

# The Triumph of Flight®

Soaring 270 feet above the intersection of I-70 & I-75 and seen by thousands of vehicles daily, this 144-foot wingspan monument will symbolize humankind "slipping the surly bonds of earth."

Bringing an Icon to Ohio - The Birthplace of Aviation

Branding America's Only National Aviation Heritage Area  
Symbolizing the Achievement of FLIGHT!

September 2021  
Volume 13  
Issue 3

© 2015 by Wright Image Group,

## New Local Initiative

In our last newsletter we announced our community assessment of The Triumph of Flight to be conducted by Dave Ramey of Strategic Leadership Associates with the help of the National Aviation Heritage Alliance (NAHA). That assessment began with a mailing of 58 information packages to local area leaders and organizations. Dave Ramey interviewed 33 of those community leaders one-on-one and provided us with a thorough summary of their responses to the questions we asked and their overall thoughts about our project. In summary, the majority of the respondents believed that the Triumph of Flight monument would provide a source of pride and value to the community and would provide some economic and tourism value, particularly as it may relate to other historical assets in the community. The primary criticism of the project was the lack of progress in gaining broad local support.

Our team reviewed these conclusions and considerable other feedback from Dave's interviews that were detailed in his 84-page report. After discussions we decided to launch an initiative seeking partners in the Triumph of Flight project from among other community organizations committed to fostering our aviation heritage. Dave provided us with recommendations on how to proceed with this effort and has agreed to assist us. We have identified several potential partners and have set appointments for initial meetings with them in October. Our hope is to reach a consensus with this group on the key features of the Triumph of Flight that will further the objectives that are common to all. There is general approval of the design of the monument itself but a variety of opinions on accompanying facilities, who will operate the site, what costs the community can afford for initial construction and continuing operation, and what location will meet all of these criteria.

It will take some months to gain more visibility on where this process will lead us. We will provide updates at our annual meeting in December and in our January newsletter. Our hope is that the support of these influential partners will redefine the Triumph of Flight project as a "go," and attract key donors that will provide the foundation for a broader fundraising campaign.

## Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting is set for 1:00 pm until 2:00 pm on Thursday, December 2, 2021. Rather than trying to predict the status of Covid on that date, we are setting it up as a Zoom meeting:

Mtg ID 817 8411 5080  
Passcode 360903  
Phone in 646-558-8656



## Passing of Ralph Link



Ralph Link, a long-time stalwart on the Wright Image Group Board of Directors has passed away. In the weeks before, he had suffered a couple of strokes, the second of which was damaging enough to send him into Hospice of Dayton where at the age of 95 he passed away peacefully on July 7<sup>th</sup>. He had been part of our Wright Image Group Board since his election ten years earlier.

Earlier that Fall, we had held our first big Dayton area fund-raiser at Dayton History's Carillon Park Education Center. The event was a success, but one of its highlight moments went largely unnoticed except by another of our board members, George Gianopoulos, who later relayed it

to me. A gentleman who was unknown to most of us at that time but acquainted with George and our former Board President Walter Ohlmann, was fidgeting in his seat as emcee Dan Edwards was "working the crowd" for pledges. The gentleman was Ralph. Dan was getting pledges, but not fast enough or big enough to suit Ralph, who said out loud as he stood up to make a pledge, "Let's get this damn thing built!" His pledge of \$4000 that night set a much higher bar for the evening and was a key factor in its success.

That was Ralph's third meaningful donation to the Triumph of Flight project and brought him to the forefront of our community supporters and to our attention as a prospect for service on the board. He graciously accepted our nomination and was elected at the annual membership meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Through the ensuing years, Ralph's business experience and keen instincts made him a key member of the board. He would ask tough questions at those moments of indecision when the board was grappling with an issue, generally cutting to the heart of it, and spotlighting a solution that was obvious only in hindsight.

But Ralph was not all business. He could keep the atmosphere light and comfortable in the boardroom with a joke, a one-liner, a reminiscence about the big fish he actually caught, or an allusion to his "legendary" skills at the tables in Vegas!

We loved him. We will miss him. The Triumph of Flight will be a lasting part of his legacy to Dayton and its rich aviation heritage.

### WIG Board of Directors

Executive Director – Curt Nelson  
 Dir Design & Engineering – Steve Brown  
 Dir Development – Joseph Lehman  
 Dir Public Information – Byron Kentner  
 Secretary – Sandy Anderson  
 Treasurer – Jacqie Nawroth  
 Tom Kleptz  
 Amanda Wright Lane  
 Linda Kahn  
 Bill Koop  
 Walter Rice  
 Paul Selm

*To make a donation or get information explaining the different sponsorship and recognition levels, write to us at:*

**Triumph of Flight®**  
 1605 N. Main St  
 Dayton, OH 45405  
 or visit our website,  
[www.triumphofflight.org](http://www.triumphofflight.org)

### Annual Membership Dues\*

1 year - \$20  
 2 years - \$35  
 3 years - \$50

\*Applicable to Individuals, Families or Businesses

**The WIG is a proud partner of the National Aviation Heritage Alliance.**

**As such, we ask our donors to make checks out to the Aviation Heritage Foundation and mark them so that it is clear the donation is specifically intended for the Wright Image Group.**

**By flowing our donations through the foundation, the federal government will match a portion of them. This additional funding goes to support the aviation heritage of the entire region.**

**(See instructions below)**



**Make checks payable to:  
 Aviation Heritage Foundation,  
 Inc.**

**With the following comment  
 on the "For" line:**

**"Restricted for WIG"  
 and mail to:**

**Triumph of Flight®  
 1605 N. Main St Dayton OH 45405**

**Newsletter Published by:**  
**Wright Image Group, Inc.**  
**1605 North Main St**  
**Dayton, OH 45405-4198**  
**Phone:** 937-276-2963  
 800-266-4767  
**Website:** [www.triumphofflight.org](http://www.triumphofflight.org)  
(Past newsletters are posted)  
**Email:** [bkentner@triumphofflight.org](mailto:bkentner@triumphofflight.org)