

NASA-Funded Radar Research Provides Backdrop for Lunar Module in Air & Space Museum's New Flight Hall

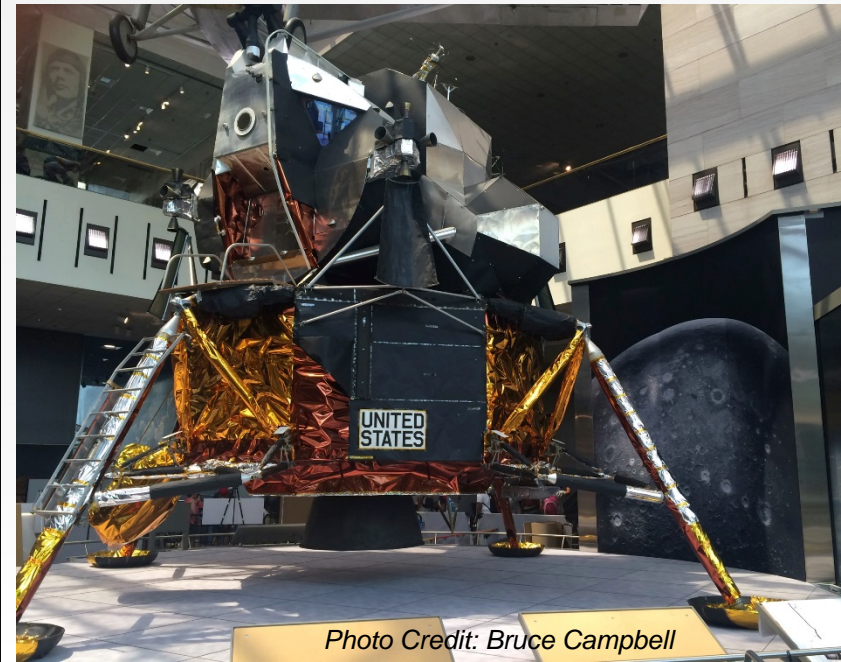


Photo Credit: Bruce Campbell

The Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum opened its new "Boeing Milestones of Flight Hall" with the Apollo Lunar Module as one of the centerpiece artifacts. Serving as a backdrop is a radar map of the Moon resulting in part from NASA-funded research and facilities.

The image of the Moon (below) was constructed from radar observations using radio telescopes at Arecibo, Puerto Rico and Green Bank, West Virginia. The Moon's north pole is at bottom center and the side facing Earth is toward the top. Bright areas, often surrounding impact craters, are very rocky while the broad, darker areas are ancient lava flows. Radar provides its own illumination, allowing areas near the pole that are never lit by the Sun to be mapped.

The radar observations to map surface and subsurface properties of the Moon were funded in part by NASA's Solar System Observations Program and carried out by scientists at the Smithsonian Institution, NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, Cornell University, Arecibo Observatory, and the Green Bank Telescope. The Arecibo radar is funded by NASA's Near-Earth Object Observations Program.

