

52nd IAA HISTORY OF ASTRONAUTICS SYMPOSIUM (E4)

"Can you believe they put a man on the moon?" (3B)

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Australia, kerrie.dougherty@gmail.com"THE DISH" WAS NOT THE WHOLE STORY: AUSTRALIA'S ROLE IN APOLLO TELEVISION
FROM THE LUNAR SURFACE**Abstract**

The Australian film *The Dish* (2000) brought to public attention, both in Australia and internationally, the crucial role that the Parkes Radio Telescope played in bringing the live television broadcast of the Apollo 11 lunar landing to the world. While factually based, the film's focus on Parkes presented only one slice of the significant role played by Australian space tracking and satellite communications facilities in receiving and broadcasting lunar surface television from all the Apollo landing missions.

This paper will outline the role played in the Apollo lunar surface television broadcasts by the NASA Manned Spaceflight Network stations in Australia, with the support of the NASA Deep Space Tracking Station at Tidbinbilla (near Canberra), the Parkes Radio Telescope and the satellite communications facilities of the Overseas Telecommunication Commission, which managed all international communication into and out of Australia. It will discuss some of the technical issues faced by the Australian stations in dealing with the US television system, which was different from Australia, and highlight the role that the Apollo program played in hastening the advent of satellite communications into Australia.