

# Apollo astronaut returns 'stolen' camera

October 31 2011, by Jason Major

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Apollo 14 astronaut Ed Mitchell on the Moon, February 5, 1971. Credit: NASA.

In [a follow-up to a recent Universe Today article](#), Apollo astronaut and sixth-man-on-the-moon Ed Mitchell has agreed to return a lunar Data Acquisition Camera (DAC) that he kept from the Apollo 14 mission, rather than face a court date next year over a suit filed by NASA in June.

The 16mm camera was “rescued” from the [Apollo 14](#) landing module by Mitchell as it was about to be released from the orbiter after the astronauts’ visit to the Moon in February 1971. The lander – with everything remaining in it – would later crash onto the Moon’s surface.

Not only did Mitchell consider it a waste of a valuable piece of historic equipment, but there was a then-standing policy that astronauts could keep certain items from their missions as mementos.

Mitchell had had the DAC until May 2010, when he put it and other items up for auction at New York’s Bonhams auction house as a part of their “Space History Sale”. It was at that time that [NASA](#) filed a suit against the 80-year-old Mitchell, claiming that he had no rightful ownership of the camera. Mitchell’s attempt to get the case dismissed was denied by a Florida district [court](#) judge earlier this month, who stated that there was no statute or jurisdiction on such cases, being filed by a federally-run organization.



This Data Acquisition Camera (DAC) was one of two 16mm cameras on the Apollo 14 lunar module "Antares" when it landed on the moon on Feb, 5, 1971.  
Credit: FLSD

Rather than go to court in October 2012, Mitchell agreed in district court this past Thursday to “relinquish all claims of ownership, legal title, or dominion” over the [camera](#).

Mitchell and the federal prosecutors will each be responsible for their own legal fees.

Source: [Universe Today](#)

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