



Soaring 270 feet above the intersection of I-70 & I-75 and seen by thousands of vehicles daily, this 144 foot wingspan monument to the Wright Flyer will symbolize Dayton, Ohio throughout the world.

# The Wright Icon News

Bringing an Icon to Dayton - The Birthplace of Aviation

Today's Modern Aerospace Hub - Tomorrow's Aviation Leader

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Issue 1

## Dec 17<sup>th</sup> 1903 Remembered

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Mid-morning December 17<sup>th</sup>, 1903, on the sands of Kitty Hawk, NC, Orville Wright flew his and Wilbur's powered airplane to a height of about 20 feet, covering 120 feet in the air and

returning to the ground 12 seconds later. There was little fanfare among those present, but in fact, this was mankind's first controlled, powered flight. It was one of those moments that are easy to overlook – especially since the brothers went on that day to make longer flights – but a barrier had been broken!

It is that achievement we celebrate every December 17<sup>th</sup> at Wright Memorial Hill overlooking Huffman Prairie near Dayton, OH.

This year's celebration, hosted by Wright-Patterson AFB Commander Col John Devillier, saw the Wright family descendants, Steven Wright and Amanda Wright Lane, great grandnephew and great grandniece of Orville and Wilbur, and a host of dignitaries gather at the monument to Dayton's most famous brothers to remember and honor their achievement. (In future years, this gathering may be at the foot of the Triumph of Flight!)

The keynote speaker this year was Mr Dan Patterson, noted aviation author, photographer and artist, and a native Daytonian. Dan is also a design consultant for the Triumph of Flight and his remarks – included in their entirety in the article below – were especially apropos for this occasion.



*Col John Devillier with Steven Wright and Amanda Wright Lane, laying a wreath at the Wright Brothers' Memorial. (Photo courtesy of Tim Gaffney, NAHA)*



*Dan Patterson delivering his keynote address. (Photo courtesy of Tim Gaffney, NAHA)*

## Keynote Address

*-By Dan Patterson, December 17<sup>th</sup> 2014, the Wright Brothers Memorial, Wright-Patterson AFB OH.*

"I have been attending these ceremonies for a really long time, since I was a student at Wright State when I had long hair and a Fu Manchu mustache. That was a really long time ago. How things have changed.

It has always been cold and the sun only has appeared a few times; there were times over those years when if there were much more than twenty people here it would be a crowd.

See [Keynote](#) on page 2

## The Triumph of Control

From 1900 through October of 1905, the Wright Brothers succeeded in the first developmental flight test program in history. They built a series of airplanes that tested solutions to a multitude of technical problems, guiding their way forward.

By the end of October 1902, at Kitty Hawk, they felt like they had solved the basic problems of flight.\* Of all those problems, controllability was the most difficult and potentially life-threatening.

Controllability is the combination of a dependable, capable mechanical control system and the skills a human needs to actually control an

airplane with it. In other words, the Wrights were pursuing two simultaneous challenges – devising the world's first flight control system and teaching themselves how to fly an airplane!

Failure at this had killed earlier aspiring flyers, and Wilbur and Orville experienced their share of potentially lethal accidents – both were keenly aware of the danger. The fact that they produced the world's first practical airplane three years later is a testament not just to their discipline and brilliance, but their extraordinary courage.



*Aviation's most famous photo – first controlled, powered flight, 1903*

*\*The Bishop's Boys, by Tom Crouch, W.W. Norton & Co, 1989, pg 241*

### Keynote from page 1

An old friend who has been here through all those times is facing great challenges today. Jack Darst, you are in our thoughts.

Amanda and Steve, you came many times with your Dad along with your Aunt Ivonette and Uncle Horace to place a wreath on the memorial. Back then, the Director of the Air Force Museum personally drove Ivonette and Horace to the ceremonies.

I have been preceded by a long list of lofty individuals and am honored to stand in their footprints. A few are here today – last year Brady Kress, Mike Heil just a few years ago. We have been lucky to hear Dr. Tom Crouch, and [it must have been] around 2001, Air Force General 'Speedy' Martin gave one of the most evocative and memorable speeches I ever heard, here or anywhere.

I have been fortunate to have gone to many places on the globe to make photographs where aviation history actually happened, and always asked myself, how did this kid from Ohio end up here?

I ask myself the same question right now.

An answer is that two other 'kids' – sons of Dayton – flew 111 years ago today and what they created changed the world.

It's a good idea today to center ourselves and add some perspective.

In 1900 Wilbur wrote to the Smithsonian and proclaimed his affliction that Man can fly.

Wilbur's Affliction....

He wrote that letter and many others just about 7 miles over that way {pointing southwest}, in the neighborhood where he and Orville lived and worked.

They built bicycles. They also had dreams.

Another letter – this time to the Weather Bureau – and [they] found Kitty Hawk about 700 miles over that way {pointing southeast} to put their theories into the air. They sought soft sand – they knew that they would be crashing, and soft sand is forgiving – and steady winds and some solitude where they could work out the kinks.

They started in 1900 – 114 years ago. In just over three years, using their own nickels, they solved the age old quest for flight.

The world's first airplane was built right over there {pointing north to Huffman Prairie}. It was a complete

aircraft including the first airplane motor and the inspired genius of the aerial propeller.

They flew the 1903 Flyer four times, a total time in the air of less than 2 minutes. Those precious seconds proved to them that their theories were solid.

After the success of 1903 they needed to be closer to the bike shop and their mechanician [sic] Charlie Taylor. The realities of adding power to their elegant solution required mechanical prowess and lots of stuff – oil, tools, patience, and family support. They arranged to carry out their further flying experiments just over there at Huffman Prairie. Mr. Huffman agreed to let them try to fly. He had his doubts. His only caution was to not hurt the cows.

Their triumph in 1905 was the culmination of their work, and they felt that the Wright Flyer III was their success. That airplane is just over that way {pointing southwest again} about 8 miles at Carillon Historical Park.

The 1905 Flyer was the basis of the airplanes they demonstrated in 1908 at Le Mans, France – about 3,000 miles that way {pointing east} and at Ft Myer, Virginia . . . oh, say, 500 miles that direction {still pointing east}. Those flights put Orville and Wilbur and Dayton, OH on the international map.

Orville wrote later about the ability to look down on the earth and consider what he saw. 'Viewed from above, the flat monotonous landscapes take on a new beauty not seen from the ground; the

See [Keynote](#) on page 4

## Public Information Update:

- The Wright Image Group has trademarked our monument's name, the Triumph of Flight. Already in use online, the ™ symbol will soon start appearing in our printed materials.



- The Wright Image Group website is now hosted by a different provider and carries a whole new, fresh look. It's still at the same address, [www.wrightmonument.org](http://www.wrightmonument.org). Check it out at your leisure, and invite your friends to do the same!



- Thanks to a couple of old friends, Mark Morgan of MainSail Productions and Dan Edwards (formerly of WDTN Ch 2), we now have a new video featuring interviews with Steve Brown, Dan Patterson and Amanda Wright Lane. It is posted on both our website and our FaceBook page.



- Ohio is one of only 18 states that does not have its own State Aviation Hall of Fame. In April 2014, the Wright Image Group Board approved a proposal from George Mongon to incorporate an Ohio Aviation Hall of Fame into the walls at the base of the Triumph.



- NASA Glenn engineers continue to assist the WIG in planning acoustics and vibration tests to potentially be conducted in NASA facilities. Further discussions on icing tests have been delayed.



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**Triumph of Flight**

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1 year - \$20

2 years - \$35

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**Keynote from page 3**

plowed fields, the patches of grass and grain, and the wooded spots appear as a quilt of beautiful colors; the hills and valleys are scarcely distinguishable; the earth appears to be a flat plain, marked and colored with a beauty not appreciated except when seen this way.'

Just down there at Huffman Prairie a little over 10 years after the first flight in 1903, they had established a flight school, and there was a war on. Young American men chose to fly and fight for France well before the USA entered the war, and at least one of them, Norman Prince, learned to fly in a Wright airplane. He is one of the founders of the Escadrille de Lafayette. Former USAF Chief of Staff, General 'Buzz' Moseley told me that 'those men were the seed corn of the entire American Air Force.'

A group of Canadians – you know, up that way {pointing north} – were also sent here to learn how to fly – just down there {pointing towards Huffman Prairie again} – and that group included Capt. Roy Brown. History tells us that he is credited with shooting down the Red Baron over that way {pointing east again} about 3000 miles. He certainly drove Richthofen close enough to the ground where everyone got a shot at him. Without his aerial persuasion that may not have happened.

My point in waving my arms around and pointing this way and that is simple. The center point of all that is here. Right where we are. The changes swirl around us. This airbase is named for two sons of Dayton who gathered up the universal knowledge of flight up to that time, they sorted out what worked. Tom Crouch said, 'They alone put the last pieces of the puzzle together and ...flew.'

When this memorial was dedicated in 1940, Orville sat right there, and at that time Wright Field was the national center of aviation technology.

Their first principles remain the bedrock of flight, and, yeah, things have sure changed. The ensuing tumult of the last 111 years is rich history. The good thing about being in the center of the maelstrom is that it is also a good place to reflect and celebrate, which we are doing today.

How things have changed...."

**Expected Donation Pledge**

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