



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEDIA ONLY:**

**Contact: Erin Porter  
Centennial Planning Office  
Tel: 252 441 6291, ext. 224  
ErinPorterNPS@aol.com**

**AIR SHOW PERFORMERS ANNOUNCED FOR  
FIRST FLIGHT CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION  
AT WRIGHT BROTHERS NATIONAL MEMORIAL**

*Air Shows Scheduled for 12 noon December 12-14; 2:30 p.m. December 16*

**KILL DEVIL HILLS, NC, (November 7, 2003)** – Event planners for the First Flight Centennial Celebration have announced the air show schedule for the First Flight Centennial Celebration for 12 noon on December 12, 13, 14 and at 2:30 p.m. on December 16, 2003 at Wright Brothers National Memorial, the site of the first manned, powered, controlled, sustained flights.

Confirmed airshow performers include Patty Wagstaff, the Aeroshell Aerobatic Team, Ian Groom, Mike Mancuso and Bobby Younkin.

“The Centennial Celebration is about the Wright Brothers, airplanes, and flying. That is why the people are coming,” said Ken Mann, Chairman, First Flight Centennial Commission. “This will be a once in a lifetime opportunity for many people to see these performances by some of the best pilots in the world.”

**Patty Wagstaff**

Patty Wagstaff has flown air shows and competitions around the world before millions of spectators. Her breathtaking low-level air show performances give spectators a front row seat view of the precision and complexity of what Wagstaff calls “Hardcore, Rock and Roll Unlimited aerobatics”. A six-time member of the U.S. Aerobatic Team since 1985, Patty is a three-time U.S. National Aerobatic Champion, the 1993 IAC Champion and a six-time recipient of the “First Lady of Aerobatics” Betty Skelton Award. She was the first woman to ever win the title of U.S. National Aerobatic Champion. Patty flies her single-seat Extra 300SX monoplane, designed and built in Germany by Extra Flugzeugbau for Unlimited aerobatics. Painted in an eye-catching red, white and blue paint scheme, the aircraft is equipped with a smoke system, with a roll rate of 400 degrees per second and the ability to withstand plus and minus 15 Gs (gravitational force). Among other maneuvers in her precise, low-level aerobatic show, Ms. Wagstaff plans to perform her signature maneuver with a new twist: an “Inverted Centennial Ribbon Cut”.

**On the web: <http://www.pattywagstaff.com>**

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## **First Flight Centennial Celebration Air Show Performers**

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### **AeroShell Aerobatic Team**

The four-man AeroShell Aerobatic Team takes the World War II North American Advanced Trainer (T-6) through a series of precision formation aerobatic maneuvers. The team Performs a series of precision formation aerobatic maneuvers, including their bomb burst, vertical rejoin, avalanche, the breath-taking "Switch Blade", along with graceful loops and rolls. The North American Advanced Trainer AT-6 first appeared in 1938 and was originally designed as a basic trainer for the United States Army Air Corps. They were used as combat trainers, basic trainers, general-purpose aircraft and bombers. They featured a wide range of engines, fixed or retractable landing gear and varying cockpit enclosures.

**On the web: [www.aeroshellaerobatics.com](http://www.aeroshellaerobatics.com)**

### **Ian Groom**

Ian Groom was born to British parents in South Africa, and was inspired to fly at age 7 after a ride in a Tiger Moth with his uncle. After serving in the Scottish Regiment in the South African military, Groom attended college and graduate school in the United States. Then he began a career that seemed normal enough-investment banking. "I worked in the states, and then in Europe, but all the while, flying was my main preoccupation. The more I flew, the happier I was," he says. At age 39, Groom began flying in aerobatic competitions and air shows. Over time, he climbed to the pinnacle of his sport, becoming nationally and internationally acclaimed as a stunt flyer.

Millions of spectators witness Groom's end-over-end tumbles, double-tail slides, multiple snap rolls, and departure and recovery from controlled flight. Groom holds the world record for completing 57 snap rolls in 26 seconds in his Russian-built Sukhoi SU-31.

The single-seat SU-31 is a relatively small plane, approximately 22.7 feet in length, 9 feet high, with a 27-foot wingspan and an empty weight of roughly 1,300 pounds. Constructed of kevlar, titanium and stainless steel, the SU-31 has the highest power-to-weight ratio of any piston engine aircraft. Groom pulls about 10 Gs (gravitational force) when climbing in the SU-31.

Though the Sukhoi SU-31 is definitely his aircraft of choice, Groom has flown more than 40 different kinds of aircraft, including the German Extra 300L (his two-seat aerobatic aircraft that can also be flown to 10 Gs), the F15, the F16, and the F18. He has also flown the famous Concorde. On occasion Groom flies with the Blue Angels, the celebrated U.S. Navy and Marine Corps flight team.

In the past couple of years, Groom has cut back his air show appearances in order to devote himself to training the men and women of Immigration Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.), previously the U.S. Customs Service. Groom says that "America has been very good to me and my family, and this [training] is a way that I can pay America back."

### **Michael Mancuso**

Michael started flying gliders when he was 11 years old, soloed in an airplane on his grandfather's farm at age 13, and proceeded to teach himself aerobatics. By the time Mancuso was 18 years old, he had his commercial pilot's license and was off to a successful aerobatic career. Michael retired from competition in 1998 to join the world-famous Northern Lights Aerobatic Team until their retirement in 2000.

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## **First Flight Centennial Celebration Air Show Performers**

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In 2001, Mancuso partnered with Klein Tools of Chicago and performs in the Klein Tools Extra 300L, a two-place low wing composite aircraft handbuilt in Germany and certified in the United States.

When Michael is not flying air shows, he is home on Long Island, NY where he runs his family business, Mid Island Flying School. He also teaches at his aerobatic school, Gyroscopic Obsessions.

**On the web: <http://www.mmairshows.com>**

### **Bobby Younkin**

Bobby Younkin's interest in flight dates back to the late 1950s, when he used to attend air shows with his father. He grew up watching performers such as Duane and Marion Cole, Bob Hoover, Harold Krier, Bill Barber, Charlie Hillard, Art Scholl, and other great performers of the day, who influenced his ideas of what air show flying should be. Bobby Younkin has since teamed up with American Champion Aircraft and flies a Super Decathlon in his own unique way, reminiscent of those breathtaking performances he witnessed as a child.

Younkin's air show begins literally at the instant the wheels leave the pavement, with a snap roll initiated at rotation, followed by 14 minutes of non-stop aerobatics (including an inverted ribbon cut) with absolutely no pauses or breaks in the action. The performance is kept tightly in front of the crowd 100% of the time.

**On the web: <http://www.younkinair.com/YounkinAirshows.ivnu>**

The First Flight Centennial Celebration takes place at Wright Brothers National Memorial December 12-17, 2003. The six-day event is designed to commemorate the last century of flight; celebrate the achievements of aviators throughout history; and inspire the next generation of aviators to further the Wright brothers' dream.

All of the most recent information on the First Flight Centennial Celebration can be accessed at the Centennial website on [www.firstflightcentennial.org](http://www.firstflightcentennial.org). For First Flight Centennial Celebration tickets, visit [www.wrightbrothers.reserveworld.com](http://www.wrightbrothers.reserveworld.com), or call (800) 973-7327 or (301) 722-1257 (for callers outside the United States). For information on accommodations or to learn more about the Outer Banks of North Carolina, check the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau website at [www.outerbanks.org](http://www.outerbanks.org) or call their toll-free number at (877) 298-4373.

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