AN INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY

SURVIVAL IN SPACE

The Apollo 13 Mission

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Barrington Stoke

In memory of the victims of
Dora-Mittelbau and Peenemünde

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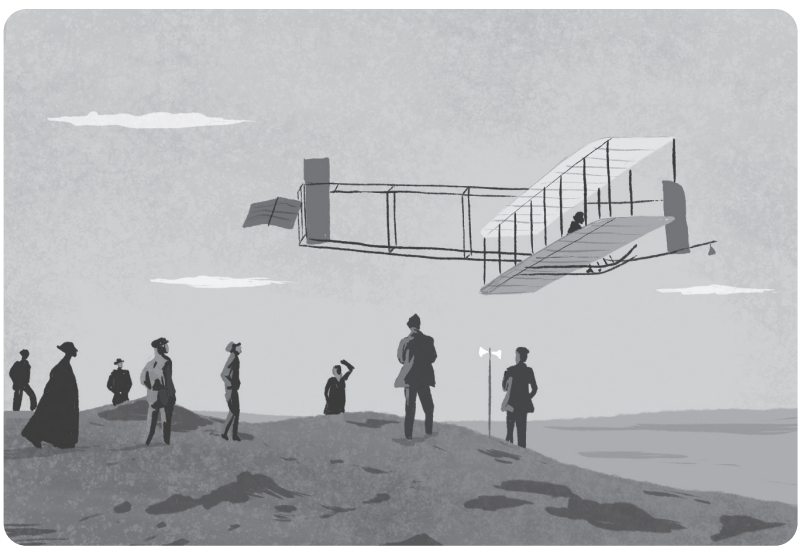
THE RACE FOR SPACE



For hundreds of years men and women have gazed up at the Moon. Many have wanted to travel there, to find out what it is like. They thought their wish to take to the skies and fly was just an impossible dream. Some people tried to strap wings to their arms or made

kites and colourful balloons to carry them up into the clouds.

The first real aeroplane was built by two American brothers called Orville and Wilbur Wright. It had flimsy wings of wood and cotton, and a small petrol engine. In 1903 their home-made machine flew for just 12 seconds before it came back down to earth with a bump. It had travelled less than 40 metres, but that was enough. The brothers had made history, and the age of powered flight had begun.

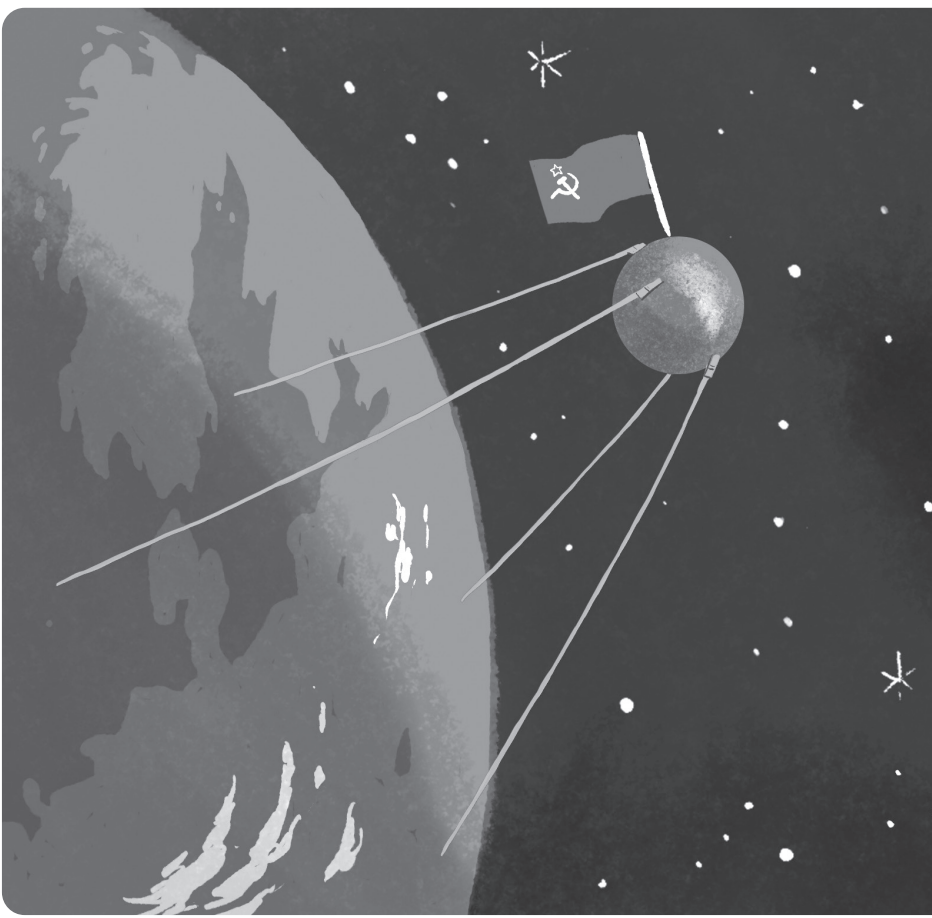


A few years later a Frenchman called Louis Blériot flew across the sea all the way to England, a distance of more than 20 miles. Soon bigger aircraft were built to carry passengers even longer distances, and more powerful jet engines meant humans could fly faster than any bird ever had. In the 1940s a bomber flew non-stop around the world, and in 1956 an English pilot called Peter Twiss became the first person to travel at more than 1,000 mph.

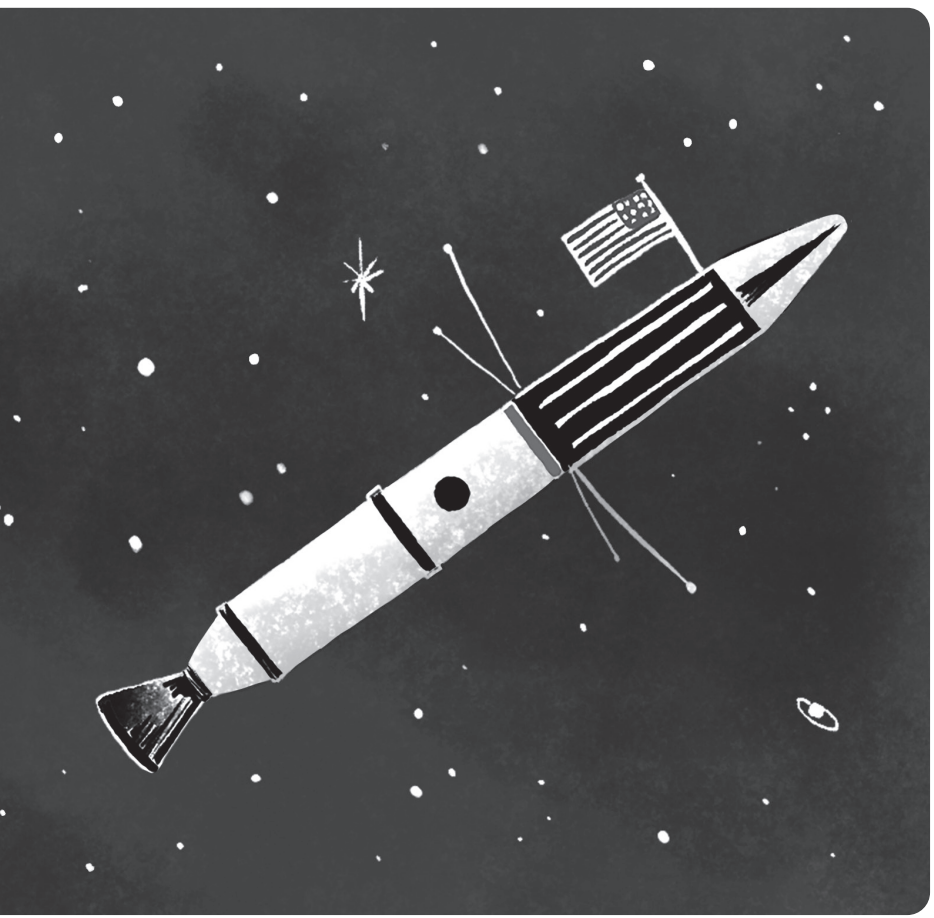
The public were excited about these daring record-breakers, and before long people began to think about travelling even further, maybe even out into space. Lots of rockets had been launched during the Second World War, but no one flew in them – they were just weapons, fired at the enemy. Once the war ended, people hoped the same technology could be used for science and exploration. Humans had spent so long looking up at the Moon, and now people

began to dream that, one day, it might be possible to actually fly there ...

Scientists and engineers started to build bigger and more powerful rockets to travel out into space. Experts came from many different countries, but America and Russia led the way.



What became known as the Space Race really got going when the Russians launched their first satellite. This was called *Sputnik*, and shortly afterwards the Americans launched a rival satellite called the *Explorer 1*. The competition between the two countries got more and more intense as each tried to out-do the other.

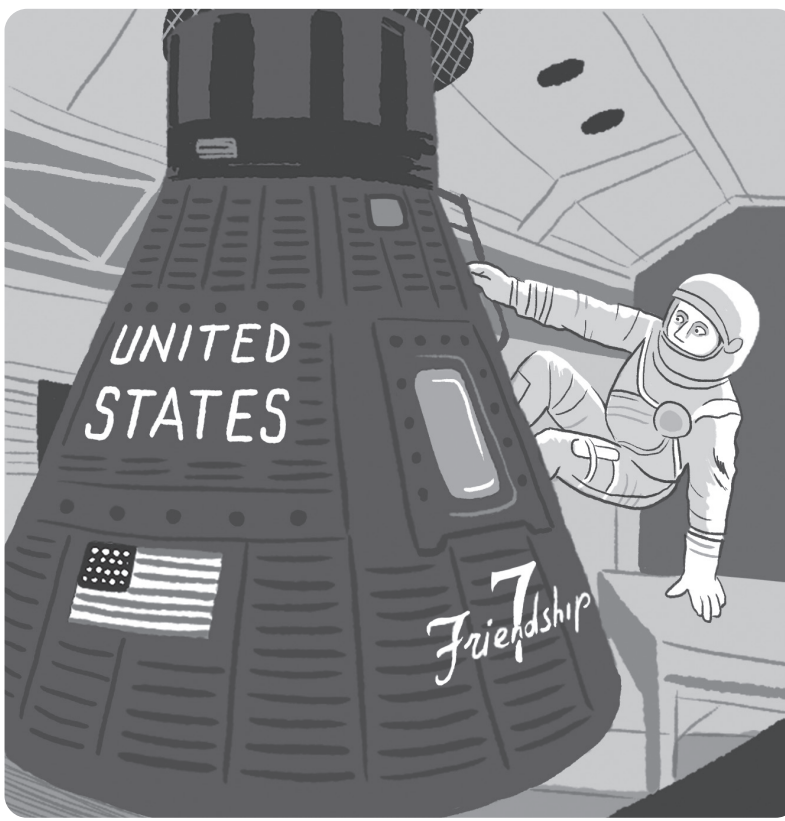


In 1957 a Russian dog called Laika became the first animal to orbit the Earth. Other rockets carried rats and mice into space, as well as frogs, flies, spiders, cats and chimpanzees. Even tortoises and rabbits travelled on rockets, but it took until 1961 before anyone dared to



send a human. The first man was Russia's Yuri Gagarin, who spent a total of 108 minutes in space. This was long enough for him to fly right around our planet, which he said looked beautiful from so far away. The first woman in space was also Russian. She was called Valentina Tereshkova and made her trip in 1963.

The Americans raced to catch up with Gagarin's great achievement. They did it less than a year later with a spacecraft so small that astronaut John Glenn couldn't even stand up inside it. He orbited the Earth three times in less than five hours, and shortly afterwards President John F. Kennedy made a famous



speech announcing that the Americans were planning a mission to the Moon. This news was incredibly exciting, but many scientists were worried about how long it would take to fly that far and how many billions of dollars it would cost.

In fact, the Americans had already sent rockets to the Moon, even before the president made his speech, but these didn't have anyone on board. Flying even an unmanned rocket all the way to the Moon was expensive and very difficult. Engineers knew that with a crew on board it would be much, much harder. In order to send a crew to the Moon they had to design a spaceship that could land safely and then bring the astronauts back home again afterwards. The president knew this too, but he was determined America was going to do it. He said the journey would be one of the greatest adventures of all time, and more than half a century later we can see that he was right.