



**100 STORIES ABOUT DOCKING AND OTHER ADVENTURES IN SPACE AND ON EARTH (*English Edition*)**, by Vladimir Sergeevich Syromiatnikov (with Preface by Academician Boris Chertok and Index), 2005, 630p., Universitetskaya Kniga, Moscow, Hard Cover \$85.00 ISBN 5-98699-014-5

In July 2005 the space community celebrated worldwide the 30th anniversary of Apollo and Soyuz docking in orbit. This unprecedented project (well known under the abbreviation of ASTP) is described in the book by Vladimir S. Syromiatnikov, one of the leaders of the Project. Many interesting and not widely known facts, and even some of those not put forth before, are revealed. In 2003 a book under the title *100 Stories about Docking and other Adventures in Space and on Earth*, Volume 1 – Twenty Years back (Moscow, University Books), was published, originally in Russian, the native language of its author – Vladimir Sergeevich Syromiatnikov, one of the leading experts of Russian cosmonautics.

**Now in English!**

Two years later, the book, translated by the Author, under the title *100 Stories about Docking and other Adventures in Space and on Earth* (Volume 1 – 20 Years back) was published in English. In this 1st Volume of the *Stories* the Author narrates on the previous space projects of the Cold War that had been carried out in the former Soviet Union and in the US, and that preceded ASTP, the project of detente.

**About the Author and the Book:**

Vladimir S. Syromiatnikov is a Lenin Prize Winner, Doctor of engineering science, Professor, Distinguished scientist of the Russian Federation, full member of International Astronautic Academy, Fellow of AIAA; the list of his titles and merits is actually longer. Still, he, being a father of all docking systems for spacecraft, including the American Space Shuttle and the European ATV (Automated Transfer Vehicle), continues his activity at RSC Energia. Within the Rocketry & Space community the designer is well known worldwide, but the most comprehensive information about his personality can be found only in this book.

The author of the book was lucky enough to join Academician Sergey Korolev, a founder of rocketry in the former Soviet Union, just a year and a half before Sputnik was launched. He, as a young engineer, took part in the development of the first ICBM, the now legendary 7-Semyorka launch vehicle, and the first artificial satellites. Later he became more and more involved in the design and development activity of many manned and unmanned projects, including Gagarin's Vostok spacecraft and the Soyuz spacecraft. Eventually, the young engineer would become a leading expert in orbital docking and play a key role in the Salyut orbital station program, and later, the Mir orbital complex and ISS (International Space Station). This kind of job experience permanently widened the author's scope of activity and his range of engineering vision; actually, this finally made it possible for him to write this book. On becoming an experienced engineer, scientist and designer, the author of *100 Stories* decided to reinterpret a lot of projects and many programs that were realized in the Soviet R&ST by his colleagues with his personal participation many years ago and during more recent times. Another unique feature of the book is that the author describes, not only the Russian projects, but also the rival projects (Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo) that were being developed in parallel by the Americans during a period of sharp competition during the cold war era.

Relatively early Syromiatnikov got exposed to American astronautics. In the early 1970s, during a so-called détente supported by President Nixon, he began to "*dock*" with NASA people, first on Earth in order to link cosmonauts and astronauts in space later. The designer of the docking devices became one of the leading participants of the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project (ASTP). This international activity provided him with a unique opportunity to look inside the "kitchen" of the former rivals of Soviet Cosmonautics during the lunar race and potential enemy in rocketry-nuclear war. Half of the stories in this book are devoted to this unusual cooperative-competitive project and are extremely interesting by themselves. This is a narration about technical, political and humanitarian aspects of unprecedented program; about active people and events, including what happened during the flight in orbit and in returning from space, about other interesting and instructive episodes, about accomplishments and consequences.

What the author has written about himself, about his leaders and colleagues, Russian people and later about Americans, no one from outside, no professional writer, is able to narrate. A vision from inside at what engineers are doing during development of high technology is very valuable indeed. The author manages to tell interesting stories about these national and international projects unlike anyone else. All this information is presented with interesting details, including various interconnections of space technology, high politics and personal fate. Even space engineers don't fully realize that such a single piece of space technology as the docking system, however complicated it can be, is only a visible part of the iceberg. An invisible part of this iceberg, processes of space system development, includes a lot of actions of many people, unusual events rather often, sometimes quite remote from engineering activity. This kind of description adds a special flavor to the *Stories* and provides an opportunity to the reader to have an inside look into personal relationships and the destiny of many participants of space projects. These events are connected with all stages of our past: the cold war, the period of the thaw, detent and another phase of confrontation, and finally a kind of partnership between Russia and the USA.

On the pages of the book, the reader will encounter many outstanding characters of Russian cosmonautics beginning with Korolev and his followers (Mishin, Glushko, Semenov, and even Sevastianov), and American astronautics (Gilruth and Kraft, Low and von Braun), as well as legendary politicians of these countries (Khrushchev and Kennedy, Nixon. and Brezhnev). The author not only describes many events he personally participated in, he provides a comprehensive analysis of those undertakings. The stories are colored by an optimistic sense of humor. A story under the title *Entering the English Speaking World* tells how the author, at the age of 33, commenced a kind of remarkable journey of his, seemingly by chance, but quite providentially — it would turn out to be his odyssey as long as for another half of his life. Step by step the English language became his professional tool in cooperation with American astronautics and later worldwide. Eventually these efforts led him to a courageous decision to translate his *Stories* into English. Of course, it took a lot of effort and time of the author; but with the help of his colleagues and friends, Americans, first of all, it brought quite outstanding results.

So, here it is: *100 Stories about Docking and other Adventures in Space and on Earth* — in English!