

## "Mount Rushmore" by Gutzon Borglum 1927-1941

**Mount Rushmore National Memorial** is a sculpture carved into the **granite** face of Mount Rushmore, a large rock formation in the **Black Hills of South Dakota**.

- 3 million visitors a year
- 14 years to complete
- the project cost almost 1 million dollars
- 400 workers carved the sculpture (no one died)
- dynamite was used to remove 90% of the rock
- 450,000 tons of rock were blasted off the mountainside-
- the heads are 60ft. tall, noses are 20ft. tall, eyes are 11 ft. wide, Roosevelt's mustache is 21 ft. long

In 1923 **Doane Robinson**, a historian, came up with the idea to create a large sculpture in the Black Hills to promote tourism. **Gutzon Borglum** was chosen to create the sculpture. ..

### **Gutzon Borglum : 1867 - 1941**

- an American artist born in Idaho
- trained in Paris where he came to know *Auguste Rodin* and was influenced by Rodin's impressionistic light catching surfaces
- he was known as a "*patriot*" who like to create art that "*memorialized American achievement*"
- he was fascinated by *gigantic scale* and themes of *heroic nationalism*
- other works include a large head of *Lincoln* carved in marble (in the Capitol bldg.), *Stone Mountain* in Atlanta, GA, and *General Sheridan* created in bronze (in Washington, D.C., a second version is in Chicago)

### **Sculpting of Mount Rushmore**

- Borglum chose the location on the mountain for the *quality of the granite* and *maximum sun exposure*.
- He chose to sculpt the *four presidents that he thought best represented the country and it's growth in the previous 150 years of American history*.

**1. George Washington** - 1st President, founding father, birth of our country

**2. Thomas Jefferson** - 3rd President, doubled the size of the country, wrote the Declaration of Independence

**3. Theodore Roosevelt** - 26th President, creation of the Panama Canal, once lived in the Dakotas

**4. Abraham Lincoln** - 16th President, led our country through the Civil War, freed the slaves

- Borglum created a *scale model 1inch-to-12inch* (still on display in the Sculptor's studio at Rushmore)
- to enlarge the 3 dimensional model onto the mountain, Borglum devised a *simple system, which had been used in ancient Greece, consisting of an angle and two measurements*. By measuring the angle and distances from the axis, workers could mark locations to drill on the mountain.
- dynamite was used to remove 90% of the rock
- drills and hammering tools were used to sculpt the details

### **3 short videos about the creation of Mount Rushmore :**

Time For Kids link on Mt. Rushmore  
<http://www.timeforkids.com/rushmore>

The Scale of Mount Rushmore (1:03)  
<http://video.pbs.org/video/2365076354/>

Borglum's Sculpting Technique (2:22)  
<http://video.pbs.org/video/2365076672/>