

53rd IAA HISTORY OF ASTRONAUTICS SYMPOSIUM (E4)  
“Can you believe they put a man on the moon?” The Apollo Program. (3)

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FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO APOLLO 11 PLUS: I WAS THERE ON 16 JULY 1969!

**Abstract**

While it is generally well-known that famous French astrophysicist Audouin Dollfus, a distinguished IAA Trustee, was involved in the Apollo landing sites selection, France also was present, directly and indirectly, at hardware level. Thus the cameras used on the Moon incorporated Angénieux optics, from Apollo 11 to the Lunar Rover Vehicle cameras on the three last landings. Interestingly, the Lunar Module structure was welded with Sciaky machines. It even could be pointed out that, before being selected as an astronaut, Michael Collins had been a 72th FBS fighter pilot in the NATO Chambley air base in Lorraine, not far from Metz, from 1954 to 1957. This paper will detail such French contribution to the Apollo program.

It will conclude with a personal recollection of how this author, then a student, not only watched the iconic Apollo 11 launch, but even managed, by a sheer stroke of luck, to be there as a VIP! To this day, his recording\*, of astonishing quality, still makes him shivering. . .

\*loudspeaker required for the replay