



SINCE 1841

WOODLAND

HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM



Aviation Innovation



The Hartzell Propeller Company's story begins in the 1860s when founder John T. Hartzell (aged 17) borrowed \$25 to begin a lightning rod company. By 1875 the lightning rod company had become the The Hartzell Farm Wagon Company. In the 1880s, John's son, George W. Hartzell, joined the lumber supply and wagon manufacturing business. When George turned 25, he purchased the company from his father and renamed it the George W. Hartzell Company. During the early 1900s, the company moved from Greenville to Piqua, Ohio, where it remains to this day.

In 1917, George's son Robert owned a small airplane and had big dreams of being a barnstormer. At his wife's request, George encouraged Robert to instead focus his efforts on airplane repair and rebuilding.

This led to Robert's discovery of the high failure rate of available wooden propellers. A friend of Robert's, Orville Wright, made the suggestion that walnut wood might be a better material for airplane

Above: George W. Hartzell, illustration published by *the Dayton Daily News*, 2/9/1930. Buried in section 113, lot 440 at Woodland Cemetery.

propellers. This marked the beginning of the Hartzell Walnut Propeller Company, which provided Liberty aircraft propellers for warplanes during World War I.

After the war, the Hartzell Co. built its first airplane primarily out of plywood – the FC1. It won first place in its class at the 1923 International Air Races in St. Louis, MO. The FC1 was shortly joined by a second all-wood plane, the FC2, winning even more prizes, money and notoriety for the company.

In 1926, the Hartzell Co. installed wood propellers on the Aeronca C-2 aircraft and manufactured propellers for the USS Shenandoah, the first ridged airship.

George N. Hartzell passed away in 1933, leaving his son Robert as sole owner of Hartzell Industries and the Hartzell Propeller Company.

In the late 1930s, Hartzell Industries began to manufacture metal blades for the Hamilton Standard and Curtiss Propeller companies.



Above: Robert N. Hartzell, illustration courtesy [National Aviation Hall of Fame](#).



Above: The Hartzell FC1; courtesy [Hartzell Propeller Inc.](#)

By 1942, business was booming for the Hartzell Company—more than 350 workers were hired and trained for the company’s transition into making aluminum propellers. At around the same time, the company developed a process for gluing wood to metal—very helpful in the production of gliders.

In 1944, the Hartzell Co. introduced the world’s first composite propeller blade using Hartzite, a fabric-based plastic material, for use in post-war light aircraft.

Hartzell’s innovation and ability to create propellers in an expedient manner made them the leading supplier of propellers to the general aviation market of the late 1940’s. The company continued with several Hartzell family members at the helm until it was sold to James Brown Jr. in 1987.



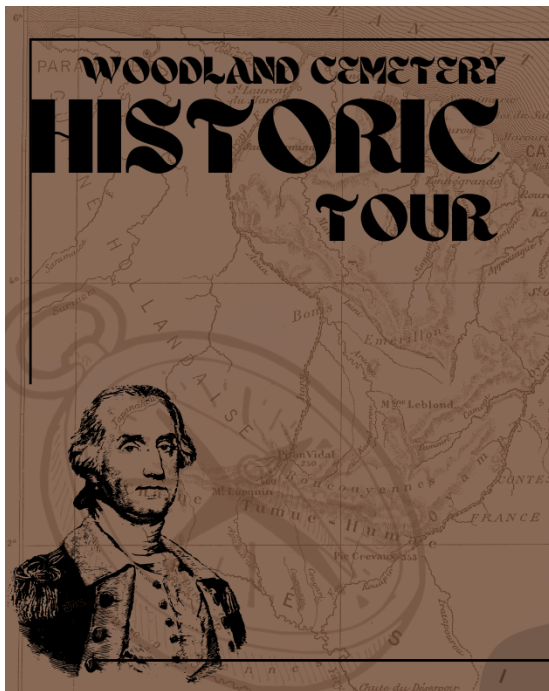
Today, the Hartzell Propeller Company is a leader in the manufacturing of composite propellers for airplanes and unmanned aerial vehicles, bringing the Hartzell family’s tradition of innovation – “Built on Honor” – into the future of powered flight.

Robert N. Hartzell died in 1968 at the age of 72.

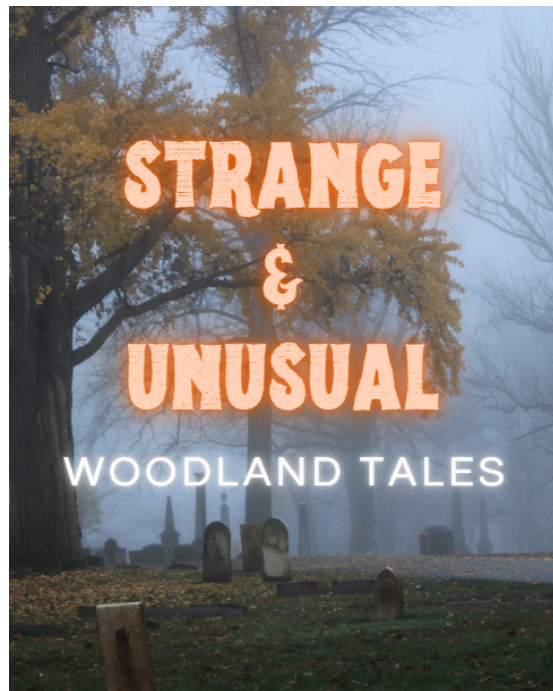
He and his wife, Miriam, and youngest son, Robert Jr., rest in section 113, lot 432 at Woodland Cemetery.



Tours & Events:



[Woodland Historic Tour](#)



[Strange & Unusual Tales of Woodland](#)

Two Dayton Legacies at Woodland

This program will explore the lives of these two Dayton figures, their lasting contributions, and their connection to Woodland Cemetery. Through stories and historical context, the presentation highlights how Woodland serves not only as a place of remembrance, but also as a landscape that preserves the stories of Dayton's cultural and scientific heritage.

Chuck Johnson will be the presenter for this program. He is a dedicated public speaker on the life and achievements of C. F. Kettering and worked for the C. F. Kettering Research Laboratory as a Senior Research Associate from 1957 to 1963. He is also a committed volunteer and historian involved in multiple Dayton community non-profits, including Five Rivers MetroParks, Woodland Cemetery, Dayton History's Carillon Park, and the City of Dayton Landmark Committee. He is currently a Trustee of Preservation Dayton, Inc., representing the Wright-Dunbar neighborhood and working to highlight its historical significance.



This program is free and open to the public but reservations are required.

[Register / Get More Info](#)

Above: Charles Kettering with electric self-starter. Photo courtesy General Motors.

[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.

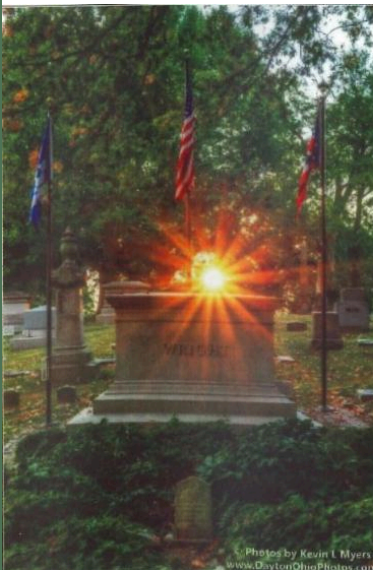
Your donation to the Woodland Arboretum Foundation supports landscape care, tree preservation, historic restoration, and our commitment to keeping Woodland a welcoming sanctuary for all.


Please consider a tax-deductible gift today

Thank you for supporting Woodland's mission.

With gratitude,

Woodland Arboretum Foundation



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Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum
118 Woodland Ave.
Dayton, OH 45409
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Beautiful. Timeless. Still Available...



Discover the men and women who made it great in Dayton on a guided walking or bus tour. Self-guided tours are available on our mobile app.

For information call 937-228-3221 or e-mail info@woodlandcemetery.org

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