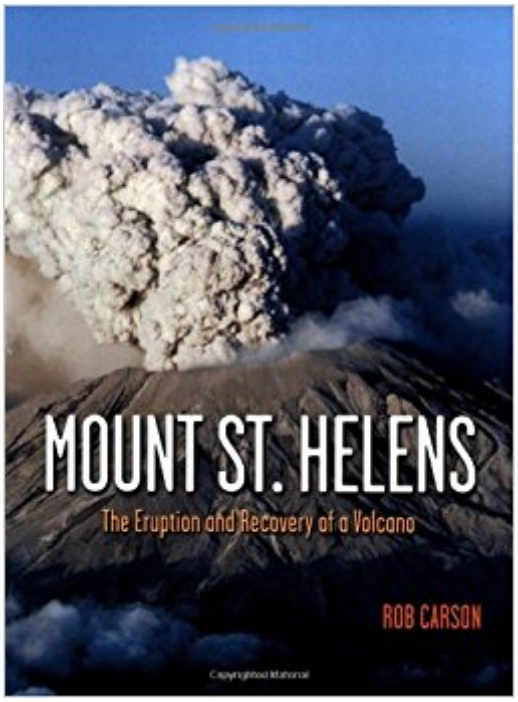
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Mount St Helens: The Eruption And Recovery Of A Volcano



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Synopsis

Where were you on May 18, 1980, when Mount St. Helens erupted? Author Rob Carson’s essays, accompanied by incredible photos, outline the events leading up to and following the eruption, with a special look at the 20-year process of the mountain’s rebirth. As plants, insects, animals, and people have reclaimed Mount St. Helens, the mountain remains a looming reminder of an event that changed the face of the Northwest.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

At 8:27 a.m. on May 18, 1980, Washington State’s Mount St. Helens stood at 9,677 feet; in the next five minutes the mountain lost 1,300 feet, blowing its top in a blast so powerful that trees toppled 17 miles away. Hurricane-force winds stripped the soil from nearby ridges and hillsides, leaving bare rock. All plant life for miles around either vaporized or tore away from the surface of the earth. Once-pristine alpine lakes were transformed into "tea-colored swamps." Volcanic ash shrouded four states like snow while an ash plume high in the atmosphere circled the globe. All told, "57 people were dead, along with millions of birds, deer, elk, and fish." No longer would Northwesterners regard the chain of glacier-clad peaks extending from British Columbia’s Mt. Garibaldi to Northern California’s Mt. Lassen as benevolent dollops of recreational fun. For the first time they would see these peaks for what they are: volcanoes that could actually erupt. For scientists, Mount St. Helens would provide an ever-changing laboratory for study; indeed, important advances have been made in any number disciplines, from seismology to ecology. Along with remarkable before-and-after

images (including the famous Rosenquist photos of the initial blast), Rob Carson’s 20th-anniversary retrospective captures the human drama leading up to the eruption and two decades of subsequent scientific discovery in its aftermath. The idea of a volcano erupting in the continental U.S. was certainly novel at the end of the age of disco. Washington governor Dixy Lee Ray hoped "to live long enough to see one of our volcanoes erupt." Sightseers rushed to the mountain, buying T-shirts with premature slogans like "I Survived Mount St. Helens." Harry Truman, "crotchety octogenarian" and whisky-packing owner and operator of the Mount St. Helens Lodge, made headlines by refusing to leave his home, claiming "that mountain will never hurt me." Truman perished under several hundred feet of ash. A geologist named David Johnston wasn’t supposed to be near the mountain that day, but as fate would have it, he traded shifts; his last words shouted into his radio were "Vancouver, Vancouver, this is it!" While the human element figures prominently in Carson’s book, the truly amazing story is the one of postblast ecological recovery. Take the humble pocket gopher: those that survived began mixing ash with underlying soil, playing a critical role in making the land suitable once more for plant and animal life. Unbelievably, just three years after the eruption, 90 percent of plant species and nearly all mammals had returned to the most devastated areas. Scientists quickly learned that recovery, rather than depending on colonizing species from outside the blast zone, relied largely on species that never left--like hibernating frogs and toads, lucky pocket gophers, and countless subterranean insects. Of course, life outside the blast helped, too; the woolly bear caterpillar parachuted in to reclaim territory and windblown fireweed seeds soon blossomed in the pumice. And meanwhile, the mountain itself (called "Fire Mountain" by the Native American Klickitats) is rapidly growing once again. --Martha Silano

Photographs with text commemorate ten years since the volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens. Half the book portrays events in 1980: human and animal deaths as far away as six, nine, and 25 miles; the blast and scorch zones; the avalanche; the mud flows topping hills of 250 feet; the flooding and loss of property; and the 540 million-ton ash fall spread over 22,000 square miles. The second half of the book sketches events since 1980. Aquatic environments are now back to normal, but the first post-eruption tree harvest won’t occur until 2025, and for other areas "the minimum will be a century." The book also includes discussions on the unique scientific opportunities to study species adaptation and compressed geological time, the human conflicts over science versus tourism in Mount St. Helens National Monument, and over human intervention versus natural regeneration on timberland and rivers. For larger collections.-Janice Dunham, John Jay Coll. Lib., New YorkCopyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or

unavailable edition of this title.

This book is full of interesting information about the events at Mt. st. Helen's. Beautiful photos. A great resource for anyone wanting to learn more. Book was used but came in better condition than we were expecting.

High quality book with many pictures and a well told story of the eruption and aftermath.

It was a good blend of pictures and the story of the eruption.

i recommend this book to anyone who finds volcanoes and the eruption of mt. st helens interesting its very informative and has great pictures a must if your planning a trip to see it first hand

I went to visit Mount St. Helens just a few weeks before she started rumbling and spitting again. I got this book because it is so much better than the superficial descriptions given at the visitors centers. The book also has a much better story. It talks more about the details of what happened. Drawing show the inside of the volcano and what happened to make the eruption occur the way it did. All in all, a much better understanding of the mountain than I got visiting it.The mountain is not exactly unique, but the lateral blast came as a real surprise to the volcanologists. Only in retrospect did what happened make good sense. The previous eruptions created a solid rock cap on the top of the mountain. The cap was strong enough and heavy enough that it successfully held the pressure. Like the proverbial irresistible force the side of the mountain swelled up and eventually fell away. When that happened the plug at the top of the mountain fell down opening up the channel to the top. Now they know how those previously discovered horseshoe shaped craters are made.What you don't get from the book is the sense of magnitude that you get from visiting the site. You really can't imagine the blown over trees that go on for literally miles. The answer is simple. First, read the book. Second, go visit the mountain. Third, read the book again and you'll pick up a lot more.

An excellent book, completely readable and very informative. I visited the devastated area by chopper within a year after the big one, and Carson's book told me that a lot of the interpretations I heard in 1981 are no longer considered valid. I particularly enjoyed the appraisal of Weyerhauser's tree farms vs natural reforestation. There are favorable points for both, and it's essentially a matter of choosing the scientific or the industrial benefits. I bought the book at the Monument (Forest

Service, not Park Service) and reading it while I was there made it all the more exciting. My only complaint: the page layouts. Too many tall, narrow pictures are printed across the binding. Photos of these dimensions would easily fit on a single page, and their impact and beauty are diminished when so much of them is buried in the binding. Possibly this flaw would be less objectionable in a sewn hardcover edition. Also, pictures are often printed as insets in larger photos -- which suggests to me that the book design was considered more important than the photographs. The illustrations are great complements to a splendid text, and they deserve kinder treatment.

I am not a volcanologist, but the discussion of how the eruption unfolded and what forces were at play was fascinating to me. To be honest, I would have preferred an even longer discussion in this area, but that is what really grabbed my attention.

The eruption of Mt. St. Helens is captured in photographic glory for any who would learn about the explosion of the volcano and the subsequent recovery of its surrounding environment. Black and white and some color photos accompany extensive descriptions of the eruption, its short- and long-term effects, and environmental changes.

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