

Bertrand Piccard: The explorer who wants to clean up the skies, and the rest of the planet

Video by CNN Staff; story by Tom Page, CNN

🕒 Updated 0919 GMT (1719 HKT) October 2, 2020



Source: CNN

Bertrand Piccard on achieving the impossible 23:53

(CNN) — As a boy, Bertrand Piccard traveled to Cape Canaveral, Florida, to watch the launch of an Apollo mission. As formative experiences go, it's up there. The roar of thrusters, burning bright; the arc of the rocket piercing the sky, heading for the depths of space. These are things one doesn't forget. Especially if, like Piccard, you watched six launches while still a child.

Now aged 62, the Swiss aviator told CNN seeing those launches made him want to become an explorer. But that decision was perhaps inevitable.

The Piccards may be the world's premier dynasty of explorers. The young Bertrand was at Cape Canaveral (called Cape Kennedy at that time) because his father, Jacques, was a renowned engineer and oceanographer who collaborated with NASA. Jacques was the son of Auguste, similarly renowned as an aeronaut, inventor and physicist. The family also includes the first person to fly across the English Channel in a balloon, and the first people to pilot a stratospheric flight through clouds.