

Birdman



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A dream to fly was alive in the mind of young **W.W. (Billy) Gibson**, as it was in the mind of hundreds at the turn of the century. At the age of 12, his passion to fly resulted in various experiments such as a basket, carrying a gopher, attached to his kite. While the Wright brothers were experimenting with their heavier than air aeroplane, Billy was busy building a four cylinder, air-cooled, engine for his aircraft design. He did this in the privacy of his farm just south of Balgonie, Saskatchewan, Canada.

To avoid ridicule, he tested the flying ability of his model aeroplanes in the early hours of the morning. He would conduct such experiments by releasing his models from the roof of the highest building in town. This building still stands to this day.

Gibson went on to build another first, a Canadian aircraft engine which weighed 219 pounds and produced 60 horsepower. This engine is on display in the National Aeronautical Museum in Ottawa.

Risking his life - physically and financially - he continued his flying experiments in Victoria, British Columbia. He redesigned his twin plane to a multi-plane in order to get better lift. This aircraft was displayed in the B.C. Exhibition called "*Made in Canada*".

Birdman is produced by Ron Goetz, directed by Chris Triffo and written by Stephen Sriver. The documentary is produced by **Partners in Motion** and will be broadcast on **History Television** and **Saskatchewan Communications Network**. *Birdman* is produced with the financial participation of **Canadian Television Fund, Harmony Entertainment, Saskatchewan Employment Tax Credit** and **Government of Canada - Canadian Film or Video Production Tax Credit Program**.



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