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U.S. Department of the Interior

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Grand Canyon News Release

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New Waysides Bring Story of Grand Canyon's Bright Angel Pueblo to Life

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – Grand Canyon National Park staff recently completed installation of five, new, wayside exhibit panels at Bright Angel Pueblo, an archeological site located within the inner canyon at the mouth of Bright Angel Creek, directly adjacent to Phantom Ranch.

The new exhibit panels share the story of the Ancestral Puebloan people who once lived in the Grand Canyon and surrounding area. Here, they built their homes, raised their families, and lived their lives, hunting, farming and collecting foods, and trading with other communities in the area.



Inner canyon visitors enjoy the new wayside exhibits at Bright Angel Pueblo.
NPS Photo

According to Grand Canyon exhibit specialist Jennie Albrinck, creating the exhibits at this site was, "...essential to interpreting the human history of the Grand Canyon. Its proximity to Phantom Ranch and the Kaibab Trail, make it easily accessible to inner canyon hikers, mule riders and people on river trips. It was a perfect opportunity to share the story of the ancestral Puebloan peoples who lived here 900 – 1000 years ago."

Modern Puebloan peoples such as the Hopi of Arizona and the Zuni and Rio Grande tribes of New Mexico are the descendents of these early residents of the Grand Canyon area, and their oral histories and traditions are often used by archeologists as a starting point for understanding the meanings of the artifacts they find at sites like Bright Angel Pueblo.

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Says park Vanishing Treasures archeologist Ian Hough: “Understanding the inhabitants of the pueblo and their culture allows for connections between the experiences of long ago and the experiences of today.” The exhibits are intended to help foster these connections for inner canyon visitors.

Today, the Grand Canyon holds deep cultural and spiritual connections for at least eleven Native American tribes. As a result, tribal consultation played a significant role in the exhibit planning and design process.

Hopi cultural resources consultant Lyle J. Balehquah joined park staff in researching, planning and writing the text for the exhibits. The panels were then designed by Buchheit Creative Services and fabricated by Northern Arizona Signs. Installation of the panels was recently completed by park staff from the divisions of Interpretation and Resource Education, Facilities Management, and Science and Resource Management.

Visitors interested in seeing the exhibit are reminded that due to the long distances involved, the steep and rugged terrain, and the seasonally hot and desert-like conditions in the inner canyon, day trips to the bottom of the canyon and back are strongly discouraged. To learn more about how to plan an overnight trip to Phantom Ranch or the Bright Angel Campground, please visit our web site at www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/.

To learn more about this exhibit and its planning and design, please contact Jennie Albrinck, Exhibit Specialist at 928-638-7639.

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