

# LCM

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS MAGAZINE  
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

## TAKING FLIGHT

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### Inside

The Papers of Orville  
And Wilbur Wright

Journeying  
Into the Horizon

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### Plus

Navajo Code Talkers

Hemingway, Unfiltered

'Like a Fire in All My Bones'





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### Into the Horizon

The vast collections of the Library chronicle our impulse to explore.

■ “The Birth of Aviation,” a frieze in the U.S. Capitol, depicts the first flight by the Wright brothers. *Carol M. Highsmith Archive/ Prints and Photographs Division*

## Mission of the Library of Congress

The Library's mission is to engage, inspire and inform Congress and the American people with a universal and enduring source of knowledge and creativity.

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Carla Hayden  
**Librarian of Congress**

April Slayton  
**Executive Editor**

Mark Hartsell  
**Editor**

Ashley Jones  
**Designer**

Shawn Miller  
**Photo Editor**

**Contributors**  
Sara Augustin  
Nathan Cross  
Nathan Dorn  
Sara W. Duke  
Sahar Kazmi  
Laurie Leshin  
Josh Levy  
Wendi A. Maloney  
Carlyn Grace Osborn  
Neely Tucker

■ **On the cover:** Orville Wright pilots a glider during a launch at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, in 1902. The jagged edges of the photograph were caused by water damage to the glass negative – the result of a flood in the Wright brothers' hometown of Dayton, Ohio, in 1913. *Prints and Photographs Division*

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## CONNECT ON

[loc.gov/connect](http://loc.gov/connect)



# ONLINE OFFERINGS



■ Joe Kellwood (from left), Floyd Saupitty and Alex Williams aboard ship on their way to fight with the U.S. Marines in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Kellwood and Williams served as Navajo Code Talkers, and Kellwood's account of his service is preserved in the Veterans History Project collections. *National Archives*

## NAVAJO CODE TALKERS

VHP interviews chronicle their experiences at home and in combat.

Before radio communications could be encrypted through technological means, the military struggled to find fast and effective means to send secure messages. Perhaps the best method they found was to employ Native American troops as Code Talkers – radio operators who communicated to each other using their native languages.

Code Talkers from 14 different Native American nations served in World War I and World War II, including over 400 Navajo Marines during World War II. The Veterans History Project maintains oral history interviews from more than 20 Navajo Code Talkers.

In their interviews, the Code Talkers speak of the adversity they faced in their lives. Growing up in an era of forced assimilation, most attended boarding schools that forbade them from speaking in Navajo. The irony of later being asked to use this language at war was not lost on them.

“Now my mind went back to the past – first they told me not to speak Navajo, but now they want me to speak Navajo in combat,”

recalled Teddy Draper, who served with the Marines on Iwo Jima.

In addition to being a fascinating chapter of military history, the Code Talkers' unique experiences have much to teach us about the human dimensions of war. They faced almost continuous combat; due to high demand for their services, the Code Talkers frequently were sent directly from one battlefield to another instead of rotating to the rear with their units. Many are open and honest about the stress combat placed on them and how that affected them after the war.

Upon coming home, some participated in traditional Navajo ceremonies that provided healing and reintegration, and they often speak highly of these ceremonies' effectiveness. All of them offer valuable insights into the importance for veterans of finding community and purpose after their service ends.

These accounts of their life experiences can be accessed through the online research guide “Navajo Code Talkers: A Guide to First-Person Narratives in the Veterans History Project.”

–Nathan Cross is an archivist in the American Folklife Center.

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### MORE INFORMATION

VHP Research Guides  
[guides.loc.gov/veterans-history](https://guides.loc.gov/veterans-history)

## ‘LIKE A FIRE IN ALL MY BONES’

‘Memoir’ tells heartbreaking tale of suffering and faith.

Nestled in the Library’s collections is a short account of a remarkable life – a small, 50-odd-page book called “Glorious in Tribulation: A Brief Memoir of Hannah Carson, For Thirteen Years Deprived of the Use of All Her Limbs.” The volume, published by the Protestant Episcopal Book Society in Philadelphia following Carson’s death in 1864, is actually a biography written by her friends rather than a memoir. The story is at once heartbreaking and inspiring.

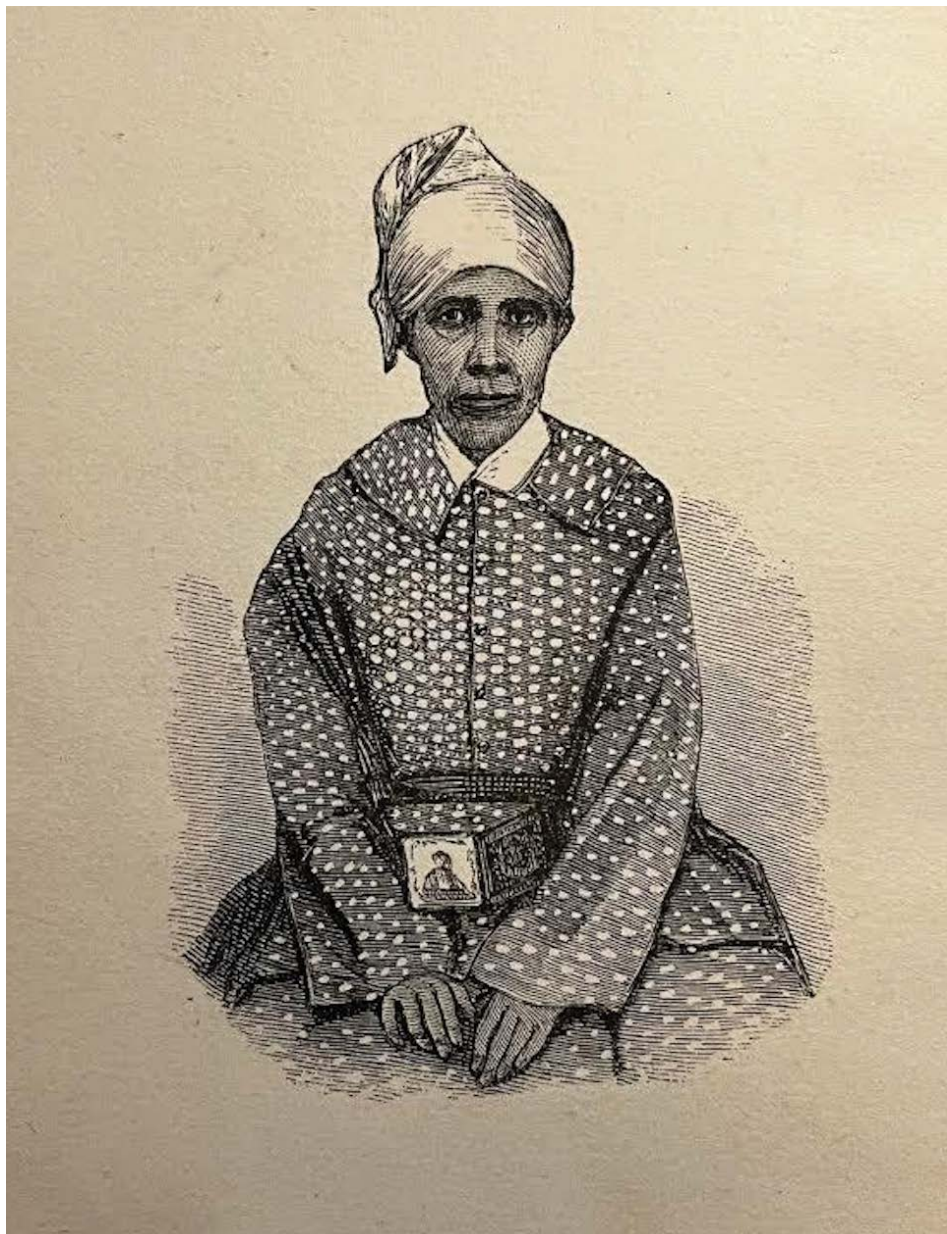
She was born Hannah Tranks in Pennsylvania in 1808 to free parents and raised in the Methodist Church. At 18, her mother died, leaving her to care for six younger siblings. She moved to the Philadelphia area, married Robert Carson and bore three children. Only one survived infancy. Robert died in 1841, making her a widow and single mother at 33.

Hannah cheerfully took to hired housework to pay the bills. Later, she was diagnosed with acute inflammatory rheumatism, which left her bedridden and almost completely paralyzed for the remaining 13 years of her life, unable to feed herself or even brush away a fly.

Carson’s religious beliefs, however, gave her a new career: Evangelizing her faith. Long a member of Bethel church, she was well known to the Christian community. Her faith was a beacon to others. As she told one group of friends who visited: “While you have been with me, the love of Christ has kindled like a fire in all my bones, and has driven out the pain and anguish, till I am full of joy.”

After she died in her own bed at 55, “her little room was crowded by her friends, both white and colored, who assembled to pay the last tribute of respect.” But respect and admiration went only so far in 19th-century Philadelphia: She was buried in a segregated cemetery. Today, her story offers a unique window into Black disability in the 19th century and, still, a deep testament to her faith.

–Sara Augustin was a summer 2023 junior fellow in the Office of Communications.

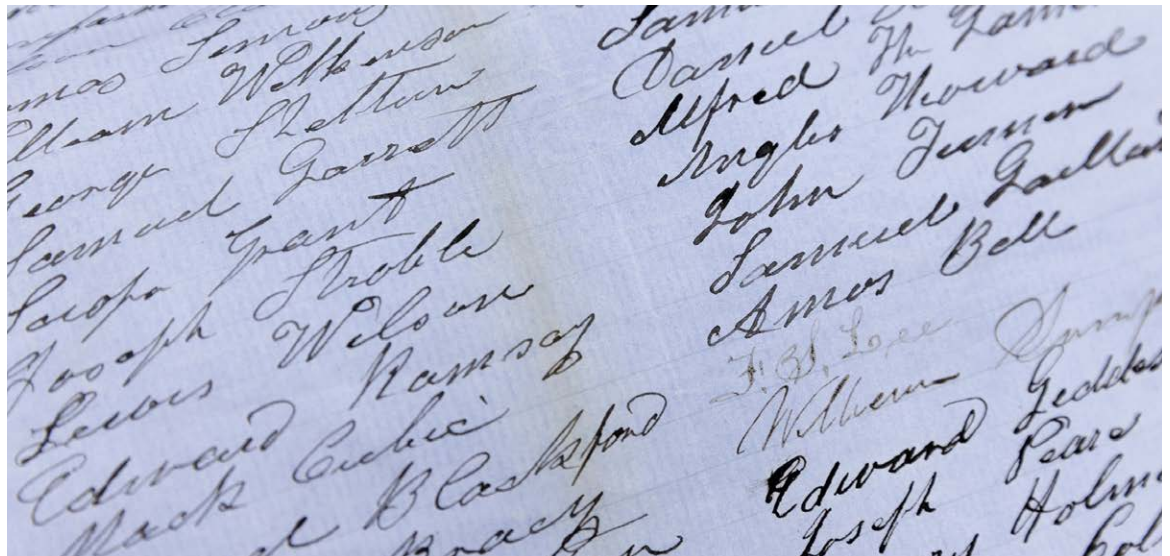


■ Hannah Carson holds a portrait of her late husband in this rendering taken from the frontispiece of “Glorious in Tribulation.” *Rare Book and Special Collections Division*

# FOR YOU

■ **Right:** More than 3,700 Black South Carolinians signed this petition calling for equal rights in 1865. The petition recently was the subject of a By the People campaign. *Manuscript Division*

**Opposite:** By the People campaigns produced transcribed collections of (clockwise from upper left) spiritualist Frederick Hockley, civil rights icon Rosa Parks, a left-handed penmanship contest for wounded Civil War soldiers and sheet music promoting women's suffrage. *Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Manuscript Division, Music Division*



## BY THE PEOPLE

### Crowdsourced transcription program helps make resources accessible.

It began as an experiment: Might crowdsourcing connect the Library with new audiences? And could that help the institution share its treasures more widely?

Five years and more than 700,000 transcribed pages later, the answer is a resounding yes.

The Library's By the People program, launched in October 2018, invites volunteers to transcribe historical materials, most of them handwritten. After a review for accuracy, transcriptions are integrated into the Library's digital collections, where users can search them by keyword or read them with accessibility technologies.

In its first year, By the People tested the waters with five Manuscript Division collections: Clara Barton's diaries, contest submissions from disabled Civil War veterans, Branch Rickey's baseball scouting reports, letters written to Abraham Lincoln and the papers of Mary Church Terrell. By year's end, thousands of volunteers had participated, transcribing and reviewing over 30,000 pages of letters, diaries and records.

By the People since has hosted 33 additional campaigns from across the Library, including letters written to Theodore Roosevelt, parts

of the papers of George Washington, Susan B. Anthony and Rosa Parks and the war diaries of Gen. George S. Patton, among others. The program recently launched a campaign covering musical theater sheet music and soon will launch another featuring composer Leonard Bernstein. On Feb. 14, the program will celebrate Frederick Douglass' birthday by hosting a transcribe-a-thon of his correspondence.

In total, By the People has released over 984,000 pages for transcription on [crowd.loc.gov](https://crowd.loc.gov). Thirty-six thousand registered contributors as well as many anonymous transcribers have completed more than 700,000 pages, and By the People has transferred nearly 300,000 transcriptions back to [loc.gov](https://loc.gov).

A side benefit of the program is the personal satisfaction volunteers get from helping make the Library's treasures more accessible to people everywhere.

"Our volunteers tell us that in addition to getting to know these people and eras of history firsthand," senior digital collections specialist Lauren Algee says, "the reason they contribute is the real-world impact they are having on these materials and future researchers."

—Carlyn Grace Osborn is a digital collections specialist at the Library of Congress.

### MORE INFORMATION

By the People  
[crowd.loc.gov](https://crowd.loc.gov)

# THE ESPION

— Vol IV —  
2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1853 to 28<sup>th</sup> June 1853

*A Record  
of Visions and Conferences with the  
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## SPIRIT WORLD.

AUG -5 1916

# WHEN HELEN CASTS HER BALLOT

By  
JOHN KIRK

WORDS BY  
PETER J. BAST



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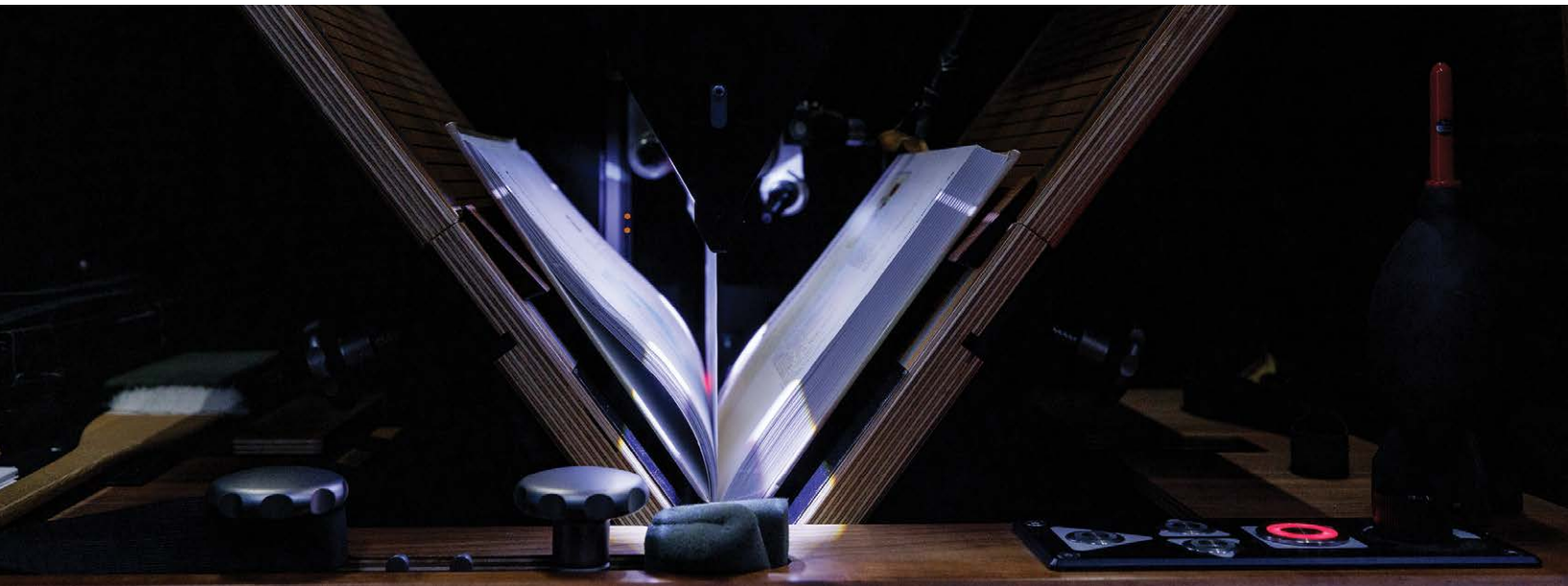


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# FT ARM CORP



■ This sophisticated scanner, designed to avoid damaging fragile books, requires volumes to open only to 60 degrees to capture images using a prism. *Shawn Miller*

## NEW SCAN CENTER OPENS ITS DOORS

Cutting-edge technology vastly increases the speed of digitization.

On a Thursday morning at the Library, digital conversion technician Kevin Marcou sits at the far corner of a darkened room beside a large-bed scanner, two neatly stacked piles of North Carolina highway maps at hand.

In an almost continuous motion, he moves a sheet from one stack onto the scanner bed, waits two seconds for a camera flash, then sweeps the sheet neatly into the other stack – no simple task considering that each map is a little over 1½ by 2½ feet.

And then he does it again. And again and again. Deep in concentration, almost in a world of his own, Marcou moves quickly and precisely to take full advantage of the scanner's instant-capture technology. He finishes around 400 sheets by day's end and completes all 2,585 maps within seven days.

The scanner is one of multiple cutting-edge pieces of technology inside the Library's new 4,000-square-foot Digital Scan Center.

Library divisions have been digitizing their holdings for several decades now.

Over the years, digitization has enabled the Library to share some of its most remarkable treasures online. People from around the country and the world can now view Alexander Hamilton's final written words to his wife, Elizabeth, before his fatal duel in 1804; holograph manuscripts by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart; or Thomas Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration of Independence.

The new scan center employs increasingly sophisticated equipment.

One fully automated machine turns book pages as high-resolution scanning proceeds. Another, designed especially to avoid damage to rare and fragile books, requires volumes to open only to 60 degrees to capture images using a prism. New 100-megapixel autofocus cameras replace their 65-megapixel predecessors. The scanner Marcou used to scan the highway maps has a 150-megapixel camera to capture large items.

In addition to dark walls and floors and lighting control (the ideal environment for scanning), the room has a vault and 24/7 electronic monitoring – all part of a high-tech effort to preserve historical items and bring them to a broader audience.

–Wendi A. Maloney is a writer-editor in the Office of Communications.



## Nathan Dorn curates rare books in the Law Library.

### Describe your work at the Library.

I am the curator of the rare books collection at the Law Library of Congress, which is mostly a collection of historical printed law books from Europe, the British Isles and the Americas. That role includes a handful of different tasks. I'm the recommending officer for the collection, which means I spend a lot of my time analyzing the collection and shopping for books to acquire that would grow it in useful directions. I'm the reference librarian for questions that relate to objects in the collection or to the subject matter it covers. In addition, I do a lot of outreach work. That includes frequent table-top displays and also longer-lived presentations. I've curated two Library of Congress exhibitions. I also write for the Law Library's blog.

### How did you prepare for your position?

Like most of the librarians at the Law Library, I have a Juris Doctor and a master's in library science. When I was finishing my master's, I had the good luck to work as an assistant to the previous rare book curator here at the Law Library. I was studying history of the book and descriptive bibliography, so I was really grateful for the opportunity to engage with the collection in hands-on ways.

Before I worked in libraries, I studied classics and then religious studies at the University of Chicago and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I was in a doctoral program at the University of Chicago when the subject of religion and law pruned my attention away from the history of mysticism, which had been occupying me for several years. When I started to look at the history of law, I came to the subject with a raft of foreign language skills that definitely helped prepare me for my work today.

### What are your favorite collection items?

This definitely changes all the time. New acquisitions always get my attention. The Law Library recently acquired a copy of the Hamburg Quran, an early edition of the Quran printed in Europe in 1694, and I'm excited to grow the Law Library's Islamic law collection.

But I also like oddities of law – publications in which law and the administration of the



SHAWN MILLER

state bump up against the edges of what can be known or realistically controlled: for instance, works on prosecution for witchcraft or heresy; adjudication of miracles; early laws related to mental illness; and medieval and early modern criminal procedure and rules of evidence. Some of my favorite items have been examples of Renaissance mnemotechnics, or the art of memory training for lawyers. For example, the works of Johannes Buno are jaw-dropping just from the point of view of their ingenuity.

### What have been your most memorable experiences at the Library?

My interactions with visitors are some of the most memorable. Here's just one unexpected experience: I'm a huge fan of the movie "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," so it was especially fun that I had a chance to take the actor Richard Dreyfuss and his wife on a tour of the Jefferson Building along with a colleague of mine. Dreyfuss and I found our way into a long conversation about historian Nancy Isenberg's book "Fallen Founder," which tries to rehabilitate the reputation of Aaron Burr. He was a big fan of the version of Burr that came out of that book, and he told me about it in detail.

# ERNEST, UNFILTERED

BY NEELY TUCKER

Library preserves  
off-the-cuff sound recordings  
made by Hemingway.



In the middle of the 20th century, when Ernest Hemingway was living in Cuba, his friend and future biographer A.E. Hotchner got him to record himself on a wire recorder – the precursor of the tape recorder – so that one of the world’s most famous (and famously gregarious) writers could pop off about anything he’d like whenever he’d like.

The idea was to capture the sound and feel of Hemingway himself, unguarded and spontaneous, comfortable in his own home.

These off-the-cuff recordings, then, would give Hotchner hours of raw material from one of the greatest literary minds in American history. Who, after all, would not think it an unforgettable experience to have plopped on Papa’s couch, listening to the man go off about war, writing, bullfights or fishing the Gulf Stream?

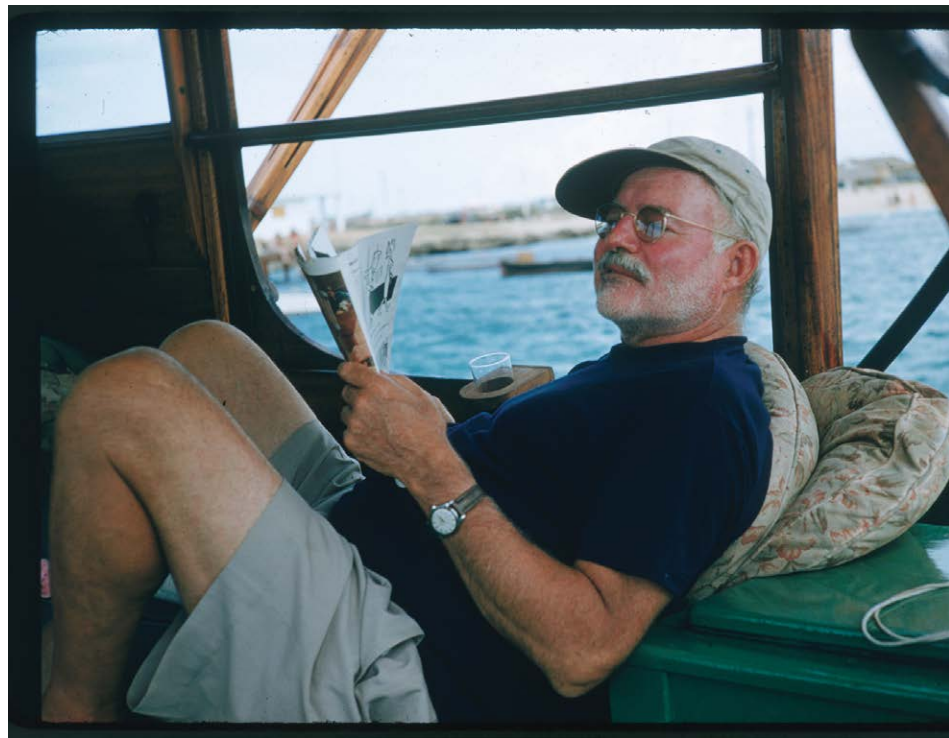
The closest you can get to that today is sitting in a soundproof booth at the Library, headphones clamped over your ears. Those 1949–50 tapes, initially recorded on 15 wire reels and lasting about 4½ hours, are preserved in digital form as part of the Hotchner Collection. (They are not online and require an in-person appointment at the Library.)

The recording quality is low and scratchy, but you can listen as Hemingway reads a bizarre poem about war he wrote for his fourth wife, Mary; gripes about a poorly organized fishing tournament and criticism of his recent work; dictates letters and book introductions; and offers salty recollections of prostitutes.

But instead of the barroom bravado that one might expect, what we really learn is how self-conscious the man was with a microphone in front of him, how different he sounded from how we might expect (his voice was high and uneven, his delivery stilted) and how uncomfortable this giant of literature was with midcentury technology. He just couldn’t get the hang of it.

“It seems I’m doing very badly at this now,” he says at one point, likely in 1949 when he was working on “Across the River and Into the Trees,” “but I wrote 1,260 words this morning and am not overly enthusiastic at the moment about talking into something that feels as dead in the hand as this does.”

And then, after playing back another segment: “Ed, I just listened back to that voice, and it could not be more horrible.”



There are a few casual moments, but he still sounds like he’s reading a script someone just handed him: “Here, Mary is lovely and we work every day and the animals are still eating. Gregorio has the boat on the waves and is painting her for the marlin season. I am jamming, trying to get work done so that I can fish.”

Hemingway was as famous at that point for his larger-than-life persona as he was for his novels, short stories and nonfiction. He would win the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for “The Old Man and the Sea” in 1953 and the Nobel Prize for Literature the following year. It was also in 1954 that he suffered the final of the nine serious concussions he had absorbed over the years. His mental state, already degraded, deteriorated from that point until he committed suicide in 1961. He died a few weeks short of his 62nd birthday.

But in these recordings there are a few moments of startling clarity. Frustrated, he snaps at the impossibility of what Hotchner has asked him to do, at the very paradox of being a novelist asked to explain his art: “It’s hard enough to write a damned story without talking about it and maybe it would be better to write and not talk at all, period.”

—Neely Tucker is a writer–editor in the Office of Communications.

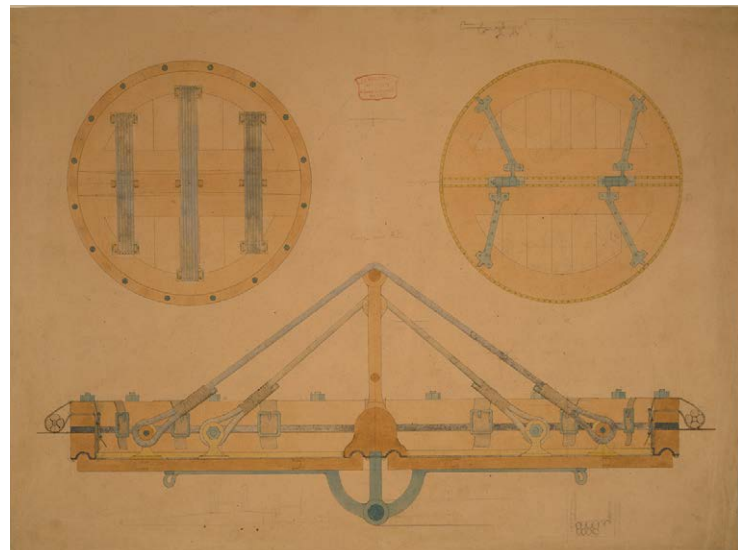
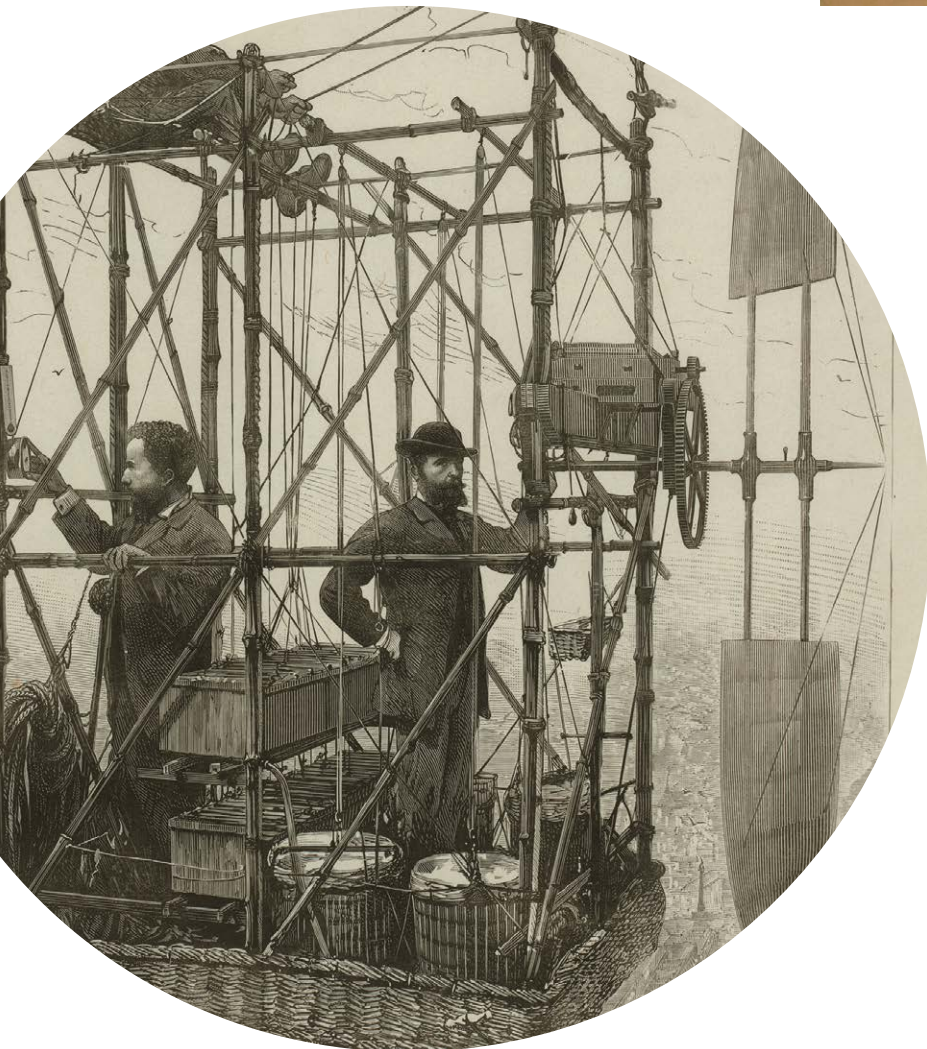
■ **Opposite:** Ernest Hemingway’s home in Havana, where he wrote “The Old Man and the Sea” and parts of “For Whom the Bell Tolls.” Carol M. Highsmith Archive/Prints and Photographs Division

**Above:** Hemingway relaxes aboard his boat, Pilar, off Cuba in 1956. Earl Theisen for Look magazine/Prints and Photographs Division

# CURATOR'S PICKS

## UP IN THE AIR

Sara W. Duke of the Prints and Photographs Division selects favorite items about lighter-than-air travel from the Tissandier Collection.



## DESIGNS ON FLYING

The Tissandier brothers collected original design drawings for equipment used in ballooning. Architect James Chavoutier drew this valve assembly in the 1860s as either an improvement or documentation for gas lines in balloons. He continued to experiment with his brother Charles and with Wilfrid de Fonvielle. He also ascended on his own for another 25 years.

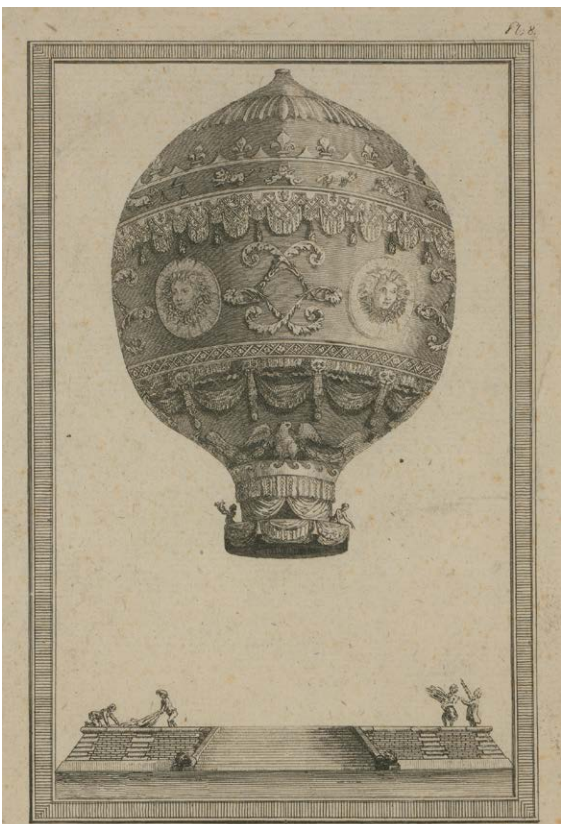
## THE BROTHERS TISSANDIER

Inventions in hot-air ballooning in France created the early vehicles for manned flight. Brothers Albert and Gaston Tissandier experimented with flight and also became historians of ballooning and air travel. Here, they try out an electric motor to hover their airship above Paris, probably on Oct. 8, 1883. In 1930, the Library purchased their extensive collection of visual materials, manuscripts and books from a London bookseller.



## DANGER IN THE SKIES

The aeronaut Sophie Blanchard – the first woman professional balloonist – saved her family from bankruptcy after her husband, Jean-Pierre Blanchard, fell to his death from a balloon in 1809. She became a favorite of Napoleon and later of Louis XVIII, who called her the “official aérostièrre of the Restoration.” In 1819, as she launched fireworks over Tivoli Gardens, the hydrogen gas in her balloon caught fire. While trying to land, the balloon hit a Parisian roof, and she fell to her death.



*Machine Aérostatique de 70 Pieds de hauteur sur 46 de Diamètre, qui s'est élevée*



## TRADING CARDS

Through tiny works of art, Romanet & Cie glorified early French aeronautical achievements on trading cards published in the 1890s. While only the wealthy could afford to sponsor balloonists or take it up as a hobby, sets of these small cards educated a patriotic audience and celebrated innovation and experimentation in 19th-century France.

## FIRST FLIGHTS

Lighter-than-air experiments began in 1783. This print represents the second attempt by Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier to ascend in a balloon tethered to the ground. The first experiment made it clear that he needed additional ballast, so another man joined him. Étienne and Joseph Montgolfier, two brothers who had been experimenting with ballooning, manufactured this balloon. De Rozier later died while attempting to fly across the English Channel.

ALL IMAGES PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION



# TAKING FLIGHT

**BY NEELY TUCKER**

**Wright brothers papers tell the complicated story of how they changed the world.**

You know this story. Or at least the story in the famous “First Flight” picture at the top of this page.

It goes like this: At 10:35 on the morning of Dec. 17, 1903, on a remote sand dune in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, mankind flew for the first time. Orville Wright piloted a homemade airplane powered by a homemade engine for a few wobbly seconds while his brother and co-creator Wilbur ran alongside the right wingtip.

“Success four flights thursday morning” Orville telegraphed their father back home in Dayton, Ohio.

The world would never be the same. Humans flew to the moon 65 years later. We live in a different universe. Et cetera.



■ **Top:** The Wrights' airplane leaves the ground on Dec. 17, 1903 – the first manned, powered flight in history. *Prints and Photographs Division*

**Right:** Orville (left) and Wilbur Wright as children. *Prints and Photographs Division*

But here's the more complicated story, one that becomes clear by looking through the Wright brothers' remarkable collection in the Library.

"Flight" was such a tricky term at the time that the Wright brothers' achievement was barely noticed, much less celebrated. Germany's Otto Lilienthal had become internationally famous as the "flying man" in the early 1890s for making the first heavier-than-air flights in a glider. After that, so many "fliers" from so many countries made so many different claims of incremental gains in the field that the public tired of the spectacle.

So that December, about the only notice paid to one of mankind's greatest achievements – the first heavier-than-air powered flight – was a largely incorrect wire-service story that ran in several papers around the country. It was treated as an unverified curiosity. Typical of the coverage, the St. Paul Globe put the three-paragraph report at the bottom of page four under the headline "This Flying Machine Actually Flies."

Even the Wright brothers' father, Milton, recipient of one of the most momentous telegrams in world history, didn't exactly run screaming into the streets.

"Well, they've made a flight," he told the family cook, after scanning the telegram she handed him. Dinner was slightly delayed.

It was not until Aug. 8, 1908 – more than 4½ years after the Kitty Hawk breakthrough – that the world finally sat bolt upright. In Le Mans, France, in front of a skeptical crowd, Wilbur flew two circles above a racetrack at a blazing 60 mph. He turned, he swooped, he went up, he went down and he coasted back to a stop on the ground just so. The crowd went bananas.

"WRIGHT FLIES EASILY," read the front-page headline in the Washington Sunday Star in the nation's capital the next day as news

shot around the globe. "WRIGHT'S AIRSHIP IN RAPID FLIGHT," The New York Times reported, also at the top of the front page, adding "Wildly Cheering Spectators" loved the spectacle.

Only then did the Wright brothers become the historical entities, the fathers of flight, the icons of the age, that we know today.

Their collection in the Library is a rare combination of significance, detail and candor. It spreads over 31,000 items that fill more than 130 boxes, extending for 61 feet of shelf space. There are also more than 300 glass-plate negatives. There are copious personal letters from family members, diaries, scrapbooks, engineering sketches and financial records. You can chart the family's entire odyssey here, from small-town Midwestern simplicity to worldwide fame, from youthful newspaper publishers to bicycle shop owners to builders of the world's first airplanes.

"Rare is the collection that provides so much depth and range, and all in such detail," wrote David McCullough, the two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian, after using the papers in researching "The Wright Brothers," his No. 1 New York Times bestseller. "In a day and age when, unfortunately, so few write letters or keep a

■ The pilot and passenger seats of a Wright brothers aircraft around 1911. Prints and Photographs Division

■ **Top:** A bronze statue at Wright Brothers National Memorial at Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina, depicts the first powered flight. *Carol M. Highsmith Archive/ Prints and Photographs Division*

**Inset:** Wilbur (left) and Orville Wright sit on the porch steps of the family home in Dayton, Ohio, in 1909. *Prints and Photographs Division*

**Opposite:** Orville sent this telegram to his father on Dec. 17, 1903, announcing their historic success earlier that day: “inform Press home Christmas.” *Manuscript Division*



Later, on the eve of their first glider test flights, Wilbur wrote to their father from the Hotel Arlington in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, on Sept. 9, 1900. He was waiting for a boat to take him to a remote barrier island with steady winds and soft sand dunes called Kitty Hawk.

“I have no intention of risking injury to any great extent, and have no expectation of being hurt. I will be careful, and will not attempt new experiments in dangerous situations. I think the danger much less than in most athletic games. I will write you again soon. Affectionately your son Wilbur.”

The striking thing here is that Wilbur wrote this “I’ll be careful, Dad” letter not as a teen, but as a 33-year-old man and successful owner of the Wright Cycle Company, the bicycle business he ran with Orville. It’s the kind of intimate communication that underscores that both brothers still lived at home with their widowed father at the time and that neither ever married.

These were not men given to poetic statements. Neither formally graduated from high school. They were no-nonsense Midwestern fellows, average-looking, determined, deliberate, frugal, practical, energetic, conservative, quiet, resourceful.

diary any longer, the Wright Papers stand as a striking reminder of a time when that was not the way and of the immense value such writings can have in bringing history to life.”

The papers show that the family was always extremely close knit. Milton and Susan Wright had seven children, five of whom survived infancy. Milton rose to the post of bishop in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, a Protestant group that was strongly abolitionist and ardently opposed to alcohol. Susan, an accomplished student in college and also devoutly Christian, kept the family together while her husband traveled. (She died of tuberculosis in 1889, cared for by Wilbur for the last three years of her life in which she was largely bedridden.)

Wilbur and Orville were the third and sixth born. Here are a few lines from the earliest written missive that survives from one of them, a postcard from the adventurous Orville to his father in 1881, when he was 9 years old:

“Dear Father .... My teacher said I was a good boy to day. We have 45 in our room. The other day I took a machine can and filled it with water then I put it on the stove I waited a little while and the water came squirting out of the top about a foot.”





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7 Hawthorne St

Success four flights thursday morning all against twenty one mile  
wind started from Level with engine power alone average speed  
through air thirty one miles longest 57 seconds inform Press  
home ~~parts~~ Christmas . Orevella Wright 525P

Life  
memo.

by noon and got the machine out on the tracks by front of the building ready for a trial from the level. The wind was gradually dying and by the time we were ready was blowing only about 4 to 5 miles per. sec. After waiting several hours to see whether it would breeze up again we took the machine in.

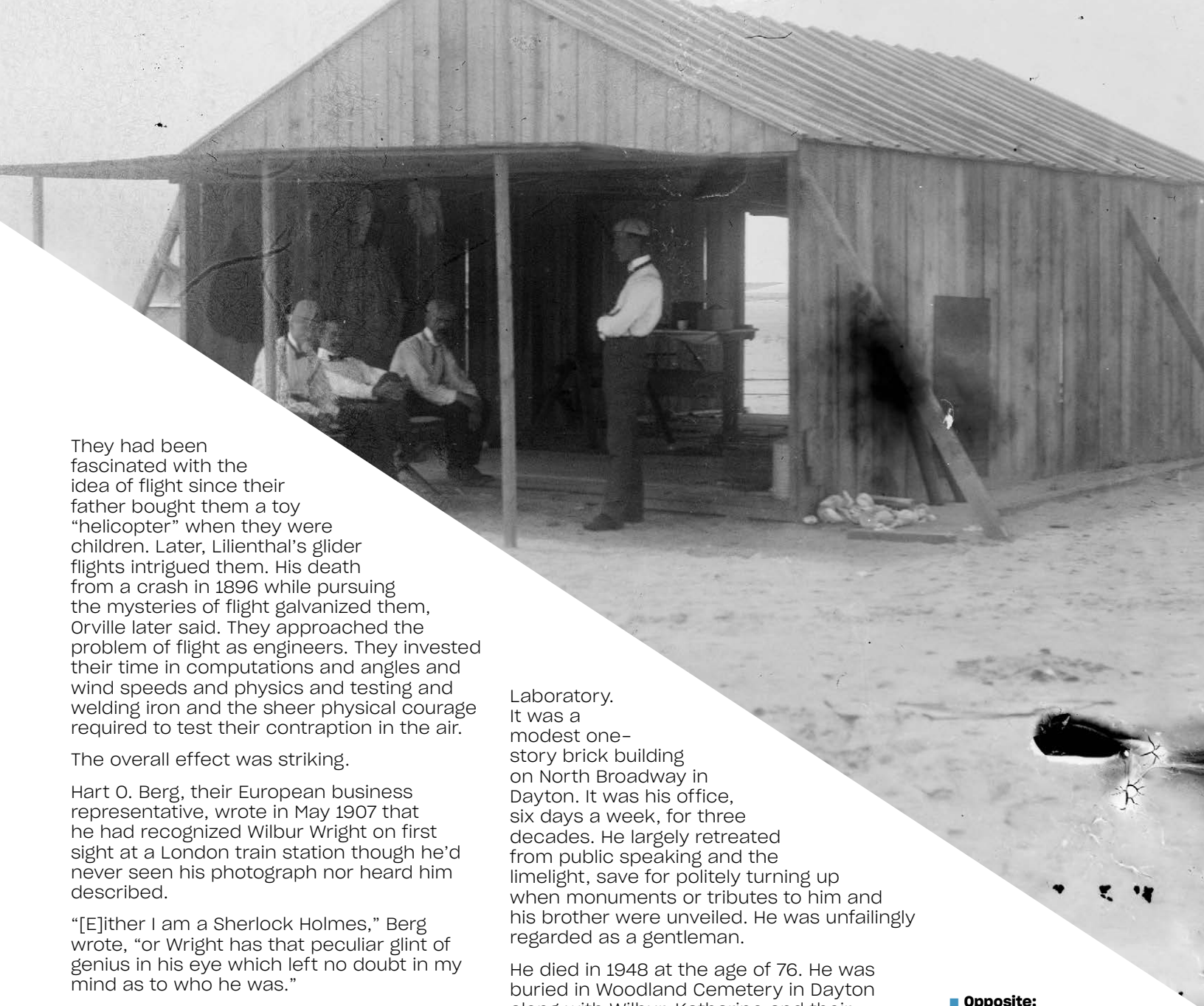
Thursday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>

When we got up a wind of between 20 and 25 miles was blowing from the north. We got the machines out early and put out the signal for the men at the station. Before we were quite ready, Mr. T. Daniels, W. S. Dough, A. D. Etheridge, W. C. Brinkley of Maudslayi, and Johnny Moore, of Nags Head arrived. After

running the engine and propellers a few minutes to get them in working order, I got on the machine at 10:35 for the first trial. The wind according to our anemometer at this time was blowing a little over 20 miles (corrected) 27 miles according to the Government anemometer at Kitty Hawk. On slipping the rope the machine started off increasing in speed to probably 7 or 8 miles. The machine lifted from the track just as it was entering on the fourth rail. Mr. Daniels took a picture just as it left the tracks. I found the control of the front rudder quite difficult on account of its being balanced too near the center and thus had a tendency to turn itself when started so that the rudder was turned too far on one side and then too

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ntional tangentia - CRX Sin. REN



They had been fascinated with the idea of flight since their father bought them a toy “helicopter” when they were children. Later, Lillienthal’s glider flights intrigued them. His death from a crash in 1896 while pursuing the mysteries of flight galvanized them, Orville later said. They approached the problem of flight as engineers. They invested their time in computations and angles and wind speeds and physics and testing and welding iron and the sheer physical courage required to test their contraption in the air.

The overall effect was striking.

Hart O. Berg, their European business representative, wrote in May 1907 that he had recognized Wilbur Wright on first sight at a London train station though he’d never seen his photograph nor heard him described.

“[E]ither I am a Sherlock Holmes,” Berg wrote, “or Wright has that peculiar glint of genius in his eye which left no doubt in my mind as to who he was.”

Katharine Wright, Wilbur and Orville’s sister, also became something of a celebrity, particularly after joining her brothers in Europe after they had become a sensation. She even went flying in February 1909: “Yesterday afternoon, Will took Madame de Lambert for a five minute ride and me for a seven minute one,” she wrote her father. “‘Them is fine!’ It was cold but I was not particularly uncomfortable.”

Another surprise made clear in the papers is how short the Wright brothers’ glory days in the air actually were.

They were not widely lauded until 1908. Wilbur died of typhoid fever four years later at age 45. Within half a dozen years of Wilbur’s death, Orville stopped flying, sold the Wright Company and set up a research business, the Wright Aeronautical

Laboratory.

It was a modest one-story brick building on North Broadway in Dayton. It was his office, six days a week, for three decades. He largely retreated from public speaking and the limelight, save for politely turning up when monuments or tributes to him and his brother were unveiled. He was unfailingly regarded as a gentleman.

He died in 1948 at the age of 76. He was buried in Woodland Cemetery in Dayton along with Wilbur, Katharine and their parents. He and Wilbur had seemed at peace with their legacy during their lifetimes – they had given mankind flight and reaped fame and financial rewards, and that was certainly enough for a couple of bachelor brothers living in the vast ocean of the middle continent, deep among the prairies and trees and small towns and rivers and lakes and bustling cities that would come to be called, in part thanks to their own invention, “flyover America.”

The brothers Wright would, no doubt, find that ironic.

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## MORE INFORMATION

Wilbur and Orville Wright Papers  
[loc.gov/collections/wilbur-and-orville-wright-papers/about-this-collection/](https://loc.gov/collections/wilbur-and-orville-wright-papers/about-this-collection/)

■ **Opposite:** Orville and Wilbur recorded their historic achievement of that December day on the pages of this diary. *Manuscript Division*

**Above:** Aviation pioneer Octave Chanute (from left) talks with Orville, Edward Huffaker and Wilbur in the Wrights’ work shed at Kitty Hawk in 1901. *Prints and Photographs Division*

■ **From top:** Wilbur Wright works in the brothers' bicycle shop in Dayton; a crumpled glider rests on the sand at Kitty Hawk; Hawthorn Hill, built by the Wright family using money earned from the brothers' business and invention successes; family and friends hold a "camping party" at the Wright family home. *Prints and Photographs Division*



# MAKING HISTORY, ON CAMERA

Among the materials the Wright brothers estate gave to the Library in 1948 were over 300 glass plate and nitrate negatives of photographs taken (mostly) by Orville and Wilbur between 1897 and 1928 – images that provide an important and fascinating record of their home lives and of their attempts to fly.

About 200 of the photos chronicle the brothers' successes and failures with their new flying machines. Taken from 1900 to 1911, the images document the Wrights' laboratory, engines, models, runways, flights, mishaps and daily life at Kitty Hawk.

Orville and Wilbur assemble a plane in a covered building on the beach. A crumpled glider rests on the sand following a crash. A local boy holds a freshly caught drum fish. And, that December day in 1903, the first powered flight, with Orville at the controls and Wilbur running alongside as the machine lifts from the Earth.

The collection also shows scenes of the brothers with family and friends back home in Ohio. Wilbur works in their bicycle shop. Orville's pet Saint Bernard, Scipio, lies on the front porch of the family's Dayton home. A third brother, Lorin, poses with his three children.

The full collection is online, waiting to be explored.

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## MORE INFORMATION

Wright brothers negatives  
[loc.gov/pictures/collection/wri/](http://loc.gov/pictures/collection/wri/)

## ENTHRALLED BY INFINITY

A young Carl Sagan imagined the future of space travel.

Children often dream of flying, of traveling to distant worlds. For Carl Sagan, contemplating the unfathomable vastness of the universe was a practically spiritual experience.

The man who would eventually become one of the world's most distinguished and beloved cosmologists was fascinated by the wonders of space as a young boy.

Captivated by dazzling visions of the future at the 1939 New York World's Fair, Sagan developed a lifelong passion for the mysteries beyond our planet and the technology that might bring humanity closer to them.

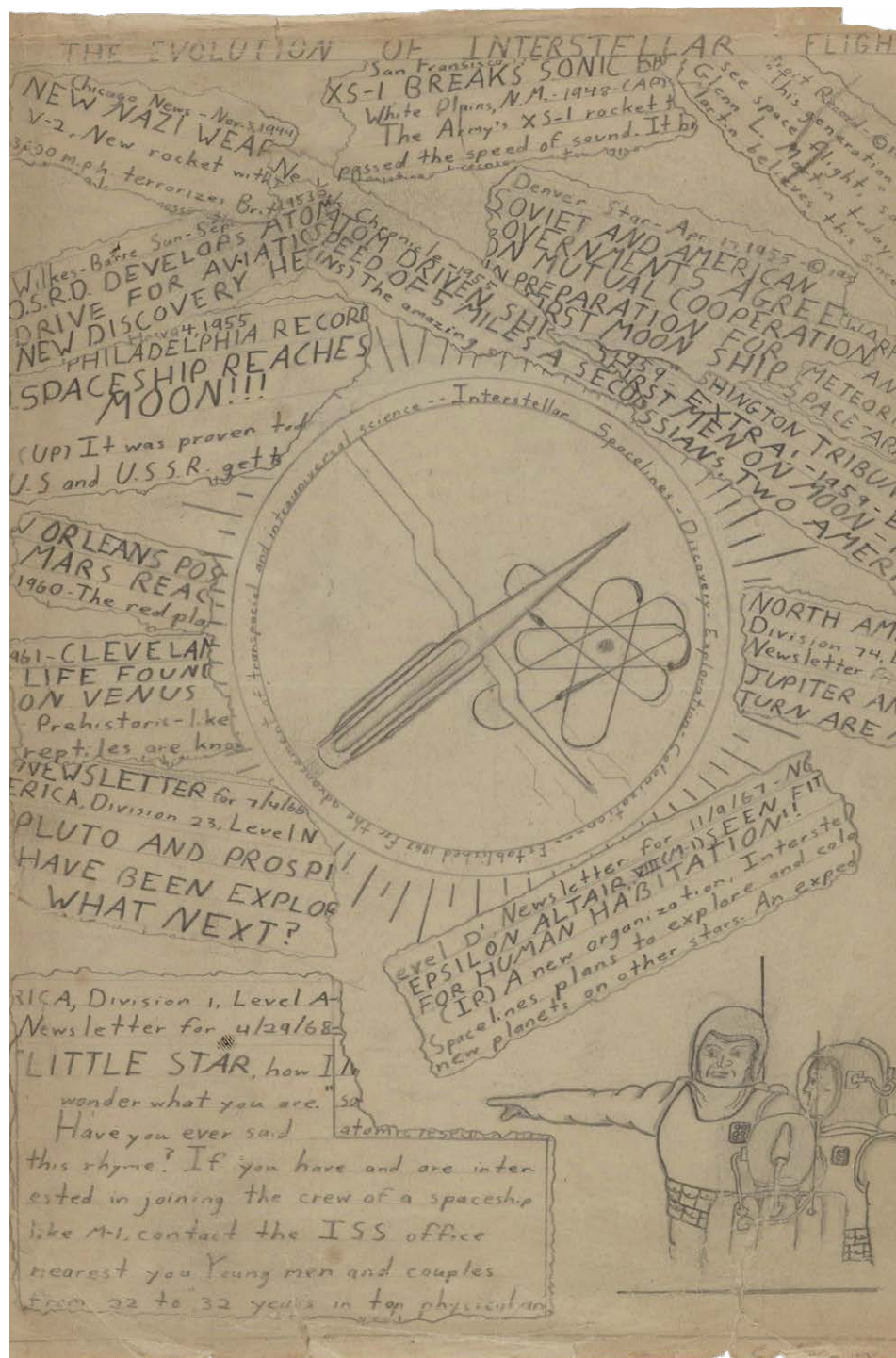
Among the 595,000 items in the Library's Carl Sagan and Ann Druyan Archive is a childhood drawing titled "The Evolution of Interstellar Flight." Created sometime between 1944 and 1947, when Sagan was 10 to 13 years old, the sketch offers a wondrous vision of adventurers crossing the galaxy.

A collage of hand-drawn headline clippings wraps around a sleek logo for Sagan's imagined multinational exploratory organization, Interstellar Spacelines. A decade before the start of the moon race, one headline proclaims, "Soviet and American Governments Agree on Mutual Cooperation in Preparation for First Moon Ship." Others read triumphantly, "Spaceship Reaches Moon!!!" and "Life Found on Venus."

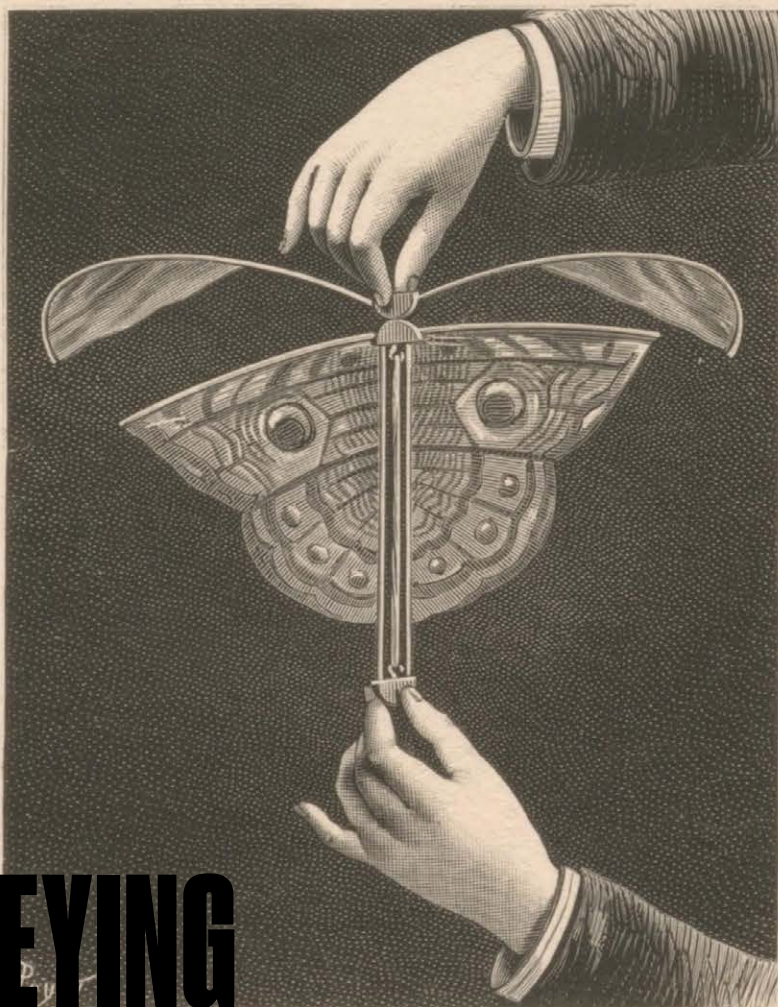
In one of the most thrilling notes of foresight from the young Sagan, three astronauts appear in the corner of the page. Their uniforms feature bubble helmets, thick jumpsuits and backpacks with antennae – familiar sights to modern readers, but unexpectedly savvy visions from a school kid in the 1940s.

That boyish wonder never left Sagan. Today, his enchantment with the cosmos lives on in an impressive body of work, ready to inspire a new generation of dreamers.

–Sahar Kazmi is a writer–editor in the Office of the Chief Information Officer.



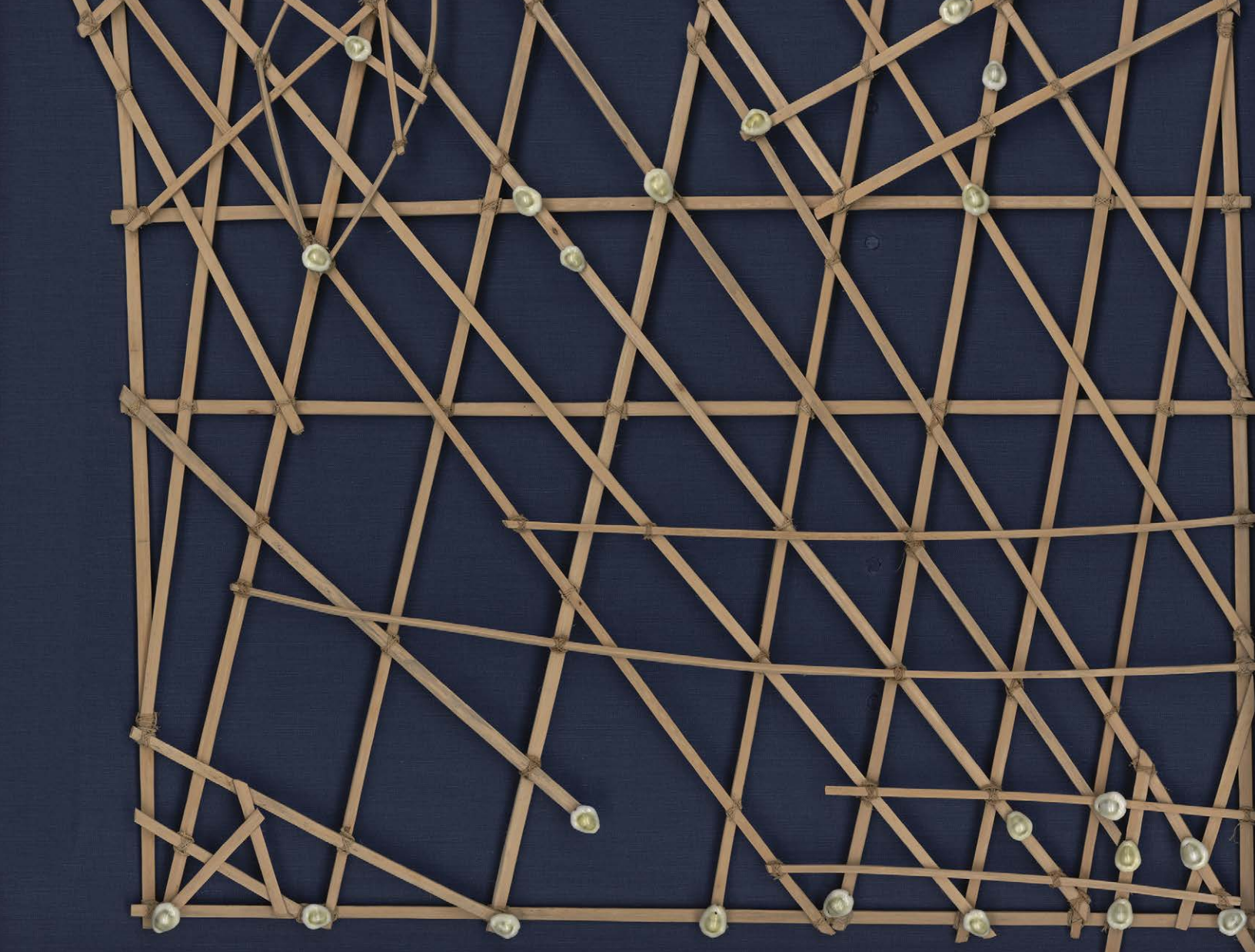
■ A young Carl Sagan sketched this conception of future space travel in the mid-1940s, when he was 10 to 13 years old. Courtesy of Druyan-Sagan Associates Inc. All rights reserved/Manuscript Division



# JOURNEYING INTO THE HORIZON

The Library's vast  
collections chronicle  
our impulse to explore.

**BY JOSH LEVY**



Exploration begins close to home. “It is on this world,” as Carl Sagan put it, “that we developed our passion for exploring the Cosmos, and it is here that we are, in some pain and with no guarantees, working out our destiny.”

The Library’s vast collections urge researchers toward their own discoveries. They document an exploring impulse that has covered the Earth with humanity and launched spacecraft far beyond our planet’s orbit. That impulse has been driven by technology, but also by our desires for liberation and for conquest, for knowledge and for domination, for beauty and for power. Exploration, researchers find, can reveal as much about human beings as the cosmos beyond.

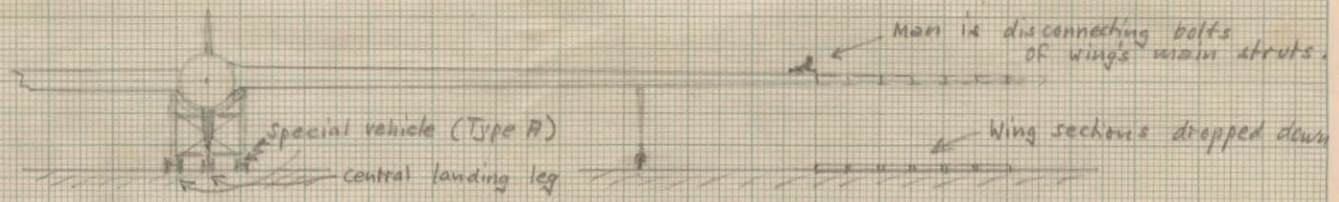
Navigational charts collected a century ago from the Marshall Islands, for instance, now reside in the Geography and Map Division. The charts are memory aids, instructional devices whose sticks and cowrie shells

map the patterns water creates as it rushes past islands in the open ocean, patterns that guide voyagers to their destination. Navigators elsewhere in Oceania assembled their own combinations of voyaging concepts and signposts, from distinctions in water temperature and salinity to the movements of animal life and flotsam to the positions of the stars. All helped drive the outrigger canoes that peopled the Pacific, centuries before Europe’s age of exploration.

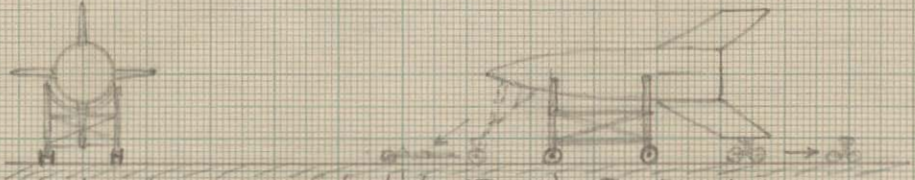
Historian Joakim Peter has noted that navigators from his own island, in the central Carolines, use a series of reference points to find their way. The first reference point is home. En route, memorized star compasses help locate another reference point in the sky, past which the islands themselves seem to move. Journeys rooted in local concerns, the need to secure resources or avoid conflict or seek health care, ultimately incorporate travelers into a distant horizon, a space

■ **Opposite:** This fanciful helicopter toy helped inspire the Wright brothers’ fascination with flight. *Prints and Photographs Division*

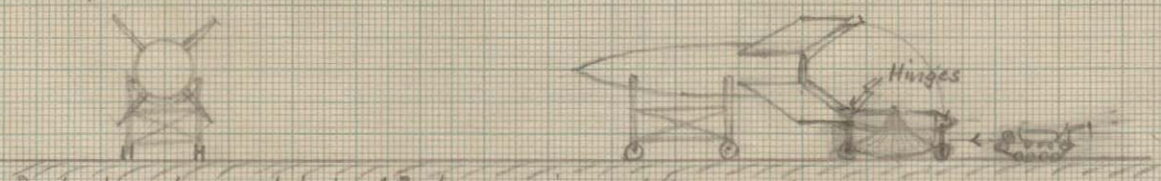
**Above:** The indigenous peoples of the Marshall Islands used this chart of sticks and seashells to teach young navigators how to traverse the Pacific Ocean by canoe. *Geography and Map Division*



① Wing is taken off in 10-foot sections. Boat still rests on its two sets of central landing wheels. Special vehicle (Type A) is pushed under boat's belly in order to support boat after removal of outrigger wheels.



② Wingless boat rests on special vehicle (Type A). Front and rear landing gears have been removed.



③ Boat has been rotated 45 degrees in saddle supports of special vehicle (Type A). Launcher has been wheeled into position by tracked vehicle (Type B) and bolted to hinges in both lower fins.

Wernher von Braun  
27 Sept 1952

■ Rocketry pioneer Wernher von Braun created these sketches in 1952. Manuscript Division

beyond which, Peter writes, “a world of foreign things, people, and spirits exists.”

Humans have found beauty in those often-treacherous journeys into the horizon. The 19th century’s enthusiasm for air travel produced a cacophony of ideas, some of which led inventors to intertwine scientific gadgetry with natural forms. Ignoring novelist Jules Verne’s caution that “trains are not modeled after quadrupeds, nor steamships after fish,” some inventors modeled aircraft after birds and bats. A French engineer, Alphonse Pénaud, produced a toy helicopter with graceful batlike wings driven by a simple rubber band. One of those toys found its way into the home of the Wright brothers, still in knee pants, for whom it sparked a lifelong fascination with the wonder of avian flight – and with the airplane.

Rocketry pioneer Wernher von Braun, whose papers reside in the Manuscript Division, often professed to share that sense of wonder, of lives lived beyond Earth’s surface. In 1958 he remarked that, as he had labored to build long-range guided rockets for Hitler’s Germany, “I kept praying for the day our missiles would be used to expand, rather than destroy, man’s place in the universe.” Yet their construction alone had cost the lives of over 10,000 laborers, shipped in from Nazi concentration camps. Arriving in America at the start of the Cold War, von Braun helped produce the nation’s first nuclear-tipped missile, then helped modify it to launch our first satellite. Von Braun spoke stirringly of technology’s ability to liberate us, “to think and to dream.” But that liberation often seemed contingent



on what he called “the conquest of space” and on the free world’s suppression of the communist threat.

Still, Space Age Americans made the cosmos their canvas for utopian dreams and dark anxieties.

Researchers in the Library’s newspaper collections will find Ed Dwight, an eager Air Force test pilot who nearly became the world’s first African American astronaut. Spurred on by civil rights leaders who imagined a Black man among the pantheon of the nation’s space heroes, the Kennedy administration brought Dwight into the Aerospace Research Pilot School. A few years later, denied entry into the astronaut program, he resigned heartbroken from the military and pursued another dream: telling the African American story through public art. His sculptures, rich and poignant and hopeful, now stand throughout the country.

For philosopher Hannah Arendt, our “conquest of space” seemed to bode ill for the very stature of humanity. In a 1963 essay, she asked whether the mathematical worldviews of young scientists and technicians had not begun to encroach on older, humanistic ways of thinking: on grounding concepts like simplicity, beauty and harmony. Those values had been formed by a species that was terrestrial, earthbound. In a world remade by technicians, Arendt worried, an ever-increasing proportion of what surrounds us could become artificial. Then we, having learned how to look down on ourselves from space, might begin to think of a fellow human as just another thing.

Humans, whatever we learn about the vastness of the cosmos, still work out our destinies here on Earth. Pacific Islanders still explore, leveraging air travel to connect with kin and clan and to bring resources home. The airplane still amazes, even as hops to distant cities have become routine. Space is still a site of liberation, wonder, scientific knowledge and military rivalry, all at once. And we still release technologies into the world without fully considering their consequences. The Library’s rich resources, however, can help us find the roots of our explorations and look into our unwritten future.

—Josh Levy is a historian in the Manuscript Division.



■ **Left:** Philosopher Hannah Arendt worried about the implications of our “conquest of space” on humanity. *Wikimedia Commons*

**Below:** Ed Dwight nearly became the world’s first African American astronaut. *Serial and Government Publications Division*



# AROUND THE LIBRARY



1.

2.

**1.** George Saunders receives the Prize for American Fiction from Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden at the National Book Festival on Aug. 12.



3.

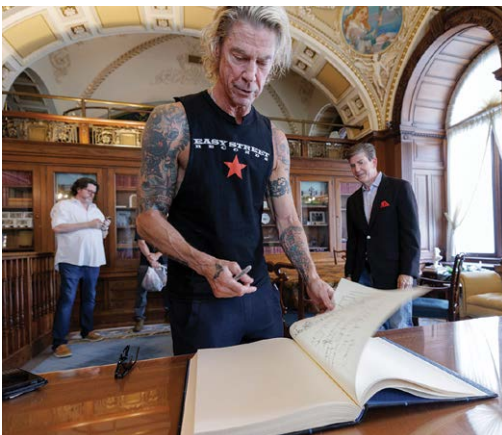


4.

**2.** Visitors dress as their favorite characters for the Literary Costume Ball in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building on Sept. 14. *Angela Napili*

**3.** Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden kicked off C-SPAN's "Books That Shaped America" series with an interview of historian Douglas Brinkley.

**4.** Tony Award-winning actress and singer Renée Elise Goldsberry visits the Members Room of the Jefferson Building on Sept. 29. *Elaina Finkelstein*



5.



6.

**5.** Bassist Duff McKagan of Guns N' Roses signs a visitors log in the ceremonial office of the Librarian of Congress on Aug. 30.

**6.** Music producer Perry Margouloff displays his collection of Les Paul guitars during the "From Cylinders to Surround Mixes" event at the Library on Aug. 24.

ALL PHOTOS BY SHAWN MILLER UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

## Literacy Awards Program Honors Three Organizations

Three organizations working to expand literacy and promote reading were named recipients of 2023 Library of Congress Literacy Awards. The program, sponsored by David M. Rubenstein since 2013, honors organizations that provide exemplary, innovative and replicable strategies to combat illiteracy.

The News Literacy Project of Washington, D.C., was named recipient of the \$150,000 David M. Rubenstein Prize. The project advances the practice of news literacy throughout American society, creating better informed, more engaged and more empowered individuals.

Downtown Boxing Gym of Detroit was named recipient of the \$50,000 American Prize. Downtown Boxing Gym is a free, out-of-school program that seeks to improve academic outcomes for high-need youth. Worldreader of Seattle was named recipient of the \$50,000 International Prize. Worldreader provides mobile reading technology for advancing literacy to over 21 million readers in numerous countries.

**MORE: [loc.gov/item/prn-23-077](https://loc.gov/item/prn-23-077)**

## Grace Church Drawing Earns Holland Prize

The Library and the National Park Service announced that the 2022 Leicester B. Holland Prize will be presented to Lukas Burgher for a drawing of the Grace Methodist Episcopal Church in Lincoln, Virginia.

The Holland Prize honors an outstanding historic building, structure or landscape measured drawing prepared to the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, the Historic American Engineering Record or the Historic American Landscapes Survey. Burgher will receive a \$1,500 cash prize and a certificate of recognition.

The Grace Methodist Episcopal Church was dedicated on July 30, 1885. The congregation was formally organized in 1872 by newly emancipated and freeborn African Americans.

The honorable mention was awarded to Nate Cole and Devin Tabor, students at the University of Arkansas Fay Jones School of Architecture and Design, for their submission of the Richard D. and Alma Brothers House in Fayetteville, Arkansas.

**MORE: [loc.gov/item/prn-23-002](https://loc.gov/item/prn-23-002)**

## Poet Laureate Launches New Nature Initiatives

U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón will feature two major new initiatives as part of her signature project, “You Are Here”: an anthology of commissioned nature poems and poetry installed as public art in national parks.

The anthology, “You Are Here: Poetry in the Natural World,” will be published by Milkweed Editions in association with the Library on April 2. It will feature original poems by 50 contemporary American poets.

“You Are Here: Poetry in Parks,” an initiative with the National Park Service and the Poetry Society of America, will feature poetry installations in seven National Park Service units across the country. The participating parks are Cape Cod National Seashore and Cuyahoga Valley, Great Smoky Mountains, Everglades, Mount Rainer, Redwood and Saguaro national parks.

**MORE: [loc.gov/item/prn-23-080](https://loc.gov/item/prn-23-080)**

## NLS Honors Libraries For Service to Readers

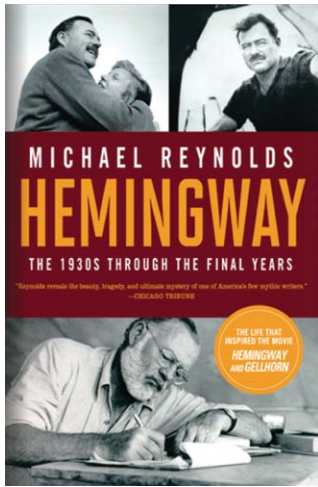
The National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS) at the Library recently recognized two of its cooperating libraries in New Jersey and Michigan for their outstanding service to readers with visual, physical or print disabilities.

The New Jersey State Library Talking Book and Braille Center in Trenton, New Jersey, received the 2023 Regional Library of the Year Award. The Library for the Visually and Physically Disabled Branch of Muskegon Area District Library in Muskegon, Michigan, received the Sub-regional Library/Advisory and Outreach Center of the Year Award.

NLS launched the Network Library Awards in 2004. A committee of librarians and consumer-organization representatives recommends finalists from nominated libraries to the NLS director based on mission support, creativity and innovation in providing service and demonstrated reader satisfaction.

**MORE: [loc.gov/item/prn-23-075](https://loc.gov/item/prn-23-075)**

# SHOP



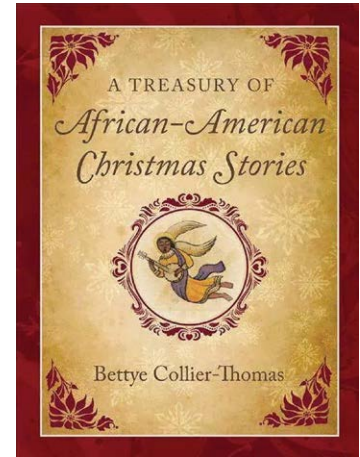
**'Hemingway'**  
Product #21113291  
Price: \$14.99

This book brings together two volumes of Michael Reynolds' masterful biography of Ernest Hemingway: "Hemingway: The 1930s" and "Hemingway: The Final Years."



**First flight print**  
Product #216040242  
Price: \$15

Frame a piece of history with this 11-by-14-inch photograph of the first powered flight, achieved by the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk in 1903.



**African American Christmas Stories**  
Product #21119817  
Price: \$17.99

Explore the experiences of everyday African Americans in this collection of Christmas stories by Bettye Collier-Thomas.



**Literary mug**  
Product #21505242  
Price: \$13.95

Start your morning with this coffee mug bearing more than 20 iconic lines from great books such as "A Christmas Carol," "The Great Gatsby," "1984" and more.



**Library of Congress ornament**  
Product #21502044  
Price: \$18.95

Celebrate the season with this elegant enameled brass ornament showing the dome of the Library's Jefferson Building encircled by laurel leaves.



**'The Joy of Looking'**  
Product #21109414  
Price: \$19.95

Explore compelling photographs from the Library's collections with this lavishly illustrated volume from authors Aimee Hess and Hannah Freece.

Order online: [loc.gov/shop](http://loc.gov/shop) Order by phone: 888.682.3557



■ Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden (right) and IT specialist Fen Han of the Library promote the Friends of the Library program at the National Book Festival on Aug. 12. Jan Mutka, a volunteer in the Visitor Engagement Office, looks on. Shawn Miller

## BE A FRIEND!

### Join in or give the gift of membership.

As year's end nears, we are feeling grateful. The Library hosted thousands of readers at the National Book Festival, started a new film festival, enlivened our Thursday nights with new programs and challenged computer programmers everywhere to develop a new game to engage students in civics. All with support from Friends of the Library of Congress!

As you consider the year's end, consider being a friend. Friends members from across the country have come together to amplify the Library's mission to educate and inspire and to help Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden achieve her vision of connecting all Americans with their nation's library. It is for all people everywhere.

Friends welcomes members beginning at \$50 annually, and all gifts to the Library are tax deductible. Learn more at [loc.gov/friends](http://loc.gov/friends).

There are many ways you can give to be a Friend. Choose the right way for you!

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101 Independence Ave., SE, LM 613  
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**Donor-advised fund:** If you have an established donor-advised fund, make your membership contribution directly from the fund. Choose "The Library of Congress" in your fund portal. The Library's tax ID is 53-6002532.

**Qualified charitable IRA donation:** If you are 70½ or older, you can donate directly from your IRA without income tax implications. Visit "Ways to Give" at [loc.gov/support](http://loc.gov/support) for a sample letter to share with your IRA administrator.

**Stock donation:** Gifts of stock that have appreciated are a great way to support the Library and may be especially attractive to you under current tax laws. Email Lora Sodini at [lsodini@loc.gov](mailto:lsodini@loc.gov) with the security you'd like to transfer.

Join Friends of the Library of Congress or give the gift of membership to a loved one. Be a Friend!

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## MORE INFORMATION

Questions?

Contact Lora Sodini at 202.707.0395 or at [lsodini@loc.gov](mailto:lsodini@loc.gov).

# LAST WORD

## LAURIE LESHIN

For centuries, humans have gazed at the sky in awe, wondering about one of the most elusive mysteries of our universe: Are we alone?

I believe that we'll have the opportunity to answer that massive, seemingly impossible question in our lifetimes.

In the foothills of Pasadena, California, NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) is working on missions that will search for habitable environments beyond Earth. One such mission is Europa Clipper, a spacecraft that will travel 1.8 billion miles on a journey to explore Europa, one of Jupiter's moons. The spacecraft is designed to observe Europa exclusively and thoroughly and is currently being assembled at JPL as it prepares for a launch in 2024.

Discovered by Galileo in 1610, Europa is believed to contain a vast ocean beneath its icy surface that may contain ingredients to support life. If we look at the history of life on Earth, we know it stayed very simple for a very long time. The life we're searching for in the cosmos could be single-celled organisms. What's thrilling about that is, if we find it, it would be a telltale sign that life beyond Earth is not only possible, but probable elsewhere in the universe.

The spacecraft won't make its long voyage alone. Engraved on its side will be an original poem titled "In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa," written by U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón, who is known for work that explores the human connection to the natural world, in collaboration with the Library of Congress. Her poem connects the two water worlds that Clipper will travel between – Earth and Europa – and describes the human impulse to reach for what's beyond.

Ada's poem is also a beautiful reminder of the harmonious connection between art and science, of human creativity and our inherent instinct toward exploration. At the heart of this connection lies a shared pursuit of knowledge, of curiosity and the joy of discovery that will lead us to better understanding our universe and beyond.

While NASA aims to be at the forefront of scientific discovery through groundbreaking missions, technology and research, we also hope to inspire people everywhere to think bigger and imagine what's possible.



NASA/JPL-CALTECH

We need innovators of all kinds – the best and brightest minds in science and the arts alike – to help uncover the mysteries of the universe. Together, with our diverse backgrounds, perspectives and experiences, we can accomplish what many thought to be impossible.

In praise of humanity's passionate pursuit of knowledge, I'd like to allow Ada to have the last word:

"O second moon, we, too, are made of water, of vast and beckoning seas. We, too, are made of wonders, of great and ordinary loves, of small invisible worlds, of a need to call out through the dark."

*–Laurie Leshin is the director of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and vice president of Caltech, which manages JPL for NASA. She is also a Bren professor of geochemistry and planetary science at Caltech.*

*Join the mission at [europa.nasa.gov/message-in-a-bottle](https://europa.nasa.gov/message-in-a-bottle) and have your name engraved on NASA's Europa Clipper spacecraft as it travels to explore an ocean world that may support life.*



■ With Jupiter looming behind, the Europa Clipper spacecraft flies above the icy surface of the moon Europa in this artist rendering. NASA/JPL-CALTECH

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