

# How the Moon landing 50 years ago inspired a generation in the UK

The public were asked to share their memories of the Moon landings and describe how Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins's achievement had inspired them.

The Moon Landing Memories campaign was organised by the [UK Space Agency](#) and the [Arts and Humanities Research Council \(AHRC\)](#), part of UK Research and Innovation.

Memories include:

- a woman in labour who delayed going to hospital so she could catch footage of the crew landing safely
- a man who proposed to his partner on the night of the Moon landing
- many whose experience of the Moon landing led to science and space industry careers.

Fifty of the submissions have been curated into a digital scrapbook and a selection of the best entries will also go on display at the National Space Centre in Leicester as part of its ['One Giant Leap'](#) programme of events.

Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

These memories of the first Moon landing bring to life the magic of that iconic moment. They clearly show why some of the children who watched live in 1969 were inspired to become the engineers and scientists that are now building our thriving space industry in the UK.

To retain our status as one of the world leaders in the new space age, we need the next generation to follow in their footsteps and our modern Industrial Strategy is backing the industry to create these highly skilled, well-paid space jobs for the future.

Tim Peake, astronaut at the European Space Agency (ESA) said:

Thank you to all those who took part in the Moon Landing Memories campaign. The Apollo 11 lunar landing was humanity's most audacious mission and our greatest achievement.

It is no surprise that for those who watched it live, and for those who were born into a world where humans had already walked on the Moon, it remains a source of inspiration and wonder.

As we reflect on past achievements and celebrate the 50th

anniversary of the Moon landing, we must also look to the future as we embark on a new era of space exploration to the Moon, Mars and beyond.

Further highlights from the entries include an account from Peter Cadogan from Cheltenham who said:

I had just graduated when Apollo 11 landed in 1969 and I stayed up all night waiting to see the first Moon walk. I was about to start my PhD at the Organic Geochemistry Unit at the University of Bristol with Geoffrey Eglinton, whose laboratory was one of just 12 in the UK to receive lunar samples from Apollo 11 and 12.

I soon joined Colin Pillinger (later of Beagle 2 fame) in trying to prove that the tiny amounts of carbon in the Apollo dust samples had come from the Sun. This I managed to do, received my PhD and then went on to determine the ages of Moon rocks with Grenville Turner at the University of Sheffield. 50 years on, I'm now developing computer software to count the very smallest lunar craters automatically.

In addition to those who were inspired to work in astronomy and science, the campaign also revealed accounts of how the Moon landing sparked artistic responses and creativity. Jackie Burns from Essex recalled:

I tried to watch the first moon walk at school – one tiny little black & white TV in the gym hall, with the rest of the school.

I remember crying in frustration because most of the other children were not interested in watching and I was reduced to seeing snatches of the TV screen amongst the moving bodies obscuring my view.

I am now a Fellow of the International Association for Astronomical Artists and the only professional female space artist in the UK.