

**Remarks by Michael D. Griffin
NASA Administrator
Commemoration of Jamestown Settlement
May 13, 2007**

Thank you for allowing me to represent the men and women of NASA, who are working today to extend humanity's horizons to the new worlds of the 21st century.

On the occasion of the tragic loss of Space Shuttle Columbia, President Bush noted that "the cause of exploration and discovery is not an option we choose; it is a desire written in the human heart." The same can be said today, as we commemorate the settlement of Jamestown and the 144 passengers and crew who set sail from London on December 20, 1606. And they apply to the three crew members of the International Space Station, whom we will see shortly.

The same values which inspired the Jamestown colonists—the drive to explore the unknown, advance commerce, and spread

the tenets of the rule of law and representative government—will propel the pioneering explorers and settlers of our time. President Bush has directed NASA to return explorers to the moon - this time to live and work there in coordination with people of many space-faring nations - and we are honored to be entrusted to keep this charge.

Jamestown lies only a short distance from NASA's Langley Research Center, which, like Jamestown, has a venerable exploration heritage. It was at Langley, nearly a half century ago, that NASA organized the original Space Task Group, which planned and executed Project Mercury, America's first leap into space. And it was at Langley that our first seven, the Original Seven, astronauts lived, worked, and trained.

Because of the work of the Space Task Group, the world cheered 45 years ago when the words "Godspeed, John Glenn," were uttered as the U.S. put its first man in orbit. How very

appropriate; 'Godspeed' was, of course, the name of one of the original Jamestown vessels. Today we are able to see and tour a replica of the original. I hope that I am not the only one here today who is amazed that such a small ship made such a momentous crossing. Perhaps future generations will look back at our Space Shuttles today and say the same thing.

Another of the Jamestown ships was the Discovery. Astronaut Suni Williams, who will speak next, flew on our Space Shuttle Discovery to the International Space Station last December, a human outpost on the final frontier that is as spartan in its way as was the colony planted here 400 years ago.

Before Suni speaks, I'd like you to know that NASA will fly a humble lead tag aboard the upcoming mission of Space Shuttle Atlantis to the International Space Station. This tag, found here at Jamestown and marked 'Yamestowne', established Jamestown as a "destination" in the new world, a destination that was the true beginning of the American nation. After its journey to the space

station and a four million mile flight, the tag will be returned to Jamestown for display.

It is now my pleasure to introduce Suni Williams, who has a special greeting from our orbiting outpost that she will deliver alongside her fellow Expedition 15 crewmates Fyodor Yurchikhin and Oleg Kotov.