



BUZZ ALDRIN

Biography

Buzz Aldrin was born in Montclair, New Jersey on January 20, 1930. His mother, Marion Moon, was the daughter of an Army Chaplain. His father, Edwin Eugene Aldrin, was a Colonel in the Air Force, a ScD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and an aviation pioneer. Buzz was educated at the US Military Academy at West Point, graduating third in his class with a BS in mechanical engineering. He then joined the Air Force where he flew F86 Sabre Jets in 66 combat missions in Korea, shot down two MIG-15's, and was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross. After a tour of duty in Germany flying F100's, he went on to earn his Doctorate of Science in Astronautics at MIT and wrote his thesis on Manned Orbital Rendezvous.

Selected by NASA in 1963 into the third group of astronauts, Aldrin was the first with a doctorate and became known as "Dr. Rendezvous." The docking and rendezvous techniques he devised for spacecraft in Earth and lunar orbit became critical to the success of the Gemini and Apollo programs, and are still used today. He also pioneered underwater training techniques, as a substitute for zero gravity flights, to simulate spacewalking. In 1966 on the Gemini 12 orbital mission, Buzz performed the world's first successful spacewalk, overcoming prior difficulties experienced by Americans and Russians during extra-vehicular activity (EVA), and setting a new EVA record of 5 ½ hours. On July 20, 1969, Buzz and Neil Armstrong made their historic Apollo 11 moonwalk, becoming the first two humans to set foot on another world. They spent 21 hours on the lunar surface and returned with 46 pounds of moon rocks. An estimated 600 million people – the world's largest television audience in history – witnessed this unprecedented heroic endeavor.

Upon returning from the moon, Buzz was decorated with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest American peacetime award. A 45-day international goodwill tour followed, where he received numerous distinguished awards and medals from 23 other countries. Named after Buzz are Asteroid "6470 Aldrin" and the "Aldrin Crater" on the moon. Buzz and his Apollo 11 crew have four "stars" on each corner of Hollywood and Vine streets on the renowned Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Since retiring from NASA and the Air Force, Col. Aldrin has remained at the forefront of efforts to ensure America's continued leadership in human space exploration. He devised a master plan for missions to Mars known as the "Aldrin Mars Cycler" – a spacecraft system with perpetual cycling orbits between Earth and Mars. Dr. Aldrin has received three US patents for his schematics of a modular space station, Starbooster reusable rockets, and multi-crew modules for space flight. He founded Starcraft Boosters, Inc., a rocket design company, and the ShareSpace Foundation, a nonprofit devoted to advancing space education, exploration and affordable space flight experiences for all. Buzz also promotes his Rocket Hero brand launched in 2008 through his newest entity, StarBuzz LLC.

Dr. Aldrin has penned his dramatic memoirs in a new autobiography, *Magnificent Desolation*, to be published by Harmony Books, a division of Crown Publishing, in July, 2009. He continues to inspire today's youth with his illustrated children's books: *Reaching for the Moon*, a New York Times best-seller, and his latest, *Look to the Stars*, a 2009 release. He has also authored two space science-fact-fiction novels: *The Return* and *Encounter with Tiber*. His non-fiction works include the best-seller historical documentary, *Men from Earth*, and an early 1970's autobiography, *Return to Earth*.

On Valentine's Day 1988, Buzz married Lois Driggs of Phoenix, Arizona. She is a Stanford University graduate, an active community leader in Southern California and Co-Chairman of StarBuzz Enterprises. Their combined family includes six adult children from previous marriages and one grandson. Sharing a similar passion for adventure, their worldwide business travels include leisure time ocean scuba diving and winter mountain skiing.

As one of the leading space exploration advocates, Buzz continues to chart a course for future space travel from Planet Earth to the moon and on to the stars.