



Petrified Forest

The official newspaper
of Petrified Forest
National Park
Issue no. 2004



The Painted Desert Inn National Historic Landmark

Painted Desert Inn Rehabilitation Project

After reading the fascinating history of the Painted Desert Inn, you may want to visit this nationally significant historic site. However, you may discover the Inn closed during a rehabilitation project. We are sorry that you will be unable to tour the building, but we hope that you will share our excitement for this long overdue project.

Structural problems started in the 1930s with noticeable damage occurring throughout the building by 1950. Damage included large separation and settlement cracks as well as leaking roofs and downspouts that caused severe water damage to the interior. The building was nearly demolished in 1965 and again in 1975. In the mid-1970s, the building was listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. The Inn became a National Historic Landmark in 1987. Although the Inn was not demolished, it was essentially abandoned as a business between 1963 and 1990, except for periodic seasonal events.

The first major rehabilitation project was undertaken in 1980. Despite the park's efforts, Painted Desert Inn was listed as a "Damaged and Threatened National Historic Landmark" in 1988 and 1989. This spawned further rehabilitation work between 1988 and 1990. The Inn was finally reopened to the general public in 1990.

Painted Desert Inn is still in need of major rehabilitation. In 2004 we will begin a full rehabilitation to repair many of the building's structural problems and provide better visitor services. Rehabilitation will include new wiring, plumbing, and security systems; plaster repair and painting; refinishing all floors; installing new public bathrooms; repairing damaged beams;



Winter at the Painted Desert Inn Museum.

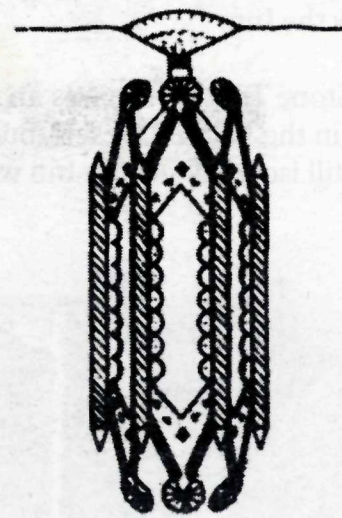
providing an accessible entrance into the building; re-grading around the perimeter of the building and relaying flagstone courtyards for proper drainage. Eventually, we also hope to restore the Lunch Room, Trade Room, and at least one Guest Room as it appeared in 1948.

Even though the problems that afflict the Inn present struggles for the National Park Service, we are committed to its preservation. In many ways these problems contribute to the overall love and appreciation we have for Painted Desert Inn, the park's National Historic Landmark.

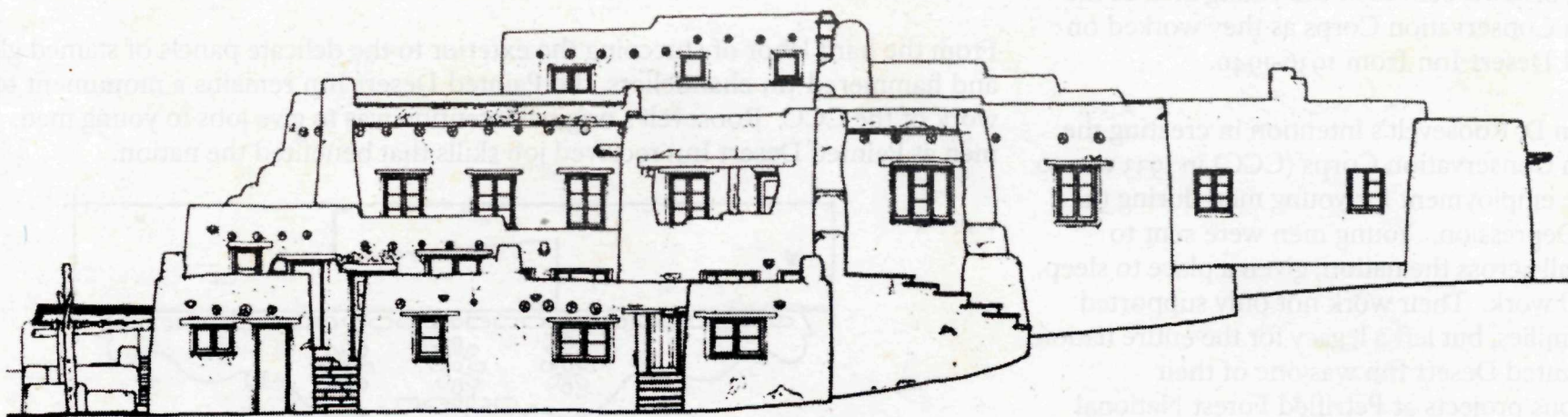
What's Inside?

- 1...Rehabilitation Project
- 2...The Stone Tree House
Civilian Conservation Corps
Route 66 - Echoes of the Past
- 3...The Harvey Girls
Hopi Heritage - Fred Kabotie
Frequent Visitor - Roadrunner
- 4...The Wild in Wilderness
What is the National Register
What is a National Historic
Landmark

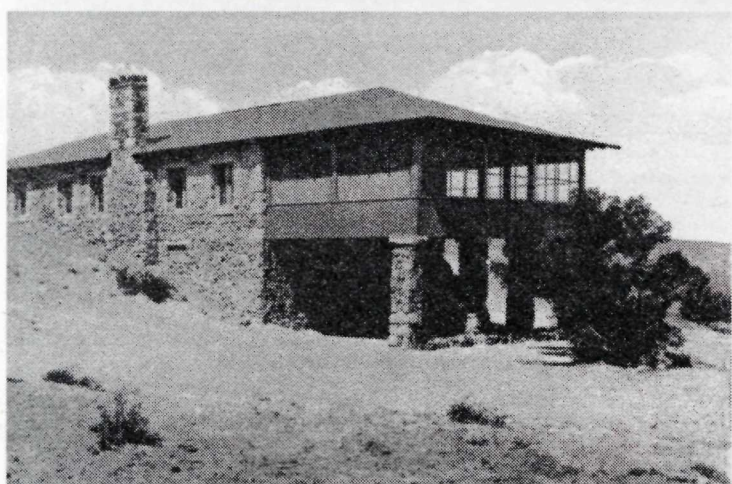
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Ranger Room Light Fixture, CCC



Painted Desert Inn Museum and National Historic Landmark



The Stone Tree House

The Painted Desert Inn was the vision of Herbert David Lore, a local business man. He constructed the two-story Inn on a high perch overlooking the Painted Desert by 1924. The Inn was nicknamed the *Stone Tree House* due to the petrified wood used in its construction, a tangible tie to the landscape.

For almost twelve years, Lore operated the Inn as a tourist attraction. Visitors could eat meals in the lunchroom, purchase Native American arts and crafts, and enjoy a cool drink in the downstairs taproom. Rooms were available for two to four dollars per night. Lore also gave two-hour motor car tours through the Black Forest in the Painted Desert below the Inn.

The Stone Tree House was an oasis in the Painted Desert, but it was still isolated. As the Inn was

not connected to electrical lines, a shop containing a lighting-plant supplied electricity. Water was hauled from Adamana, ten miles south on the Puerco River. After all his efforts, Lore began to consider selling his property.

In 1932, the National Monument expanded with the addition of 53,300 acres of the Painted Desert, not including Lore's property. In 1931, Lore had expressed an interest in selling or exchanging his property "in order that it could be preserved and protected." It wasn't until four years later that Petrified Forest National Monument purchased the Stone Tree House and four sections of land for \$59,400.

The Stone Tree House has evolved over the decades. Although the original design has been altered, the Inn still survives as a testimony to one man's vision in a landscape of exceptional beauty.



The Civilian Conservation Corps

Near the Painted Desert Inn, listen closely. You may still hear the ringing of hammers and the rasping of saws, echoes of the young men of the Civilian Conservation Corps as they worked on Painted Desert Inn from 1936-1940.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's intention in creating the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933 was to provide employment for young men during the Great Depression. Young men were sent to camps all across the nation, given a place to sleep, eat, and work. Their work not only supported their families, but left a legacy for the entire nation. The Painted Desert Inn was one of their numerous projects at Petrified Forest National Park.

Route 66 - Echoes of the Past

Traces of an old roadbed and weathered telephone poles mark the path of the famous "Main Street of America" as it passed through Petrified Forest National Park, the only park in the National Park System that contains a section of Route 66. From Chicago to Los Angeles, this heavily traveled highway was not only a road, but it stood as a symbol of opportunity, adventure and exploration to travelers.

A trip from Middle America to the Coast could take about a week - no Interstate speeds here! For many, the journey was not just across miles; it was across cultures and life styles — from the modest to the exotic. Of course getting to your destination was important, but the trip itself was a reward. From the neon signs of one-of-a-kind motels to burgers and chicken fried steaks in the multitude of restaurants, from

the filling stations that served as miniature oases to gaudy tourist traps, these more than 2,200 miles of open road were magical.

Driving West on Route 66 — in the heart of the Painted Desert — one could see the pink edifice glimmering in the clear air. After long hours of travel, here was a special place to take a break. Here was a welcome stop and rest; to stretch your legs, to sip a cold drink and admire the view. The Painted Desert Inn welcomed all with an air of hospitality and allure.

"It winds from Chicago to L. A., More than two thousand miles all the way.

Get your kicks on Route Sixty-six!"

(From the Tune - Route 66 by Bobby Troup)

Gaze down the long road... and listen. You may hear echoes of the past - echoes of Route 66.

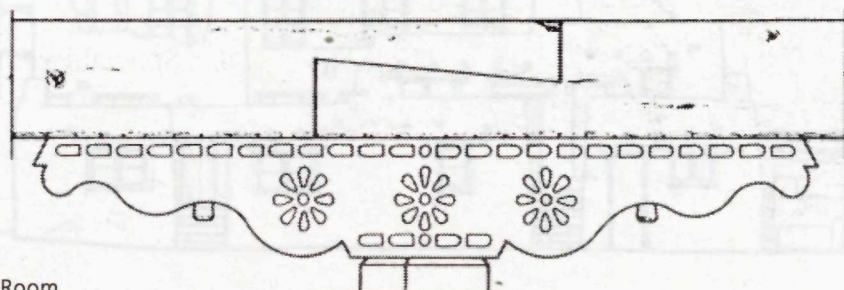


Original park entrance station, 1940s

After the National Park Service bought the Inn from Herbert Lore in 1936, architect Lyle Bennett produced designs for a building that blended into the rolling red hills of the Painted Desert. The excessive cost of using outside contractors led to the decision to use CCC labor for construction of the building. The enrollees received training in carpentry, electrical, masonry, and stone quarrying.

Through the cold of winter and the heat of summer, the boys put in electrical wires, plumbing, and a heating system. Guest rooms, a new entryway, restrooms, a dining room, and a shaded porch were built as additions to the original structure. The construction of the Painted Desert Inn took three years, employing hundreds of young men in the process. The men were sent home with many new skills including construction methods and the use of hand tools.

From the hard labor of stuccoing the exterior to the delicate panels of stained glass and hammered-tin chandeliers, the Painted Desert Inn remains a monument to the work of the CCC. Roosevelt's original intention was to give jobs to young men. The men at Painted Desert Inn received job skills that benefited the nation.



Decor in Dining Room

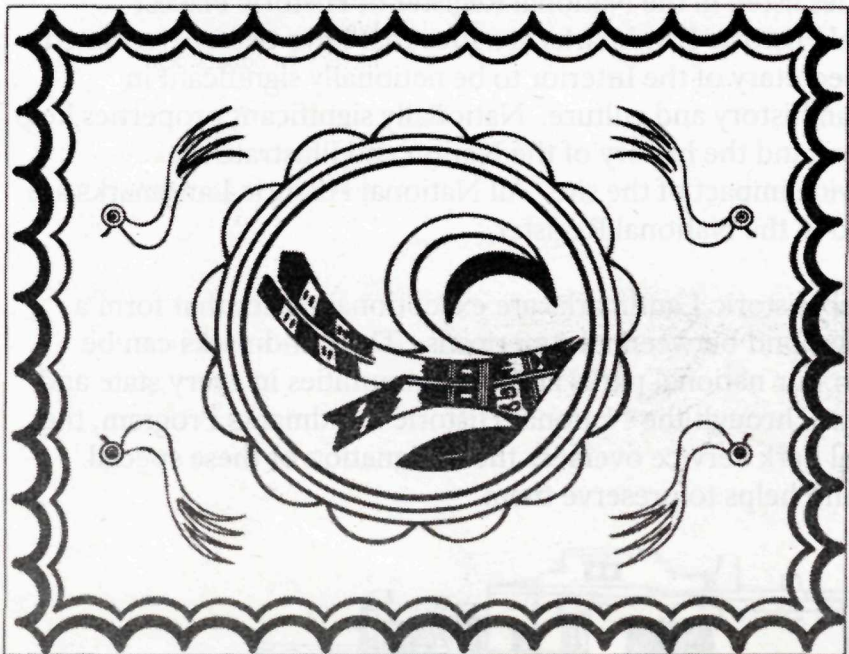


The Harvey Girls

Take yourself back into the past to when you left home for the first time. That sense of adventure, that exhilarating feeling of being free. That feeling must have grasped the hearts of many a young woman in the early 1900's when Fred Harvey was building a legend. Harvey envisioned his restaurants as being the most refined restaurants in the West. Upset by the rowdiness of the boys he hired as waiters, Harvey turned to a more civil group of people. In response to newspaper ads for young, unmarried women, Harvey soon had many girls ready for all the excitement, freedom, and adventure he could offer.

Harvey brought his legendary "Harvey Girls" to the Painted Desert Inn at the Petrified Forest. The company officially took over management of the Inn in 1947. Harvey Girls carried out the "Harvey Way," serving complete meals in the dining room on spotless china, leaving no customer unsatisfied with any part of the service. Harvey Girls were also a sight for many a sore eye at the counter in the next room, where a hot and tired traveler could order drinks, shakes, or even a banana split for a hefty 30 cents!

Fred Harvey built the foundations for a legend when he began the restaurants that revolutionized Western travel. But the real legend began almost by accident after one too many of his waiters came to work drunk and ready to fight. The Harvey Girls stood on the foundation that Harvey built and did something that nobody at the time expected of women. They built a legend that could touch the sky. Today, the voices of those Harvey Girls echo within the walls of the Painted Desert Inn, in harmony with the voices of so many others who are a part of the ongoing story of this fascinating building.



One of the skylight panel designs

Hopi Heritage at the Painted Desert Inn

You came to Petrified Forest National Park to see the colorful badlands and a fossilized forest. Will it surprise you to also see the murals of a famous Hopi artist? Within the Painted Desert Inn are beautiful murals, the work of Fred Kabotie.

In 1948, the Painted Desert Inn was the park's northern headquarters, featuring a shop and restaurant operated by the Fred Harvey Company. The Company's architect and interior designer, Mary Colter, was in charge of a remodeling project. She hired Mr. Kabotie to paint murals in two rooms. His murals reflect the Hopi ties to this region.

The lunch room features the painting of a Buffalo Dance, a ceremony performed in January for good hunting and snow. This dance may have taken place in the plaza at Puerco Pueblo as it does in the Hopi villages of today.

The mood changes as you enter the dining room. Several murals are painted on the walls in a style that you might have seen in a kiva (a ceremonial room), featuring many important Hopi symbols including corn, rain, eagles, and the sacred peaks near Flagstaff. The mural on the east wall tells the story of two young Hopi men as they walk some 230 miles round trip from their home to collect salt from a lake near the Zuni pueblo. It was not only a physical

journey; it is a sacred journey. According to Mr. Kabotie they walked right through what is now Petrified Forest National Park.

The murals tie together the Ancestral Pueblo people of the region, the Hopi people of the 1940s and today. While the Painted Desert Inn gained the status of National Historic Landmark primarily due to its architecture, the murals of Fred Kabotie made a significant impact on the nomination. The murals offer life within the quiet rooms of the Inn.



Murals by Fred Kabotie

A Frequent Visitor to the Painted Desert Inn

Few creatures symbolize the Southwest better than the greater roadrunner, *Geococcyx californianus*. Their speedy excursions, handsome appearance, and lizard hunting prowess have made them a favorite subject in folklore, oral traditions, and even cartoons. At Petrified Forest National Park, one roadrunner has made the Painted Desert Inn a favorite haunt, allowing visitors and staff alike a rare opportunity to enjoy the antics of this remarkable bird.

The roadrunner is built for speed with long legs and a sleek body. Speed is necessary because it is one of the few birds in the cuckoo family with a terrestrial lifestyle. The roadrunner rarely flies but is frequently seen strolling casually or racing full speed after prey. At the Painted Desert Inn, the neighborhood roadrunner is commonly seen with the prizes of its hunting forays. It has caught many lizards and at least a couple of mice. These have been flaunted by the roadrunner at the big picture windows of the Inn to the delight of the visiting public. In addition to lizards and mice, roadrunners will eat centipedes, scorpions, tarantulas, horned lizards, snakes and even fruit and berries, on occasion.

The roadrunner has a bit of domesticity in its character. It will pair for life and will maintain a territory. Both male and female raise the young. A pair will spend weeks tirelessly tending their chicks. They are careful and nurturing parents, not only providing food but almost always staying long enough to ensure that the meal they provide can be safely swallowed by the chick.

There is no question that the roadrunner is among the most fascinating of Petrified Forest National Park's amazing creatures. Spend some time at Painted Desert Inn and you may be one of the fortunate ones that will capture a glimpse into the life of this unusual and entertaining bird.

The Wild in Wilderness

The Painted Desert Inn perches on the rim of the Painted Desert, taking advantage of a spectacular view of the red landscape as seen from Kachina Point. This very same landscape that inspired the location of the Painted Desert Inn, however, nearly resulted in its destruction.

Originally built by Herbert Lore in 1924, the Painted Desert Inn provided an oasis of civilization in the midst of a vast wilderness. Weary travelers journeying to the Painted Desert by train and car found a convenient spot to refresh themselves after a long trip.

The National Park Service purchased Lore's property in 1936. Only 12 years after its construction, the Inn was already succumbing to the forces of the wilderness. The original walls of the building were unstable, due to Lore's construction methods and the expanding and contracting bentonite clay seam beneath the Inn. This problem continued to plague the Inn during its renovation by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the years 1937-1940 and has caused the major cracks presently seen in the walls of the Inn.

The designation of the Painted Desert Wilderness area in 1970 posed the final challenge to the Painted Desert Inn. Virtually abandoned after the completion of the new Painted Desert Headquarters complex in 1963, the Inn was slated for demolition in 1975. The superintendent of Petrified Forest National Park wrote that the inn "serve[d] as a subtle but constant reminder to the wilderness hiker of a man-made intrusion being visible from almost any portion of the desert." Fortunately, not everyone agreed. In October 1975, the Painted Desert Inn was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its presence on the rim of the Painted Desert provides a striking contrast to the wilderness area just below and reminds us that we are fortunate to have access to both civilization and wilderness.



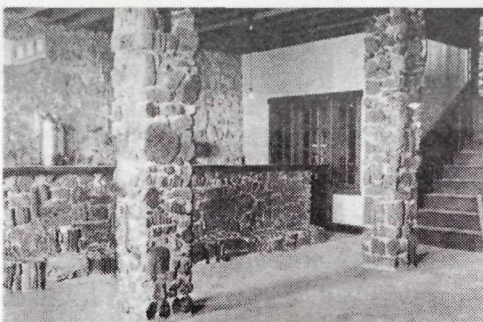
Painted Desert Inn, late 1940s

What is the National Register of Historic Places?

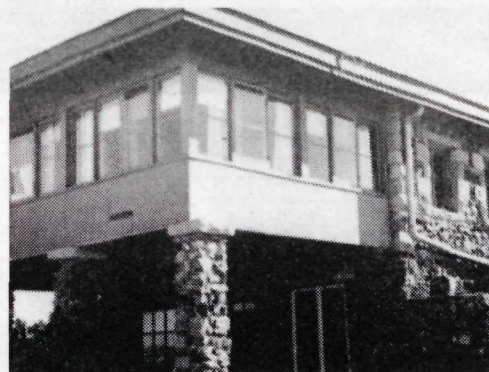
Did you know that there are nearly 77,000 listings on the National Register of Historic Places? The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archaeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. Do you have any Historic Places in your hometown that are on the National Register?

The Painted Desert Inn was listed on the Register in 1975, becoming a National Historic Landmark in 1987.

Interiors and Detailsof the Painted Desert Inn



Before 1935, Lore's Painted Desert Inn had petrified wood throughout the downstairs and the lower exterior.



Lore had many windows overlooking the painted Desert, protected by fashionable striped shades on sunny days.



The curio shop during the late 1940s into the 1950s offered many souvenirs.



The dining room during Fred Harvey era still featured furniture by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).



Fireplaces in the guest rooms after the late 1930s were based on the Pueblo ovens of the Southwest.



The late 1940s decorations on the back of the lunch room stools were based on the handpainted panels of the CCC skylight in the curio room.



What is a National Historic Landmark?

More than 2,300 sites on the National Register of Historic Places have been designated as National Historic Landmarks. National Historic Landmarks make tangible the American experience. They are places where significant historical events occurred, where prominent Americans worked or lived, that represent those ideas that shaped the nation, that provide important information about our past, or that are outstanding examples of design or construction. Mount Vernon, Pearl Harbor, the Apollo Mission Control Center, Alcatraz, and the Martin Luther King Birthplace in Atlanta, Georgia are Landmarks that illustrate important contributions to the Nation's historical development.

How are National Historic Landmarks different from other historic properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places? National Historic Landmarks are sites that have been determined by the Secretary of the Interior to be nationally significant in American history and culture. Nationally significant properties help us understand the history of the Nation and illustrate the nationwide impact of the site. All National Historic Landmarks are included in the National Register.

National Historic Landmarks are exceptional places that form a common bond between all Americans. The Landmarks can be found in our national parks and in communities in every state and territory. Through the National Historic Landmarks Program, the National Park Service oversees the designation of these special places and helps to preserve them.

