

# Main Airport Road Renamed Dee Howard Way



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San Antonio today honored aviation pioneer Dee Howard, who died in 2009, by renaming Terminal Drive, the road that connects US 281 to the Airport, Dee Howard Way in his honor, 1200 WOAI news reports.

"To start out with an eight grade education as an auto mechanic and then become an aviation mechanic, and then go on from there to build Howard Aero, which had a thousand employees," recalled long time friend Wayne Fagin, who is the former general counsel for the Dee Howard Company. "And just to prove it was no fluke what he did the first time, he turned and created the Dee Howard Company."

Howard built the massive orange hangars which are a landmark at San Antonio International for his airplane retrofitting business.

Fagin joked that after Howard received a \$90 million contract to retrofit the King of Saudi Arabia's personal 747 aircraft, Dee Howard Company had no hangars, and the contract specified that the work had to be done in a hangar.

So Howard came to San Antonio and with the help of then County Commissioner Mike Novak, he built the first hangar to house the King's plane.

Howard is legendary in the aviation business. He invented the thrust reverser, which allowed private business jets, like Lear Jets, to land without parachutes to slow them on the runway.

Howard Aero was started in a shed at Stinson Field in 1947, and Howard built it into one of the dominant aviation companies in the country, turning old World War Two aircraft into corporate transportation vehicles.

After selling Howard Aero, then building and selling Dee Howard Company, Howard started a third company, River City Products, which built steering systems for trucks and recreational vehicles.

Howard also personally restored dozens of classic cars.

Fagin recalled why Howard decided to go into business in the first place, after a successful career as an aviation mechanic so skilled, he was exempted from active duty service during World War Two to help maintain the Army Air Corps Fleet of planes.

"Because he wanted to spend half of his time providing for his employees and his family, and the other half of his time being creative and innovative."

Read more: <http://www.woai.com/articles/woai-local-news-119078/main-airport-road-renamed-dee-howard-11349317/#ixzz326iNTjWk>