



Aviation Trail, Inc.

News and Updates from "The Trail"

Experience the Birthplace of Aviation!

A non-profit corporation in partnership with the National Park Service to promote Aviation Heritage in the Dayton region

Visit the historical sites that tell of man's conquest of the air.

"The Flight Log" -

AVIATION TRAIL MAIL

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Aviation Trail Visitor Center • Wright-Dunbar Interpretive Center • Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park

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Print Version

APRIL 2020 ISSUE

04/24/2020

This "Flight Log" highlights some of the stories and events featured on the Aviation Trail website: AviationTrailInc.org

Site Closures in April

Status of Aviation Trail sites regarding visitors during the COVID-19 precautions:

As indicated in last month's "Flight Log" there are many facility closings due to the COVID-19 virus threat. A list of the status of sites on the Aviation Trail is posted on the the "Aviation Blog" page of the Aviation Trail website. It is updated as changes occur:

<https://www.aviationtrailinc.org/post/covid-19-closure-updates>

Since things can change on a day-to-day basis, it is recommended that visitors contact the individual sites directly before making plans to visit. The website and phone information for each site is available on the Aviation Trail website "Trail Sites" page, <https://www.aviationtrailinc.org/copy-of-trail-sites>, and on the Aviation Trail brochure, which can be downloaded from that page.



First Motion Picture from an Airplane

April in Aviation History:

On April 24, 1909, on a flight Wilbur Wright made in Rome, Italy, the first motion picture from an aircraft was taken.



Wilbur Wright and seine Flugmaschine - 1909

Wilbur made five flights that day, with King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy present. On one flight his passenger was photographer Frederico Valle, who shot the footage. The "from-the-air" footage was included in a silent film short titled "Wilbur Wright und seine Flugmaschine" by French cinematographic company Société Générale des Cinématographes Eclipse. Most of the film consists of pre-flight shots and views from the ground of the plane in flight. The portion of this film which is shot from the air is only about the last third of the 3:28 long movie, which can be seen in the YouTube video at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8osZHhkp-cM>

(First Motion Picture continued in next column...)

(...First Motion Picture - continued from previous column)

Still photos had be made from balloons and kites as early as 1858, and that was further pioneered through the late 1800's, including attaching cameras to unmanned rockets and even pigeons. Although there were photos and films taken from the ground, of aircraft in flight, prior to this flight nothing had been taken from an airplane - neither still photo nor motion picture.

A year after the above mentioned motion picture flight of 1909, in the fall of 1910, the first still photo was taken from an airplane in flight when Orville Wright took a rookie photographer from the Dayton Daily News along for a ride over the Huffman Prairie flying field in Dayton. The photographer was William Preston Mayfield, who went on to become the personal photographer of the Wrights, and a pioneer of aviation photography.



Mayfield Aerial Photo - over Huffman Praina Flying Field - 1910

As it did with the development of aviation technology, WWI accelerated the development of aerial photography, as its value in reconnaissance was realized. By war's end, the equipment had increased in sophistication and focal power, and was also proving valuable for use in cartography. In the decade that followed Wilbur's flight in Rome, photography had become an integral part of the aviation adventure.



"Girl on the Wing"

Aviation Trail Board Member Inducted into Women in Aviation Pioneer Hall of Fame



Patty Wagner, FAA Master Pilot, and air show legend, was one of the inductees into the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame at the 31st Annual International Women in Aviation Conference in Lake Buena Vista, Florida on March 7.

(*"Girl on the Wing"* - continued on page 2...)

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In addition to her piloting experience, Patty was famous as the "Girl on the Wing" – a wing-walker on the international air show circuit for some 30 years, with her husband Bob who piloted their Stearman biplane. They have flown in all 50 states and performed in 47 states, as well as British Columbia, Quebec, every Canadian province in between, and in South America.

Just last year, in May of 2019 the FAA had presented her with the The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, which recognizes professionalism, skill and aviation expertise as an accident-free career pilot for at least 50 years.



Patty Wagner receiving FAA Award in 2019

The WIA Pioneer Hall of Fame honors women who have made significant contributions as record setters, pioneers, or innovators in the aviation and aerospace industries. This year's Women in Aviation award recognizes Patty for her contributions to aviation, and puts her on a hall of fame list that includes names like Amelia Earhart, Bessie Coleman, Harriet Quimby, and Sally Ride. In addition to Patty Wagner, the other inductees in the 2020 class are Maj. Gen. Jeannie Leavitt, the service's first female fighter pilot and U.S. Army's First Women Rotary Wing Aviators, a group of nine female helicopter pilots who represent the first women in rotary wing aviation to serve in the U.S. Army. The WIA has been presenting the Pioneer Hall of Fame award since 1992.



Patty currently volunteers her time to many aviation organizations, including Women in Aviation, and serves on the Board of Trustees of Aviation Trail, Inc., WACO Historical Society, OX5 Aviation Pioneers, and Moraine Air Park.



This Month in Aviation History

April 15, 1952 - First flight of the Boeing B-52 Stratofortress:

On that day the YB-52 prototype model, designed to carry nuclear weapons as a Cold War deterrent, took off from Boeing Field in Seattle headed to Larson AFB. Watch a YouTube video on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5q7lyF7Ecl>



Boeing produced 744 B-52's from 1952 to 1962. The plane went into service in 1955, and over the last six decades, the bomber has been adapted as needed for changing mission and combat requirements, such as low-level bombing, and missile deployment. Nearly 60 B-52's are still in service with several more in reserve. The versatile aircraft continues to be a valuable contributor to U.S. military arsenal, and is planned for use by the USAF through 2050.

(B-52 continued in next previous column...)

A weekend in Dayton, and the design of the B-52:

The design of what turned out to be the B-52 went through several iterations. When, in 1946, the contract for a large, long range, high altitude, strategic bomber was awarded to Boeing, it was first envisioned as being powered by four turboprop engines with contrarotating propellers, and straight wings. At the time there was a debate over the value of using turboprop versus jet propulsion, with the turboprop using less fuel but sacrificing speed.



On Thursday, October 21, 1948 Boeing engineers presented a four-engine turboprop design to the Air Force project officer, Colonel Henry Edward ("Pete") Warden, at the Van Cleve Hotel in Dayton, Ohio, near the development and testing center at Wright Patterson Air Force Base.



Colonel Warden, an MIT educated engineer, was a proponent of jet propulsion, and knew that Pratt & Whitney's J57 turbojet engine was more efficient than previous jet engines. At that meeting he asked the Boeing engineers to redesign the plane using turbojet power, and after a night of redesigning in their hotel suite, they presented a jet version. Colonel Warden was not satisfied with this result, and he asked for a new design by Monday.

Boeing engineers George S. Schairer, Art Carlsen and Vaughn Blumenthal had been joined by Ed Wells, Boeing vice president of engineering, plus engineers Bob Whithington and Maynard Pennell, and spent the weekend at the Van Cleve completely reconfiguring their design. While the others crunched numbers and analyzed data, George Schairer, the chief aerodynamicist, went to a local hobby store to get model building supplies, and configured a 14" silver painted model of the new design, which incorporated eight turbojet engines, paired in pods hanging below the swept wings. The design incorporated various other innovations. The sculpted model, along with a 33-page proposal was presented to the Air Force on Monday. Colonel Warden knew that this was going to be the B-52.

Learn more about the B-52, and B-52 specs, on these links: <https://www.boeing.com/history/products/b-52-stratofortress.page>

<https://www.boeing.com/defense/b-52-bomber/#/videos/new-b-52-engines-make-sense>

<https://www.af.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/104465/b-52-stratofortress/>

Footnote: Retired Air Force **Colonel Roger McClure**, a member of the Aviation Trail Board of Trustees, was an experienced pilot of the B-52, as well as many other aircraft, and shared some fond memories of this iconic and versatile airplane: *"I was fortunate enough to have flown a couple thousand hours in several different models of the aircraft, and was commander of a B-52 Unit back in the mid 70's. Also, actually flew several combat missions in the very aircraft that is on display at the Air Force Museum"*.





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All levels of Aviation Trail memberships, except for Life Membership, are annual and are subject to renewal, at the desired level, by each January.

Membership Levels

I / We wish to remain anonymous.

_____ \$25.00 Senior (age 60+)

_____ \$75 Contributing

_____ \$1000 Patron

_____ \$30 Individual

_____ \$150 Supporting

_____ Other- I am a life member and would like to make an additional contribution

_____ \$40 Family

_____ \$1500 Individual Life Member*

(*May be paid in three annual payments of \$500 per year, mail in only)

_____ Donation - I would like to support Aviation Trail with a **DONATION** of \$ _____ to Aviation Trail

Please apply my donation to:

Membership Fund

Preservation Fund*

Wilbear Fund**

* Donations will be designated to promote and preserve historical aviation sites in the Dayton Region.

** Donations will be designated to promote and preserve the "Wilbear Wright" teddy bear program that promotes the Aviation Trail and its partner sites.

Check enclosed. Make payable to: Aviation Trail, Inc.

Mail to Aviation Trail, Inc. / PO Box 633 / Wright Brothers Station / Dayton, OH 45409

Members and donors receive an online subscription to the Aviation Trail newsletter, *Flight Log*, and advance invitations to Aviation Trail events and programs.

Online credit card payments may be made from our website at www.aviationtrailinc.org.

Select the "Memberships -Donations-Reservations button from the top menu. Secure payments are made through PayPal.

Donations to Aviation Trail, Inc., a 501(c)3 organization, in partnership with the National Park Service to promote Aviation Heritage in the Dayton region, are fully tax deductible.

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