Old Man of the Mountain

260 Tramway Drive
Franconia Notch, NH.
New Hampshire 03580
United States

Old Man of the Mountain, Aka "Great Stone Face," or "The Profile," was located on the top of Cannon Mountain within New Hampshire's Franconia Notch. The Old Man of the Mountain has been an icon for the state of New Hampshire for many years. Even despite it's fall in 2003, the Old Man of the Mountain remains an iconic symbol for the State of NH. The image of the Old Man of the Mountain remains New Hampshire state emblem to this day. The Old Man of the Mountain sat 1,200 feet above Profile Lake at the base of Cannon Mountain and was 40' tall by 25 feet wide. Daniel Webster, a New Hampshire native wrote a tribute to the Old Man of the Mountain: "Men hang out their signs indicative of their respective trades; shoe makers hang out a gigantic shoe; jewelers a monster watch, and the dentist hangs out a gold tooth; but up in the Mountains of New Hampshire, God Almighty has hung out a sign to show that there he makes men." The Old Man of The Mountain is featured on New Hampshire's State Quarter.

How Was the Old Man of the Mountain Created? Geologists speculate that the Old Man of the Mountain was formed by the last retreating glaciers in New England approximately 12,000 years ago.

What Was the Old Man of the Mountain Made of? The Old Man of the Mountain was made of Conway Granite. Conway Granite was named because it was first found in Conway, NH. Conway Granite was created during the Jurassic period (144-206 million years ago) when parts of magma or plutons that didn't reach the surface formed a unique salmon colored granite known as Conway Granite. Granite generally contains the three minerals of quartz, mica and feldspar. The feldspar in Conway Granite is pinkish/orange or salmon colored, which is what distinguishes Conway Granite from other types of granite.

Why Did the Old Man of the Mountain Fall Off? The Old Man of the Mountain fell during the early morning hours of May 3, 2003 after years of erosion, freezing and melting as well as vibrations from traffic on the nearby I-93 that runs right through Franconia Notch.
Since the 1920's, the Old Man was repaired with chains, cement, steel rods, turnbuckles and by adding plastic and gutters nearby to re-route running water away from the Old Man of the Mountain. The Old Man of the Mountain was made of 5 Conway Granite slabs that were all balanced on the each other on the stack. The entire weight of the slabs all rested on the bottom slab, which was the chin of the Old Man of the Mountain. The chin was a smaller slab of granite which was only being held in place by 2 feet of granite that rested on the mountain's ledge, 80% of that slab was protruding outwards and was seen as the chin of the old man. the 2 feet that rested on the mountain's ledge was held in place by the weight of the slabs above it and the weight was perfectly balanced within that 2 foot space, keeping the Old Man of the Mountain firmly in place for over 12,000 years. The Old Man of the Mountain fell when erosion from water damage changed the chins center of gravity and caused the chin to move forward far enough away from the cliff face that it fell. The above facial features of the Old Man of the Mountain followed, since the chin which had supported the natural structure for so many years was no longer there. Today, many people have offered proposals on how to recreate the natural wonder, all have been rejected by the state of NH. Old Man of the Mountain Memorial On June 24, 2010, the Friends of The Old Man of The Mountain, broke ground on phase one of the state-sanctioned "Old Man of the Mountain Memorial" to be located on a walkway along Profile Lake 1,200 feet below Cannon Cliff. Phase one includes a viewing platform with "Steel Profilers." When the steel profilers are aligned with the Cannon Cliff above, it will create a profile of what the Old Man of the Mountain looked like. Phase 2 includes a Granite gateway with a tribute to the Nielsen family and others who maintained the Old Man of the Mountain over the last century. It will also include a historical piece, one of the turnbuckle tie rods that supported the top slab. Phase 3, the final phase of the project will include five large "Granite Monoliths" that will be lifted in alignment. When viewed from ground level the granite monoliths will merge, creating a 20-foot-tall profile replica of the five ledges that formed the original profile. May 11, 2011 (eight years and one week from the date the Old Man fell), the steel profilers were installed at the Old Man of the Mountain Memorial site so people can view the mountain as it once looked when
the Old Man of the Mountain was still with us. The Old Man of The Mountain Memorial and viewing area at Profler Plaza is handicapped accessible from the lower parking area off I-93. Directions to Franconia Notch State Park: You can get to Franconia Notch State Park by driving on I-93. Whether you're coming from the North or South, Drive I-93. I-93 will take you right through the very well-marked Franconia Notch Parkway and follow the signs for "Franconia Notch State Park." You can also use the NH GPS Coordinates below an enter them into your GPS unit: Old Man on the Mountain Southbound Parking Area GPS Location: N44° 09.668' | W071° 40.624' Also see: Franconia Notch State Park Old Man of the Mountain is located in Franconia Notch State Park NH.

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