



SPACE PORTRAIT: As a member of the crew of *Skylab 3*, Gibson (below) took one of the final spacewalks from the orbiting craft (above).

Four Decades Ago, Ed Gibson '59 Set a Skylab Record

It's been 40 years since the third and final mission to *Skylab*, the nation's first space station. Aboard *Skylab 3* was NASA scientist-astronaut **Ed Gibson '59**, who—along with fellow crew members Jerry Carr and Bill Pogue—set a then world record of 84 days in space. It remained a record in the United States for 21 years, until Norman Thagard spent 115 days on the Russian space station *Mir*.

“Although it might not appear so, based on its metal internal surfaces, *Skylab* was a comfortable home for sure. I would've

been content to live there for many years, if I had friends and family along . . . and maybe a good pizza delivery,” Gibson wrote last year in an essay published in a *Skylab* special issue of the journal *Quest: The History of Spaceflight Quarterly*, marking the November 1973 launch. The mission ended in February 1974.

During 1,214 orbits of Earth, the men covered 34.5 million miles. They took four space walks on the mission; Gibson participated in three. *Skylab*, which was launched in 1973, remained in orbit until 1979. Gibson left NASA in 1981.

