

50 Years of Skydiving - the Main Event

A mid-summer skydiving celebration honoring the "first man in space" is the centerpiece for one of the biggest fundraising events yet planned for the National Skydiving Museum. Fifty years ago, Air Force Capt. Joe Kittinger exited at 102,800 feet from a helium balloon over New Mexico, reaching a speed of 614 mph during a four-and-a-half minute free fall. The record still stands today, although there have been several attempts to better it.

The "National Skydiving Museum Weekend Honoring Joe Kittinger" will be held in DeLand, Florida the weekend of August 13-15. Kittinger's jump was on August 16, 1960. Kittinger, who retired as a colonel and is now 81, plans to attend, as well as other skydiving luminaries. There will also be several activities during the weekend benefiting the Boy Scouts of America, another cause Kittinger supports, to commemorate their 100th Anniversary.

One highlight will be a 50-way formation, organized by B.J. Worth, museum trustee, chairman of the board of the United States Parachute Association and well-known as the stuntman in several James Bond movies. Worth also was one of the key organizers of the world record 400-way formation in Thailand.

The weekend will also commemorate the modern history of sport parachuting, roughly

speaking about 50 years. (Skydivers are consummate debaters and determining the "beginning" of the sport has been nearly impossible to pinpoint.) One thing is certain. . . the sport has progressed dramatically in the past half century.



Joe Kittinger outside the gondola from which he took his historical jump; Kittinger's jump into outer space.

Several exhibition jumps are planned including swooping – canopy gliding across the ground or water, accuracy (one of the "classic" events), and wingsuit free fall formations. The wingsuit is a relatively new innovation where large-surface area jumpsuits allow skydivers to glide horizontally for

great distances during their descent. The U.S. Air Force Academy has been invited to skydive into the event to honor their former officer and world record holder. The U.S. Army demonstration team, the Golden Knights, has also been invited to drop in during the festivities.



With nearly 2000 years combined experience, SOS (Skydivers Over Sixty) jumpers build a 52-way formation over Elsinore, CA. Photo by Terry Weatherford

It's difficult to miss the Knights, with their yellow and black canopies, trailing smoke during their aerial show. (cont'd on page 2)

Chuting Times is a biannual newsletter for museum supporters and volunteers.

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Skydiving Activities and Exhibitions . . .

Here are just a few of the events that will honor Joe Kittinger and celebrate 50+ years of skydiving history including giving special recognition to other pioneers for their contributions to our sport. *(schedule subject to change)*

Jumping for Joe 50-Way Formation Skydiving

This 50-way formation with some of the best skydivers in the country will celebrate and symbolize 50 years since Joe Kittinger's record breaking jump. Canopies opening in an almost simultaneous rhythm will have the audience cheering until the last skydiver lands.

Swooping Exhibition

Swooping truly shows how far parachute equipment has come over the years. Swooping is gliding a high performance parachute across the ground or water for long distances, generally a slalom type course, to show the skill of the canopy pilot. The exhibition will have some of the top swooping demo jumpers in both individual and team exhibitions.

Accuracy Competition

Accuracy goes way back in our history but didn't get the recognition it deserved until the Sixth World Parachuting Championships held for the first time in the U.S. at Orange, MA. Accuracy canopies in those days were modified military surplus equipment with very little steerability. Today, high performance accuracy canopies and the skill of jumpers make for exciting and competitive accuracy contests.

Skydiving Demonstrations

Precision skydiving demos the world famous Army Parachute Team (Golden Knights) and the Air Force Academy Parachute Team.

Wingsuit Flying Exhibition

Grand finale and tribute to Joe Kittinger wingsuit flying truly exhibits the dream of human flight. Ten to 15 of the premier wingsuit flyers in the world will fly formations across the sky with smoke to add to the effect of this spectacular jump.

(50 Years of Skydiving—the Main Event. . .cont'd from front page)

Marc Middleton, a Florida-based television and radio producer, plans on creating a documentary around Kittinger's feat and the weekend's events.

There will be a number of exhibits displaying the lineage of parachuting equipment by various sponsor manufacturers.

The Saturday evening dinner will be devoted to honoring the initial class of inductees into the National Skydiving Museum Hall of Fame. A special committee carefully selected eleven honorees, culled from a list of skydivers who made major lifelong contributions in equipment design, free fall techniques, and those who excelled in national and international competitions.

This fundraiser is part of the National Skydiving Museum's \$5 million capital program that will raise the necessary funds to build the museum in Fredericksburg, VA. *(story contributed by Doug Garr)*

National Skydiving Museum Hall of Fame—Class of 2010

The National Skydiving Museum is proud to introduce the inaugural Class of 2010 inductees into its Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those, who through leadership, innovation and/or outstanding achievements have defined, promoted, inspired and advanced skydiving at the highest and sustained levels in the past, present and for future generations of skydivers.

Congratulations to:

Lowell Bachman
Jerry Bird
Tiny Broadwick
Joe Crane
Joe Kittinger
Eilif Ness
William H. Ottley
Lewis Sanborn
Cheryl Stearns
Ted Strong
Gene Paul Thacker

Honorees will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at a special dinner Saturday, August 14, during the Museum's weekend of activities in DeLand, Florida. Tickets to the dinner are required and must be purchased by August 1. Seating is limited. (*registration form attached*)

National Skydiving Museum Weekend Honoring Joe Kittinger

Schedule of Events (*subject to change*)

Thursday – August 12

5 pm – Midnight Pioneers Lounge open for early arrivals – No admittance fee

Friday – August 13

All Day General Jumping and Demonstration Practice
9 am—Noon Set-Up
Noon—5 pm Exhibit and Displays/Booths Open
Noon—5 pm Pioneers Lounge Open – Admittance Fee (\$10 per day/\$25 for weekend)
4 pm—5 pm First Rehearsal
6 pm—7 pm Joe Kittinger Reception in the Pioneers Lounge
7 pm—9 pm "Jump Stories" BBQ with our history in pictures
9 pm—Midnight Pioneers Lounge Open

Saturday – August 14

All Day General Jumping and Demonstration Practice
10 am—5 pm Exhibits and Displays/Booths Open
Noon—6 pm Pioneers Lounge Open – Admittance Fee (\$10 per day/\$25 for weekend)
Noon—1 pm Dress Rehearsal for Kick-Off
4 pm—5 pm Kick-Off Exhibition
6 pm—9 pm Hall of Fame Reception/Dinner (*must pre-register to attend, limited seating*)
9 pm—Midnight Pioneers Lounge Open

Sunday – August 15

All Day General Jumping and Demonstration Practice
10 am—2 pm Exhibits and Displays/Booths Open
Noon—6 pm Pioneers Lounge Open – Admittance Fee (\$10 per day/\$25 for weekend)
10 am—11 am Dress Rehearsal for Grande Finale
2 pm—3 pm Grande Finale—Jumping for Joe (50-way formation Exhibition)—Swooping Exhibition—Golden Knights (*invited*) - Air Force Academy (*invited*) - Wingsuit Flying Exhibition
3 pm Wrap-Up

**There will also be several activities during the weekend benefiting the Boy Scouts of America to commemorate their 100th Anniversary.*

Remembering Our Donors: Thank You!

The National Skydiving Museum gratefully acknowledges the generosity of its donors in 2009. **We regret any errors or omissions in this list. If you note an error or missing name, please contact us at nkemble@skydivingmuseum.org so that we may correct our records.

A special thank you to those donors who, cumulatively, have contributed more than \$50,000 to the National Skydiving Museum:

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