



## Promising New Developments!

With the advent of 2025 comes a welcome number of promising new developments in our ongoing effort to create a national monument acknowledging the achievement of the world's first heavier-than-air, powered, controlled **FLIGHT** – right here where it happened – in the skies over Dayton, Ohio.

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**First** – along with steadfast support at the state level, we now enjoy the support of the Dayton city leadership team. The mayor, city commissioners, and the city manager have expressed a welcome new interest in this endeavor.

**Second** – also based in part on an offer from city planners, we abandoned the I70/I75 location in favor of a site inside the Dayton city limits. Having the potential of locating the Triumph of Flight on the Kettering Sports Field Complex (formerly the home of McCook Field) will ensure the monument not only remains readily visible to the many thousands of passersby on I-75, but the monument itself becomes a new fixture on the Dayton city skyline, not far, in fact, from the actual location of that first flight in 1905.

**Third** – unlike the I70/I75 site, McCook Field is itself the site of many aviation “firsts.” This site not only ties the monument directly to one of our nation's first airfields and one of our many other aviation heritage sites, but it also helps acknowledge the historically significant advances in aviation achieved at McCook Field itself.

**Fourth** – we now recognize that the facilities that had been envisioned at the base of the I70/I75 monument were overly ambitious and perhaps neither practical nor affordable. Accordingly, we are focused now on a more modest yet important new objective at the base – to function as a “signpost” and a regional directory for visitors who may not be aware of the other world-class aviation heritage sites in our area. Our new vision for the base of the monument allows us to lower the estimated cost from \$22M to about \$12M.

**Fifth** – along with most in this world, we weathered setbacks driven by the COVID epidemic. Airlines and defense contractors, just to name two classes of possible benefactors, were all confronted with unusual and often sobering financial challenges. With those challenges now mostly in the past and along with the other significant changes noted here, we are optimistic about our ability to drive new interest and investment in this long-overdue acknowledgement that one of the world's greatest inventions occurred right here in Dayton.

## The Dayton Foundation

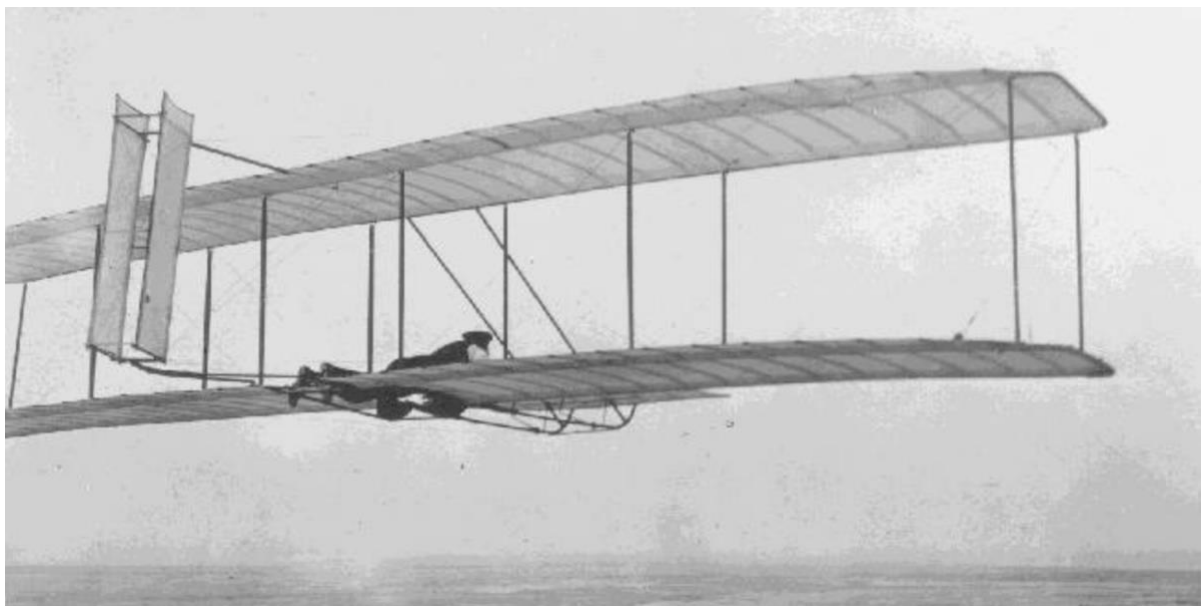
The Wright Image Group board is pleased to announce a developing new relationship with the Dayton Foundation. To begin, we are in the final stages of establishing a charitable checking account. This new account will allow donors to make contributions to our account via a direct (on-line) donation link, by clicking on a QR code, or of course, mailing a check to the Dayton Foundation, designating our account. In the near future, we also hope to tap into other areas of expertise at the foundation such as obtaining assistance in developing robust donor pledge forms. We are pleased to join the many other organizations in our area that benefit from their association with the Dayton Foundation. We welcome having immediate access to our funds and access to the trusted professional services that are their hallmark.

## ... And the Rest is History

Many people know that the Wright Brother's flew at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Some even know it was December 17, 1903. Did the brothers just show up and fly that day? Turns out that there were many trials & tribulations leading up to that historic flight.

**September 23** – The Wright brothers departed Dayton.

**September 28** – They conducted over 60 flights in the old glider for flight practice while awaiting new parts.



While readying their powered Flyer 1, the Wrights modified the tail of the 1902 glider, adding a second movable vane to give the rudder more authority.

**October 8** – The new “Flying Machine” parts arrived from Dayton.

**November 5** – They finished assembling the new machine (after delays of almost a month because of bad weather). While testing the engine and propeller, both propeller shafts were damaged and had to be sent back to Dayton for repair.

**November 20** – The shafts repaired by Charlie Taylor arrived from Dayton. However, the engine still ran rough which loosened the sprockets that held the shafts in place. Out of frustration, the brothers used bicycle tire cement to glue the sprocket nuts.

**November 28** – Unfortunately, one of the repaired propeller shafts cracked during further engine testing. Orville left for Dayton to make new, more durable shafts made from solid-spring steel.

**December 11** – Orville arrived at camp with the replacement shafts.

**December 12** – The brothers were prepared to begin their usual practice of flying the new, heavier machine as a glider. However, they were running out of good weather and decided to forgo those tests.

**December 14** – Light winds resulted in a decision to set up a starting track on a gentle slope (to aid takeoff). Wilbur won the coin toss (once witnesses had been assembled), but did not anticipate the extreme sensitivity of the elevator and over controlled the airplane as it was lifting off the rail - the new machine smashed into the sand on the left wing. Neither of the Wrights considered this effort a true flight.

**December 17** – Repairs were made as they waited for suitable weather. Even though they woke to freezing temperatures, the Wrights were running out of time as winter descended. At 10:35 AM, Orville tripped the release. The Flyer slowly moved forward ... and the rest is history!

Contributed by Board Member Jim Woodford

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