



The building reflects our history, and you are invited to become part of it.

A self-guided tour of the Engineers Club



The building in 1921

THE ENGINEERS CLUB OF DAYTON was formed in 1914 by the great inventor **Charles F. Kettering** and industrialist **Col. Edward Deeds**. They wanted a meeting place for engineers and others brought to Dayton by industry and the flood-control work that followed the 1913 flood.

The first home for the Club was a downtown residence owned by Delco (Dayton Engineering Laboratories Co., later Delphi) that Deeds and Kettering formed to manufacture the ignition systems they and their “Barn Gang” of NCR craftsmen had invented.

In 1916, Deeds and Kettering bought the 110 Monument Avenue property. Inspired by British clubs, the exterior is of the Georgian style developed in England between the 17th and 18th centuries. Except for the Wedgwood Room, the interior is mostly Tudor, for a classic “Old English” look and feel.

The building was dedicated on Feb. 2, 1918, when Orville Wright accepted the keys on behalf of the members.

LOBBY LEVEL

In the front entrance lobby, at the base of the staircase, note the busts of Charles Kettering and Col. Edward Deeds. The coat room area originally had leaded-glass doors like the doors to the dining room. Similar doors could close the lobby at the top of the steps to the lower level.



Walk into the large room of the west wing – the WRIGHT ROOM. This was originally a game room for men (see photo above.)

From the lobby, walk down the east hall. The glass-paned doors at the end of the hallway originally opened to a canopy over the driveway where members let their wives and guests enter protected from the elements.



The original Ladies Lounge

The WEDGWOOD ROOM at the end of the east hall was originally the Ladies Lounge. Note the pale blue jasper design and color, taken from the innovative English dinnerware pioneered by Josiah Wedgwood in the 1700s. The decorative painters who restored the walls and relief ceilings are the same ones who restored the interiors of The Biltmore mansion in Asheville, North Carolina, and Buckingham Palace.

Back in the lobby, on the landing: Under the glass front of the pneumatic grandfather clock, in the upper left corner, see a black rubber tube. It originally connected to a bellows that went “whoosh” once a minute to advance the minute hands of other clocks in the building.

TOP FLOOR

On the east side of the central area note the WRIGHT BROTHERS’ THIRD ENGINE, used for testing and built by their brilliant machinist, Charles Taylor. The first Wright engine is in the Smithsonian, and the second one is in the Wright III flyer at Carillon Park.

Northward, step into the LOGGIA facing Riverscape. The Loggia originally was an open porch with railings (see building photo on front.)

West of the Loggia is a coffee shop room, which originally was used as a barber shop. Orville Wright liked to get his haircut here and look out the window to see planes take off and land at McCook Field northeastward across the Great Miami River. McCook Field (1917-27) was the nation’s first military aviation test field before its functions were moved to what became Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. On the walls of the Loggia are photos of the field and the Club’s construction.



The Harold Shaw Library

Step eastward into the window-paneled hall of the Harold Shaw LIBRARY. For half a century the library was a state-of-the-art reference resource, attracting engineers from all over the country. The library table and chairs, like the massive tables in the second floor central area, were donated by the late Harold Leland, whose father George Leland, invented the no-spark motor (displayed in auditorium foyer) to power gasoline pumps, used across the nation in the expansion of motorized travel.

From the library, return to the central area and enter the FOYER behind the staircase. The foyer displays memorabilia of inventions and developments by members. As in the Dining Room, the ceiling molding uses the gold, red and blue colors of the Club seal.

Enter the 350-seat AUDITORIUM. At the front portion of the stage floor notice three squares. Two are of black metal, the other wood. Underneath those were a lab table and connections for electricity, water and propane for experiments. During the early years,



Auditorium in 1921

Charles Kettering on Saturday mornings held 'Mr. Wizard' type science classes for children.

On the third level at the back of the auditorium were a projection room, sleeping rooms, and a bathroom for guest speakers. It is now used for storage and is not open to the public.

Finish the tour by returning to the central area and going into the west wing – the grand ENGLISH ROOM, formerly the Men's Lounge. Starting on the wall to the left of the door are pictures of Club presidents, including Orville Wright, the fourth president in 1923-24.

SIDE ENTRY LEVEL

DINING ROOM – Entering from the center, check the plaque on the wall to your immediate left. It notes that the gregarious Charles Kettering sat with acquaintances at a big round table in this spot.

Behind the east wing partition near the kitchen is a small, two-person table, noted by a wall plaque. This is the space Orville Wright always reserved for his privacy. Originally, the east and west wings could be partitioned off by leaded glass pocket doors to create two or three rooms per side for working lunches.



Dining Room in the early days

Carrying an English theme in its design, the Dining Room ceiling motif is the “War of the Roses.”

BASEMENT LEVEL

Going downstairs from the Dining Room foyer, go left to the NUTTER CYBER SAFARI PUB. Originally this was a workshop area for members. The late Ervin Nutter, an industrialist, philanthropist and Club member, left a bequest to remodel this space. The Pub’s renovation, completed in 2002, was underwritten and given direction by his wife, Zoe Dell Nutter, also a member of the Club. From the Nutter collection she chose the safari-themed artifacts here and in the English Room.

In the basement hall be sure to check out **THE LOO**, personally designed by Mrs. Nutter. It’s not your traditional bathroom.