

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

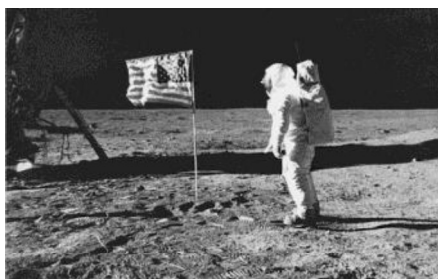
From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Photographs from the Moon in 1969

Fifty years ago, Neil Armstrong was the first person to set foot on the Moon. The anniversary of this feat has been noted with publications, movies, and other ceremonial tributes. As this was one of the most significant events in human history, Americans took pride in NASA's Apollo 11 successful mission, and those who achieved it. Astronauts were unique, specially selected personnel from a huge pool of applicants – men, and later on, women – who sought to conquer the frontier of space. Though NASA employees numbered about 350,000 people over the decade prior to the moon landing, the astronauts were the individuals who actually endured space flight.



**On the Sea of Tranquility, Buzz Aldrin
salutes the Stars and Stripes**

After being chosen, astronauts went through a rigorous 1 or 2 year training program before the crew was chosen for a specific mission. The ability to work together as a team in a cramped environment was crucial, and those who trained collectively developed a strong camaraderie while at Johnson Space Center in Houston. Apparently colleague astronauts Neil Armstrong and Gus Grissom became friends. They both were engineers and from small Midwestern towns. (Wapakoneta, OH and Mitchell, IN). They each had two sons; Gus' were Scott and Mark, and Neil's were Eric and Mark. Both men were quiet and reserved.

When Gus returned home to see his parents in Mitchell, he would often bring photographic negatives of himself and the different fighter jets he had flown. Gus' father, Dennis Grissom would go to his friend's (James F. Barrett's) photography studio and develop the negatives. The residents of Mitchell were proud of their hometown hero. But Gus tragically died with two other astronauts in the Apollo 1 launch pad fire of January 1967. After Gus' death, Neil Armstrong visited Dennis several times, and they became friends. Dennis was interested in space flight, and though his son was gone, his son's fellow astronaut kept Dennis up to date on the progress being made in space travel.

Then in July 1969 the Apollo 11 mission occurred. Its purpose was to land men on the moon's surface and then return them to earth. The crew consisted of Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin. Their rocket blasted off from Kennedy Space Center in Florida. They traveled for 4 days in *Columbia* (the command and service module) attached to the *Eagle* (the moon landing space ship) to reach the lunar surface. Collins remained in *Columbia* while Armstrong and Aldrin manned the *Eagle*. Because of computer problems, Armstrong piloted the *Eagle* manually and landed it in the Sea of Tranquility with very little fuel left. When Armstrong stepped on the moon, he said, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Armstrong and Aldrin did some experiments, took notes and photographs, collected rocks and placed an American flag on the moon, as well as a plaque that read, "Here men from the planet Earth first set foot on the Moon. July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind." Then the men returned to the *Eagle*, which docked with *Columbia*, where Collins was waiting aboard. The *Eagle* was jettisoned into space, and *Columbia* splashed down near Hawaii. The crew members were heroes, and their accomplishment was a magnificent achievement.

At a later date, Neil Armstrong returned to Mitchell, Indiana and shared with Dennis Grissom the photographic negatives that he personally had taken during the Apollo 11 mission. Dennis took the negatives to James Barrett to be developed, and Barrett asked Grissom if he could make duplicate prints to give to his young son. Permission was granted, and Barrett gave the second set to James R. Barrett. The younger Barrett kept them for decades. He now is the last survivor of his family. With encouragement from his friend and former Board Trustee Bill Bramlage, Barrett recently decided to donate the Armstrong photographs to the Indian Hill Historical Society.

The images are stunning. They include man's first footstep on the moon, Buzz Aldrin working with scientific equipment, various shots of the *Eagle*, the American flag on the Sea of Tranquility, and the plaque marking the first moon landing. That Neil Armstrong took them and that he lived in Indian Hill makes them an especially meaningful addition to the Historical Society's archives. The Society is honored to keep these treasures, as they represent a glorious moment in history.