

**AEDC Support to the Apollo Program in the 1960's:  
UTSI Apollo 11 50th Anniversary Celebration,  
July 12, 2019 in the UTSI Dining Hall at 1:30 pm**



*Ad astra per aspera*

By

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NASA asked the USAF to be able to occupy some of AEDC's unique test facilities throughout most of the decade of the 1960's in support of what would be the Lunar Landing in the Apollo 11 mission. The Government-contractor team at AEDC supported all the incremental Apollo flights leading up to Apollo 11 in critical qualification and Space environmental testing, helping solve critical problems that arose. The story of AEDC's support by so many people at the time is recounted from his own eyes and experience at AEDC.

**Nathan Sam Dougherty (Tullahoma, TN)** is working on the Staff of the Propulsion Systems Engineering and Integration Discipline Lead Engineer for NASA's Space Launch System at Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, AL. He serves as the Propulsion Member of the Avionics and Software Control Board for this rocket which will take Astronauts back to the Moon and then to Mars under the Artemis Program. Having spent most of his working career in human space flight, he graduated from the University of Tennessee with a BS degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1962 and then from the University of Tennessee Space Institute with an Aerospace MS Degree in 1970. He began as a Co-op Student at AEDC in 1958 where he worked in testing for 22 years. He retired as Senior Manager of Mechanical/ Structures Engineering for the Boeing Company, Huntsville Site, in 2002 after having worked on the Apollo, Space Shuttle, and International Space Station in various Lead Engineer and Management positions for Sverdrup, Rockwell International, then Boeing. He is presently employed for NASA by ERC, Inc., through the Jacobs Space Exploration Group in Huntsville, where he is listed as a national expert in the field of rocket propulsion testing. He serves on the University of Tennessee Industry Board of Advisors for the Mechanical, Aerospace, and Biomedical Engineering Department. He is an Associate Fellow in the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and has been a member since 1967. He was a member of AEDC's test team that supported the Apollo Program in the 1960's and tells the story done by so many AEDC employees at the time through his own eyes and experience.