Visiting the Park

Moses H. Cone Memorial Park is managed as a unit of the Blue Ridge Parkway of the National Park System. A superintendent, whose address is Box 760, Asheville, NC 28801, is in charge. As the National’s principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for the wise use of our land and water resources, for the protection of our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assumes our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation territories under U.S. administration.

The story of Cone’s Blue Ridge experience may be traced to the 1840s, when his father, seeking to America. Straight-laced, hard-working Herman Cone and his wife settled for 16 years in the small, eastern town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina. Moses, their eldest of 13 children, was born in 1857. Thirteen years later Herman moved the family to Baltimore, Md., and carefully built up a thriving wholesale grocery business. At the same time Moses Cone had become a black-haired, dutiful, seriously intent young man, whose work as salesmen for their father’s grocery firm took them south into a new textile frontier. Confidently, they moved their headquarters to New York City, where the Cone Export and Commission Company, a unit of the Blue Ridge Parkway of the National Park System, was established in 1891.

The Cone brothers supplied these stores with groceries, often accepting payment in marketable fabrics rather than hard cash, which was still a bit scarce in the old Confederacy. A few years later, the Cone brothers decided that henceforth they would concentrate their effort where it counted: on the all-important production lines and the people who made those lines run. They moved their headquarters to America. Straight-laced, hard-working Herman Cone and his wife settled for 16 years in the small, eastern town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina. Moses, their eldest of 13 children, was born in 1857. Thirteen years later Herman moved the family to Baltimore, Md., and carefully built up a thriving wholesale grocery business. At the same time Moses Cone had become a black-haired, dutiful, seriously intent young man, whose work as salesmen for their father’s grocery firm took them south into a new textile frontier. Confidently, they moved their headquarters to New York City, where the Cone Export and Commission Company, a unit of the Blue Ridge Parkway of the National Park System, was established in 1891.

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The key to the Cone’s success was proximity.
solidly established their business, Ceasar from towels to dyes to polyurethane foam. But and more numerous, breed of tourist to the Greensboro. turned his attention to the mountains west of became the company's first president and Moses and energy of two brothers. As these co-founders the origin of all this remained with the imagination and added other plants. Corduroy, flannel, and a variety of fabrics began to appear on the production lines. Much later the renamed Cone Mills would have more than 30 plants and would be manufacturing commodities on a spectrum from clothing to packaging. With its single, tall smokestack and its functional, row-like buildings, Proximity churned out the "heavy duty, deep tone blue denim" that was to give Moses H. Cone a reputation as "the Denim King." This was the successful idea that brought Moses Proximity Manufacturing Company expanded right at the turn of the 20th century. Other members of this remarkable family implemented his ambitious scheme. He built three estate. In the center of his holdings he created a mansion, surrounded by tall trees, and a sweeping view from their overlook the expansive of lakes and mountains. The sisters gradually gathered an incredible collection of art, the value of which would increase with each passing decade. When a young painter named Pablo Picasso expressed a taste for American comic strips, they traded him their hometown newspapers for his drawings and pictures. The present-day Cone Collection at the Baltimore Museum of Art attests to the judgment and the foresight of Claribel and Etta Cone. Meanwhile, Moses was using his skills in civic affairs. After the death of his father-in-law of Blowing Rock, he helped the local schools by giving them "funds for every one dollar raised by the citizens of the town." He contributed funds to the beginning of what is now Appalachian State University and served on the school's original board. Education took its place alongside textile, farming, and conservation. When Cone died in 1928 at the age of 51, he had seen booms which would bear an increasing harvest of good in a number of crucial fields. Bertha Cone outlived her husband by 39 years. When she died in 1947, she left Greensboro's Cone Memorial Hospital an estate that had remained intact and conscientiously administered. Three years after its founding, the hospital donated the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park to the U.S. Government. Through the park, the memory of a man who went to the mountains and lived so well lives on today.