



News Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press Tour Rescheduled

Press Preview of \$15 Million Restoration of the U.S. Immigration Station at Angel Island

Who: Dave Matthews – Superintendent, Angel Island State Park
Eddie Wong – Executive Director, Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation

What: Press-only preview – The Angel Island fire caused us to cancel our first press preview. Now, with many reporters calling and asking about it, we are rescheduling.

This press-only preview of restoration work includes an overview of construction and restoration progress to date, arrival of interpretive displays to be installed and interviews with State Parks officials and people who were detained on Angel Island when the U.S. Immigration Station was operating.

The significance of this is that when we officially reopen on February 15, 2009, for the first time ever, the entire Immigration Station barracks will be completely open to the public following the \$15 million restoration. Reporters will get a sneak preview of the restoration work and the previously closed areas on the date listed below.

When: Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Where: Media should take the 10 a.m. Angel Island ferry from Tiburon (Free to working media with identification). At the island, they will be met by State Parks and Foundation representatives, and transported to the U.S. Immigration Station. This press preview will take about two hours, with return ferry at noon.

Background: Lured by the promise of gold and a better life, Chinese began immigrating to the United States in 1848. However, because they were seen as displacing jobs for Americans, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed. In 1905, construction on the Immigration Station began. It became a detention facility, where Chinese immigrants were held until they could prove they were joining relatives already in the country. Those detained carved and etched their poetic stories in beautiful calligraphy on the walls of the barracks building. These story poems, about 200, are vivid, emotional reminders of disappointment and struggle in a search for a new life in a new land. With Phase One of the Immigration Station restoration complete, the stories come alive more vividly than ever before, ensuring preservation for future generations. ###