

## National Hero

**Gagarin Yuri Alexeevich** by Sergei Anokhin and Danil Grigoriev



Yuri Gagarin became the first human in space and the first human to orbit the Earth.

Yuri Gagarin was born in 1934 in a peasant family. Yuri was the third of four children. His elder sister helped raise him while his parents worked.



Yuri Gagarin with his parents. The house they lived in the village of Klushino



During the Second World War there was an episode that Yuri often recalled. A Soviet pilot was shot down over their occupied village. Yuri and other boys rescued the pilot and hid him. It was very dangerous because Nazis killed the people who helped Red Army men. This episode deeply influenced him and from that time he really wanted to be a pilot and did everything to make sure that his dream would come true.

So he entered military flight training at pilot's school. He was an intelligent and hard working student and graduated the school with honors.

Gagarin was assigned to the airbase close to Norwegian border where terrible weather made flying risky.



In 1960 after an extensive search Yuri Gagarin was selected with 19 other astronauts for the Soviet space programme. When his colleges were asked to vote for the member of the

programmed to fly first, 17 out of 20 voted for Gagarin. Gagarin had all the important qualifications: excellent health, courage, resolution, faith in the success of the flight, patriotism.

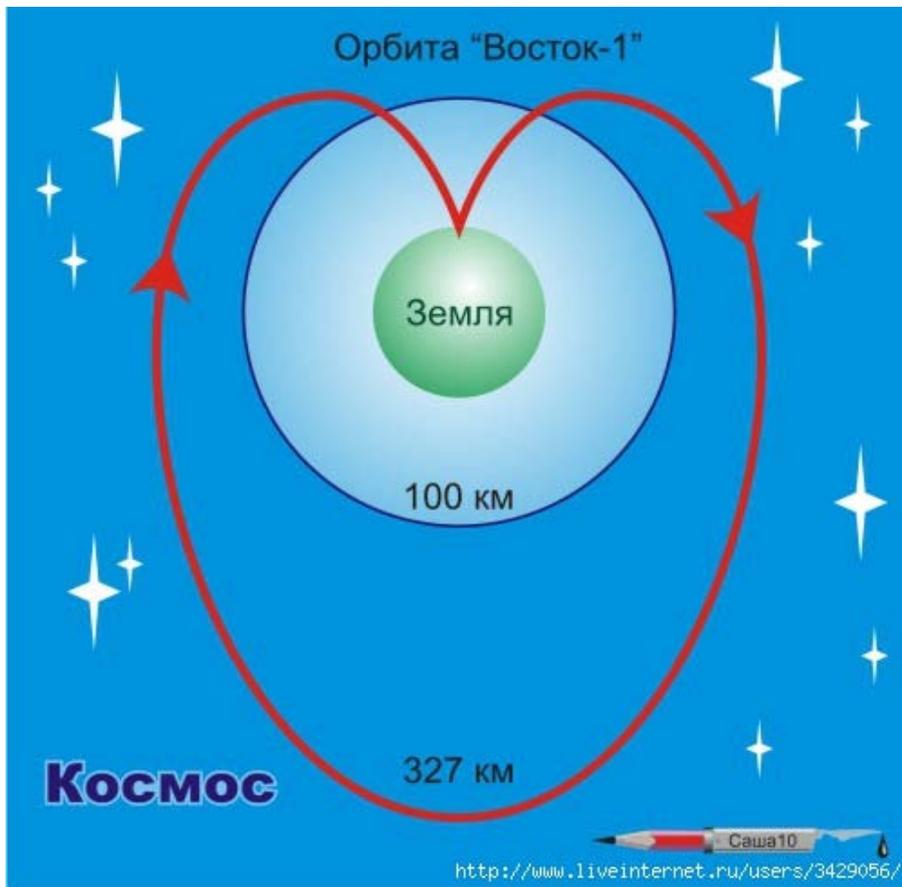
After the famous flight on April the 12th, 1961 Yuri Gagarin became a world-wide celebrity.



Gagarin in the spaceship Vostok I



The launch of the spaceship VOSTOK I



Yuri Gagarin toured widely abroad.



But he remained the same modest, friendly, simple, charming, kind and cheerful man as he was known before. When he visited Manchester in the United Kingdom it was pouring, however, Gagarin insisted that the car hood remain back so that the cheering crowds could catch a glimpse of him. Gagarin stated, "If all these people have turned out to welcome me and can stand in the rain so can I." He refused an umbrella and remained standing in his open-top Bentley so that the cheering crowds could still see him.

Yuri Gagarin had a family: a wife and two daughters. He loved them dearly. Whenever he could he gave them all his time.



One of Gagarin's notable traits was his smile. Sergei Korolyov one of the masterminds behind the early years of the Soviet space programme later said that Gagarin possessed a smile that lit up the Cold War.



Yuri Gagarin died in 1968 when a MiG 15 training jet he was piloting crashed. His friend Alexei Leonov the first man to conduct a spacewalk said: “Yuri was the exemplary man of that era – the model of his time. He called us to space.”



Alexei Leonov

We think he was a great guy and if he were here today he'd still be a top bloke.

Wikipedia

Danilkin L. Yuri Gagarin. —M.:Young Guard,2011. — 512 c.