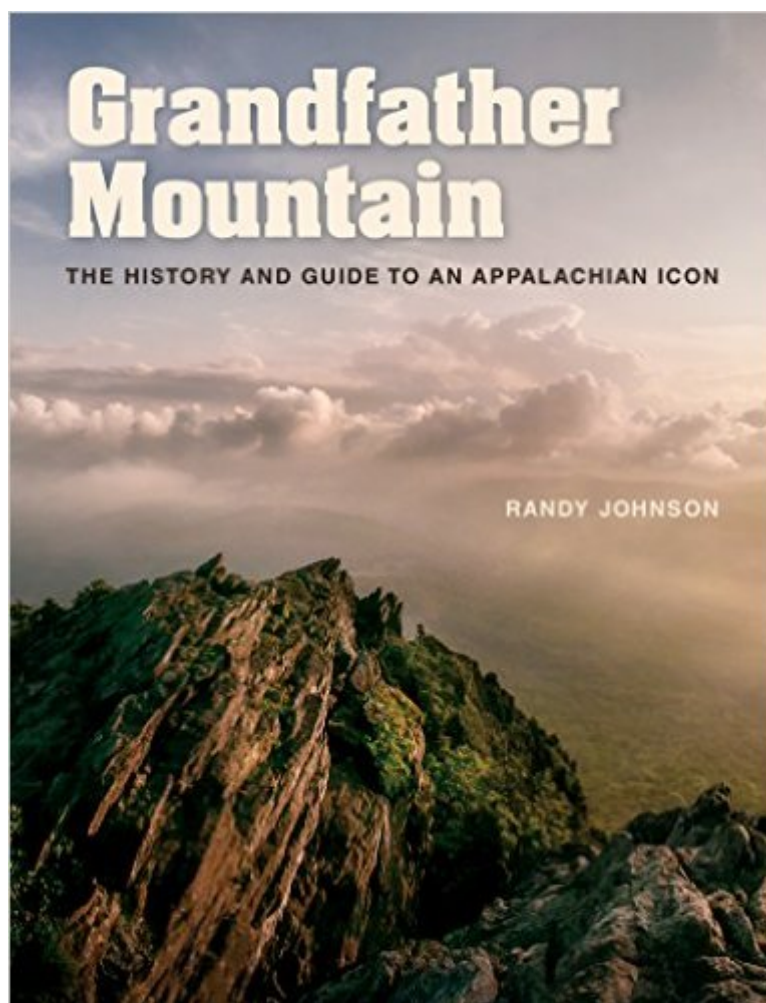


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Grandfather Mountain: The History And Guide To An Appalachian Icon



Synopsis

With its prominent profile recognizable for miles around and featuring vistas among the most beloved in the Appalachians, North Carolina's Grandfather Mountain is many things to many people: an easily recognized landmark along the Blue Ridge Parkway, a popular tourist destination, a site of annual Highland Games, and an internationally recognized nature preserve. In this definitive book on Grandfather, Randy Johnson guides readers on a journey through the mountain's history, from its geological beginnings millennia ago and the early days of exploration to its role in regional development and eventual establishment as a North Carolina state park. Along the way, he shows how Grandfather has changed, and has been changed by, the people of western North Carolina and beyond. To tell the full natural and human story, Johnson draws not only on historical sources but on his rich personal experience working closely on the mountain alongside Hugh Morton and others. The result is a unique and personal telling of Grandfather's lasting significance. The book includes more than 200 historical and contemporary photographs, maps, and a practical guide to hiking the extensive trails, appreciating key plant and animal species and photographing the natural wonder that is Grandfather.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (13 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The collection of photos included in this oversize book by themselves would establish this book as a quintessential "coffee table" book, something to pick up and casually leaf through and admire. But this book is more than that - it's also a history book of the iconic mountain and its surroundings with many of the stories told in the first person. The text gives context to the pictures and to our travels

up and down the trails on and around the mountain. On the issue of Mr Morton's legacy, Randy Johnson takes a diplomatic approach. Mr Morton insisted on doing things his own way and considered "his" mountain something to do with as he pleased. His contentious fights with governing agencies are the stuff of legends. I think this approach is warranted in this case because while viewed from today's vantage point, Mr Morton's exploits resemble those of the old timber and robber barons. However, when viewed in the light of their times, they were considered as normal operations of successful and powerful businessmen. The book does put the lie to some other books that try to portray Mr Morton as a "great environmentalist". Perhaps he was both during his long stewardship of the mountain. We wish he had not timbered it, we wish he had not developed it, yet we still admire all that is left. We can deplore his decision to build a shopping center at the headwaters of two river systems while still shopping at the Lowes Foods. So while we are divided on the legacy he left behind, we are left with an optimistic view of the future. Although we seem to accept it today, perhaps future generations may well wonder how we can consider a natural resource like Grandfather Mountain to be "private".

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