



The Dream of Flight

On December 17, 1903, Wilbur and Orville Wright made the world's first powered, sustained, and controlled flight in their heavier-than-air flying machine. To commemorate their achievement and to celebrate the anniversary of that great event, the Library of Congress presents *The Dream of Flight*—a special display dedicated to the Wright Brothers and their realization of mankind's age-old aspiration to fly.

Until the Wright Brothers' successful attempt, the notion of human flight—purposefully and skillfully soaring through the air—was still primarily the domain of dreamers and belonged in the realm of myth and imagination. The original letters, diaries, notebooks and photographs displayed here tell the compelling story of how two motivated American bicycle mechanics achieved a scientific understanding of then-unknown laws of aerodynamics and used their technical genius to invent what would become a worldwide industry. Through ingenuity, keen intellect, courage, perseverance, and scientific methods, the Wrights used wood, cloth, and steel to transform a dream into a reality.

The Dream of Flight also highlights the breadth and depth of other Library of Congress collections, including rare books and prints, photographs, and manuscripts, that trace the concept of flight across cultures and over time. Briefly surveying the dream of flight from classical times to the start of the twentieth century, the display culminates in the Wrights' grand and lasting achievement—teaching the world to fly.