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Exhibition: https://airandspace.si.edu/exhibitions/early-flight
Photos: https://www.flickr.com/gp/airandspace/a5hZ1X2vxY

Fact Sheet
"Early Flight"

Title: "Early Flight"
Opening: Oct. 14, 2022, National Air and Space Museum, Washington, D.C., Gallery 103

In one short decade, the airplane grew from an ancient dream into the reality of a machine that would shape the future. "Early Flight" will explore how, between the first flights at Kitty Hawk and the opening guns of World War I, the design and construction of aircraft and engines became a global industrial enterprise, which promised to exercise enormous impact on society, politics and culture in war and peace. Fueled by the excitement of the first air races, meets and exhibitions, a wave of public enthusiasm for aviation circled the globe. The men and women who flew ever higher, faster and farther emerged as the great heroes of the era. The stage was set for a new age shaped by the fact that humans can fly.

Highlights include:

- **1909 Wright Military Flyer:** This is the world's first military airplane. Wilbur Wright taught the first three American military aviators to fly in this airplane. The Army gave the airplane to the Smithsonian in 1911.
- **Blériot XI:** The classic Blériot XI first appeared in the spring of 1909 and became one of the most popular monoplanes produced before WWI. It was licensed for other firms to build, and it was popular with European armies and even do-it-yourself builders in Europe and America.
- **Ecker Flying Boat:** Originally fitted with wheels, Herman A. Ecker added pontoons to enable his flying boat to operate from water. Ecker represents the large community of individuals who designed and built their own airplanes or built their own copies of manufactured aircraft.
- **Curtiss Headless D:** This is an original Curtiss D-III, which first appeared in 1909 and became the standard aircraft flown by members of the Curtiss Exhibition team. Headless refers to the location of the elevator—it is in the rear, unlike earlier Curtiss models that featured it in front of the pilot.

- **Lilienthal Glider:** An improved restoration of the Lilienthal glider, which is one of the most authentic in existence. Otto Lilienthal was the most important aviation pioneer in the years between Sir George Cayley and the Wright brothers. This is the only original Lilienthal glider in the Western Hemisphere. Lilienthal considered it the most successful of his designs.
- **Georgia "Tiny" Broadwick's Parachute:** At just 5 feet (1.5 meters) tall and weighing all of 85 pounds (39 kilograms), Georgia Broadwick earned the nickname "Tiny." Yet as the first woman to parachute from an airplane, her courage was anything but tiny.
- **Cayley Convertiplane Model:** Sir George Cayley produced this 1843 design for an aircraft featuring helicopter blades that could be converted to fixed wings. While never built, this design was inspired by Cayley's initial experiments with a helicopter toy. This model was constructed by Paul Edward Garber based on Cayley's original drawings.
- **How to Build an Airplane Interactive:** Visitors can explore various ways early designers and engineers approached the challenge of building an airplane capable of flight through animations and answering questions about the properties on a flight-worthy aircraft on a touchscreen.
- **Fly an Early Airplane Interactive:** Using touchscreen controls, visitors will be able to control an early aircraft using different early control systems, such as the Bleriot stick and rudder, Curtiss all moving wheel and the Wright Military three stick system, using a touchscreen to fly a course over water near New York City.

Sponsors: Richard W McKinney

"Early Flight" Curator Bios

Christopher Moore

Christopher Moore curates the museum's collection of aircraft armament—including guns, cannon, missiles and bombs—representing the technological history of the militarization of aircraft from WWI to the present. He also curates the Aeronautics Department's model aircraft collection, including model aircraft propulsion. The collection, comprising more than 5,000 objects, documents the history of flight from models of the designs of pioneers such as Octave Chanute to models of the latest aircraft. Prior to joining the Smithsonian, he served as an officer in the U.S. Coast Guard. He was also a collections specialist with the National Museum of American History. At the museum, he has assisted with several gallery projects and is currently serving on three gallery teams. He is a member of the American Alliance of Museums, the League of WWI Aviation Historians and the Vintage Radio Control Society. He received his Bachelor of Arts in European history from the University of California, San Diego, and his Master of Arts in American history from George Mason University.

Tom Crouch

Tom Crouch, now curator emeritus, joined the Smithsonian in 1974 and has served both the National Air and Space Museum and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in a variety of curatorial and administrative posts. Throughout his career, Crouch has played a major role in planning museum exhibitions. In addition to the exhibitions at the National Air and

Space Museum, he was involved in planning exhibitions for the Neil Armstrong Museum, the Ohio Historical Center and the National Museum of American History. In 2000, President Bill Clinton appointed Crouch to the chairmanship of the First Flight Centennial Federal Advisory Board, an organization created to advise the Centennial of Flight Commission on activities planned to commemorate the 100th anniversary of powered flight. Prior to coming to the Smithsonian, he was employed by the Ohio Historical Society. Crouch holds a Bachelor of Arts (1962) from Ohio University, a Master of Arts (1968) from Miami University and a doctorate (1976) from the Ohio State University.

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