

Freeman Redevelops American Airlines Museum for 15th Anniversary

3/20/2008 - The American Airlines C.R. Smith Museum is celebrating its 15th anniversary in style, opening for 2008 with a fresh new look, expanded exhibits and a dramatic wall-size mural that can be seen from Highway 360 and even from the air by some passengers landing at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport.

Since opening in July 1993, the C.R. Smith Museum, named for aviation pioneer and long-time American Airlines leader C.R. Smith, and located just south of DFW Airport at Highways 360 and 183, has welcomed more than 1.1 million visitors. But none has ever experienced quite the breadth and excitement of what the revitalized museum has to offer.

'What we've done is build on an already great museum to take this remarkable facility to a new level of excellence,' said Jeffrey Johns, the C.R. Smith Museum's Associate Director and Chief Curator. 'With improvements to our theater, a new energy-efficient lighting system, and expanded exhibits with interactive displays, we've significantly enhanced the museum as an educational resource for everyone, but most especially children.'

To build on its educational experiences, the museum re-launched its popular Eagle Aviation Academy program in 2006 for fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students, and will use the educational tools created by the expanded exhibits to establish expanded outreach programs to give young people throughout North Central Texas new insights into commercial air travel and careers in aviation.

'We see the C.R. Smith Museum as a living facility and an educational resource for the entire community,' Johns said.

To help redevelop its core exhibit, the museum selected the Freeman Company, one of the world's leading providers of integrated services for expositions, corporate events and exhibits. Drawing on proven expertise with interactive environments, Freeman, based in Dallas, delivered a full spectrum of services, from environmental and graphic design, content development and audio-visual production, to exhibit fabrication and installation. 'Our Freeman team was a tremendous asset throughout all phases of the project,' Johns said.

With more than 35,000 square feet of exhibit space, including a 10,000-foot 'hangar' facility that houses the Flagship Knoxville, a fully restored 1930s-era American Airlines DC-3 that began service in 1940, the C.R. Smith Museum's main function is to preserve and interpret the history of American, American Eagle and the air transportation industry.

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