

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CULINARY BIO-ETHICS

2017: SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT I

Professor Thrupiece and the Space Race

A Cold War Story

Boris Rez'bovayakost'

with

Clinton Skywalker



Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth ...
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

Professor Brian Thrupiece
(*Collected Poems and Other Juvenalia*)





The Right Stuff: *“Was Lenin greater than Stalin? Or was Stalin greater than Lenin? History will judge. I say Thrupiece was greater than both and History will agree.”*

Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev, Address to *The Dallas Association of Radio and Television Retailers*, Dallas Chamber of Commerce, 22 November 1963

The authors would like to acknowledge the kind contributions of:

Mrs Amanda J Threadbone

Pyotr Svetlanov, President of the Russian (formerly Soviet) Space Agency

Jim, Tim, Tommy, Tatum, Tina and Tom at NASA [You guys are great!]

The European Space Agency for keeping the field clear for others

Наталия & Евгений Резьбоваякость [*“Your Dependable Post-Soviet Pharmacists”*]

They further acknowledge financial assistance from the Kremlin Bank in meeting the cost of overnight accommodation (twin beds, modest breakfast, no newspaper).

Editor's Note:

It goes without saying that the appearance of a volume on a subject as sensitive as that addressed here requires the co-operation and, moreover, the personal bravery of a significant number of people, many of whom have risked all to tell their part of a truly remarkable story. Colleagues in the West (as well as Comrades in the East) - many sworn to secrecy on pain of death or worse (compulsory vegetarianism for example) - have, little by little, helped piece together a story, the almost terrifying significance of which was - at the time of its unfolding - unknown to any living soul save those who knew all along (see below). Assembling the materials for this volume has been akin to solving a clueless crossword puzzle whilst simultaneously completing a one colour jigsaw in the pitch dark and all amidst the fog of war: and no less a war for being cold: indeed so cold that a Siberian gulag might seem tropical by comparison. In short: thanks are owed, debts have been accrued, homage must be paid, settles must be scored¹. *“Excreta disperget in stercore percusserit evacuatione”*!

As I was moved to write in a previous volume of Thrupiece-related biographical exposition: *“Readers will again be struck by Professor Thrupiece’s uncanny ability to find himself in the right place at the right time and some will perhaps conclude that more than coincidence is involved. During his lifetime, stories frequently circulated that the Professor was in the pay of an agency (MI6, CIA, Mossad - and even bizarrely the KGB) but no proof has ever been advanced to substantiate these claims”* - that is until now. For here at last we meet in full profile Professor Thrupiece the *Internationalist*. An agent (perhaps) of many but a creature of none; he alone was capable of seeing the value of covert collaboration, of playing both ends against the middle (and pocketing two retainers in the process) in order to secure for the greater good of mankind - *sine terminus* - the conquest of frontiers far wider than those which bound our small but restless earth and far deeper than our small and clueless minds can properly apprehend.

A shorter version of this article appeared in the Autumn 2016 edition of *South East Dorset Life* and is here re-printed (in full) with the kind co-operation of the publishers, Threadbone Newspapers Ltd.

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thrupiecedigitalmedia

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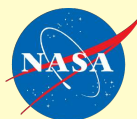
¹ *“Settles must be scored”* refers to an old Russian habit of making scratches on a settee to record a debt (see Pushkin *passim*)

A NOTE ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS: The photographs assembled here for the first time have been sourced from many individuals and organisations, several of whom/which have requested anonymity. They will not, therefore, be named here (though a full list is available on application). Readers will further understand that the quality of the original materials varies enormously so that it has not always been possible to reproduce them with the startling clarity normally expected of the Threadbone Press's exacting *Living Presence Digirestore*™ optical processing technologies. Nevertheless the intrinsic historical value of even the poorest image is such that we have preferred to publish them "*as they are*" and allow the reader to decide their merits for him or herself. As the Professor himself might have said: **удачи** (or, for those unfamiliar with the Russian tongue: "udachi").

Mrs Amanda J Threadbone
Great Heaving | Dorset
April 2017



РОСКОСМОС

A PARTNERSHIP
MADE IN SPACE

RUSSIAN (FORMERLY SOVIET) SPACE AGENCY

From: The Desk of Yevgeny Svetlanov | President

Чрезвычайно радостно слышать благодарность и восхищение выдающегося профессора Брайана Трупцеца, уважаемого коллектива с запада, который помогает сделать успех советской космической программы успешным во всем мире. Без него и его испытаний мы наверняка будем отставать, и США украдут все, включая много космических сокровищ.

Вместо этого известный друг советского друга Фиделя Касто неоднократно приезжает в СССР, чтобы помочь бедным маленьким русским мальчикам совершить большое путешествие в космос - запустить, погулять, взять собак и иметь много связей со стратосферой.

Мы очень любим профессора и хотим, чтобы его включили в гробницу с Лениным и другими великими, чтобы показать, насколько он герой для нас всех. Как мы любим, как мы смеемся и все в очень плотной космической капсуле.

Удовольствие в этом - все мое. Надеюсь, ты тоже получишь. Моя сестра доступна, хотя у нее очень больная бабушка и ей нужны хорошие западные, чтобы помочь. Она красивая и делает большинство вещей за наличные.

ЕВГЕНИЙ

Chrezvychayno radostno slyshat' blagodarnost' i voskhishcheniye vydayushchegosya professora Brayana Truptseza, uvazhayemogo kolektiva s zapada, kotoryy pomagayet sdelat' uspekhnost' sovetskoy kosmicheskoy programmy uspehnym vo vsem mire. Bez nego i yego ispytaniy my navernyaka budem otstavat', i SSHA ukradut vse, vkluyuchaya mnogo kosmicheskikh sokrovishch.

Vmesto etogo izvestnyy drug sovetskogo druga Fidelya Kasto neodnokratno priyeezhayet v SSSR, chtoby pomoch' bednym malen'kim russkim mal'chikam sovershit' bol'shoye puteshestviye v kosmos - zapustit', pogulyat', vzyat' sobak i imet' mnogo svyazey so stratosferoy.

My ochen' lyubim professora i khotim, chtoby yego vkluyuchili v grobnitsu s Leninym i drugimi velikimi, chtoby pokazat', naskol'ko on geroy dlya nas vseh. Kak my lyubim, kak my smeyemsiya i vse v ochen' plotnoy kosmicheskoy kapsule.

Udovol'stviye v etom - vse moye. Nadeyus', ty tozhe poluchish'. Moya sestra dostupna, khotya u ney ochen' bol'naya babushka i yey nuzhny khoroshiye zapadnyye, chtoby pomoch'. Ona krasivaya i delayet bol'shinstvo veshchey za nalichnyye.

Yevgeny

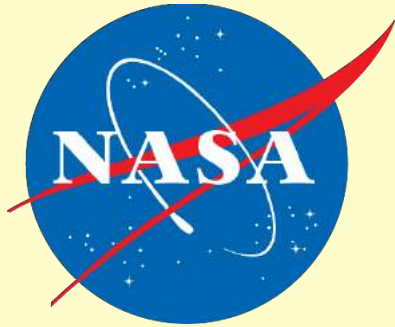
It is overjoying amidst heavy responsibility to record gratitude and admiration to eminent Professor Brian spirited collaborator from west who help to make soviet space programme big success in whole world knowingly. Without him and his trials we shall surely be lagged and the US will steal everything including many space treasure and Laika.

Instead secret big friend of Soviet friend Fidel Casto comes many times to USSR to help poor small Russian boys to make big adventure in space - launching, walking, taking dogs and having many intercourses with the stratosphere.

We are loving professor very much and want for him to be enabled in tomb with Lenin and other greats to show how much he is hero for us all here. Weeping sorrow is dead in Switzerland. How we love, how we laugh and all in very tight space capsule without no toilet facility.

The pleasure for this is all mine. But I hope you get some too. My sister is available though she is tender for grandmother very sick and needs nice western man to help. She is pretty and do most things for cash. Please send Bank details. Your friend and also Professor friend.

Yevgeny



A PARTNERSHIP
MADE IN SPACE

NASA, AVENUE Q, WASHINGTON

From: The Desk of Clinton Skywalker | Director Space Programmes NASA

I agree with Yevgeny and would dearly like to meet his sister. My Bank Account details are:

NAME [REDACTED] BANK [REDACTED] SORT CODE [REDACTED]
ACCOUNT NUMBER [REDACTED]

Love

Clinton

Professor Thrupiece in Space: A Cold War Story

Boris Rez'bovakost²

with

Clinton Skywalker

Background:

Perhaps nothing symbolises more starkly the intense rivalry between East and West from the late 1950s though to the late 1980s than *“the space race”*. The object of bitter competition (as each side sought to establish primacy and, with it, stake territorial rights) the race to put the first man into space and later on the Moon led both the US and the USSR to develop and master technologies hitherto unknown as well as seek ways to plunder each other's secrets whilst trying desperately to protect their own. If war famously advances Science, then a cold wars teaches significant lessons in the meaning, discovery and obfuscation of truth. Professor Thrupiece found himself in the midst of the maelstrom but never wavered in his singleminded forensic pursuit of higher truths (frequently of a culinary-bioethical and occasionally of an micro electro-magnetic nature).

In perhaps his most memorable speech (drafted, it now seems clear, by a little known Culinary Bio-ethicists from the County of Dorset) President John Fitzgerald Kennedy announced on September 12 1962, his grand plan to charge NASA with the responsibility of getting an American to the Moon and landing him there within a decade. [The idea of getting him back came later but was, Professor Thrupiece noted *“a welcome addition”*.] *“We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy but because they are a tad tricky”*, Professor Thrupiece's original manuscript read (later amended to *“because they are hard”*; the words *“tad”* and *“tricky”* being considered by JFK's advisors *“tricky and a tad colloquial”*)³. Little could that unknown 22 year old would be Culinary Bioethicist from Dorset have known that, in addition to crafting the claim, he would come to assume a vital rôle in its achievement.



Hostilities Begin: *“We choose to go to the moon ...”*. Kennedy's great rallying call to US scientists, drafted it can now be confirmed by Professor Brian Thrupiece who can be seen smiling approvingly in the background.

² Boris Rez'bovakost is the Moscow Correspondent of *South East Dorset Life Magazine*. Clinton Skywalker makes his living somewhere in the United States and writes occasionally on topics of interest to himself (and few others).

³ Historians have since debated what the President might have been implying in the phrase *“and do other things”*. It is now generally agreed that he meant Marilyn Monroe who may, ironically, have been easy rather than hard.

Nor should we assume - as the few historians who have researched the matter have invariably assumed - that the Professor's work was known only to scientists in the free world. Indeed, no less a figure than Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1953 to 1964) and Premier (1958 to 1964) took a close interest in "*Comrade Thrupiece*" (a *nomen* which had already landed him in deep water during Senator McCarthy's *Un-American Activities* Investigations to which he was subject in 1955 aged only fifteen). Significantly it was Khrushchev's address to the *Dallas Association of Radio and Television Retailers* at the Chamber of Commerce on 22nd November 1963 in which he praised the Professor for his "*big fat balls assistance to the Soviet people*" which forever bound together the two men in the popular imagination and led many to hold Professor Thrupiece responsible for other events on that fateful day (<https://www.professorthrupiece.com/single-post/2017/04/07/Incriminating-Photograph-Finally-Exposed-As-Brilliant-Fake>)⁴.



Khrushchev addresses the *Dallas Association of Radio & Television Retailers* at the Chamber of Commerce on 22nd November 1963. Was his presence a Russian tactic to divert the attention of the CIA from their protection duties and was Professor Thrupiece in Khrushchev's audience or, as some claim, elsewhere in the city at the Texas School Book

In short, it is now clear that in the period 1957- 2000 Professor Thrupiece was an instrument not only of radical transformation in the field of rocket propulsion, astronaut nutrition and space technology more generally, but also a respected figure on both sides of the divide and (covertly) a critical go-between whose diplomacy and meta-ethical insights offered vital conceptual stability at a time of escalating international tension. The secret recipient of honours from several governments, he remains the only man to have been awarded both the Presidential and Congressional Medals on the one hand and the Supreme Soviet Award of "*Friend and Respected Big Balls Comrade of the USSR 5**" on the other. (The last of these entitled him to an annual three week time-share of a one room kitchenette in one of the less fashionable districts of Moscow as well as access to a Soviet "*mother of choice*" for two hours each Wednesday afternoon of his stay). (Information supplied by Oleg Dimiri Brianovich Thrupova-Legova whose mother was one such "*mother of choice*".)



Professor Thrupiece's Moscow Apartment c 1982, Note the luxury shower-head reserved only for those with the highest security clearance. According to the Professor, when placed next to the ear, it "*gave a very clear impression of what was going on next door*"

Piecing together fragments of evidence, Russian space expert Professor Pyotr Svetlanov and his American counterpart Dr Luna Landings-Module have offered the following description of the seven key phases of the Professor's out-of-earth journey: his "*Seven Ages of Spaceman*" or, more simply, his "*Life in Space*".

⁴ KGB Archives opened to scrutiny in 2012 suggest that Khrushchev went to his death believing Professor Thrupiece to be an American; further confirmation of the Professor's brilliant aptitude for misdirection when circumstance required it.

Early Steps I: The Thrupiecediet™ and Space Survival

The Professor almost certainly came to the attention of shadowy agencies worldwide when news leaked of his prodigal work on fluff - research first undertaken *“instinctively”* when he was 11 years old and discovered blue jumper fluff in his navel. It was later formalised in his Cambridge PhD thesis (1964). The veil of absolute secrecy was probably punctured in late 1951 when he was obliged to seek import licenses for specialist *“fluff and household dust handling technologies”* (UK Customs and Excise Certificate B649c October 1951) when equipping his private state-of-the-art laboratory (or shed) in his Batcombe back garden.



The Professor's first laboratories in his Garden in Batcombe. Nicknamed *“The Lair”* it was an unlikely place from which to begin the scientific exploration of the cosmos.

Given the now almost universal availability of thrupiecediet™ products (www.professorthrupiece.com/the-thrupiecediet) it is hard to imagine the extraordinary sensitivities attaching to this early work or its strategic value to governments of all descriptions in the early-mid 1950s. Without question it was subject from 1953 onwards to what MI5 Historian Ivor Notion has termed *“observation, oversight and espionage”* and there is reason to believe that interest intensified once the idea of manned space operations began to crystallise. Food which was almost without weight and had zero nutritional value was ideal for a space programme in which minimising rocket payload on take off and combating astronaut weight gain whilst *in* space was essential.

Tellingly, it was at about this time, according to Sissy Oats (the Thrupiece household's cleaner and grandmother-in-law of the 2007 thrupiecediet™ *Slimmer of the Year* Brenda Oats) that the thirteen year old “Professor” bought a new high-capacity vacuum cleaner from Harrods and asked her to estimate the likely weekly yield of *“fluff, dust and other particles”* from behind the extensive venetian blinds in the Batcombe Cricket Pavilion which she also serviced on Tuesdays. In that same year, he would also contact his second cousin Sheldon Threadbone (an undergraduate at Magdalene College, Cambridge) to see if he could source high quality undergraduate fluff on the industrial scale he would require if he was to satisfy his ever more demanding paymasters⁵.

Feeding astronauts and cosmonauts was critical if the ultimate goal of sending men into space for long periods was to be achieved; but it was only one element in a complex equation. How, for example, might men be propelled into space (and particularly into deeper space) in the first instance? This was the next question to which US and Soviet scientists applied themselves and here too, the Professor was critical: the unassuming teenager from Dorset had another ace up his sleeve.

⁵ *“I need as much fluff as you can muster and feel sure we can rely on the undergraduates of Cambridge to provide their fair share. Please secure at the earliest opportunity. That generated by philosophers and sociologists would be especially welcomed: it has an intellectual weightlessness and fuzz factor second to none”* (Letter to Sheldon Threadbone, September 1953; *Collected Letters Vol 8*)



Batcombe Cricket Pavilion: [TOP] c 1960 with Professor Thrupiece *"a useful leg spinner on a good day"* circled; [BOTTOM LEFT] as it is today and [BOTTOM RIGHT] detail of a venetian blind of the type sought by the young "Professor" Thrupiece, these *"abominations"* being *"poor aesthetically, unreliable functionally and questionable bio-ethically but damned good dust harbourers for all that"* [Thrupiece *Juvenalia* Vol 62 March-April 1963]



Critical Technology: [TOP] An Electrolux E75 of the type purchased by the young Professor Thrupiece in 1953 in an attempt to harvest increased quantities of fluff, lint and other types of household dust. The concept of the allergenic filter had not yet occurred to him. [BOTTOM] Elusian Type X4 vacuum cleaner sent to the Professor by Soviet authorities keen to assist him in his endeavours. *"Nothing is more important than good suction [Хорошее всасывани]"* Academician Karamazov assured him.

Early Steps II: Project “M” and the Search for Bio-ethically Sustainable Rocket Fuel

Alongside his continuing efforts to monetise the *thrupiecediet* and its space programme-related spinoffs, Professor Thrupiece had been commissioned by producers of the popular BBC Radio programme *The Archers* to write a series of scripts for Episodes 210-213 (week beginning 10th July 1954) and, typically, he had decided that, in order to find an authentic voice, he should research the “*topic de la jour*” as thoroughly as possible - it was Jack and Peggy’s problems with bovine flatulence. In this way he soon found himself deep into highly classified territory and what was to become known as *Project “M”* (later identified as the *Dorset Methane Protocol*). His interest in the matter was such that he found himself drawn to propose solutions to problems he had first identified only for their dramatic potential and the subsequent success of his work in this field meant that he soon found himself transferred to the BBC’s fledgling science programme “*Tomorrow’s World*” where, with the help of Professor Raymond Baxter, he turned an agricultural concern into a scientific obsession. From these humble beginnings the modern rocket launcher - capable of delivering hitherto unprecedented payloads (>2lbs) - was born. For the first time, travel into “*outer space*” was close to becoming a reality.

Evidence corroborating Professor Thrupiece’s early involvement in the development of bio-ethically sustainable fuels for both US and Russian launch vehicles only came to light in 2003 when Library of Congress researchers discovered correspondence between a Brian Thrupiece (7 The Terrace, Corfe Mullen, Dorset) and Academician Gerasimov (Office 2678564535 (First Floor) The Kremlin, Moscow). These had been acquired by the CIA in 1964 and deliberately mislabelled as *Oreo Mis-shapes*. It is clear from these exchanges that the Russians were well aware of the Professor’s breakthrough researches and were keen to source “*up to 2.4 million capitalist cubic litres of gas per month*”, something the Professor describes as “*a bit of a stretch*” as “*I have only four suitable animals at my immediate disposal*”. Whilst it is almost certain that this particular application had been far from the Professor’s mind when he first considered the efficacy of the methane source (he was trying to reduce his mother’s domestic gas bills, the family having received “*a bit of a shocker from the Dorset Gas Board following the cold winter of 1960*”) he nevertheless allowed negotiations to proceed and by the Spring of 1961 outline agreement had been reached. A trip to the USSR followed and from thence he travelled to East Germany, a place to which he would return many times in later life (see *The Professor and the Wall*, *Thrupiece Papers* 2016).

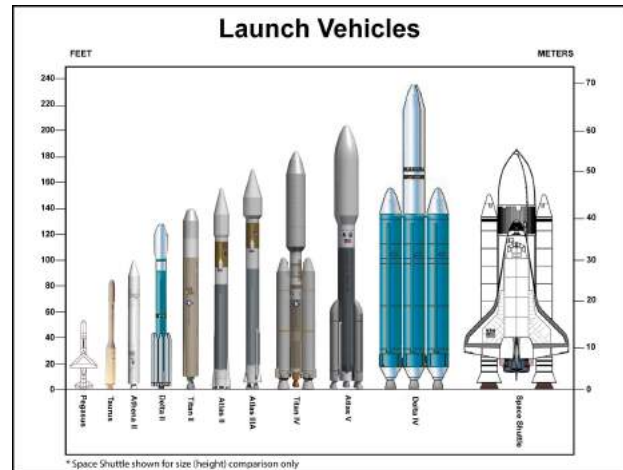
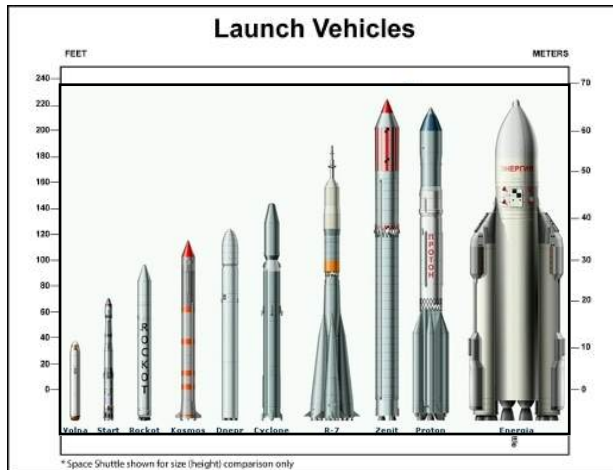


By the late 1954 Professor Thrupiece was close to perfecting a system of bovine wind capture. Here a technician puts the *Thrupiece Sleeve* through its paces. Its lineal successor the *Thrupiece Rotating Armatured Pipe* would soon revolutionise production, increasing output by 300% with a <2% loss through the *snugfit™* patent rubberised multi-nipple manifolds.

By the late 1954 Professor Thrupiece was close to perfecting a system of bovine wind capture. Here a technician puts the *Thrupiece Sleeve* through its paces. Its lineal successor the *Thrupiece Rotating Armatured Pipe* would soon revolutionise production, increasing output by 300% with a <2% loss through the *snugfit™* patent rubberised multi-nipple manifolds.

Keen as always to keep the conquest of space from falling unevenly into the hands of any particular interest, on his return to the UK, the Professor contacted US scientists, offering to share his knowledge and, in return for “*any Texas Longhorns (good farters only!) you can spare*”, “*such quantities of gas as may be left over after another space agency has been satisfied*”.

In retrospect all of this explains, of course, the startling similarities between the technologies deployed in early US (Pegasus, Taurus, Athena, Delta, Titan and Atlas) launch vehicles on the one hand and the equivalent Soviet models (Volna, Start, Rockot, Losmos, Daep, Cyclone, R7 and Zenit) on the other. “*They all bore the Thrupiece fingerprint*”, commented later collaborator Audrey Badminton-Court: “*he left it everywhere*”.



Space historians have often noted the striking resemblance between the delivery systems developed by NASA and the Russian Space Agency, attributing these similarities to the success of each side's sophisticated espionage efforts. In fact both space agencies used almost identical Thrupiece-developed fuels and propulsion systems manufactured to Professor Thrupiece's exacting standards and it is in this that the resemblance chiefly resides.

Never an idle pair of hands, Professor Thrupiece continued to refine his production techniques. In late 1962 he reported that he had now managed to modify the Longhorn's diet in such ways as to ensure that “*the gas is now delivered in wholly liquified form*”. With minor tweaks to the patent rubberised multi-nipple manifolds of the *Thrupiece Rotating Armatured Pipe*™ output soared. He was in business.



Rocket Fuel for Kids: was Professor Thrupiece using a private confessional code to disclose his twin inventions and thus help ease a troubled mind? [Thrupiece Food Organisation Advertisement 1959]

A Dog's Life

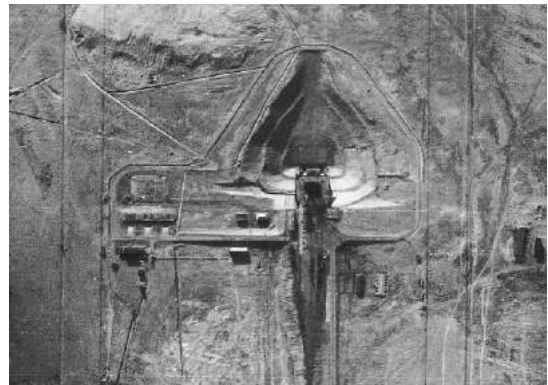
Now armed with a suitable propulsion system, the prospect of space travel came tangibly within reach. Questions however remained: could a man survive in space? Would he return to earth sane? Might orbiting the earth leave him permanently dizzy and unable properly to service his wife and/or loved one? Might his capacities be so impaired that he would be unable to play golf, visit his club and still make his intentions clear to the *au pair* once he got home? In short - as Lita Roza quite properly asked at the time in a question disguised as a song but really an early form of *vox pop*: How much *is* that doggy in the window?

Answers to most of these questions would come later, but the answer to the last came in 1957 - the doggy in the window was significantly more expensive than anyone in Moscow or Washington could afford and so it fell once again to Professor Thrupiece "*to source a suitable creature*". He turned - as he so often did in times of difficulty - to his cousin Mrs Edna Whisky McNightly whose prized husky *Minti* (the name was a diminutive of Hornimint, a popular chocolate lozengewith alleged aphrodisiacal properties) was, he recorded, "*of the right weight, size and availability*"

Offering to take *Minti* for "*a very long walk*" Professor Thrupiece smuggled the animal to the Baikonur Cosmodrome in southern Kazakhstan in early March 1957. Now better known as a fridge magnet, *Minti* was the first living creature knowingly sent into space, though revisionist historians have made a similar claim for Red-dotka a Russian Ladybird (immortalised as the icon for the Ladybone Children's Book series) who was inadvertently sent into space attached to a lettuce leaf in 1956. The leaf was recovered unharmed - but inedible - in the Kara Kum Desert (Turkmenistan) in 1962 but Red-dotka was, alas, nowhere to be found.



ABOVE: *Minti*, Mrs Whisky McNightly's prized husky was the first living creature to orbit the Earth. She did not live as long as officials led the world to believe. Launched on a one-way trip on board *Thrupnik 2* in November 1957, she was said to have died painlessly in orbit about a week after blast-off. Professor Thrupiece told his cousin that *Minti* had "*run after a rabbit whilst off the leash*" and was probably "*still somewhere in dense woodland just outside Dewlish*".



ABOVE: The Baikonur Cosmodrome in southern Kazakhstan scene of both *Minti's* and *Red-spotka's* last moments on earth.

LEFT: *Minti* Fridge Magnet: a Threadbone Corporation giveaway available in exchange for collectible tokens printed on *thrupiecediet™* breakfast lint cereal mix. More than 25 were made. None are thought to have survived due to a design flaw which caused the product to de-magnetise on contact with a fridge.

Image © 1957 The Threadbone Picture Library.

Thrupiece in Space I: The Right Stuff: Early Orbits

Though the lot of the early astronauts/cosmonauts was steadily improving by the early 1960s - the new rocket fuel was now more likely than not (51:49 probability) to get them into orbit after take off and nutrition was no longer an issue not least because no one had yet got that far - it still required a very particular calibre of recruit to make it all the way to the gantry in the knowledge it was highly unlikely they would make it all the way back.. As Director of US Space Operations Recruitment - Houston Thrust - said , the programme required “*rampant heterosexuals oozing the right stuff*”. Professor Thrupiece was such a man (“*He could ooze for Dorset*”, Audrey Badminton-Court famously quipped) and in the Spring of 1960 he was asked to join the pioneer programme for “*young men in a hurry and nothing much to get home for*”.



Denis Quaid [LEFT] played the part of Professor Thrupiece [RIGHT] heavily disguised as a fictional character “Gordon Cooper” in the 1983 film “The Right Stuff”.

Now in his prime, Professor Thrupiece was uniquely placed to become both the first Cosmonaut to orbit the earth once (12 April 1961) and the first astronaut to do so three times (20 February 1962). Self-effacing to the last he recorded “*I went up and around the earth once and came home. Finding that I was still functional in all departments, I decided to do it again. The second time was - well - just the same - except that is for the controls: the US vehicle had some. Whilst I was surprised and delighted to find that I could manage it three times in one day, in the end I thought ... well you’ve done it four times now and it’s just the same every time - like the Waltzer at Shapwick Goose Fair but without the excitement. So I stopped for a while and took up fabric and felts and a little later on raffia work*”

In truth matters were not so simple. Once Professor Thrupiece had provided the Soviet authorities with their first (and last) major space *coup*, pressure in the US to match the Russian’s achievement reached fever pitch. Unhappily for NASA, no American was yet in a position to undertake space flight, having neither the knowledge nor the fuel required. It was for this reason that NASA placed an advert in *The New York Times* on 2nd January 1962, asking for candidates with orbiting experience to apply for the job and Professor Thrupiece was the obvious (only) candidate. He was offered the princely sum of \$23 and a month’s shared use of a Mini Moke.



Professor Thrupiece’s first earth orbit was reported worldwide. It was the first time a Dorset citizen had left the planet.

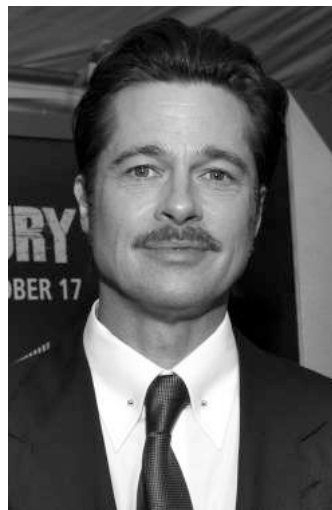


A Tale of Two Missions: ABOVE Professor Thrupiece's Vostok Rocket before and during launch alongside the capsule in which he completed the first ever orbit of the earth. BELOW The Professor oversees preparation of the Mercury M6 launcher and poses outside the "Friendship 7" capsule shortly before take off from Cape Canaveral (later (briefly) Cape Thrupiece)





Man of the Year: [LEFT] *Time Magazine* reluctantly honours the “Mystery Russian Cosmonaut” who first achieved space flight, little suspecting that the man in question was in fact almost one of their own; [RIGHT] Idealised Soviet poster in which a (much younger) actor was used as a Thrupiece stand-in. The application of the moustache fooled no-one and everyone - as the KGB intended. The Professor’s Baikonur flatmate at that time - Natalia Legova - claimed the Professor was indignant but says that he later investigated the possibility of a face lift in an attempt “to look more like the chappie on the poster”. He settled for a tummy-tuck.



Thrupiece or Not Thrupiece: That Is The Question: Rumours that Professor Thrupiece considered but did not undergo plastic surgery have added to the web of confusion regarding his appearance which is known to vary alarmingly in portraits taken at different stages of his career.

Did this inherent image instability stem from vanity or necessity or was it perhaps part of a complex deceit which allowed him to operate *incognito* in many of the world’s trouble-spots including Cuba, the DDR and the Soviet Union?

[FAR LEFT] Image purporting to be of Professor Thrupiece immediately after facial surgery in Moscow. [RIGHT] The result might have been startling though this is still recognisably the Professor.

Thrupiece Takes a Leap: Walking in the (Non) Air

By late 1964, the space efforts of both East and West were stalled and Professor Thrupiece was bored. “*There’s only so many times a man can go round and round*” he had said after his second mission and in December 1964 he told Johnny Carson “*it’s really rather frustrating in space you know: it’s not as though you can go outside and do something if you want to which is a shame because it’s always sunny up there and pity to be cooped in!*”. “*Crickey, we’ve put a dog and a man in space*” he added, “*but have either gone walkies or innocently chased a rabbit out there?*”



Professor Thrupiece was always a popular chat show guest. Here he appears on the *Johnny Carson Show*, amusing audiences with his laconic wit and “*very English sense of humour*”. Few suspected the enormity of his contribution to the nation’s wellbeing considering him at best “*some kind of English Bob Hope with a moustache*”. Contrary to popular opinion Professor Thrupiece had not tested for the 1947 classic *Road to Rio*, in part because he had not yet been born. Persistent fears that space travel accelerated ageing were clearly groundless. By now the Professor was already 24 years old and using nasal clippers on a regular basis. [CBS/Thrupiece Archive, New York]

Therein a seed was sewn and on March 18, 1965, the Professor was once again at the Baikonur facility and on the brink of yet another first⁶. His walk in space on that day put the Soviet Union back in the driving seat. [This was ironic: the Tatra 603 had been launched at the Moscow Car Show in 1956 and 15 had already been built at a price somewhat beyond the reach of all but the Communist Party elite, so though the country was back in the driving seat there were only 3 registered drivers]. With the walk behind him, Professor Thrupiece was again rewarded; this time with an all expenses-paid trip to the Moscow State Circus where he particularly enjoyed Beppe the two-headed clown from Chernobyl and the contortionist Ivor Bigun who was capable, the impressed Professor noted, “*of inspecting himself closely without the aid of an endoscope*”.

Wrong-footed yet again, it was not long before the call came from Washington and Professor Thrupiece now flew to greet his colleagues at Cape Canaveral ready to don a US suit. Here he was to re-encounter an old friend. Several years previously the Professor had become intrigued by the possibilities offered by the then emerging field of personal mobility scooter engineering and, anticipating by almost 50 years the needs of a future in-law (the

⁶ The US authorities had no idea that *The Johnny Carson Show* was beamed into selected Russian homes on Saturday nights by an enterprising Rupert Murodski (edited repeats went out on Thursday afternoons at 3pm (UTC+5 Yekaterinburg Time Zone) or that the Professor’s seminal idea was, therefore, under active consideration in Moscow over Christmas 1964.

late Mr Threadbone), he devoted much time and energy to improving traction, torque and manoeuvrability across the range. Looking to improve several aspects of the design - above all acceleration (the aim was 0-70 in 0.4 seconds in a crowded mall) - he had experimented with strap on rocket packs in various designs. Back in 1961, the concept was too far ahead of its time to gain traction.

It would reappear disguised as a water bottle on Team Hornimint's 2017 Racing bicycles. In the meantime, on arrival at Cape Canaveral the Professor was asked to consider modifying the Type 4b "Clifton Maybank" Model for space use and it was the resulting design which was to power him on his pioneering US spacewalk.



Walkies: [Opposite] Professor Thrupiece repeats his spacewalk for the Americans in an attempt to salvage national pride; [BELOW LEFT] *The Daily News* reports the Professor's (simulated) reluctance to return to the capsule ("I was desperate to get back", he told Houston controllers. "I'd forgotten 'to go' before leaving the capsule and I was bursting!"). [BELOW] Originally conceived in 'The Lair' in the mid 1950s, the personalised rocket pack was intended for deployment in an improved mobility scooter. Only when the call came from NASA did Professor Thrupiece turn his mind to a space application; [BOTTOM] Professor Thrupiece is "fished from out of the soup" yet again. By now he was so used to ocean landings, rescuers often found him asleep listening to *Desert Island Discs*. Roy Plomley was his favourite; he never warmed to Michael Parkinson, found Sue Lawley rather effeminate and wondered if Kirsty Young might be "a tad too keen on the pre-recording sniffers". He himself appeared on the Programme in 1998. His chosen book was *Thrupiece at Large* and his luxury a set of self-sharpening electric nasal clippers with an endless supply of blade oil.



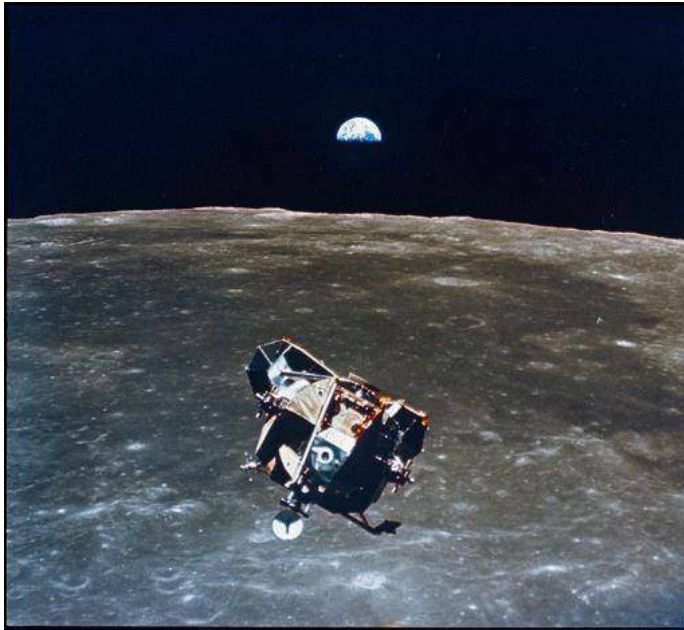
Apollo 11: Moonwalking

From the very first the object of both the superpowers had been to land a man on the Moon, stake a territorial claim and wallow in a propaganda victory. In the end it was to be the Americans who would get there and it would be Professor Thrupiece - substituting at the last moment for an ailing Neil Armstrong - who would plant his Size 6s on the surface of the Moon for the first time. The Professor had been brought back into the Apollo Programme in a consultative capacity and was not, originally, expected to fly. Only when it was realised that he alone knew how to navigate to the Moon (he was an ace with a map even in zero gravity) was he seconded to the crew. By now his experience was second to none and he was known to be a generous collaborator, often bringing in donuts when he arrived at the Space Centre each day. Personal Assistant Mary Everso-Large [née Mary Waferthin] recalls him with fondness. *“He set me off really. I was a skinny little thing back then, but he encouraged me to express myself through food. Worried I would get fat, he assured me he had a dietary method which would restore me to whatever weight I wanted to be in no time at all and I believed him. Call me naive, but he could sell sweets to babies that man could. Well he certainly built me up: though not so much in the confidence department. More in other ways... like dress-size for example”.*

Seconded to the Advanced Programme (Codename: “*The Advanced Programme*”) Professor Thrupiece was given particular responsibility for the Beagle Lunar Landing Module, adding sprung feet to the design in replacement for the sharp spikes originally proposed. (NASA scientists had assumed that once the capsule had landed, the absence of gravity would require it to “*dig in and cling on*” to the Moon’s surface. Professor Thrupiece reassured them that chewing gum attached to the widened feet would do the trick just as well). Further work ensued on the computerised systems required to guide the module safely to the surface, whilst he was also tasked with choosing suitable music to keep Michael Collins entertained whilst he and “Buzz Aldrin” amused themselves on the surface. (He selected a number of tracks by Ziggy Osmington and the Boners - a combo Collins grew to “*hate with a passion*” and never listened to again (see Sandra Wonite-Stande: *Fingering Myself: The Life and Strange Times of Ziggy Osmington*, The Threadbone Press 2017 available from <https://www.professorthrupiece.com/copy-2-of-merchandise>).

The lunar module touched down on the Moon's Sea of Tranquility, a large basaltic region, at 4:17 p.m. EDT on 20 July 1969 and shortly thereafter Professor Thrupiece left the craft, descended to the surface and uttered the immortal words “*It’s a very short ladder from Aldi’s but a very long way from Dorset... The Beagle is stranded*”. (If anything the chewing gum had worked too well.) He was wrong, however, in one respect: the crew would return to earth albeit a few days late and in entirely the wrong place.

Because it has generated such controversy, it is necessary to address here an issue which has dogged the first Moon Mission ever since it was completed: the oft repeated conspiracy theory that the whole affair was staged. Two alleged “*facts*” have added credence to this ludicrous claim: first the Professor’s involvement (both before and after the event) in film-making in general and Hollywood in particular (he founded *thrupiecefilm* which still bears his name and had been a close friend of Ethel Barrymore) and secondly the discrepancy in size between the boot print photographed on 20 July 1969 and Professor Thrupiece’s known shoe size. Photogrammetric calculations confirm that the footprint depicted in NASA Photograph 20/07/1969:000000000000000000000001 is a size 9 [Moon boot manufactured by the Rugged Moonboot Co. California]. However, the Professor was famously a size 5 in court shoe, five and a half in a brogue and occasionally a 6 “*at most*” in a slip-on. How then can we explain the disparity? Ing. Mario Stiletto of the *Istituto Milano di Scarpa Luna* and an expert witness in many similar cases believes that expansion of the feet in weightless environments is common and might be expected to “*lead a wise man* [Professor Thrupiece was one such [ed]] *to take the elementary precaution of investing in a roomier fit when planning to leave the earth’s atmosphere*”. Studies show that the long-term effects of Inter-stellar Pinching (*Pizzicare Inter-stellare*) can be pronounced and debilitating in later life; yet there is absolutely no indication that the Professor suffered in this way: evidence perhaps that he took the precaution of ordering a Size 9 in the exact manner Ing Mario Stiletto recommends. Will this definitive explanation silence the sceptical voices? Perhaps not, but as Professor Thrupiece himself said at the time: “*Armstrong was a Size 9 and NASA had already bought his boots. I pointed out they were a little on the large side for me but they said the clothing and boot budget was fully spent and that I should wear three pairs of socks and make do. I did.*”



SPECIAL MOMENTS; No amount of cynicism can diminish the achievements of Professor Thrupiece and his Apollo team. The Moon landing was *"one of the top twenty things that happened to me"*, he later recalled. Pressed further, he added *"I'd put it about number eleven"*. TOP LEFT: The Beagle approaches the Moon's surface, MIDDLE LEFT: Professor Thrupiece descends the short *Aldi Brand Telescopic Ladder* [available in store Tuesday 6 May]; TOP RIGHT: The Professor outside the Beagle ready to plant the flag [later replaced by "Buzz" Aldrin with the Stars and Stripes]. BOTTOM LEFT: The controversial boot print. Intended to *"leave a mark and prove we went there"* it was instead used to fuel conspiracy theories which claimed the whole adventure had been a fake. Professor Thrupiece never relented in his assertion that *"though the whole mission now feels like a dream. I am pretty sure it wasn't"* (*Thrupiece Remensicences* 2002, p 77.)

Thrupiece in Space II: Shuttle Diplomacy

In truth, the Moon landing marked the apex of Professor Thrupiece's personal journey towards and finally into space. He would travel no further than the Moon and though he would return there for one final time in 1973 (he was scheduled to command the ill-fated Apollo 13 Mission but decided at the last minute to send the Hollywood actor Tom Hanks instead), his active engagement in the space programme was almost at an end. For over a decade he had singlehandedly driven the Soviet space programme and had dragged the USA alongside in a principled effort to ensure parity between the two empires and guarantee the neutrality of space. But now it was over and time to turn to pastures new as well as to consolidating his already formidable reputation in the fields of Culinary Bio-ethics and Small Electrical Appliance Methodologies. As he once famously said, *"to capture the minutiae of a culinary bio-ethic we must sometimes set aside a whole Universe"*. As he preached, so did he live.

That said, Professor Thrupiece's connection with space developments was not quite severed and in 1981 he was asked to pilot the Boeing 747 from which the space shuttle would initially be tested. Further - in an interesting twist of fate - the Shuttle's attachment to the body of the 737 was secured through a reinforced form of *Thrucro* (the very chewing gum Professor Thrupiece had originally proposed for the lunar landing module's Moon hugging pads) though such was his age and the quantities required, he could no longer be expected to chew it all himself.

It was on the second test flight that, banking in an effort to get a better view of the Blanford Forum Farmer's Market, the Professor accidentally hit the release button and dropped the Shuttle to the ground with catastrophic results. His career in space was well and truly over.



A FINAL FLING: TOP: The Shuttle in position on top of it's Boeing 747 launcher. Critics accused Professor Thrupiece and his associates using the vehicles as a mobile canvas for thrupiece organisation promotional advertising; BOTTOM LEFT: The Shuttle in its natural element; BOTTOM RIGHT: The second flight did not go so well when the Professor accidentally dropped the craft over the Dorset countryside. The irreparably damaged vehicle is now on display in the Thrupiece Museum of Science and Technology, Tincleton.



HAPPY DAYS: Professor Thrupiece (middle background) joins in the general applause as Houston controllers bring the Apollo 13 mission to a successful conclusion. There had been a fear for astronaut safety when a small methane explosion damaged internal controls. Professor Thrupiece blamed a rogue batch of ruminants and vowed to tighten still further bio-security measures at Brookfields Farm, Chilfrome.

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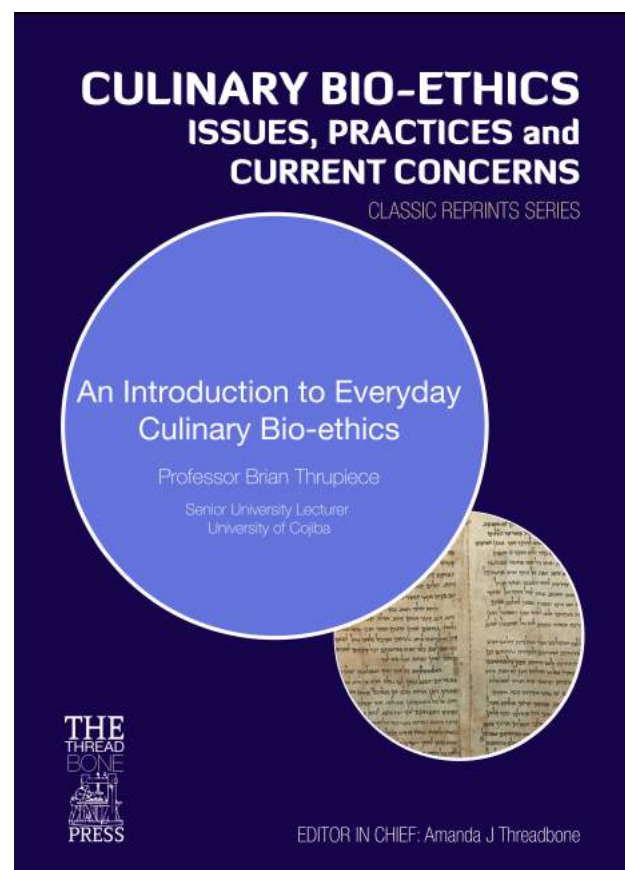
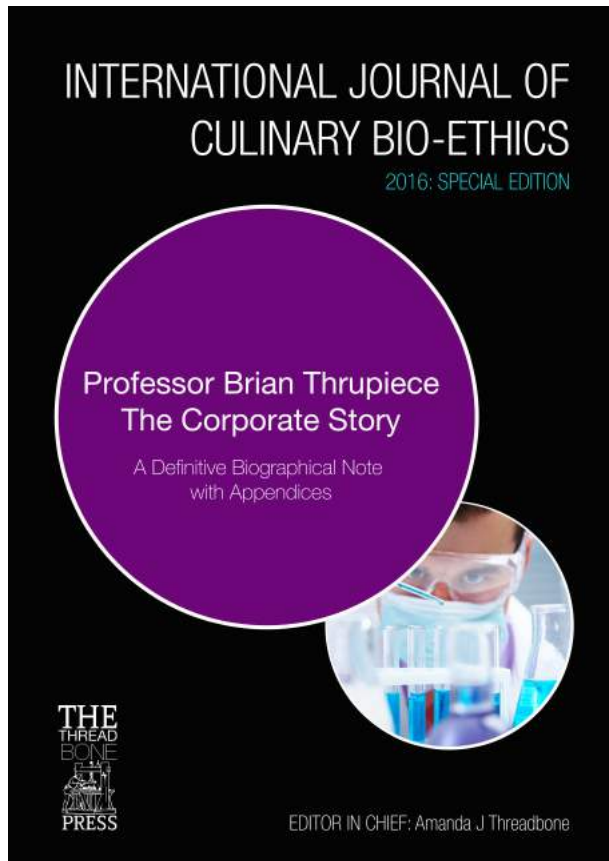
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NASA telegram dated 15th January 1962 inquiring about Professor Thrupiece's availability to orbit the earth as America's first astronaut. The telegram's final line is part of the critical chain of evidence linking the Professor's methane gas experiments to the US space effort. In the event, the Chifrome herd was suffering from a severe bout of *Pecore Capti Temporis Ventum* (Seasonal Bovine Trapped Wind Syndrome (SBTWS)) and he could not oblige.

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