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NEWS RELEASE

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ARCHITREATS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT PRESENTATION
A STRANGE NEW BIRD: THE AIRPLANE COMES TO ALABAMA
BY BILLY J. SINGLETON
AT THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

ArchiTreats: Food for Thought continues another year of informative talks on Alabama history at the Alabama Department of Archives and History. Join us at **noon** on **Thursday, March 18** as **Billy J. Singleton** presents *A Strange New Bird: The Airplane Comes to Alabama*.

The first century of powered flight in Alabama began in February 1910 with the arrival of Wilbur Wright in the capital city of Montgomery. In search of a suitable location to establish a spring training camp for student aviators, Wright selected Montgomery as the site of the nation's first civilian pilot training school because of the region's genial climate and suitable grounds. The establishment of the Wright flying school marked the beginning of a remarkable aviation heritage in Montgomery, a legacy further enhanced by the evolution of military aviation on the former site of the flying school of the Wright Brothers. The same factors that attracted the Wrights to Montgomery made the area an ideal location for the establishment of military flight training and aerospace education programs, and formed the foundation of the first century of powered flight in Alabama.

Billy Singleton has been involved in the aviation industry for more than three decades. Recently retired as a pilot for a major airline, he continues to fly as a corporate pilot based in Birmingham. A native of Alabama, Singleton serves as chairman of the Alabama Aviation Hall of Fame, vice-chairman of the Wright Brothers / Maxwell Field Museum project, and member of the Board of Directors of the Southern Museum of Flight. He received a bachelor's degree from Troy State University and a Master of Aeronautical Science degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He is the author of *Images of Aviation: Montgomery Aviation* and numerous articles relating to aviation history and safety.

This ArchiTreats presentation is made possible by the Friends of the Alabama Archives. The public is invited to bring a sack lunch and enjoy a bit of Alabama history. Coffee and tea will be provided by the Friends of the Alabama Archives. For more information, call (334) 353-4726.

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