PROJECT: **Rehabilitate the Yavapai Observation Station**

LOCATION: South Rim, Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona

SIZE: 2,500 SF **DATE:** 2001-2006

ROLE: Project manager for Historic Structure Report, schematic design, construction documents, and rehabilitation construction.

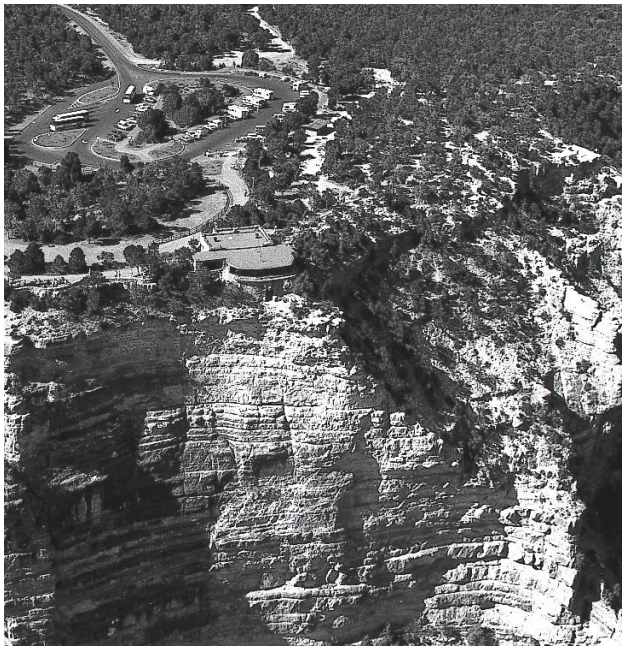
DESCRIPTION:

Herbert C. Maier designed the Yavapai Observation Station in 1927. The building demonstrates the concept of "organic architecture". Maier intended the outside of the museum to blend with the adjoining natural features. He used design elements such as native rock masonry, a roof support system of vigas and a flat roofline that suggests comparison with Anasazi pueblos from over 800 years ago. The original structure featured an open terrace facing the canyon. This kept with Maier's wish to give park visitors the opportunity to better connect with the canyon. For functional reasons, the Park enclosed the terrace in 1953.

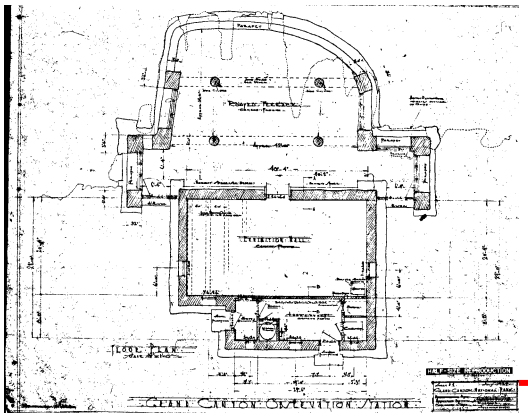
Constructed in 1928, the Observation Station sits at the very edge of the south rim of the Grand Canyon. This carefully chosen site provides one of perhaps three points along the south rim where the inner canyon can be seen. This feature is vital to the building's function as the place to educate visitors about the geological creation of the Grand Canyon.

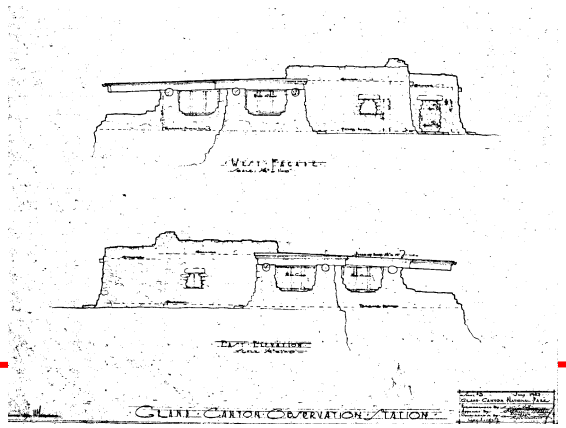
The rehabilitation project faced the challenge of retaining/restoring Maier's original intent while creating a facility to meet 21st century visitor expectations. Additionally the project entailed a very tight construction schedule to minimize the duration of the building's closure.

The initial step in the project was the production of the historic structure report (HSR). The HSR presented the building's history, documentation of its physical evolution over time and its 2003condition and deficiencies. The design and construction work has included: removal and replacement of the roofing system with new flashing, drains and scuppers; repair/replacement of badly deteriorated log vigas, tuck pointing native stone masonry; restoration of historic exterior doors including replacement hardware and weatherstripping; restore/repair of windows and openings; repaint interior and exterior trim/woodwork; remove carpets and restore original patterned concrete floors; upgrade electrical, HVAC & fire sprinkler systems. This project did not reopen the terrace, but did provide structural upgrades that will allow a planned reopening of the terrace under a future project.

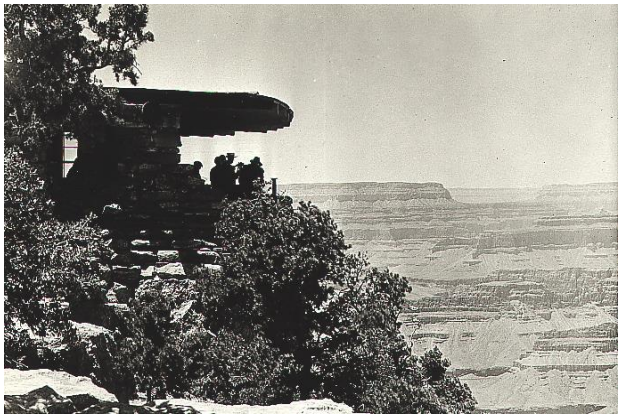


Aerial view showing Yavapai Observation Station location directly on the South Rim of Grand Canyon.





1927 construction drawings.



1930s view of the east elevation showing the open observation terrace. The terrace was enclosed with glass in 1953.

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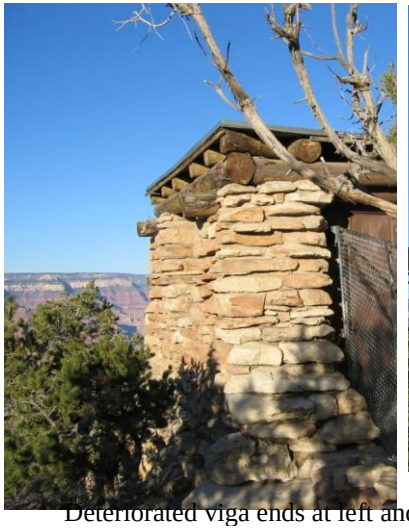
View of restored patterned concrete floor.



Deteriorated viga ends at left and after rehabilitation work at right.

1930s interior view near west entrance with the patterned concrete floor.

Yavapai Observation Station- new plywood roof deck in place, installation of conduit concealed within roof structure under way.

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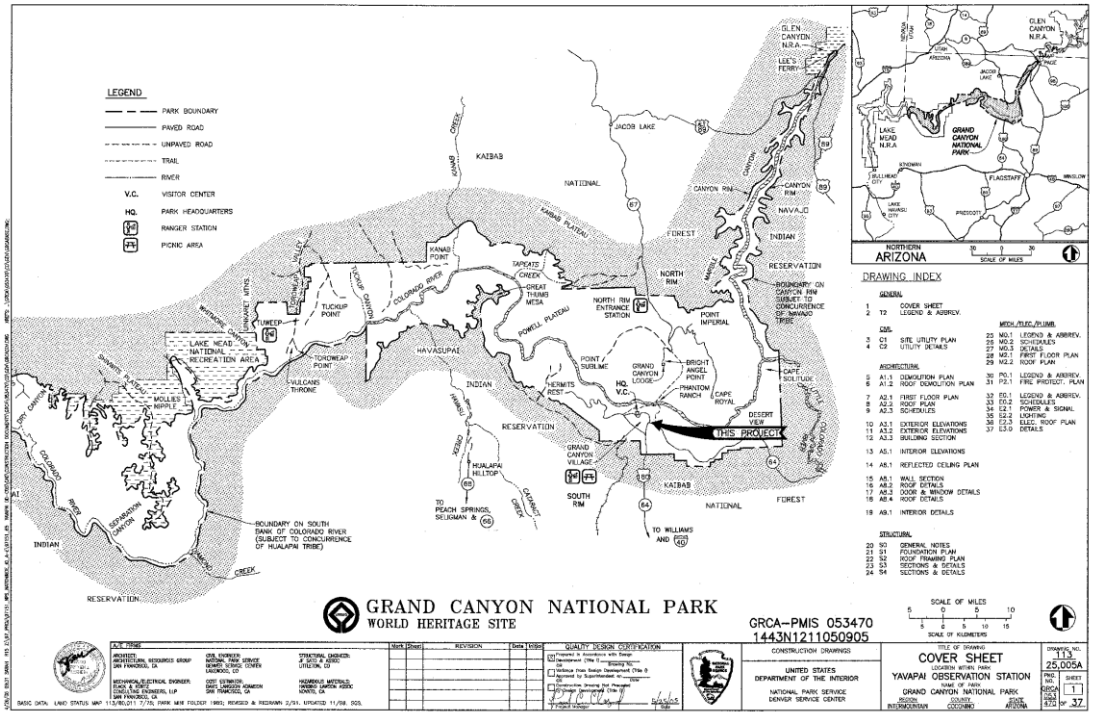

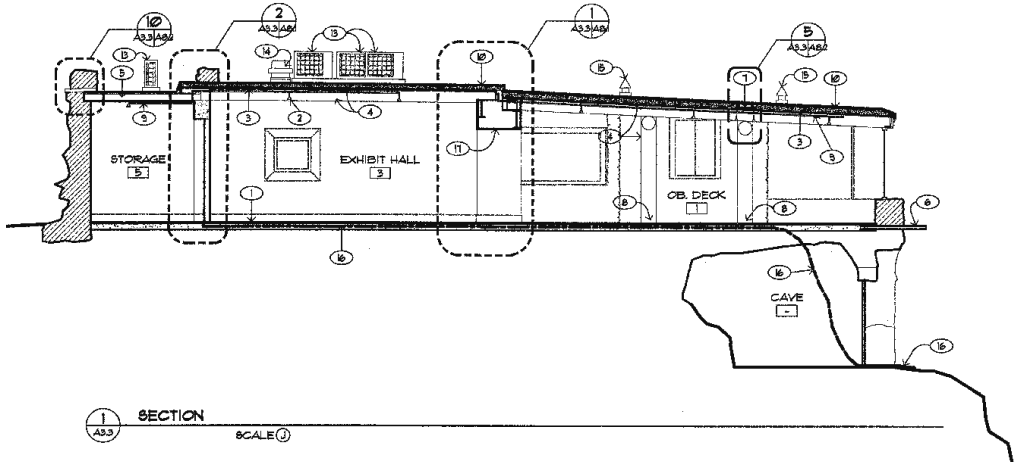

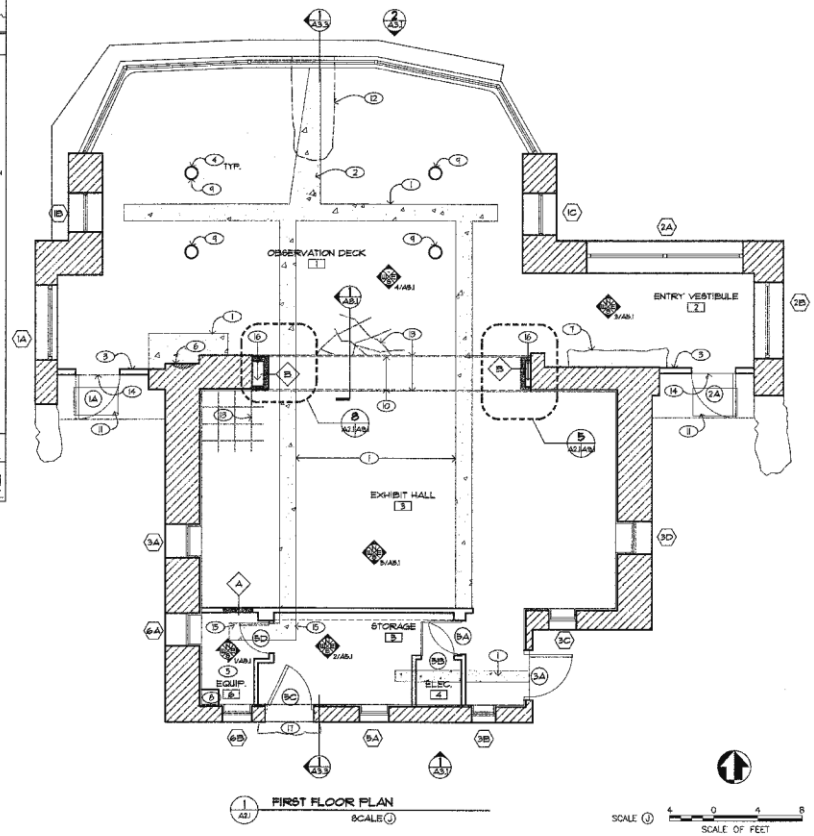

Yavapai Observation Station: Rehabilitation design building section and floor plan.