



# Neil Armstrong

Neil A. Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon, July 20, 1969. With fuel running low and computers sounding alarms, Armstrong had taken manual control of the lunar module Eagle and piloted it past a boulder-strewn field to a safe landing. Now he and his crewmate Buzz Aldrin were sitting on the moon, with Mike Collins orbiting above in the command module.

Armstrong's words from the Sea of Tranquillity "Houston, Tranquility Base here the Eagle has landed." epitomized the fulfillment of the efforts of a generation of scientists and researchers and the hopes and dreams of millions of ordinary men and women. Tens of millions watched Armstrong take the "small step," he so aptly called a "giant leap for mankind."

Born in Wapakoneta, Ohio, on August 5, 1930, he dreamed of flying even as a boy. In fact, he got his pilot's license on his 16th birthday -- before he got his driver's license. Upon graduation from High School in 1947, Armstrong received a scholarship from the U.S. Navy. He enrolled at Purdue University to begin the study of aeronautical engineering.

In 1949, the Navy called him to active duty and he became a navy pilot. In 1950, he was sent to Korea where he flew 78 combat missions from the carrier USS Essex in a Grumman F9F-2 Panther. He received the Air Medal and two Gold Stars.

In 1952, Armstrong returned to Purdue University and graduated with a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering in 1955. He later earned a masters degree in aerospace engineering from the University of Southern California.

He got his aeronautical engineering degree from Purdue University. After serving as a naval aviator from 1949 to 1952 flew 78 combat missions as a naval aviator during the Korean War, Armstrong joined the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics (NACA) in 1955.

His first assignment was with the NACA Lewis Research Center (now NASA Glenn) in Cleveland. Over the next 17 years, he was an engineer, test pilot, astronaut and administrator for NACA and its successor agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

At the High-Speed Flight Station (which later became the NASA Dryden Flight Research Center) Armstrong served as project pilot on the North American F-100A and -C aircraft, McDonnell F-101, and the Lockheed F-104A. He also flew the Bell X-1B (4 flights, first on August 15, 1957), Bell X-5 (one flight, the last in the program, on October 25, 1955) and the Paresev. On November 30, 1960, Armstrong made his first flight in the X-15. He made a total of seven flights in the rocket plane reaching an altitude of 207,500 feet in the X-15-3 and a Mach number of 5.74 (3,989 mph) in the X-15-1. He left the Flight Research Center with a total of 2450 flying hours in more than 50 aircraft types.

He was a member of the USAF-NASA Dyna-Soar Pilot Consultant Group, and studied X-20 Dyna-Soar approaches and abort maneuvers through use of the F-102A and F5D jet aircraft.

Armstrong transferred to astronaut status in 1962. He was assigned as command pilot for the Gemini 8 mission. Gemini 8 was launched on March 16, 1966, and Armstrong performed the first successful docking of two vehicles in space.

As spacecraft commander for Apollo 11, the first manned lunar landing mission, Armstrong gained the distinction of being the first man to land a craft on the moon and first to step on its surface.

Armstrong subsequently held the position of Deputy Associate Administrator for Aeronautics, NASA Headquarters, and Washington, D.C. In this position, he was responsible for the coordination and management of overall NASA research and technology work related to aeronautics.

He was Professor of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Cincinnati between 1971-1979. During the years 1982-1992, Armstrong was chairman of Computing Technologies for Aviation, Inc., Charlottesville, Va.

He received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Aeronautical Engineering from Purdue University and a Master of Science in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Southern California. He holds honorary doctorates from a number of universities.

Armstrong is a Fellow of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots and the Royal Aeronautical Society; Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and the International Astronautics Federation.

He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and the Academy of the Kingdom of Morocco. He served as a member of the National Commission on Space (1985-1986), as Vice-Chairman of the Presidential Commission on the Space Shuttle Challenger Accident (1986), and as Chairman of the Presidential Advisory Committee for the Peace Corps (1971-1973).

Armstrong has been decorated by 17 countries. He is the recipient of many special honors, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom; the Congressional Space Medal of Honor; the Explorers Club Medal; the Robert H. Goddard Memorial Trophy; the NASA Distinguished Service Medal; the Harmon International Aviation Trophy; the Royal Geographic Society's Gold Medal; the Federation Aeronautique Internationale's Gold Space Medal; the American Astronautical Society Flight Achievement Award; the Robert J. Collier Trophy; the AIAA Astronautics Award; the Octave Chanute Award; and the John J. Montgomery