FILE TITLE: 1st Person to Simulate a Trip to the Moon: A1C Donald G. Farrell

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DID YOU KNOW THAT...

ALMOST 33 YEARS AGO, A TWENTY-THREE-YEAR-OLD ENLISTED PERSON TOOK A TRIP TO THE MOON. ON 9 FEBRUARY 1958, AIRMAN FIRST CLASS DONALD G. FARRALL, A NEW YORKER FROM THE BRONX, "TOOK OFF" FOR THE FIRST SIMULATED TRIP TO THE MOON. HIS TRAIL BLAZING ACHIEVEMENT WAS COMPLETED AT THE AIR FORCE SCHOOL OF AVIATION MEDICINE, RANDOLPH AFB, TEXAS. AIRMAN FARRELL'S SEVEN-DAY MISSION WAS HAILED BY SCIENTISTS AS EVIDENCE THAT MAN IS EMOTIONALLY EQUIPPED FOR SPACE TRAVEL, AND CAN ENDURE SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN AN ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT IMPAIRING HIS NORMAL FUNCTIONS. AIRMAN FARRELL'S MISSION MARKED A GIANT STEP FORWARD IN THE DRIVE TO DESIGN A CABIN IN WHICH A MAN CAN LIVE COMFORTABLY FOR LONG FLIGHTS INTO SPACE.
FARRELL, ‘SPACEMAN’

Wezied into a barrel-shaped steel chamber amid a nightmare of instruments and controls, Airman First Class Donald G. Farrell "took off" for the first simulated trip to the moon on February 9, 1950. Place: the Air Force School of Aviation Medicine, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. Seven days later Farrell came back to earth. He was "a little tired," but physically and mentally in good shape.

Air Force scientists hailed Airman Farrell’s trail-blazing achievement as evidence that man is emotionally equipped for space travel, that he can endure solitary confinement in an artificial environment without impairing his normal functions. His seven-day stint marked a giant step forward from previous tests of twenty-four hours duration in the drive to design a cabin in which a man can live comfortably for long flights into space.

Although Airman Farrell was not exposed to acceleration, weightlessness and cosmic rays, he lived under the same lonely, hemmed-in conditions a space flyer would encounter. There were some "rough spots"—the...