

The Triumph of Flight™

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

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

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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"

© 2015 by Wright Image Group.

Wright Factory Site Is Not an Option

We had great hopes of the Triumph of Flight being welcomed to the Wright Factory site at the intersection of US Route 35 and Abbey Avenue, close to where it intersects with West Third Street. The planned location there of renovated Wright Aircraft Company hangars housing a National Park Service visitor center promised to attract visitors, especially aviation enthusiasts, to the Triumph of Flight soaring over the site. But neither the development plan for the site nor its residential neighbors approved of a stainless-steel pedestal topped with the equivalent of a C47 looming 270 feet above and glowing brightly at night. Our only hope of locating at the site would have required us to radically reduce its height, to as low as 50 feet, which in turn would have required a new design. That, we are not prepared to do.

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The original motivation for designing and promoting the Triumph of Flight was the nagging suspicion that very few Americans were aware that the Wright brothers lived in Dayton and invented the airplane in Dayton. That suspicion was confirmed in 2005 when a survey contracted by the National Aviation Heritage Alliance found that while 80% of Americans knew that the Wright brothers invented the airplane, only 6% were aware of their connection to Dayton. 40% of those surveyed believed the airplane was invented in North Carolina. According to Steve Brown, one of the founders of the Wright Image Group and the designer of the Triumph of Flight, "We wanted the monument to be the equivalent of Dayton raising its hand and saying, 'Hey, it all started here in Dayton.'" So just how high should Dayton raise its hand?

If you drive through Dayton on I-75, as over 40 million vehicles do per year, you will see no indication of the city's aviation heritage, other than road signs for area Wright brothers sites. Correction, there is one. On top of a Key-Ads electronic billboard at Stanley Avenue is a small model of a Wright Flyer. There are no words or explanation for it being there. Only those who know of Dayton's aviation heritage know why it is there. Otherwise, there is no signage, no billboard, no structure telling travelers through town that Dayton is where aviation began. The same is true for travelers on Route 35 and Route 4 through Dayton and Route 235 & I-70 near the Air Force Museum. But the intent of those behind the Triumph of Flight was not just to serve notification to travelers of local aviation heritage, they wanted to erect a structure that said "aviation" in no uncertain terms, and they wanted passersby to say "WOW" to themselves when they saw it.

Steve Brown came up with a unique design to get part of that WOW. The other factor is height. The higher the Wright Flyer is at the top of the Triumph of Flight, the more WOW it will have. And besides, shouldn't you be looking up in the sky when you're looking at an airplane?

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting was held in a meeting room at the Dayton Convention Center on December 5, 2023. Executive Director, Curt Nelson chaired the meeting beginning with a review of our past efforts and ending with a reading of a letter from Dayton's Director of Planning discussing the problems that would accompany the location of the Triumph of Flight at the Wright Factory site.

In the business portion of the meeting the following individuals were nominated and elected to 3-year terms commencing January 1, 2024, as directors of the Wright Image Group, Inc.:

Steve Brown
Linda Ohlmann Kahn
Jacqie Nawroth


Judge Walter Rice
Paul Selm
Jim Woodford

Sandy Anderson Retires from Board

Sandy came into our Board meetings in 2017 as a volunteer acting Secretary. She was then working for George Gianopulos, our VP of Development for many years. She dealt so much with Wright Image Group issues in George's office, that she figured she may as well get things firsthand by attending Board meetings. She did such a complete and consistent job as Secretary that she was elected to the Board in 2019, and then elected as the official Secretary by the Board. Sandy also pitched in with setting up and maintaining our donor data base.



We were sorry to accept Sandy's retirement last year. She will be missed. She gave an awful lot of time to our efforts. In recognition of her work, she was nominated and elected as Board Member Emerita at our annual meeting in December,

<p><u>WIG Board of Directors</u></p> <p>Executive Director - Curt Nelson Director of Development - Bill Koop Dir Design & Engineering - Steve Brown Dir Public Information - Byron Kentner Treasurer - Jacqie Nawroth Jim Butler Linda Kahn Tom Kleptz Amanda Wright Lane Walter Rice Paul Selm Jim Woodford</p>	<p><i>To make a donation or get information explaining the different sponsorship and recognition levels, write to us at:</i></p> <p>Triumph of Flight® PO Box 264 Englewood, OH 45322</p> <p><i>or visit our website,</i> www.triumphofflight.org</p>	 <p>Member National Aviation Heritage Alliance</p>
<p><u>Annual Membership Dues*</u></p> <p>1 year - \$20 2 years - \$35 3 years - \$50</p> <p><small>* Applicable to Individuals, Families or Businesses</small></p>	<p>Make checks payable to: Aviation Heritage Foundation, Inc.</p> <p>With the following comment on the "For" line: "Restricted for WIG"</p> <p>and mail to: Triumph of Flight® PO Box 264, Englewood, OH 45322</p>	<p>Newsletter Published by:</p> <p>Wright Image Group, Inc. PO Box 264 Englewood, OH 45322</p> <p>Website: www.triumphofflight.org <i>(Past newsletters are posted)</i></p> <p>Email: bkentner@triumphofflight.org</p>