

NEWS



Forest Service

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Department of
Agriculture*

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**Inyo
National Forest**

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The Mt. Whitney Hut Celebrates 100 Years

The small, stone shelter on the summit of Mount Whitney, located in Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks, is 100 years old on August 27 of this year. The Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association, in partnership with the Inyo National Forest and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks, will be hosting a small public celebration of this Centennial event.

The Celebration will take place on Thursday August 27 at 10:00 a.m., at the Whitney Portal Day Use Area. Whitney Portal is located 13 miles west of Lone Pine at the end of Whitney Portal Road. Parking is limited so carpooling is highly recommended.

The Mt. Whitney Hut, more formally known as the Mount Whitney Smithsonian Institution Shelter, was originally built for storage and shelter in support of scientific studies of the planet Mars. Dr. William W. Campbell of California's Lick Observatory was instrumental in its design, construction, and initial use. Key support for the shelter came from Dr. Charles Abbot of the Smithsonian Institution and Professor Alexander G. McAdie of the US Weather Bureau. Construction funds were provided by the Smithsonian's "Thomas G. Hodgkins Fund."

Interestingly the summit of Mt. Whitney was set aside in 1883 as a military reservation, in part to support meteorological studies; the Weather Bureau was then a part of the War Department. In 1904 the land was transferred to the Interior Department and in 1926 it was added to Sequoia National Park. In 1977 the Mount Whitney Smithsonian Institution Shelter was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

During its centennial summer of 2009, recognition is extended to all who have hiked to the summit and seen the shelter. Special appreciation is being noted for the services of construction foreman Gustave F. Marsh, his crew, and the citizens of Inyo County whose support was key to seeing that the shelter was built in time for the 1909 observations of Mars.

For more information about the Celebration and to RSVP, please contact KC Wylie at the InterAgency Visitor Center, 760-876-6214 or kwylie@fs.fed.us.

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