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REMEMBERING THE NEXT APOLLO: CHALLENGES TO PRESERVING AND PRESENTING THE  
NEXT 50 YEARS OF SPACEFLIGHT

**Abstract**

The 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing occurs at a significant nexus of space history and contemporary space exploration. As the historical preservation community prepares to remember and celebrate humankind's first steps on the Moon, NASA and its international partners have once again turned their focus to lunar exploration while the commercial space industry has been making its own significant strides. The rapid growth and diversification of the space industry that has taken place over the past decade presents a challenge for historians and museums which are used to navigating the relatively monolithic architecture that dominated the Government space programs of the past half-century. The raw material used to write the histories of Apollo was generated in the reams of paper memos, technical reports, and mission transcripts, which made their way into the National Archive, NASA History Office, and museums across the country as a natural byproduct of the space program. The rise of multiple independent private space efforts, steeped in the fast-and-lean culture of Silicon Valley startups, combined with the digital tools of the modern workplace has fractured and endangered this flow of information putting the future historic record at risk.

If we are to ensure that records of the historic events taking place today are accessible 50 years from now, museums and historians must adapt our practices to meet the changing culture and business of space. In 2018, the space history community began a concerted effort to engage with this topic, identify the challenges, and to discuss ways to adapt. This paper will summarize some of the issues identified by space historians during a series of meetings held over the past year and how they impact space historiography. It will also begin to make recommendations for addressing those challenges. If we expect to celebrate the achievements of the next 50 years of spaceflight in the same way we are preparing to recognize the achievements of 50 years past, it will take a deliberate coordinated effort between the historical community, Government space programs, and private companies. Only through our combined efforts will we be able to guarantee that we can remember the next Apollo when the time comes.