



The Alpha Control Reference Manual

Biography: Maureen Tomlinson Robinson

Vital Statistics

Birthplace:	New York, New York	Eyes:	Blues
Birthdate:	June 25, 1958	Hair:	Honey Blonde
Height:	5' 5"	Rank:	None
Weight:	128 pounds	Likes:	Growing flowers and other types of plants

A native New Yorker, Maureen Tomlinson was born in Brooklyn in 1958, the second daughter of James and Margaret Tomlinson. Maureen's father was the founder and owner of Tomlinson Engineering Corporation, a large firm famous for its aircraft navigation system designs.

Maureen inherited the brilliance of her father, and her parents enrolled her in a private school catering to the needs of gifted children. But other than her obvious intelligence, good looks, and benefits that came with her family's affluence, her life was as normal as any other child's. And at the same time, she was subject to the same tragedies that might occur in the life of any child.

In 1966, shortly after her sister Colleen had graduated from college in California, her parents were killed when their light plane crashed on a pleasure flight near Baltimore. Being Maureen's only living relative, Colleen became her legal guardian and she moved to Los Angeles to live with her sister, where she would remain for the next twenty-two years.

While Maureen was able to adapt well to her new environment, she would always feel the loss of her family. In later years she would feel strongly about the well-being of her husband and three children, sometimes to the point of being over-protective. But her loss as a child would, if anything, be compensated for by her being an excellent mother and wife.

Maureen continued to grow up with Colleen and her husband David, and she graduated from high school in 1976. That fall she enrolled in college at the California Institute of Technology, and met a young student from Massachusetts named John Robinson. A whirlwind romance resulted in their being married the following year. Their first child, Judy, was born in 1978. Despite the added responsibilities of a child and husband, Maureen continued at school full time and graduated after the 1980 spring semester with a degree in chemical engineering. To make ends meet while John continued working on his masters degree, Maureen accepted a position with Tetrodyne Chemicals, a company specializing in solid fuel propellants for a number of U.S. military and NASA rockets.

Maureen left her job in 1985 to be a full-time mother and housewife after the birth of Penny in September. Penny's arrival would soon be followed by Will's in February of 1987. After spending most of her life living in the Los Angeles area, Maureen moved with her family to

Houston, Texas, where John had taken a job working for Alpha Control.

The move to Houston in 1988 provided for a hectic year requiring many adjustments by the Robinson family. Dealing with a new home and job, acquiring new friends and acquaintances, and handling the hundreds of details that always accompany such a move made the year pass quickly. When things settled down by the following summer, Maureen went back to school to obtain her masters degree (completed in 1991), and later began work on a doctorate in biochemistry.

Maureen was entirely satisfied with her role as a full-time mother and housewife, and part-time student, when John first proposed that their family should volunteer for the upcoming Alpha Control mission. While she knew that her husband had been considering their volunteering for several months, the sudden realization that he would actually commit the family to the dangers of such a project came as a shock. On more than one occasion she had remarked that she was a woman and a mother first, and that all other interests were secondary. So, despite her interests in space travel, it was difficult for her to seriously consider placing her family in such a dangerous situation without considerable persuasion from John, and from several friends who worked with him at Alpha Control. With some reluctance, she finally gave her approval and John submitted their application in March of 1983. Three months later the announcement was made that the Robinsons had been chosen to be the first family in space.

Maureen would spend the next four years with her family at the USSC Training Center (located next to the Alpha Control test facilities), and while there she finished her doctorate. Shortly after finishing training, she and her family left Earth on October 16, 1997.

AFTER THE LAUNCH

John's logs reveal no shortcomings in Maureen throughout their ordeals in space. Naturally, there have been times where she has regretted the decision to put her family in a position of danger by going on the mission, and when they first became lost in space, she was in favor of returning to Earth rather than risking going further into space. But while she has been reluctant to risk danger to the Jupiter 2 crew, she has on a number of occasions faced such danger herself. Overall, she has proven to be an excellent choice for the mission.