

Capt. Jon McBride (retired NASA astronaut) visits

Abbey Vocational School

Capt. Jon McBride (retired NASA astronaut) gave a talk to some of the 5th and 6th year students on Friday morning last March 27th at the Abbey Vocational School in Donegal Town. Jon gave the students an oversight of space travel\life and also a very motivational talk about their studies and future.

His ancestors came from Donegal and Jon and his son were retracing their roots.

Jon's Space Travel

Selected as an astronaut candidate by NASA in January 1978, Jon McBride became an astronaut in August 1979. His NASA assignments have included lead chase pilot for the maiden voyage of Space Shuttle Columbia, software verification in the Shuttle Avionics Integration Laboratory(SAIL), capsule communicator (CAPCOM) for STS-5, STS-6, and STS-7, Flight Data File (FDF) Manager, and orbital rendezvous procedures development.

Jon McBride was pilot of STS-41-G, which launched from Kennedy Space Centre, Florida, on October 5, 1984, aboard the Orbiter Challenger. This was the first crew of seven. During their eight day mission, crew members deployed the Earth Radiation Budget Satellite, conducted scientific observations of the earth with the OSTA-3 pallet and Large Format Camera, and demonstrated potential satellite refuelling with an EVA and associated hydrazine transfer. Mission duration was 197 hours and concluded with a landing at Kennedy Space Centre, Florida, on October 13, 1984.

McBride was scheduled to fly next in March 1986, as the commander of STS-61-E crew. This flight was one of several deferred by NASA in the wake of the Challenger accident in January 1986.

Jon is 1 of only approx. 500 people to have ever been in space so it was a great honour for the school that he agreed to visit and give a presentation.