**Three Astronauts**

Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, Michael Collins

**Reporter**

**President Nixon**

**1969: Man takes first steps on the Moon**

**Reporter**

The astronaut stepped onto the Moon's surface, in the Sea of Tranquility, at 0256 GMT, nearly 20 minutes after first opening the hatch on the Eagle landing craft.

**Armstrong**

Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed.

That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.

The surface is like powdered charcoal and the landing craft left a crater about a foot deep.

**Reporter**

The historic moments were captured on television cameras installed on the Eagle and turned on by Armstrong.

Armstrong spent his first few minutes on the Moon taking photographs and soil samples in case the mission had to be aborted suddenly.

He was joined by colleague Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin at 0315 GMT and the two collected data and performed various exercises - including jumping across the landscape - before planting the Stars and Stripes flag at 0341 GMT.

They also unveiled a plaque bearing President Nixon's signature and an inscription reading:

**Aldrin**

"Here men from the planet Earth first set foot upon the Moon July 1969 AD. We came in peace for all mankind."

**Reporter**

After filming their experience with a portable television camera the astronauts received a message from the US President.

President Nixon, in the White House, spoke of the pride of the American people and said: "This certainly has to be the most historic telephone call ever made."

Many other nations - including the UK - sent messages of congratulation.

Moscow Radio announced the news solemnly in its 1030 GMT broadcast.

As Aldrin and Armstrong collected samples...

**Michael Collins**

Mission control, Houston. I have successfully orbited the Moon in the mother ship Columbia, and take-off was on schedule for 1750 GMT this evening.

**Reporter**

Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin spent a total of 21 hours on the Moon, two-and-a-half of them outside the landing module.

After re-joining the Columbia mothership the astronauts - including Collins - left the Moon's orbit on 22 July and returned to Earth on 24 July.

The three men spent the next 21 days in quarantine at an American military base - a procedure dropped in subsequent missions since no alien organisms were found.