

STATE OF ARKANSAS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS COME – GREETINGS:

WHEREAS: James C. Mars, born in 1876, was a pioneering aviator, who flew several historic short flights, beginning in Fort Smith, Arkansas, at the turn of the 20th Century; and

WHEREAS: On May 17, 1910, a Curtiss biplane belonging to Mars arrived at the train depot in Fort Smith in three boxes and was transported to Electric Park (present-day Kay Rodgers Park), where crowds gathered to observe the mechanics as they assembled the *Skylark*, as Mars named his plane; and

WHEREAS: Once the plane was assembled, pilot James “Bud” Mars spun the propeller to jumpstart the motor, while four men held the plane down to keep it from breaking away; and

WHEREAS: Aviator Mars executed the first recorded manned flight in the State on May 21, 1910, at League Field in Fort Smith, and many residents came to observe history being made as he executed two flights at an altitude of seventy-five feet in a one-half-mile circuit; and

WHEREAS: As a first lieutenant in the aviation section of the Signal Corps in World War I, Mars trained soldiers to fly and later built an airport in West Chester, New York; and;

WHEREAS: On May 21, 2010, Arkansas proudly celebrates the centennial of the Fort Smith Museum of History, and its latest exhibit, *The Fort in Flight: Bud Mars and the City's Aviation History*, which opens in the Boyd Gallery, on the 100th anniversary of the first airplane flight in Arkansas;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MIKE BEEBE, Governor of the State of Arkansas, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of Arkansas, do hereby proclaim May 21, 2010, as

JAMES “BUD” MARS DAY


across the State, and I urge my fellow citizens to recognize the important contributions to aviation in the Natural State and the Nation made by Bud Mars.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Arkansas to be affixed this 19th day of April in the year of our Lord 2010.





MIKE BEEBE, GOVERNOR



CHARLIE DANIELS, SECRETARY OF STATE