

# Mastering The Sky: A History Of Aviation From Ancient Times To Present

*James P. Harrison*

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#4576778 in Books Da Capo Press 1996-10-21 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.50 x 6.25 x 1.251, #File Name: 1885119232338 pages | File size: 66.Mb

**James P. Harrison : Mastering The Sky: A History Of Aviation From Ancient Times To Present** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mastering The Sky: A History Of Aviation From Ancient Times To Present:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. The Most Up-to-Date History of Aviation By james p. harrison Mastering the Sky tells the exciting story of aviation in historical perspective. The author is a former Air Force pilot who became a published historian. It begins with the take-off of a Boeing 747, asking how one can lift over 400 tons higher than Mt. Everest in a matter of minutes. It gives answers to such questions, as it flashes back to the mythology of flight and comes forward to the 20th century, including space flight. It is current through 2000, three years before the centenary of the Wright Brothers first flights. It is current through 2000.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. fantastic By Haytham Karram just a very easy read about the history of flying....I am sure everybody will enjoy it.

First published in 1996, Mastering the Sky received acclaim as one of the best one-volume histories of aviation ever written. Beginning with ancient myths and man's aspiration to soar to the heavens, James Harrison takes us on a kaleidoscopic tour of early history, including tower jumpers, balloonists and barnstormers. After the achievement of the Wright Brothers, the story accelerates, parallel to the development of faster, stronger and more powerful aircraft.

By the end of the book, man has flown to the moon and humans reside on space stations for months at a time. The history of aviation is a breathtaking story, told here by a masterful author who, despite his wealth of detail, never fails to convey the human interest, and a sense of pure exhilaration at our ability to conquer challenges.

From Library Journal  
Humanity has been defying gravity with powered vehicles for less than a century, and earlier with gliders and balloons with mixed success. Our aviation history is of such complexity and density that it can stagger anyone who studies it closely. Harrison (history, Hunter Coll.), whose field is ordinarily Asian history, has produced a densely packed panorama on a specialized and extraordinary subject. He portrays a century's parade of victories in rapid succession with defeats and setbacks sprinkled around to keep us humble and courage and ingenuity enough for a dozen lifetimes of study. He also tells the story of a science and technology and so requires a seemingly endless cataract of facts, statistics, dates, and numbers. It is inevitable that in such an all-encompassing history of flight, the inevitable errors creep in, like Ben Franklin's use of a balloon for his lightning experiments instead of a kite or the date of the Absolute Speed Record (off by a day). But these are swept away in the headlong rush to tell the story of the development of the most important invention of our century. Recommended especially for public libraries. Mel D. Lane, Sacramento, Cal. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist  
Harrison's overview of aviation history tries to take in everything from Daedalus to TWA flight 800 and from the Frisbee to the space shuttle in less than 400 pages. If it does not succeed, it is still an admirable failure. Former air force pilot Harrison clearly loves the miracle of flight and those who have brought it about, and he tries to do justice to as many persons and machines as possible. So he marshals a vast amount of raw data, but poor organization and some glaring errors suggest the effort needed more editing than it got. On the other hand, Harrison offers an imposing and up-to-date reading list, and he totally avoids the technophobic condescension that mars much recent academic material on aviation history. Hardly perfect, this volume is still useful and definitely fun. Roland Green  
Mastering The Sky is a history of aviation from ancient times to the present, from the Wright brothers to the space age. Daedalus and his son Icarus were not the only ancients dreaming of becoming airborne, the Chinese had their schemes, and by the time of the Renaissance, the towers of Europe were crowded with men wearing every sort of contraption designed to let them take wing -- and then there was Leonardo da Vinci. Once machines were in the air, daredevils around the world seized the public imagination with their feats of speed and distance, even as inventors and factories raced to produce newer and better planes. In wartime, fighter pilots revived a tradition of chivalric combat that had all but disappeared, even as "air power" stretched the limits of warfare to new and frightening degrees. Today's jet age has witnessed a spiral of innovation plus new heroes who have ventured into the frontier of space. Mastering The Sky chronicles the near-fantastic determination of men to fly over the centuries with their countless variations of devices and machines. Mastering The Sky retains its sense of wonder at what we have achieved, the champions who led the way, and at how these ancient dreams became modern realities. -- Midwest Book