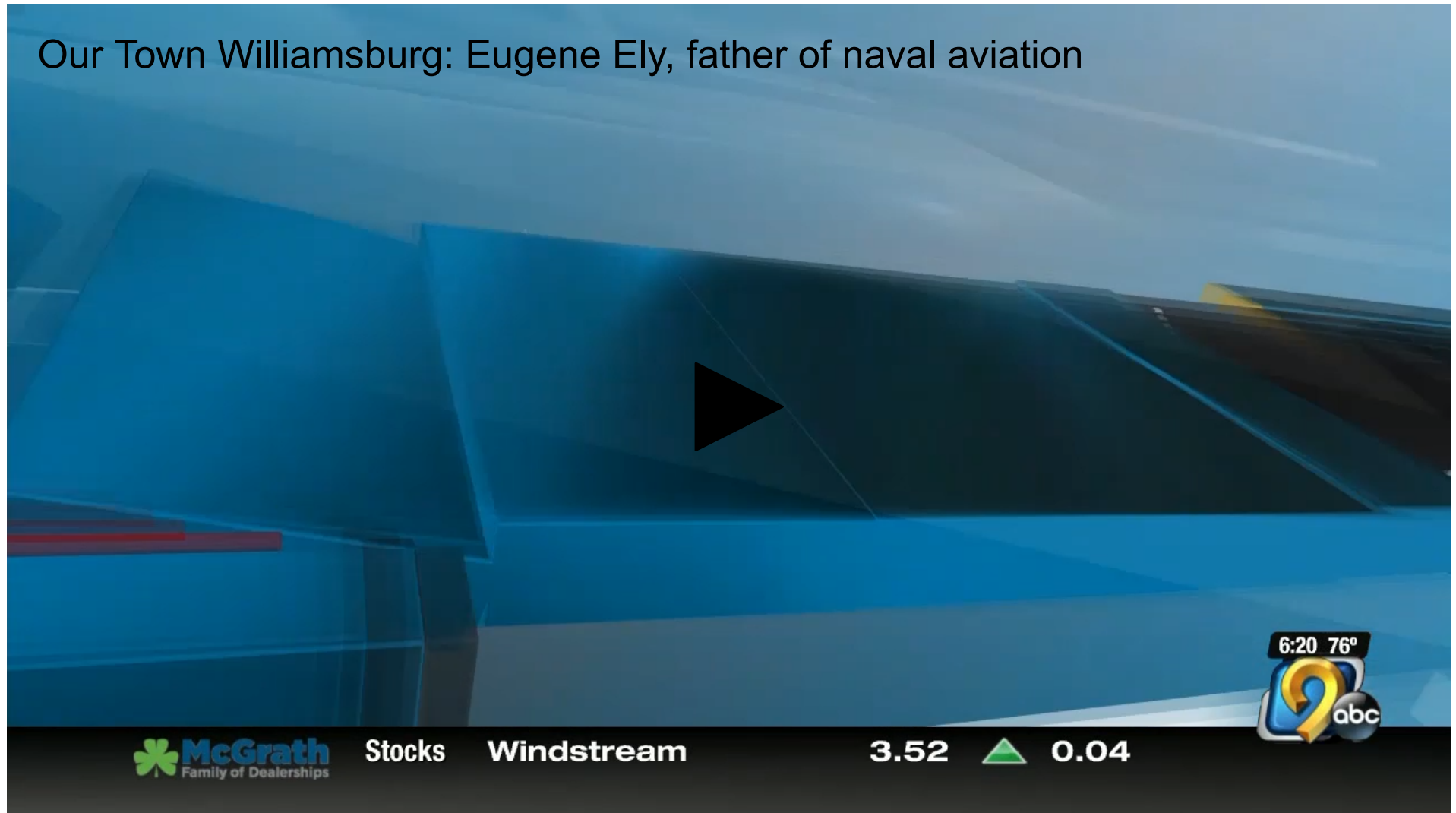


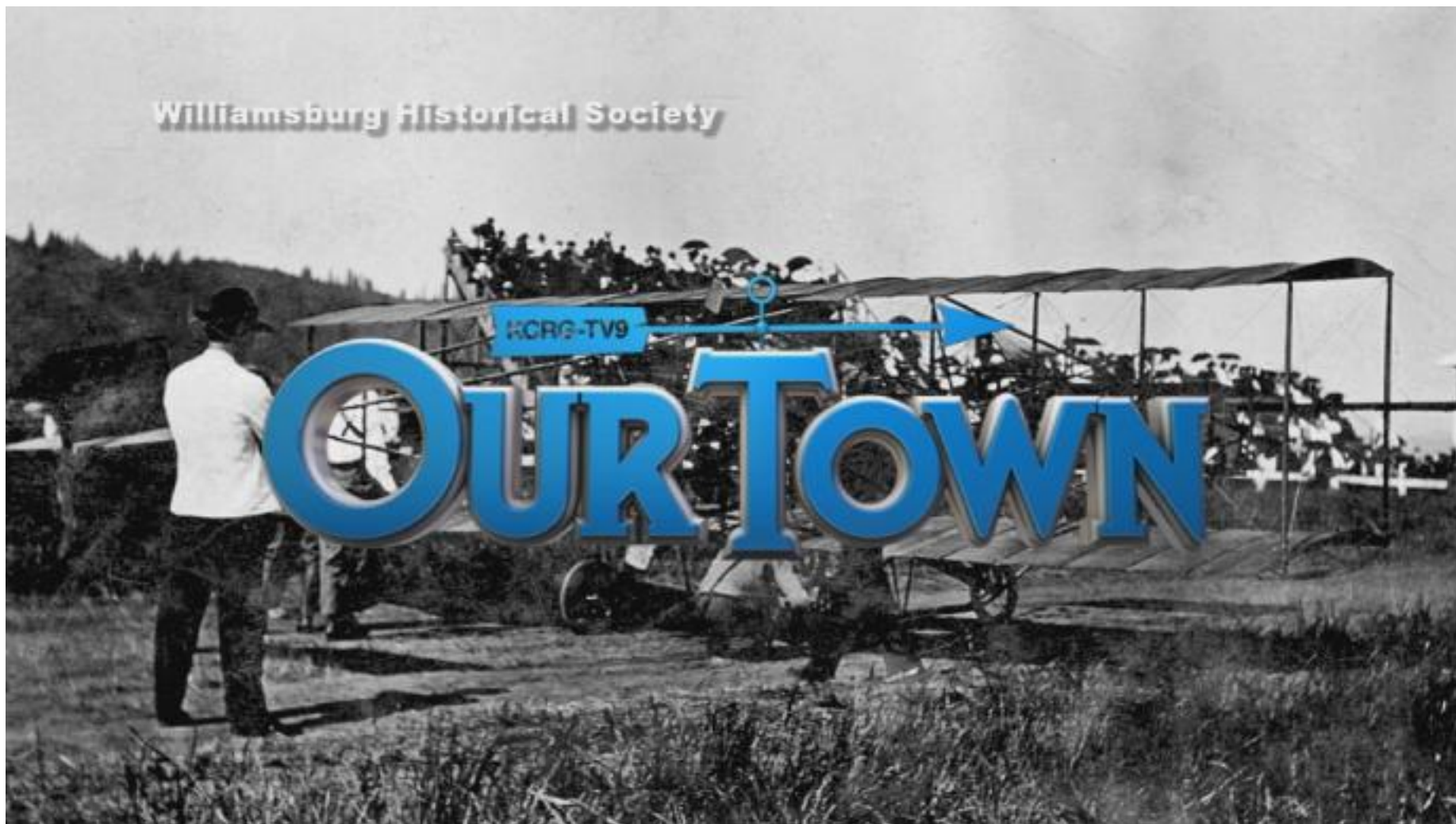
Our Town Williamsburg: Eugene Ely, 'father of naval aviation'



By Forrest Saunders, KCRG-TV9 | Posted: Tue 6:28 PM, Jul 31, 2018 | Updated: Tue 7:32 PM, Jul 31, 2018

WILLIAMSBURG, Iowa (KCRG-TV9) — Eugene Ely, you've probably never heard of him but he helped change aviation forever.

Ely was born in 1886, not far from Williamsburg.



He was a professional stunt pilot who became the first man to take off and land a plane from a US Navy ship, in 1910 and '11 respectively.

Some consider Ely to be the father of modern naval aviation.

His flights were considered major accomplishments for the time.

They helped paved the way for the development of aircraft carriers.

"His landing was softened by ropes and tied to sandbags," said Ronald Holden, a local historian. "He had a hook on the back, just like they use now. I think far and away he was the person that was on every major newspaper in the country for doing that, easily."

Unfortunately, Ely's fame was short lived. He died only a few months after making that first successful landing on a ship.

Ely was performing stunt work in Georgia.



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