



MARSHALL
REMEMBERS APOLLO

1
00:00:18,920 --> 00:00:16,960

[Music]

2
00:00:22,160 --> 00:00:18,930
well I came out of West Virginia

3
00:00:25,460 --> 00:00:22,170
University as a an ROTC student meaning

4
00:00:27,830 --> 00:00:25,470
the Reserve Officer Training Corps and I

5
00:00:31,189 --> 00:00:27,840
was a second lieutenant and I was

6
00:00:33,259 --> 00:00:31,199
transferred to Huntsville Alabama the

7
00:00:36,140 --> 00:00:33,269
Redstone Arsenal and I was here for

8
00:00:39,369 --> 00:00:36,150
about two years as a lieutenant and the

9
00:00:43,880 --> 00:00:39,379
army got to know the missile people and

10
00:00:46,969 --> 00:00:43,890
lo and behold Eisenhower decided to

11
00:00:48,049 --> 00:00:46,979
create something called NASA the

12
00:00:50,719 --> 00:00:48,059
National Aeronautics and Space

13
00:00:55,579 --> 00:00:50,729

Administration and in fact all of us

14

00:00:58,130 --> 00:00:55,589

about 4,000 of us basically left the

15

00:01:00,289 --> 00:00:58,140

army and went to work for the space

16

00:01:03,560 --> 00:01:00,299

agency and von Braun of course was the

17

00:01:06,109 --> 00:01:03,570

director and we put together a program

18

00:01:08,480 --> 00:01:06,119

of about four thousand guys and gals and

19

00:01:09,640 --> 00:01:08,490

started what's known today as the

20

00:01:13,039 --> 00:01:09,650

Marshall Space Flight Center

21

00:01:16,160 --> 00:01:13,049

almost immediately after that agency was

22

00:01:18,740 --> 00:01:16,170

established the President Kennedy

23

00:01:20,210 --> 00:01:18,750

declared we're gonna go to the moon and

24

00:01:22,670 --> 00:01:20,220

we're going to go to the moon within

25

00:01:25,690 --> 00:01:22,680

this decade and by the way we're gonna

26
00:01:29,960 --> 00:01:25,700
kick the Russians but in space so that

27
00:01:32,780 --> 00:01:29,970
created a whole effort by the Marshall

28
00:01:36,260 --> 00:01:32,790
Center and we were young yeah I think I

29
00:01:39,430 --> 00:01:36,270
was 26 27 years old and one of my jobs

30
00:01:42,620 --> 00:01:39,440
primarily job was handling the press and

31
00:01:44,840 --> 00:01:42,630
in those days we were just beginning to

32
00:01:47,180 --> 00:01:44,850
get into the Saturn program that big

33
00:01:49,969 --> 00:01:47,190
rocket that made a lot of noise and got

34
00:01:51,950 --> 00:01:49,979
people's attention and so once the

35
00:01:54,520 --> 00:01:51,960
President had made this commitment to go

36
00:01:57,230 --> 00:01:54,530
to the moon we began to ground test our

37
00:02:00,590 --> 00:01:57,240
Saturn rockets and my job was to take

38
00:02:02,780 --> 00:02:00,600

the press to the test site and bring him

39

00:02:06,140 --> 00:02:02,790

up close and watch the test fine had

40

00:02:09,410 --> 00:02:06,150

this one reporter from New York who came

41

00:02:11,539 --> 00:02:09,420

to seal a test firing and he set up his

42

00:02:14,960 --> 00:02:11,549

camera and he was going to record the

43

00:02:19,220 --> 00:02:14,970

entire test and this was the closest

44

00:02:21,649 --> 00:02:19,230

that I had ever brought a newsman to the

45

00:02:23,629 --> 00:02:21,659

test and in fact I was told by my boss

46

00:02:25,879 --> 00:02:23,639

bring the guy as close as you can

47

00:02:27,920 --> 00:02:25,889

because we want to really impress him so

48

00:02:30,020 --> 00:02:27,930

I did we were about

49

00:02:33,729 --> 00:02:30,030

two thousand two thousand yards away

50

00:02:37,190 --> 00:02:33,739

from the saturn v test stand and we were

51
00:02:40,179 --> 00:02:37,200
cooking up and and i I began to explain

52
00:02:43,429 --> 00:02:40,189
to this this reporter and and and

53
00:02:45,589 --> 00:02:43,439
photographer look we're very close to

54
00:02:48,349 --> 00:02:45,599
this machine and when this goes off

55
00:02:51,379 --> 00:02:48,359
you're going to see a lot of flame

56
00:02:53,780 --> 00:02:51,389
you're gonna feel a vibration and you

57
00:02:56,929 --> 00:02:53,790
probably may want to go back further and

58
00:02:58,729 --> 00:02:56,939
get some shelter and he said young man

59
00:03:01,309 --> 00:02:58,739
I've been all over the world I have

60
00:03:03,110 --> 00:03:01,319
covered floods I've covered tornadoes

61
00:03:07,069 --> 00:03:03,120
Wars I think I can handle this little

62
00:03:09,920 --> 00:03:07,079
rocket engine firing so we waited for

63
00:03:12,080 --> 00:03:09,930

the bells and whistles to go off as they

64

00:03:14,270 --> 00:03:12,090

did in the test lab warning everybody

65

00:03:16,670 --> 00:03:14,280

that we're about to fire and sure enough

66

00:03:19,789 --> 00:03:16,680

they turn that big Saturn 5 booster on

67

00:03:21,259 --> 00:03:19,799

and for a few seconds the flame just

68

00:03:26,089 --> 00:03:21,269

sort of hangs there and all of a sudden

69

00:03:29,270 --> 00:03:26,099

it just blows out and the reporter not

70

00:03:32,000 --> 00:03:29,280

only knocked over his camera but he ran

71

00:03:35,990 --> 00:03:32,010

across the cotton field and then not get

72

00:03:38,869 --> 00:03:36,000

one foot of footage of the Saturn 5 test

73

00:03:41,030 --> 00:03:38,879

at which I was able to go back and get

74

00:03:42,860 --> 00:03:41,040

some some footage and give it to him

75

00:03:44,390 --> 00:03:42,870

I never heard from him again I don't

76

00:03:45,860 --> 00:03:44,400

know whether he ever use it or not but I

77

00:03:48,860 --> 00:03:45,870

know that was an interesting experience

78

00:03:51,020 --> 00:03:48,870

for our reporter who came to see a

79

00:03:53,869 --> 00:03:51,030

Saturn 5 test-firing for that in those

80

00:03:56,330 --> 00:03:53,879

days we were very active in the press

81

00:03:59,300 --> 00:03:56,340

and one of the things that had happened

82

00:04:01,490 --> 00:03:59,310

we had all these laboratories we had to

83

00:04:04,429 --> 00:04:01,500

test laboratory computer laboratory and

84

00:04:08,629 --> 00:04:04,439

it we you know we were designing

85

00:04:11,449 --> 00:04:08,639

developing creating and and testing

86

00:04:13,849 --> 00:04:11,459

rockets here would that's we were in the

87

00:04:16,399 --> 00:04:13,859

rocket business early on and we were

88

00:04:20,210 --> 00:04:16,409

building big rockets with Saturn one

89

00:04:23,240 --> 00:04:20,220

sound 1b Saturn 5 and that was a really

90

00:04:25,610 --> 00:04:23,250

exciting time because we just we would

91

00:04:26,899 --> 00:04:25,620

see a lots of press people they wanted

92

00:04:28,520 --> 00:04:26,909

to see von Braun they wanted to

93

00:04:31,100 --> 00:04:28,530

interview von Braun but they also wanted

94

00:04:33,409 --> 00:04:31,110

to see a Saturn 5 test firing so that

95

00:04:35,629 --> 00:04:33,419

was a big deal for us to be a part of

96

00:04:37,820 --> 00:04:35,639

that and and really launched the Saturn

97

00:04:44,490 --> 00:04:37,830

program which eventually was the machine

98

00:04:51,240 --> 00:04:48,270

I really think President Kennedy found

99

00:04:54,720 --> 00:04:51,250

something in us that we didn't know we

100

00:04:56,850 --> 00:04:54,730

had at the time we had done missiles we

101
00:04:58,890 --> 00:04:56,860
had done a lot of rockets with the

102
00:05:01,770 --> 00:04:58,900
missile army people but we had never

103
00:05:06,470 --> 00:05:01,780
really been challenged to do something

104
00:05:09,960 --> 00:05:06,480
like fly astronauts out of Earth orbit

105
00:05:13,800 --> 00:05:09,970
240,000 miles away and I think von Braun

106
00:05:16,170 --> 00:05:13,810
was the perfect person to be engaged in

107
00:05:19,860 --> 00:05:16,180
all of that because he had he had the

108
00:05:22,830 --> 00:05:19,870
vision that we didn't really have a feel

109
00:05:26,070 --> 00:05:22,840
for at our level and he was seeing the

110
00:05:29,880 --> 00:05:26,080
future way beyond us and he put together

111
00:05:32,910 --> 00:05:29,890
one heck of a team of people to develop

112
00:05:35,340 --> 00:05:32,920
the rocket and you know you go down the

113
00:05:37,020 --> 00:05:35,350

hall to the water fountain that's where

114

00:05:38,490 --> 00:05:37,030

all the major decisions were made by the

115

00:05:42,270 --> 00:05:38,500

way in those days at the water fountain

116

00:05:47,790 --> 00:05:42,280

and you would hear four words Saturn man

117

00:05:51,660 --> 00:05:47,800

moon decade we had a passion about what

118

00:05:54,180 --> 00:05:51,670

we were challenged to do and I think we

119

00:05:56,160 --> 00:05:54,190

began to realize that we were really

120

00:05:57,750 --> 00:05:56,170

going to do this we were going to go to

121

00:06:00,710 --> 00:05:57,760

the moon we were gonna launch astronauts

122

00:06:03,960 --> 00:06:00,720

to the moon we ended up launching nine

123

00:06:06,390 --> 00:06:03,970

Saturn fives to the moon and six of

124

00:06:08,460 --> 00:06:06,400

those crews landed and we did all that

125

00:06:11,640 --> 00:06:08,470

went in a short period of time eight

126

00:06:15,090 --> 00:06:11,650

years but I think at that time we had

127

00:06:17,040 --> 00:06:15,100

the right people we had the the

128

00:06:20,310 --> 00:06:17,050

commitment for the president knighted

129

00:06:22,560 --> 00:06:20,320

States we had the money and we were

130

00:06:24,660 --> 00:06:22,570

turned loose to really make this happen

131

00:06:26,820 --> 00:06:24,670

you didn't go home until you had

132

00:06:29,400 --> 00:06:26,830

finished her work that was pretty

133

00:06:31,940 --> 00:06:29,410

standard in those days late to bed early

134

00:06:35,400 --> 00:06:31,950

to rise work like hell and advertise and

135

00:06:37,580 --> 00:06:35,410

we were committed to make it happen and

136

00:06:40,890 --> 00:06:37,590

I think with the President's commitment

137

00:06:44,490 --> 00:06:40,900

challenged us and and we were not only

138

00:06:46,230 --> 00:06:44,500

we were reinvade our partners at the

139

00:06:48,840 --> 00:06:46,240

Cape and we had our partners at the

140

00:06:50,850 --> 00:06:48,850

Houston facility so and then Mississippi

141

00:06:54,270 --> 00:06:50,860

Tess and Michou all came together and

142

00:06:57,370 --> 00:06:54,280

that was an unbelievable group of people

143

00:06:59,230 --> 00:06:57,380

that had the dream and

144

00:07:02,350 --> 00:06:59,240

and we had the commitment to make this

145

00:07:04,900 --> 00:07:02,360

thing happen so I think it was a special

146

00:07:07,570 --> 00:07:04,910

time and and I think within the

147

00:07:13,520 --> 00:07:07,580

eight-year period we accomplished what

148

00:07:20,780 --> 00:07:16,820

when I got here and about 50,000 people

149

00:07:21,260 --> 00:07:20,790

and Huntsville was a really a cotton

150

00:07:23,840 --> 00:07:21,270

town

151
00:07:26,210 --> 00:07:23,850
we did have Redstone Arsenal indeed they

152
00:07:27,980 --> 00:07:26,220
had been in the the a munitions business

153
00:07:30,730 --> 00:07:27,990
and so forth then they got into the the

154
00:07:34,850 --> 00:07:30,740
missile business so for about ten years

155
00:07:37,400 --> 00:07:34,860
that the institution called Redstone

156
00:07:41,170 --> 00:07:37,410
Arsenal grew from a small group of

157
00:07:44,060 --> 00:07:41,180
people to some very well-qualified

158
00:07:46,820 --> 00:07:44,070
especially engineering people so it was

159
00:07:49,910 --> 00:07:46,830
it was you know pretty pretty sizeable

160
00:07:54,310 --> 00:07:49,920
Marshall came along and added roughly

161
00:07:58,280 --> 00:07:54,320
7,000 people so we went from the small

162
00:08:01,520 --> 00:07:58,290
southern town to something that was

163
00:08:03,200 --> 00:08:01,530

quite sizable and growing fast in fact

164

00:08:06,020 --> 00:08:03,210

it the city did grow fast

165

00:08:08,420 --> 00:08:06,030

we enjoyed Huntsville when we first got

166

00:08:10,550 --> 00:08:08,430

here because it was a small town and we

167

00:08:12,470 --> 00:08:10,560

felt like we were still back in our

168

00:08:15,680 --> 00:08:12,480

little you know hometown we grew up in

169

00:08:17,900 --> 00:08:15,690

and then eventually though it grew to

170

00:08:19,940 --> 00:08:17,910

become pretty substantial and I think

171

00:08:23,030 --> 00:08:19,950

the city fathers did a good job of

172

00:08:24,860 --> 00:08:23,040

preparing the community for growth and I

173

00:08:28,659 --> 00:08:24,870

think in overall we've been very

174

00:08:32,690 --> 00:08:28,669

fortunate to have a well-developed well

175

00:08:34,850 --> 00:08:32,700

controlled city that you know we enjoy

176

00:08:36,469 --> 00:08:34,860

raising our families here and we have

177

00:08:39,050 --> 00:08:36,479

great schools and and then we have

178

00:08:42,950 --> 00:08:39,060

colleges and so forth so it's it's been

179

00:08:46,120 --> 00:08:42,960

an impressive view to see that that

180

00:08:49,370 --> 00:08:46,130

community go from that fifty thousand

181

00:08:51,200 --> 00:08:49,380

population to approaching well over two

182

00:08:54,050 --> 00:08:51,210

hundred thousand I take it today so yes

183

00:08:59,520 --> 00:08:54,060

and it's it's still the rocket city as

184

00:09:04,350 --> 00:09:01,890

you know we really didn't have any

185

00:09:07,680 --> 00:09:04,360

connection with that situation in

186

00:09:11,370 --> 00:09:07,690

Montgomery it was like we were so

187

00:09:12,990 --> 00:09:11,380

committed to the moon landing Huntsville

188

00:09:15,960 --> 00:09:13,000

was kind of like a little separate

189

00:09:17,670 --> 00:09:15,970

community from the rest of the state you

190

00:09:20,040 --> 00:09:17,680

had a lot of people that had moved in

191

00:09:23,460 --> 00:09:20,050

here from other locations in the in the

192

00:09:26,700 --> 00:09:23,470

country and we were just not engaged

193

00:09:29,520 --> 00:09:26,710

with that we invited governor Wallace to

194

00:09:33,210 --> 00:09:29,530

come to the Marshall Center and it was a

195

00:09:35,400 --> 00:09:33,220

big deal because Webb came to town von

196

00:09:36,900 --> 00:09:35,410

Braun of course was here and they were

197

00:09:39,450 --> 00:09:36,910

you know they were they were they

198

00:09:43,320 --> 00:09:39,460

invited him to come and he came to watch

199

00:09:45,420 --> 00:09:43,330

a Saturn one test firing and he was just

200

00:09:48,270 --> 00:09:45,430

a perfect gentleman I can assure you

201

00:09:51,510 --> 00:09:48,280

that staff meetings before that visit

202

00:09:54,720 --> 00:09:51,520

went long and strong because we were all

203

00:09:58,620 --> 00:09:54,730

nervous about the press was going to

204

00:10:01,110 --> 00:09:58,630

take over create a situation that we

205

00:10:03,270 --> 00:10:01,120

would not want to embarrass mr. Webb and

206

00:10:06,150 --> 00:10:03,280

certainly one of them Brown because of

207

00:10:08,760 --> 00:10:06,160

the politicians coming to town it turned

208

00:10:11,250 --> 00:10:08,770

out that governor Wallace was just he

209

00:10:14,280 --> 00:10:11,260

was perfect gentleman and it was a it

210

00:10:17,810 --> 00:10:14,290

was a great relationship that developed

211

00:10:20,400 --> 00:10:17,820

between politics and the space program

212

00:10:23,730 --> 00:10:20,410

he saw what we were doing and he was

213

00:10:26,550 --> 00:10:23,740

extremely impressed I don't think he had

214

00:10:28,950 --> 00:10:26,560

any idea the size of the Saturn Rockets

215

00:10:31,200 --> 00:10:28,960

he'd heard about missiles being fired

216

00:10:33,840 --> 00:10:31,210

and so forth but he was really we took

217

00:10:35,550 --> 00:10:33,850

him right up close to the booster and he

218

00:10:39,060 --> 00:10:35,560

had a chance to see a ground test firing

219

00:10:43,050 --> 00:10:39,070

so of course von Braun was the master

220

00:10:45,720 --> 00:10:43,060

politician he never had any problems

221

00:10:48,750 --> 00:10:45,730

dealing with people he made you feel

222

00:10:51,540 --> 00:10:48,760

comfortable and he believed it was

223

00:10:54,510 --> 00:10:51,550

important for us to connect with the

224

00:10:56,520 --> 00:10:54,520

state of Alabama and be a part of the

225

00:11:00,390 --> 00:10:56,530

government where we needed to

226

00:11:01,710 --> 00:11:00,400

participate or where we could help the

227

00:11:03,510 --> 00:11:01,720

state of Alabama and we did that of

228

00:11:05,640 --> 00:11:03,520

course one of the things that happened

229

00:11:08,520 --> 00:11:05,650

out of that was the state of Alabama

230

00:11:11,520 --> 00:11:08,530

built the u.s. space & Rocket Center von

231

00:11:12,990 --> 00:11:11,530

Browns idea and he got governor Wallace

232

00:11:15,660 --> 00:11:13,000

and others to support that

233

00:11:21,920 --> 00:11:15,670

and that was paid for by the state of

234

00:11:27,230 --> 00:11:25,070

oh he was one heck of a Salesman we

235

00:11:29,990 --> 00:11:27,240

didn't have to do much sale selling of

236

00:11:32,960 --> 00:11:30,000

the program when Warner was in town I

237

00:11:36,260 --> 00:11:32,970

think he had that ability to communicate

238

00:11:38,269 --> 00:11:36,270

and here's a rocket scientists that you

239

00:11:41,480 --> 00:11:38,279

would expect would be talking to you in

240

00:11:42,400 --> 00:11:41,490

technical terms and so forth it didn't

241

00:11:46,220 --> 00:11:42,410

make any difference

242

00:11:50,450 --> 00:11:46,230

whoever was in the audience one of them

243

00:11:54,170 --> 00:11:50,460

Brown would connect first of all he

244

00:11:56,300 --> 00:11:54,180

believed in the team he really did

245

00:11:58,640 --> 00:11:56,310

believe that we could make the landing

246

00:12:00,590 --> 00:11:58,650

within the decade and a lot of us I can

247

00:12:03,940 --> 00:12:00,600

tell you right now didn't think we'd

248

00:12:08,140 --> 00:12:03,950

ever make the cut by 69 he was a great

249

00:12:12,410 --> 00:12:08,150

team manager he knew his people so well

250

00:12:14,930 --> 00:12:12,420

that he could he could call up and he

251
00:12:17,810 --> 00:12:14,940
would not necessarily just call the the

252
00:12:20,480 --> 00:12:17,820
this the lab director he might call a

253
00:12:24,890 --> 00:12:20,490
guy or a gal three or four levels down

254
00:12:28,579 --> 00:12:24,900
to get an answer to a question so he was

255
00:12:31,160 --> 00:12:28,589
an unusual technical guy not only did he

256
00:12:34,250 --> 00:12:31,170
have tremendous technical skills but

257
00:12:37,490 --> 00:12:34,260
when he sat down to interview be

258
00:12:41,210 --> 00:12:37,500
interviewed by a TV or a news reporter

259
00:12:44,810 --> 00:12:41,220
it was the guy walked away tremendously

260
00:12:46,670 --> 00:12:44,820
impressed and it was usable it didn't

261
00:12:49,640 --> 00:12:46,680
sound like some technical guy that was

262
00:12:52,160 --> 00:12:49,650
trying to speak over your head so he

263
00:12:55,519 --> 00:12:52,170

taught us all the fact that we needed to

264

00:12:55,940 --> 00:12:55,529

be able to tell our story open up the

265

00:12:59,900 --> 00:12:55,950

gates

266

00:13:02,720 --> 00:12:59,910

we had a unbelievable number of visitors

267

00:13:05,990 --> 00:13:02,730

we were open for business I'm telling

268

00:13:08,210 --> 00:13:06,000

you we a day would not go by that we

269

00:13:11,210 --> 00:13:08,220

didn't have all kinds of visitors coming

270

00:13:12,680 --> 00:13:11,220

not only to see this the Marshall Space

271

00:13:15,199 --> 00:13:12,690

Flight Center but hopefully see a

272

00:13:16,850 --> 00:13:15,209

test-firing but for sure to go in one of

273

00:13:19,120 --> 00:13:16,860

the labs and see one of the boosters

274

00:13:23,000 --> 00:13:19,130

under development or under construction

275

00:13:25,040 --> 00:13:23,010

so we were selling the thing all the

276

00:13:27,350 --> 00:13:25,050

time and of course von Braun was right

277

00:13:30,460 --> 00:13:27,360

out there helping us do that and I think

278

00:13:34,100 --> 00:13:30,470

he believed that the American public the

279

00:13:35,000 --> 00:13:34,110

taxpayer deserved to know what was being

280

00:13:36,890 --> 00:13:35,010

done

281

00:13:39,380 --> 00:13:36,900

we really gonna go to the moon are we

282

00:13:42,440 --> 00:13:39,390

gonna be successful and he felt like we

283

00:13:44,510 --> 00:13:42,450

had an obligation to let the tax payer

284

00:13:46,280 --> 00:13:44,520

know that this is your money and we're

285

00:13:47,810 --> 00:13:46,290

gonna use this money to go to the moon

286

00:13:50,960 --> 00:13:47,820

and we're gonna we're gonna beat the

287

00:13:53,420 --> 00:13:50,970

Russians to the moon so he was a perfect

288

00:13:55,370 --> 00:13:53,430

boss to have and he would listen to us

289

00:13:57,710 --> 00:13:55,380

when you know we would advise him that

290

00:13:59,480 --> 00:13:57,720

we need to get some attention here we

291

00:14:01,610 --> 00:13:59,490

need to take some people to the Cape for

292

00:14:05,360 --> 00:14:01,620

a launch and we would do that we would

293

00:14:07,040 --> 00:14:05,370

take leaders of the communities down to

294

00:14:09,680 --> 00:14:07,050

the Cape to see a launch that was pretty

295

00:14:11,570 --> 00:14:09,690

popular in those days to load them up in

296

00:14:13,910 --> 00:14:11,580

an airplane go what go watch a firing

297

00:14:17,000 --> 00:14:13,920

and see a launch so he was a PR man's

298

00:14:20,540 --> 00:14:17,010

dream as far as being able to deal with

299

00:14:23,060 --> 00:14:20,550

him and have him available to us and

300

00:14:24,650 --> 00:14:23,070

when we needed him to tell the story he

301
00:14:27,520 --> 00:14:24,660
never wanted to waste time he was the

302
00:14:30,260 --> 00:14:27,530
kind of guy that never took you know

303
00:14:31,970 --> 00:14:30,270
time to do this or do that he was very

304
00:14:34,880 --> 00:14:31,980
much committed to making something

305
00:14:36,650 --> 00:14:34,890
happen even as he went waterskiing and

306
00:14:38,420 --> 00:14:36,660
so forth he wanted to be make sure

307
00:14:40,910 --> 00:14:38,430
everybody was active doing something

308
00:14:43,430 --> 00:14:40,920
somebody had a job he's driving the boat

309
00:14:45,830 --> 00:14:43,440
or floating on the deck or on the book

310
00:14:47,270 --> 00:14:45,840
on the and the skis are doing something

311
00:14:52,490 --> 00:14:47,280
he wanted to make sure everybody was

312
00:14:57,380 --> 00:14:55,550
well when Sputnik was launched I was

313
00:15:00,500 --> 00:14:57,390

working on the West Virginia University

314

00:15:02,060 --> 00:15:00,510

newspaper that night I was backed in the

315

00:15:04,880 --> 00:15:02,070

slot and we were putting the paper

316

00:15:07,730 --> 00:15:04,890

together and a big machine in the back

317

00:15:10,490 --> 00:15:07,740

room started going off all bells ringing

318

00:15:12,140 --> 00:15:10,500

and you know when that when you heard

319

00:15:13,280 --> 00:15:12,150

that you thought there's a war or

320

00:15:16,400 --> 00:15:13,290

something gonna happen and sure enough

321

00:15:19,070 --> 00:15:16,410

the announcement came out was the

322

00:15:21,410 --> 00:15:19,080

Russians have launched a Sputnik well we

323

00:15:23,240 --> 00:15:21,420

thought it was a potato at first because

324

00:15:24,950 --> 00:15:23,250

we didn't know what Sputnik was nobody

325

00:15:26,930 --> 00:15:24,960

could spell it so we called the

326

00:15:29,600 --> 00:15:26,940

professor and he looked into it he said

327

00:15:31,850 --> 00:15:29,610

yes it's some kind of a device that

328

00:15:33,380 --> 00:15:31,860

they've launched in space well is it we

329

00:15:35,270 --> 00:15:33,390

were asking is it gonna come down or

330

00:15:39,650 --> 00:15:35,280

what's gonna happen and you know we were

331

00:15:41,780 --> 00:15:39,660

shocked that that happened and then

332

00:15:42,320 --> 00:15:41,790

after I looked back and realized what

333

00:15:45,530 --> 00:15:42,330

happened

334

00:15:47,060 --> 00:15:45,540

we actually had Explorer one ready to go

335

00:15:49,370 --> 00:15:47,070

before Sputnik

336

00:15:51,800 --> 00:15:49,380

but consequently the politics and so

337

00:15:54,560 --> 00:15:51,810

forth got all involved and it was

338

00:15:57,740 --> 00:15:54,570

delayed and we eventually launched it

339

00:16:00,110 --> 00:15:57,750

and that really I think convinced all of

340

00:16:01,790 --> 00:16:00,120

us that we could do something with these

341

00:16:04,360 --> 00:16:01,800

rockets and then the next thing you know

342

00:16:08,060 --> 00:16:04,370

we launched Alan Shepard May 5 1961

343

00:16:10,820 --> 00:16:08,070

first American to fly on a rocket and I

344

00:16:14,060 --> 00:16:10,830

really believed that was the mission

345

00:16:16,340 --> 00:16:14,070

that was the event that got everybody

346

00:16:18,230 --> 00:16:16,350

pumped up we were challenged by the

347

00:16:22,220 --> 00:16:18,240

Russians in fact I think the Russians

348

00:16:24,620 --> 00:16:22,230

really kicked us in to the movement to

349

00:16:27,260 --> 00:16:24,630

make this thing happen and we love to

350

00:16:30,470 --> 00:16:27,270

beat them you know in fact we as every

351
00:16:35,410 --> 00:16:30,480
time we had a launch of an Apollo to the

352
00:16:37,790 --> 00:16:35,420
moon we sent a newspaper clipping and

353
00:16:42,079 --> 00:16:37,800
photographed to all the Russian

354
00:16:44,480 --> 00:16:42,089
newspapers and and publications we never

355
00:16:46,220 --> 00:16:44,490
heard a word so you know the Russian

356
00:16:48,050 --> 00:16:46,230
people really didn't know that there was

357
00:16:53,769 --> 00:16:48,060
a competition going on between the US

358
00:17:00,759 --> 00:16:57,150
well saturn v launch was a major event

359
00:17:03,819 --> 00:17:00,769
we would about six of us would go there

360
00:17:06,720 --> 00:17:03,829
about three days before liftoff and of

361
00:17:11,169 --> 00:17:06,730
course the the press I think when we had

362
00:17:14,289 --> 00:17:11,179
Apollo 11 there were something like a

363
00:17:17,620 --> 00:17:14,299

thousand members of the press certified

364

00:17:20,319 --> 00:17:17,630

to watch that lunch so we brought him in

365

00:17:22,929 --> 00:17:20,329

and we took him on tours out to the

366

00:17:26,069 --> 00:17:22,939

launch site they saw the the vehicle on

367

00:17:28,539 --> 00:17:26,079

the pad and you know we we basically

368

00:17:30,580 --> 00:17:28,549

prepared them well then we took them to

369

00:17:34,510 --> 00:17:30,590

the press site and then we prepared them

370

00:17:38,529 --> 00:17:34,520

for the launch and a lot of people had

371

00:17:42,760 --> 00:17:38,539

not experienced a Saturn one or anything

372

00:17:46,210 --> 00:17:42,770

that size so the new press people were

373

00:17:48,340 --> 00:17:46,220

somewhat overwhelmed particularly that

374

00:17:52,149 --> 00:17:48,350

old saturn v would come off the pad real

375

00:17:54,570 --> 00:17:52,159

slow and I remember the first time I saw

376

00:17:57,039 --> 00:17:54,580

a saturn v launch with the press people

377

00:17:59,820 --> 00:17:57,049

one of the guys says it's coming back

378

00:18:03,039 --> 00:17:59,830

which he thought it was coming back

379

00:18:05,110 --> 00:18:03,049

through this to the press site and not

380

00:18:07,690 --> 00:18:05,120

going out over the ocean so it was kind

381

00:18:09,159 --> 00:18:07,700

of a common joke when we anytime we

382

00:18:11,620 --> 00:18:09,169

would fly one when somebody said yeah

383

00:18:14,830 --> 00:18:11,630

it's coming back again you know but it

384

00:18:17,260 --> 00:18:14,840

was a major vehicle to watch it was so

385

00:18:19,779 --> 00:18:17,270

slow coming off the pad and then you got

386

00:18:22,149 --> 00:18:19,789

to see it for a long distance misspell

387

00:18:24,580 --> 00:18:22,159

when there was none any cloud cover you

388

00:18:27,279 --> 00:18:24,590

got to watch that bird fly for a long

389

00:18:30,370 --> 00:18:27,289

time and then on occasion you would

390

00:18:33,549 --> 00:18:30,380

actually see staging at a certain time

391

00:18:36,190 --> 00:18:33,559

in the flight but yes it you know I know

392

00:18:38,500 --> 00:18:36,200

no one ever grew tired of watching a

393

00:18:41,230 --> 00:18:38,510

saturn v launch it was something about

394

00:18:43,090 --> 00:18:41,240

that vehicle that stayed with you of

395

00:18:45,970 --> 00:18:43,100

course the shuttle was fantastic because

396

00:18:49,210 --> 00:18:45,980

you saw it come off and turn and all but

397

00:18:51,250 --> 00:18:49,220

to shut the space there's a Saturn 5 you

398

00:18:54,130 --> 00:18:51,260

know when you had crew members on board

399

00:18:57,430 --> 00:18:54,140

that thing and we launched nine of those

400

00:19:01,240 --> 00:18:57,440

cruised beyond Earth orbit to the moon

401
00:19:03,340 --> 00:19:01,250
and back and it was successful every one

402
00:19:05,110 --> 00:19:03,350
of those flights was successful and I

403
00:19:06,990 --> 00:19:05,120
think that's that's the thing that

404
00:19:09,860 --> 00:19:07,000
sticks with me

405
00:19:13,740 --> 00:19:09,870
we went through Mercury Gemini Apollo

406
00:19:16,080 --> 00:19:13,750
Saturn moon rockets all those flights

407
00:19:18,600 --> 00:19:16,090
and we were very successful in

408
00:19:20,340 --> 00:19:18,610
accomplishing all those flights with

409
00:19:23,550 --> 00:19:20,350
those guys and you know when you send

410
00:19:25,770 --> 00:19:23,560
guys out of Earth orbit beyond Earth

411
00:19:27,390 --> 00:19:25,780
orbit and to the moon and back you know

412
00:19:29,940 --> 00:19:27,400
you really accomplish something and I

413
00:19:33,930 --> 00:19:29,950

don't think we appreciated at the time

414

00:19:36,030 --> 00:19:33,940

how how competent the team was and how

415

00:19:38,340 --> 00:19:36,040

successful we were I'm sure there's a

416

00:19:41,460 --> 00:19:38,350

lot of luck involved too because things

417

00:19:43,050 --> 00:19:41,470

did happen but those vehicles performed

418

00:19:45,420 --> 00:19:43,060

well and we got all those astronauts

419

00:19:48,720 --> 00:19:45,430

back safely and I think that's that's

420

00:19:52,080 --> 00:19:48,730

the thing about Apollo is I think you

421

00:19:54,780 --> 00:19:52,090

have to look at Apollo's being this is

422

00:19:56,670 --> 00:19:54,790

an example of a country leaving Earth

423

00:19:59,400 --> 00:19:56,680

orbit and doing something that's never

424

00:20:01,230 --> 00:19:59,410

been done before and no other country

425

00:20:04,800 --> 00:20:01,240

has ever accomplished what we've done

426
00:20:07,380 --> 00:20:04,810
with the Saturn Apollo program and those

427
00:20:09,300 --> 00:20:07,390
those astronauts they get a lot of

428
00:20:10,650 --> 00:20:09,310
credit they you know they they're good

429
00:20:12,210 --> 00:20:10,660
old fighter pilots and they just

430
00:20:14,550 --> 00:20:12,220
volunteered you know and there's a

431
00:20:16,170 --> 00:20:14,560
Shepards say well you know I'm gonna fly

432
00:20:18,990 --> 00:20:16,180
on this rocket and I'll come back and

433
00:20:21,570 --> 00:20:19,000
fly another one they were they were in

434
00:20:24,210 --> 00:20:21,580
touch with us and they did acknowledge

435
00:20:26,580 --> 00:20:24,220
von Braun and they appreciated the team

436
00:20:29,280 --> 00:20:26,590
by the way that put the mercury together

437
00:20:31,380 --> 00:20:29,290
and put the Saturn program together that

438
00:20:33,420 --> 00:20:31,390

they really appreciated the fact that we

439

00:20:35,520 --> 00:20:33,430

had the rocket people here in Huntsville

440

00:20:37,800 --> 00:20:35,530

Alabama and we we had a good marriage

441

00:20:44,350 --> 00:20:37,810

between the Houston people and the

442

00:20:47,830 --> 00:20:45,910

he came to the Space and Rocket Center

443

00:20:50,560 --> 00:20:47,840

one day and we were walking through the

444

00:20:52,360 --> 00:20:50,570

rocket park because we just put up one

445

00:20:55,710 --> 00:20:52,370

of the rockets and we were cleaning it

446

00:20:59,620 --> 00:20:55,720

up and there was a whole group of

447

00:21:01,480 --> 00:20:59,630

schoolchildren there and they were

448

00:21:03,610 --> 00:21:01,490

walking through and they had their book

449

00:21:06,310 --> 00:21:03,620

sketches books and so forth they were

450

00:21:09,280 --> 00:21:06,320

taking notes teacher was with him and he

451
00:21:11,110 --> 00:21:09,290
said to me he said what's that group

452
00:21:12,430 --> 00:21:11,120
doing and I said well that's a school

453
00:21:15,250 --> 00:21:12,440
group that's we call it two yellow

454
00:21:17,620 --> 00:21:15,260
school bus tour they're here and they'll

455
00:21:20,230 --> 00:21:17,630
probably spend most of the day and then

456
00:21:23,140 --> 00:21:20,240
they'll be leaving and going back to

457
00:21:25,240 --> 00:21:23,150
back back home he says do you think they

458
00:21:28,690 --> 00:21:25,250
get anything out of this this visit I

459
00:21:30,850 --> 00:21:28,700
said yes sir I do I believe they get

460
00:21:34,140 --> 00:21:30,860
excited about rocketry they learn about

461
00:21:36,580 --> 00:21:34,150
rocketry but I think they'd also liked

462
00:21:39,250 --> 00:21:36,590
climbing that spacecraft over there and

463
00:21:41,620 --> 00:21:39,260

slip on a spacesuit and maybe snack on

464

00:21:42,850 --> 00:21:41,630

space food while they're here he looked

465

00:21:44,530 --> 00:21:42,860

at me and he look at those those

466

00:21:47,890 --> 00:21:44,540

youngsters you know we have all kinds of

467

00:21:50,080 --> 00:21:47,900

camp in this country we need a science

468

00:21:53,560 --> 00:21:50,090

camp and that was the beginning of what

469

00:21:54,040 --> 00:21:53,570

today is Space Camp and one of them

470

00:21:56,560 --> 00:21:54,050

Brown

471

00:22:00,820 --> 00:21:56,570

is the guy who brought Space Camp to

472

00:22:04,090 --> 00:22:00,830

Huntsville Alabama 700,000 children have

473

00:22:10,460 --> 00:22:04,100

experienced Space Camp and that was a

474

00:22:16,399 --> 00:22:13,249

if we had not lost the president United

475

00:22:19,639 --> 00:22:16,409

States of that time Kennedy I think this

476

00:22:22,580 --> 00:22:19,649

team would have gone on to Mars because

477

00:22:26,210 --> 00:22:22,590

that was von Browns real long-range

478

00:22:26,840 --> 00:22:26,220

dream is land astronauts on the surface

479

00:22:29,450 --> 00:22:26,850

of Mars

480

00:22:31,610 --> 00:22:29,460

he had the nuclear engine for the third

481

00:22:34,100 --> 00:22:31,620

stage of the Saturn 5 already developed

482

00:22:36,619 --> 00:22:34,110

I did not get to see that but many of my

483

00:22:38,749 --> 00:22:36,629

friends did see that nuclear rocket

484

00:22:40,789 --> 00:22:38,759

engine tested and that thing was going

485

00:22:44,060 --> 00:22:40,799

to be ready to go by the end of the of

486

00:22:47,960 --> 00:22:44,070

this sixties and early seventies so the

487

00:22:49,759 --> 00:22:47,970

team was in in place and the the spirit