

COSMOGRAM-11 1984 SEP 28  
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cosmonaut return imminent

There have been more and more hints about the three-man Salyut crew preparing for return to Earth. By the time you get this, their landing should have been explicitly forecast.

Starting about September 29 the landing times (for passes between 5E and 10W) are pre-sunset; the deorbit burn point (about 30S 15W) is sunlit through about Oct 10. So we are now in the standard lighting conditions for return, as follows:

Sep29/1230 ut 236/181 (crew/Soyuz)

Oct01/1200 ut 238/183 days

Oct02/1230 ut 239/184 in

Oct 4/1030 ut 241/186 orbit

.... and so on in a five day pattern two hours earlier.

And it looks like there will be no crew handover.

Roald Sagdeyev hinted at that in a remarkable interview in "Sky and Telescope", Sep 84 issue, pages 241-3, interview conducted in May at Harvard by J. Kelly Beatty.

He asked, "Western observers believe that Salyut stations are about to be occupied on a continuous basis".

Sagdeyev: "Not the present Salyut. We are thinking of doing that with a modified version, because the current version is quite an old one -- it dates from the 1960s." It has "only minor improvements" over Salyut-6.

Q: "So you're saying that the next Salyut will be quite different?"

Sagdeyev: "A different design, we hope."

Maybe one with lateral docking ports, huh?

If Salyut-7 is abandoned again, do we have to re-think our interpretation of the mission of Soyuz T-10A last September 26? Maybe was NOT a crew handover? AWST reported in December that it was

merely a visiting crew to perform EVA. I was skeptical because a) visiting crews had never done EVA and b) the crew was a trained long duration crew and c) Lyakhov/Aleks said later that the explosion had indeed extended their mission. But since then, a visiting crew (Soyuz T-12) DID perform an EVA. Dunno what to think.

By the way, kudos to the folks who alerted us to the "woman's EVA" plan, although not with the crew first anticipated. Probably the imminent second flight of Sally Ride prompted Moscow to let Svetlana make a second flight first. She admitted that after her first flight she had gone back to the aircraft design and testing bureau and had to be recalled after one year there. As for future "stunts", I feel Savitskaya is fully qualified to serve as a Soyuz mission commander for a visiting flight, and may do so within a year or two. That is a record the US will take decades to match!!

Also kudos on "Volk", who is very probably the "Volkov" who reportedly was backup researcher on Soyuz T-8 in April 1983. But his full role in this program is still enigmatic.

Note no mission for the "module" and no orbital mission so far this year for the "spaceplane". We await developments. Oh, Sagdeyev mentioned that Kosmos-1443 used gyroscopes for attitude control, unlike Salyut-7/6 which use jets. This is yet another similarity with military Salyuts, which also used gyroscopes (in the form of an "inertial sphere").

lifetime increases:

We also have to give credit for remarkable increases in Soviet spacecraft lifetime, above and beyond Soyuz T-11 going for more than 180 days. Cosmos-1552 is still up after four months, and the Venera radar mappers have been operating in

Venus orbit for a year. Other vehicles in low earth orbit show similar increased lifetimes. Despite this, the Soviets are pushing a record launch pace, especially of Proton boosters. Don't those guys know when to quit? Evidently not.

boo hiss for Janes --

Big news was a report from the new Janes Spacecraft that Ryumin and Popov on Soyuz-25 in 1977 had to drink a big water blob which spilled while they were gardening. OOPS!! Those guys were on Soyuz-35 in 1980, sorry about the typo and sloppy research. I had not heard the story before but it is plausible.

remarkable new book --

I've obtained a copy of "Where All Roads to Space Begin", by Borisenko and Romanov, in English, Progress Publishers, 1982. Sold by "Imported Publications", 320 West Ohio St., Chicago, IL 60610 (it and one other are only spaceflight books they carry, alas!). It is great! The nuggets:

In August 1980 at "Baikonur", the authors "had one more meeting with Konstantin Feoktistov. On that occasion we were interested in him not only as a designer, but as a member of the crew of the forthcoming mission aboard the Soyuz T-3, a spacecraft which he had helped construct.

"You intend to make a second flight, 16 years after the first. Why?" [We asked].

"If you remember, in 1964 on the Voskhod my duties were those of flight engineer.... I think it is high time I went up again to take a look for myself at how the systems of the new Soyuz T function, as well as those of the Salyut, which has surpassed all expectations in operating so long. An exhaustive and detailed analysis of the systems operation in space will do me a lot of good." [no more about this].

On page 47, Tereshkova admits her father was killed not in the

PS I'm still interested in crackpot "spy theories" about KAL-007 airliner. 3

Great Fatherland War but in the Finnish War of 1939. And it is hinted that Kovalenok's father, who also died in the war period, did not die a martyr to Russia.

On page 61, we are told that the first semyorka [the term is never used] was launched on May 15, 1957, at 7 PM Moscow Time, and all went well for 50 seconds, at which point the narrative ceases.

On page 80 we are reminded that the Vostok radio frequencies were 9.019 and 20.006 MHz and also 143.625 MHz.

The book is full of fascinating details of the early years of "Baikonur", including veiled references to old buildings "on the banks of the Syr Darya river". The original settlement, for example, was called "Zarya", and only on January 28, 1958, was renamed "Leninsk"! The photographs are disappointing and "old hat".

report from iran --

Cyrus Borzoo reports that he has some Soviet books in Farsi which give details of the 1960 class. "Cosmonaut" by Yevgeniy Petrov, Progress Books in Farsi, 1963, has names: Grigory, Georgi, Ivan, Anatoly, Dimitry, Valentin, Boris, Valery, German, Yuri, Pavel, Andrian, Vladimir, and Alexei - i.e., everybody. Some photos, plus text: Georgy is "sharp-sighted, abstruse, perseverent, restive and refractory". Grigory is known by cosmonauts as an egotistic man. Ivan was first volunteer for centrifuge, a humble, meek man. Anatoly is a champion runner, he could run 9 meters per second. Dimitry had a birthday in April. Valentin plays guitar very well, one day he dived into a river and wounded his head, for some time he could not train but he made a "comeback" after a while. Well, that is not consistent with Shonin's revelations, is it?

PERSONAL NOTE. Two big projects are almost totally absorbing my attention outside of working hours: a new baby, due Nov 12, and a major book, co-authored with Cooky. So please do not be surprised if you do not hear much from me until 1985. Until then, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!

