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## 50th Anniversary Perth City of Light, John Glenn, ARISS contact

On the 20th of February 1962 a Mercury-Atlas 6 space craft called 'Friendship 7' was launched. In the hot-seat was astronaut, **John Glenn**.

The objective was to place a man into earth orbit, observe his reactions to the space environment and safely return him to earth to a point where he could be readily found.



During the first orbit of 3, the spacecraft came into radio range of the Mucnea Tracking Station where the first Australian Space Radio contact was made by Gerry O'Connor who spoke with John Glenn as he passed overhead.

John Glenn reported that he saw the City of Perth and a very bright light as he overflew Perth and the Kwinana refinery which flared for the occasion.

The event gave Perth the moniker, the **City of Light**.

Next month, 50 years after those 3 orbits, the WA State Records Office, the WA Museum, the City of Perth, ARISS, the Hills Amateur Radio Group and of course NASA are going to celebrate with a public event in the Northbridge Piazza in Perth where around 10 lucky primary and secondary school students will make a public ARISS contact together with web-streaming and other activities, such as a radio telescope, optical telescopes, museum exhibitions, a presentation by the WA Chief Scientist and some others we're working on. I have to say, it helps when there is an amateur at the State Records Office, hi Meg, VK6LUX.

From a technical perspective, we'll be using a telebridge because we don't actually have an overhead orbit to the International Space Station, but Dick, AH6NM, the ARISS amateur in Honolulu will be wide awake at midnight to make the contact possible.

In Perth, members of the **Hills Amateur Radio Group** will provide the amateur link between the technology and the students so they can talk to an Astronaut. Behind the scenes there is feverish activity by Tony VK5ZAI,

who is the ARISS mentor in Australia - and I recommend you take a moment to have a look at some of the photo's he's published online, you'll see a NASA style console in his shack and a tracking antenna to make you drool.

This once in a life-time experience is going to introduce a whole new generation of kids into space and amateur radio.

If you have or know school going children, primary or secondary, in Western Australia, get them to fill in the competition form on the WA Museum Web-site, at [museum.wa.gov.au/city-lights](http://museum.wa.gov.au/city-lights)

If you're able to make it to Perth on February 20th, we'd love to see you at the Northbridge Piazza where we'll be setting up for the contact. Festivities start from 5pm.

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So, get your kids to fill in the form, at [museum.wa.gov.au/city-lights](http://museum.wa.gov.au/city-lights) and watch this space!

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