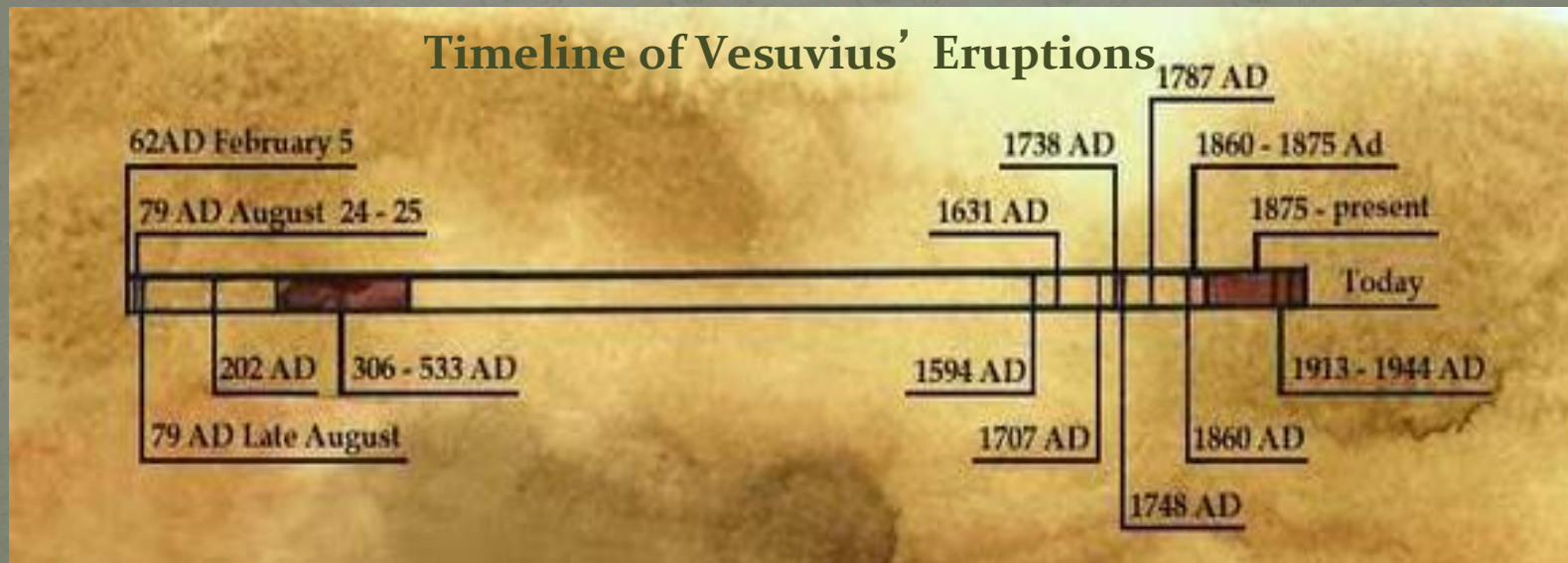


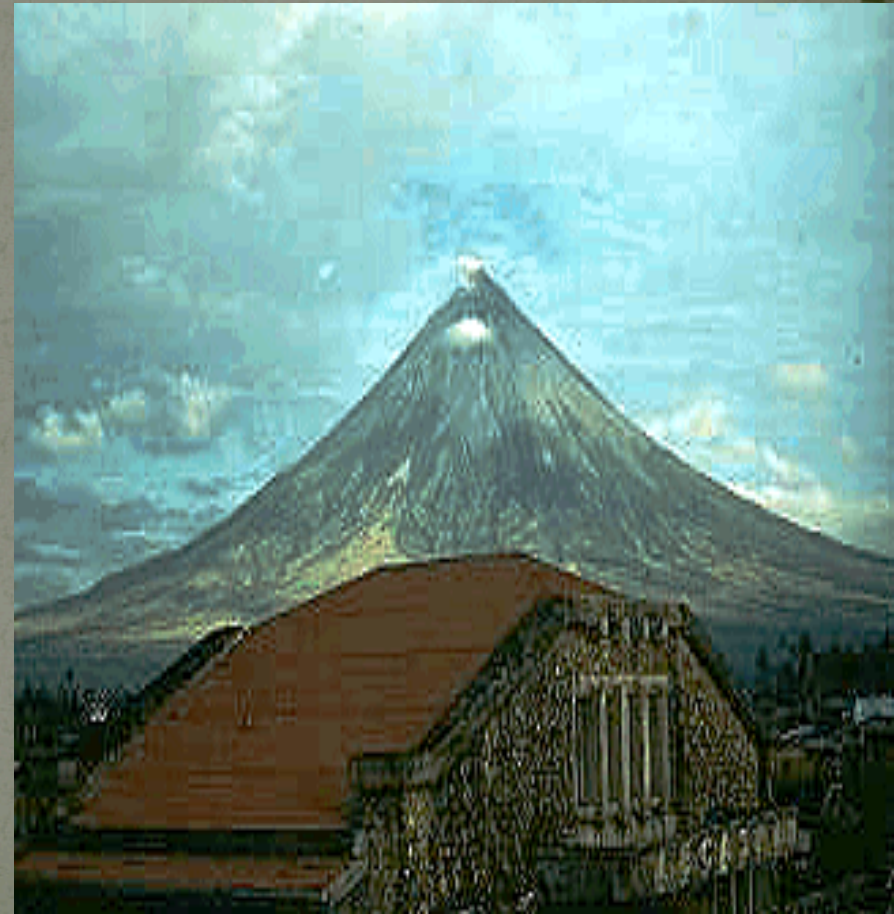
Mons Vesuvius

- Mount Vesuvius, a volcano located in Campania, near Naples, Italy, has experienced eight major eruptions in the last 17,000 years.



About Vesuvius

- Formed by the collapse of an older volcano, Mount Somma
- A stratovolcano, which means it gets its shape from many layers formed by hardened lava
- Has pyroclastic flows, which means it erupts hot gas and rock at a high rate of speed
- The only currently active volcano on mainland Europe



Before Vesuvius Erupted

- On August 23, 79 AD, Pompeii, a city at the base of Mt. Vesuvius, looked like any other busy, prosperous Roman city. People were moving about, trading goods, news, and friendly talk.
- Three days later, on August 26, all of these sounds had fallen silent, and the place itself had vanished. Almost nothing was seen of Pompeii for more than 1500 years.





- At the time of the eruption, Pompeii was a wealthy Roman trading town, famous for its fish sauce and grand villas.
- Pompeiians had very lavish, well-decorated homes with elegant courtyard gardens and an abundance of modern conveniences.



The Eruption

- The August 24th 79 AD eruption is one of the most well known ancient eruptions in the world
- Earthquakes gave citizens a sign of Vesuvius' activity in the days prior to the eruption itself
- Beginning around noon, Vesuvius began its assault on the streets of Pompeii, Herculaneum and Oplontis and the surrounding region
 - First came a column of smoke
 - Then *lapilli*, or small pieces of solidified lava, began to fall onto the area
 - Then heavier pieces of rock landed in the area, accompanied by smothering ash, which collapsed roofs and suffocated citizens
 - The cities were covered in volcanic material and subsequently buried

The Eruption

- Residents of the towns tried to flee, some successfully moving inland and others towards the sea.
 - Because of the prolonged nature of the eruption, many fugitives had time to prepare for escape
 - Some remains of victims were found alongside beloved possessions that they hoped to save in their flight from the ashes
 - These pieces have proven to be valuable in identifying the victims and in helping archeologists to reconstruct details of daily life:
 - Doctors carried with them their surgical tools in hopes of helping others
 - Women of the house, held their precious jewels and heirlooms
 - Slaves were found with iron rings around their ankles.

The Eruption

- By dawn of the following morning, the eruption had poured an avalanche of ash onto Herculaneum, Oplontis, and finally Pompeii.
- Vesuvius spouted the equivalent of one cubic mile of ash onto the area in about 19 hours
- Ash, mud and rocks from this eruption buried the cities of Pompeii, Oplontis and Herculaneum.
 - Pompeii was buried under 10' of ash
 - Herculaneum was buried under 75' of ash
 - Not much is known about Oplontis

The Aftermath

- The ruins are famous for the casts the hot ash formed around victims of the eruptions. The unfortunate people suffocated on ash in the air, which then covered them and preserved amazing details of their clothing and faces.



Since 79 AD



- Starting in 1631, Vesuvius entered a period of steady volcanic activity, including lava flows and eruptions of ash and mud.
- Violent eruptions in the late 1700s, 1800s and early 1900s created more fissures, lava flows, and ash-and-gas explosions.
 - These damaged or destroyed many towns around the volcano, and sometimes killed people
 - The eruption of 1906 had more than 100 casualties
- The most recent eruption was in 1944 during World War II. It caused major problems for the newly-arrived Allied forces in Italy when ash and rocks from the eruption destroyed planes and forced evacuations at a nearby airbase.

