

# The Triumph of Flight™

Bringing an Icon to Dayton, Ohio – The Birthplace of Aviation

The 1905 Wright Flyer III will top this 270-foot monument with its 144-foot wingspan to symbolize humankind “slipping the surly bonds of earth”

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

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## A New Home Emerges

*A report to the membership from our Executive Director*

In the January 2022 Triumph of Flight newsletter, we told you that we were working hard on a new vision for the monument, including a new location, a reduced scope, and a lower price, and that we expected to have that in hand by February.

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The new vision did not come as easily or as quickly as we hoped. Thanks to the talents of Steve Brown, project architect, we had a relatively easy time with narrowing the scope of the monument and lowering the cost estimate. Steve quickly came up with what looked like a generic design that could be adapted to any new location, and it was significantly cheaper – an estimate of \$9M in lieu of the \$22M we had reached at the I-70/75 site. When it came to choosing a new location, however, strong differences of opinion emerged within the board. Several board members held the view that even though we had given up on the I-70/75 location, it was still critically important to hold on to the



maximum impact and visibility (the WOW! factor) that comes from locating very close to a major interstate. Others held that this was of secondary importance to factors like co-locating with other aviation heritage assets and organizations, establishing partnerships with them, and connecting with planned economic developments.

The partnership development meetings we held with all our potential community partners in January focused on a limited set of locations – none of which would satisfy both viewpoints on the board. Rather than forcing a decision between those two schools of thought, the board launched an extensive effort to explore alternative sites. The City of Dayton assisted in finding alternative locations, but by the end of July, none had proven to be workable. At the August board meeting, we agreed to proceed with a revised prospectus that focused on the Wright Brothers Airplane Factory site as the future home of the Triumph of Flight.

The Factory site includes over 50 acres in West Dayton that the City owns and has focused on as its #1 economic development target. It includes the two original Wright Brothers Airplane Factory buildings, which the National Park Service, with the support of the National Aviation Heritage Alliance, will soon convert into its Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park headquarters. Dayton Metro Library purchased some of that acreage and recently opened a brand-new branch on the site. A major local developer has submitted a preliminary development plan to the city that includes those plus multiple small businesses and a food court. There are several locations within the site that would hold the Triumph of Flight, but we have not selected one yet. We will be working with the City and whomever is hired as the developer for the project to make that determination

The Factory Site does not offer the same kind of WOW! factor as it would have enjoyed at I-70/75, but at 270 feet height, the Triumph of Flight will be readily visible from I-75 in downtown Dayton and also from further south on I-75. It will also be directly accessible from US Hwy 35 in West Dayton, where anybody who passes by or stops to see it will definitely be WOW'ed!



#### Overview of the Wright Brothers Airplane Factory Site

Dark buildings in the center are the original Wright factory hangars. City of Dayton parcels are possible sites for the Triumph of Flight. The preferred site is in the dark circle next to US 35.

There are still a few loose ends to tie up with the City about securing enough land there to build the monument and finalizing the development plan. We expect to be in a position by the end of December 2022 to re-launch our capital campaign.



## Jim Butler Joins Wright Image Group Board

Our executive committee, representing a majority of the board of directors, has approved Jim Butler for a position on our board effective immediately. Jim graduated from the US Naval Academy with honors in 1995 and went on to serve in the Navy as an officer and an aviator. While serving he earned a degree in history from the University of Maryland. After his service he graduated from University of Cincinnati College of Law and practiced in Dayton at Thompson Hine as a business litigation attorney from 2005 to 2019. Jim was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives in 2011 and finished his service there as Speaker Pro Tempore in 2020. His knowledge, experience, and contacts will make him a valuable asset in our efforts to make the Triumph of Flight a reality.



## Wright Flyer III Sculpture to Relocate

You may have noticed that the statue of the 1905 Wright Flyer III, the same flyer on the Triumph of Flight, is gone from its location on Monument Avenue across from Riverscape Park. It is currently in storage but will be reappearing in 2023 at a new location. That new location will be at the southwest corner of West Third Street and Edwin C. Moses Boulevard, the gateway to the Wright Dunbar District. It is difficult to think of a more appropriate home for the stainless steel and aluminum sculpture designed by architect Steve Brown, also the designer of the Triumph of Flight. The Wright brothers lived, worked, and designed the early Wright flyers near this new location, only a few blocks from the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park commemorating their achievements. The land at the new site and costs to relocate the sculpture are both being funded by Montgomery County.



**Artist's rendering of the Wright Flyer III sculpture at its future home at the gateway to the Wright Dunbar District**

## Joe Lehman Retires from Board



We were sorry to see Joe Lehman leave our board and his position as our Director of Development, a title he had held since 2019. Joe put an incredible amount of time into transitioning our donor relations database to a new platform and, of course, into seeking major sponsors for the Triumph of Flight. Despite a dedicated effort, his ability to reach out to major donors was hampered by several issues, perhaps most significantly, the COVID pandemic. With those, and other factors in mind, Joe concluded that the time had come to step down and let a new Director find a path forward. He wished the board "... every success in this important and eminently worthwhile endeavor." Joe will continue to lead Dayton's 100+ Men Who Care, resume tutoring incarcerated individuals in Montgomery County, and look forward to traveling to new destinations with his wife Kelly.

## Annual Meeting Notice

Our Annual Membership Meeting will be held on Thursday December 1<sup>st</sup> between 1:00 p.m. & 2:00 p.m. It will be held on Zoom. The actual Zoom call starts at noon, but the first hour will be the December board meeting.

Link to Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86880893938?pwd=UHNDV2E0OUJqY2dRMmJMd3BNMIZ5QT09>

Meeting ID: 868 8089 3938  
 Passcode: 024452  
 Phone In: 646-558-8656

<p><b><u>WIG Board of Directors</u></b>                  Executive Director – Curt Nelson                  Dir Design &amp; Engineering – Steve Brown                  Dir Public Information – Byron Kentner                  Secretary – Sandy Anderson                  Treasurer – Jacqie Nawroth                  Jim Butler                  Tom Kleptz                  Amanda Wright Lane                  Linda Kahn                  Bill Koop                  Walter Rice                  Paul Selm</p>	<p><i>To make a donation or get information explaining the different sponsorship and recognition levels, write to us at:</i></p> <p><b>Triumph of Flight®</b>                  1605 N. Main St                  Dayton, OH 45405</p> <p><i>or visit our website,</i>  <a href="http://www.triumphofflight.org">www.triumphofflight.org</a></p>	 <p>Member                  National Aviation Heritage Alliance</p>
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