

NASA Shuttle Astronaut Salutes Her WWII Bomber Pilot Father In First Book "Air Born: Two Generations In Flight"

~Two aviators making history. Two Americans serving their country. One incredible story spanning fifty years and two generations-Set For Release September 26th~

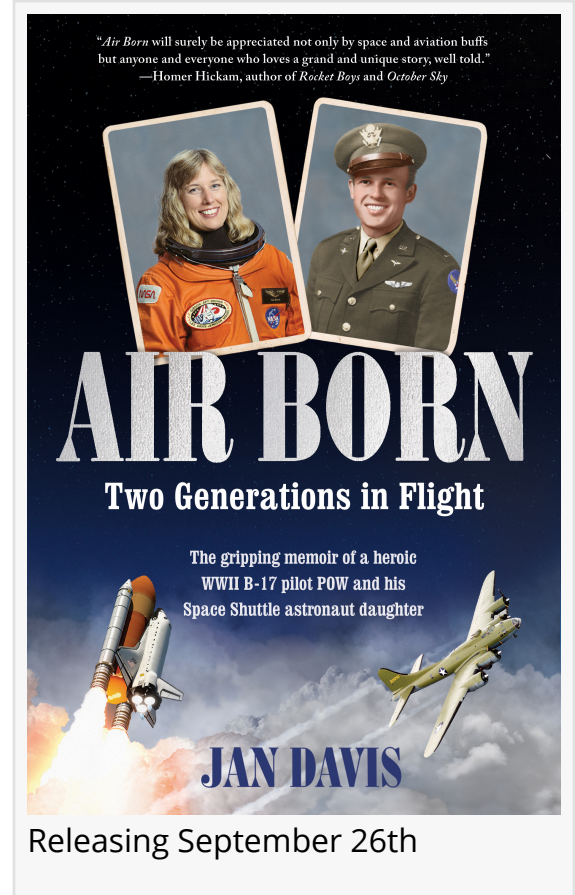
HUNTSVILLE, AL, UNITED STATES, July 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Astronaut Jan Davis](#), who flew three NASA shuttle missions and logged 673 hours in orbit, will release her first book, "[Air Born: Two Generations In Flight](#)" later this year. A limited number of advance copies will be available this summer at select personal appearances by Dr. Davis.

But "Air Born" is not the typical space diary; the book tells two never-before-told stories interwoven through space and time.

"Air Born: Two Generations In Flight" scheduled for release September 26th from publisher Ballast Books, tells two incredible parallel stories of history-making American aviators from two generations who share one bloodline, both heroically serving their country 50 years apart.

Jan Davis' father, Ben Smotherman, was a decorated B-17 pilot in World War II who fought in the European Theater of Operations before being shot down over Holland in July 1943. Ben endured twenty-one grueling months in a P.O.W. camp, chronicling his time in captivity through detailed journals, caricatures, and illustrations before finally being reunited with his loved ones and starting a family.

Many years later, Ben's daughter Jan Davis underwent intensive training, flew NASA jets, and completed three groundbreaking spaceflights, spending over 673 hours in orbit. Curious about her past and her father's wartime service, Jan made discoveries in Ben's wartime log about her father's experiences he never spoke about that shed light on her own life as an astronaut. Jan's



experiences and emotions during her shuttle launches and space travel echoed those of her father during his combat missions, highlighting the unshakable bond between father and daughter.

With *Air Born*, readers have the rare opportunity to join in on a flight through history as Jan Davis relates her father's heroic service and draws connections between his combat missions and her spaceflights. Discover the ins and outs of pilot training in the 1940s alongside Ben Smotherman and witness his harrowing capture, interrogation, and long imprisonment at Stalag Luft III. Rejoice with the P.O.W.s as World War II finally ends, and the prisoners return home to continue pursuing the American dream.



Author Jan Davis

Then, climb into the shuttle cockpit and shadow astronaut Jan Davis as she expertly navigates a career characterized by space exploration, scientific experimentation, and phenomenal feats of engineering. Readers will draw inspiration from the intersection of two completely different yet uniquely connected worlds brought together by a common link of family and flying.

About the Author

Jan Davis has been surrounded by aviation and space her entire life. Born at Patrick Air Force Base and raised in Huntsville, Alabama, aka "Rocket City U.S.A.," Jan followed up her biomedical engineering degree from Georgia Institute of Technology with a mechanical engineering degree from Auburn University and a Ph.D. from the University of Alabama in Huntsville. During her career breaking the glass ceiling for women in engineering and space, Jan worked for Texaco and NASA before being selected from a pool of thousands of applicants as an astronaut in 1987.

Dr. Davis flew on three groundbreaking Space Shuttle missions and continued her NASA career in the Senior Executive Service. After she retired from NASA, Jan served as an industry executive, consultant, and speaker. Jan also devotes many hours to her non-profit organization, AstraFemina, encouraging girls to pursue science, technology, engineering, and math careers.

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