**Verde Canyon Railroad Depot:**

**A Fresh Look to Showcase History and Culture**

**Sedona, Verde Valley, AZ -** Arizona’s Verde Valley is steeped in an intriguing past ranging from ancient Native American culture to early copper mining, ranching and railroading which converge seamlessly with the present-day Sedona-area tourism boom.

In honor of Verde Canyon Railroad’s *Silver Anniversary*, the depot grounds and John Bell Museum, a treasure trove of the railroad’s heritage, has received a major update and upgrade. New exhibits in the Museum are rich with photography and print about Jerome, Cottonwood, Clarkdale, early ranchers, Yavapai-Apache natives and the illustrious copper industry with a network of rail lines (many now vanished) that shaped central Arizona.

The newly renovated John Bell Museum, teeming with vintage artifacts ranging from 100-year-old switch locks to railroad lanterns that span the same distance of time, is free and open daily to the public. Over the past 25 years, the keen-eyed maintenance-of-way crew has unearthed these hidden treasures along the railroad tracks. Input from prominent historians and supplemental images such as vintage postcard scenes and historic area photos, in cooperation with Clarkdale Heritage Museum, round out the Railroad’s fascinating history.

Eye-catching additions to the Verde Canyon Railroad visitor experience are depot storyboards, overflowing with details on the Verde Canyon encounter, pioneer spirit and railroad lore, installed along the quarter-mile length of the depot’s loading platform. Visitors will gather fascinating facts about the many animals, plants and people that have imprinted the Verde Valley and the Canyon through which the train passes.  Specifics on the railroad’s vintage FP7 locomotives and historic rail cars also are shared via storyboards. “Your new interpretive signage is fantastic,” stated first-time visitor Dave Osborn. “As frequent visitors to National Parks and other national treasures, we found your signage and the content far superior to most. Excellent idea!” added Dave’s wife Zenita.

A stone’s throw from the hillside mining town of Jerome, Verde Canyon Railroad’s Clarkdale depot is located in the heart of the Verde Valley, a diverse crossroad featuring amazing adventures in every direction. Only two hours from Phoenix and 25 minutes from Sedona, Verde Canyon Railroad is the perfect Arizona day trip. Reservations are accepted online at verdecanyonrr.com or 800.293.7245.

*It’s not the destination; it’s the historic journey*

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