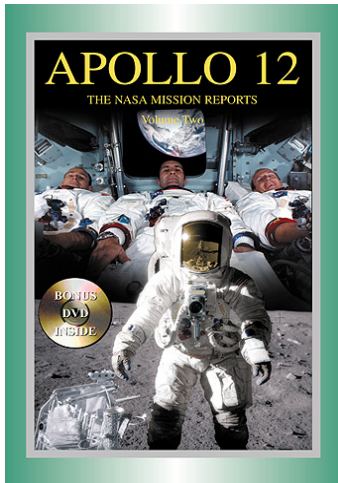


Online Book review July, 2005 at *International* **SPACE REVIEW**

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Apollo 12: The NASA Mission Reports Volume 2, Robert Godwin (Ed), Apogee Books, Collectors Guide Publishing Inc (<http://www.cgpublishing.com>), 2004, 192pp, US\$24.95; Can\$31.95; £15.95 ISBN 1-894959-16-7 [softback]

What does one say about this excellent series of books that has not already been said? Volume 1 of the Apollo 12 book, just one of the many on the NASA manned space missions, was published in 1999. Now it is time for Volume 2. In common with the remainder, it reproduces original mission reports from the NASA archives, allowing us effectively to relive those heady days of the 1960s and 70s when mankind was actually going somewhere in space.

This book comprises a report on the

events of the Apollo 12 mission from launch, when the Saturn V rocket was struck by lightning, to the "pinpoint landing" through dust that obscured the landing site "from 40 feet away".

It also covers the return of moon rocks and parts of the Surveyor 3 probe, which had landed there earlier. The fact that an Apollo lunar module could be targeted to land within walking distance of another spacecraft is one of the unsung achievements of the Apollo programme.

Unfortunately, the results of the analysis of parts of the Surveyor's camera (which allegedly contained bacteria transported from Earth two years and seven months earlier) are not included here. But since the book contains no index, it is difficult to be sure.

The piece de resistance of this series, however, is the DVD enclosed within the back cover. This one includes "unique synchronised film and audio of the lunar landing, rendezvous and docking", as well as training footage, launch footage and "multi-camera EVA film".

The amazing thing is that the publisher can deliver this, and a book, for much the same price as a feature film on DVD. Computer technology has always reaped benefits for the space programme, but with the Apogee series the benefits are delivered directly to our desktops.

Thoroughly recommended. <<<

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