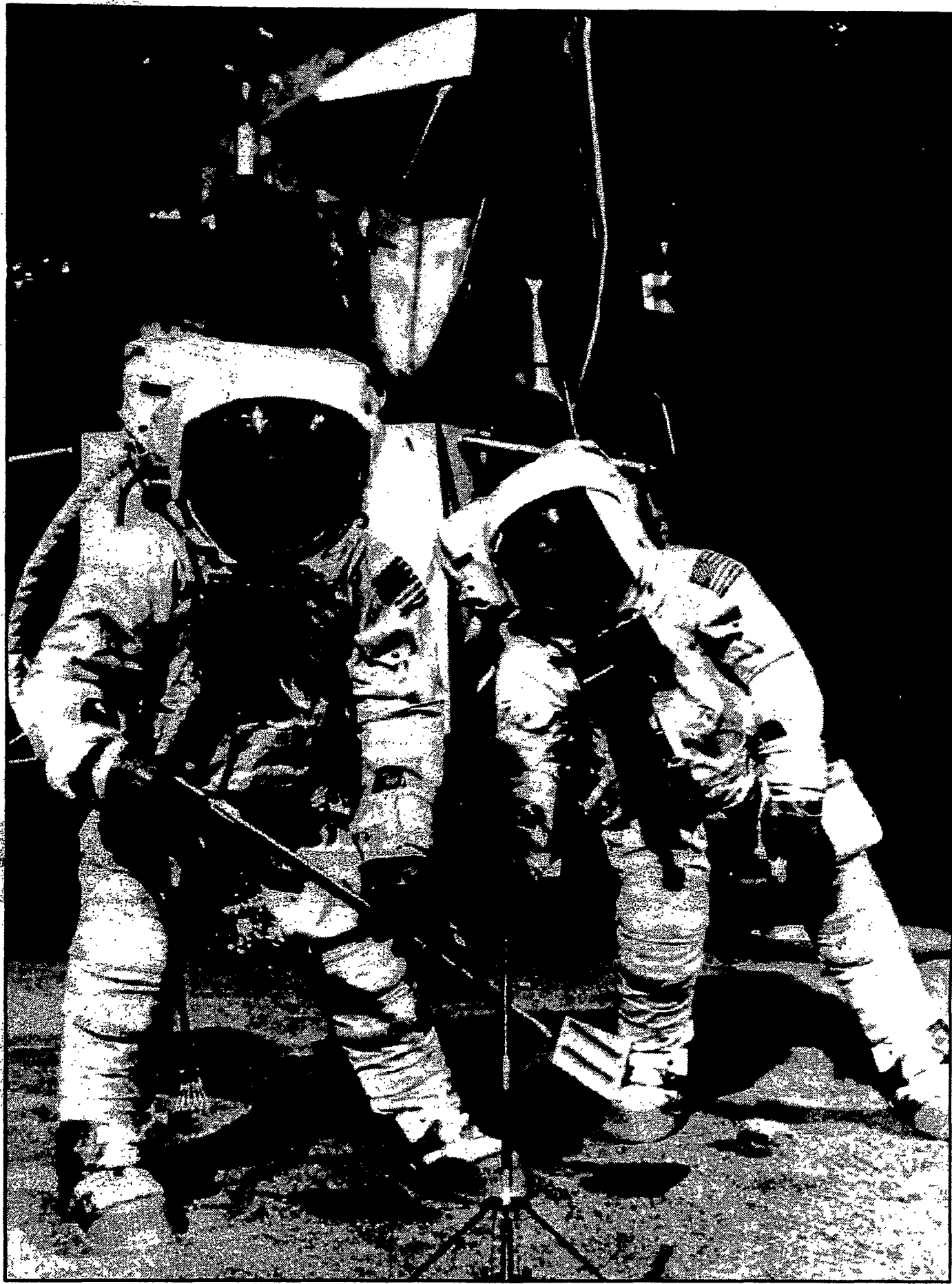


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Prior to their July 16, 1969, journey to the moon with Michael Collins, Apollo II Lunar Module Pilot Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin (left) and Commander Neil Armstrong practice lunar surface activities at the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston.



Apollo II astronauts (from left) Neil A. Armstrong, Michael Collins, and Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin are shown in their spacesuits. Armstrong became the first man to set foot on the moon on July 21, 1969.

Man on the Moon 25

YEARS LATER

Elmira native to become shuttle's first female pilot

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

HOUSTON — Man on the moon. At the time, the phrase had a nice ring to it.

But 25 years after the historic Apollo XI journey, women as well as men are taking leading roles in outer-space expeditions.

And one of those women is still somewhat surprised that this transition has occurred so quickly.

Lt. Col. Eileen Collins recalls Apollo XI as being "really inspiring," but she also knew that at that moment in American history "it was not an op-

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tion" for women to fly in space.

"No way," the Elmira native said in a recent telephone interview from NASA headquarters in Houston. "As a child I was very interested in space travel. But if you had told me 25 years ago that I'd be doing this, I would have laughed."

Currently, Collins is preparing to do what no woman has ever done. This coming winter, the 37-year-old Collins is scheduled to become the first woman ever to pilot a National Aeronautics
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Part of Lt. Col. Eileen Collins' astronaut survival training at Vance Air Force Base in Oklahoma included this simulated ejection from a T-38 aircraft.

NASA