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Newspaper front pages from 50 years ago reveal how the world reacted to the Apollo 11 moon landing

Morgan McFall-Johnsen Jul 20, 2019, 8:03 AM



Harry's American Bar in Paris created a cocktail in honor of the Apollo 11 astronauts. The bartender, Daniel (left), said the drink was "guaranteed to make anybody take off." Bettmann/Getty



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- **The achievement made global headlines, with many [newspapers](#) tracking the mission from its Florida launch to the splashdown in the Pacific Ocean.**

 - **Here's what newspapers from the time looked like.**

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On this day 50 years ago, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin [stepped](#) through the hatch of a rickety spacecraft, climbed down a ladder, and made history as their feet touched the dusty lunar surface.

The [Apollo 11](#) moon landing made headlines worldwide; newspapers announced the accomplishment in big, bold letters. Many papers covered every step of the crew's journey, running stories about what the astronauts ate in space, how they slept, and what they said to each other while standing on the moon.

Take a look at how the world's papers covered the event.



Aldrin, Armstrong, and Michael Collins launched on July 16, 1969.



A man leans down to read the headlines of the San Francisco Chronicle in a newspaper box, San Francisco, California, July 16, 1969. [Garth Eliassen/Getty](#)

During the week the crew spent in space, newspapers across the globe covered their progress.



Newspapers published the day after the Apollo 11 astronauts landed on the moon are displayed at the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex in Cape Canaveral, Florida, July 16, 2009. [Chip Somodevilla/Getty](#)

A paper in Houston, Texas even printed Aldrin's son Andrew's photo the day after the mission launched.



Andrew Aldrin, 10, is followed by a group of neighborhood youngsters anxious to see his picture in the newspaper, July 17, 1969 in Houston. [Associated Press](#)

The day of the landing — July 20, 1969 — Sunday morning newspapers reported about the anticipation. Armstrong's son picked up the Houston Chronicle at their home in Houston, Texas.





Mark Armstrong, 6-year-old son of astronaut Neil Armstrong, picks up the morning paper at the family home in Houston, Texas on July 20, 1969. [Associated Press](#)

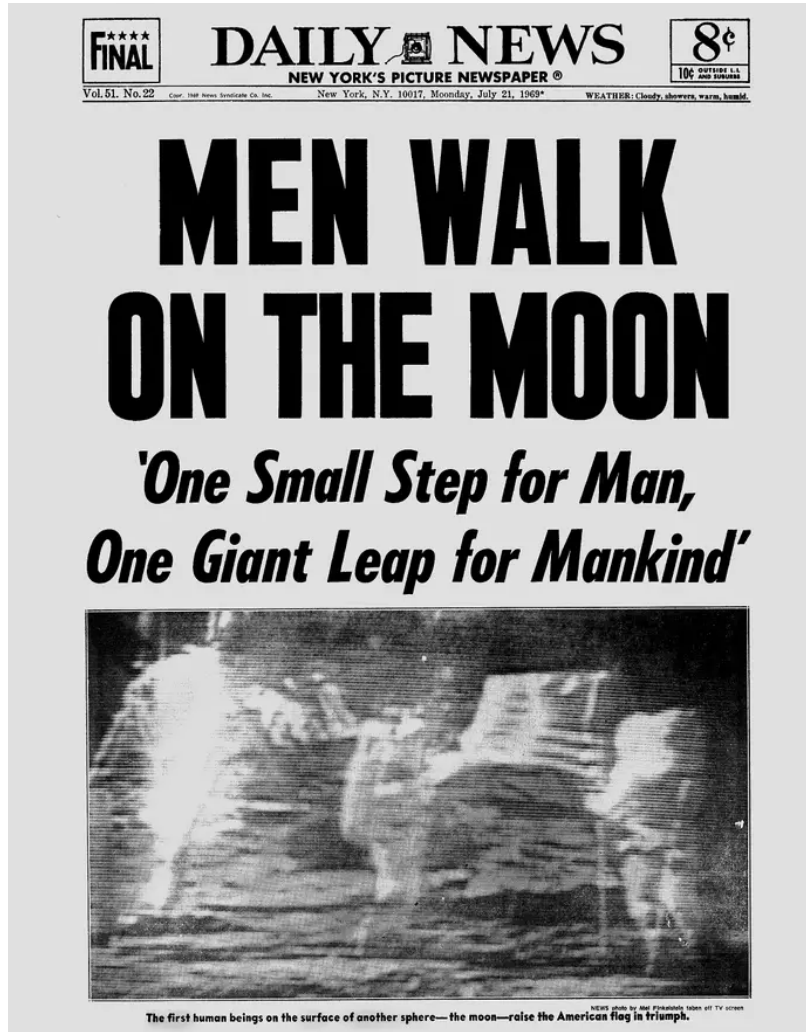
Armstrong stepped onto the moon at 10:56 p.m. ET on July 20, 1969. About 650 million people watched the historic event live. Apollo 11's success came after eight years of grueling engineering work at NASA and eight other missions in the program.



[San Diego Air and Space Museum Archive](#)



The following morning, local, national, and international newspaper printed the news in big, bold headlines.



[New York Daily News Archive/Getty](#)

The Las Vegas Sun published some word-for-word dialogue between Aldrin and Armstrong, including Aldrin's now-famous description: "magnificent desolation."



BUSINESS INSIDER

SOUTHERN NEVADA'S ONLY HOME OWNED NEWSPAPER

Las Vegas SUN

FINAL

Vol. 20 No. 21 CIRCULATION 322,572 NEWS 322-3111 LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, MONDAY, JULY 21, 1969 12 CENTS THIRTY-ONE PAGES

WORLD CHEERS AS AMERICAN FLAG HOISTED ON THE MOON



AWED WORLD LAUDS FEAT OF APOLLO
By Robert Press International

AWED all the world here within 24 hours of mankind's greatest achievement...
 "It is a momentous day for the world..."
 "The first step by 30-year-old Colonel Neil A. Armstrong, in the lunar lander at 10:56 a.m. (Crested Peak, about 6 1/2 hours after launching) and Edwin M. 'Buzz' Aldrin Jr. landed their spacecraft Eagle on the lunar surface."
 "This was a great day for man, one great hour for mankind... Armstrong's first words as he first stepped on the lunar soil which he found so peaceful, serene, quiet, peaceful, as he walked at 10:56 a.m. 'Magnificent desolation,' said Aldrin."
 "My God, 666-1-1 say we're not some people here," Aldrin said as he took his first step."
 "That's a pretty rough" Armstrong added.
 "No," Aldrin replied. He said some words were spoken."
 Aldrin said he thought one rock was flatter, which is a slight mark of being round, like a common rock on Earth. It is round, he said.
 Aldrin walked about the lunar surface, because of the stillness of his surroundings.
 Armstrong returned the lunar surface to the lunar surface through one and returned it to the surface, clearly showing small craters giving the surface a rough look.
 Armstrong passed about 10 to 20 feet from Eagle, turned and showed his hand to the lunar surface.
 The service around the spacecraft appeared very slow, slowed with what appeared to be the lunar rocks and pebbles with little craters, a few in the distance.
 The first view that millions of earth citizens saw of the moon was Armstrong's first passing the air as he descended the 8 steps to the abandoned lunar landing on the lunar surface.
 "There's going to be no difficulty in moving around," he said, first seeing man's footsteps on the lunar surface, where growth is one inch high at night.
 While Armstrong handled the camera, Aldrin, at that moment from the moon ship and joined Armstrong on the lunar surface at 11:01 p.m. The world got over a major portion of the greatest feat in man's history."
 (See U.S. FLAG, Page 1)

Proud, Beaming Wives Express Joy On Landing

Nixon Tags Moon Landing Nation's Greatest Moment

MILLIONS GLUED TO TELEVISION Americans Burst With Pride

In The SUN

Weather

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner or SNACK...

Dining's Great at the Showboat RESTAURANT

SHOWBOAT

Las Vegas Sun Archives

The morning edition of the The Sydney Morning Herald went to press before Armstrong stepped out of the lunar lander and onto the lunar surface. So it covered the landing, as well as the astronauts' sleep habits and meals.

SPECIAL

The Sydney Morning Herald

Monday, July 21, 1969

No. 41,888 Telephone 21044 Our Herald is Thirty-fourth Year of Publication 44 PAGES incl. Advt. Unbound & TV GUIDE PRICE 7c

MEN ON MOON

AUSTRALIA UNLIMITED

U.S. astronauts open a new era for mankind



LOOKS AT THE 1970s TODAY:



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The pre-moonwalk issue of The Sydney Morning Herald announced plans to publish a special souvenir edition the next day. The Sydney Morning Herald

Other papers across the globe printed dramatic headlines, declaring "The New World" or "The Moon Vanquished."

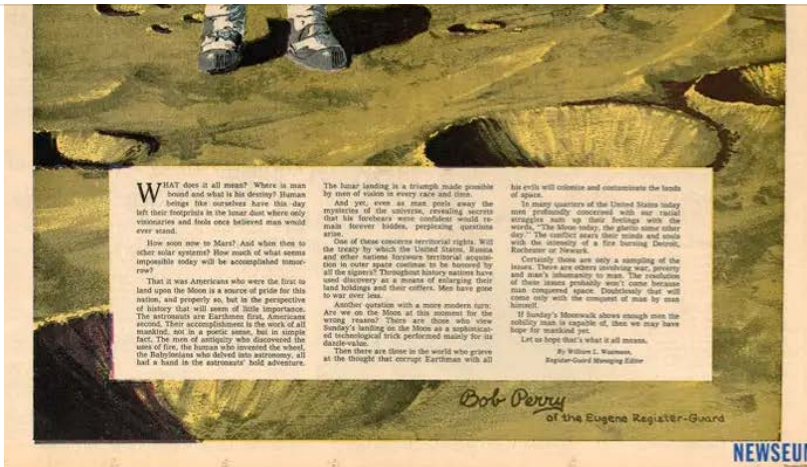




The moon-landing headlines are shown on various newspapers, including the International Herald Tribune, l'Humanité, and Le Figaro. [Bettmann/Getty](#)

The Eugene Register-Guard offered a more critical angle. "Are we on the moon at this moment for the wrong reason?" William Wasmann, the paper's managing editor, wrote. He said "man's inhumanity to man" would not be solved by exploring space, but that it could demonstrate "the nobility man is capable of."





An editorial in the Eugene Register-Guard discussed the potential for territorial scrambles in space. [Eugene Register-Guard](#)

The Saigon Post, an English-language newspaper published during the Vietnam War, reported the story for Americans stationed in South Vietnam.



Michael Chivaris, Andrew Hutchins, John Whalin, and Lloyd Newton read a newspaper article about the Apollo 11 moon landing, in downtown Saigon, Vietnam. [Hugh Van Fs/Associated Press](#)



But it wasn't the top story everywhere. Soviet newspaper Izvestia put stories about communism in Poland and the Soviet Luna 15 spacecraft above the fold, with a mention of the moon landing at the bottom of the front page (where the arrow is pointing).



Men read the July 21, 1969 edition of the Soviet newspaper Izvestia. Bettmann/Getty



The headlines inspired celebrations: This American bar in France offered a "moonshot cocktail."



Harry's American Bar in Paris created a cocktail in honor of the Apollo 11 astronauts. The bartender, Daniel (left), said the drink was "guaranteed to make anybody take off." Bettmann/Getty

For the astronauts' hometowns, their safe return was just as exciting as the moon landing. The Wapakoneta Daily News in Ohio celebrated Armstrong's homecoming and announced a party to be held there when he visited the area in September.



The front page of the Wapakoneta Daily News, dated September 6, 1969. John Minchillo/Associated Press



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