

# One giant sale: Neil Armstrong's collection goes to auction

July 20 2018, by Lisa Cornwell

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In this July 16, 1969, file photo, Neil Armstrong waving in front, heads for the van that will take the crew to the rocket for launch to the moon at Kennedy Space Center in Merritt Island, Fla. When Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, he captured the attention and admiration of millions of people around the world. Now fans of Armstrong and of space exploration have a chance to own artifacts and mementos that belonged to the modest man who became a global hero. The personal collection of Armstrong, who died in 2012, will be offered for sale in a series of auctions handled by Dallas-based Heritage Auctions. (AP Photo/File)

Admirers of Neil Armstrong and space exploration have a chance to own artifacts and mementos that belonged to the modest man who became a global hero by becoming the first human to walk on the moon.

The personal collection of Armstrong, who died in his native Ohio in 2012, will be offered for sale in a series of auctions handled by Dallas-based Heritage Auctions, beginning Nov. 1-2 and continuing in May and November 2019.

The collection includes a variety of artifacts from Armstrong's 1969 lunar landing and private mementos that include pieces of a wing and propeller from the 1903 Wright Brothers Flyer that the astronaut took with him to the moon.

Other items that went to the moon with Armstrong include a U.S. flag, the largest size typically flown during Apollo missions; a United Nations flag; various state flags; and some Robbins Medallions. The sterling silver medallions were paid for by the crews of Apollo missions and were available for purchase only by NASA astronauts. Armstrong's collection also includes a rare gold medallion.

Among the more personal items to be auctioned are a Purdue University centennial flag from Armstrong's alma mater that traveled on Apollo 11 and his Boy Scout cap.

Armstrong's son, Mark Armstrong, said his father never talked to him about what he wanted done with the large amount of items he kept.



In this Feb. 11, 1986 file photo, former astronaut Neil Armstrong, a member of the presidential panel investigating the Space Shuttle Challenger explosion, listens to testimony before the commission in Washington, as David Acheson, a commission member, listens in the background. When Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, he captured the attention and admiration of millions of people around the world. Now fans of Armstrong and of space exploration have a chance to own artifacts and mementos that belonged to the modest man who became a global hero. The personal collection of Armstrong, who died in 2012, will be offered for sale in a series of auctions handled by Dallas-based Heritage Auctions. (AP Photo/Scott Stewart, File)

"I don't think he spent much time thinking about it," Armstrong said.  
"He did save all the items, so he obviously felt they were worth saving."

Armstrong, who lives in suburban Cincinnati, said his father did keep all of his "flown" items together.

Faced with the responsibility of conserving, preserving and insuring irreplaceable items and honoring their father's legacy, Armstrong and his brother, Rick, found that some things needed restoration, and that some required research to be properly identified.

"We felt like the number of people that could help us identify them and give us the historical context was diminishing and that the problem of understanding that context would only get worse over time," he said.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

This undated photo provided by Heritage Auctions shows a U.S. flag, that traveled to the moon with Apollo 11 in July 1969. When Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, he captured the attention and admiration of millions of people around the world. Now, the flag, part of the personal collection of Armstrong, who died in 2012, will be offered for sale in a series of auctions handled by Dallas-based Heritage Auctions. (Emily Clements/Heritage Auctions via AP)

The Armstrongs turned to Sarasota, Florida-based Collectibles Authentication Guaranty for help with preserving and authenticating the artifacts and memorabilia and chose Heritage Auctions for the sales.

Greg Rohan, president of Heritage Auctions, said it handles numerous categories of collectibles that appeal to various collectors, but items connected with space seem to have a universal appeal.

"Space is one of the very, very few categories that every single person seems to be interested in," Rohan said. "You show somebody something from the space program, and they are fascinated by it."

Bids can be taken online, by phone or in person.





This June 15, 2018 photo provided by Heritage Auctions shows an Apollo 11 Robbins Medallion which was also flown on the moon landing mission in July 1969. When Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon, he captured the attention and admiration of millions of people around the world. Now, the medallion, part of the personal collection of Armstrong, who died in 2012, will be offered for sale in a series of auctions handled by Dallas-based Heritage Auctions. (Emily Clements/Heritage Auctions via AP)

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