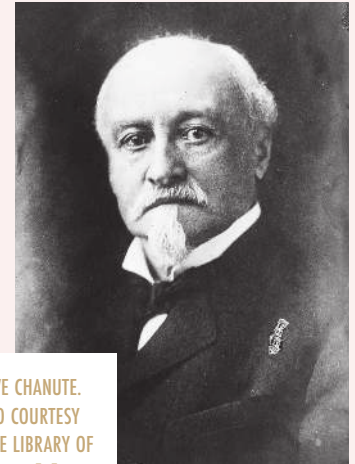


GLIDER TRIPLANE MODEL
BY OCTAVE CHANUTE WITH
ADJUSTABLE COMBINATION
FORE-AND-AFT CONTROLS
C1927 NOV. 17. PHOTO
COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY
OF CONGRESS[2]



OCTAVE CHANUTE.
PHOTO COURTESY
OF THE LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS.[1]

INTERPRETIVE
PARK RANGER
LEA HICKLE.



Airport. With over 70,000 landings and departures per year, you can watch planes take off and land every day of the week: Monday through Friday from 6:00am to 10:00pm and weekends from 7:00am to 7:00pm.

- You can also enjoy the outdoor pavilion with picnic tables for outdoor aircraft viewing.

Charter a Plane

- Midwest Airlink provides charters across the country and even into Canada. 219-465-2104.



A REPLICA OF OCTAVE CHANUTE'S BI-PLANE
AT THE INDIANA DUNES VISITOR CENTER.

Octave Chanute

A PIONEER IN AVIATION

By Cheryl Wooten

When it comes to pioneers in aerial navigation, Octave Chanute may not be as well-known as Wilbur and Orville Wright. However, this well-respected, French-American civil engineer made his own mark on the development of flight right here in Northwest Indiana.

August 19th marks the celebration of National Aviation Day in the United States, and it's the perfect time to honor the achievements of Octave Chanute. While designing bridges, railroads, and urban plans was Octave's career, flying machines were his passion. The flight-minded Chanute corresponded amiably with other aeronautical experimenters such as the Wright brothers and Germany's Otto Lilienthal. Chanute published *Progress in Flying Machines* in 1894, a valuable resource for aviation enthusiasts.

In the spring and summer of 1896, with the help of four young assistants, 64-year-old Octave Chanute performed glider trials along Lake Michigan's southern shore. With steady lake winds and soft landing spots below, the fearless aviators launched themselves off the dunes at Miller Beach in Gary. Although the test results were less than they had hoped for, they spent the next few months making modifications and repairs. In August that year and at a new location near Mt. Baldy, the group completed several hundred flights with Chanute's new biplane design. His was the most successful flying machine in the world at that time.

To honor the region's pioneering aeronautical engineer, a bronze statue was erected outside the Aquatorium at Gary's Marquette Park. And in 2020, filmmaker Paul Nelson, of Munster, and Chanute biographer

Simine Short, of Crown Point, released a documentary, *Octave Chanute: Patron Saint of Flight*, which aired on PBS.

One of the best places to get more information and a glimpse of Octave Chanute's designs is at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center in Porter where a replica of his bi-plane is suspended from the ceiling. According to Interpretive Park Ranger Lea Hickle, "Octave came up with his own glider designs and then shared those ideas with the Wright brothers. He would test out his models, lugging them up the 200 ft. sand dunes and the pilots would jump off the top." If you really want to take your aeronautical curiosity up a notch, visit the Octave Grill in Chesterton and try the Chanute Burger with cremini mushrooms, pepper jack, bacon, blue cheese sauce, greens, tomato, and onion. Yum!

If all of this aviation history has whetted your appetite, here are a few more local opportunities to get up in the air at the Porter County Regional Airport.

Scenic Flights and Learn to Fly

- Eagle Aircraft offers one-hour scenic flights around NWI and along the lakeshore. Only \$139 per person and \$25 for the next two passengers. 219-464-0132
- Region Flyers Aerial Tours. See the beautiful sights, take a sunset flight, or see the Chicago skyline at night. Nothing beats the view! 844-435-9694
- Both Eagle Aircraft and Region Flyers offer flying lessons.

Watch Planes Take Off and Land

- Step inside the beautifully appointed terminal at the Porter County Regional

[1] O. Chanute., None. [Between 1900 and 1910] [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/92520415/>. Rights Advisory: No known restrictions on publication. Reproduction Number: LC-USZ62-106858 (b&w film copy neg.). Call Number: LOT 10818 [item] [P&P].

[2] Glider Triplane Model by Octave Chanute, with adjustable combination fore-and-aft controls., ca. 1927. Nov. 17. [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2002721437/>. Rights Advisory: No known restrictions on publication. No renewal in the U.S. Copyright Office (checked 12/2014). Reproduction Number: LC-USZ62-59027 (b&w film copy neg.). Call Number: SSF - GLIDERS [item] [P&P]. (ca. 1927).