

Yuri Gagarin

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Biography: Yuri Gagarin, cosmonaut

Born: 9 March 1934

Birthplace: Klushino, Russia

Died: 27 March 1968
(airplane crash)

Best Known As: The first
human in space



Early life



Yuri Gagarin was born in the village of Klushino near Gzhatsk (now in Smolensk Oblast, Russia), on 9 March 1934. The adjacent town of Gzhatsk was renamed Gagarin in 1968 in his honor. His parents, Alexei Ivanovich Gagarin and Anna Timofeyevna Gagarina, worked on a collective farm.

Career in the Soviet space program

Space flight



He was launched in Vostok 1 on the planned date, and during the crowded 1 hour 48 minutes of his single orbit of the earth he proved that man could survive in space and perform useful tasks. His mission ended at 10:55 A.M., when he landed safely in a field near Saratov

Career in the Soviet space program

Fame and later life



After the flight, Gagarin became a worldwide celebrity, touring widely with appearances in Italy, Great Britain, Germany, Canada, and Japan to promote the Soviet achievement.

Death and legacy



On 27 March 1968, while on a routine training flight, he and flight instructor Vladimir Seryogin died in a MiG-15UTI crash near the town of Kirzhach. Gagarin and Seryogin were buried in the walls of the Kremlin on Red Square.

Death and legacy



American astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin left one of Gagarin's medals on the moon as a tribute. The cosmonaut training center where he had first trained was named after him. A crater on the moon bears his name, as does Gagarin Square in Moscow with its soaring monument, along with a number of monuments and streets in cities throughout Russia. At Baikonur, a reproduction of his training room is traditionally visited by space crews before a launch. Russians celebrate Cosmonaut Day on April 12 every year in honor of Gagarin's historic flight.