

# Kentucky New Era

## Charity uses 1st flight celebration to draw attention to sick children

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KILL DEVIL HILLS, N.C. (AP) — Among the Spitfires, F-15 Strike Eagles and the rest of the 600 or so planes buzzing the field this week at Wright Brothers National Memorial, one brightly painted DC-3 stands out.

The 1938 aircraft is flying special colors, adorned with vibrantly painted flowers created by sick and disabled children in a yearlong project.

It was organized by **Portraits of Hope**, a Los Angeles-based group that promotes art as therapy for victims of physical and emotional trauma. More than 2,000 children — many of them gravely ill — took part in the painting.

"Some of them did not live to see this," said Ed Massey, co-founder of the organization.

The DC-3 project, called "Garden in Transit — AIRburne," is one of several public art projects the group has organized. On the ground, it currently has affixed similar flowers to the tops of New York City taxis in a display called "Garden in Transit."

The aircraft has flown several times over the field where aviation buffs are celebrating the centennial anniversary of the first powered flight. It's also among 100 aircraft scheduled to fly over the site on Wednesday, the 100th anniversary of Wilbur and Orville Wright's first flights.

The six-pointed, daisy-like



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Visitors to the First Flight Centennial in Hill Devil Hill, N.C., make their way around the Wright Memorial Monument and displays of vintage aircraft Sunday.

flowers on the plane are the actual artwork created by children in hospitals in Florida, North Carolina, Maryland, New York, Michigan, Illinois, California, Ohio and the District of Columbia, Massey said.

"If you were to look up closely at the aircraft, you'd see the brush strokes," he said.

The children painted their designs on adhesive panels that were affixed to the aircraft.

"This panel here," Massey said, pointing to a photograph of one artist at work, and then to a model of the aircraft, "is in this section here."

The artists' illnesses demanded creative ways of helping them get paint on the

panels. Organizers created a sponge brush that attaches to shoes for children who can't paint with their hands. A fruit-flavored paint brush can be used by those who can only manipulate the brush with their mouths. Children in wheelchairs were given a telescoping brush to reach the panels on the floor.

The artwork itself is as ephemeral as some of its creators. The day after the festival ends, Massey said, the rented airplane will be flown to a facility in Greensboro and the panels stripped off.

On the Net:  
[www.portraitsofhope.org](http://www.portraitsofhope.org)