

A Fundraising Campaign to Honor Newark Native Geraldine "Jerrie" Fredritz Mock

The first woman to successfully complete a solo flight around the world.

Campaign Purpose: To honor Newark native Geraldine Mock's groundbreaking accomplishment of being the first woman to successfully complete a solo flight around the world 47 years ago.

It is the goal of Bill Kelley and Susan Reid, establishers of the Jerrie Mock Aviation Pioneer Sculpture Fund held at The Licking County Foundation, to erect a bronze statue in Newark, Ohio in her honor. Renate Burgyan-Facker, local sculptor, will be commissioned to create a statue representing Mock and the essence of her accomplishment. Upon completion, the statue will become a permanent fixture in LeFevre Courtyard located at The Works: Center for History, Art & Technology. An ideal location to house the tribute to Mock, The Works highlights accomplishments in the areas of science and technology by local citizens. The museum also acts as an educational destination and history resource for more than 60,000 visitors annually.

Fundraising Goal & Campaign Period:

Bill Kelley and Susan Reid have established a fundraising goal of **\$45,000** to be raised in a campaign starting in September 2011 with the sculpture commission to begin once funds are raised.

The Story of Geraldine "Jerrie" Fredritz Mock:

Contributed by: John Morgan and Jim Hanson

Amelia Earhart, the most recognizable figurehead for women in aviation, was an accomplished pilot but failed to do what Newark native Geraldine "Jerrie" Fredritz Mock did accomplish in 1964. During the 1930's in small town Newark, Ohio, young girls were expected to learn homemaking skills such as cooking and sewing and as they got older, to marry, tend to their families and household. Geraldine Mock had other aspirations. Geraldine, known as "Jerrie" by most, was fascinated by geography and wanted to see the world. She took her first airplane ride at the age of 7 on a Ford Tri-motor and decided she would learn to fly and then fly around the world.

Jerrie took steps toward her goal by enrolling in the Aeronautical Engineering Program at Ohio State University being the only woman in the program. After becoming a wife and a mother, it was not until 1956 that she took her first flying lesson and then earned her Private Pilot Certificate in 1958. Jerrie continued her career by managing the Lincoln County, Illinois airport followed by the Delaware County, Ohio airport in 1960. Determined to become a professional pilot, Jerrie passed the written instrument test, opened a flying service company, and became an airport manager in 1961.

By 1962, Jerrie had accumulated 700 flight hours and sought a new, exciting challenge. Her husband, Russ, said, "Why don't you fly around the world?" She thought, "Why

not?" Jerrie began working on flight planning, which proved to be tedious, time consuming, and filled with bureaucracy. In the early 1960's, only the airlines and military operated internationally, flight planning agencies did not exist, diplomatic clearances, insurance, aviation fuel, maintenance, and accommodations all had to be arranged – and Jerrie had to do it all herself on a shoestring budget. This was in stark contrast to the lavish arrangements made by previous female pilots who attempted such a feat.

After 15 months of preparation and overcoming opposition from a Congressional bill attempting to deny search and rescue help from the U.S. military to any pilot undertaking, in their opinion, this "idiotic" adventure, Jerrie was ready for flight. On March 19, 1964, Jerrie Mock took off from Columbus in a modified Cessna 180 named "*The Spirit of Columbus*" and began her solo flight around the world.

Jerrie encountered several incidents along her journey including ice on the wings, sand in the engine, radio problems, and delays caused by government officials when landing for maintenance and refueling. "I am utterly exhausted", she said "not from flying, but from spending 3 to 4 hours before and after each flight with officials."

Thirty days after her departure from Columbus, Jerrie returned safely having traveled 22,858 miles, breaking numerous world records, and most importantly, accomplishing what she set out to do; become the first female to successfully complete a solo flight around the world. In addition to receiving several awards and accolades, several of which being the first woman to receive such awards, President Lyndon Johnson presented Jerrie with the FAA Gold Medal for Exceptional Service.

Jerrie never flew "*The Spirit of Columbus*" again. It has since been retired to the Udvar-Hazy Center of the National Air and Space Museum at Dulles. Today, Jerrie Mock resides in Florida and when asked, shares her personal philosophy on life, "Every person should have a goal," she says, "but don't take things too seriously. You've got to have some fun."

Bill Kelley and Susan Reid are requesting monetary donations to fund the production of a statue to honor the accomplishments of Geraldine "Jerrie" Mock. It is time to celebrate the amazing successes of this fearless, determined, and tenacious woman who calls Newark, Ohio her hometown. Mock's contributions shaped the future of American aviation and opened the door to new opportunities for children to learn, discover, and explore the wonders of flight.

Contributions Should Be Made To: The Licking County Foundation, P.O. Box 4212, Newark, Ohio 43058-4212. Gifts are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.