

## FOLLOW the Countdown to Kitty Hawk Odyssey!

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the Centennial of Flight.



# COUNTDOWN

A NEWSLETTER UPDATE FROM EAA



September 18, 2003 - Vol. 1, No. 2

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## 90 Days to Kitty Hawk!

-- EAA Young Eagles As of Today: 970.002 --

### Discovery Channel Celebrates 100th Anniversary of First Flight A Special Focus On Our Countdown To Kitty Hawk

On Friday, September 19, from 8-10 p.m. (ET/PT), the Discovery Channel will celebrate the 100th anniversary of this historic accomplishment with *The Wright Brothers: First in Flight*, an in-depth look at exactly what it took to create such an ingenious craft in the early 1900s while following a modern-day team of scientists, historians and top experts as they attempt to bring that momentous first flight back to life in 2003.

*The Wright Brothers: First in Flight* follows the team of multidisciplinary experts as they work to re-create and fly the Wright Flyer aircraft used to make that first journey over the dunes near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) led the efforts to reconstruct the Wright brothers' first flight on December 17, 2003 – 100 years to the minute from the actual historic flight – with Countdown to Kitty Hawk, presented by Ford Motor Company. As part of this initiative, EAA commissioned The Wright Experience of Warrenton, Virginia, to build an authentic 1903 Wright Flyer reproduction. Ken Hyde, a retired American Airlines pilot, led The Wright Experience in developing EAA's flyer reproduction. Together, Hyde and his team have meticulously re-created every detail of the aircraft – from the type of wood used to the exact placement of each and every rivet – culminating in the world's only accurate reproduction of the Wrights' 1903 Flyer.

Air dates and time (all times Eastern) for *The Wright Brothers: First in Flight* on The Discovery Channel:

- September 19 @ 8 p.m. & 11 p.m.
- September 21 @ 11 a.m.
- September 25 @ 8 p.m. & 11 p.m.
- September 27 @ 6 p.m.

### Continuing to Share the Wright's Story:

#### Ford Motor Company, Microsoft Flight Simulator, Northrop Grumman

Through the national Countdown to Kitty Hawk Tour (Washington, D.C., Florida, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Washington State) more than 250,000 people in have inspected EAA's 1903 Wright Flyer Reproduction, virtually taken flight in Microsoft's Wright Flyer Simulators, cast their votes for Eclipse Aviation's Greatest Aviation Innovations, and met aviation pioneers and Wright brothers authorities like Chuck Yeager, Scott Crossfield, Ken Hyde, Tom Crouch, James Tobin, Darrell Collins, Bob Peterson, as well as Charles Taylor II, Stephan Wright and Amanda Wright Lane. In addition, our sponsors have launched similar events on a smaller scale; all intended to share the centennial of flight.



### **Ford Motor Company**

The Ford pavilion celebrates 100 years of powered flight and provides a peek at the future of aviation. Destinations this summer included the St. Louis County Fair and Air Show in Chesterfield, Missouri; an Air Show in Van Nuys, California; the Air National Guard base in Westfield, Massachusetts; and the Reno (Nevada) National Championship Air Races. The final stop in 2003 will be at the Miramar Air Show October 17-19 in San Diego, California.

### **Microsoft Flight Simulator**

With support from the EAA Museum's Restoration Department, Microsoft Flight Simulator team developed a replica 1903 Wright Flyer Cradle that enables participants to virtually take flight just as Orville and Wilbur. It has been one of the most popular elements of the tour. The Simulator Station can now also be enjoyed in other cities across the country.

- Chicago: Museum of Science and Industry (9/18–21)
- Boston: Museum of Science (10/2-5)
- Baltimore: Maryland Science Center (10/9-12)
- Atlanta: SciTek (10/16-19)
- Dallas: The Science Place (10/23-26)

### **Northrop Grumman**

On September 8, Northrop Grumman sponsored the Long Island Technology Day. The goal of the event was to bring Long Island's political, business, and academic communities together. Alongside present-day Northrop Grumman technologies was the new Wright Experience-built glider No. 2 (built for pilot training). [Pilots of the Century](#) Terry Queijo and Kevin Kochersberger are using the '02 Glider to prepare for flying EAA's 1903 Wright *Flyer* at the First Flight Centennial Celebration. Tune into the documentary on The Discovery Channel and learn much more about this process, led by aviation pioneer Scott Crossfield.

### **Eclipse Aviation's Greatest Aviation Innovations**

#### **Featured Innovations: Constant-Speed Props & ATC**

Aviation is a series of compromises, and since the Wrights, people have sought ways to make it more efficient. Orville and Wilbur learned that the propeller is really a wing, and those who followed learned that with a fixed pitch its performance favored cruise or climb. Engineers solved this imbalance in the late 1920s with the constant-speed propeller, which allowed pilots to set the pitch that gave them the best performance. Constant-speed props contributed to the success of early airliners like the Boeing 247 and DC-2.

With this success, a growing number of airplanes filled American skies. To control air traffic around busy Lambert Field, in 1929, St. Louis hired Archie Teague, who directed the movement of airplanes with red and green signal flags. Air traffic increased after World War II, and in 1947 Congress responded with a "Common System of Air Navigation, Communication, and Traffic Control," to be phased in and completed by 1963.

[Learn about eight more great innovations.](#)

### **Kitty Hawk Moments:**

#### **A Place Called Kitty Hawk**

In August of 1900, while still running their bicycle business, the Wright brothers were also beginning to construct their first kite/glider...and searching for a favorable testing ground. Dayton hardly qualified, since winds seldom reached the 12-15 mile per hour strength they felt were necessary to fly and test the machine. Frustrated, Wilbur wrote to Octave Chanute on May 13, seeking his advice on a "suitable locality where I could depend on winds of about fifteen miles per hour without rain or too inclement weather." He also asked Chanute's views on his idea of launching the kite/glider (perhaps manned) from a 150-foot tower.

[\(read more\)](#)

#### **Fall 1900...The First Flights**

On the morning of September 13, 1900, a tall stranger came knocking at the door of William Tate's house in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. When Tate appeared, he took off

his cap and introduced himself as Wilbur Wright of Dayton, Ohio, "to whom you wrote concerning this section." Staying at Tate's home until Orville arrived two weeks later, Wilbur found Tate to be as friendly and hospitable as his earlier letter. Mrs. Tate, aghast that Wilbur had eaten nothing but a jar of jelly in the last 48 hours of traveling, immediately prepared him a hearty breakfast of ham and eggs. Her only worry was that their spare room might not be good enough for the well-dressed young man, but Wilbur assured her it was fine. His only request was that she boil a gallon of water each morning and place it in a pitcher in his room. Orville's near-fatal attack of typhoid fever four years before was still on his mind.

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