



## KANSAS LEGEND BIOGRAPHY

### Joe Henry Engle (1932 – Present)

Like fellow Kansan Ronald Evans, Joe Henry Engle served as a space shuttle commander for NASA and was involved with the Apollo series missions. Engle flew more than 155 different types of aircraft during his career, including 25 different fighters, logging more than 12,400 hours of total flight time before retiring.



Engle was born in Chapman, Kan., where he attended school before graduating from Dickinson County High School. After high school, he attended the University of Kansas where he received a Bachelor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering, as well as his commission in the Air Force through the school's ROTC program. Engle proceeded to enter flight school in 1957, serving with the 474<sup>th</sup> Fighter Day Squadron and the 209<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron in California.

Engle graduated from the United States Air Force (USAF) Experimental Test Pilot School and the Air Force Aerospace Research Pilot School. He flight-tested NASA-USAF's rocket airplane, the X-15, while in school. In 1966, he was one of 19 men inducted into NASA's astronaut program.



While Ronald Evans served as backup command module pilot for Apollo 14, Engle served as backup lunar module pilot. He commanded an approach and landing test flight crew in 1977 for the Space Shuttle Enterprise. He also served as backup commander for the STS-1 after flight-testing the Space Shuttle Columbia's orbital configuration.

Engle logged more than 225 hours in space, serving as commander of the STS-2 and STS-511 test flight phases of the Space Shuttle Columbia. Both missions were launched from Kennedy Space Center in Florida and took place in 1981 and 1985, respectively. The STS-511 was an extremely successful shuttle mission, with the crew deploying three communications satellites. They repaired an additional satellite and completed 112 earth orbits.

For Engle's space flights, he earned numerous honors and awards, including Kansan of the Year in 1981. After the STS-2 test flights, Engle took a short hiatus from flying and served as Deputy Associate Administrator for Manned Space Flight at NASA Headquarters before returning to Johnson Space Center the following year.



Engle retired from the Air Force on Nov. 30, 1986, and was subsequently appointed to the Kansas Air National Guard. He received a promotion to the rank of Brigadier General and was inducted into the Aerospace Walk of Honor in 1992.

Engle is married with two grown children. In his retirement, he has served as an aerospace and sporting goods consultant. Engle continues to lead an active lifestyle, flying high performance aircraft, hunting and backpacking.

