

# Collector's Journal

A SERVICE OF COLLECTORS ALLIANCE

## 2016 Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Quarter – Kentucky

### *Thirty-Second in the America the Beautiful Quarters Collection*

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park in Kentucky is featured on the second of five America the Beautiful Quarters issued in 2016. The coin is also the thirty-second in the overall collection; the series started in 2010 and coins are issued at the rate of five per year.

Eventually, the series will include coins for each of the 50 states, Washington, D.C., and the five overseas U.S. territories. Each coin highlights a National Park or other national site within the featured jurisdiction, and the coins are released in the order in which the sites were set aside by the federal government. Production is restricted to only about 10 weeks before the U.S. Mint starts striking the next coin.

America the Beautiful Quarters are made for circulation at both the Philadelphia and Denver Mints; they are identified by a small “P” (Philadelphia) or “D” (Denver) mint mark under “In God We Trust.”

The region now preserved as Cumberland Gap National Historical Park played a key role in America’s early history. The centerpiece is Cumberland Gap, an opening in the Appalachian Mountains that was used for centuries by Native Americans and wildlife as a shortcut over the mountains.

In colonial times, Cumberland Gap provided the only practical route from Virginia to what was then known as the American West. The route was made easier to traverse when frontiersman Daniel Boone cleared the Wilderness Road in 1775, and more than 300,000 pioneers used the Cumberland Gap between 1775 and 1810 to start new lives in the western frontiers of Kentucky and Tennessee.

Cumberland Gap National Historical Park is about 26 miles long and includes portions of Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia where



the three states meet. The most popular locations include White Rocks Overlook and Pinnacle Overlook that provide panoramic views of the surrounding mountains. The park is also renowned for many miles of limestone caves, the most famous of which is Gap Cave. Wildlife, including black bears, is abundant, and many visitors enjoy exploring more than 80 miles of hiking trails.

The design of the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Quarter features a frontiersman armed with a long rifle (also known as a Kentucky rifle) as he crosses west through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. Mountain scenery can be seen in the background, and the inscription identifies Cumberland Gap as the “First Doorway to the West.”

U.S. Mint artists submitted five suggested designs to the advisory committees that review all U.S. coin designs. In addition to the selected design, one showed a modern visitor at Pinnacle Overlook with a majestic landscape in the background; another featured Indian Rock, a landmark for travelers but also a place where they were vulnerable to attack from Native Americans; the third design included a white-tailed deer in the foreground with Cumberland Gap in the background; the final design was footprints on a path to symbolize Cumberland Gap as the first doorway to the West.

The Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Quarter was released by the U.S. Mint in April, 2016.

Collectors Alliance • 1942 Swarthmore Avenue • Lakewood, NJ 08701  
Call TOLL FREE 1-800-997-9843  
[www.CollectorsAlliance.com](http://www.CollectorsAlliance.com)