



Mike I returns in new exhibit

Museum of Natural Science opens first of many new sections

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Published: Monday, February 9, 2004

Updated: Monday, December 29, 2008

When guests visit the LSU Museum of Natural Science, they might not expect to find the actual remains of the original Mike the Tiger.

The addition of the new exhibit comes as part of the Museum's new theme this year to bridge the gap between research and exhibits to serve the community.

Sophie Warny, assistant director of education at the Museum, was responsible for putting together the renovation to Mike's exhibit.

"We wanted to find something that was interesting to the kids and something that the fans could enjoy," Warny said.

The new exhibit features pictures of all five Mikes with blurbs and fun facts about each tiger. There also are flip panels with questions and answers for kids to enjoy.

Along with the new panel, the actual skull from Mike I is in a display case adjacent to the real stuffed Mike which was completed shortly after his death in 1956.

The exhibit was completed in December, just before Christmas, after about a year of work.

"An interactive educational experience was what we wanted for the kids who visit the museum," Warny said.

Once a month the Museum has "Special Saturday" where kids from local community schools come and view the exhibits.

Ashley Hamlin, who works with public relations at the Museum Education department, was enthusiastic about the new exhibit.

"I think it looks great," Hamlin said. "It brings you back to the importance of LSU. It's part of our history."

The skull was included so people can see the morphological features, Warny said. The museum wanted to combine history with natural science facts.

In addition to the Mike the Tiger exhibit, visitors can view zebras, polar bears, monkeys and many other exotic animals.

The Mike the Tiger exhibit is the first of a new line of exhibits to be added to the Museum.

New interactive panels for dioramas and the "Hall of Birds", along with a brand new exhibit featuring Antarctic dinosaurs will be added to the Museum during the next year.

Funding for the exhibit came from the Irine W. and C.B. Pennington Foundation and other donations.

"We hope this new exhibit will excite the kids and get people more interested in the Museum, because not a lot of people know about it," Warny said.

The Museum of Natural Science is located in 119 Foster Hall. It is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.



PAIGE O'NEILL / The Reveille
INTERACTIVE MIKE: The new Mike the Tiger exhibit at the LSU Museum of Natural Science provides visitors with a look at all of the past tigers the University has seen. John Thomas, an English junior, lifts one of the informa