

IN THIS ISSUE

- [The Ultimate Archive](#)
  - [Announcements](#)
  - [Book Review](#)
  - [40th Anniversary](#)
  - [In the Spotlight](#)
  - Free Publications
- 

**WRCA: THE ULTIMATE ARCHIVE?**

*by Donald Jackson*

I first visited WRCA because of my interest in the structural form of the multiple arch dam. I also wanted to know more about John S. Eastwood (1857-1924), the engineer who became the most important proponent of this innovative hydraulic technology. This newsletter is not the place to discuss the rationale or ramifications of Eastwood's claim to have developed "The Ultimate Dam" (those interested in this subject may find my recent book, *Building the Ultimate Dam*, worth perusing). But it is an appropriate forum to stress how the Eastwood Papers at WRCA offer a revealing window into both the history of dam building and how water is controlled - physically, legally and professionally - in the American West.

Donated to WRCA by the San Diego-based California Water and Telephone Company (whose founders were colleagues of Eastwood) and accessioned by Gerald Giefer in 1961, the Eastwood papers cover scores of proposed and completed reservoir projects in the early 20th century West. To Eastwood, water storage comprised the key to western economic development and in 1914 he even went so far as to pen the homily: "The California slogan e're should be, that t'is a crime to let our rivers reach the sea." Such a seemingly extreme perspective may not appear particularly enlightened (at least to modern-day environmentalists), but it helps explain why the development of dam design technology consumed all of his professional energies during the last fifteen years of his life. It also helps explain the intense and provocative nature of his engineering career and the reason why his work continues to be of historical interest.

Eastwood's consulting practice engaged him in an expansive range of western water projects covering hydroelectric power, irrigation, municipal water supply, logging, mining, and flood control; in fact, the range of his professional activity mirrors the diverse character of WRCA collections as a whole. Because of the state's economic predominance, most of Eastwood's work focussed on California. For example, he designed and built the Big Bear Valley Dam northeast of San Bernardino and was the engineering visionary behind Southern California Edison's Big Creek hydroelectric power system east of Fresno. His activities also extended throughout the West and, of his 17 dams that reached the construction stage, two were in Idaho along with one each in Utah, Arizona, and British Columbia.

My interest in Eastwood retains a strong focus on technical and professional issues governing how innovation is embraced (or resisted) in the field of dam design. Such debates only have meaning in a larger cultural context. In exploring the world that Eastwood and his ideas inhabited, I came to appreciate the true richness of WRCA's collections.

Some of this involved tracking down data on Eastwood-related projects in the voluminous papers of J. B. Lippincott, Walter L. Huber, or James D. Schuyler; some involved ferreting out documents and insights from little-known papers such as those donated by Andrae Nordskog; and some derived from the vast number of books, pamphlets, and hard-to-find reports that have accrued to WRCA during the past four decades.

The Bottom Line: WRCA offers me (as well as numerous other researchers) a critical mass of scholarship essential to my work. Of course, not everything related to Eastwood can be found at the WRCA and there exists a plethora of data on the world of western water beyond the domain of 4th floor O'Brien Hall. But WRCA stands as a central and vital (would it be too brash to say "ultimate"?) repository of information that anyone interested in the subject of water in the West will find worth visiting and experiencing. Just don't try to get in front of me at the xerox machine...

*Donald Jackson teaches history at Lafayette College, Easton, PA. You can learn more about his book, Building the Ultimate Dam, by visiting <http://ww2.lafayette.edu/~jacksond/ultdam.html>. He recently visited the Archives while researching his next book on John R. Freeman's role in the Hetch Hetchy Dam controversy.*

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**CWWR CELEBRATES 40th ANNIVERSARY**



The [Centers for Water and Wildland Resources](#) celebrated its 40th anniversary with a wine reception and buffet at the Water Resources Center Archives, May 19, 1998.

### **Power Outage Doesn't Dim Centers' Party**

Linda Vida and members of the staffs of WRCA and the Centers for Water and Wildland Resources were making final food preparations for the 40th anniversary party reception, when suddenly the lights went out, the refrigerator ceased its humming and the computer screens went blank. With the reception scheduled to begin in less than two hours and power to the campus off indefinitely, Linda, for the second time that morning, visited the local gourmet market - this time to purchase as many votive candles as she could carry. Buckets of ice would keep the beverages cold, votive candles and natural light would illumine the library; the only thing that couldn't be remedied was power to the elevator. The fifty invited guests would have to climb four flights of stairs to the Archives.

The guests arrived a little winded but quickly entered into the spirit of the festivities enjoying a candlelight wine reception and buffet. On hand for the celebration was Henry Vaux, Associate Vice President, University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources and former Director of the Water Resources Center, Robert Callahan, former Director of the Wildland Resources Center, John Letey, Associate Director of the Centers for Water and Wildland Resources, Rex Woods, Academic Coordinator (retired) of the Centers and Donald C. Erman, the current Director of the Centers for Water and Wildland Resources, University of California at Davis and his staff.

Don Erman welcomed the guests and thanked everyone for their support of the Centers. His remarks included a brief history of the Centers which, until 1993, functioned independently. Adverse fiscal conditions, made it necessary to restructure the Water Resources Center, the Wildland Resources Center, the Salinity/Drainage Research program, and the Water Quality program under one administrative organization, the Centers for

Water and Wildland Resources (CWWR). Don Erman was appointed its first Director. It was a consolidation which made sense since the intellectual content of the Resource Centers was unified just as the properties of water and wildlands are inseparable in the natural world. The mission of CWWR is to stimulate and coordinate research and disseminate information on all aspects of water and water-related issues. It does not conduct research directly but supports an annual portfolio on all phases of water through its competitive grants program. It also funds the Water Resources Center Archives, which maintains an unparalleled collection of research and historical materials.

Earlier this year, Don Erman announced his retirement effective October 1, 1998. When asked about his accomplishments as Director of the Centers, he said, "Whatever legacy I leave has been the successful merging of the different units into a smoothly functioning Centers for Water and Wildland Resources. The Centers have done well in their 40 years in fulfilling the mandate given them by the legislature."

Looking to the Centers' role in the coming decade, Don continued, "It (CWWR) is now moving into the world arena as the home for the Rosenberg International Forum on Water Policy. From all indications, the future's needs for sound science to guide policy will increase, nowhere more so than, in the proper use and protection of natural resources. We must also devote more energy to reducing the time it takes for new knowledge to become implemented in practice."



Don C. Erman, Director of the Centers for Water and Wildland Resources, addresses the guests at the reception celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Centers.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### *After-Hours Book Drop*

Along with Etta James the patrons of WRCA can sing, "At Last," for the Archives has a bookdrop. Located outside O'Brien Hall, the book drop will be open when the library is closed - evenings, weekends and holidays.

### *Gifts*

WRCA wishes to thank the following corporations and individuals for becoming Friends of the Archives:

#### **Benefactors/ \$500 +**

- Central Valley Project Water Association
- Infotrieve Information Systems
- Todd Engineers

#### **Associates/ \$250 +**

- Bechtel Corporation
- John R. Kiefer, Environmental Consultant
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- Landels Ripley & Diamond
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- Montgomery Watson Americas, Inc.
- Gary Weatherford
- Philip Williams & Associates, Ltd.
- IT Corporation/PHR Environmental

#### **Donors/ \$50 +**

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- Laura King

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## BOOK REVIEW

*by Pia Grimes*

*The Spirit of the Soil: Agriculture and Environmental Ethics.* By Paul B. Thompson. Published as part of the Environmental Philosophies Series.

Chicago, Illinois: Routledge, 1995. 196 p.

In *The Spirit of the Soil: Agriculture and Environmental Ethics*, Paul Thompson looks at the past and current relationship between agriculture and the natural environment and asks, "How can this adversarial relationship be improved.?" He offers a unifying concept in sustainability as an agricultural goal.

My sense of dissatisfaction with the treatment of agriculture in environmentally focused writings has become more defined through reading *The Spirit of the Soil: Agriculture and Environmental Ethics*. Thompson, the Director of the Center for Biotechnology Policy and Ethics and Professor of Philosophy and Agricultural Economics at Texas A&M University, seeks not to criticize agriculture, but to improve the relationship between the practice of farming and the natural environment.

The poverty of the current relationship is partially attributed to the apparent disinterest of environmental philosophers, with the qualifier that the common discussion on the unwanted consequences of agriculture has not raised new issues of ethical concern.

Thompson takes a more fundamental look at agriculture through perusal of production as its primary goal. Considering this goal, two responses to the question of why a natural or ecological balance might have ethical significance within agriculture are: eventual disaster for humans (anthropocentric viewpoint), and the intrinsic value or sacredness of nature (ecocentric viewpoint). The distance between these responses does not represent an impasse to Thompson. He proposes reconciliation of necessary agriculture and ecological preservation as a place to begin development of an environmental ethic for agriculture. He proposes a philosophical marriage in the concept of sustainability. Sustainability is described as a desirable outcome of systems which can be approximated and studied through careful modeling. Despite inherent difficulties with the details of modeling natural systems, the global applicability of models makes this description of sustainability attractive, and hopefully, useful.

Thompson's book is informative and provocative. Since he only presents his solution in an undeveloped and untested form, the book is a challenge to those who possess the skills and desire to improve the practice of agriculture.

To obtain a copy of *The Spirit of the Soil: Agriculture and Environmental Ethics*, write to Routledge at P.O. Box 95562, Chicago, Illinois, 60694-5562; or borrow it from the Water Resources Center Archives.

*Pia Grimes is a Graduate Student in the Department of Civil Engineering, Water*

## **IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

*by Kathy Dieden*

**Gary D. Weatherford** practices water and natural resources law. He is a partner in the firm of Weatherford & Taaffe LLP, attorneys at law.

Meeting Gary Weatherford for the first time, one is struck by this soft-spoken, gentle and intelligent man's abilities as a communicator and a facilitator. His active listening skills including his knack for summing up and evaluating all sides of a question without arrogance and his thoughtful feedback are more the hallmark of a minister than a lawyer. Perhaps, it's not so unusual since Gary, in addition to a law degree from Yale University, also earned a degree in Divinity there.

Author and editor of a number of scholarly publications, Gary Weatherford is a sought after speaker at conferences and forums on water and environmental issues. He has made considerable contributions to water law. When recently interviewed for *In the Spotlight*, this is what Gary had to say about his contributions to water law and, what he sees are the key water issues facing California.

Q: What are the contributions you have made to water law of which you are most proud?

A: I was one of the early proponents in the legal community of the "conserve and transfer" approach to water supply management. I co-convened the first retrospective conference on the Colorado River Compact in 1983 that resulted in the book, *New Courses*.

Q: What is meant by the term "hydrocommons"?

A: I coined the word "hydrocommons" to describe the growing interdependency of people, institutions, and ecosystems in the service areas that share the same water source (e.g. Colorado, Sacramento - San Joaquin).

Q: What do you think are the most important water issues facing California in the next 20 to 30 years?

A: Finding ways:

- to make long-term water transfers of supplemental water to cities;
- to restore aquatic environments selectively, where feasible;
- to protect water for economically viable agriculture.

Q: What are some of the probable solutions or remedies for these issues?

A: Solutions:

- Invest in new infrastructure that allows existing water storage and distribution systems in the state to be better integrated and coordinated, in general, and interconnected with conjunctive management sites, in particular;
- Create water banks that can obtain and manage both short-term and long-term commitments from depositors of water; and
- Continue to promote investment in water conservation, recycling, reclamation and desalination technology.

Gary has been a member of the [Friends of the Archives Board](http://lib.berkeley.edu/WRCA/board.html) <<http://lib.berkeley.edu/WRCA/board.html>> since its inception. Linda Vida recalls that when she mentioned she was starting a "Friends" board, Gary volunteered to become a member. "So (Gary) really was our first Board member. Besides being a dedicated Board member, Gary is a donor, and was a member of the Honorary Committee for the Mono Lake fundraising event. He offers excellent advice and suggestions. He's just terrific."

*Kathy Dieden is the editor of WRCA News. She recently was awarded a staff recognition award from U.C. Davis for her outstanding contributions to the [Mono Lake fundraising event](#).*

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