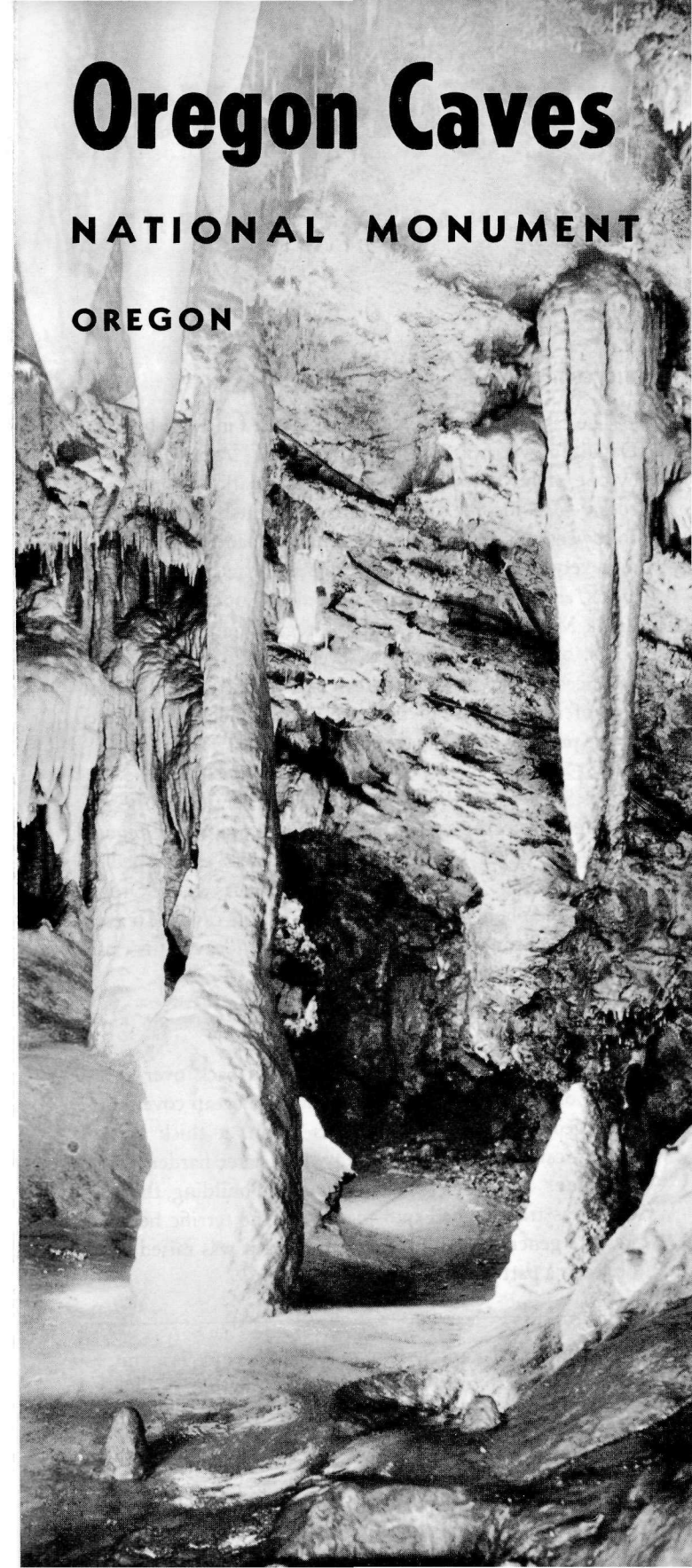


Cave formations, too, show the grace and symmetry of nature's creations.

Oregon Caves

NATIONAL MONUMENT

OREGON



Meals, refreshments, and overnight accommodations are available in the summer; souvenirs may be purchased throughout the year. As children under 6 years of age are not permitted in the cave, the concessioner provides nursery service while parents make the cave trip.

There is a picnic area, but camping is not permitted in the monument. Grayback Campground, operated by the Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, is 8 miles from the monument on State Route 46.

Evening campfire programs include brief talks by members of the National Park Service staff on interesting phases of the monument and entertainment by employees of the concessioner.

ADMINISTRATION

Oregon Caves National Monument, containing 480 acres, is in the heart of the Siskiyou Mountains, 4,000 feet above sea level. The Superintendent of Crater Lake National Park is in charge of the monument. Inquiries or comments about the area should be addressed to him at Crater Lake, Oreg., in the summer and Box 672, Medford, Oreg., in the winter.

MISSION 66

Mission 66 is a 10-year servicewide program planned for completion by 1966. Through it the National Park Service, with the cooperation of its concessioners, intends to achieve improvements in the many facilities and services required to provide adequately for the increasing millions of visitors. It is intended to provide for the public's maximum enjoyment and understanding of our National Parks and National Monuments while assuring their maximum protection and the preservation of their unique qualities for the benefit of future generations.



United States
Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



Reprint 1961

* U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1961 O-616916

Oregon Caves

NATIONAL MONUMENT

HISTORY

The cave is said to have been discovered in 1874 by Elijah Davidson, who was hunting at the time. A bear, wounded by one of his shots, sought refuge in a dark opening in the rocks. Davidson gathered splinters of pitch for a torch and followed the bear. It was then that he made his remarkable discovery. Soon, the cave became an attraction for adventurers, and parts of it were explored and opened. In 1877, Frank M. Nickerson, of Kerby, Oreg., found four different floors, or levels, and opened several of the galleries which had been blocked by stalactites. But even today, the darkness of remote parts of the cave has never been penetrated by the probing beam of an explorer's light.

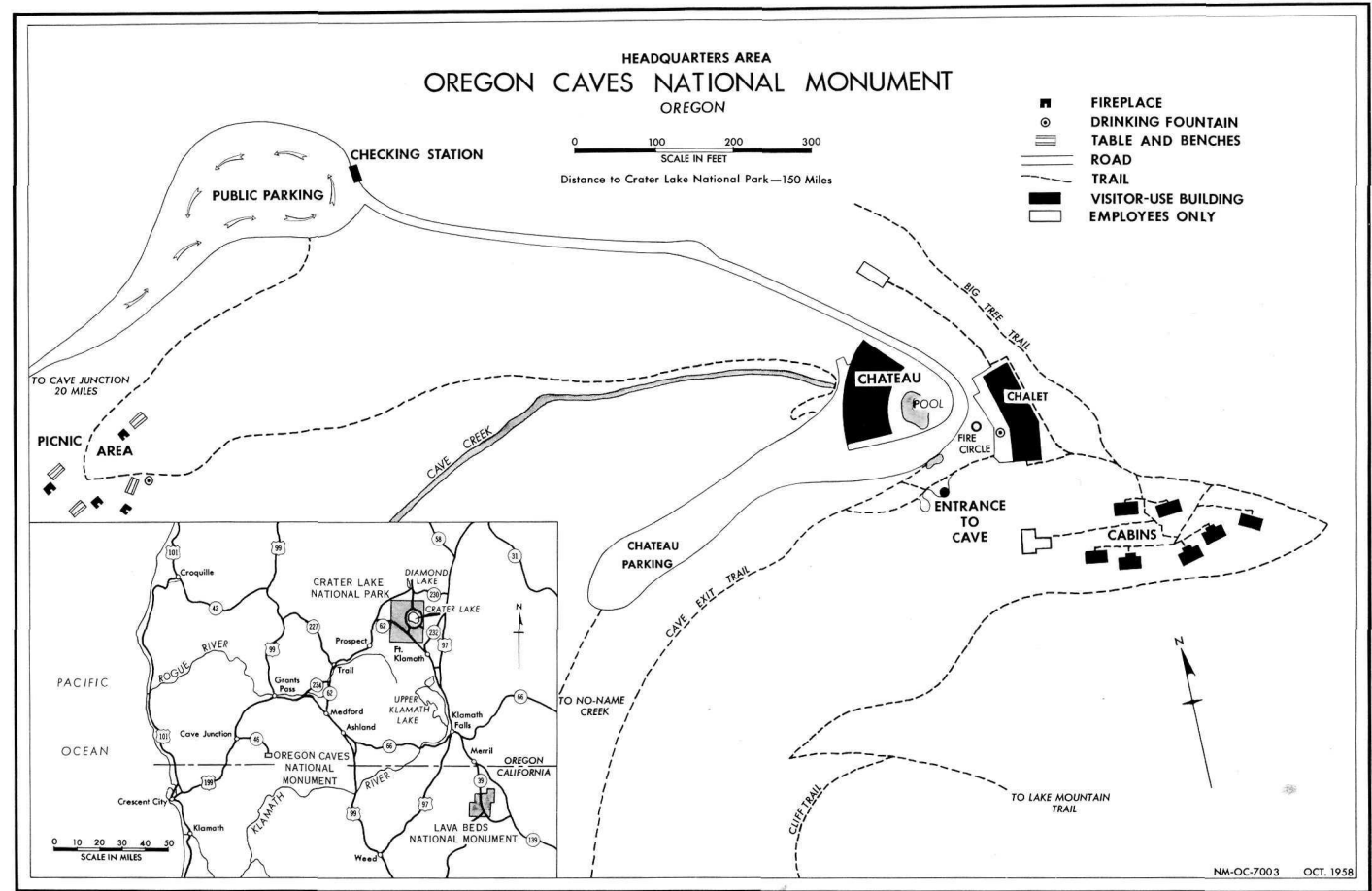
In 1907 the cave was visited by Joaquin Miller, the Poet of the Sierra, who did much to attract attention to the area by referring to the cave as "The Marble Halls of Oregon."

Oregon Caves National Monument was established on July 12, 1909. Although long known as the "Oregon Caves," the phenomenon consists of a single cave. To avoid possible misunderstanding, the word "cave" is used throughout this folder.

GEOLOGY

The geological story of the cave goes back over a vast period of time to an age when an ancient ocean covered the area, geologists explain. In this ocean, a thick bed of calcium carbonate was deposited which later hardened into limestone. During a period of mountain building, the limestone was transformed into marble by the terrific heat and pressure generated within the earth, and it was raised above the sea as a part of a mountain range.

The National Park System, of which this area is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and enjoyment of its people.



The uplift that formed the mountains fractured the marble in many places. Although the actual openings along these fractures may have been small, they were sufficient to allow the passage of water through them. Rainwater, charged by carbonic and other acids from decaying vegetation, moved along the small fracture planes and dissolved the marble. As the fractures were enlarged, they admitted more water, which increased the rate of solution and further enlarged the fractures to the size of the present cave.

Carbonate dissolved in one place by the water was redeposited wherever the water was subjected to evaporation. This occurred particularly where the water dripped slowly from the ceiling of the cave, for here each drop as it clung to the rock lost some of its water to the air, and the carbonate which it carried was left as a deposit. The deposit grew downward, forming a stalactite. Where drops of water fell to the floor and there evaporated, a stalagmite was built upward by the deposit. In some places the stalactites and stalagmites joined to form columns extending from floor to

ceiling. Some deposits have assumed odd and fantastic shapes, and others have acquired graceful forms. Among the most striking are the exquisite miniatures of waterfalls created in stone. Descriptive names have been given to some of the main features and chambers in the cave, such as Paradise Lost, Neptune's Grotto, Joaquin Miller's Chapel, Ghost Chamber, and Satan's Cradle.

GENERAL INFORMATION

From Cave Junction on U. S. 199, it is 20 miles to the monument over State Route 46.

Guide service is furnished by the Oregon Caves Co., under contract with the U. S. Department of the Interior. Because of moist conditions within the cave, it is advisable to use coveralls and rubber footgear, which may be rented from the concessioner. The cave has a temperature of about 48° F. and is electrically lighted. Canes, sticks, and tripods must be left outside the cave to avoid accidental damage to the formations.