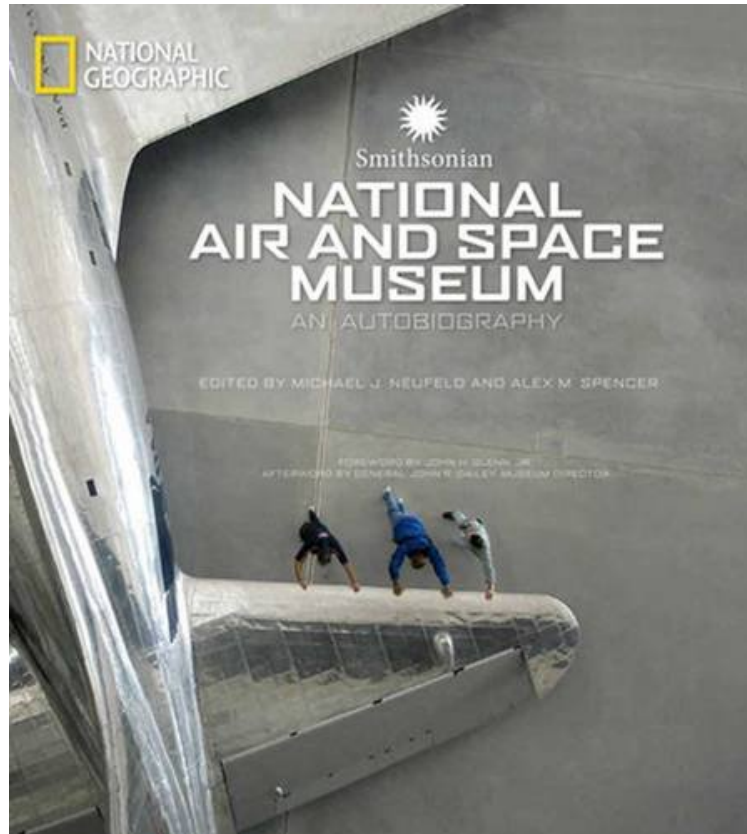


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## Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum: An Autobiography

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**From National Geographic : Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum: An Autobiography** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum: An Autobiography:

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Designed to convey the awe of a visitor first walking into the world's largest showplace of aviation history, this Autobiography headlines the incredible collections, both on view and behind the scenes, of the Smithsonian National

Air and Space Museum. The official story and insiders' tales of the museum are shared by its curators, the people who know it best. Spectacular photography and fascinating backstage glimpses show off the jaw-dropping collection, including well-known and beloved artifacts like Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis and the Apollo 11 command module, as well as rare treasures not displayed to the public. For aircraft and spaceflight enthusiasts, for readers interested in science and technology, and for all who admire the civil and military legacy of aviation, Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum: An Autobiography will be a welcome adventure.

.com From Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum: An Autobiography Click on the images or captions below to open larger versions. This photograph, perhaps the most famous in aviation history, was taken at about 10:35 on the morning of December 17, 1903. It shows the world's first airplane taking off for the first time. Orville Wright is piloting the machine, while Wilbur runs along beside. (Smithsonian Institute, p. 101) U.S. Air Mail pilot William C. "Wild Bill" Hopson strikes a cocky pose before a flight from Omaha to Chicago in 1921. Hopson earned a reputation for disobeying Post Office flight regulations. (Smithsonian Institute, p. 117) The Aquabelles from the New York World's Fair of 1939 and Army Air Corps officers pose on the wing of Boeing's experimental XB-15 bomber. (Smithsonian Institute, p. 157) Robert Goddard shows off one of his A-series rockets in front of his workshop in Roswell, New Mexico, in the mid-1930s. He gave the Smithsonian a rocket almost identical to this one in 1935. (Smithsonian Institute, p. 174) Three U.S. military rockets stand on display before the Smithsonian Institution's Arts and Industries Building, circa 1960. In those days, the area outside the museum building became known as Rocket Row. (National Air and Space Museum, p. 198) The Rutan SpaceShipOne is in the museum's collection. (Dane A. Penland, p. 266) Not designed to be disassembled, the B-29 Enola Gay posed interesting problems during restoration, which took more than 300,000 man-hours. (National Air and Space Museum Collections Management, p. 362) Nearly a decade after its opening, almost 200 aircraft can be viewed each day at the Boeing Hangar. (National Air and Space Museum Collections Management, p. 368) From BooklistThe most popular museum in the U.S. has a pedigree in flight extending back to the Civil War's observation balloons, a history this volume celebrates. Written by staffers of the National Air and Space Museum, it naturally covers bureaucratic evolution and the institution's installations for collecting, storing, restoring, and displaying its artifacts. Saluting various museum personnel such as former curator Paul Garber, who obtained such icons as the Spirit of St. Louis, and astronaut Michael Collins, who administered construction of the present museum building in Washington, D.C., the writers also confront problems the institution has experienced. Readers can return to the controversy the museum provoked by its 1995 display of the Enola Gay, and to a contretemps that so outraged Orville Wright that he withheld the history-making 1903 airplane from the museum (which did eventually acquire it). Informative as this work's text is, visuals are its preeminent value: with about 700 color and black-and-white photographs, it will absorb aviation browsers and could well incite pilgrimages to the museum. What more could a collection developer ask for? --Gilbert Taylor "Informative as this work's text is, visuals are its preeminent value: with about 700 color and black-and-white photographs, it will absorb aviation browsers and could well incite pilgrimages to the museum." --Booklist"The most popular museum in the U.S. has a pedigree in flight extending back to the Civil War's observation balloons, a history this volume celebrates." --Booklist