

# The Novarupta - Katmai Eruption of 1912 — largest eruption of the 20th century: A Centennial Perspective

**Judy Fierstein, Research Geologist, U.S. Geological Survey**

April 24, 2012 7:00 pm

Anchorage Museum Auditorium (use 7th Ave. entrance)

*Free to the public*

One hundred years ago this June, a 3-day explosive eruption at Novarupta on the Alaska Peninsula near King Salmon became one of the five largest eruptions in recorded history. It created the spectacular Katmai caldera and the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes, which early explorers called the eighth wonder of the world. Preserved as a National Monument in 1918, and now part of Katmai National Park, the eruption created an outdoor laboratory that has captivated scientists and sightseers alike for 100 years.



*Members of the 1917 National Geographic Katmai expedition standing next to a fumarole in the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes formed during the great eruption. The men are using the hot fumarole to cook their dinner. Photo by D.B. Church.*

Katmai expert Judy Fierstein will tell the story of those 3 dramatic days and what has been learned from the 1912 eruption about large explosive events. Judy will explain how geologist "volcano detectives" explored and examined the eruption's aftermath, how the eruption has remained scientifically important for 100 years, and why Katmai still offers insights about earth processes that shape our world.



*Aerial view northwestward shows Katmai caldera – formed as the top of Mount Katmai collapsed during the 1912 eruption – and the ash-filled Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes. The caldera lake began forming in 1923 is now about 820 feet deep.*



*Judy Fierstein (center) with Wes Hildreth (L) and Garniss Curtis (R), three generations of Katmai field volcanologists.*

## The Speaker

U.S. Geological Survey Research Geologist Judy Fierstein is known worldwide for her meticulous fieldwork on young, remote volcanoes in Alaska, the Cascades, and the high Andes. Judy joined the USGS in 1980 just before the eruption of Mount St. Helens and began working in Katmai soon after. She received graduate and undergraduate degrees in Earth Science from the University of California at Santa Cruz. Judy is a Fellow of the Geological Society of America and is highly regarded for engaging presentations about volcanoes and geologic fieldwork in wild places.



*This presentation is sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Park Service, and the Alaska Historical Society. For more information, please call: Tina Neal, USGS, 907-786-7458*