

Wright "B" Flyer, Inc.

# WRIGHT LANDINGS



Issue 2, 2015

Dayton, Ohio

Spring 2015

## DONATION WILL MAKE NEW WRIGHT B FLYER MORE MOBILE

NAHA Press Release

When Wright "B" Flyer Inc. takes its one-of-a-kind airplane to AirVenture 2015 in July, it will take more than filing a flight plan.

The Wright "B" Flyer has short legs and is tiring to fly. Instead, volunteers will laboriously disassemble the 3,400-pound biplane, carefully load it into a custom trailer, and have it hauled overland to Oshkosh—where the same scenario will play out in reverse to put it together and fly it.

Transporting the next-generation Wright "B" Flyer will be a much simpler affair. This one will be designed for easy disassembly and scaled to fit in a standard shipping container that will allow the organization to show and display the airplane worldwide.

Wright "B" Flyer Inc. has received more than \$100,000 towards its \$300,000 fundraising goal for the project, with a challenge grant to match up to another \$50,000. The fundraising campaign recently advanced with the donation of a steel container by Benedict Tractor and Containers Inc.

(BEI) of Monroe, Ohio. Wright "B" Flyer estimates the donation saved it more than \$4,000.

"This container is exactly what we will need to represent America's aviation heritage across the country and overseas. We're extremely grateful for BEI's support," Wright "B" Flyer President William J. "Jay" Jabour said.



Pilots Tom Bell and Rich Stepler took the Brown Bird on its first taxi test of the year on March 21.



This 2013 photo of the non-flying Valentine Flyer shows how the new Wright "B" Flyer lookalike will fit into a standard shipping container. (Photo: Timothy R. Gaffney)

Like the current "B", the new airplane will resemble the original, 1910-era Wright Model B Flyer, but it will use modern materials and meet modern safety standards. It will be built at the original Wright Company factory in Dayton with support from the National Aviation Heritage Alliance and the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA). The factory is where the Wright brothers produced the first Model B flyers more than a century ago, launching America's aviation industry.

In addition to the shipping container, Wright "B" Flyer's "wish list" includes an engine, instruments, materials, tools, professional services, and volunteers.

## Wright "B" Flyer, Inc.

Wright Landings is published quarterly for the information of members and volunteers of the Wright B Flyer, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Dayton-Wright Brothers Airport  
10550 Springboro Pike  
Miamisburg, Ohio 45342  
Phone: 937-885-2327  
Fax: 937-885-3310  
www.wright-b-flyer.org

Editors: kwavn@earthlink.net



## MARIANNE MILLER HUDEC, WRIGHT DESCENDENT, DIES

Marianne Miller Hudec, granddaughter of Lorin Wright and the last surviving Wright brothers family member to have known Orville Wright, has died at age 79. She was a librarian in Newton, Mass. who had a yen for knowledge, traveling widely to learn about ancient cultures.

She was also a source of much family history and lore. As reported in the *Dayton Daily News*, she recorded in a National Park Service oral history that she spent much time with her family at Hawthorne Hill with her uncle prior to his death in 1948.

"Uncle Orv always had a dozen interesting projects on his plate at one time, and must have had trouble deciding what to do next," she told interviewer Ann Deines. "... I never quite knew what he did at the lab on Sunday, because he was always dressed in a suit when we arrived. Of course he never got dirty. He seemed to have the ability to do dirty work but not look dirty."

## SPRING VISITS TO THE WRIGHT B

Among the organizations making early Spring visits to the Wright B Flyer Inc. were the Southwest Ohio Chapter of the Air Force Academy Association of Graduates, the Super Sabre (F-100) Society reunion attendees, and Norwin HS Junior ROTC.



USAFA grads learn about the Wright B Flyer from an expert. Photo, Pittman

camaraderie to the people who flew it. The F-100 was the first of the Century Series of fighters, and the first jet aircraft able to fly supersonic in level flight. It was employed extensively through the early and middle Cold War and in Vietnam.

Junior ROTC cadets from Norwin High School near Pittsburgh were on a visit to Wright Patterson.

## SPRING LINEUP

The Events Calendar is shaping up for the coming year. the following are some of those scheduled in the next three months.

District Rotary  
Oxford Kinetic Festival (Flying event)  
Civil War Round Table  
Morane Fiftieth Anniversary Parade (Flying event)  
Air Camp  
National Federal Employees  
Arc Light/ Young Tigers Reunion  
Dayton Air Show (Flying event)  
Vandalia Air Show Parade  
Air Force Tattoo (Flying event)  
Centerville Americana Parade (Flying event)

The Academy graduates visit was part of their day-long Founders' Day celebration. On April 1, 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed legislation creating the Academy, which entered its first class a year later at Lowry AFB. Every year, on or about that date, graduates around the world celebrate the event with Founders' Day. The local chapter's tour was conducted by Gen. Jabor, WBF President and himself a 1973 graduate.

The Super Sabre Society preserves the history of the F-100 aircraft and provides



Lt. Gen. Ted Rees of the Super Sabres receives an orientation flight. Photo, Don Payne



## NAHA SUPPORTS WRIGHT FIRST IN FLIGHT BILL

### NAHA Press Release

The National Aviation Heritage Alliance (NAHA), of which the WBF Inc. is a partner, testified in March in favor of an Ohio bill that would repudiate the claim that Gustave Whitehead flew a powered airplane in Connecticut two years before Ohio's Wright brothers flew in North Carolina.

NAHA Executive Director Tony Sculimbrene testified in a House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee hearing in favor of House Concurrent Resolution 8 (HCR 8) along with Amanda Wright Lane and Tim Gaffney, author of *The Dayton Flight Factory: The Wright Brothers and the Birth of Aviation*.

Sculimbrene's testimony focused on a 2013 column by Paul Jackson, editor-in-chief of IHS Jane's *All the World's Aircraft*, which endorsed the claim despite its repeated dismissal by top aviation historians.

Sculimbrene cited a Cleveland *Plain Dealer* editorial which said Jackson denied through his company a request to be interviewed about his column, and he said an IHS executive he spoke with personally refused to say who he believed flew first.

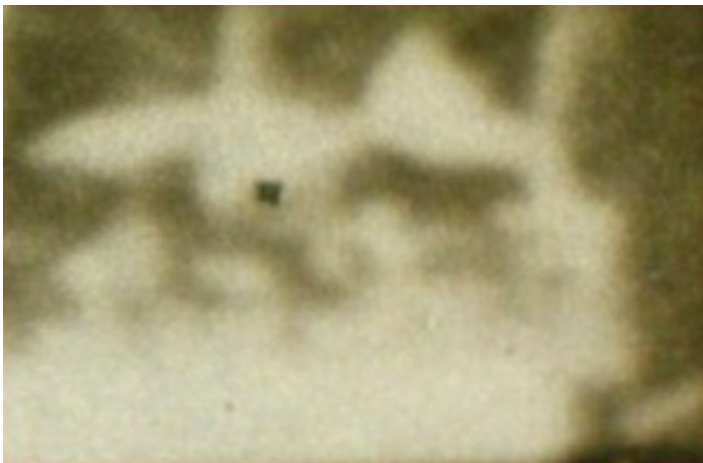
"For such a bold change in history, there seems to be little willingness to defend the change by the people who are responsible for this 'authoritative source on aviation,'" Sculimbrene said. Lane said the "iconic photo" of the Wright Flyer's first flight in 1903 as well as other records amply document that "Uncle Orv and Uncle Will were the first to fly a powered, heavier than air flying machine, they were the first to build a flying machine of practical utility, they were the first to sell an aeroplane to the U.S. government and other foreign entities, and they were the first to build a factory that launched the aviation industry."

### CONNECTICUT PROPOSES "FIRST FLIGHT" HOLIDAY

In an admitted counter-move to Ohio's HCR 8, a Connecticut legislator has introduced a bill in that state to declare August 14, "Gustave Whitehead, First in Flight, Day."

According to the bill's sponsor, State Sen. Kevin Kelly, "Connecticut ... must continue to work to ensure that the true aviation history is honored and remembered. I am proposing this legislation to further this recognition and celebration of Whitehead by commemorating the exact day of Whitehead's first flight." Citing the Ohio bill, he continued: "Facing this opposition, Connecticut must stand strongly behind the history we know to be true. Senate Bill 772 will send a clear message: Connecticut was the birthplace of powered flight. Celebrating the exact historic day that changed history, we can ensure future generations never forget."

Source: *Valley Gazette*, Shelton, CT



The two First Flight photos



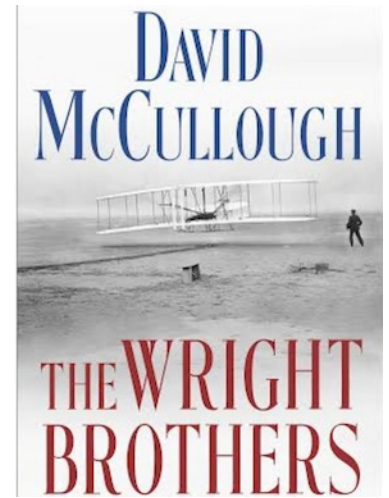
The NAHA press release on the shipping container donation behind our first page story was picked up on the nationally viewed blog, [allthingsaero.com](http://allthingsaero.com), by one of their contributors, Ric Peterson, an air show announcer who is also an award winning broadcast journalist.

## A NEW BIOGRAPHY OF THE WRIGHT BROTHERS

A new and much anticipated biography of the Wright brothers is to be released early next month.

The author, David McCullough, is a celebrated historian, recipient of the Pulitzer Prize for his biographies *Truman* and *John Adams*, as well as the National Book Award for *Path Between the Seas* (the Panama Canal) and *Mornings on Horseback* (Theodore Roosevelt). In addition to his writing, which has also earned him two Francis Parkman Prizes, the Los Angeles Times Book Award, and the NY Public Library's Literary Lion Award, he has been a television regular. He hosted PBS's "American Experience" from 1988-1999, and narrated Ken Burns' "The Civil War."

The research for the book involved several visits to the Dayton area by McCullough and his professional researcher. The author is scheduled for a visit to the Wright B Flyer on June 9.



## TOURS OF WRIGHT FACTORY



The original Wright Brothers 1910-1911 factory just off West Third St in West Dayton is intended to become part of the Aviation Heritage National Park, is also planned to be the construction site for the new Wright B Flyer. Although still in the hands of the Home Avenue Redevelopment LLC and very much an undeveloped area, the factory is open to scheduled tours by the National Aviation Heritage Area. For tour information, contact NAHA at [info@aviationheritagearea.org](mailto:info@aviationheritagearea.org).

There is no air conditioning, so dress accordingly. Also, wear closed-toe shoes and bring along a flashlight.

## ORVILLE'S LABORATORY

Following the sale of the Wright Company in 1915, Orville was able to devote more time to personal research. In this pursuit, he moved into a specially constructed laboratory on North Broadway in December 1916. He worked here almost daily until his death in 1948. It contained a small machine shop and a three-foot wind tunnel, in addition to office space for him and his secretary, Mabel Beck.

Among other projects worked on in the building were split-wing flaps (think WW II dive bombers), automatic stabilizer, propellers for the Kettering Bug, and various domestic inventions, some of which went into the mansion at Hawthorn Hill.

Although Orville sold the property in 1919, he remained as a renter. After his death, the building survived. In 1971 the land was purchased by the Standard Oil Co. to construct a service station. That didn't happen, and the company tried unsuccessfully to make the site available for preservation. When the structure was razed in 1976, some material was preserved, including the front facade. In 2003, the site was donated by Bank One and in the following year the facade was reerected. The now vacant lot was developed with interpretive signage as a Wright Brothers location within the old West Dayton neighborhood. In the center stands a statue by John and Marna Bosch of Orville with a propeller, one of the original inventions that led to successful flight.

