

By July 2007 Dorneanu, Science Editor

[Space Shuttle Endeavour Is Being Prepared for the Next Mission](#)

The shuttle was taken to the vehicle assembly building

Yesterday, the space shuttle Endeavour rolled out of the hangar and was taken to the vehicle assembly building at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where a fuel tank and the booster rockets were mounted on it, in preparation for the next mission, scheduled on August 7. Endeavour, one of the original five spaceships in US fleet, was named after the first ship commanded by 18th century British explorer James Cook. On its maiden voyage in 1788, Cook sailed into the South Pacific and around Tahiti to observe the passage of the planet Venus between the Earth and the Sun. During another leg of the journey, Cook discovered New Zealand, surveyed Australia and navigated the Great Barrier Reef. The shuttle is scheduled to be launched again on Valentine's Day in 2008, but this summer's launch will be the first since before the 2003 Columbia accident, which forced NASA officials to ground the shuttle fleet for more than two and a half years for safety improvements. Seven astronauts will embark for a mission aboard Endeavour, which will be taking them to the \$100- billion International Space Station, where they will install the next piece of the external frame of the station and will also deliver supplies and equipment. A total of 12 flights are scheduled by NASA in order to complete the construction of the space station, and 2 more will be made to deliver spare parts and to carry out the last repairs to the Hubble Space Telescope, which is about to be decommissioned, after successfully serving its purpose since 1990. James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), a space infrared observatory, will be replacing the aging Hubble Space Telescope and its launch is planned for no earlier than June 2013, on an Ariane 5 rocket. The current shuttle program is scheduled for mandatory retirement in 2010. The shuttle's planned successor is Project Constellation with its Ares I and Ares V launch vehicles and the Orion Spacecraft.