

Women Spacefarers – Sixty Different Paths to Space

by Umberto Cavallaro

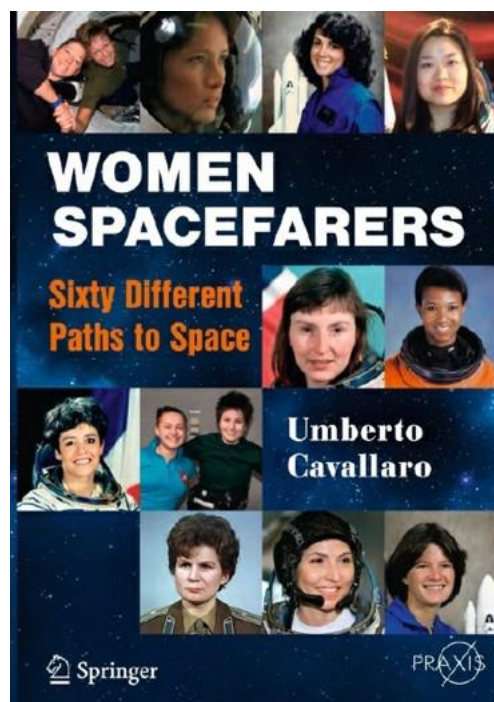
Book Review and related personal commentary by Jim Reichman

Women Spacefarers is a collection of mini biographies of 60 women who trained for and (except for one – Christie McAuliffe) flew in space to support their respective country's space programmes. This is actually Umberto's second book on this subject. His first, titled *Donne nello Spazio*, was published in Italian in 2015. This latest book, published in 2017, is more than just a translation of the Italian text from the earlier book, because it also includes info Umberto has gained since (mainly through email contact).

The catalyst for that first book was a philatelic exhibition Umberto organized in 2013 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the world's first female spacefarer Cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova. To support that exhibition, he wrote a small brochure to identify all of the women who had flown in space and made it available to the exhibition attendees. At the time he wrote the brochure, he remembers being surprised at just how many women spacefarers there were.

The brochure was popular and he was encouraged to expand on its information and write a full-length book in Italian which he did and had published. Luckily for us who do not read Italian, Umberto subsequently decided to prepare an English-language version of the book (...)

This book is well worth reading, is well documented (even has excerpts from Umberto's own interviews and email contacts with these women), and is a testament to the fact that these 60 women spacefarers all had characteristics we normally call the "Right Stuff". And speaking of the right stuff, Umberto even included items in his book for us astrophilatelists to enjoy. These are images of autographed space covers for most of the 60 women as well as postage stamps and artistic meter cancels that have images related to these spacefarers and their spaceflights.



NOTE

Umberto Cavallaro (right) is the founder and current chairman of the Italian Astrophilately Society and editor of that group's quarterly journal called AD*ASTRA. He is a collector of astrophilatelic materials and a frequent exhibitor. Two of his exhibits have won gold medals at major international competition

