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WRIGHT BROTHERS' FIRST FLIGHT HONORED
ON NEW U.S. POSTAGE STAMP

DAYTON, Ohio & KILL DEVIL HILLS, N.C.— Enthusiastic crowds of stamp collectors, history buffs and fans of flying gathered today in separate events in Dayton, Ohio and Kill Devil Hills, N.C. to mark the United States Postal Service issuance of the First Flight commemorative postage stamp. The stamp marks the 100th anniversary of the first controlled, powered, sustained flight in a heavier-than-air flying machine.



In Dayton, the backdrop was the United States Air Force Museum's Inventing Flight Centennial Celebration. In Kill Devil Hills, a special celebration occurred at the Wright Brothers National Memorial Park.

The 37-cent First Flight stamp is available today in Dayton, Kill Devil Hills and Kitty Hawk post offices only. Beginning tomorrow, it will be available at post offices across the country.

"With their first brief flight in December of 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright ushered in a new century that would see the world forever changed by air travel," said Ralph Moden, Senior Vice President, Government Relations, for the Postal Service, who dedicated the stamp in Dayton.

"Special events like this one give me the opportunity to take a step back and reflect on the larger picture of what the Postal Service means to the American people," said Henry Pankey, Vice President, Delivery and Retail, for the Postal Service, who dedicated the stamp in Kill Devil Hills.

"The First Flight stamp image captures that remarkable moment of aviation history, when the Wright Flyer first soared into the air and ushered in a new age of transportation," he said.

"In December 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright attained their dream, vision and achievement when their first powered flight took off from these grounds here in Kill Devil Hills," said Lawrence A.

Belli, Superintendent, Outer Banks Group, National Park Service. "Given that Kitty Hawk Postmaster Captain William (Bill) Tate served such an important role in convincing the Wright brothers, two visionaries from Dayton, Ohio, to come to the Outer Banks a century ago, today's stamp issuance by the U.S. Postal Service is a perfect addition to the First Flight Centennial celebration."

"It's only fitting that the first day issue of the First Flight Centennial Stamp should take place at Wright Brothers National Memorial, the site of the first flight; and in Dayton, Ohio, the home of the Wright Brothers," said Ken Mann, President, First Flight Society and Chairman, North Carolina First Flight Centennial Commission. "This special stamp will travel the world, telling people everywhere about this historic accomplishment."

The ceremony in Dayton began with an opening selection by the Air Force Band of Flight, followed by an Ohio welcome from Major General (Ret.) Charles Metcalf, Director of the U.S. Air Force Museum. This was followed by the presentation of colors by the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base Honor Guard, and the National Anthem, sung by "Cruise Control," a Dayton-based barbershop quartet.

Joining Moden and Metcalf in Dayton was Amanda Wright Lane, great-grand niece of Orville and Wilbur Wright.

In Kill Devil Hills the ceremony began with the presentation of colors by the Langley Air force Base Honor Guard Unit, followed by Saint Andrews Episcopal Church Quartet who sang the National Anthem. A warm North Carolina welcome was received from Warren Judge, Chairman, Dare County Commission. The Wright Flight Program Students, from First Flight Elementary School, brought letters they wrote for Special Delivery.

Joining Pankey, Belli and Mann in Kill Devil Hills were the Honorable Sherry Rollason, Mayor of Kill Devil Hills; the Honorable Bill Harris, Mayor of Kitty Hawk; and David C. Fields, Sr., District Manager of the Postal Service's Greensboro District, who presided over the ceremony.

Intellectually curious and mechanically inclined, Wilbur Wright (1867–1912) and his brother Orville (1871–1948) owned a printing business and several bicycle shops in Dayton. In the late 1890s their interest turned to aviation, and from 1900 to 1902 they tested a series of gliders at Kill Devil Hills, a location near Kitty Hawk, N.C., that was chosen primarily for its steady winds.

In 1903 the Wright brothers built a new flyer, which they also tested at Kill Devil Hills. Equipped with a four-cylinder engine that delivered a little more than 12 horsepower, the flyer—with Orville at the controls—lifted into the air at about 10:35 a.m. on Dec. 17. Although the craft was only

airborne for an estimated 12 seconds and traveled only 120 feet, the Wright brothers had achieved the first controlled, powered, sustained flight in a heavier-than-air flying machine. Three even more successful flights followed later that day, the remarkable prelude to a century that would see the world forever changed by air travel.

The brothers continued their work at Huffman Prairie Flying Field near Dayton, improving the process of controlling flight while designing aircraft capable of mid-air turning.

Eighty-five million self-adhesive First Flight stamps were printed and made available in a souvenir sheet of 10 stamps of one design. The stamp illustration by McRay Magleby of Provo, Utah, depicts Orville Wright at the controls of the 1903 Wright flyer. Text at the bottom of the design reads: "First Flight ? Wright Brothers ? 1903." The front of the souvenir sheet features a detail of a photograph of Orville and Wilbur Wright taken in Pau, France, in 1909.

In addition to the souvenir sheet of 10 stamps, the following philatelic products will be available at Postal Stores and by toll-free phone order at 1 800 STAMP-24: Cancellation Keepsake including a First Day Cover and pane of the First Flight stamps (\$5.20); First Day Cover (\$0.75); Commemorative Panel (\$8.75); and Matted Print Keepsake (\$27.95).

To see the First Flight stamp, locate the online version of this press release at www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm. Current U.S. stamps and philatelic products, as well as the free USA Philatelic catalog, are available by calling toll free 1 800 STAMP-24. A selection of U.S. stamps and gift items are also available online at the Postal Store at www.usps.com/shop. Images of many current, past and future stamp issues can be found in the Stamp Issues section of the Collector's Corner.

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Postal Service delivers more than 43 percent of the world's mail volume—some 203 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves seven million customers each day at its 38,000 retail locations nationwide.