



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Historic Yavapai Observation Station to be rededicated at Grand Canyon National Park

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – The National Park Service will rededicate the historic Yavapai Observation Station and unveil new geology exhibits on Thursday, May 24, at 3:00 p.m.

The rededication ceremony will take place outside the Yavapai Observation Station, located at Yavapai Point on the South Rim in Grand Canyon National Park. In addition to Park Superintendent Steve Martin, featured guest speakers will include Lynn Scarlett, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior, and George H. Billingsley, Geologist, U.S. Geological Survey.

Originally named the Yavapai Point Trailside Museum, this structure was first dedicated in July, 1928. Inspired by the work of Mary Elizabeth Jane Colter, architect Herbert C. Maier designed the building to blend into its setting and used indigenous Kaibab limestone and ponderosa pine in its construction. Built for the purpose of observing and understanding Grand Canyon geology, its site was selected by a team of geologists led by John C. Merriam, who was also instrumental in securing grant funding for the project from the American Association of Museums' Laura Spelman Rockerfeller Memorial Fund. An exhibit is dedicated to these early leaders, whose vision encouraged the cooperative funding and philanthropic efforts that brought this building to fruition.

The rehabilitation of this structure and the design of the exhibits is a Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act project, with funding coming directly from park entrance fees. In addition, cooperation between many private and government entities allowed the new exhibits to be designed and installed. Building reconstruction included roof replacement, stone work, replacement of log vigas and beams, replacement of exterior lighting with preservation of night sky conforming fixtures, installation of more efficient interior lighting, installation of a fire detection and sprinkler system, a complete asphalt renovation around the building, and much needed accessibility improvements.

The new exhibits, consistent with the vision of the building's original designers to "make the out-of-doors intelligible," focus on the geologic story of the Grand Canyon. The exhibits allow visitors to experience, intellectually and emotionally, the powerful geologic processes still at work in the canyon and also encourage visitors to seek out canyon resources on their own. Exhibits explain the deposition of the rock layers, the uplift of the Colorado Plateau, and the carving of Grand Canyon. In addition, a discussion of time allows visitors to gain a comprehension of almost two billion years of Earth's history, intangible yet vital to understanding geology.

Displays include beautifully crafted artwork, powerful photographs, and interpretive text which allow park visitors to see and understand the complicated geologic story in ways that all can understand. Visitors can view a video of river footage which explains erosion, rock movement, and sedimentation. A computer-enhanced movie of plateau building and sea encroachment displays millions of years of geological events in less than thirty seconds.

"We are extremely excited about the renovation of Yavapai Observation Station, along with the new exhibits that tell the story of Grand Canyon's geology", stated Steve Martin, park superintendent. "This is but the first step, as we continue to forge opportunities for connections between our park visitors and the incredible Grand Canyon."

Yavapai Observation Station currently is closed to allow for the installation of the exhibits. The building reopens to the public on May 12, at 8:00 a.m. The National Park Service invites visitors

to attend the rededication event at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 24. Photographs from the rededication ceremony will be posted on the park's website at http://www.nps.gov/grca/parknews/20070524yav_rededication.htm following the event.

For more information on Grand Canyon National Park and available programs and events, please visit the park's website or call 928-638-7888.

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Editors Note: In the event of foul weather the rededication ceremony will be held in the Shrine of the Ages, located adjacent to Park Headquarters on the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park.