

# NAA NEWS

National Aeronautic Association



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Inventor of flexible wing technology wins Katharine Wright Award**

*Gertrude Rogallo and husband developed prototype  
that led to hang gliding, ultralight flight*

**Arlington, VA** – Gertrude Rogallo, who worked with her husband to patent "flexible wing" technology, won this year's Katharine Wright Award, given by the National Aeronautic Association.

The "Rogallo Wing," invented by Gertrude and Francis Rogallo in 1948, became the forerunner to several branches of aviation today, including hang gliding, paragliding and ultralight flight.

For her contributions to the growth of aviation, Rogallo won the Katharine Wright Award, given annually to a woman who has "made a personal contribution to the advancement of the art, sport and science of aviation and space flight over an extended period of time."

Gertrude aided her husband throughout his career, as he worked for the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics, and later NASA. They worked together in developing an airfoil that was light, stable and flexible like a parachute but could create lift like an aircraft's wing.

The result was the prototype that she created in 1948 with her husband's plans, a sewing machine and old kitchen curtains—the Rogallo Wing. Their invention was applied and refined in the last half century, allowing millions to enjoy the freedom of personal flight. Today, the Rogallos live in Kitty Hawk, N.C., near the site of the Wright Brothers first powered flight.

NAA is a non-profit, membership organization devoted to fostering opportunities to participate fully in aviation activities and to promoting public understanding of the importance of aviation and space flight to the United States. For more information on NAA and its award and recognition programs, visit [www.naa-usa.org](http://www.naa-usa.org).