

# Introduction

The story of the first time humans landed on and explored our Moon has been told many times—by the Apollo 11 astronauts, by mission controllers, by NASA officials and historians. Yet we believe this book will help to fill in visually the events surrounding this landmark in exploration, since a large percentage of the images you see (except for in-flight photography) have never been published previously.

Although we set the stage for the mission with background information on Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, and Mike Collins, our primary focus is January through August 1969. We take the reader through crew training, including geology field trips and lunar surface simulations. You see the arrival, processing, and assembly of the huge Saturn V booster and the two Apollo spacecraft at the launch site, Florida's John F. Kennedy Space Center.

Our coverage proceeds chronologically through launch preparations, launch vehicle rollout, and testing. Interest was quickly building during May and June, as Apollo 10's three astronauts successfully conducted a dress rehearsal in lunar orbit for the first landing.

On launch day, July 16, 1969, more than one million people were watching along Florida's Space Coast. The broadcast coverage on the three national TV and radio networks was extensive. I was fifteen years old, living in St. Petersburg, Florida, and as an enthusiast with a local Apollo contractor connection, was fortunate enough to watch the liftoff from just inside the south gate to Cape Canaveral, about twelve miles away.

The weeks surrounding the flight were filled with other news: actress Judy Garland died of a drug overdose in her London home. The first U.S. troop withdrawals from Vietnam began, and the Stonewall riots in New York City marked the start of the modern gay rights movement in the United States.

The day before the landing Senator Ted Kennedy drove off a bridge on his way home from a party on Chappaquiddick Island, Massachusetts. Mary Jo Kopechne, a former campaign aide to his brother, died in the submerged car. John Fairfax landed that same day in Hollywood Beach, Florida, near Miami, becoming the first person to row across an ocean solo, after 180 days spent at sea on board the twenty-five-foot rowboat *Britannia*.

At the top of the charts was "In the Year 2525" by one-hit wonders Zager and Evans. Two other songs in the top twenty touched on the racial and social change of the era: "In the Ghetto" by Elvis and "Black Pearl" by Checkmates Ltd. This awareness was reflected by the Poor People's protest at the launch.

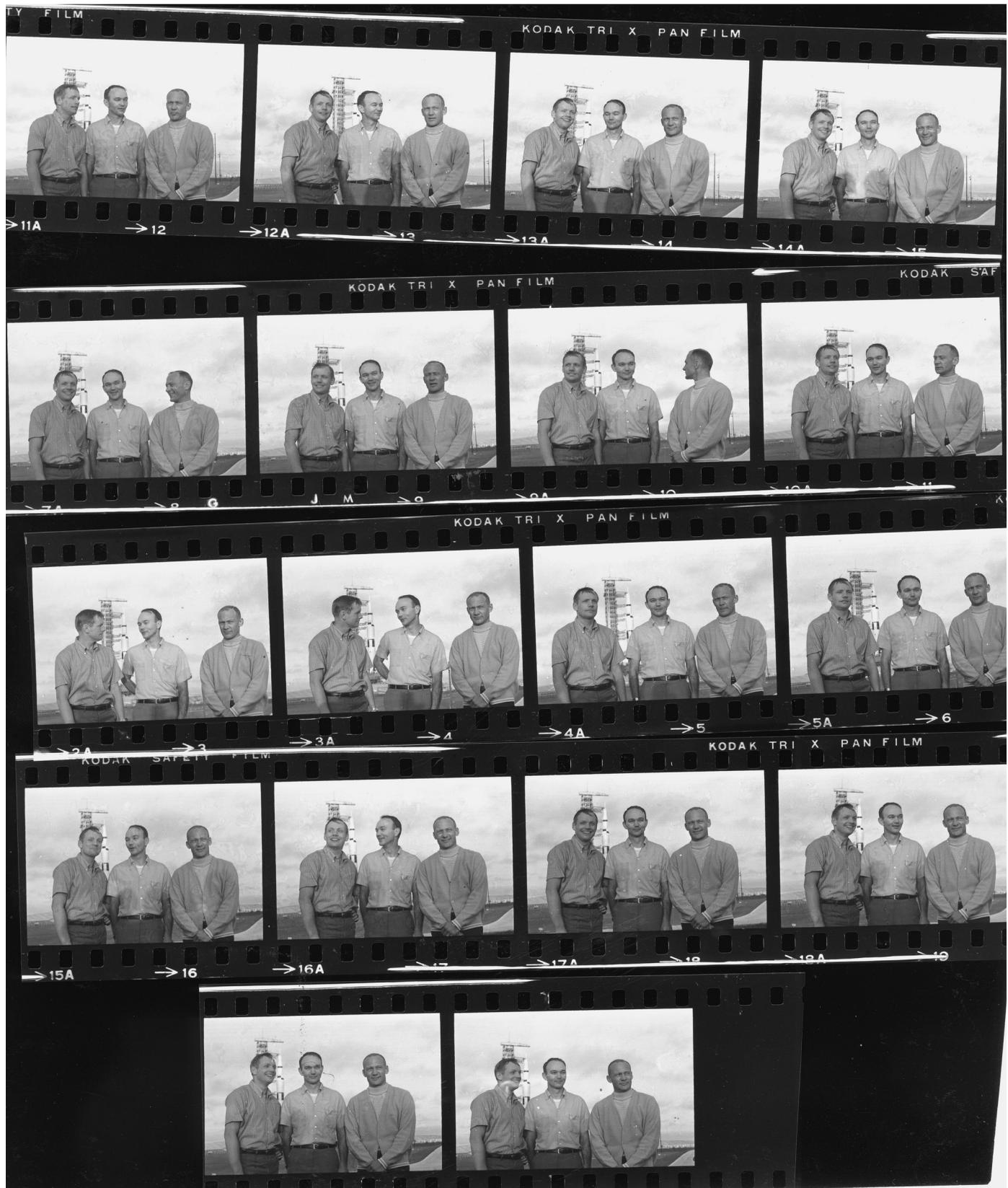
On July 20 at 10:56 p.m. Eastern time an estimated 500 million people worldwide watched Neil Armstrong take his historic first steps on the Moon, the largest television audience for a live broadcast at that time and about 14 percent of the global population.

As J. L. notes in the remarks that follow, all the in-flight photography by the crewmen has been publically available since 1969, so we make no claim of unseen images during the flight itself.

We wrap up with an extensive look at the astronauts' recovery and quarantine with their lunar samples as well as reviewing the parades, tours, anniversaries, and crew reunions that followed.

As with our previous space photo books, we have done our best to identify as many of the people in each image as possible, since they played significant roles in the success of the mission. I hope you enjoy this new look at Apollo 11, fifty years later.

*John Bisney  
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A contact sheet of 35mm film strips of the Apollo 11 crew at Launch Complex 39A after rollout of their Saturn V illustrates both the challenges of selecting the best of rare photos as well as the wealth of images still buried in the archives.

# About the Photography

As an eleven-year-old living in Bloomington, Illinois, the year 1969 would be about as good as it gets for those of us closely following the U.S. space program. NASA, in fact, promoted it as “The Year of Apollo.” The Apollo Program was in high gear with Apollo 9 in March, Apollo 10 in May, Apollo 11 in July, and Apollo 12 in November. It was a period that saw my Sears Silvertone reel-to-reel tape recorder get quite a workout as my collection of TV network space coverage began to grow.

During 1970–71 I began collecting original NASA prints in earnest. Considerable letter writing (pre-email) and long-distance phone calling allowed me to get acquainted with folks who would help build my collection to its current size. Prints and 35mm slides eventually led to 4×5 negatives and transparencies. The digital era ushered in a whole new level of archiving, allowing me to acquire images from many obscure sources.

When putting a book together, there is a fine line between choosing photos that are of interest as rare or unseen as opposed to using more familiar images that might, in some cases, tell a better story. I have also become aware that photos I consider common are not always viewed that way by others. This applies especially to younger people, who may be seeing the “greatest space hits” for the first time. That being said, this project, like our previous efforts, consists of as many unpublished images as possible, and we hope they give audiences of all ages some new views of the golden era of space flight.

For this Apollo 11 retrospective I assembled a selection of rare images that show the preparation, execution, and follow-up of the mission. The high-profile nature of the first landing of astronauts on the Moon required me to dig deep into federal government archives for new material.

Chapter 1 primarily illustrates the history of the Apollo 11 astronauts. The chapter opens with a rare

alternate version of the Group 1 and 2 astronauts together. Also included are images of survival and geology training as well as of Gemini missions flown by Armstrong, Collins, and Aldrin. Chapter 1 closes with relatively rare color images of the astronauts and their families.

Chapter 2 begins with an alternate Apollo 11 crew photo. To the best of my knowledge, from this photo session only two photos have been released that show all three crew members together. When the Media Resource Center at Johnson Space Center (JSC) closed several years ago, it became nearly impossible to discover additional oddball images in the JSC archive.

This chapter also includes images of the Saturn V’s arrival and processing at Kennedy Space Center (KSC), all scanned from the original 4×5 color negatives. I am happy that just recently I finally located color images of the S-II stage arrival. I wish I could have acquired some fresher images of Armstrong and Aldrin training outdoors in Texas, but again that was a JSC holding.

Chapter 3 concentrates heavily on spacecraft and launch vehicle checkout at KSC as well as astronaut training at KSC and the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston. I was extremely happy to locate some long-hidden negatives in the archives that show new views of the Saturn V stages being stacked inside the Vehicle Assembly Building. Some other personal favorites are the new views of the Apollo 11 astronauts in the altitude chamber and of Pad Leader Guenter Wendt. The chapter closes with some wonderful images taken inside the command and lunar modules during checkout at KSC.

In chapter 4 the beauty of the Saturn V rocket is on full display. Our friend Jacques Tiziou, the late French photojournalist, blessed me with a large portion of his personal slides a few years ago. Many images taken by Jacques and his brother Michel are in this chapter, including the wonderful images of Collins, Armstrong, and Aldrin at the pad following the rollout. Jacques

and Michel emphasized the human side in their photography as opposed to the more formal engineering side.

Some of my favorite images in the book are in chapter 5. It was great to have located original negatives of the crewmen inspecting their spacecraft and escape routes at the pad. Some superb images taken at close range by the Tiziou photo team of the Apollo 11 stack at Launch Complex 39A are next, followed by a group of images showing the astronauts arriving at Patrick Air Force Base. The photos perfectly illustrate the casual and cool demeanor of these pilots. This chapter concludes with a selection of images showing Mike Collins training in and out of the command module simulator.

In chapter 6 you can feel the excitement build as the launch date nears. We begin with some unseen images showing the crew suiting up for the countdown demonstration test and some rare color images of the scene inside the firing room at KSC.

Of special note are the scenes inside the white room during the test—I recently purchased a collection of negatives from a retired employee of Technicolor (a former KSC photo contractor). Included was a plain white envelope labeled “Astronauts in white room.” Inside were approximately 35 strips of original 35mm color film of the Apollo 11 crew and general activity in the white room.

Also of note are the excellent night views of Apollo 11 at the pad, the scenes around the KSC Visitor Center, and the Space Coast in general. These are all the fine work of the Tiziou photo team.

Chapter 7, launch day, presented a frustrating challenge. Over the last twenty years I have written many e-mails, made many phone calls, followed up on many leads, and conducted extensive research in the KSC and JSC archives. Amazingly, I have yet to locate the original negatives for images that were taken by NASA on the day of the Apollo 11 launch (or for any manned Apollo launch)! Why the KSC photo archives seem void of any launch day material that shows astronaut, launch vehicle, or firing room activity remains a complete mystery.

We nevertheless show you a well-rounded selection of launch day material. Some favorite images for me and for John (who was at the launch) are the Cocoa

Beach crowd shots. They show people captivated by the historic moment and coming together for a once in a lifetime event.

Chapter 8 was probably the most difficult. There are no images taken by the astronauts during the mission that have not been released. How could we bring a fresh approach to the Apollo 11 mission without relying on the in-flight images that have been available for fifty years? The solution was to emphasize activities on the ground and to crop the in-flight images for a more up to date look. Fortunately the Tiziou photo team made the trip to Houston during the Apollo 11 mission and captured some great images of the astronauts’ families and the area surrounding the Manned Spacecraft Center.

The successful end of the mission and life in the Mobile Quarantine Facility make up chapter 9. I had built up a decent selection of Apollo 11 recovery and post-flight images from the JSC negative files in the 1990s. Although a Navy photographer captured a grainy image of the *Columbia* descending on the main parachutes, unfortunately there are no NASA images. I have also never been able to locate a photo showing a full view of the Apollo 11 command module inside the Lunar Receiving Laboratory. If I ever do, I will include it in an updated edition!

Chapter 10 was an interesting chapter to assemble. It was great to see how the Apollo 11 crew came together every five years and celebrated the accomplishments of the entire NASA team. Although Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins inevitably grew older by each milestone, they maintained a great bond throughout.

My favorite images in this chapter are from Washington, D.C., in 1994, images taken by Jacques Tiziou and scanned from the original 35mm black and white strips; and color views of Armstrong and Aldrin at KSC in 1999 shot by my other space photographer friends, brothers Tom and Mark Usciak, and scanned from the original color negatives.

The space photo books John and I have assembled are intended to fill voids in photographic history; I hope we have accomplished that again.

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