

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:
COUNTY:
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Lemmon Petrified Park

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Lemmon CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 2nd

STATE: South Dakota CODE: 046 COUNTY: Perkins CODE: 105

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: City of Lemmon

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Lemmon STATE: South Dakota CODE: 046

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Perkins County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Lemmon STATE: South Dakota CODE: 046

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: South Dakota Historic Sites Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1975 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Historical Preservation Center

STREET AND NUMBER: USD Alumni House

CITY OR TOWN: Vermillion STATE: South Dakota CODE: 046

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE:

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

If the traveler crosses the northern plains of South Dakota to the city of Lemmon, he will come upon a very interesting and unusual site-- the world's largest petrified wood park. This site consists of 3200 tons of petrified wood, 100 tons of petrified grass, and tons of cannon ball boulders which are either standing in the condition they were found or stacked and cemented together to form conical pyramids, pillars, various other configurations, and three buildings.

Of the structures, two of them serve a functional purpose: one houses the Chamber of Commerce, and the other, a museum. Both use petrified logs in their construction, but the latter utilizes it throughout including a petrified grass floor. The polygonal-shaped museum's main exterior features are spires of varying height along the roof's edge; the interior exhibits are mostly related to local history, geology, or pioneer life. The third structure employs over three hundred tons of petrified wood and resembles a miniature castle.

The stone itself dates back to the Mesozoic times and there are numerous examples of fossilized plant and animal life captured within the material. It comes in a variety of sizes and shapes and has a diversity of color. The cannonball boulders come from a similarly named river in North Dakota and derive their name from their oval and smooth look. The interplay of the current and the sand, which rubs against the stones, causes them to take on their appearance. Their diameter varies from a half a foot to several feet.

All of this stone appears in an area of less than an acre and it creates a rather bizarre picture. The park has changed since it opened in 1932 because some of the visitors have stolen the stone, and also, the construction of a tennis court caused the loss of some monuments. Also, the Chamber of Commerce building was once a gas station, but overall, the site still retains much of its original appearance.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian;	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1928--Ola f S Quammen

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The city of Lemmon has the world's largest petrified wood park which has been important to the city's commercial development. It also is significant in the social humanitarian area for two reasons. First, Ole S. Quammen, the founder, built the park partially to hire the jobless during the years of the Great Depression. Secondly, Alice Quammen, his daughter, donated the park to the city for the public's benefit.

Ole S. Quammen was among the people who arrived on the first passenger train into Lemmon in 1907. He owned and operated a lumberyard which was a prosperous enterprise in a newly developing town located on the treeless plains. However, he has become better known for his hobby than his business success. Quammen was an amateur geologist who roamed the county examining petrified wood which was quite abundant.

Around 1926 he and his son, David, began to formulate plans of establishing a park with examples of petrified wood made into various configurations. The idea was not implemented until 1928. The father believed that gathering the best example of the material in one place would enhance his studies, provide an interesting exhibit, and help hire the jobless. The project took around four years to complete. It gave many people, especially ranchers, an income during those early depression years. They continued to work on the park with the completion of the museum in 1933. The Quammens had gathered 600,000 pounds of petrified grass, 8,200,000 pounds of petrified and agatized wood, and 13,000 bones. This was quite an achievement for them and all the people who hauled those stones by wagon.

Unfortunately, both father and son were unable to enjoy their success very long for they both died in 1934. The park then came under the ownership of Alice Quammen who kept the land until she donated it, with conditions, to the city in 1954. Since then the city has maintained the park and hired caretakers to take care of it and dispense information to tourists.

To many people, this site is extremely important to history and development of the city. The construction of the park employed many people who might have had to otherwise leave the area. Also, since its inception, it has been a boon to the tourist industry for the state and especially to Lemmon. This, of course, is important to the commercial development of a city. Although it is less than fifty years old it must be remembered that the town was not started until 1907 which makes it a rather early undertaking in the city's history. It is definitely Lemmon's most important landmark.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Boorman, Jane ed., "Lemmon: Half Century of Progress 1907-1957" (souvenir program), 1957.

Lemmon Tribune, March 8, 1962

Sandwick, Gelda, personal interview, Lemmon. September 16, 1975 with Scott Gerloff

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	0 . .	0 . .		0 . .	0 . .	
NE	0 . .	0 . .		0 . .	0 . .	
SE	0 . .	0 . .		0 . .	0 . .	
SW	0 . .	0 . .		0 . .	0 . .	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Scott Gerloff--Historical Preservation Assistant II

ORGANIZATION: **Historical Preservation Center** DATE: **December 1975**

STREET AND NUMBER:
USD Alumni House

CITY OR TOWN: **Vermillion** STATE: **South Dakota** CODE: **046**

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Date _____</p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p>_____ Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p>_____ Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date _____</p>
--	--

SEE INSTRUCTIONS