

# Retirees newsletter

March 2004

## RETIREES' RETREAT 2004

### Please Register and Make Your Hotel Reservation Now!

The 2004 Retreat in the Redding area is only 6 months away. Thanks to Bob Harding and his Committee members, we will have several days of interesting and fun-filled activities at our reunion in early October. For those of you not familiar with Northern California, Redding is located approximately 2-1/2 hours north of Sacramento on Interstate 5 (I-5) and about 3-1/2 hours northeast of San Francisco at the north end of the Sacramento Valley. Clair A. Hill founded the "Hill" part of our company in Redding about the same time the "CH2M" part was getting started in Corvallis.

Quoting Bob Harding: Redding lies at the heart of one of the greatest recreational areas in California. Here you will find wide open spaces and abundant opportunities for recreational adventure, the arts, and six state and national parks within a 50-mile radius. For Air Travel, major airlines fly into SFO and then to Redding by shuttle or commuter airline. You can also fly into SAC, then by auto on I-5 to Redding. For those who will be coming from the south or north who prefer to leave the freeway and crazy drivers to others, you can catch the Amtrak Coast Starlight which has daily service (nightly) to Redding, except its arrival and departure times are not very convenient (they are both way past midnight). Those of you who will be arriving by RV/Motorhome there are several places where you can park. Call Judy Mueller for more information at 541-768-3234

We are looking forward to spending a really enjoyable time with old friends and fellow retirees and hope you will be able to join us for our **2004 RETIREEES RETREAT October 5, 6, 7, & 8.**

Please complete the enclosed Registration Form **NOW** and send it in with your check for the activities and events you will attend. Your payment, **EXCEPT** for the **Registration Fee** of \$15 can be refunded up until September 15, in case some unforeseen conflict occurs. **See you in Redding!**

Please also make hotel reservations yourself as needed. The hotel information is shown following the registration form. The following are the updated and final schedule of activities and events from October 5 through 8.

### Tuesday October 5

**7:00 pm** Welcome Dinner at Red Lion Hotel (Headquarters) on Hilltop Drive.

### Wednesday October 6

**Breakfast** on your own.

**8:30 am** Tour bus leaves Red Lion Hotel for Shasta Dam Visitor Center.

**9:00 am** Arrive at Shasta Dam Visitor Center and view film on dam construction.

**9:45 am** Begin tour of interior of Shasta Dam and Powerhouse.

**11:30 am** Depart for cruise boat harbor for cruise on Lake Shasta and a substantial hot lunch with wine or your choice of soft drinks.

**3:30 pm** Depart for Whiskeytown/Clair A. Hill Dam Visitors Center. Joe Patten will review the history of the project while we are traveling. En route, we will view Keswick Dam, Spring Creek Powerhouse, and Spring Creek Debris Dam, which is part of the Iron Mountain cleanup and containment project.

**4:15 pm** Arrive at Whiskeytown/Clair A. Hill Dam Visitors Center. Tour area, including dam and lake.

**5:15 pm** Depart for Red Lion Hotel.

**5:45 pm** Arrive at Red Lion Hotel. **Evening meal and free time are on your own.**

### Thursday October 7

**9:00 am** Breakfast buffet at Red Lion Hotel.

**10:30 am** Tour bus departs for Turtle Bay Museum, Arboretum, and the new award-winning Sun Dial Bridge conceived by architect Santiago Calatrara.

**Lunch** will be catered at the Museum.

**2:30 pm** Tour bus departs for McConnell Foundation Headquarters, located in a beautiful park-like setting approximately 5 miles east of the Museum. There will be a short presentation of the history of the foundation.

**4:00 pm** Depart for the Red Lion Hotel.

**6:00 pm** Bus departs from Red Lion Hotel for social hour and dinner at the picturesque Riverview Golf and Country Club. The Club offers magnificent views of the Sacramento River, golf course, and the western mountains.

**9:00 pm** Bus returns to the Red Lion Hotel.

### Friday October 8

**9:00 am** Farewell buffet breakfast at the Red Lion Hotel.

**Note:** For those of you who are planning on a game of golf Tuesday, October 5, we are in the process of finalizing details and should have costs, etc. in a few weeks. If you are going to play, call Don Fox at 530/275-1416.

## GO EAST, YOUNG FIRM!

by Glenn Rehberger/HRO and George Gunn/PHX

CH2M HILL got its start on the east coast as a result of the success of the South Lake Tahoe PUD AWT plant. The chairman of the Virginia Water Control Board (an ex-nuclear submariner) got the SWCB to adopt a policy for the Occoquan Watershed that required the elimination of 11 small, malfunctioning wastewater treatment plants. The plants were to be replaced by a high-performance plant designed by the firm that designed the South Lake Tahoe plant - CH2M HILL. The firm's longest-term east coast client, the Upper Occoquan Sewage Authority (UOSA), was born. In order to get the job, it was required that we have an office in the vicinity.

There are various versions of the story about how the first east coast office came to be located in the new planned community of Reston. Most versions involve Harlan Moyer, Gene Suhr, and an attractive real estate agent. The end result was the opening of an office located on Isaac Newton Square, in 1971. The office was given the WDC identifier but never was located in Washington, D.C. It was called the "Reston Office." In addition to the work for UOSA, CH2M HILL soon added the design of an AWT plant for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission. Stormwater work followed. The growth in the Isaac Newton Square office could be measured by the changes in carpet color and style in the office space. Gene Suhr's office had a particularly ugly orange shag carpet. During this period many of the firm's leaders and future leaders contributed to our growth on the east coast, including Gene Suhr, John Filbert, George Fisher, Harlan Moyer and Don Evans. During this period the geographic range of CH2M HILL's services grew too, into Maine, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina.

By the end of the 1970s the growth in Reston exceeded the capacity to expand in the Isaac Newton Square location. With George Gunn as the regional manager, a new location designed specifically for CH2M HILL was constructed on Roland Clarke Place. Initially occupying only the upper floor of a two-story building, the firm's success in the then-new hazardous waste remediation business filled the building and resulted in some of the staff working next

door in the Arthur Anderson building. During the growth of the emergent haz-waste business, Ralph Peterson, Bill Dehn, and Nancy Tuor



WDC's current office in Herndon

(among others) worked hard expanding CH2M HILL on the east coast. The merger with BC&E and RGH allowed the WDC office to focus on the more immediate geography.

Having outgrown the office on Roland Clarke Place, the next office was much larger and no longer in Reston. The next move was to 625 Herndon Parkway in the Town of Herndon. The WDC office then occupied an entire two-story building and rather quickly outgrew it.

Currently, the WDC office occupies two full floors and part of another floor in an office building adjacent to Dulles Airport in Herndon (13921 Park Center Road, Suite 600).

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW

### And Where They Have Been

There are currently 689 names on our official corporate retirees list. Many of them had served the firm for more than 20 years by the time they retired. The Newsletter is starting a series dubbed: "WHERE ARE THEY NOW- and where they have been" to honor some of our fellow retirees. The following are three that we have asked to provide us with a sketch of their career, their whereabouts after they retired, and some of the projects they helped to complete.

### Otto Vydra

Most people in the firm, especially the retirees, will remember Otto as Mr. International. Although he didn't start the International Division, he was very instrumental in its development and its successful growth into a significant sector of the CH2M HILL complex. Otto's brief summary of his early years in Europe and subsequent immigration to the USA highlights his key moves leading up to his employment with the firm. His short story about his first exposure to managing a project in the Mid-East is just one of many he can tell about this "different" approach to getting the job done. Our thanks to Otto for sharing his experiences. Here is the summary in Otto's own words:



Otto and Shirley Temple Black

*After retiring from a full-time, 31- year service for CH2M HILL in 1999 I have been dividing my time between Dillon, Colorado, (ski in winter, tennis and hiking in summer) and Prague, Czech Republic, (some tennis but also pool and cards with old high school buddies). When in Colorado I am trying to be occasionally useful in the Denver office, recently helping with a massive proposal for the Iraq reconstruction.*

*How in the world I connected with CH2M HILL? I was born and educated in Czechoslovakia (MS, Civil Eng.). During several years of work it became obvious that, as a son of a small*



manufacturer – thus a “bourgeois”, I had no chance to aspire to a meaningful position. I escaped from Czechoslovakia in 1964 and after several months in Sweden I got a political asylum in the US and took a boat to New York, with little money, except for some bridge-winnings during the trip. But 1964 was a good year for engineers and quickly I got a good job in Chicago with a reputable consulting firm that specialized in Interstate Highway design. After supplemental courses at the University of Illinois and passing my P.E. exam in 1967, I advertised my services; going through the answers I just about skipped this “chemical engineering” firm called CH2M, well aware that chemistry was just about my weakest subject. Eventually they called me for an interview in Seattle. I was so impressed by **Holly Cornell** and the Pacific Northwest, that I accepted the job as a Project Engineer in the Vancouver, Washington, office working for **Gordon Elliott** and **Dan Rowley** on I-205, at a lower salary than I had in Chicago. And I was never sorry for that.

For me, coming from Europe, where you assume that behind each kindness is something lurking, working for this company and encountering people who were just plain decent was probably the greatest thing that happened to me in my professional life. Take **Fred Merryfield**, who called me after the Russian army invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968 and tens of thousands Czechs were leaving the country; he would have a desk for any immigrant Czech engineer who I’d recommend. Take **Ralph Peterson**, who gave me a lecture about the importance of keeping our word when I wanted to back off a disadvantageous agreement that was not confirmed in writing.

In the mid-seventies, while working out of the Portland office, I offered my services to **Les Wierson**, who was starting CH2M HILL International with a big planning job in Saudi Arabia. After a few weeks I landed in Dhahran and immediately realized why there were so few takers of the Saudi job offers. My function was something like a chief engineer and an office manager but that quickly changed once Les and Holly fired the Project Manager. I was asked to fill that function pro tem until we found a planner to take the job. (We were lucky to later identify **Nofal Kasrawi** who served as a P.M. on that and many more future assignments). There was no (contractually promised) office to house 35 people, just a piece of desert, and there was no (contractually committed) 20 percent advance payment from the client. The office we imported from Finland prefab but the advance payment, about \$1.5 million, was the real fun. After months of me trying to pry it from the client, **Gus Pantazi**, the project A.M., asked his Greek friends (working on another job) how they get paid. It’s simple, they said, just let Otto meet Mohammed who will expedite this and future payments for a small consideration of ½ percent of the gross, payable in advance in small used bills. And he needs a Power of Attorney so he can get your check from the client. My eventual meeting with Mohammed in a Riyadh back alley where I gave him an unconditional POA and a bag of small bills was a biggest trepidation of my life. He came through and

it turned out that we had done nothing illegal even in the eyes of the U.S. government.

After that, all international work, including some pretty close calls in Egypt, seemed easy. By 1991 we have completed more than 80 projects in some 40 countries. Toward the end of my career I fulfilled a dream of landing a good-sized job in my old country and have opened a CH2M HILL office in Prague. And I have been blessed with friendship of a number of people from all corners of the world.

### Carol G. Wilkinson, Corporate Secretary

Carol was born in Scotland, and graduated from high school in Edinburg. She served in the British Army during WWII, serving in Wales, England, Naples, Venice, Vienna, celebrating VE Day in Rome. As she says, “Such Excitement.” Her mother served as the stewardess and only woman aboard the SS President Harrison when it was



Carol Wilkinson

captured by the Japanese off the coast of Shanghai. After Carol’s discharge from the service she met an Englishman, Tom Wilkinson, who was vacationing in England from his job in Albany, Oregon. They became engaged and following her immigration to Oregon they were married. In 1967 Carol was hired as the Corvallis Management Team’s Secretary, assisting the Office Manager, Chief Financial Officer, and other corporate leaders. When the corporate offices relocated to Denver, Carol moved there as well.

Carol’s brief summary of her life story with emphasis on her experiences during WWII is aptly presented in a three page well-written document prepared for this newsletter, but was too long to be included in its entirety. If anyone would like a full copy of Carol’s very interesting biosketch, send an email to Ken Bielman at [bielman@pioneer.net](mailto:bielman@pioneer.net) and he will forward a copy to you. The following is the abridged version of Carol’s biosketch:

Tom and I were married in Newberg, Oregon, in 1953. Our first home was in Lebanon, OR, and then we bought a dairy farm in Millersburg, OR. Our only child, Cherie, was born in 1960. I gave up work then, and this was my first “retirement.” Unfortunately, Tom died of cancer in 1961. I sold the farm and moved into Albany. Not long after I heard through Della Hickey that CH2M was looking for a secretary. I remember being extremely impressed when Mike Fisher and Della Hickey interviewed me at the Corvallis Country Club. I got the job and started working for Mike Fisher. When I saw the box of an office I had to share with Betty Holbrook who was Fred Merryfield’s assistant, I realized why I was interviewed at the

*Club! Perhaps had I seen the office first I might have turned down the job, and you wouldn't be reading this now!*

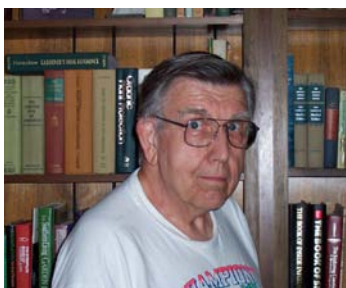
*I moved to Corvallis soon after getting the job at CH2M and then in 1982 I was asked to go to Denver with Corporate, which I did. Cherie joined me a year after I had moved, and she is still there. I don't believe I ever liked Denver - the sudden snow storms a half an hour after it showed the temperature was 65 degrees. My second "retirement" came in 1986 when I returned to Oregon. I moved to an area close to King City and although I have moved twice since then, I am within two miles of where I first moved.*

*I was offered a job with a secretarial service in down town Portland, where I worked for two years or so. It ended when the owner sold the business and the new owner didn't need any help. I thought perhaps I had "retired" again, but got the offer of a job at another secretarial service in Tualatin. The owner hired me because I was older than she was! When she sold the business, the new owner hired me, but she finally gave up the office. I thought I had really retired then, but no, two of her clients asked me if I would work directly for them - a husband and wife, both clinical psychologists-transcribing their tapes. So here I am still working at the age of almost 84, with no thoughts of retirement again, so far!*

*I have many fond memories of my days at CH2M HILL. I was given lots of opportunities to better myself-especially the support I got as a member of Professional Secretaries International, and in my endeavors and success in becoming a Certified Professional Secretary. I made many friends at CH2M and still keep in touch with quite a few.*

## Roger Yorton, Project Scientist

Roger joined the firm (BC&E then) on November 1, 1971. After more than 30 years service, he has recently retired. He originally started as laboratory manager in Gainesville, then he was reassigned to our water group in the 1980's after the laboratory in Gainesville separated from CH2M HILL.



Roger Yorton

In addition to the support in treatment processes of water projects, the interesting work he has participated in was designing, building and operating pilot plants for water treatment projects. He built two pilot plant trailers and traveled around the country doing pilot studies. He got to know many people in various offices and was known as "Mr. Pilot Plant". The following is "Where He Is" now.

*During my first year of retirement I actually worked about half time cleaning up projects, mostly pilot studies, that were already underway. Since then requests for my services have dropped significantly. In the past year I have consulted on*

*some laboratory designs and a couple of treatability studies. I still teach the lime soften class at Florida's semiannual short school for water treatment plant operators. In fact, I just completed the spring session yesterday.*

*During my infrequent visits to the Gainesville office my old friends always ask: "Are you staying busy?" I guess they are concerned for my mental health. My reply is always the same. "There is no down side to retirement."*

*Although I truly enjoyed my career at CH2M HILL I am now enjoying the freedom to pursue my long-time hobbies, gardening and wood working. Both hobbies have an element of problem solving that I found stimulating at CH. Retirement has allowed time to become a Master Gardener volunteer for the Alachua County Extension Service. The MG volunteers perform various tasks to help the extension agents. We call it extending extension. My niche has been to teach classes on basic vegetable gardening to various groups. I even have a gig at Home Depot this Saturday. I am also a docent for our local botanical garden. This experience has helped me cram more information about plants into my brain than I ever thought possible. Kanapaha Botanical Garden is the second largest botanical garden in the state of Florida but it is not well known. Someone came up with the idea to develop a slide show to help promote the garden to local groups. I volunteered to lead an effort to produce a multi-media program. Mind you, I know next to nothing about multi-media. However, the leadership skills that I absorbed over some 30+ years at CH has been a real help in coordinating the efforts of some very talented people who know exactly what to do in their own area of expertise but haven't a clue how to deliver a project. Thanks CH2M HILL it's been a great run.*

## Travel

### Moscow (Enroute Home from India)

by Arlen Borgen

When my daughter Heather and I were approaching time to leave India for home, we stopped by the Russian Aeroflot office. It seems we could change our ticket to stop for three days in Moscow on an in-flight visa at no airline cost. A nice policy for travelers. All we had to do was get the visa from the Russian embassy in Delhi. It was a chicken and egg situation. We did not want to change our ticket unless we had the visa and the visa required us to have a ticket with In and Out flights. We also had been advised hotel accommodations were needed. Our solution was to hire a taxi at a mileage rate as we could see it was going to be a merry-go-round. First off, the travel agencies wanted money up front in US \$. We solved that by going to a Sheraton Hotel and booked a room with a credit card with the option to cancel. The airline approved our ticket change as the departure from Russia did not change and the embassy took our passports for a day plus \$50 to issue the visa.

Arriving in Moscow, green like the Pacific Northwest in July, the Russian taxi touts were waiting. \$120 to go into the downtown Sheraton. No way, we said and they lowered their price to \$60. Agreeing, they led us to their taxi, a beat-up old Chevy-looking car. When they tried to get our bags in the trunk, it would not open. Finally they got a crow bar to pry the lid. After getting our bags in the trunk, amazingly it closed tight. If you have ridden in a car with "shot" shocks and soft springs, you can imagine our ride into city center. The trunk did open though, when we got to the hotel.

From the hotel we walked a few blocks to the entrance to the subway. The subway system map gave us an idea of where to catch our train, but the intersection of several subway lines means the lines are stacked on top of one another and going underground with twisting stairs and multiple loading platforms is confusing. It was a time to ask directions...in English in Moscow. We'd keep asking until we found someone who understood, then off to the next point of confusion. The Russians were courteous and went out of their way to help whenever we found they spoke English. The subway is definitely not a place to be timid about getting help.

Arriving at our stop close to the Kremlin, we took the escalator to the surface street and walked the short distance to Red Square. From dress and sound it was very apparent Red Square and the Kremlin are world-wide attractions. We had arrived early in the morning to do our sightseeing and that proved fortunate as once inside the Kremlin walls we went directly to the Armory, which surprisingly is minimally related to armor and is mostly exhibits of treasures from the time of the Czars. By the time we were back out on the grounds, long lines had formed for the Armory. Ambling about the Kremlin grounds is a pleasure, with several large church structures with their ornate domes, the Faberge egg collection, and miscellaneous items like the Czar's cannon. Back outside the Kremlin walls and strolling Red Square there are Lenin's tomb and St. Basil's cathedral to explore. Then right alongside the square is the huge department store with many shops and eating places on multiple levels. A fun place to just browse and enjoy a snack.

Our stay in Moscow was short, as one day was the afternoon arriving day and another was the morning departure day. So if you have a three-day, in-transit stopover, remember to look at your arrival and departure times. And be sure to take a sweater and jacket even in summer, as Moscow at almost 56 degrees north is more than 100 miles closer to the pole than Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

## HOTEL INFORMATION

The Red Lion Hotel has reserved 25 rooms for the CH2M HILL retirees and will offer the rooms at a discount rate of \$89.00, plus tax. When calling for reservations, tell them you are with CH2M HILL.

Following are some accommodations available in Redding, California.

<i>Red Lion Hotel</i>	<i>Oxford Suites</i>
<b>Headquarters Hotel</b>	2 beds - \$85.00, plus tax
2 beds - \$89.00, plus tax	1-800-762-0133
1-800-733-5466	

<i>Best Western Hilltop Inn</i>	<i>Holiday Inn</i>
Single - \$79.00	2 beds - \$95.00, plus tax
Double - \$94.00	1-800-626-1900
530-221-6100	

All of the above hotels are located on Hilltop Drive (see map).

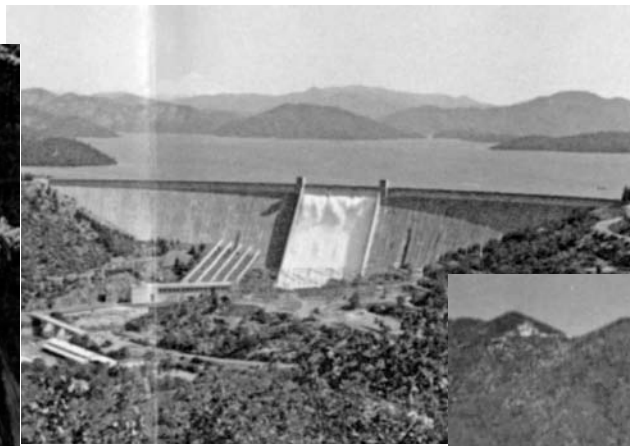
Additional detailed information will become available soon at the Retreat Website [www.alumni.ch2m.com/redding](http://www.alumni.ch2m.com/redding) that is currently under construction. While it is not yet available, please keep trying to access it over the next few weeks and the most current information regarding the 2004 Retreat will be at your fingertips.







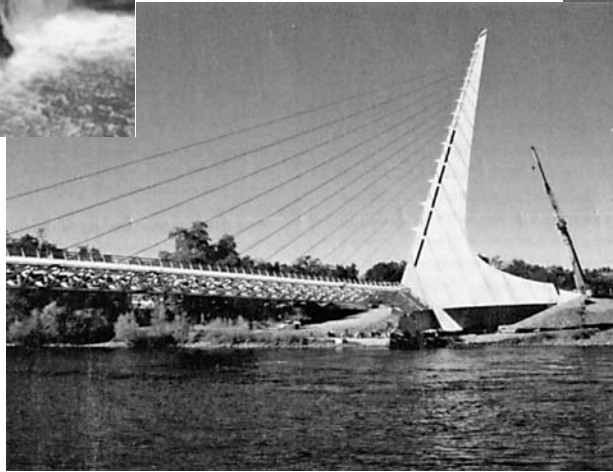
Burney Falls



Shasta Dam



Whiskeytown Lake



Calatrava Bridge



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## RETIRES' RETREAT 2004

Complete the registration form and  
mail with your check to Judy Mueller/CVO