



THEN
(TOPEX/Poseidon)

Happy 30th Anniversary TOPEX/Poseidon

& the satellite reference sea level records!

With Love and Fondness,
NASA OSTST, Aug 10th, 2022



NOW
(Sentinel-6 Michael Freilich)

When TOPEX/Poseidon launched, ...

"...I was a graduate student, and I was JPL's cheapest option for sending someone to Norfolk Island for a month to collect data to calibrate the TOPEX/Poseidon radiometer",

Karen St German NASA Earth Science Director

"... I was frittering away my last summer of freedom after graduating from High School and before starting College. Probably watching Batman Returns",

Josh Willis, OSTST lead Sentinel-6 Project Scientist

"... my wife and I were at the French embassy in Washington, watching a live video feed from French Guiana, after which the embassy put on a fantastic wine and cheese celebration.",

Richard Ray OSTST member

"...I was just beginning my career at NASA/GSFC. It was only a few years later that we first thought to compute global mean sea level.",

Steve Nerem, OSTST member

"... I was dreaming of becoming a fighter pilot, inspired by the first Top Gun movie",

Ben Hamlington, OSTST member

"...I had just defended my Ph.D at the University of Colorado. With the rest of the CCAR satellite geodesy contingent, we watched the launch on a big screen in the Physics building. The launch was meaningful for many of the graduate students, because many had done or were still doing work related to satellite altimetry and/or TOPEX, under the supervision of their advisors, Dr. George H. Born and Dr. George W. Rosborough.", **Frank Lemoine, OSTST member**

"... I was in the viewing area at the Kourou launch facility, watching the nighttime launch with a pounding heart from a mix of emotions ranging from trepidation to excitement and enthusiasm. All the hard work that had been done over the preceding decade by the T/P Science Definition Team and Science Working Team was hanging in the balance, wholly dependent on a successful launch. I will never forget the jubilation and sighs of relief that everyone at the launch facility felt when T/P successfully separated from the third stage of the rocket and was inserted into a perfect orbit. It was the first step toward what would become a legacy of high-precision altimetry that nobody at the time could know for certain would be successful and enduring. The rest is history.",

Dudley Chelton, OSTST member

"... I was a graduate student, just about to head to the Southern Ocean for a 52-day World Ocean Circulation Experiment cruise. At the time I wondered whether we'd gain consistent information about the strength and position of the Antarctic Circumpolar Current from in situ observations and from altimetry. We've learned a lot in the last 30 years.", **Sarah Gille, OSTST member**

"... my wife sent me a message saying her tarot card's narratives for the next step was data assimilation.",

Lee Fu, SWOT Project Scientist

"... I was at a summer camp near Kyiv, geeking out with my teenage friends. Yet to see the ocean. Yet to grow out of my pixie mohawk.",

**Nadya Vinogradova Shiffer,
NASA Program Scientist & Manager**

"... I was sitting in the operations testbed supporting my first launch and praying for a smooth launch where I wouldn't have to work on anomalies.",

Parag Vaze, SWOT Project Manager

"... I was working at a Space Science Lab hidden deep in the Surrey (UK) countryside",

Charon Birkett, OSTST member

"... I had to help my dad fix the retaining wall before 8th grade started.",

Jessica Hausman, NASA PO Support Scientist

"At the T/P launch and after 13 years of concept and development, we still didn't know if it was going to work!",

Carl Wunsch, OSTST member