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One Giant Leap: North Carolina and the Space Race

New exhibit launches April 5



March 19, 2019 (RALEIGH, N.C.) — Almost 50 years ago, Neil Armstrong and the rest of the Apollo 11 crew took one small step for man and one giant leap for mankind. 2019 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the moon landing, and to celebrate, the North Carolina Museum of History will open a new exhibit, [*One Giant Leap: North Carolina and the Space Race*](#), on April 5.

Did you know that North Carolina has direct ties to the space race? From flight test engineers, military bases, training centers, and even housing the first chimp that went into space, North Carolina was a large contributor to the space race.

[*One Giant Leap: North Carolina and the Space Race*](#) will feature artifacts on loan from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. Come and see actual Apollo items, including a Presidential Medal of Freedom, astronaut John Young's Apollo 16 chronograph, and a training helmet, on loan from the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum. The interactive exhibit will be featured in the museum's lobby, and visitors can even take part in a training module to test their ability to follow Mission Control's command.

“The National Air and Space Museum is pleased to lend Apollo-era artifacts to the North Carolina Museum of History to be featured in the One Giant Leap exhibition,” said Dr. Valerie Neal, Chair of the Air and Space museum’s Space History Department. “The 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing on the Moon is an excellent opportunity to bring this story of American achievement to a new generation of museum visitors, and to remind those who witnessed it in 1969 of the awe and inspiration it created.”

“In the course of my research, I personally have been surprised by the number of connections we’ve been able to unearth,” said exhibit curator Jessica Bandel. “I think visitors will be amazed by some of the stories we’re highlighting, and I hope this exhibit leaves them with a newfound sense of pride in their state.”

The museum will also be hosting several activities and events to further celebrate the Apollo 11 anniversary throughout the year. Read below to see some of the fun activities planned!

- **[LIVE! One Giant Leap: To the Moon \(and Back\)](#)**

[Fri., April 5, 10:15–11:15 a.m.](#)

Watch a *LIVE!* exploration of Tar Heel ties to the Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo missions with a very special guest: Mr. Gerry Griffin. Mr. Griffin is a former director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston and, during NASA’s Apollo program, he was a flight director in Mission Control. This **free** live-streaming program features *One Giant Leap* exhibit curator Jessica Bandel, who will share stories of the people, places, and things that helped humankind make that historic “one giant leap” on the moon. Text your questions during the event and we’ll answer them *LIVE!* To register, visit [BeyondTheExhibits.com](#). This program is sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina and North Carolina Space Grant.

- **[One Giant Leap Festival](#)**

[Sat., July 20, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.](#)

Commemorate *the* 50th Anniversary of Apollo 11's landing! Our indoor and outdoor celebration will feature hands-on crafts, demonstrations, and activities—including a virtual-reality lab where you can "travel" to space and "be" the first person on the Moon; and a bungee-jumping station where you can experience weightlessness, like real astronauts. More and more out-of-this-world fun will be announced as the festival nears!

[Additional programming information will be coming available soon.](#) The exhibit and corresponding events are supported by Corning Incorporated Foundation, First Flight Foundation, and Publix Super Markets Charities. CBS 17 News will serve as the official media sponsor.

About the NC Museum of History

The N.C. Museum of History, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is located at 5 E. Edenton Street in downtown Raleigh. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The museum collects and preserves artifacts of North Carolina history and educates the public on the history of the state and the nation through exhibits and educational programs. Each year more than 400,000 people visit the museum to see some of the 150,000 artifacts in the

museum collection. The Museum of History, within the Division of State History Museums, is part of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

About Smithsonian Affiliations

In association with the Smithsonian since 2006, the North Carolina Museum of History is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian's resources with the nation. Smithsonian Affiliations is a national outreach program that develops long-term collaborative partnerships with museums, educational, and cultural organizations to enrich communities with Smithsonian resources. More information is available at www.affiliations.si.edu.

About the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (NCDNCR) is the state agency with a vision to be the leader in using the state's natural and cultural resources to build the social, cultural, educational and economic future of North Carolina. NCDNCR's mission is to improve the quality of life in our state by creating opportunities to experience excellence in the arts, history, libraries and nature in North Carolina by stimulating learning, inspiring creativity, preserving the state's history, conserving the state's natural heritage, encouraging recreation and cultural tourism, and promoting economic development.

NCDNCR includes 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums and Jennette's Pier, 39 state parks and recreation areas, the NC Zoo, the nation's first state-supported Symphony Orchestra, the State Library, the State Archives, the NC Arts Council, State Preservation Office, and the Office of State Archaeology, along with the Division of Land and Water Stewardship. For more information, please call 919-807-7300 or visit www.ncdcr.gov.

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