

# WFC Flyer



First Flight Airport (FAA) and the Wright Brothers National Memorial in Kill Devil Hills, NC photographed from WFC aircraft N701DT 31 July 2023 (Dan Probst)

## Important Dates:

**General Meeting**  
October 12, 2023  
WFC Clubhouse

**Board Meeting**  
November 2, 2023  
WFC Clubhouse

**General Meeting**  
November 9, 2023  
WFC Clubhouse

## Inside This Issue:

- President's Desk, p1
- Cool Places to Fly, First Flight Airport, p3
- Fly-outs: Mid-Atlantic Air Museum, p6
- Congratulations, p7
- Calendar, p7
- Bird Bath, p7

## Williamson Flying Club Newsletter October 2023

### From the President's Desk by Bob Fratangelo

Here we are – October!

As we scream into October, what great weather we have had! There has been much flying activity so far this month and I expect we will hear some stories from our activities committee as a result of some of their fantastic fly outs! If you have not joined them with your aircraft or club aircraft, please don't be bashful about reaching out to them about grabbing a seat in one to go! Great stuff.

Kevin Malchoff recently obtained his instrument ticket! Doc is smiling for sure. Congratulations Kevin! Mike Bjerger also has some great news for more club members obtaining their first solo,

private and instrument ratings. Great month.

Tony's Thanksgiving in October will be celebrated this coming Saturday, October 14 at noon. Be sure to come out and bring a dish to pass. Scott and Kim Laskey are cooking up some turkeys for us again. Mmmmmmmmmmm...

Our grounds people are doing a great job maintaining the club property. There is always more to do of course. Thank you to all who come out to make the club look awesome! Special thanks to those who come out to do a special project or two: Don Baker, Mick McKee, Dave Lowry pitched in to fix the lighting

*(Continued on page 2)*



## Williamson Flying Club

Williamson-Sodus Airport (KSDC)  
5502 State Route 104  
Williamson, NY 14589

Find us on the web at:  
[www.williamsonflyingclub.com](http://www.williamsonflyingclub.com)

## Board of Directors

President: Bob Fratangelo  
Vice President: Dave Lowry  
Secretary: Paula Sippel  
Treasurer: Bob Herloski

Director, 2021: Dick Swingly  
Director, 2022: Gilead Biggie  
Director, 2023: Dave Perricone

Contact: [bod@williamsonflyingclub.com](mailto:bod@williamsonflyingclub.com)

Medical Advisor: Dr. Pam Tarkington

## WFC General Meetings

Please remember that our general meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm. Recently, we've struggled to reach a quorum to conduct club business such as voting in new members.

These meetings are great opportunity to catch up with other members and stay current on what's happening at the club.

We hope to see you there!

## From the President's Desk by Bob Fratangelo

*(Continued from page 1)*

on the flagpole. We had 15 members come out to wash planes the other day. (See the back page of this newsletter for photos.) Great stuff.

Sadly, there are aviation tragedies that hit close to home. Stay current to give yourself and your passengers a chance if something goes wrong. When you are up boring holes in the sky, add a few emergency procedures to your flight. Pick a hard deck of, let's say 1800 ft, and try going 800 ft above that to see if you lost an engine would you make it back to the airport? No? Then how good are you at constantly monitoring for a field or landing spot if

not? Try those pesky stall recoveries, slow flight, spot landings!

If you are current with all of that, flying into Oshkosh becomes so much easier, especially the spot landing and slow flight parts. Of course, eyes in the sides and back of your head are helpful, too.

The Christmas Party has been planned for Saturday, December 9. Scott Lasky will have more details out soon. Please plan to attend! It is a great time and a great way to celebrate your flying bug with other aviators!

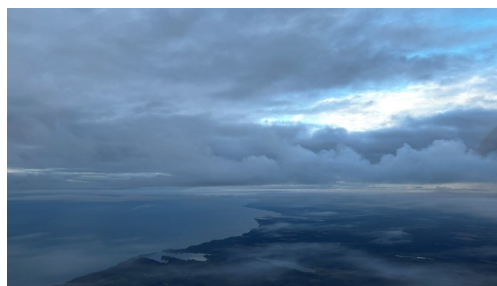
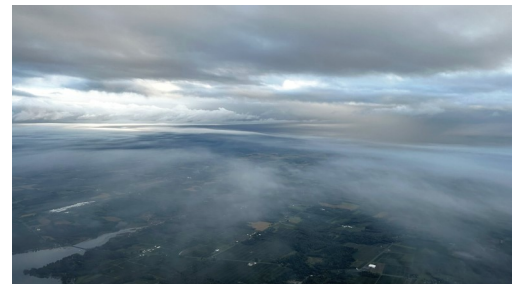
Come on out to the Club! Get in the air! See you there!

## Images by Chris Houston

### Aviation Quote

"Suddenly the wind ceased. The air seemed motionless around us. We were off, going at the speed of the air-current in which we now lived and moved. Indeed, for us there was no more wind; and this is the first great fact of spherical ballooning. Infinitely gentle is this unfelt motion forward and upward. The illusion is complete: it seems not to be the balloon that moves, but the earth that sinks down and away."

- Alberto Santos-Dumont  
*My Air-Ships* (1904)



In September, I flew my family eastbound on an IFR flight for a college visit. I used to think that IFR flying was all about "blind flying". But really, some of the best IFR flying allows us to travel among some spectacular cloudscaapes and maneuver into some amazing pockets of VFR without worrying about VFR cloud clearances!



## Cool Places to Fly: First Flight Airport (KFFA) by Chris Houston



### Destination:

First Flight Airport (KFFA),  
Kill Devil Hills, NC

### Distance:

438 nautical miles (direct)

### Why It's Cool:

- A journey here is an aviator's pilgrimage, a bucket list item for all pilots.
- KFFA is sited where the Wright Brothers first successfully flew their 1903 Flyer.
- Home to the Wright Brothers National Memorial; land in a national park!
- The Outer Banks are stunningly beautiful from the air.

The main goal of this column is to highlight easily-reachable flying destinations as encouragement for WFC members to leave the SDC pattern. For this month, let's venture a little farther than usual...this is aviation bucket list kind of stuff.

On December 17, 1903, Orville Wright took the controls of an underpowered wooden craft with muslin-skinned wings and made a 12 second, 120' baby step into the age of modern aeronautics. Justifiably, the windswept location outside of Kitty Hawk, North

Carolina is viewed as hallowed ground by most aviators. Just imagine settling an aircraft onto a runway positioned mere dozens of feet from the very spot where those early flights occurred!

The airport is part of the Wright Brothers National Memorial and administered by the National Park Service. A landing here is literally a landing in a National Park. A massive, Art Deco granite monument in the shape of a pylon stands atop the dune where the Wrights conducted their manned glider experiments. The inscription around its base reads: "In commemoration of the conquest of the air by the brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright conceived by genius achieved by dauntless resolution and unconquerable faith."

In the field north of the dune, stone markers show the start and end points of each of the four flights made on December 17. Each successive marker is farther away from the launch rail, visually chronicling the Wrights' gradual mastery of their unstable craft. Nearby buildings contain additional artifacts and information about the site.

I have flown to First Flight three times: in 2011 as a solo pilot, in 2013 with my family, and in 2023 on a WFC Ac-

tivities Committee trip with seven other WFC members (see "Fly-Outs: Tangier Island and First Flight" in the [August 2023 WFC Flyer](#)). As a pilot, each pilgrimage held a lot of meaning for me. On the first, I crossed the 1000 hour mark in my logbook. On the second, I had the pleasure of sharing the site with my family. Along these lines, First Flight is also a great family destination. Like many of the National Parks, this one has a [Junior Ranger program](#) (rebranded as a "Junior Flight Ranger" program for extra cool factor). Junior Ranger programs at the National Parks give kids a mission focus to capture their attention while they explore what each park has to offer. At the Wright Brothers National Memorial, kids fly makeshift kites, time themselves running the 120' length of the first flight (my daughter averaged about 45% faster than the ground speed of the 1903 Flyer), and scour the site for information in scavenger hunt fashion. My then six-year-old daughter had a blast earning her Junior Flight Ranger badge and we had a lot of fun watching her.

In addition to the appeal of the Wright Brothers National Memorial itself, the scenery of the Outer Banks is beautiful.

*(Continued on page 4)*



Aerial view of First Flight Airport and the Wright Brothers National Memorial.



## Cool Places to Fly: First Flight Airport (KFFA) by Chris Houston

*(Continued from page 3)*

ful and makes for a unique flying destination. It is worth a flight south along the barrier islands, past Cape Hatteras, to Ocracoke Island (W95). The island can only be reached by boat or airplane. At seventeen miles from the mainland, Ocracoke is considered the most remote island in the Outer Banks. However, from FFA, the entire flight can be made over land. The runway is situated within feet of the beach for a quick dip in the Atlantic. [Howard's Pub](#) is an easy walk from the airport for meals. The pub is owned and operated by the Howard family that potentially traces its roots in the Outer Banks back to William Howard, quartermaster for notorious pirate Blackbeard. Interestingly, Howard's Pub played up this connection in 2013 and was backing away from it by 2023.

Completists can also explore Billy Mitchell Airport (KHSE) on Hatteras Island. It is another basic facility with excellent beach access.

If you have not done so already, add First Flight and the Outer Banks to your aeronautical bucket list. If you already have added it and have not gone, consider this another nudge to make the journey! This past summer, we successfully flew four aircraft VFR to First Flight Airport, around the Outer Banks, and back. While the distance may seem significant, the journey can be easily accomplished with judicious planning and is one that can be accomplished by any of our members.

### Tips:

- Note that runway 21 at KFFA is right traffic.
- First Flight Airport is well maintained, but a bare-bones facility. There are no services (e.g., fuel) and night operations are not permitted. Continuous parking is limited to 24 hours with no more



The Wright Brothers monument viewed from the ramp of First Flight Airport.



The Wright Brothers monument.



My daughter "launches" from the same spot as the Flyer.



My family in front of the centennial of flight sculpture.



WFC at the Wright Brothers Memorial (Dan Probst)

than two overnight stays per month. There is an AOPA-sponsored building adjacent to

the airport parking area containing flight planning facilities, re-

*(Continued on page 5)*



## Cool Places to Fly: First Flight Airport (KFFA) by Chris Houston



Four granite markers show the progress made by each successive flight on December 17, 1903.



Granite marker for the first flight.

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streams, and perhaps most importantly given the locale, air conditioning. RNAV instrument approaches are available for both runways, which is an upgrade that occurred in the past decade since my previous visit.

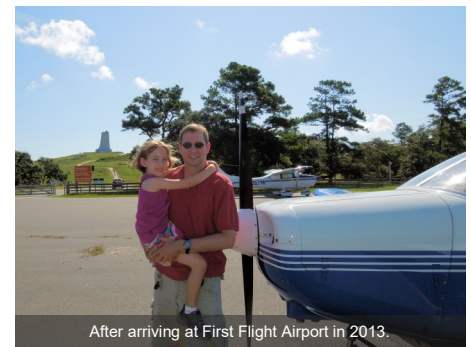
- Watch for banner tow operations along the ocean side of the strand.
- Dare County Regional (MQI) in Manteo is only six miles away and can provide most amenities you might need, including courtesy or rental cars and fuel (currently \$5.50 / gal)
- Currituck County Airport (KONX, 28 miles north) consistently has low prices on 100LL (currently \$5.405/gal).
- There is a lot of walking to do in the park and it can get hot depending on the time of year. There is also no food available in the park. Plan accordingly on both counts.
- Take note of the airspace over the Outer Banks, particularly if you plan to explore southward toward Ocracoke. Much of the area is designated a national wildlife refuge and flight below 2000' AGL is

prohibited. MOAs overlay the portions of the region with floors of 8000' MSL. Beyond the lateral boundaries of the barrier islands, special use airspace starts as low as the surface. It is all completely manageable, but requires attention.

- Speaking of airspace, the direct route from Sodus to Kill Devil Hills passes just east of the Washington DC Special Flight Rules Area (SFRA). If VFR, pilots flying within 60 nautical miles of the DCA VOR are required to take the DC Special Flight Rules Area course available at [www.faasafety.gov](http://www.faasafety.gov) whether they plan on flying through the SFRA or not ([ALC-405: DC Special Flight Rules Area](#)). While IFR, we've been routed directly through the SFRA east of the Capital with no issues; the airspace was entirely transparent to us.
- If you proceed south to Ocracoke, watch for the iconic black and white lighthouses on Bodie Island and Cape Hatteras. The Hatteras lighthouse is the tallest brick lighthouse in the United States. Howard Pub closes for the winter and is open from early spring to late fall ([www.howardspub.com](http://www.howardspub.com)).



My daughter flying her kite on the road to Jr Ranger.



After arriving at First Flight Airport in 2013.



The iconic Cape Hatteras lighthouse.



## Fly-Outs: Mid-Atlantic Air Museum, Reading, PA (KRDG) - 16 Sep 2023



Chris Houston's Warrior and 85X at the RDG terminal.



Entrance to Klinger's at the Airport.



A Martin 4-0-4 "Silver Falcon", early pressurized airliner.



Boeing C-97 Stratofreighter, derived from the B-29



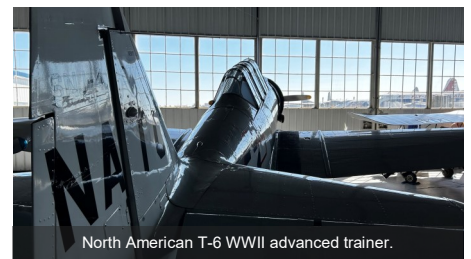
WFC member Scott "El Mariachi" Lasky



The museum's movie star B-25 Mitchell bomber.



Distinctive rear bubble of the P-61 Black Widow.



North American T-6 WWII advanced trainer.



A rare P-61 Black Widow WWII night fighter.



Homebuilt 2/3 scale Mustang w/ 600 hp engine.



A beautiful Ryan PT-22 Recruit WWII primary trainer.



Group photo taken by our docent.

On August 16, an Activities Committee fly-out to Basin Harbor (B06) was planned, but cancelled due to a combination of Vermont weather and runway closure at the destination. (We later learned that the reason for the closure was extremely wet turf. Some members visited a week later and, though usable, Basin Harbor's turf runway was still noticeably soft.) Instead, six people flew in two airplanes to Reading Regional Airport / Carl A Spaatz Field (KRDG) for lunch at [Klinger's at the Airport](#) and a tour of the [Mid-Atlantic Air Museum](#) (see "Cool Places to Fly" in the [November 2018 issue of the WFC Flyer](#)). The museum's claim to fame and reason for existence is the restoration of a rare, P-61 Black Widow WWII night fighter, one of only four still existing the world. Progress continues to be made on the P-61 restoration, though space is tight in the hangar. Beyond that, the collection is large and contains some unique aircraft. Photos by Chris Houston.



## Congratulations!



Congratulations to **Jerry Whitmer** on his first solo on 27 September 2023! Great job!

## Upcoming WFC and Local Events

Saturday October 14	Annual WFC Thanksgiving in October Celebration at KSDC, noon. We will be deep frying 4 turkeys. This is an opportunity to enjoy a great meal with other club members. Dishes to pass and/or donations to the lunch fund are encouraged. Invitations already sent by aSoS. Contact Scott Lasky if you have any questions.
Saturday October 14	Fly-in / Drive-in Fall Festival, Whitford's Airport (B16), 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm. An afternoon of food and flying. Live music by Transport, bring your own chair. Choice of hamburger, hot dog, or sausage, plus drinks. Adults \$25, children under 12 \$10, children under 5 free.
Saturday October 14	Leaf-Peeper Fall Fly-in Pancake Breakfast. Rutland-Southern Vermont Regional Airport (KRUT), EAA 968 in the Modern Air hangar, 8:00 am–11:00 am. All-you-can-eat pancakes (many flavors) with real Vermont maple syrup, plus bacon, sausage, eggs, homefries, and all the fixings. Donation \$15 adult, \$7 youth 8-15, under 8 free.
Saturday October 21	WFC Fly-Out to the annual BBQ at Benton Airport (PA40). Turf only, 2200 feet, excellent condition. Plan an arrival by 10:30 am, lunch served at 11:00. Invitations already sent by aSoS. Contact Chris Houston with any questions.
Saturday October 28	WFC Fly-Out for the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery Tour via KHPN. Details should be sent by aSoS in the coming weeks.
Saturday December 9	Annual WFC Holiday Party at the Ontario Golf Club. Cost for dinner will be \$35 per person. More details coming in November.

## Fall Bird Bath—Thank You!



Thanks to everyone who came out to keep the WFC fleet of aircraft looking great! We will have a similar event in the spring. Photos courtesy of Gilead Biggie.