



MAY 2011 MONTHLY MEETING

Meeting Tuesday May 17th

We close out another year with a program by David B. Williams. Most people don't think of looking for geology from the sidewalks of a major city, but for the intrepid geologist any "good rock" can tell a fascinating story. All one has to do is look at the stone used to construct buildings in downtown business districts to find a range of rocks equal to any assembled by plate tectonics. Furthermore, building stones provide the foundation for focusing on cultural as well as natural history. He will discuss the local stone used around Puget Sound, as well as some of the more exotic rock that has come into the city.

Williams is the author of *Stories in Stone: Travels Through Urban Geology*. Each chapter focuses on a different stone from around the country. To write the book, he traveled to the quarries and stone yards to discuss how people work the rocks; met with historians and preservationists to discuss the social history of the stone; and went out in the field with geologists to discover how the rocks formed and how that influenced the rock's qualities as a building material. Topics range from the 3.5-billion-year old gneiss quarried in Morton, Minnesota to a petrified wood gas station in eastern Colorado to the granite in the Bunker Hill Monument, a use that led to the first commercial railroad in the United States.

Location: We meet at 6:30pm at the Northeast Branch of Seattle Public Library. This is our usual time and place.

Year End Notes

This ends another season of six monthly history talks. We were also pleased to put on our annual Banquet in January and annual March Conference. In September a similar season for 2011-12 will resume. The 2012 will be built around the theme of the Century 21 fair of 1962 and everyone is invited to submit ideas for programs or help by joining an organizing committee this summer. We will have more to say about volunteering and participation at the meeting Tuesday. We are also pleased to mention a forthcoming book by HistoryLink in October.