

Buzz Aldrin pays tribute to 'world icon' John Glenn

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Moonwalker Buzz Aldrin paid tribute Friday to pioneer astronaut John Glenn, describing the first American to orbit the Earth as a world icon.

Glenn, who died in Ohio on Thursday aged 95, was "one of the most influential officers" in the US Marine Corps, Aldrin said from his hospital bed in New Zealand where he is recovering from a health scare on a trip to the South Pole.

"I feel fortunate to be recovering from my own illness, but saddened that we lost another [space pioneer](#) and world icon," said Aldrin, 86, who has been told he can only return to the United States when congestion on his lungs clears.

"I was very saddened to hear that John was ill over the past year. Since he was the last remaining Mercury astronaut, I was always lobbying him to encourage the Apollo guys to do regular reunions annually since we're not getting any younger.

"With the news today I'm saddened again to hear that we have lost the pioneer of space flight for the United States, second only to Yuri Gagarin, and he will always go down in history as certainly one of the most influential officers in the Marine Corps."

Aldrin and Glenn first met in 1953 when they were fighter pilots in South Korea and later re-united when Aldrin joined Glenn as a NASA astronaut in 1963.

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