

QUEST

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THE HISTORY OF SPACEFLIGHT
Q U A R T E R L Y

**FROM *COUNTDOWN TO LIFTOFF*—
THE HISTORY OF QUEST**

**THE HEXAGON KH-9
SPY SATELLITE**

**ATLAS 500: A TALE OF
TWO ROCKETS**

**ANNETTE HASBROOK—ONE MISSION
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The launch of the *Gemini 12* and the Agena target vehicle (Atlas 5307) is seamlessly captured on two pieces of film as a double-exposure on 11 November 1966.

Original Images Credit: NASA
Edited Image Credit: Joel W. Powell

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From *Countdown to Liftoff*—The History of *Quest*

Part I—Beginnings through the University of North Dakota Acquisition 1988-1998

By Glen E. Swanson

Shortly after Chris Gainor became the editor of *Quest: The History of Spaceflight Quarterly*, he and publisher Scott Sacknoff approached me about contributing the first of what is hoped to be a multi-part series chronicling the history of the publication. Now that the magazine has achieved the remarkable goal of 25 years of continuous publication, it seems appropriate to reflect back upon how it all got started, where it has gone, and how it has been able to continue. From the publishers, editors, and writers responsible for the production of each issue to the dedicated group of readers who continue to subscribe, all share a common interest in outer space and in chronicling humanity's efforts to explore it.

Celebrating its silver anniversary, *Quest* remains one of the few printed publications in its field that has endured and that itself is worth a closer study. I hope that this series will serve as a launching point for an in-depth, critical examination of the history of subscription-based publications devoted to the exploration of space that have come and gone over the years.

Back in 2008, I read an online article in *The Space Review* by frequent contributor Dwayne Day titled "A quick guide to space news publications in print" (see *The Space Review*, 5 May 2008). Day's article offered an overview of space-related publications then in print. Though not all-inclusive, the article was fairly extensive, giving brief opinionated overviews of many publications in print at that time. The article resulted

in a smattering of reader postings from followers of the forum including a piece about a now out-of-print publication called *Space World* (see *The Space Review*, 19 May 2008).

As a kid growing up during the peak of the Apollo program, *Space World* was the publication to seek out in the library. I don't recall that I ever saw it on newsstands, and eventually I subscribed to it. It appeared at the same time as *Sky & Telescope* and *Astronomy*, but these publications did not focus on space travel. *Space World*, as its very name proclaimed, did, in an easy-to-understand way through articles that made liberal use of photos and illustrations. Indeed many issues were simply reprints of press materials issued by NASA and other aerospace companies, with the editor not even bothering to change the font to match the other articles.

Space World began in 1960 by science fiction and comic book author Otto Binder. The very first issue hit the newsstands in May of that year under the name *Space World—The News Magazine of Astro-Science*. The publication served as a counterpoint to the numerous lore-based UFO and flying saucer-based pulp magazines that were common at the time.

In 1963, *Space World* was purchased by Ray Palmer, an interesting character who cut his teeth in the world of pulp fiction as editor of *Amazing Stories*. Ray Palmer, or as he liked to be called "Rap," announced his recent acquisition in one of his magazines *Flying Saucers*, "Now in *Space World*, you will be able to get the latest developments in space matters, while in *Flying Saucers* you will continue to get the world's only complete coverage of space mysteries."

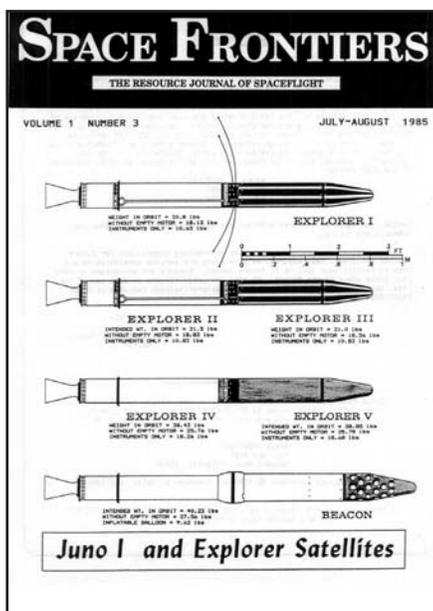


The first popular publication devoted to covering spaceflight in the United States Ray Palmer's *Space World* had a near 30-year publication run from 1960-1988.

(Source: Raymond Palmer, *Flying Saucers*, September 1962, 2.)

Palmer was an unusual fellow, and more should be written about him. Writer Fred Nadis took a stab at doing just that with his book *The Man from Mars—Ray Palmer's Amazing Pulp Journey* (Penguin, New York 2013). In Nadis' book he describes how the diminutive Palmer, born with a hunchback that forced him to stand at just a little over 4 feet tall, created numerous publications that many of my generation grew up with, including *Other Worlds*, *Universe*, *Fate*, *Mystic*, *Search*, *Flying Saucers*, *Hidden World*, and of course *Space World*.

Space World remained one of the longest running publications of its kind. It survived for over a quarter of a century, finally folding in December



Proving that a self-published space-history themed publication could be done, Ted Talay's excellent *Space Frontiers* ran from 1985-1989.

1988. Whatever its business model, it succeeded in spite of having a relatively low number of subscribers and a near non-existent advertising base—two essentials for the ongoing success of any publication.

After Palmer's death, his widow somehow managed to keep the magazine going. Perhaps this was due to the loyalty of its readers and the contributions of a then young Jim Oberg, who worked for Palmer starting as an associate editor for *Flying Saucers* and then, in 1976, due to Palmer's failing health, took over as editor of *Space World*.

Shortly after graduating from college, I was lucky enough to obtain employment during the summer of 1988 as a Space Camp counselor in Huntsville. I was stricken by Kate Capshaw's performance in the 1986 widescreen treatment of the franchise and knew that if I was going to be an astronaut (or not), Space Camp was

where I needed to go. Young and foolish, I headed down to Huntsville in my 1978 Datsun four-door sedan.

It was while trying to keep a bunch of fourth graders from sneaking out of their dorm rooms that I got the long-distance phone call that brought me back to Michigan. During my years as an undergrad at Western Michigan University, I often volunteered with the Michigan Space Center in Jackson, helping with their annual Space Day and summer space camps. I made some good contacts and grew close to several of the staff there, including Fran Greene, the Space Center's program coordinator. Fran was a great inspiration as she was filled with enthusiasm and encouragement in everything that she did. She also was close to retirement.

The call that I received came from Jim Satterelli. Jim was the director of the Michigan Space Center and had called to see if I would be interested in coming back for an interview as Fran announced that she would be retiring. I was delighted at this news as it allowed me to return back home with the likely prospect of obtaining employment in the space education field while no longer having to tape kids into their rooms. (We used strips of masking tape across the kids' dorm room doors in the Huntsville Marriott to make sure cadets did not leave their rooms. A quick check for broken tape showed if they had escaped).

After heading back north and meeting with the folks at Jackson Community College, they offered me the job. In the fall of 1988 I became the new Program Coordinator of the Michigan Space Center.

One of the wonderful perks of working as an educator back in the late 1980s was that you could purchase Apple Computer products at a substantial "educator's discount." Not only that, but what you did buy you could purchase over time because they

could deduct payments from your paycheck at no interest. This was great because one of the first things that I did as a new employee was purchase a Macintosh SE, complete with an external 20MB hard drive and ImageWriter printer—all for the princely sum \$2,500, an amount that, adjusting for inflation, would amount to more than \$5,000 today.

The relative ease with which fairly high-quality publications could be produced as a result of the mid 1980s introduction of the personal computer and desktop publishing caused a surge in niche publications. When the last issue of *Space World* came out in December 1988, a faithful companion of my youth had passed away. However, by this time other publications had come onto the scene. These included *Countdown*, a monthly publication that focused on the Space Shuttle program, and a slick new full color bimonthly magazine called *Final Frontier—The Magazine of Space Exploration*, which also hit the newsstands with Tony Reichhardt as editor. Tony would move on to become editor of the *Smithsonian Air & Space Magazine*, a position he still holds today.

Theodore A. Talay, an aerospace engineer with NASA's Langley Research Center, began producing from his home in Newport News, Virginia, a small desktop publication called *Space Frontiers—The Resource Journal of Spaceflight*. Premiering in 1985, each 20-page bimonthly issue contained photos and drawings depicting various rockets and spacecraft in articles "designed to educate the reader in rocketry and space basics." What caught my attention was his dominant history of spaceflight theme, something that no single publication had previously done. Sadly, medical problems forced him to close the publication during the fall of 1989 after producing only 23 issues.

While working at the Michigan Space Center, I often corresponded with Ted, explaining how I had been toying with the idea of putting together my own publication that would focus on the history of spaceflight. Called *CAPCOM—The Journal of the Michigan Space Center*, it would be a bimonthly publication with regular columns on international space exploration, state-funded research efforts in space, astronauts with state ties, and space history. It would also have an aerospace educator column devoted to teaching space in the classroom as well as describing resources, books, and publications dealing with space. The publication would be offered as a perk to encourage membership with the Michigan Space Center as well as be the forum for all events and organizations within the state that are active in space and space-related activities.

CAPCOM was never published, even though I managed to produce a 26-page galley proof complete with articles, drawings, line art, and photos. Initially, the premiere publication was to be released in 1989 in order to coincide with the twentieth anniversary of *Apollo 11*. Those familiar with *Quest* will find that most of the contents from that first and only issue of *CAPCOM* made its way into several issues of *Quest*. They included an article by Peter Alway on the V-2 rocket, complete with his amazing scale drawings that have since appeared in multiple editions of his international best selling reference, *Rockets of the World*.

After leaving the Michigan Space Center, I took the idea of *CAPCOM* with me. Returning to Grand Rapids, I sought to go into business for myself. I purchased a Chief 17 offset printing press and took to the idea of forming a publishing company to produce a space magazine. After all, I had my Mac, a printing press, an idea for a magazine, and the wonderful optimism of ignorant youth. All I



The Michigan Space Center in Jackson, Michigan. The birthplace of *Quest*.

Photo courtesy Glen Swanson

needed now was a name for my company. Since “CAPCOM” was a NASA acronym for “Capsule Communicator” I used “CSPACE” which stood for the Center for Scholastic Programming in Aerospace Education. The name sounded cool as long as no one asked what it meant.

Even though I knew how to use a Mac, I did not know how to run a printing press. Fortunately, there was a class offered by our local district skills center called “Offset Printing and Graphics.” I signed up, paid the course registration fee, and sat in for nine weeks with a bunch of high school students who were taking the class as part of their summer school. This was the best money I ever spent. From darkroom work, optical typesetting, and screening photos, to platemaking, printing, collating, folding, and stapling, this class taught me all I needed to know in order to print a magazine...*all that is, except how to fund it.*

Fortunately, my new skills allowed me to seek out work in the printing field to help offset the cost of producing a space magazine. In

January 1992 I landed a part time job with Grand Rapids Sash & Door, an area wholesale distributor of doors and windows. They had their own in-house print shop and needed a printer to run their printing press.

One of the advantages of working at Sash & Door was that they had a complete darkroom that I could use to make camera-ready reductions and enlargements as well as screened halftones. Desktop publishing was great, but it had its limitations, and one still had to use a darkroom to produce good halftones for printing photos. The shop also had a hydraulic paper cutter and I remember hauling in many issues of *Quest* that I had printed, folded, collated, and stapled but needed to be trimmed before mailing out.

Starting a magazine from scratch was not easy. Subscribers helped provide material for each issue, but I did the production on all of those early issues from the printing to the mailing.

In early 1992, the first issue of my new space history magazine finally premiered but long-time sub-



scribers may recall that what they got in the mail was not called *Quest*. The very first issue was called *Liftoff*.

On 11 June 1992, I received a letter from the legal offices of McGraw-Hill, the well-known book publisher. They also happen to be the publisher of *Aviation Week & Space Technology*. The letter asked about my legal status relating to the name *Liftoff*. As explained in their initial letter, the Aviation Week Group of McGraw-Hill, Inc. had been developing plans for an educational magazine about aerospace, the name of which was to be *Liftoff*. In connection with this magazine, they had filed an intent-to-use application with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. To make a long story short, basically, they beat me by a matter of months to the legal paperwork that would have allowed my first-use claim to the name in a printed publication. My patent attorney told me that I could fight the claim but it would be expensive.

Now I found myself with a premiere issue of a new magazine that had been mailed to hundreds of prospective subscribers, only to have to change the name after the very first issue. I was worried. Would the idea of having a space history magazine fall apart because the name had to be changed? It was a rough start for the new magazine.

After a few sleepless nights and phone calls with friends, many of whom I made as a result of them subscribing after receiving the first issue of *Liftoff*, I decided that the idea of the magazine was stronger than its name and that the publication should go on. But what to call it? So began a quest to find a new name. This time

I would do my homework and make sure that whatever name I chose, I would make sure to thoroughly secure its legal status.

The next “premiere” issue came out during the second quarter of 1992. *Quest—The History of Spaceflight Magazine* now made its mark on the world with Volume 1 No. 2. The legal claim to its name was now more certain, though it did have a few challenges during the multi-year effort to secure the formal trademark. This included overcoming challenges by Nissan motors regarding possible implied connection to their *Quest* minivan as well as responding to the owners of a reboot of the original 1960s *Jonny Quest* animated television series who wanted to produce a comic book tie-in called *Quest* to go along with their new TV series.

With a new name securely in place and a growing subscriber base, *Quest* began to establish itself during the first half of the 1990s. The magazine’s daily operations proved to be a lot of work. During this time, the Internet was only beginning to become a usable entity, mostly limited to online chats and e-mail. The idea of downloadable attached files was something that still had not materialized, at least not in the form that we recognize today. Dialup access and low baud rates limited the amount of information that could be exchanged online. Plain paper faxes rather than thermal paper began to be used and proved wonders for their time, since they were far more efficient than the early Internet in sending pages of formatted text and images to distant locations.

To help promote the magazine, I traveled to various space events such as the Midwest Space Development



The Chief 17 offset printing press that produced the very first issues of *Quest*. Shown are my late father (left) and grandfather, both of whom were tremendous inspirations to me.

Photo courtesy Glen Swanson

Conferences and the National Space Society's annual International Space Development Conferences. These events offered opportunities to connect with others, network, and promote publications like mine. During one of these events in 1993, I had the opportunity to meet the editor and publisher of *Countdown*. Dixon P. Otto was the founder of Main Stage Publications in Athens, Ohio. A journalism graduate from Ohio University, he started producing a monthly publication ten years earlier that focused on the Space Shuttle program. Like *Quest*, his magazine was produced entirely by him out of his home using desktop publishing.

In talking with him, I found we had a lot in common. At the time we first met, however, he had been producing his magazine for 10 years whereas I had been at it for a little more than a year. We went to lunch at that conference, where he explained how the downtime imposed in the wake of the *Challenger* accident really made it difficult for him to keep the magazine going. I started subscribing to the magazine shortly before the Shuttle's return to flight. Even so, Dixon explained that subscription numbers had started declining, and I got a sense from his tone that he was worried.

As a seasoned veteran of the self-publishing world, Dixon gave me some good sound advice, including making sure to pace myself to avoid getting burned out. He said that the world of self-publishing can be very interesting but also very lonely as most folks don't realize how much work goes into producing a regular subscription-based publication. The work removes you from a lot of other things in life.

As *Quest* matured, daily trips to the post office were the norm. This was before regular email and nearly all correspondence was done via "snail

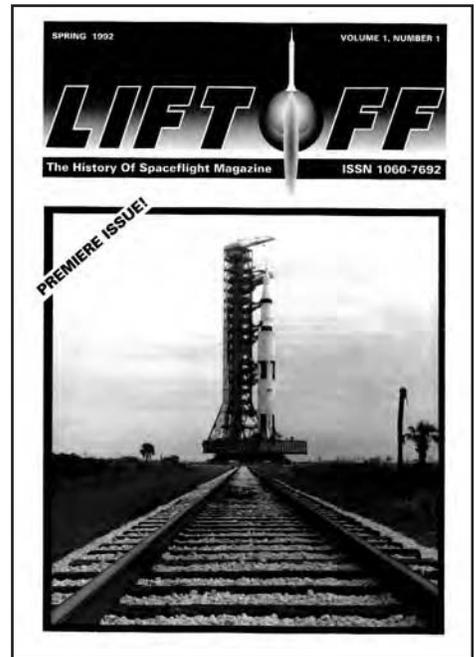
mail." Subscriptions came in, checks were deposited and complaints were dealt with. I remember one subscriber who was so upset about a particular issue that he sent a real lemon wedge. The folks at the post office flagged this for me and made a big deal of it when they brought the dripping envelope out to the front counter. I responded to the angry customer by terminating his subscription and refunding his money. Soon after, I received a phone call from him begging to reinstate his subscription. He was upset about an issue but not upset enough to cancel his beloved *Quest*.

In December of that same year Dixon Otto called me. He remembered our meeting from earlier that year and explained that he wanted to get out of the magazine business. He asked if I would be interested in assuming ownership and publication of *Countdown*. I told him I would think about it and get back with him after the first of the year.

By the end of 1993, *Countdown* had a paid subscription base of nearly 3,000 whereas *Quest* had just under 900. After two years of production, I was beginning to get comfortable with the workload and was finding that *Quest's* subscription base was growing. It was not making a profit, but at the same time it was not losing money either. Would taking on another publication with an existing subscriber base help or hurt *Quest*, *Countdown*, or both? I decided to find out and agreed to acquire *Countdown*.

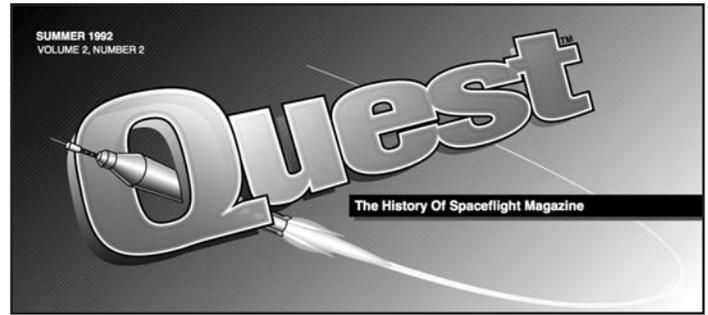
In May of 1994, I drove down to Athens, Ohio, to meet with Dixon and sign all the paperwork that legally transferred ownership of *Countdown* to CSPACE Press. Shortly after this time, I left Grand Rapids Sash & Door. Managing and producing two magazines would now keep me busier than I had ever been before and would help make CSPACE a known entity.

In order for both magazines to



succeed, I had to make changes. One of the more unpopular of these was reducing the frequency of *Countdown* from being a monthly to a bimonthly. I began seeing the writing on the wall as the Internet was becoming a very real presence that allowed nearly instant access to timely news and information. By this time, there was also more competition in print media as other publications entered the fold such as *Final Frontier* (1988), *Space News* (1989) and *STS Mission Profiles* (1992). These other publications were covering current space topics such as the Space Shuttle, but there still was no publication other than *Quest* covering space history.

In June 1994, Dixon P. Otto published his 132nd and last issue of *Countdown*. He spent 11 years doing the magazine and now the torch had been passed. Starting with the July/August 1994 issue, the new *Countdown* was now being published by CSPACE. To help offset the less frequent production run, each bimonthly issue now had more pages including more color photos. At this time, I did all of the management and layout but continued farming out the



Same publication but with a different name. Here is the logo for *Quest*, which I tried printing in color for the second issue during the summer of 1992.

That summer, the first Shuttle/Mir docking mission occurred and the film *Apollo 13* premiered. There was a heightened awareness of space exploration, both past and present, and my magazines were there to help capture it.

But storm clouds loomed on the horizon. The number of *Countdown* subscribers continued to fall while the number of *Quest* subscribers continued to rise. I was also starting to feel the pressure of managing two magazines and producing 10 issues a year with each issue averaging 50 pages in length.

I decided that of the two magazines, *Quest* had the best chance of surviving. *Countdown* was feeling the rising competition of other news sources as well as the rapidly maturing presence of the Internet. No one was doing anything like *Quest*, while there were other print and online sources people could go to for the same information that was being offered in *Countdown*.

The November/December 1995 issue was the last issue of *Countdown*. Starting with the first quarter in 1996, *Quest* replaced *Countdown* and became known as *Quest: The Magazine of Spaceflight*. Both the contents of *Countdown* and *Quest* were combined into one single quarterly publication offering the best of both worlds. As my promotional literature described: "The past, present and future of space exploration is now covered through the pages of one magazine...*Quest*."

At the same time that the new format *Quest* was launched, I enrolled in a distance learning degree program. The University of North Dakota in Grand Forks had an established Master's Program in Space Studies that proved to be popular among career Air Force officers stationed at nearby Minot Air Force Base. Beginning in January 1996, they offered the same program in a newly revamped online distance-learning format. Other friends and subscribers told me about the program and encouraged me to enroll. I did, and soon joined 40 others from around the globe who made up the class.

The source of much frustration. This is the McGraw-Hill product that forced me to change the name of my magazine from *Liftoff* to *Quest*.

printing, distribution, and mailing.

Quest continued in its regular quarterly format, but I could now print each issue with higher quality photos and graphics, something that I could not do before because of the limits of my own equipment. So much of space history is in photos, but not just any photos. Specifically, I sought out images to include in each issue that were rare and told a story that had not been told in recent memory. This took knowledge and experience because I had to be familiar with what was printed. I had to know the literature in the field.

By 1995 I was making regular trips down to the Kennedy Space Center to cover various Shuttle missions as part of NASA's badged press corps, meeting other journalists in the field who were worlds better than me. These included Jim Banke, Beth Dickey, Todd Halvorson, and Bill Harwood. I also rubbed shoulders with several long-time veterans including Jay Barbree and the late Howard Benedict. I even had the good fortune of meeting the legendary Martin Caidin not too long before he passed away.

At this time, the subscription base for *Quest* began to stabilize at around 2,000 paid subscribers. With the elimination of *Countdown*, funds for the magazine started to fall as subscriptions slowed. This was due, in part, to disgruntled subscribers who chose not to renew, as well as potential new readers who may have been reluctant to subscribe because they were skeptical of the evolving *Quest* format.

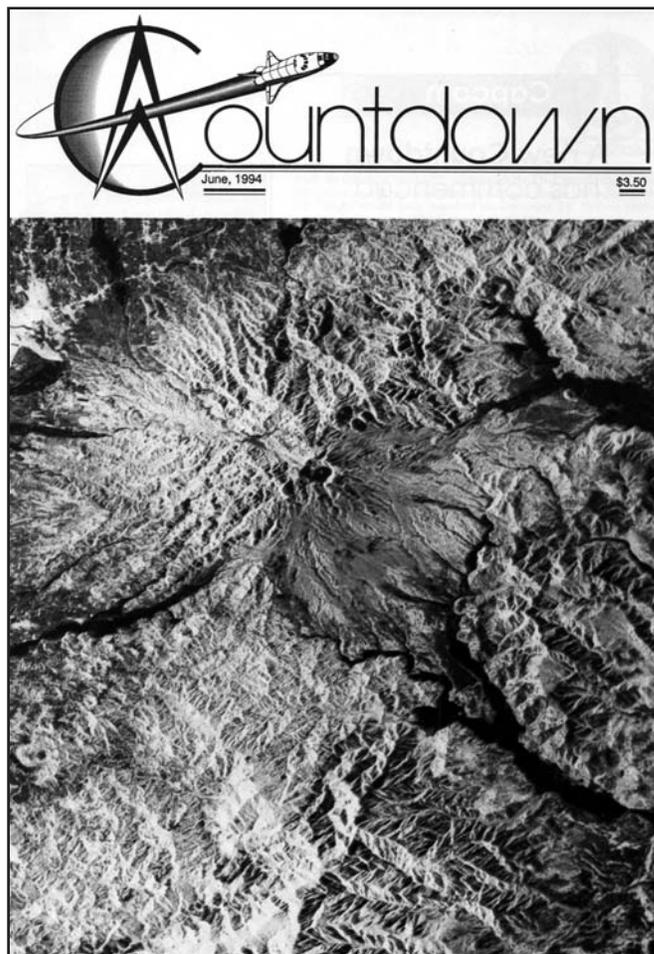
During the summer of 1996 I got a call from a local aerospace contractor. Earlier that year, I had applied for a job as a proposal coordinator/technical writer with Smiths Industries Aerospace, and now they wanted to see me. Soon after the interview, they offered me the job. For now, my funding problems for *Quest* had been reduced but not eliminated.

By August 1996, I settled in with my new job at Smiths and continued to work on *Quest* as well as my distance learning UND Master's Program. But simultaneously working at a full-time job, producing the magazine, and working on my master's degree began taking its toll. I was getting tired. In addition, subscriptions were falling yet production costs, especially shipping, continued to rise. Like many other news media began doing at this time, I considered switching the publication to an online format. I even drafted an announcement that I considered mailing out to current readers explaining that *Quest* would switch to being a free online format magazine. In any event, I decided that the Volume 5 #4 1997 issue would be the last regular printed edition of *Quest* that I would publish.

It was during this time that I learned of an online space forum called Friends and Partners in Space (FPSpace). Founded in 1994 by Jennifer Green, FPSpace was an international nonprofit organization devoted to improving communication and cooperation between the West and the former Soviet Union in areas related to space. They were organizing a 10-day trip to Russia in April 1997. Many *Quest* subscribers were going as well as several faculty members from the UND Space Studies program.

For the first time in my life, I traveled overseas. From 4-14 April 1997 we had an amazing experience as participants were immersed in Russian space policy and culture. We toured the Russian Space Agency, the Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, the Orevo Educational Center and Museum, the Khrunichev (Proton) Factory, the Moscow Aviation Institute, TsUP Mission Control, and the Tsiolkovsky Memorial Museum in Kaluga.

During the FPSpace Russia tour, I met two UND faculty members, Joanne Gabrynowicz and her husband John Graham. Both were familiar with *Quest* and were impressed with the publication. During one of our conversations during the Russian tour they suggested some changes for the magazine. They also alerted me to several funding sources



including the NASA Space Grant Program that might be able to offset production costs.

Based upon initial conversations that I had with the two UND faculty during the FPSpace tour of Russia, I decided to formally approach UND to see if they would be interested in continuing the publication of *Quest*. After our return from Russia, I started exchanging e-mails with the Space Studies Department that summer, and these eventually led to them acquiring the publication.

A lot of paperwork was exchanged including a visit to UND's campus during the first quarter of 1998, but eventually, a deal was signed. On 5 February 1998 I mailed out a special free issue of *Quest* to all subscribers giving them details about the new UND/*Quest* ownership. By June of that year, the first issue of *Quest—The History of Spaceflight Quarterly* (Vol. 6 No. 1) was published. UND's Stephen Johnson became the new editor, and I remained onboard for a brief period serving as a department editor as well as consultant to help ensure a smooth transition.

Shortly after the first issue of UND's *Quest* came out and upon obtaining my new master's degree in Space Studies, I moved down to Houston to begin a new job with NASA's Johnson Space Center as a historian, a position I



Here I am showing off one of the custom-built display cases for Peter Alway's famous "Rockets of the Word" color poster. This poster proved to be the biggest seller of anything that we ever offered in the magazine. It was an amazing success.

Photo courtesy Glen Swanson

held for nearly four years. During that time, I distanced myself from *Quest*, feeling confident that it was in capable hands.

In reflecting back over the nearly 10 years of being involved with the magazine from initial conception in 1988 to UND's production of the "new" *Quest* in 1998, I have been very pleased with how everything has turned out. During that inaugural period of the early 1990s, each issue was by no means a solitary effort. There were many who contributed articles, photos, and artwork that went into each issue. Some started out as subscribers who eventually became regular contributors. These include Joel Powell, Peter Alway, Dan Gauthier, Keith Scala, Dennis Newkirk, Ed

Hengeveld, Ron White, Don Pealer, Dwayne Day, and Asif Siddiqi—all whom helped make those early issues of *Quest* possible. Sadly, both Dan and Dennis have passed away, but Keith and Joel are still involved with the magazine, serving as assistant editors. Asif went on to become a highly respected spaceflight historian in his own right specializing in the history of the former Soviet space program. He wrote the award-winning book *Challenge to Apollo: The Soviet Union and the Space Race, 1945-1974*, regarded as the best English-language history of the Soviet space program in print and noted by the *Wall Street Journal* as "one of the five best books" on space exploration. He is now a full professor at Fordham University and continues to serve *Quest* as one its Editorial Board members.

Looking at the number of space-related publications that have come and gone before and since *Quest* first premiered in 1992, the fact that it has survived for more than a quarter of a century is nothing short of amazing.

I recently spoke with *Space Frontiers* founder Ted Talay, now retired, from his home in Newport News, Virginia. I thanked him once again for the work that he did and the inspiration that he had given me through his nearly four-year production run of *Space Frontiers*, a run that ended several years before *Quest* first premiered. Together we reminisced about those days of self-publishing.

"I started falling behind in publication schedule after the first year" explained Ted. "I always thought that I would make it up." When asked if he ever turned a profit, Ted replied "Well, yes and no. As a tax break I guess I did, although from a simple money in, money out viewpoint it was more break even. Printing and production costs kept going up along with postage." Ted went on to explain how

it was the subscribers' support for the publication that kept him going during the lean and frustrating times. "Subscriber response was almost universally favorable—I still have subscribers writing and asking me if I would start publishing again."

I had many of those experiences myself while doing *Quest*. If someone approached me today about doing something like I did, I would suggest they start out smaller. You also need to be honest with yourself. When it stops being fun, assess what you're doing and correct it. If after then it still is no fun, it might be time to pull out.

In Dwayne Day's original 2008 *Space Review* article, "A Quick Guide to Space News Publications in Print," he offered several closing remarks about the long-term viability of these printed publications, accurately predicting that many of them would fold. He felt that *Launch* would "last the shortest" (it folded shortly after its premiere in 2006) and that *Space News* would "go to an online subscription format" (it did) although it still continues distributing a printed version, albeit greatly reduced in content from its original biweekly newspaper form.

In spite of a strong digital presence, magazines are here to stay. Publishers have not yet entirely written off newsprint. Just look at the periodical section of your local bookstore. Some, like *Quest*, have succeeded in finding a niche market; you would be hard-pressed to find any similar content on the Web. Robert Pearlman's *CollectSpace* website which was launched in 1999, offers a regular forum for space collectors and perhaps comes the closest to what an online version for *Quest* might have been if it had gone that route back then. But *Quest* is and continues to remain a niche or specialty publication and that is the reason, at least in part, for why it has continued.

Because *Quest* does not deal with the present but focuses on the past, it does not have to compete with current headlines. It can produce historical articles that can be savored and not rushed.

Though accurate in most of his predications, Day originally thought in 2008 that *Quest* would “fold in a few years, because it seems to lack the kind of support from the space history

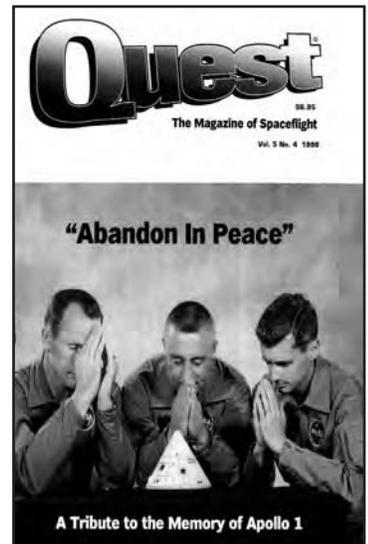
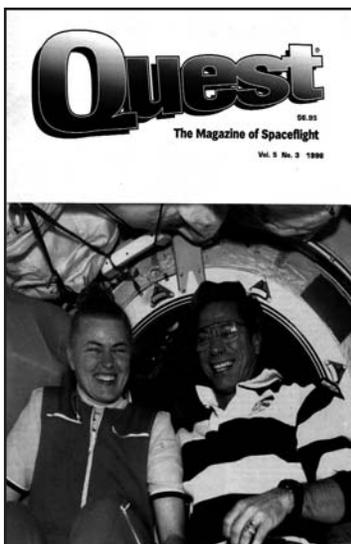
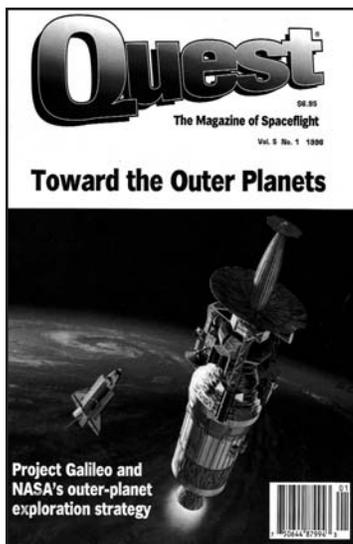
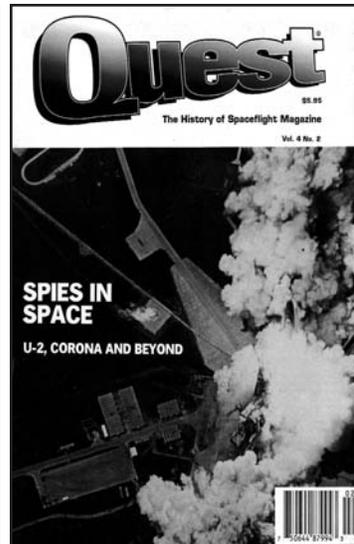
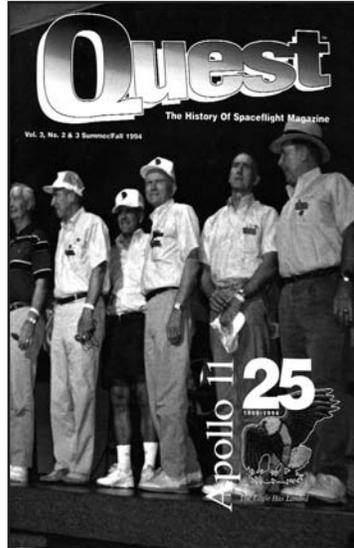
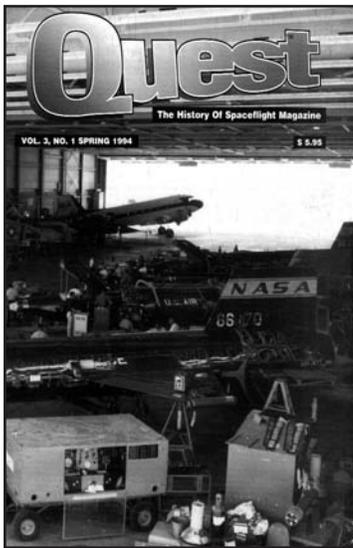
community that it requires in order to stay vibrant.” Nearly 10 years later I’m proud to say that because it does have the right kind of support from the space history community, *Quest* remains in print, and I am optimistic that it will continue to do so for a long, long time.

Happy silver anniversary, *Quest*. It is good to have played a role in your success.

About the Author

Glen Swanson is currently researching mid-to late-19th century renewable energy efforts with a specific focus on early wind power generation. He lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan with his wife and their 9-year old son.





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Mailing Address

Quest
P.O. Box 5752
Bethesda, MD 20824-5752
United States
Tel: +1 (703) 524-2766
quest@spacehistory101.com

Quest on the Internet

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