



Craters of the Moon National Monument - Idaho **1924 - 1999**

Welcome to the Monument!

If you asked any of the 16 Superintendents who served at Craters of the Moon over the last 75 years what parks they enjoyed most during their careers, I am sure this one would be near the top of every list. Even among all the national park sites that preserve our nation's most noteworthy natural, cultural, and scenic areas, Craters of the Moon is a very special place. I invite you to visit the park in 1999 and create your own personal experiences and memories of what early visitors described as a "weird and scenic landscape peculiar to itself." Have a safe, enjoyable, and interesting visit.

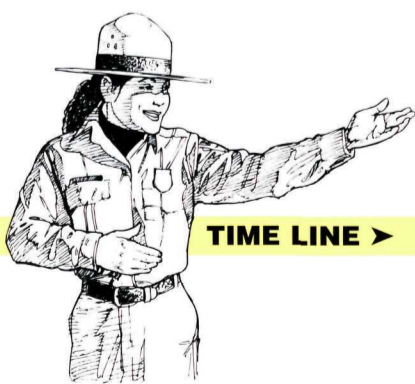
—James A. Morris, Superintendent
Craters of the Moon National Monument

Thanks to the generous support of the 225,000 visitors who stop to explore Craters of the Moon each year, the Natural History Association has been able to donate a total of \$300,000 to the National Park Service to sponsor a variety of educational programs. Celebrating its own 40th Anniversary, the Association hopes you have an opportunity to enjoy the monument in this very special year.

—Leroy Lewis, Chairman of the Board
Craters of the Moon Natural History Association



Clockwise from top: The Craters Inn built in 1927, car stranded in lava, the spatter cones, Boy Scouts on a natural bridge, first park custodian Samuel Paisley and wife, circa 1925.



TIME LINE >

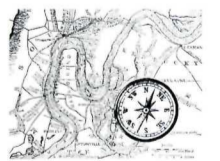
2,000 years ago, a volcanic eruption creates the Broken Top Flow.



Lewis and Clark cross northern Idaho enroute to the Pacific Ocean.



Army Captain Benjamin Bonneville explores the area with instructions to report back his findings to the War Department.



(Before Recorded History)

1805

1830

1833

1862



2,000 years ago, the Shoshone build rock rings at Indian Tunnel.



John Work and a brigade of fur trappers nearly perish trying to cross the Snake River Plain from south to north.



Tim Goodale leads 820 emigrants, 338 wagons, and about 1,400 head of livestock across a cutoff of the Oregon Trail that came to bear his name.

An Unearthly Experience

In the 1960s, when NASA Astronauts were looking for an encounter that would somehow prepare them for what they might experience on the moon, one of the places they chose to visit was Craters of the Moon. Today, the volcanic landscape most often described as unearthly, still gives visitors a sense that they are experiencing the unfamiliar.

You notice the feeling of entering the unknown as soon as you stop your car, open the door, and step out onto the parking area. But you ignore your senses as you pull your boots out of the trunk, put them on, and lace them up. Then as you walk toward the trailhead applying sunscreen to your face, it suddenly dawns on you—you have absolutely no idea what you are getting yourself into. Your only clue is the name of this place, Craters of the Moon.

Cinders and Lava

The name starts you thinking about photos you have seen of the moon taken during lunar landings. But there seems to be little here that resembles the pockmarked, chalky-white surface of that distant satellite. So what is the connection? You realize that there is only one way to

find out, so you place one foot in front of the other and start down the trail.

As soon as your foot touches the ground you get a strange sensation of stepping onto a carpet of puffed rice. With every step you find the loose rock under your feet makes an odd crunching sound as it squishes beneath your boot. It's not an unpleasant feeling, but when you head uphill you find it is a little bit like walking on marbles.

Further along, you find yourself skirting the edge of a wall of sharp, jagged rock that seems to be a twisted mass of impenetrable debris. Curious, you lightly brush your boot against these odd clinkers. You barely touch the wall and it slices a two-inch rip into the leather.

With your hundred dollar boots now permanently scarred, you back away from this nasty stuff and continue on. More observant now, you notice that what initially appeared to be a bleak, barren landscape is actually full of life. Plant life, while sparse, is found in scattered patches along the trail. In this high desert, plants grow in a vegetative collage that contains a huge variety of different herbs, shrubs, and curiously twisted trees.

Amazingly, there are thousands of colorful wildflowers dispersed among the larger plants and popping out of every crack.

Exploring a Volcano

Suddenly you are climbing and find yourself getting a little winded. You pull out your park folder and are surprised to find that you are at an elevation of more than a mile above sea level. You take a breather and then head upward until suddenly you are at the top of a giant, multi-hued chasm! You are staring into a huge crater of some kind. The opening must be several hundred feet deep and appears even further across.

You think volcano, but this certainly isn't anything like Mt. Saint Helens. Regardless of how it came to be, it is breathtaking and you realize somehow this must be the reason this place is known as Craters of the Moon.

Special Experiences

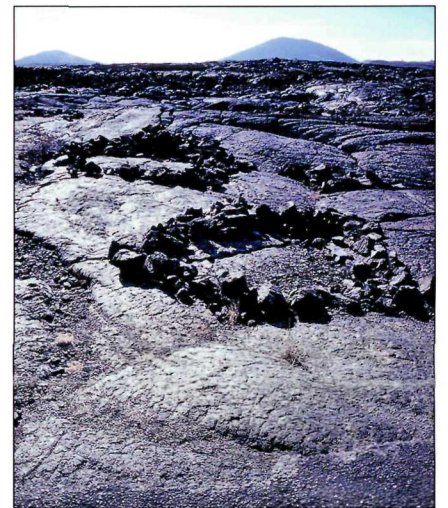
This hypothetical visit is probably very similar to what many of the quarter million visitors to Craters of the Moon each year experience while at the monument. In fact, it is probably identical to what people 75 years ago enjoyed—the same people who wanted to ensure the opportunity for more such encounters by making Craters of the Moon a unit of the National Park Service.

Craters of the Moon was set aside to preserve volcanic formations, plant and animal life, and all other natural and cultural features. It was established to serve as a scientific laboratory to help us learn more about the world we live in. But it was also set aside for the enjoyment of the public, and ultimately it is the special experience that Craters of the Moon offers each of us and has led us to preserve and protect it.

Shoshone Migration

Looking back hundreds of years, the first visitors to the future Craters of the Moon were members of the Shoshone-Bannock tribe. Each spring found the Shoshone leaving their winter home along the Snake River near present-day Pocatello. Their annual migration eventually led them to the Camas Prairie and the Boise River in central Idaho, where diet staples such as the bulb of the Camas plant and spawning salmon could be found in great abundance. Along their route, they crossed through Craters of the Moon, where their passing was marked by discarded arrowheads, broken pottery, and circles of rock found scattered about on the lava flows.

At Craters, archeologists have determined that the Shoshone camped in the northern section of the monument where water and food were more abundant. But the record also shows that they visited the lava tubes or caves located well into the



lava fields. Here they erected mysterious rings of rock for what use can only be speculated. Possibly connected to ceremonial uses, rock circles of 10 to 20 feet in diameter are commonly found in the proximity of the caves. Why? Perhaps because the caves often contained water or could provide shelter from the rain, wind, or heat. But just as likely the answer may be explained by the same reason today's visitors seek out these caves—they are fascinating, out-of-the-ordinary, and, some might say, spiritual places. Because these underground chambers are so extraordinary in every way, they are



Israel Russell with the Geological Survey explores the area and provides the first geologic description of what he calls the Cinder Buttes.



1901

1920

Harold Sterns, a geologist, describes the area as the most recent example of a fissure eruption in this country and recommends it be preserved as a national monument.



1923

1924

Limbert's article "Among the Craters of the Moon" is published in NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE.



President Calvin Coolidge signs a proclamation creating Craters of the Moon National Monument.



1924

1925

1926
Visitation:
4,600



First custodian Samuel Paisley constructs first visitor center near Registration Waterhole and receives a salary of \$12 per year.

Waterholes that supplied water to the monument dry up following a series of earthquakes and water has to be hauled in for four years.



1927

1927



A troop of Boy Scouts discovers Boy Scout Cave.

simply something everyone wants to experience.



Emigrant Crossing

Later, in the mid-1800s, came the emigrants, who because of hostilities with the Shoshone along the main Oregon Trail were trying a new northern route called Goodale's Cutoff. The wagon trains tried to stay away from the rugged lava flows of Craters of the Moon, but because they were hemmed in by lava on one side and steep mountains on the other, the best they could do was to attempt to skirt the northern edge of the lava. Crossing during the hottest part of the summer, following in the foot-deep dust created by earlier wagons, and finding all the grass grazed and the waterholes muddy, tested the persistence of the pioneers. Losing a wheel to a lava protuberance was nearly the last straw for many. Little wonder one emigrant's journal recorded that he viewed the lava flows as "black vomit from the bowels of the earth." Few of the emigrants found the encounter with the lava rock to be pleasant, but most thought it to be one of the most memorable experiences of the entire trip.

The Treks of Robert Limbert

Known simply as "the lavas" for many years, it was left to a Boise taxidermist to wake others up to the volcanic landscape's incredible attributes. In the early 1920s, Robert Limbert came to Craters of the Moon to find a rumored dwarf grizzly. He never did find a grizzly (although there is evidence they were present here until the mid-1920s), but he

trekked over much of the lava and to the tops of most of the cinder cones.

A bit of an "Indiana Jones," the lure of going where no one else had been was more than Limbert could resist. A true adventurer, he seemed to relish the tough going. With only one companion, marginal supplies, and no maps, Limbert repeatedly crossed the meanest of lava flows that few hikers would be willing to tackle today. His comment that it was "like a million cups and saucers that had just been thrown into a huge pile where every time you took a step you slipped, and every time you slipped you cut yourself," was not an exaggeration of what travel through the lava flows is all about.

During his explorations, Limbert took photographs of all of the incredible sights he found. He included these in an album he sent to President Coolidge as well as articles he wrote for publications such as *The NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE*. Limbert told the world about the intense feelings he experienced exploring the unknown reaches of this treacherous terrain. Others agreed, and in 1924 the area was proclaimed a National Monument and named "Craters of the Moon" because it was thought the place resembled the surface of the moon as seen through a telescope.

An Environmental Laboratory

Following Limbert were a progression of scientists whose dedicated work defined exactly what a "Craters of the Moon" was. I. C. Russell, Harold Sterns, and Mel Kuntz were geologists who collectively walked nearly every foot of the monument, mapped it, and defined its geologic history. Wildlife biologist Brad Griffith tagged or radio-collared over 100 mule deer, followed their lives for three years, and found they had a unique twice-a-year migration. Botanist Thomas Day mapped and identified dozens of different plant communities. David Louter, a historian, amassed reams of documentation on the history of the monument and identified all those special people who chose not to avoid the place.

These people were followed by

herpetologists (people who study reptiles), entomologists (insects), zoologists (animals), archeologists (early people), chemists (air quality), and others. These experts told us that the Clark's Nutcracker was responsible for spreading the seeds of the limber pine, that our air is some of the cleanest in the nation, that snakes avoid the lava because of a lack of prey and a dislike for rough surfaces, and that here the Shoshone quarried a dense form of basalt lava called tachylyte and chipped arrowheads from it.

To these scientists, the experience was one of linking together the resource, their inquiring minds, a lot of dedication, and a love of their special fields. Ultimately, their reward was their ability to share this knowledge with everyone interested in Craters of the Moon.

Craters of the Moon continues. Some come to bike, camp, birdwatch, breath clean air, relax, wander, picnic, learn, and be with their families. Others like to listen to the ravens, watch for shooting stars, or feel the wind evaporate the sweat off their face. Put as simply as possible, people come to Craters of the Moon and other parks because they delight in what they sense and feel while visiting these special places. And maybe what they treasure most are the memories they take home.

75 Years of Wonder—1924 to 1999

The 75th Anniversary of the creation of Craters of the Moon National Monument is not a celebration of government endeavors, but rather a remembrance of millions of good experiences at a place that earth-bound dreamers once thought



Different Experiences

Today, thousands of people come to enjoy and experience Craters. Although most want to see and do many of the same things, each person seeks something a little different. Some value solitude and hike into the wilderness (80% of the monument) for an overnight camp out. Some love to get up before dawn to attempt to capture the sun rising over the spatter cones on film. Others scour the visitor center exhibits, read every park publication, and attend all guided walks in an attempt to absorb every detail about this strange and fascinating place.

The list of why people come to

resembled the surface of the moon. Today, Craters remains an exotic place whose essence is best captured in the words of a 5th grade student visiting the park for the first time, "It's just that when you start walking you get a really special feeling. I don't know why, you just do."

On this special birthday year, we invite you to follow in the steps of Indians, emigrants, adventurers, scientists, astronauts, and thousands of your peers. Visit Craters of the Moon National Monument and create your own experiences and memories.

—Dave Clark, Chief Interpreter
Craters of the Moon National Monument

The Craters Inn and several cabins are built for convenience of visitors.



1927



1931

A waterline supplying water from springs in the north end of the monument to the campground and headquarters building completed.

The Mission 66 Program initiates construction of today's road system, visitor center, shop, campground, and comfort station.



1956

1956
Visitation:
100,000



1959

The Craters of the Moon Natural History Association formed to assist the monument in educational activities.

Addition of an island of vegetation completely surrounded by lava known as Carey Kipuka increases the size of the monument by 5360 acres.



1962



1967

Study of mule deer completed.

NASA astronauts Alan Shepherd, Edgar Mitchell, Eugene Cernan, and Joe Engle explore the monument while training to visit the moon.



1969



1970

Congress creates the Craters of the Moon Wilderness, the first such designation within the National Park Service.

Regional Activities and Information



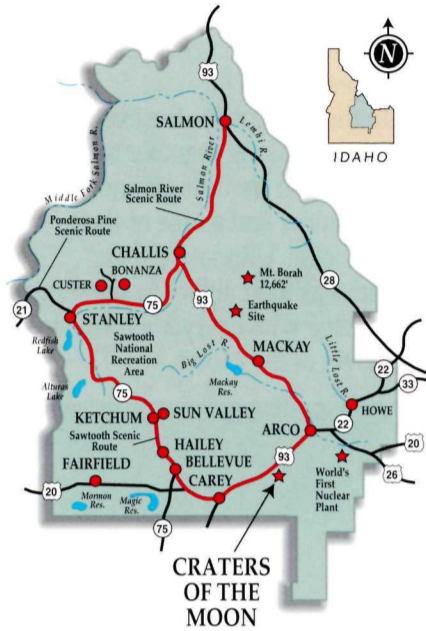
Courtesy Auto Tape Tours



Cassette tapes are available to guide you through the heart of Idaho. They will both entertain and educate you with the history, geology, and attractions of this beautiful region. Various segments are available through most local Chambers of Commerce, and regional, state, and federal visitor centers in this area.

Local Chambers of Commerce:

- Arco208-527-8977
- Challis208-879-2771
- Hailey208-788-2700
- Mackay208-588-2693
- Salmon208-756-2100
- Stanley/Sawtooth800-878-7950
- Sun Valley/Ketchum800-634-3347



Nearby National Parks & Forests

City of Rocks National Reserve

The 14,000 acre City of Rocks National Reserve is a mecca for rock climbers from all over the world. It is also rich in human history. Call the City of Rocks National Reserve in Almo, Idaho at (208) 824-5519.

Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument

This monument was established in 1988 to preserve the outstanding Pliocene fossil sites of the region. Call the National Park Service in Hagerman, Idaho at (208) 837-4793.

Yellowstone National Park

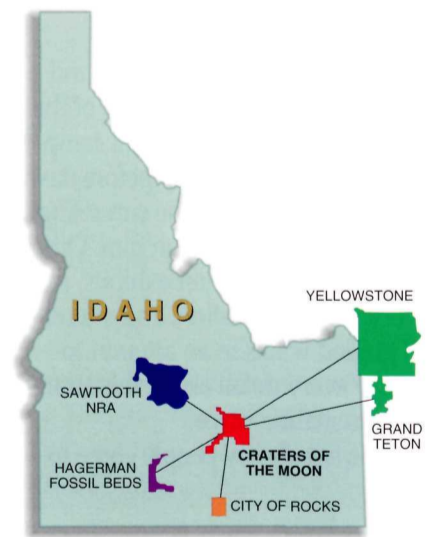
Yellowstone, the first National Park in the United States, contains spectacular lakes and waterfalls, abundant wildlife, and some 10,000 geysers and hot springs, including Old Faithful. For information call (307) 344-7381. For lodging reservations call (307) 344-7311.

Grand Teton National Park

The park contains some of the most awe-inspiring mountain scenery in the United States. Call Grand Teton National Park in Moose, Wyoming at (307) 739-3399.

Sawtooth National Recreation Area

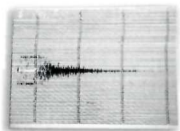
The area includes four classic mountain ranges with 40 peaks above 10,000 feet. Call the U.S. Forest Service at (208) 727-5013.



1999 Schedule of Regional Events

DATE	EVENT	CITY	PHONE
May 1-2	Challis High School Rodeo	Challis	208-879-5244
May 15-16	Mackay High School Rodeo	Mackay	208-527-8977
May 22-23	Arco High School Rodeo	Arco	208-527-8977
May 28-31	Mountain Wellness Festival	Ketchum/Sun Valley	800-634-3347
May 29-30	Salmon High School Rodeo	Salmon	208-756-2100
May 29-30	Spring Fest	Hailey	208-788-2700
June - Sept.	Sun Valley Ice Shows (every Saturday)	Sun Valley	800-634-3347
June 9	Stanley Information Fair	Stanley	208-774-3411
June 12	3rd Annual Mackay Golf Scramble	Mackay	208-588-2296
June 12	Round Valley Horse Show	Challis	208-879-2344
June 19-20	Antique Custom Car Show	Salmon	208-756-2100
June 25-27	Idaho's Wildest Rodeo	Mackay	208-588-2677
July	Reggae in the Mountains (call for date)	Hailey	208-788-2700
July	Choral Rendezvous (call for date)	Challis	208-879-2771
July 1-4	Salmon River Days	Salmon	208-756-2100
July 2-4	Hailey Days of the Old West	Hailey	208-788-2700
July 3	A.B.A.T.E. Motorcycle Rodeo	Mackay	208-237-2804
July 4	Parade and Junior Jackpot Rodeo	Challis	208-879-5244
July 6-13	Arco Atomic Days Quilt Show	Arco	208-527-8977
July 10	Mt. McCaleb Arts and Crafts Festival	Mackay	208-588-2716
July 17-18	Mountain MaMas Arts & Crafts Festival	Stanley	208-774-3411
July 17-19	Arco Atomic Days	Arco	208-527-8977
July 21-26	Hemingway Centennial Celebration	Sun Valley	800-634-3347
July 22-24	Sun Valley Wine Auction	Sun Valley	208-726-9491
July 24-25	Custer Stampede	Challis	208-879-5244
Aug. 1-16	Sun Valley Summer Symphony	Sun Valley	800-634-3347
Aug. 6-7	Northern Rockies Folk Festival	Hailey	208-788-2700
Aug. 7	15th Annual White Knob Challenge Classic	Mackay	208-588-2325
Aug. 13-15	Salmon Balloon Festival and Lewis & Clark Days	Salmon	208-756-2100
Aug. 13-15	Sun Valley Arts and Crafts Festival	Sun Valley	800-634-3347
Aug. 21	A Western Gathering	Stanley	208-774-3411
Aug. 21-28	Lemhi County Fair and Rodeo	Salmon	208-756-2100
Aug. 21-22	Custer Days	Custer	208-879-5244
Aug. 22-25	Sun Valley Writer's Conference	Sun Valley	800-634-3347
Aug. 25-28	Danny Thomas Memorial Golf Tournament	Sun Valley	800-634-3347
Sept. 3-6	Wagon Days	Ketchum	800-634-3347
Sept. 5	Hailey Antique Fair	Hailey	208-788-2700
Sept. 17-18	Idaho Cowboy Poetry Gathering	Salmon	208-756-2100
Sept. 18	Mackay Free Barbecue	Mackay	208-588-2274
Sept. 18	Round Valley Jubilee Arts and Crafts Fair	Challis	208-879-2771
Sept. 18-19	Mountain MaMas Quilt Festival	Stanley	208-774-3411
Sept. 18-19	Silver Bit Roping	Challis	208-879-2344

Mt. Borah earthquake with a magnitude of 7.3 on the Richter scale felt at the monument but does little damage.



1983



Dedication of first totally accessible trail at Devils Orchard.

1992

The first Winterfest, a mid-winter event to encourage family fun in the snow, is held.



1993

Guided walks and programs attended by over 12,000 visitors.

Visitor center lawns removed to eliminate the attraction that was causing deer to be killed while crossing the highway.



1994



1997

New exhibits installed in visitor center.

Over 6,000 school children visit the monument.



1997



1999

75th Anniversary Celebration.