



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Share What You Know About Tennessee Marble

Saturday April 6 from 1:00pm-4:00pm at Ijams Nature Center

Following a successful session at the East Tennessee History Center earlier this month, local historians are urging members of the public to share personal knowledge, stories, family photographs, photos of marble buildings or other treasures that can be hand carried for show and tell at an informal information gathering session at Ijams Nature Center on Saturday, April 6th, 2013, from 1:00pm-4:00pm.

Many of us know that Tennessee marble has been used in many buildings in Washington, D.C. Three of the four grand staircases leading to the House and Senate Chambers in the United States Capitol are dark cedar (brown variegated marble) from Hawkins County. The exterior light pink marble for the National Gallery of Art and its East Building came from Knox and Blount County quarries. But did you know that the floor of Grand Central Terminal in New York City is dark pink Tennessee marble? And that the Morgan Library was built of a light pink marble likely quarried out of one of the two quarries now property of Ijams?

Will you share your knowledge of the marble industry in East Tennessee with us? Did anyone in your family work in an East Tennessee marble quarry? Do you have any objects made of Tennessee pink, gray, or cedar marble or live in a house that has any interior marble features? We would love to talk with you!

Public historian Susan W. Knowles, Ph.D. and Carroll Van West, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University are visiting quarries and mills around the region, collecting stories and scanning documents and photographs for a survey of the East Tennessee Marble Industry, 1838-1950. Their goal is to bring this important cultural heritage national attention. Maps of former quarry and mill locations will show the extent of marble quarrying in the area. The former Mead and Ross quarries (now part of Ijams Nature Center) will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

This project is a partnership between Ijams Nature Center, the East Tennessee Historical Society, the McClung Historical Collection/Knox County Public Library, the Center for Historic Preservation at MTSU, and Knox Heritage, with a grant from the Tennessee Historical Commission.

For more information contact: Call Paul James @ 865-577-4717 ext. 118 or email pjames@ijams.org or susan.knowles@mtsu.edu.

Ijams Nature Center is a 300-acre urban greenspace encouraging stewardship of the natural world by providing engaging outdoor experiences.