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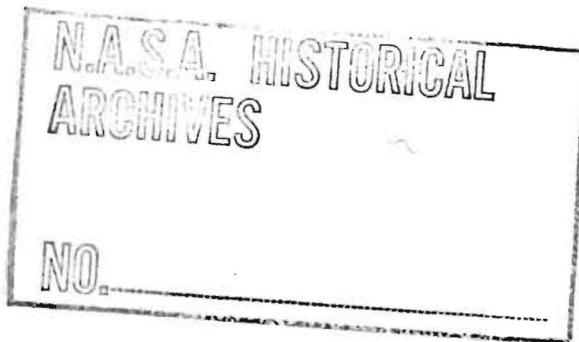
At a luncheon in Washington, Abe Silverstein, Director, Office of Space Flight Programs, gave the name Apollo to the manned space flight program that was to follow Mercury. Others at the luncheon were Robert R. Gilruth, Maxime Faget, General Don Ostrander, and Charles J. Donlan

Interview with Charles J. Donlan
Langley Research Center, June 20,
1966.

Comment Draft

The Apollo Spacecraft
A Chronology

Volume I
Through November 7, 1962



ASTRONAUT - from the latin word ASTRUM meaning star.
COSMONAUT - from the græk word Cosmos meaning space.

APOLLO. In July 1960, NASA was preparing to implement its long-range plan beyond Mercury and to introduce a manned circumlunar mission project--then unnamed--at the NASA/Industry Program Plans Conference in Washington. Abe Silverstein, Director of Space Flight Development, proposed the name "Apollo" because it was the name of a god in Greek mythology with attractive connotations, and the precedent for naming manned spaceflight projects for mythological gods and heroes had been set with Mercury.⁽¹⁾ In ancient Greek mythology, Apollo was god of archery, prophecy, poetry, and music, and most significantly he was god of the sun. In his horse-drawn golden chariot, Apollo pulled the sun in its course across the sky each day.⁽²⁾ NASA approved the name and publically announced "Project Apollo" at the July 28-29 Conference.⁽³⁾

Project Apollo took new form when the goal of a manned lunar landing was proposed to the Congress by President John F. Kennedy on May 25, 1961, and was subsequently approved by the Congress. It is a program of three-man space flights, leading to the landing of men on the moon. Rendezvous and docking in lunar orbit of Apollo spacecraft components are vital techniques for the intricate flight to and return from the moon. The Apollo spacecraft consists of the Command Module--the crew's quarters and flight control section; the Service Module--containing propulsion systems and supporting spacecraft systems; and the Lunar Module--carrying two crewmen to the lunar surface, supporting them on the moon, and returning

them to the Command Module stationed in lunar orbit. These designations came into use in 1962, when NASA made basic decisions on the flight mode (lunar orbit rendezvous), the boosters, and the spacecraft for Project Apollo. From that time until June 1966, the Lunar Module was called "Lunar Excursion Module" (LEM). It was redesignated by the NASA Project Designation Committee because the word "excursion" implied mobility on the moon and this vehicle does not have such a capability. ⁽⁴⁾

PART IV: MANNED SPACE FLIGHT PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

1. Lloyd S. Swenson, James M. Grimwood, and Charles C. Alexander, This New Ocean: A History of Project Mercury, (NASA SP-4201, (Washington: NASA, 1966), p. 505.

2. John F. Kennedy, Special Message to the Congress, May 25, 1961.

APOLLO

1. Merle Waugh, Office of Manned Space Flight, NASA, letter to James M. Grimwood, Historian, MSC, November 5, 1963. The precedent of Mercury's name had been given consideration in NASA as early as May 16, 1960, when the Ad Hoc Committee to Name Space Projects and Objects "tentatively decided that the manned space flight programs will be named after the gods and heroes of mythology, thus continuing in the present class begun by 'Mercury.'" NASA Ad Hoc Committee, Minutes of Meeting, May 16, 1960.

2. Thomas Bulfinch, Mythology, ed. Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 17, 40ff.

3. Abe Silverstein, memorandum to Harry Goett, Director, GSFC, July 25, 1960.

4. Julian Scheer, Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs, NASA, memorandum from Project Designation Committee, June 9, 1966.

GEMINI

1. Al Nagy, Office of Manned Space Flight, NASA, memorandum to George Low, Office of Manned Space Flight, NASA, December 11, 1961; D. Brainerd Holmes, Director of Manned Space Flight Programs, NASA, memorandum to Associate Administrator, NASA, December 16, 1961; and D. Brainerd Holmes, memorandum to Associate Administrator, NASA, January 2, 1962.

2. Thomas Bulfinch, Mythology, ed. Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 130-31.

3. NASA, "NASA Photo Release 62-Gemini-2," January 3, 1962.

MERCURY

1. The Greek equivalent of the Latin name "Mercury" was "Hermes." Mercury (Hermes) was a Grecian divinity received also by the Romans. His attributes were many: he was god of commerce, wrestling, and even thievery. Thomas Bulfinch, Mythology, ed. Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 18, 19.

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