



Astronaut

at a Glance

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00:00:05,138 --> 00:00:09,175
Next to strapping yourself into
a rocket, it's the next best

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00:00:09,175 --> 00:00:13,213
thing to high-five your buddy,
clip his seat belt, close the

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00:00:13,213 --> 00:00:15,582
door, and then watch
them blast off.

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00:00:15,582 --> 00:00:19,419
So I grew up in a town in
southern Maine -- small town

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00:00:19,419 --> 00:00:20,420
called York, Maine.

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00:00:20,420 --> 00:00:21,421
Went to high school there.

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00:00:21,421 --> 00:00:25,291
And then from there went on to
the Naval Academy with a brief

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00:00:25,291 --> 00:00:28,294
one-year stop at the Naval
Academy Prep School in Newport,

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00:00:28,294 --> 00:00:30,463
Rhode Island. Turns out that was
the greatest thing that ever

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00:00:30,463 --> 00:00:33,700
happened to me because I matured
tremendously, took the same

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00:00:33,700 --> 00:00:36,936

courses that I took my freshman year at the Naval Academy, and

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00:00:36,936 --> 00:00:41,074

really it set me up for success going into the Naval Academy.

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00:00:41,074 --> 00:00:44,644

You know, I really had a good time at the Naval Academy.

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00:00:44,644 --> 00:00:47,347

The first year is a drag, rigorous academics, but piled on

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00:00:47,347 --> 00:00:50,350

top of that you have to know all this military knowledge, you

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00:00:50,350 --> 00:00:54,053

have to run around and call everybody sir.

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00:00:54,053 --> 00:00:58,425

But there's so many funny stories that come out of it.

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00:00:58,425 --> 00:01:02,362

And my best friends that I have in life today are from that

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00:01:02,362 --> 00:01:03,363

year.

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00:01:03,363 --> 00:01:05,365

I had been in the SEAL teams for about four years, around the

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00:01:05,365 --> 00:01:08,301

same time I met Bill Shepherd,

who was an astronaut here --

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00:01:08,301 --> 00:01:12,639

Navy SEAL; become an astronaut;
was a commander of the first

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00:01:12,639 --> 00:01:13,807

space station crew.

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00:01:13,807 --> 00:01:17,076

And in talking to him, I
realized, "Hey, my background is

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00:01:17,076 --> 00:01:19,145

kind of similar to his.

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00:01:19,145 --> 00:01:24,083

Maybe I could try to become an
astronaut also." And realized

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00:01:24,083 --> 00:01:29,255

that he went to MIT in the ocean
engineering department, and

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00:01:29,255 --> 00:01:31,224

maybe I could pursue
something similar.

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00:01:31,224 --> 00:01:34,561

Well, I was driving underwater
vehicles in the SEAL teams.

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00:01:34,561 --> 00:01:37,564

And just so happened one of
the professors in the ocean

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00:01:37,564 --> 00:01:40,767

engineering department at MIT
was named John Leonard was

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00:01:40,767 --> 00:01:42,802
studying underwater
vehicle navigation.

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00:01:42,802 --> 00:01:44,904
And that's what I was -- I was
a navigator of an underwater

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00:01:44,904 --> 00:01:45,939
vehicle in the SEAL teams.

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00:01:45,939 --> 00:01:48,808
So it seemed to me like it made
perfect sense and the stars were

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00:01:48,808 --> 00:01:49,809
aligning.

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00:01:49,809 --> 00:01:51,244
I came in the class of 2004.

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00:01:51,244 --> 00:01:53,947
Those first couple of years
you're an astronaut candidate,

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00:01:53,947 --> 00:01:56,616
not really eligible to be
assigned to anything but just

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00:01:56,616 --> 00:01:58,585
learning the ropes of
how to be an astronaut.

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00:01:58,585 --> 00:02:03,022
Came out of that program 2006,
spent a couple years doing

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00:02:03,022 --> 00:02:04,123
various jobs.

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00:02:04,123 --> 00:02:09,496

I supported Expedition 15, I think it was, and worked as

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00:02:09,496 --> 00:02:13,366

CAPCOM for a while before I was assigned to be part of the crew

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00:02:13,366 --> 00:02:15,235

of STS-127.

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00:02:15,235 --> 00:02:18,104

And we launched in the summer of 2009.

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00:02:18,104 --> 00:02:21,107

So back up about a year and a half from that is when we began

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00:02:21,107 --> 00:02:23,510

training all here in Houston.

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00:02:23,510 --> 00:02:29,015

Our main role was to bring up the exposed facility that's

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00:02:29,015 --> 00:02:33,386

outside on the Japanese portion of the space station, along with

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00:02:33,386 --> 00:02:36,856

some batteries for the Port 6 solar array.

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00:02:36,856 --> 00:02:43,329

And then probably about 2010 or '11 I started training for

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00:02:43,329 --> 00:02:45,331
Expedition 35, 36.

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00:02:47,267 --> 00:02:50,970
And long -- much longer training
process, two and a half years.

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00:02:50,970 --> 00:02:55,308
Mostly because half your time's
in Russia or some other country,

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00:02:55,308 --> 00:02:56,643
Japan or German.

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00:02:56,643 --> 00:03:01,114
And Russian language is a
huge part of that training.

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00:03:01,114 --> 00:03:04,217
So we spent a lot of time in
the classroom one-on-one with an

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00:03:04,217 --> 00:03:07,353
instructor, and then ultimately
launched from Baikonur, and