

# U.S. 50 Star Apollo 14 Flag

## First Flag to Moon and Return to Earth

**Date:** 1971

**Media:** Printed rayon, paper & cardboard.

**Comment:** This 50 Star United States Flag is one of only two flags placed on the lunar surface and returned to Earth. Astronaut Captain Alan Shepard, USN took the flag to the lunar surface in the Apollo 14 Lunar Module, during the third successful lunar landing, at the request of his friend, Mr. Brad Washburn, Director of the Museum of Science in Boston, MA.

Director Washburn eschewed the small U.S. flags traditionally carried in the Apollo missions Official Flight Kits, and wanted to acquire a large Moon flown U.S. flag for his museum. He provided two large, private purchase, United States flags to Capt. Shepard, carried these, along with a Wilson six-iron golf club head intended for some lunar golf, in his Personal Preference Kit.

During one of the periods of Extra Vehicular Activity, he was able to display this flag on the surface of the Moon, and for posterity, “post-mark” the flag from the Moon by creasing it with the Apollo 14 Mobile Equipment Transporter (MET) tires, which created the undulations seen on the flag.

Thus, this and the 2nd Apollo 14 flag, which Alan Shepard took for his friend to the Moon in January 1971 and post-marked this flag with the treads of the lunar MET, are the only flags to be displayed on the surface of the moon and then returned to earth. This is a truly celestial flag from one of the greatest astronauts of the time.

**Provenance:** Acquired in 2007 by the Zaricor Flag Collection (ZFC2521), from The Naylor Collection, who acquired it from Brad Washburn who had provided it to Alan Shepard; via Guernsey’s Auctions, New York, New York.

[www.FlagCollection.com](http://www.FlagCollection.com)