



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GAINESVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT CELEBRATE'S 100 YEARS OF FLIGHT

Gainesville, FL – December 15, 2003 – On December 17, 2003, the Gainesville Regional Airport will join other airports in the nation by celebrating the Centennial of Flight. On December 17, 1903, the world witnessed at 10:35 A.M. the first successful flight as Orville Wright piloted the Wright brother's plane for a 12-second, 120-foot journey. This day a new industry was born.

The Gainesville Regional Airport has planned a special program to be held on Wednesday, December 17th at 10:00 A.M., at the airline passenger terminal. The commemoration will be honored by the presence of Major General John R. Alison, after whom the airport was originally named.

General Alison grew up in Gainesville and graduated from Gainesville High School and the University of Florida. He will be recognized for his accomplishments during and after World War II. The program will include a tribute to the Wright Brothers and to General Alison by local historian, Michael Gannon. In 1979 the Gainesville Regional Airport Airline Passenger Terminal was dedicated to John R. Alison.

Gainesville's historic Matheson Museum will have an exhibit of model airplanes. The models were built by the Gator Modelers and include significant aircraft from the past 100 years of powered flight. The exhibit will be on display from December 14, 2003 to February 8, 2004 at the airline passenger terminal.

Wednesday's event is sponsored by the Gainesville-Alachua County Regional Airport Authority and is open to the general public. For more information, please contact Elaine Funk, Public Relations at the Gainesville Regional Airport by calling (352) 373-0249 extension 15.



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Centennial Of Flight Model Exhibit Set To Open At Airport

GAINESVILLE, Fla. - The Alachua County Historic Trust: Matheson Museum, Inc. is teaming up with the Gainesville Regional Airport to commemorate Orville and Wilbur Wright's historic 1903 flight with an exhibit of model airplanes. The models, which will be built by the Gator Modelers chapter of the International Plastic Modelers' Society, will include significant aircraft from the past 100 years of powered flight, many of which passed through the Gainesville Regional Airport and its World War II predecessor, the Alachua Army Air Field.

The exhibit will be on display at the airport from Dec. 14 – Feb. 8. An opening ceremony will be held in conjunction with the airport's Centennial of Flight celebration, Dec. 17 at 10:35 a.m., the exact time the Wright brothers took flight.

The display cases will then move to the Matheson Museum, 513 E. University Ave., where they will be on display from Feb. 17 – March 7. The museum will also host a model-making workshop Feb. 28, bringing together the Gator Modelers and the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Gainesville.

The events celebrate the historic flight of Orville Wright, who piloted the "Flyer" 120 feet in 12 seconds. The fourth and final flight of the day was the most successful, with Wilbur Wright flying 852 feet in 59 seconds.

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