

ADLER)75

AMERICA'S FIRST PLANETARIUM

Contact: Molly O'Connell
312-322-0524
moconnell@adlerplanetarium.org

Amy McGee
312-542-2424
amcgee@adlerplanetarium.org

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SCULPTURE OF AMERICAN HERO WHO MADE HISTORY ORBITING THE EARTH LANDS SAFELY AT THE ADLER

Sculpture of Apollo 13's James A. Lovell Jr. Unveiled June 28 At Adler Planetarium

CHICAGO – Thirty-five years ago, **Captain James A. Lovell, Jr.** and the crew of Apollo 13 saw their sights on a Moon landing, but came up short due to an explosion on their spacecraft. Lovell successfully landed safely at the **Adler Planetarium** where a seven-foot bronze sculpture of our nation's hero was unveiled in a private dedication ceremony. The sculpture will be on view to the public beginning June 29 at the Adler's newly renovated historic Rainbow Lobby.

Quest for Exploration, a sculpture of Captain Lovell, was unveiled in the Adler Planetarium's newly restored Art Deco Rainbow Lobby on June 28. The seven-foot, 700-pound bronze sculpture commemorates man's quest to explore beyond the Earth and features one of Captain Lovell's famous quotes: "I have seen the Earth as it truly is...a grand oasis in the vastness of space."

Unlike the typical astronaut sculptures, Captain Lovell is depicted floating in a zero gravity environment, thousands of miles away from Earth. It recreates a famous moment – Captain Lovell looking through the window of Apollo 8 and holding up his thumb to block his view of the Earth.

"I will never forget the moment my thumb obscured the entire planet Earth – all the people and places I knew. It was a humbling experience," said Captain Lovell. "I am honored that this Adler Planetarium will welcome future visitors to the Adler Planetarium – especially young people. I hope they will wonder about the Universe the way I did at their age."

After comments by Adler President Paul H. Knappenberger, Jr. and Chicago Cultural Affairs Commissioner Lois Weisberg, Captain Lovell's wife Marilyn unveiled the sculpture in dramatic fashion by leading the crowd in a countdown. The sculpture, created by **artists Julie Rotblatt Amrany and Omri Amrany** will be on view to the public beginning June 29.

"Today, as a nation, we honor Jim Lovell as a great explorer and American hero," said Adler Planetarium President Paul H. Knappenberger Jr., PhD. "Captain Lovell has given life and vigor to our planet and mission here at the Adler, and we are delighted to honor him by dedicating a statue in his likeness. He is a national treasure and a true inspiration to a new generation of explorers."

Captain Lovell, veteran of seven Gemini and Apollo missions, including the perilous Apollo 13 mission, serves as Honorary Chairman of the Adler's 75th Anniversary. The ***Quest for Exploration*** sculpture and the restored Rainbow Lobby are the first phase of a multi-year facilities renovation project, ***America in Space***, which will include five exhibition galleries to be installed over the next few years as the museum implements its new strategic long-range plan.

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In April, Captain Lovell announced the gift of his consolidated personal collection of space to the Adler and *America in Space*. Spanning a historic career and telling the exciting story America's pioneering efforts in space, Captain Lovell's collection includes important documents, memorabilia and instruments. The first major exhibition element of *America in Space* will be the installation of the Gemini 12 spacecraft on long-term loan from the Smithsonian's Air & Space Museum. This exhibit will open in 2006.

The sculpture unveiling coincides with the Inspiration of Astronomical Phenomenon (INSAP) international conference, which explores the rich and diverse ways in which people incorporate astronomical events into literary, visual, and performing arts. This conference and public event is generously supported by the McCormick Tribune Foundation.

The Adler commissioned *Quest for Exploration* as part of its 75th Anniversary Celebration. On May 12, the Adler Planetarium marked this milestone by announcing a new strategic plan for the future. A new vision expands the museum's current focus on astronomy history to feature space exploration and America's space heroes. Through this new vision, the Adler will help inspire the next generation of explorers.

Quest For Exploration is a contemporary installation sculpture constructed of bronze, granite and glass. The sculpture is 8' wide, 12 1/2' high and 8' deep overall. In the sculpture, Captain Lovell's figure floats in the lunar module above the moon's surface, which is etched on a black granite base. His communication hose and glove float around him while he holds his log book. The sculpture is surrounded by images of the Milky Way, which are imbedded in glass around the sculpture.

About Captain Lovell

Captain Lovell was chosen for the national space program in September 1962 following extensive experience as a naval aviator and test pilot. Lovell executed various commands in the Gemini program, including backup pilot for the Gemini 4 flight and backup commander for Gemini 7, the pilot of the history-making Gemini 7 mission, which saw the first rendezvous of two manned spacecraft in 1965, and commander of the Gemini 12 mission in 1966 that perfected rendezvous vehicular operations. As part of the Apollo program, Lovell served as command module pilot and navigator for the epic six-day journey of Apollo 8 – man's maiden voyage to the Moon. He and his crewman were the first humans to leave the Earth's gravitational influence. Lovell was also commander to Neil Armstrong for the Apollo 11 lunar landing mission.

Lovell's final and most famous flight was the Apollo 13 mission in 1970, in which Lovell and his crew successfully modified the lunar module into an effective lifeboat when its oxygen system failed. His resourcefulness helped conserve electrical power and water in sufficient supply to survive the return safely to Earth. The perilous mission captivated television audiences around the world and was the basis of a 1995 Oscar-winning film directed by Ron Howard. In the movie, Captain Lovell is portrayed by Tom Hanks.

Until surpassed by Skylab astronauts, Captain Lovell held the record for most hours in space (715 hours and 5 minutes).

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The Adler Planetarium & Astronomy Museum – America’s First Planetarium – was founded in Chicago by business leader Max Adler. The museum is home to one of the world’s most important instrument collections and is the only museum in the world with two full-size planetariums. Adler is a recognized leader in science education, with a focus on inspiring young people, women and minorities, to pursue careers in science.

The Adler Planetarium is marking its 75th Anniversary by launching a year of celebration and a new vision for its future. A new mission will expand the museum’s current focus on astronomy and human space exploration and America’s space heroes. Through this new vision, the Adler Planetarium will inspire the next generation of explorers.

The Adler Planetarium is located at 1300 South Lake Shore Drive in Chicago and is open every day except for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. For more information, call 312.922.STAR, www.adlerplanetarium.org

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