



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

“A Hilarious Mood”

Last issue's excerpts from *The Papers of Wilbur and Orville Wright, Volume One, 1899-1905* (McGraw-Hill, 2001), recounted the brothers' completion of their 1902 glider. These excerpts describe them working with the glider at Kill Devil Hill, and succeeding with the vertical tail and the rudder.

Wilbur Wright to George A. Spratt [a fellow believer in manned flight], Kill Devil Hills, September 16, 1902

It would be a pity to have your ideas of camp life here based on your experience of one year ago. First, we have not seen a dozen mosquitoes in the two weeks and a half we have been here. Second, we fitted up our living arrangements much more comfortably than last year. Our kitchen is immensely improved, and then we have made beds on the second floor and now sleep aloft. It is an improvement over cots. Our new well goes down about ten feet deeper than last year, and we now have good water. We also have a bicycle which runs much better over the sand than we hoped, so that it only takes about an hour to make the round trip to Kitty Hawk instead of three hours as before. We are having a splendid time. The main thing though is the new machine. We had it out making some tests of its efficiency today and are very much pleased with the results. If you are really intending to build a large machine you ought to see the three machines at Kitty Hawk this year.

Orville Wright's Diary B, September 19, 1902

Completed the rear vertical tail at 10:30. After dinner took machine to small hill, and after taking two pictures, flying it as kite, began gliding. We are convinced that the trouble with the 1901 machine is overcome by the vertical tail.

Wilbur Wright to Octave Chanute, September 23, 1902

We finished the day with a slight catastrophe which will delay further experiment for two or three days. My brother after too brief practice with the use of the front rudder tried to add the use of the wing-twisting arrangement also, with the result that, while he was correcting a slight rise in one wing, he completely forgot to attend to the front rudder, and the machine reared up and rose some 25 feet and sidled off and struck the ground on one wing tip. We hope to have repairs made in a few days.

Orville Wright's Diary B, September 23

The result was a heap of flying machine, cloth, and sticks, with me in the center without a bruise or a scratch. In spite of this sad catastrophe we are in a hilarious mood as a result of the encouraging performance of the machine both in control and in angles of flight. We have come to the conclusion, that the cause of the sudden rise of the front of the machine is a result of the wind striking on the underside of the front rudder when the relative wind is from one side.

A few mosquitoes tonight.

Moments & Milestones is produced in association with the National Aeronautic Association. Visit the NAA Web site at www.naa-usa.org or call (703) 527-0226.

LOGBOOK

Events

The National Aeronautic Association 2003 **Spring Awards Reception and Ceremony** will be held on the evening of Monday, March 31, 2003, at the College Park Aviation Museum in College Park, Maryland. This event will celebrate NAA members who have established or broken records, Fédération Aéronautique Internationale award winners, and the winners of the 2003 Young Artists Contest, which is titled "100 Years of Powered Flight." Attendees can mingle with the evening's honorees and other aviation enthusiasts while enjoying the historic exhibits of the museum, which is located at the world's oldest continuously operated airport. For more information, visit NAA's Web site at www.naa-usa.org or call (703) 527-0226.

Nominations

The Elder Statesman of Aviation Award is awarded annually to honor outstanding Americans, who, by their efforts over the years, have made significant contributions to aeronautics and have reflected credit upon the nation and themselves. Candidates must be a U.S. citizen and at least 60 years old. Nominations will be accepted from April 1 through June 30, 2003.

The Wright Brothers Memorial Trophy is awarded annually "to a living individual for significant public service of enduring value, as a civilian, to aviation in the United States." Nominations will be accepted from April 1 through June 30, 2003.

The Harmon Aeronaut (Ballooning) Trophy is awarded annually for the most outstanding international achievement in the art and/or science of ballooning for the period of July 1, 2002, to June 30, 2003. Nominations will be accepted from April 15 through July 15, 2003.