

## Amazing never-before-seen pictures show aftermath of nuclear test in specially built ghost town just like in Indiana Jones

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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When the eponymous hero stumbles on an eerie abandoned city in 2008 hit *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, it may seem like a classic piece of Hollywood exaggeration.

But in fact the unbelievable scene, showing a deserted ghost town which is the site of a nuclear bomb test, is remarkably true to life.

These extraordinary pictures, most of which have never been seen before, show one of the many towns made and destroyed by the U.S. military in the Nevada desert as part of ongoing nuclear tests during the Cold War.



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**Destruction: A dummy caught in a nuclear attack on a test village in Nevada in May 1955**



**Blown apart: Little survived of this specially constructed house in the aftermath of the bomb blast**

They date from 1955, a time when the threat of nuclear war hung over much of the world and when tests like this one were almost routine in the fierce arms race between America and the Soviet Union.

But the pictures bring home the potential devastation that a nuclear bomb could have visited on a small American town.

They show dummies torn in half lying amidst the debris of shattered houses - even though several of the models still have creepy smiles fixed to their faces.

The aftermath of the test, one of dozens carried out in the South-West throughout the 1950s, also shows that some people could have escaped from a nuclear attack, as some of the dummies are merely burnt without being utterly destroyed.



**Eerie: The shop mannequins used as stand-ins for people end up contorted and damaged**



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**Staying alive: this mannequin is badly burned, but if it were a real man he would probably have escaped death**

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**Shell: The inhabitants of this house would probably not have escaped with their lives**

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However, these were only the early days of nuclear weapons - before the development of the much more powerful hydrogen bomb - so the effects could ultimately have been far worse even than those seen in this simulation.

It was not just the dummies who were being tested in the fake village - the government wanted to find out what effect nuclear weapons would have on the food supply and other vital necessities.

When [LIFE magazine](#) first carried some of the photographs, it wrote: 'The figures were residents of an entire million-dollar village built to test the effects of an atomic blast on everything from houses to clothes to canned soup.'

The remarkable pictures show the destruction which seemed imminent throughout the Cold War - and the resilience which could have enabled humanity to rebuild if the worst had indeed come to pass.





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**Precaution:** This dummy was less hot than others because of her light-coloured dress which deflected heat



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**Bowled over:** These photos show just how fortunate the world was to escape a Cold War nuclear attack



Art imitating life: Indiana Jones visited a similar nuclear test town during his latest adventures

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- [TIME.com: After an Atomic Bomb Test: Rare and Unpublished LIFE Magazine Photos From 1955](#) | [LIFE](#) | [TIME.com](#)



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There's film footage in circulation (it's probably on YouTube) from a secured camera that was set up inside one of the houses. You can see the mannequins beginning to smoulder as the heat flash happens. Creepy. Ignoring the fridge, most of that scene in Indiana Jones was pretty close to what they did back them for tests, except they likely didn't bother leaving a TV set running the way they did in the movie.

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