

# Fun Facts

## **Inventor Liked a Well-Rounded View**

William Gruber, a piano tuner and hobby stereo photographer, went to the Oregon Caves National Monuments in 1938 with the idea of updating the 19th-century stereoscope, using rich Kodachrome color slide film.

At the caves, he met Harold Graves, president of Sawyer's Photographic Services and a fellow camera buff. By the next morning, they had made a deal to produce a new handheld stereo viewing device, the View-Master, to show color images.

It was introduced in Portland, Oregon in 1939 but didn't catch on nationally until it appeared at the New York World's Fair in 1940.

A year after its debut, the View-Master was being sold at 1,000 stores.

During WWII, View-Master produced training reels for the U.S. military. After the war, demand for the viewers and new reels skyrocketed. Sets of reels showing U.S. national parks, Disney characters and historic events were extremely popular.

Today, the View-Master continues to evolve and owner Fisher-Price offers a wide range of images of popular TV and movie characters.

But although the look of the View-Master has changed, it still relies on a simple combination—ambient light (not batteries) and exciting, entertaining images for kids of all ages.