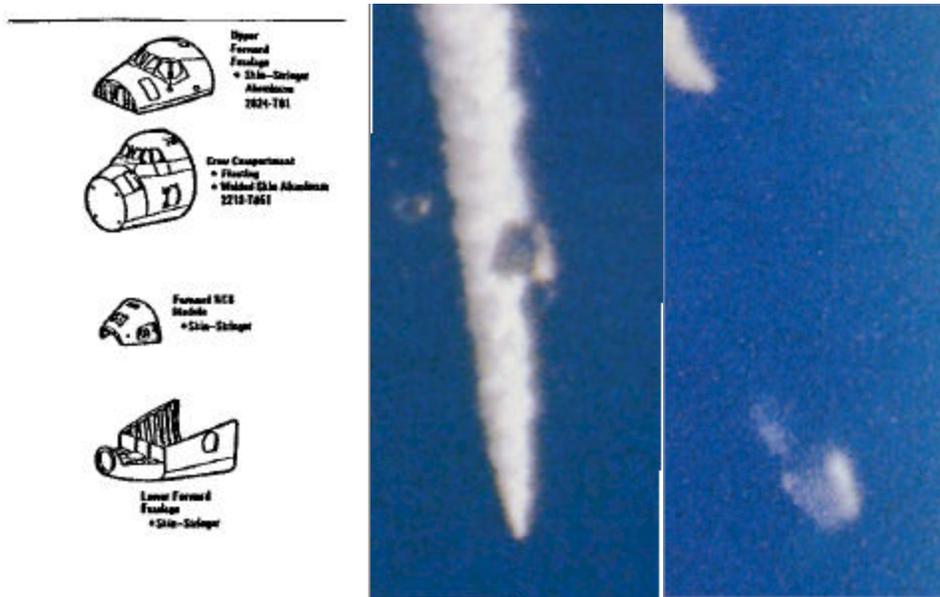


After nearly 20 years, here is a modest effort and hopefully useful information.

The photo at center is the “mjanovec’s” post, and another supposedly Crew Cabin photo (same source) is on the right. On the left, four forward Orbiter modules are shown, from top to bottom: (1) Upper Forward Fuselage, (2) Crew Compartment (CC), (3) Forward RCS Module, and (4) Lower Forward Fuselage (LFF). All one needs is good lighting to make out the piece in the photos. It is the LFF without the lower forward lip section. Read my post #104 about the shadows and the order of recovery of the LFF by the Search and Recovery Team. Also, notice the rise, or slant, of the windows in the Upper Forward Fuselage and the CC. The supposed “CC” in the photos below, and video, does not show the slope or the windows at any angle!



The piece in these and similar photos is the Lower Forward Fuselage, NOT the Crew Cabin.

The Crew Cabin broke off the Lower Forward Fuselage. How, why and when did that happen? My questions about the CC in Post #101 will slowly make sense. In December 1986, I met with Shuttle directors at NASA HQ; the meeting was headed and observed by two great space veterans, respectively, Mike Weeks, then head of the Shuttle program, and Burt Edelson, then Associate Administrator for Science. The 2-hours meeting fell apart, and neither NASA nor I mentioned it then. Many issues were contested, as normally happens amongst engineers. I wrapped up my presentation before we got to the critical Crew Cabin subject.

One of the things I wanted to know around that time was the mode of failure in the LFF to CC connections: What failed in tension, compression, shear, bending, torsion, fatigue, etc., and in what direction? That was vital to determine what happened to the Crew Cabin and to match it with the video evidence. Did the CC detach from the LFF before or after the LOX explosion? Did the Crew take action? What? The wreckage was buried a month later. Of course, I could, and did, use reverse engineering to determine what happened to the CC from the elements of the trajectory that the Crew Cabin experienced, and as observed in the video.

For now, it is important to begin by realizing that the piece in the above photos is not the Crew Cabin. Do I hear seconds?

Ali