

To all of you who are celebrating the 60th anniversary of the opening of Tidbinbilla, please accept the gratitude and good wishes offered by an old, retired former NASA Administrator who, going all the way back to my experience as a young flight controller at the Goddard Space Flight Center, very much appreciates what you did way back then and still do today.



In that long-ago time when no one but me ever imagined that I might one day serve at the helm of NASA, we at Goddard relied every day on the ground stations deployed around the world to link NASA with its spacecraft in and beyond Earth orbit. Our Australian partners and the facilities you built were critical to the success of Mercury, Gemini, Apollo and, beyond that, to Pioneer, Mariner, Viking, Voyager and more. None of your contributions turned out to be more important for a longer time than those made by Tidbinbilla.

I am personally connected to your work through our mutual involvement with Voyager. After receiving my Ph.D. in 1977 and joining the staff at NASA/JPL, I worked for a time on Voyager, for which much of the operational software was developed and uplinked after launch. I will never, ever forget sitting in the JPL cafeteria for the Voyager 1 and 2 encounters with first Jupiter, and then Saturn, and watching new worlds come into view on the television screens installed around the room. Knowing that today Tidbinbilla is the only station that can still “see” Voyager 2 brings a special warmth to those memories and to the request that I offer a few words in recognition of your contributions.

I could not be more pleased nor more appreciative of the fact that after 60 years, you are still there and still making a difference.

Michael Griffin

Former Chief Engineer, NASA
Former Administrator, NASA.