



## A Return to Glory — The Dayton Chapter Relaunched

By Angelo Collins, Executive Director

Ohio truly is the world capital of aviation. Birthplace of the Wright brothers, home of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (AFB) and the historic National Museum of the United States Air Force, aviation enthusiasts feel at home here. I had the pleasure of joining Emile Gantous, Dassault Systèmes, and Charlie Svoboda, VFS US Mideast Region Vice President, for a dinner meeting to discuss relaunching the Dayton Chapter. As one of the Society's fastest growing regions, the chapter is primed for success and a return to its former glory.

Taking a look back, we can truly appreciate the excellence and potential the region offers. Dayton, Ohio, was the center of all Air Force rotorcraft activity until the move to Edwards AFB. Wright-Patterson's Wright Field is where the first delivery of the Sikorsky XR-4 occurred in 1942, with significant rotorcraft flight testing for many years thereafter. After World War II, German engineers conducted testing on captured Nazi helicopters there as part of Operation Paperclip.

The Dayton Chapter was founded in 1962, the same year that the US Army left the base and joint flight testing ended there. Although Army aviation activities moved to St. Louis, Missouri (and later to Huntsville, Alabama), Dayton still boasted many Air Force rotorcraft and vertical and/or short takeoff and landing (V/STOL) programs, such as the XV-4B augmented thrust jet, X-19 tilt-prop and the XC-142 tiltwing. Two of our VFS awards are named after Dayton Chapter members, the Paul E. Haueter Award for V/STOL accomplishments and the Bernard L. Lindenbaum Historical Paper.

Today, the region is experiencing impressive growth in the aviation and advanced air mobility (AAM) sectors. The FlyOhio initiative is a state-led program that aims to create a cohesive air mobility ecosystem in Ohio. It focuses on developing the necessary infrastructure and regulatory frameworks for AAM, such as the National Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence (NAAMCE), which features 30,000 ft<sup>2</sup> (2,800 m<sup>2</sup>) of state-of-the-art collaboration space to aid in the advancement



of AAM technology. The US Air Force's Agility Prime program has collaborated with Ohio companies and institutions to develop and test military and civilian AAM vehicles. Joby Aviation is also building its first large-scale manufacturing facility in Dayton. This decision places Joby at the center of Ohio's aviation industry and aligns with the state's rich aerospace legacy. Even traditional suppliers, such as Hartzell Propeller in Piqua, Ohio, are now producing blades for various AAM aircraft.

The Dayton Chapter relaunch meeting kicked off with a presentation from Penn State VFS Student Chapter President — and Vertical Lift Research Center of Excellence (VLRCE) graduate student — Isabella Mawry. She outlined her

research in a talk titled, "Individual Blade Pitch Controls (IBC) for Rotor and Fuselage Vibration Reduction of Coaxial Rotor Vehicle with a Pusher Propeller." Vibrations are a known issue in coaxial, contra-rotating rotors, and research in this space is critical for future success of coax designs.

I gave the keynote presentation to the audience in attendance, walking through updates to the Society, its Board of Directors, Technical Council and the new Student Council (see "Educational Initiatives," pg. 64). There was substantial interest in AAM developments on all fronts, as well as uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) operations for disaster relief and delivery of critical supplies. We agreed that VFS is well positioned to support the growth of uncrewed vertical flight operations at all weight classes.

For those reading this in the Dayton region, note that delegates have been selected to organize the next chapter meeting. At this meeting, officer positions and descriptions will be laid out and candidates will be identified for elections occurring in December 2024.

Stay tuned for more information, and don't hesitate to reach out to me or the staff if you'd like to learn more. Ohio's growing AAM sector, coupled with the presence of major players like Joby, makes it a central hub for the future of electric and autonomous flight with more engagement with VFS for years to come.

What do you think? Let me know at [director@vtol.org](mailto:director@vtol.org).

