

Teacher dies in *Challenger* catastrophe

By our space correspondent
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A MASSACHUSETTS-born teacher was killed yesterday in one of the most tragic days in the history of American space exploration.

The *Challenger* disintegrated off the coast of Cape Canaveral in Florida at 11.39 a.m. EST, just 73 seconds after takeoff. Investigators are already working to establish whether a mechanical fault was to blame for the disaster, possibly connected to the particularly cold weather that accompanied the launch.



The high level of public interest was due to the presence on board of high school teacher Christa McAuliffe, who would have become the first teacher in space.

McAuliffe, who was born in the city of Boston and grew up in Framingham, Massachusetts, was selected by NASA from more than 11,000 applicants to participate in the Teacher in Space Project.

GEORGE H. W. BUSH was elected 41st U.S. President in 1988. The World War II Navy pilot was born in Milton, a Boston suburb, and later moved to Texas, where he made his fortune in the oil industry. Bush was the fifth "son of Massachusetts" to become President, joining John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Calvin Coolidge, and John F. Kennedy.