



Everyone's Gone to the Moon Podcast

Episode 3: A Music Revolution

[Kennedy – Moon Speech, intro music in b/g]

Google July 1969 and what comes up? Over 7 million entries, most of which are related to the first landing on the moon by the crew of Apollo 11.

[Neil Armstrong / Walter Cronkite first step on moon]

On July 20th, 1969, NASA completed President John F. Kennedy's dream of landing a man on the moon and just days later, returned them safely to the Earth.

In that fleeting moment, billions of people on Earth stopped and became one, one people standing in awe at what humans could do if they put their minds to it. But beneath the headline, beneath the technical wizardry that made the event a reality, the Earth seemed to be spinning off its axis...

[War clip]

Wars raged on...

[Protester clip]

...protesters filled the streets, standing in unison demanding equal rights, protection of the environment, ending the war in Vietnam.

[Honky Tonk Woman instrumental intro under v/o]

It was a month when pop culture was dramatically changing who we were then and who we are now.

[Honky Tonk Woman chorus into instrumental under v/o]

This is July 1969, the month when everyone had gone to the moon. I'm Joe Cuhaj.

Episode 3: A Music Revolution

[Music fade]

As the Swinging 60s was drawing to an end, the world of pop culture - art, movies, literature, television, and music, was changing dramatically. The revolution in clothing, music, and attitudes of kids in the late 50s that made their parents cringe would be magnified tenfold as their offspring – the Baby Boomers – pushed the boundaries of what was acceptable in the arts.

If they were horrified by the gyrations of Elvis Presley, they were in for quite a shock in July 1969.

[Plane Crash New Coverage Clip]

From the moment the “day the music died” with the death of Buddy Holly, the “Big Bopper” JP Richardson, and Ritchie Valens on Feb 3rd, 1959, the trajectory of modern music began to change. The 1960s saw popular music splinter into a wide range of genres.

Besides the acceptable sounds of what was then called bubble gum music, in July 1969, the world was introduced to several new forms of music including progressive, punk, and Glam Rock. Often, the lyrics and music of these genres had an edgier side while at the same time experimenting with new sounds.

The progression of musical genres from the early 60s to July 1969 was an evolution on steroids, changing in the blink of an eye in a short 10 years. From folk to Motown to soul music and everything in between, all of which could be heard on radio stations around the world.

By July 1969, all of these musical forms were colliding. Bubble gum music, or straight pop music, had already been around for many years and only changed slightly by 1969, just enough to match the tastes of its teeny bopper listeners who tastes in music and clothes were changing as well. One of the more memorable songs of this genre was released in July 69 and came from a fictional cartoon TV show – the Archies.

[Archie Show intro]

Archie Andrews and his pals were first introduced to the world in a 1941 edition of Pep Comics and has been in print ever since. He made the jump to television in September 1968 with the Saturday morning cartoon show, The Archie Show.

During that first season, Archie and his friends formed a band, cleverly called *the Archies*, and each episode would feature a song by the fictional group. In July 1969, the cartoon characters would release one of those songs as a single and son-of-a-gun if it didn't turn out to be a #1 hit on the charts. It was literally a sugary sweet bubble gum song...

[Sugar Sugar]

The song was written by Andy Kim, who would have a hit song himself that same year with “Baby I Love You,” and the writing team of Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich, both of whom scored by writing songs like “Baby I Love You” for the Ronettes and “Then He Kissed Me” for the Crystals.

Sugar Sugar was recorded by Kim, Toni Wine, Ron Dante, and Ellie Greenwich, and produced by famed record producer Don Kirshner. While it was a good song that really stuck in your head, it didn't hurt that the marketing of the record included printing a copy of the single on the back of specially marked boxes of Sugar Pops.

Kids could finish eating the cereal, cut what was called a "flex disc" off the box, and play it to their hearts content on their parent's phonograph, much to their parent's chagrin. They didn't have long to play it. Inevitably the cardboard would warp and curl up making the disc unplayable. It didn't matter, the gimmick worked and the song would become a number one hit.

[The Stooges – 1969 clip up and under]

As the summer of 1969 was heating up, parents were faced with a new kind of music blaring from stereos in their kids' rooms. The style would be called Punk and leading the way into this new genre that was loud, primitive, and primal was a band out of Ann Arbor, Michigan – the Stooges who was led by their lead singer Jim Osterberg.

Osterberg was credited on the band's 1969 debut LP as Iggy Stoooge, but would later known to the world as Iggy Pop.

[Iggy Pop on Iggy Pop clip]

Even more influential than the music was the band's stage performance, especially that of Iggy Pop. Rock star Alice Cooper later commented that when he first saw Iggy Pop perform, he thought, "Who is this guy? I thought I was the freakiest guy out there."

[Iggy Pop clip #2]

Henry Rollins of the group Black Flag said that Osterberg – aka Iggy – were two separate people. "Jim is cool," he said, "but Iggy was a rock 'n roll monster." Many believe he was the first to jump off the stage into the crowd.

[Hadfield "Major Tom" clip]

50 years after its release, who doesn't know the opening lyrics to that classic song, *Space Oddity*. Singing this version was astronaut Commander Chris Hadfield. Hadfield performed the song and filmed an accompanying video during his stay aboard the International Space Station (or ISS) in 2013 making him an instant YouTube sensation.

The man who introduced the world to Glam Rock in 1969, David Bowie, first released the song in July 1969, but despite it being a widely known tune today 50 plus years later, it wasn't an immediate hit. In fact, the song only hit #124 on the U.S. music charts. It was re-released in 1973, hitting #15 on the Top 40, then again in 1975 when it finally became a #1 hit.

After releasing his version of the song, Hadfield said that he was taken by surprise when he heard that one of his new devoted fans, Bowie himself, described it as "the most poignant version of the song ever done."

[NASA clip of Apollo 11 launch]

On the third week of July 1969, the one news story that topped headlines in newspapers as well as radio and television newscasts was the launch of the crew of Apollo 11 from Cape Kennedy, Florida.

[Jack King audio preparing for launch]

This wasn't the first time that the massive Saturn V would be manned by a crew and rocketed to the moon. That had been done twice before, once with the flight of Apollo 8, the other with the crew of Apollo 10 that tested the LEM or lunar excursion module in orbit around the moon, a dress rehearsal for this moment in history.

[Jack King comments on Saturn V and Apollo 11 launch]

That's the voice of Jack King who was interviewed on July 15, 2009, before the launch of shuttle flight STS 127. For being such a complex rocket, King said that the launch of Apollo 11 was remarkably uneventful.

[Jack King on launch]

Finally, at 9:32am on July 16th, humanity's greatest adventure, a trip to the moon, began.

[Apollo 11 launch]

Only four days later, science fiction would become science fact when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin first set foot on the moon.

[Everyone's Gone to the Moon Theme]

And now, a Footnote to History, additional headlines the third week of July 1969 that floated under the radar while Apollo 11 grabbed the headlines.

On July 18th, famed explorer Thor Heyerdahl and his crew aboard the raft *Ra* were forced to abandon their attempt to prove that it was possible for ancient Egyptians to sail across the Atlantic and influence pre-Columbian cultures in South America. The crew had set sail from Morocco on their voyage and were actually scheduled to communicate with the crew of Apollo 11 over shortwave radio relayed to the Apollo capsule, Columbia. Instead, the crew found themselves packing what they could and abandoning ship as the *Ra* began to sink 600 miles short of their destination in Central America.

[Miss Universe finalist clip]

On July 19th, the CBS Television Network aired the Miss Universe Pageant live from Miami, Florida. From the beginning of the competition, it was clear there was one standout: Miss Philippines, 18-year-old Gloria Diaz.

[Crowning of Miss Universe clip]

Diaz had both beauty and an incredible wit that she wasn't shy to share. The young woman came from a family of twelve children and when the host asked her to name her two brothers and nine sisters, she replied, "Alphabetically or by rank?" Diaz became the first Filipina winner of the competition and went on to become a successful actress.

I'm Joe Cuhaj and thank you for joining me for this edition of *Everyone's Gone to the Moon*. My thanks goes out this week to NASA, the Library of Congress, CBS Television, and the Canadian Broadcasting Company for clips heard in today's episode.

You can learn more about the events and pop-culture that shaped our world in my new book published by Prometheus Books, *Everyone's Gone to the Moon: July 1969, Life on Earth, and the Epic Voyage of Apollo 11*. It's available now at your favorite local bookstore or online retailer.

If you liked this episode, then please share it with a friend. You can view clips from today's episode, learn more about the book, my other titles, and drop me a line by visiting my website, JOE-CUHAI.COM, that's spelled C-U-H-A-J. We'll see you next time.

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References:

Buddy Holly, et al Plane Crash
<https://youtu.be/D1D74KZNMes>

Archie's Theme
<https://youtu.be/fBK1k9CM26s>

Sugar Sugar
<https://youtu.be/eX28cgKHHyc>

The Stooges: 1969
<https://youtu.be/FT0L2Xg5k4c>

Iggy Pop on Iggy Pop
<https://youtu.be/YJEvZHN9E6s>

Cdr. Chris Hadfield Sings "Space Oddity"
<https://youtu.be/KaOC9danxNo>

Jack King Voice of Apollo Launch Control Interviewed on the Anniversary of Apollo 11 Launch During Shuttle Flight STS-127 Launch
<https://youtu.be/vrs4P0rIdMg>

Jack King Apollo 11 Launch Commentary
<https://youtu.be/i3Qpel0kEMQ>

Miss Universe Gloria Diaz
<https://youtu.be/96wwQsrj1fA>