

Archie Rice



In Celebration of His Life

June 17, 1917 - September 3, 1995

Archie H. Rice was born and raised in Portland, Oregon, graduated from Grant High School, and attended Albany College and Reed College as a chemistry student before attending Oregon State College, from which he graduated in sanitary engineering in 1941. He and Jane Reed Rice have two children, Judy and Jeff, and two grandchildren, James and Janell.

His professional life started as a carpenter, assisting his father in the construction of houses. Following college, he worked for a San Francisco firm in Medford on the design of the sewage treatment facilities for Camp White, Oregon. Following that, he became an assistant state sanitary engineer. Then, as a civilian employee of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers he was responsible for the operation of the water and sewage treatment plants, incinerators, and water and sewage systems for Camp Adair, Oregon. In the latter part of World War II, he served as an officer in the U.S. Army Sanitary Corps as Sanitary Officer and Medical Inspector for Warner Robins Airfield, Georgia. Archie was a registered professional engineer in Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Idaho.

Archie was a key figure in the early development of CH2M HILL, becoming a major force in laying the strong foundations upon which the firm has had dramatic development for nearly 50 years. He joined the firm soon after it was founded in 1946, and by 1950 was one of six equal partners who headed the organization in the early formative years. His work as the partner-in-charge of all water treatment design for the firm made him internationally known. Archie had an incisive mind that he applied with equal vigor to technical analysis and design, business problems, and to having fun. He had a great sense of humor.

A major achievement for Archie and the team he assembled was developing the MicroFLOC multimedia water filtration process, for which key features were patented. The MicroFLOC process became the standard for high quality water treatment. He temporarily left the firm for 5 years to become president and general manager of Neptune-

MicroFLOC Corporation when this CH2M subsidiary was sold to the Neptune Meter Company. However, for each of the 5 years he was at MicroFLOC he was elected to the CH2M board. Not only was the MicroFLOC process an important breakthrough in water treatment, but this innovation was a key feature in the Lake Tahoe Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant design. The Lake Tahoe project became the single most important project in making CH2M HILL a nationally recognized organization.

Upon returning to CH2M in 1970, Archie became executive vice president. Prior to the merger with Clair A. Hill and Associates, he had the inspiration for a matrix organization that combined technical excellence with responsive client service. He championed moving from a partnership to a corporation, having no owners over age 65, expanding the company ownership, creating a subsidiary (OMI) for the operation of municipal utilities, and many other business-related innovations.

He also undertook major client projects. Twice in the 1970s, Jane and Archie moved to San Francisco, where Archie was the project director for expanding San Francisco's 90-million-gallons-per-day Southeast Wastewater Treatment Plant. An early phase of the project involved a major and important pilot plant project, which he managed in San Francisco and was the basis for design. Archie was the recipient of the American Water Works Association George W. Fuller Award for distinguished service in the water supply field. He was also a diplomate in the American Academy of Sanitary Engineers.

Archie's sense of humor was well known. It was he who organized the "CH2M Nimble Nimrod" annual fishing trips, and he played Santa for many years at the annual Christmas dinner. Without fanfare, he quietly helped many people through difficult times, and aided individuals of promise in developing their potential.

Donations in his memory may be made to Benton Hospice Service, Inc., P.O. Box 100, Corvallis, 97339.