

"When I left the Moon and started up the ladder, I was really at a loss. I didn't want to leave and I looked down at my last footsteps and realised I wasn't coming this way again. Looking back over my shoulder at the Earth had a particular significance to me – it was alive, it was moving, with purpose and beauty through space and time. In those short few minutes I wanted to figure out what was the meaning of us – everyone alive in the world today – leaving the cradle of civilization and calling the Moon our home for a few days. I searched for that answer, I needed more time. I wanted to press the freeze button, stop time to give myself a chance to think about it.

~ Gene Cernan, Commander, Apollo 17. The last man to walk on the moon

Apollo17.org

The Apollo17.org website is real-time experience of NASA's Apollo 17 mission to the moon.

Introduction

Apollo 17 was the last mission to the moon. It is considered the “jewel” of the Apollo program. More time was spent living and walking on the moon, more samples were gathered and returned home, and more photos were taken than on any other mission. It was the first time a scientist was a crew member—A geologist, Jack Schmitt, lived on the moon for 3 days investigating the origin of the moon itself.

Relive the Mission in Real-time

Apollo17.org inspires to provide a compelling way for the public to experience Apollo without needing any technical knowledge of the mission. Visitors are invited to "lean in" on the details of Apollo by living the mission firsthand, just as the astronauts and mission control did during the mission. The site provides a unique way to take in the incredible achievement of Apollo and aims to inspire visitors to imagine what can be achieved by humanity when we put our minds to it.

The website acts as an unedited “player” of the complete mission. Each visitor can watch and listen to every moment of the mission--over 300 hours of audio transmitted, 550,000+ words spoken and transcribed, 4,200+ photos taken, and 22+ hours of television transmitted from the lunar surface. This media is all coordinated into a single experience. Video, photography, and every word spoken is played back in real-time, as events occurred back in 1972.

v1.0 Website Launch on the 43rd Anniversary of the Mission

This project is the result of five years of archival, design, and engineering work. Version 1.0 of the site will contain supporting introductory material and a fully designed user interface. The site will be live in time for the 43rd anniversary of the mission, on December 7, 2015. During the anniversary, the site will play back the mission live, as it happened, synced exactly 43 years to the second to each historical moment. A preview of the 1.0 version of the site (still a work in progress) can be found here: <http://apollo17.org/develop>

Background

This website and the collation of all underlying data is the work of one independent and curious volunteer, Ben Feist. Ben resides in Toronto, Canada. (More on his motivations [here](#)).

The mission reconstruction project began to take shape while working in association with the [Apollo Flight Journal](#) on a project to reconstruct the mission transcripts of Apollo 17 for the inclusion of the transcripts within the Journal. The mission transcripts of Apollo 17 required special attention due to the technical details of how they were originally typewritten in 1973 ([more here](#)). In short, the timing of mission items had to be reconstructed from original voice recordings, a very labour-intensive problem solving process ([more here](#)). With corrected mission data in hand as well as audio and video (reconstructed during the process of correcting the mission data) I began to understand there was an opportunity to develop a real-time playback web application, and give the general public a chance to experience the reality of space travel for themselves.

In March 2014 the alpha version of the site was released in time for the screening of [The Last Man on the Moon](#). The alpha was a technical proof of concept without refined design or any supporting material, yet the day it was made public by a single tweet, it was [picked up by Gizmodo](#) resulting in 10,000 enthusiastic visitors to the site.

With the more refined experience of v1.0 and the coordination of the launch of the site with the anniversary of the launch of the mission, I hope to be able to engage hundreds of thousands of people globally to take in the incredible achievement of Apollo.