

USU Geology Dedicates the Geology Centennial Rock Garden

is being developed to guide and interpret the garden for visitors and will be available soon in the Department of Geology's main office and posted on the department webpage.

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On 12th April 2018, after a stormy morning of rain and snow, a break in the weather allowed the sun to peek through the clouds. The students, staff and faculty of Geology and their visiting Advisory Board members took the opportunity to go out to the front of the building and dedicate the new Centennial Rock Garden. This group effort over the academic year was part of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Geology Building (originally the Plant Industry Building).

Large rock specimens ranging in age from 2.5 billion years to 2,500 years old have been placed in chronological order from west to east along the front landscaping of the building. They have been collected through the years on class field trips, research expeditions, and serendipitous circumstances, and documented in the department's archives.

Department Head Joel Pederson recognized the efforts of Professor Dave Liddell, Instructor Amy Hochberg, and especially senior Geology major Michael Ferraro for their instrumental roles in making the new garden happen. In fact, Ferraro took the honor of being named Geology's own rock-garden gnome and was presented with a gnome hat to wear ingloriously during the proceedings. Dr. Liddell and Mike Ferraro then cut the ceremonial ribbon set up in front of the sandstone bench Mike built of Moenkopi Formation from the San Rafael Swell of Utah. Dr. Liddell proceeded to give anecdotes about the harvesting of the collection and information about the various rocks along the path.

In addition to its aesthetic value, this new garden will serve as a teaching tool for instructors in the department, an attraction for visitors, schoolkids, and more. A map