

John Glenn

John H. Glenn was born on July 18, 1921, in Cambridge, Ohio. During his early childhood, the family moved to New Concord, Ohio, where Glenn attended primary and secondary school. Following graduation from New Concord High School, Glenn enrolled in Muskingum College and began flying lessons at the New Philadelphia airport, earning his pilot's license in 1941. Following Pearl Harbor, he left college and enlisted in the Naval Aviation Cadet Program. He was commissioned in the Marine Corps in 1943. Glenn was awarded a bachelor of science in engineering from Muskingum in 1962.

During his World War II service, Glenn flew 59 combat missions in the South Pacific. Following the war, he remained in the military as a Marine pilot and served as an instructor in advanced flight training. During the Korean conflict, he flew 63 missions with Marine Fighter Squadron 311 and 27 missions as an exchange pilot with the Air Force.

He holds the Air Medal with 18 Clusters for his combat service and has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on six occasions. He is the recipient of numerous other honors, including the Congressional Space Medal of Honor.

In 1954, Glenn won an assignment as a Marine test pilot and, in 1957, set a transcontinental speed record for the first flight to average supersonic speeds from Los Angeles to New York. In 1959, he was selected to be one of seven NASA Mercury astronauts from an original pool of 508. Three years later, on February 20, 1962, he made history as the first American to orbit the earth, completing three orbits in a five-hour flight and returning to a hero's welcome.

Glenn retired from the Marine Corps as a colonel in 1965, becoming a business executive with Royal Crown and serving first as a member of the board of directors and then as president of Royal Crown International. During this time, he took an active part in Democratic politics and early environmental protection efforts in Ohio.

In 1974, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, carrying all 88 counties in Ohio. He was reelected in 1980 with the largest margin of votes in Ohio history. Ohioans returned him to the Senate for the third time in 1986, and, in 1992, he again made history by being the first popularly elected senator from Ohio to win four consecutive terms. He retired from the Senate at the end of his term in January 1999.

Glenn returned to space from October 29 to November 7, 1998, as a member of NASA's Shuttle STS-95 Discovery mission during which the crew supported 83 research payloads and investigations on space flight and aging. He is the oldest person to have flown in space. During that mission, Glenn made 134 Earth orbits in 213 hours and 44 minutes.

In October 1997, Glenn announced that his papers, documenting his full career, would be archived at The Ohio State University. In September 1998, Ohio State announced the establishment of the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy at the university and in July of 2006, the Institute merged with Ohio State's School of Public Policy & Management to form the John Glenn School of Public Affairs.

Glenn has been married to Anna (Annie) Margaret Castor since 1943. They have a son, Dave, and a daughter, Lyn, and two grandchildren.