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Contact info: Cathy Harper

Marketing/Public Relations Director

New Mexico Museum of Space History

1-877-333-6589 or 1-575-437-2840

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Apollo 11 Commemorative Launch Reenactment

Launch Reenactment Highlights Activities

The New Mexico Museum of Space History and the Fellowship of Las Cruces Area Rocket Enthusiasts (FLARE) continue the yearlong commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the Apollo program Thursday, July 16, at the New Mexico Museum of Space History in Alamogordo. The event, which includes the launch of model rockets reflecting the history of White Sands Missile Range and of the Apollo Manned Spaceflight Program, will take place in the upper parking lot of the Museum. Activities in the parking lot will be free to the public.

Author and filmmaker Michael Lennick will be the guest speaker. Lennick's films, "The Highest Step" and "The Land of Space and Time," which focus on New Mexico's space heritage and those who were involved, won top honors two years in a row at the White Sands Film Festival. Lennick's topic on Thursday will be the significance of the Apollo program and how the moon landing changed the way the world looked at space exploration. Lennick will also be premiering an episode of his Discovery Channel Series "Rocket Science" which deals with Apollo 11 in the IMAX Theater twice that day.

Also in attendance will be Dr. Beth O’Leary, author, anthropologist and assistant college professor at NMSU in Las Cruces. O’Leary, co-editor and author of “The Handbook of Space Engineering, Archaeology and Heritage” published by CRC Press, will be giving a presentation on the first floor of the museum. Her topic will be “Our Lunar Legacy: The Archaeology and Heritage of Space Exploration,” a lecture commemorating the 40th anniversary of the launch of Apollo 11 on its trip to the Moon. Her talk will focus on the human journey into space, especially the Apollo 11 Tranquility Base site on the Moon, the first manned lunar landing, an archaeological site created on July 20, 1969, by two astronauts. She will explore the historic context of sites in space, the nature of the assemblages, and the preservation of archaeological data. Space archaeology and heritage is an evolving field where the sites and artifacts exist in a cultural landscape, on Earth, in outer space, and on other celestial bodies. Most were created during the Cold War and are inaccessible and temporarily protected by their remoteness. The complexities and ambiguities of international legal structures to deal with these sites as cultural and historic resources leaves them vulnerable to impacts in the near future by many varieties of space travel. O’Leary will discuss the Lunar Legacy Project, and the future of space exploration and preservation.

NASA will be on hand for the event also. Leslie Williams, Public Affairs Specialist with the NASA Dryden Flight Research Center, will have several displays highlighting NASA’s new Constellation program, which will take man back to the moon and beyond. That display will be in the upper parking lot of the museum near the rocket launch area and will be free to the public. Williams recently exhibited in Las Cruces for the groundbreaking of Spaceport America.

Events begin with the “Rockets of White Sands” launch demonstration at 8:45 am, and the “Manned Space Program Space Vehicle” launch demonstration at 9:00 am. Museum of Space History Education Specialist Michael Shinabery will narrate the demonstrations. The demonstration rockets range from 12 inches to forty-five inches in height, with a maximum anticipated altitude of 1,200 feet.

Author and filmmaker Michael Lennick will be our guest speaker. Michael’s films “The Highest Step In The World” and “The Land of Space and Time” (both of which focus on New Mexico’s remarkable space heritage) won top honors at the White Sands International Film Festival and elsewhere. Michael’s topic on Thursday will be the significance of the Apollo program, along with the oft-debated reasons we haven’t tried anything quite so bold for nearly four decades. Michael will also be screening an episode of his Discovery Channel Series “Rocket Science” which traces the incredibly risky, largely-forgotten steps and practice missions that led directly to the Apollo 11 lunar landing, as well as detailing the risks and triumph of that final ‘small step’. “Before This Decade Is Out” will be featured in the IMAX theater twice on Thursday, with Q & A to follow each screening.

All of the activities taking place in the upper parking lot of the museum are free to the public. All activities are weather permitting; a back-up date is not planned.

FLARE member Dave Kovar was very enthusiastic about the partnership between the club and the museum for this commemoration. "What makes this event so special to me is meeting and talking to local New Mexico residents who actually played a part in the Apollo program," said Kovar. According to Kovar the various rocket demonstrations are possible because of the hard work of many club members who built the scale models. Kovar built the Saturn 5 and launch gantry that will be launched.

One more launch is planned in 2009 to commemorate Apollo. The Museum of Space History will host the Apollo 12 Launch Reenactment on November 14. "We are particularly excited about celebrating the Apollo 11 launch," said Museum Marketing Director Cathy Harper, adding, "the New Mexico Space Academy's summer camp will be in session during that time period and our cadets are looking forward to learning about the history of the Apollo program and what NASA has in store for their future,"

The New Mexico Museum of Space History is a division of the NM Department of Cultural Affairs. For more information, call 505-437-2840 or toll free 1-877-333-6589 or visit the website at www.nmspacemuseum.org.

EVENT SCHEDULE:

8:45-9:00 Historic Rockets of White Sands Demonstration

9:00-9:15 Historic NASA Manned Space Vehicles Launch Demonstration

9:15-9:30 Guest Speaker Presentation

9:30-9:40 Apollo 11 Launch Reenactment

10:00 - 11:00 Michael Lennick, filmmaker and producer, presents his Discovery Channel production "Rocket Science" Episode 11 in the IMAX

11:00 - 12:00 inside the museum: Dr. Beth O'Leary, author "The Handbook of Space Engineering, Archaeology and Heritage," lecture

12:30-12:40 Encore Apollo 11 Launch Reenactment

1:00 - 2:00 Michael Lennick, filmmaker and producer, presents his Discovery Channel production "Rocket Science" Episode 11 in the IMAX

NASA tent will be open beginning at 8:30 am until 2:00 pm.

APOLLO 11 BACKGROUND:

Apollo 11 was the first manned mission to land on the Moon. The Apollo 11 spacecraft was [launched](#) from Cape Kennedy at 13:32:00 UT on July 16, 1969. The first steps by humans on another planetary body were taken by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on July 20, 1969. The astronauts also returned to Earth the first samples from another planetary body. Apollo 11 achieved its primary mission - to perform a manned lunar landing and return the mission safely to Earth - and paved the way for the Apollo lunar landing missions to follow.

A plaque was attached to the leg of the lunar landing vehicle which read:

HERE MEN FROM THE PLANET EARTH
FIRST SET FOOT UPON THE MOON
JULY 1969 A.D.
WE CAME IN PEACE FOR ALL MANKIND

The crew included Neil Armstrong, commander, Michael Collins, command module pilot, and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, lunar module pilot.

Michael Lennick bio:

Author and filmmaker Michael Lennick was born in Toronto shortly before the dawn of the Space Age, an era that provided excellent reasons for skipping school on launch days, along with the impetus for the rest of his career. For twenty years, Michael divided his time between writing and directing kids' shows and documentaries for the CBC, PBS and The Discovery Channel, and creating visual effects for numerous film and television projects including "Videodrome" and the TV series "War of the Worlds."

Michael, his wife (and co-producer) Shirley and at least two dogs reside near Bala, Ontario, where the recent introduction of high speed internet allows them to complete their book, magazine and television assignments with minimal gasoline use. For the past decade, their company, Foolish Earthling Productions, has focused almost exclusively on science series and specials, including the award-winning Discovery Channel space history series "Rocket Science," and the PBS special "Dr. Teller's Very Large Bomb."

Their recent film about the early space age in New Mexico, "The Highest Step in the World," won the top prize at the 2007 White Sands Film Festival, leading to a sequel currently in production. In 2008, their film, "The Land of Space and Time," about New Mexico's rich space heritage, also took top honors at the White Sands Film Festival.

Michael, Shirley and their team at Foolish Earthling Productions are frequently in southern New Mexico filming for new productions.

Lennick photo caption:

Michael Lennick aims a motion-control camera at one of George Pal's old Martian War Machines from the TV series "War of the Worlds". Lennick supervised the visual effects for the pilot film. Lennick will be the guest speaker on the Thursday, July 16, as part of the commemoration of the Apollo 40th anniversary.

Dr. O'Leary bio:

Beth Laura O'Leary, Ph.D. is an anthropologist and assistant college professor specializing in cultural resource management in the Department of Anthropology at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico. Appointed by Governor Richardson, Dr. O'Leary is vice chairperson of the New Mexico Cultural Properties Review Committee. For the last nine years she has been involved with the cultural heritage of outer space and the moon in the emerging field of Space Heritage. A recipient of a grant from the New Mexico Space Grant Consortium (NASA), she investigated both the archaeological assemblage and the international heritage status of the Apollo 11 Tranquility Base site on the Moon. <http://spacegrant.nmsu.edu/lunarlegacies/index.html>.

On June 22, "The Handbook of Space Engineering, Archaeology and Heritage" was published by CRC Press. LINK Dr. O'Leary was the co-editor and author with Ann Darrin of Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory. The book brings together 43 archaeologists, historians, physicists and engineers to cover the space age from space basics to modern satellites and the field of space archaeology and heritage, for the archaeological study and preservation of material culture found in outer space that is clearly the result of human behavior.

In 2006, Dr. O'Leary, with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer Katherine Slick and the New Mexico Museum of Space History (NMMSH), documented the Apollo 11 Tranquility Base archaeological site on the Moon as LA 2,000,000 in the State of New Mexico's Archaeological Records Management Section database. This is the largest archaeological database in the US.

LA 2,000,000 represents the first landing site created by the Apollo 11 Astronauts on July 20, 1969, on the Moon, (238,857 miles from Earth at Lunar Coordinates: 0.67266 degrees North Latitude, 23.47298 degrees East Longitude). NMMSH serves as the host for LA 2,000,000 on Earth where a marker at the Museum (UTM Coordinates: Zone 13, E 413969/ N3642735) is forever linked to the first lunar landing site. This action is one of the first efforts to preserve the cultural heritage on the Moon and the first Space Heritage site in the world.

Dr. O'Leary has co-chaired two international symposia at the World Archaeological Congress (WAC), where she is member of the WAC Space Heritage Task Force, and Society for American Archaeology on Space Heritage. In 2007 she was an invited keynote speaker at the International Council on Monuments and Sites in Cairns, Australia. As an expert in this field, she has published articles on space heritage and been interviewed in the international press.

Dr. O'Leary Photo Caption:

Dr. Beth O'Leary, author, anthropologist and assistant college professor at NMSU in Las Cruces. O'Leary, co-editor and author of "The Handbook of Space Engineering, Archaeology and Heritage" published by CRC Press, will be giving a presentation on the first floor of the museum Thursday, July 16, as part of the commemoration of the Apollo program. Her topic will be "Our Lunar Legacy: The Archaeology and Heritage of Space Exploration," a lecture commemorating the 40th anniversary of the launch of Apollo 11 on its trip to the Moon. Her talk will focus on the human journey into space, especially the Apollo 11 Tranquility Base site on the Moon, the first manned lunar landing, an archaeological site created on July 20, 1969, by two astronauts.

Rocket Launch Photo Caption: Apollo 9 lifts off during the 40th Anniversary Commemoration last March at NMSU in Las Cruces. The event was held as an education day for Las Cruces area Middle Schools. Nearly 450 students were in attendance. A similar rocket will be launched in honor of the 40th anniversary of Apollo 11 on Thursday, July 16, at the New Mexico Museum of Space History. Photo used with permission of the Las Cruces Sun News. Photo by LCSN photographer Norm Dettlaff.

Neil Armstrong photo caption:

- Neil Armstrong, commander of Apollo 11, takes the final steps down to the surface of the moon on July 21, 1969, to become the first man to set foot on the moon. His famous first words from the moon were: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."