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Now in Cyberspace, Apollo 11 Flies Again



Mark Wilson/Getty Images

The Apollo 11 command module, Columbia, on display on Thursday at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington.

By [BRIAN STELTER](#)
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Many Americans alive today are too young to remember when Apollo 11 landed on the [moon](#) 40 years ago on Monday. But for the next several days a remarkable replay of the audio is allowing Internet users to experience the momentous 1969 space mission as it happened.

The original audio feed between mission control and the Apollo 11 spacecraft is being streamed on [Wechoosethemoon.org](#), a presentation of [AOL](#) and the [John F. Kennedy](#) Presidential Library & Museum in Boston.

The [NASA](#) Web site, [Nasa.gov](#), is also streaming a simulcast of the mission. On both sites, the 109 hours of audio started on Thursday and will continue until Monday night. Officials say it is the first such audio stream of a previous space mission, enabled in part by the continuing digitization of NASA's audio records.

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The virtual museum exhibition is a wrinkle of the Web; now we can live (if we weren't alive) or relive (if we were) moments in time.

"It's a modern way to experience some of the greatest moments in history," said Bill Wilson, the president of AOL's content division. He said he expected that the service would try to simulcast similar events in the future, although he did not name specific ones.

For the Kennedy library, the Web site started as a project by the Martin Agency, which provides pro bono advertising services for the library, to spotlight the 40th anniversary of the moon landing, a goal that Kennedy championed while in office. The resulting Web site showcases photos and animations of the mission, but its defining feature may be the simulcast.

The faint hum from space is occasionally punctuated by the voices of the crew and the command center. Listeners hear about spacecraft maneuvers, sightings of Earth and even coffee and lunch breaks.

"Three times during the day on Thursday I found myself shushing people because I wanted to hear how the astronauts were doing," Tom McNaught, the deputy director of the library's foundation, said.

In 1969, Mr. McNaught noted, radio listeners and television viewers generally were not able to follow the mission in real time. "All we saw back then," he said, was the spacecraft launch and "the fuzzy footage that [Walter Cronkite](#) showed that night of the walk on the moon."

[Brian Williams](#), the senior art director at the Martin Agency, added, "It's all the in-between that fills in the gaps that is the most compelling."

The conversations between the astronauts and the ground commanders were transferred from tape to digital form just last March. "There are thousands and thousands of hours of historical audio that we have on tape that we are digitizing," said James Hartsfield, a NASA spokesman.

The audio conversations are now part of an exhibit at the Kennedy library. But they are likely to reach more listeners online; some Web users said they played the audio in the background on Thursday and Friday as they worked.

"The long periods of silence, the static, the times when the crew and Houston can't actually hear each other, brings home how just how much of a step into the unknown this all was," Max Brockbank, a resident of London, wrote in an e-mail message.

AOL said Wechoosethemoon.org had nearly half a million visits on Thursday.

The real-time audio may resonate most with listeners who weren't old enough to remember the actual mission. Mr. Hartsfield, who was 8 at the time of the moon landing, said the simulcast was "bringing it alive for me."

A version of this article appeared in print on July 18, 2009, on page C3 of the New York edition.

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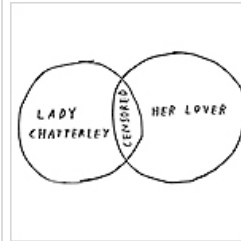
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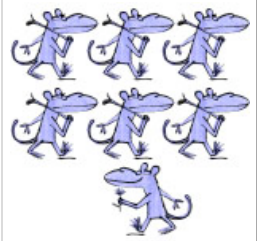
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