



SINCE 1841

# WOODLAND

HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM



## Definitely not a German Spy

Did you know that the city of Dayton has its own flag?

Today, it looks like this:



In 1915, the directors of the Greater Dayton Association (or G.D.A), concluded that the city of Dayton needed its own flag “for local uses and to inspire civic patriotism.”

A group of local notables, including Houston Lowe, Marie J. Kumler, Annie Campbell, William B. Werthner, and J. M. Guild formed a committee to get it done.

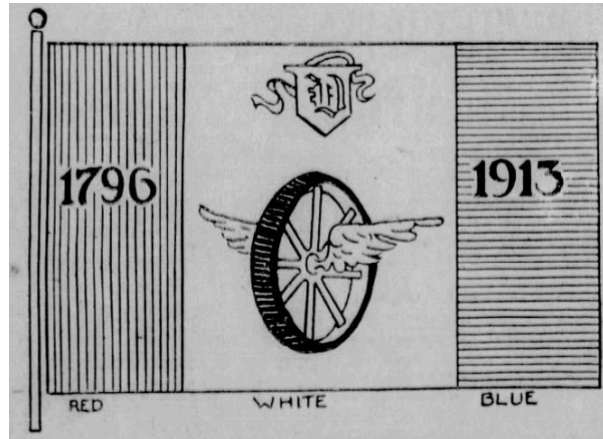
They arranged a contest, published instructions in the local papers, and set aside a \$25 cash prize for the best design.

Originally, the contest winner was a man named Harvey J. King.

His complex, artistic design included an ornamental 'D' for 'Dayton' and a speeding, winged factory wheel, symbolizing Dayton's fame as a manufacturing city

It worked well on paper, but was later found "impracticable to produce<sup>[1]</sup>".

We may imagine this means that whoever the G.D.A had found to sit down to stitch the flag together told the committee that they were welcome to try to sew it themselves.



Above: Harvey King's flag design. Published by the Dayton Herald, 6/29/1915.

[1] Dayton Herald, 6/15/1916

[2] History of the Dayton Flag; [Dayton Ohio Official Website](#)



Above: Mabel Hyer Griep & the flag she designed, published by the Dayton Daily News, 2/25/1951

Returning to the drawing board, the G.D.A committee refocused their search for a design that “while artistic and emblematic of the city, would also be sufficiently simple for manufacturing and commercial purposes. [2]”

At Steele High School, a young woman named Mabel Hyer (later Griep) was working as an assistant in the art department. Her supervisor there, Annie Campbell, was part of the flag-search committee, and urged Miss Hyer to submit a design.

Agreeing to give it a shot, Mabel determined that her flag would need to incorporate Dayton's most famous invention—an airplane.

Below: Mabel Hyer Griep's winning flag design



Luckily, Miss Hyer had been childhood friends with Orville & Wilbur's niece; Ivonette Wright (later Miller). The pair had spent hours in the Wright Brothers' bicycle shop where their first experiments with planes had taken place.

It also helped that the original Wright plane was on display at the time. On a visit, sketchbook in tow, Mabel “was taken for a German spy [...] at the Delco electrical exposition held in February of 1916,” she laughed, telling the story to the Dayton Herald.

Instead of doing anything nefarious with her drawings, Mabel Hyer Griep submitted her design to the Dayton City Commission. It was adopted by city ordinance on August 2, 1917.

Mrs. Mabel Griep went on to be an active member of the Dayton Art Institute and helped establish the Dayton Society of Painters and Sculptors. After 40-plus years of teaching art in the Dayton school system, she retired in 1962.

Mabel Hyer Griep died in 1994 at the age of 98. She and her husband rest in section 107, lot 3675 at Woodland Cemetery.

Coincidentally, [Houston Lowe](#), [Marie Kumler](#), [Annie Campbell](#), [William B. Werthner](#), [Ivonette Wright Miller](#) & [Harvey J. King](#) are also laid to rest here at Woodland; click their names above to learn more about each person.



**DON'T FORGET**  
Winter clean-off  
begins 1<sup>st</sup> week of  
March!

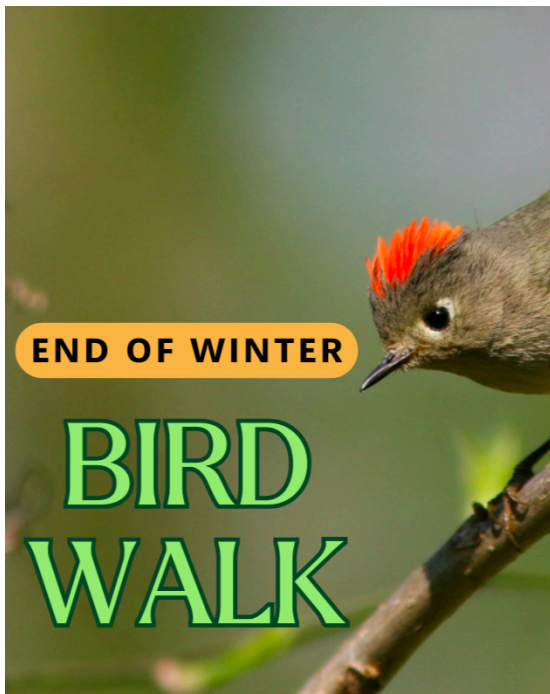
2026 Adornment  
calendars available!  
See Main Office!

A graphic illustration on a dark green background. On the left, a white hand with black outlines points its index finger towards the center. A small red ribbon is tied around the tip of the finger. In the center, a yellow rectangular box contains the text 'DON'T FORGET' in bold black letters, followed by 'Winter clean-off begins 1<sup>st</sup> week of March!' in white. To the right of the yellow box is a red starburst shape containing the text '2026 Adornment calendars available! See Main Office!' in white. The background is decorated with stylized yellow and red flowers and a pattern of small dark blue dots.

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Upcoming Events!

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[End of Winter Bird Walk](#)



[Spring Migration Bird Walk](#)

[Click here to explore our full calendar of events!](#)



### Office Hours

Monday - Friday: 8a - 5p  
Closed Saturday & Sunday

### Contact Us!

For questions about pre-planning, funeral services, or memorial design:

[Request an Appointment](#)

(Non-urgent) general questions:

[Contact Us](#)

**Support Woodland!**

For 184 years, Woodland has been a place of remembrance, reflection, and beauty.

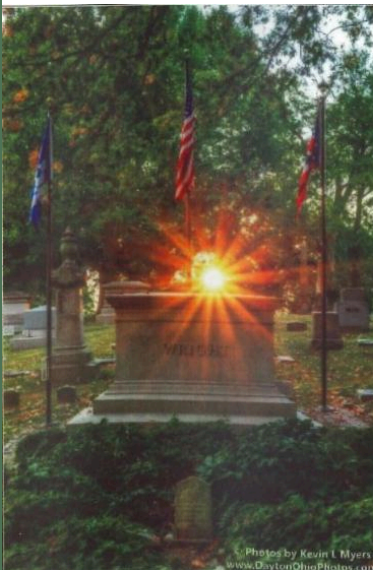
Your donation to the Woodland Arboretum Foundation supports landscape care, tree preservation, historic restoration, and our commitment to keeping Woodland a welcoming sanctuary for all.


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Thank you for supporting Woodland's mission.

With gratitude,

Woodland Arboretum Foundation



SINCE  1841

# WOODLAND

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