One Small Step, One Great Man

The world says goodbye to Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon

August 27, 2012
By Cameron Keady

Armstrong spent nearly three hours on the surface of the moon, collecting samples and taking photographs.

The moment Neil Armstrong took his first airplane ride at age 6, he knew he wanted to fly higher than the sky. About thirty years later, Armstrong got his wish. On July 20, 1969, he became the first man to walk on the moon.

Now, more than forty years after that memorable landing, the world says a fond farewell to the man who made space history. On Friday, August 25, Armstrong died at the age of 82.
Beginnings on Earth

Armstrong flew fighter jets in the Korean War before beginning his travels into space.

As a kid, Armstrong was fascinated with aviation and built model airplanes to conduct flying experiments. Once he was old enough, he began taking flying lessons. He was licensed to fly before he could even drive.

Armstrong began college as an aeronautical engineering student. After flying combat missions in the Korean War, he received his degree and became a test pilot. Armstrong then went on to NASA’s astronaut training program. He flew more than 200 kinds of aircrafts.

Out of This World

Armstrong’s footprint changed the surface of the moon, and history, in 1969.

The Apollo 11 mission was the most remarkable flight of all. Three NASA astronauts manned the mission: Armstrong, Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin and Michael Collins. The trip from Earth to the moon took four days. A special lunar module, nicknamed Eagle, carried Armstrong to and from the moon while the others remained in lunar orbit. It took Armstrong longer than expected to find a level place to land. Once he did, Armstrong spoke his now famous words: “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

Thousands of miles below, on Earth, an estimated 600 million people were listening. Glued to their televisions and radios, people were in awe of what they had just witnessed. Armstrong had done what no man had done before. His footprint will remain forever on the moon as a tribute to his remarkable life and the “giant leap for mankind.”