

Building Big

by David Macaulay

By Jim Carlsen, PE, M.ASCE

“David Macaulay, as only he can, engages readers’ imaginations and gets them thinking about structures they see and use every day – bridges, tunnels, skyscrapers, domes, and dams. In Building Big he focuses on the connections between the planning and design problems and the solutions that are finally reached.”

Those are publisher comments that highlight the book distributed by several of the Sections members to area Schools for placement in their junior high or middle school libraries. This book can inspire our future generation of civil engineers. Following are comments of appreciation we received from several of the schools.

Please accept our sincere thanks for the generous donation of the book “Building Big” by David Macaulay. It has greatly enhanced that portion of our library collection and will be enjoyed by our students for a long time to come.

Krista Scioli, Librarian, Kalles Junior High

It was so very thoughtful of you to donate this “Building Big” book to the Bethel Junior High. It is a beautiful book. We appreciate it, and it will certainly be an asset to our current collection.

Marlene Bodwell, Librarian, Bethel Junior High

Thank you for the recent donation of the book Building Big by David Macaulay. While we have several Macaulay titles we did not have any copies of Building Big. This will be an asset to our library collection. I know it will be read by many of our students and staff.

Deborah K. Shultz, Librarian, Nisqually Middle School

Please share with your organization the Olympia School District’s appreciation for the four copies of Building Big by David Macaulay. These books will be distributed to the four middle schools in our school district for check out by students. Your organization’s gift is very generous. David Macaulay is a familiar author for students and I’m sure the books will be very popular.

Dr. Pamela Farr, Assistant Supt. for Educational Services, Olympia School District

Thank you for the recent donation of five books by David Macaulay entitled Building Big. These informative books teach so many interesting facts about building bridges, tunnels, skyscrapers, and dams. Your generous gift will be enjoyed by students in our junior highs for many years to come. In this time of tightened budgets it is reassuring to know we have a supporter in you.

Michael J. Sandner, Director of Arts Education, Bethel School District

Thank you for the generous donation of Building Big to the Griffin School Library. I am sure it will be read and enjoyed for many years.

Chris Wolfe, Librarian, Griffin School

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Please note in the Tacoma Public School Staff Bulletin, the announcement and thanks for your donation of the “Building Big” books to our middle schools. It was a very thoughtful and generous gift and will inspire our students.

Maggi Barrett, Administrative Secretary, Community Relations, Tacoma School District

Following is a reprint of that announcement from the Staff Bulletin.

Many thanks to the Tacoma/Olympia Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers for donating a copy of the “Building Big” book to each of the 10 middle school libraries. This is a companion book to the PBS series aired last spring on Building Big, which highlighted structures such as bridges, tunnels and skyscrapers. It was a very thoughtful and generous donation to inspire a future generation of engineers and designers.

Elaine Twogood, media specialist, Library Services, Tacoma School District

Thanks for the donation of the book “Building Big” to our Spanaway Junior High Library.

Jim Wilson

I want to thank you for this gift. We have purchased most of David Macaulay’s books over the years in each library where I have worked. They have been singularly useful and interesting for my students, and from the earliest days when they were published, have been picked up to research everything from the construction of a castle to the makeup of the structure of the underground of cities, and browsed for their intelligent and aesthetic design. I am sure you know that school libraries have had shrinking budgets over the years. I had not purchased this book and am very grateful that anyone thought to give it to us.

Margaret Wuersten, Librarian, Aylen Junior High School

BUILDING BIG BOOK DONATION

By Jim Carlsen, PE, M.ASCE

Why this shape and not that? Why steel instead of concrete or stone? Why put it here and not over there? These are the kinds of questions that David Macaulay asks himself when he observes a structure. These questions take him back to the basic process of design from which all structures begin, from the realization of a need for the structures to the struggles of the engineers and designers to map out and create the final construction. These basic engineering processes are explored in Macaulay’s Building Big.

Building Big, the book, is the companion to the PBS 5-part series from two years ago that explored bridges, tunnels, skyscrapers, domes, and dams. The Tacoma/Olympia Section was fortunate to receive 42 copies of this book for shipping costs only. As part of the Society’s 150th Anniversary activities, the Section donated these books to area middle or junior high school libraries. School districts to receive a copy or several copies included Bethel, Griffin, Fife-Milton, North Thurston, Olympia, Peninsula, Puyallup, Steilacoom, Sumner, Tacoma, White River, and Yelm.

I extend my appreciation to the following individuals who volunteered to assist with distributing the Building Big books to these libraries:

Chris Beckman

Peter Malsch

Gary Squires

Dennis Walden

I have one copy of Building Big remaining should someone have a school in mind that has not already received a copy. You may contact me at 383-2422. And again, a special thanks to those volunteers that assisted.