Space shuttle Enterprise lands in New York atop jet

Thomas Zambito, Reuters

(Reuters) - The space shuttle Enterprise flew to New York from Washington on Friday piggybacked atop a Boeing 747, making a dramatic flight along the Hudson River past the Statue of Liberty to the delight of observers.

En route to John F. Kennedy International Airport, the retired shuttle flew at low altitude along the river, giving residents of New York and New Jersey an extraordinary view of the craft.

After three decades, the United States retired its space shuttles last year after building the $100 billion International Space Station, a 15-nation project. It will begin work on a new generation of spaceships to carry astronauts beyond the station's 240-mile-high (384-km-high) orbit.

The Enterprise flight took off from Washington Dulles International Airport at about 9:30 a.m. EDT (1330 GMT). The flight was rescheduled from Wednesday due to weather.

It flew past the Statue of Liberty, up the Hudson River and over the George Washington Bridge before turning to land to the cheers of school children clad in astronaut garb.

Among those watching its arrival was actor Leonard Nimoy, who played Spock on the Star Trek television series. Nimoy said he recalled watching as Enterprise, which bears the same moniker as the spaceship from the original Star Trek series, was unveiled in California.

"I was there in September 1976 when they rolled it out of the hangar," he said. "The Air Force band was playing the theme from Star Trek - da-da-da-da-daaaaa. I love it."

A prototype orbiter that was used for atmospheric test flights in the 1970s but never on a space mission, the Enterprise is scheduled later to be moved by barge up the Hudson for display at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum in Manhattan.

It will be lifted by crane onto the Intrepid, an aircraft carrier that has been a museum since 1982.

NASA has been flying the shuttles to cities around the nation for display.

On April 19, space shuttle Discovery was flown over Washington on its way to being displayed at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum annex in Virginia.

Sister ship Endeavour will head to the California Science Center in Los Angeles in the fall, while Atlantis will go on exhibit at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex in Florida.

(Editing by Ellen Wulfhorst [1] and Paul Simao)

Source URL (retrieved on *05/24/2013 - 3:19pm*):
http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2012/04/space-shuttle-enterprise-lands-new-york-atop-jet

Links:
[1] http://blogs.reuters.com/search/journalist.php?edition=us&n=ellen.wulfhorst&