



Walla Walla District employees gathered in front of the Headquarters building on Sept. 11 in remembrance of those who perished or were wounded in the events of one year ago. Pictured top left is Carl Knaak, Operations Division; right and lower left is Maj. Harry Cunningham, Deputy District Engineer, addressing the events of that day. Maj. Cunningham was assigned to the Pentagon at that time. (Photos by Gina Schwetz)

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FROM WHERE I SIT

Welcome back to the Walla Walla District monthly newsletter, **“The Intercom.”**

Many of you have asked me to resurrect this publication as a way to brag about our accomplishments to each other. Here it is! This is your newsletter. Submit your photos and articles to the Public Affairs Office for inclusion every month. PAO will work with you to get it right, but they won't do it for you.

One of the first changes I have implemented is to eliminate the “Commander's Corner” column. Most have you have heard me say, “what you see depends on where you sit”. The column that will replace the “Commander's Corner” will be called “From Where I Sit”. I will still contribute my thoughts periodically, but I'm sure you don't want to hear from me every month. Instead, I've invited the executives, staff office chiefs, and even YOU, to submit columns for consideration. Articles must be constructive in nature; whining is not permitted.

I have just completed my tour of the District, finishing



Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis, Jr.

with the Regulatory Office in Idaho Falls.

I am impressed not only with the diversity of our mission, but with the caliber of people we have out there executing it. Thanks for all you do for our nation.

For those of you who have not heard my town halls, let me reiterate my priorities during my command tour:

1 — Security/Safety — Nothing we do at work or at home is worth the life, limb, or vision of an employee or visitor.

NOTHING. Slow down and do it right.

2 — Get the word out — The Corps has been beaten up in the media long enough. It is the mission of every one of us to make sure the public knows the great things we do for the country and our community. This may be through your direct immediate contact with a visitor or by working with PAO for more formal and sensitive issues.

3 — Have fun — Life is short. Enjoy your family and your profession. You should enjoy coming to work. Every day should be a Monday.

Many of you have contacted me regarding problems you've noticed or criticisms you have of the District. I appreciate the input, but would like to remind everyone that every time you bring forth a problem, you should also try to bring forth a solution. You are best at determining how to make your job better. Use your “Just Do It” card and do it!

Thanks for the great welcome. I am happy to be here.

**LTC Ed Kertis,
District Commander**

First chief of Operations passes

Richard L. Earnheart, first chief of Operations Division at Walla Walla District, died on Sept. 25.

Earnheart, 97, was a lifetime Hermiston, Ore., resident. He was born at Pendleton and graduated from high school there. In 1927 he graduated from Oregon State College where he majored in electrical engineering.

He began his engineering career with General Electric at Schenectady, NY.

In 1929 he moved west and took a job with Bonneville Power in Portland and soon began working with the Corps at Bonneville Dam in the

drafting room.

Earnheart's federal service from 1935 - 1965 included positions at Bonneville Dam, the Hydroelectric Design Branch of the North Pacific Division and McNary Dam. As McNary Project Engineer he supervised installation and operation of the hydroelectric power plant. He also directed activities that resulted in remote control of Snake River Projects. He was chief of Operations at his retirement.

Earnheart also served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, had service in World War II in Italy and Africa, and was an Army Reserves colonel.

Permission Slip

Ask yourself:

- Is it right for my customers?
- Is it legal and ethical?
- Is it something I'm willing to be accountable for?
- Is it consistent with my agency's mission?
- Am I using my time wisely?

Is the answer yes to all of these questions?

If so, don't ask permission, you already have it.

JUST DO IT!

Message to the Commander

In your town hall talk here at Dworshak you stated that you wanted to bring forth local events and to show what our personnel are doing. Well, here is one person who has answered your call. Her name is Heather Burke Park Ranger at Dworshak Dam.



She was called upon to do something with the 9-11 at the armory here at Orofino. The city of Orofino Council proclaimed 9-11 a day for Emergence Response. Within a week she had a plan and set out to execute it. I was asked to do the 9-11 speeches as I was there. While there the whole day she projected a positive attitude to all.

Heather was scheduled to have a relief at 12:30 p.m. and there was a problem with her relief she never wavered.

I for one was very proud to have worked with Heather and I have informed her boss of this. In these times when we see and hear so many negative things. It's great to see some sun light at the end of the tunnel.

Erick Knotts, Dworshak

Intercom



The **INTERCOM** is an unofficial publication authorized by the provisions of Army Regulation 360-1. It is published by the Public Affairs Office, Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has a distribution of 1,500 copies. This is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of **INTERCOM** are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Walla Walla District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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Top ten issues in Northwestern Division

Headquarters USACE recently asked me to nominate the top 10 issues facing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In a *perfect* world, all of us in the Northwestern Division would have gotten together and thrashed this out. But in the *real* world I had to identify my list, vet it with my District Engineers, and then send it back to D.C. So the list you see below reflects the collective judgment of your commanders. This is just the Northwestern Division input — I have no idea how the collective Corps input will turn out. But I wanted to share it with you.

How would you have responded? Don't hesitate to let me know if you get the urge. I am a key click away at David.A.Fastabend@usace.army.mil.

Top Ten nominations follows. Thank you for the extraordinary things you do for the nation, every day, in every task you undertake. We need you now more than ever!

BG David Fastabend Commander and Division Engineer Northwestern Division

- Corps Reform / National Water Policy.
- Aging Infrastructure - Strategic Communications – external and internal.
- People.
- Transformation Installation Management.
- Missouri River Master Manual.
- Salmon Recovery.
- Cost of Doing Business with the Corps – perceived / actual.
- Learning Organization.
- Native American Cultural Resources.
- Project Management Business Process or PMBP.

LETTERS

LTC Kertis,

Sir, I want to thank you for a great visit to the Walla Walla District.

I appreciate all the hospitality and courtesy that was extended to me. I really enjoyed the opportunity to talk with and spend time with so many of our USACE employees. The dedication that everyone in the Walla Walla District has for serving our Nation and the United States Army Corps of Engineers made a big impression on me. I was very impressed with the tremendous morale that I saw at every location.

The Chief's three pillars of people, process, and communications works very well in the Walla Walla District.

The attention to detail and concern for safety that I saw everywhere was superb. I was also very impressed with the

tremendous relationship that the Walla Walla District has with its stakeholders and community partners. It is obvious that everyone in the Walla Walla District works relationships very hard and that your Public Affairs Office is doing a great job in telling the Walla Walla District story. Your facilities and structures really look good and set a very high standard. I witnessed many examples of tremendous team building efforts. The concern for the environment was evident everywhere.

Sir, again, thanks for a great visit and a clear demonstration that people are the most important piece of the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

Essayons!

CSM Robert M. Dils

Command Sergeant Major

(Editor's note: See related article on page 6).

LoMo stilling basin repairs begin

Story and photos by Gina Schwetz

From the shoreline, it doesn't look like much is happening at Lower Monumental Dam, but just below the water's surface, workers race against impending seasonal weather to repair the stilling basin on the downstream side of the dam.

Walla Walla District dam safety officials identified two large holes worn by erosion in the stilling basin. One of the holes extends through five feet of concrete and a couple of feet into the bedrock, according to Spillway Stilling Basin Erosion Repair Project Manager Everett Wright, in Engineering Division. The spillway stilling basin erosion has been monitored closely as a dam safety concern since 1996. During this period the area of erosion significantly increased.

"The stilling basin floor is a big concrete pad that extends from the spillway downstream about 175 feet," said Wright.

"These holes were ground out by gravel and rocks drawn into the basin by reverse currents that occur during spill. Over the years, the rock debris has been rolled around down there, pounding and grinding away at the concrete."

The exposure of bedrock beneath the basin brought to light a dam safety issue – during high spill events water pressure through natural fissures in the exposed bedrock can create uplift pressure under the dam, according to Wright.

"It's not an immediate threat to safety, but it needs to be fixed before it gets worse. This repair project will help us keep a safe dam safe," said Wright. "If the basin went without repairs, erosion would continue creating bigger and deeper holes, causing a greater impact on the safety of the dam."



Steve Tatro, civil engineer, goes over stilling basin project schematics with construction owner Steve Goebel during a partnering meeting.

Robert B. Goebel Construction, Inc. of Spokane, Wash., won the \$3.4 million erosion repair contract at Lower Monumental. The contract includes underwater repairs of erosion-damaged concrete in the spillway stilling basin and construction of spillway deflectors on two spill bays to



District project team members get an up-close look at construction progress below the spillway.

improve conditions for juvenile fish.

While the repair site and the progress of the job are hidden from view below the water, workers can be seen on the surface just below the dam's spillway.

A barge floats several yards out from the row of eight spillway bays making a platform for drillers to work from as they extend metal tubes through holes on the deck, into the water, and down to the concrete bed of the stilling basin. The tubes guide the drills that make the anchor holes through the concrete basin and into bedrock.

The drillers install steel anchor rods in the holes and fill them with cementitious grout to firmly attach them into the bedrock. Divers then inspect the anchors and attach steel plates on top of each anchor rod. Once the concrete is placed, the anchors extending into the bedrock will hold the new concrete patch in place over the eroded areas.

The drilling and rebar process takes time – a commodity that is quickly running out as icy winter weather approaches. Contractors and District officials compare notes regularly during partnering meetings to discuss obstacles they've encountered that may impact their mid-November target to pour concrete.

While participating in partnering meetings is optional for contractors, company owner Steve Goebel said he considers the meetings necessary for successfully completing the project on time.

The project is slated for completion in mid-February, including the installation of spillway deflectors. The repair work will be confined to the immediate area of the dam and should not affect recreational or commercial activities on the river.

Lower Granite Dam personnel perform head-to-toe turbine maintenance

by Gina Schwetz

Parts to clean, worn areas to repair, some pieces to replace, and then put it all back together again. For mechanics and electricians at Lower Granite Dam, disassembling, repairing and reassembling a generating unit presents a rare challenge as well as a golden opportunity.

“When the Kaplan blades on our unit four started to perform erratically due to an internal hydraulic leak during August 2001, mechanics made a temporary fix and got it back into service,” said Rob Lustig, a mechanical engineer at Lower Granite’s operations and maintenance office. “But, that repair was only intended to be temporary.”

A Bonneville Power Administration large capital project proposal was developed to obtain funding from BPA to repair the unit using in-house maintenance personnel to do the work.

District experience was used by bringing in John Berglin, a project engineer in construction division, to direct the work and Lyle Calhoun, a rigger at Lower Monumental Dam, served as working foreman. The crew started taking apart the unit in July.

“We’re pretty excited about doing this maintenance repair job,” said Lustig. “Usually, this type of work on a turbine is contracted out. Even though we are responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of the turbines, we seldom get the chance to be involved in the full-blown, pull-everything-apart jobs. It’s proving to be a fantastic training opportunity for our mechanics.”

“The most challenging aspects of this project were coordinating to get the tools we needed and working with project maintenance personnel who

have not previously been involved in a unit teardown,” said John Berglin.

“It’s been fun to see the enthusiasm of our crew to get this unit disassembled – we beat our initial disassembly schedule by a week and a half.”

Workers took apart the unit from the oil head down to removal of the generator rotor and the intermediate shaft that connects the rotor and turbine.

Maintenance crews will spend the next six to eight weeks cleaning each nut, bolt, lever, pipe and spring while reassembling the turbine unit.

“We expect to have everything put back together and running by mid-December,” said Lustig.



Photo by John Berglin

Maintenance personnel watch while the rotor is hoisted from the rotor pit.



Photo by Gina Schwetz

Mechanics (from right) Glen Tauscher, Matt Dinoto and Michael Heaton use solvent to clean unit four parts.



Photo by Rob Lustig

Mechanics quickly and simultaneously heat all sides of the thrust collar of unit four, causing it to expand for removal.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Top Army Corps of Engineers noncom visits District headquarters, project sites in Washington, Oregon, Idaho

by Dutch Meier

The top enlisted soldier in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers visited the Walla Walla District and most of its facilities in Washington, Oregon and Idaho in August.

He serves as the primary advisor to the Chief of Engineers on enlisted soldier and civilian employee concerns.

The key topics of interest and conversation for Command Sergeant Major Robert M. Dils are quality of life, worker and workplace safety, and employee welfare and morale.

Dils' visit began with a town hall meeting with the District's workforce at the headquarters in Walla Walla this morning. For the rest of the week, he will visit Corps dams and facilities on the Columbia and Snake and Clearwater rivers. He will meet with the workforce and with project leaders at numerous sites, and be available to



CSM Dils met with Dworshak personnel and was given a tour of the dam and recreation areas by Natural Resource Manager Paul Pence and Wildlife Biologist Russ Davis.

media outlets at various stops in the region.

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert M. Dils entered the U.S. Army in 1971 as a draftee. He completed Basic Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina and Advanced Individual Training as a Pioneer at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

He has completed tours of duty at Camp Indian, Korea; Fort Belvoir, Virginia; Stuttgart, Germany; New Kensington, Pennsylvania; Karlsruhe, Germany; Fort Riley, Kansas; Camp Howze, Korea; Fort Shafter, Hawaii and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. In addition, he has completed multiple overseas deployments to Honduras, Bolivia, and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Command Sgt. Maj. Dils has served as a Squad Leader, Fire Team Leader, Service School Instructor, Recruiter, Station Commander, Platoon Sergeant, Operations Sergeant, First Sergeant, Operations Sergeant Major, Battalion Command Sergeant Major, Group Command Sergeant Major, Brigade Command Sergeant Major, Training Center Command Sergeant Major, and Installation Command Sergeant Major. His last duty assignment was Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center and Fort Leonard Wood.

He has attended numerous service schools and holds associate's and bachelor's degrees, and is working on a master's degree in public administration. He holds many military awards and decorations, as well as marksmanship honors from the German army.

McNary Dam hydropower turbine shut down when smoke detected

Turbine number six was shut down on Sept. 18 when an employee detected smoke and activated fire suppression systems. The powerhouse was evacuated and employees sent home

while the smoke was evacuated from the powerhouse. Cause of the fire was a braking system that had malfunctioned, said Roger Golladay, chief of maintenance at McNary. Pictured left is Golladay pointing at the mechanism that failed and right is Denny Johnson, powerplant mechanic, cleaning and repairing damage. The unit is expected to be back on line after repairs are made. (Photos by Gina Schwetz)



AROUND THE DISTRICT

District commander meets co-commander of historic expedition

The commander of the Northwestern Division, and the outgoing and the incoming commanders of Walla Walla District were certainly expected to show up at the change of command ceremony held in July at Hood Park, outside of the Tri-Cities.

But, the appearance of one of the co-commanders of the Lewis and Clark Expedition was not expected. Immediately following the ceremony, Captain William Clark arrived to welcome Lieutenant Colonel Edward Kertis as he took the reigns of the district on the threshold of the bicentennial of the historic Lewis and Clark Expedition.

As he ceremonially handed a Jefferson Peace Medal to Lt. Col. Edward Kertis, Captain Clark was heard to say,

"Just as Captain Lewis and I gave these peace medals to the Chiefs of the Indian nations of this land 200 years ago, it is an honor to give this to you as you take command of the Walla Walla District. Every time you look at it, reflect on the fact that you have the privilege of being in command during the first half of the Bicentennial of our now historic expedition." Walla Walla District will play a substantial role in the bicentennial as managers of the Clearwater and Snake Rivers and part of the Columbia River, all part of the Lewis and Clark Trail.

Captain Clark, portrayed by Craig Rockwell, a Corps of Engineers employee on loan as a Liaison



Photo provided by Craig Rockwell

Capt. William Clark (Craig Rockwell) presents Lt. Col. Edward J. Kertis, Jr., District commander with a replica of the Jefferson Peace Medal.

to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Caucus of the U.S. Congress, makes appearances at many events nationwide these days.

More information on the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, is available on the Corps' Web site at <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/lewisandclark/news.html>.

In the Walla Walla District, the point of contact is Phil Bengé, Outdoor Recreation Planner in Operations Division.

Contact him to find out how you can help.

Corps putting together list of speakers for Lewis and Clark Commemoration

The Corps is putting together a list of personnel that would be willing to speak at a variety of venues during the upcoming Lewis and Clark Commemoration, 2003 - 2006.

"This is an opportunity for Corps personnel to discuss their work, how it relates to the Lewis and Clark Expedition and educate the public on exactly what we do," said Jeannine M. Nauss, the Corps' coordinator for the commemoration. More information and an application is available on the Corps' Lewis and Clark Website at:

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/lewisandclark/news.html>

The District coordinator for the Lewis and Clark commemoration is Phil Bengé, Outdoor Recreation Planner in Operations Division.

Best of Show

Ann Glassley, an engineering technician in Operations Division, took best of show at the Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days, held Labor Day Weekend, with her hand-crocheted shawl. (Photo by Ann Glassley).



FOCUS ON THE DISTRICT

Logistics staff support keeps the District equipped, running

by Alan Butts,
Chief, Logistics Management

Logistics has nine employees that support your organization for travel, transportation, storage space, headquarters building management, office supplies and property accountability.

In 1993 Logistics had eighteen employees. Disposal was located at Ice Harbor Dam, office supplies was provided thru a self service supply window, the motor pool consisted of 200 Corps-owned vehicles and the Core Shack was used as our warehouse.

Today, disposal and warehousing is in one building at 725 E Street and called Logistics Annex. Orin Thomas is our disposal officer with 18 years of federal service and is ready to help with your excess equipment, scrap metal, paper recycling and donation to schools program.

We closed the motor pool, contracted out maintenance reduced the fleet to 150 vehicles then converted to GSA.

Larry Lewis your fleet manager and Clive Griffy, vehicle dispatcher combine their 22 years of experience to assist with vehicles.

Building ownership means maintenance, plumbing, heating and cooling, vending machines, custodial, window washing, conference room reservations, workstation modifications, building configurations and snow and ice removal to name a few.

Betty Asbjornsen and Tami Vance have a combined 42 years of experience to provide for all of your building management needs.

Travel has gone through many changes. CEFMS has automated the travel order/voucher process so we no longer have to handcarry travel documents. Payments for vouchers average three days compared to 30 days in 1994. Tami will assist you with all your TDY travel and freight shipments.

Permanent Change of Station was moved to Logistics from Human Resources in 1995 when we processed six orders per year. We now initiate 45 PCS orders per year. Bob Minden has 30 years experience and is our expert for PCS questions.

Property accountability was enhanced with Automated Personal Property System many years ago but adding CEFMS allowed us to interface PR&Cs, improve accountability and reduce workload.

Betty Asbjornsen is the Property Book Officer. She is aided by Kim Hazelton who has worked 18 years for the federal government.

Bob Minden also helps with mandatory sources, working with construction equipment purchases to round out his duties.

Providing office supplies is vital to your



Tami Vance and Betty Asbjornsen and other LMO employees recently assembled 40 new chairs for the District headquarters' conference room. (Photo by Gina Schwetz)

operation. Dave VanDewark has over 23 years experience and has provided the best user friendly system possible within operating constraints. We have received many comments from employees that have transferred here from other districts who rave about how easy it is to get supplies with no hassle.

Logistics Management Office has accumulated over 188 years for the federal government and are still striving to improve quality, reduce cost and deliver service sooner.

Walla Walla Facts

The Walla Walla District staff provides engineering, environmental, and planning services to the inland northwest from McNary Dam on the Columbia River to the mouth of the Snake River near the Tri-Cities, Washington, to the headwaters in Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming.

DAMS: The Walla Walla District staff operates five large multipurpose hydropower dams that provide navigation, recreation, and fish and wildlife benefits. This includes: McNary Lock and Dam on the Columbia River and four lock and dams on the lower Snake River — Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose, and Lower Granite. Flood storage projects include Dworshak and Lucky Peak Dams in Idaho and Mill Creek Dam in Washington.

ENVIRONMENT: An important environmental responsibility of the District is improving fish passage at Corps dams to aid the recovery of endangered salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River Basin.

FLOODING: Protecting lives and property from flooding is a key mission for the District.

HYDROPOWER: The Walla Walla District is the second largest hydropower producer in the Corps, providing a total generating capacity of 4,413 megawatts to the Federal Columbia River Power System.

NAVIGATION: The District designed, built, and operates some of the highest lift locks in the world, with an average lift of more than 100 feet, providing a navigable waterway 400 miles inland to Lewiston, Idaho.

REGULATORY: Walla Walla District's regulatory jurisdiction covers the entire state of Idaho. Anyone wanting to conduct work in navigable waters or wetlands, need a permit from the Corps before beginning the project.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT: Disaster-related activities include emergency preparedness and flood-fighting assistance to local governments within the District's boundaries, throughout the Nation, and around the world.

RECREATION: The District receives more than 7.5 million visitors a year to its seven lakes and recreational areas.