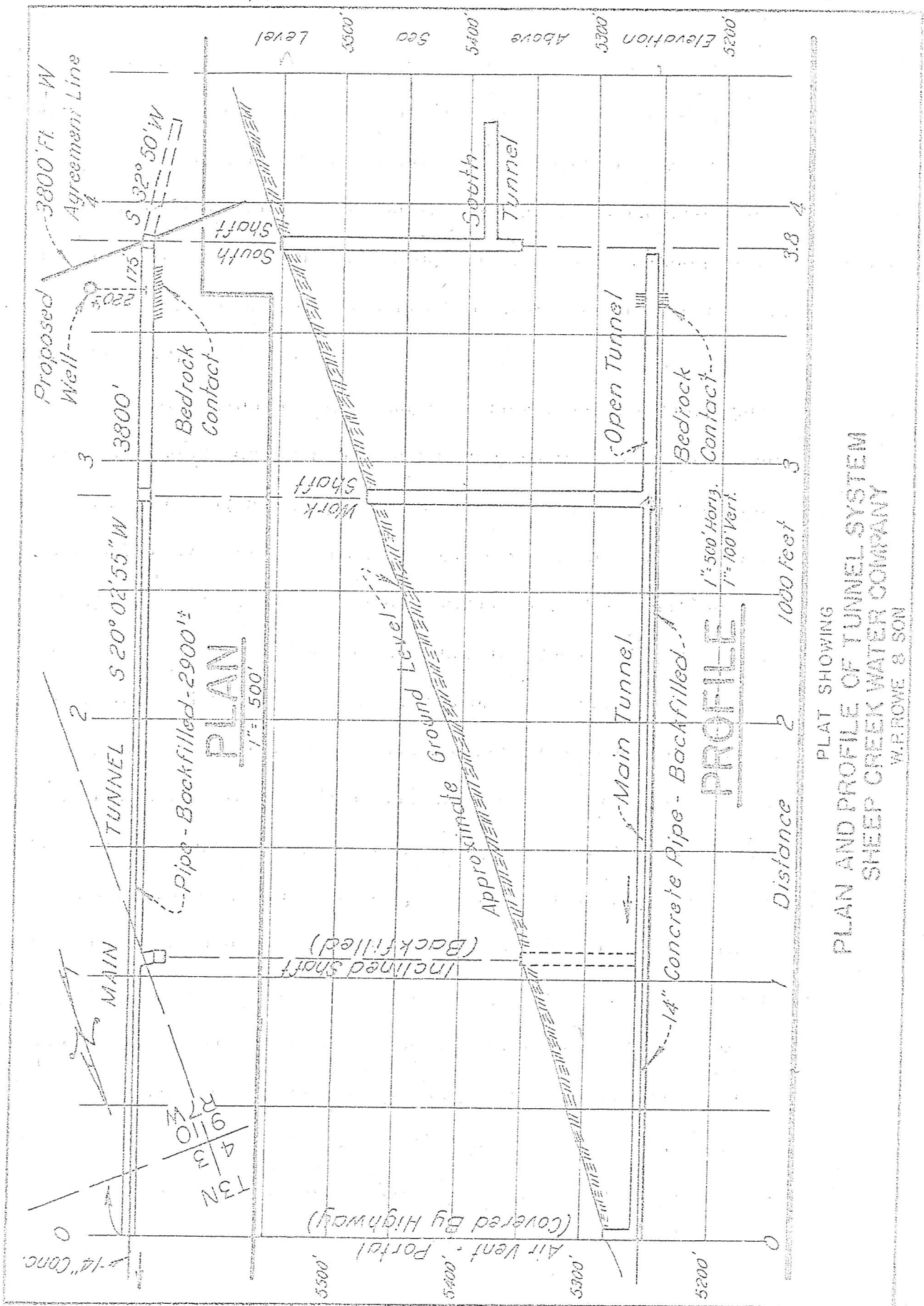


A. E. JOHNSON

MacINTYRE C. O. JOHNSON

HAULING BLUE CLAY FOR DAM IN HORSE CANYON - 1915-1916



PLAN AND PROFILE OF TUNNEL SYSTEM
SHEEP CREEK WATER COMPANY
W. PROWE & SON

A. E. Johnson, Walker Jones, H. S. Espey, Bill Barnett and H. A. Johnson were in attendance. Alfred was the Board President, Henry was the Secretary/Treasurer, Mr. Espey, Walker Jones and Bill Barnett were board members.

On November 5, 1938, the Board of Directors were A. E. Johnson, Melvin Nilsen, H. A. Johnson and H. S. Espey. On October 12, 1939 the Board of Directors were A. E. Johnson, Melvin Nilsen, M. M. White, H. S. Espey and H. A. Johnson. The board began an attempt to get two mortgages paid off by the shareholders by assessing them \$1.00 per share. One was to H. T. Goodwon of Cucamonga for \$7,600.00. The second one was to A. E. and Cecelia Johnson for \$45,000.00. They later reduced the mortgage to \$11,000.00.

On May 8, 1940, the board was H. A. Johnson, Melvin Nilsen, Sam Carlander, M. M. White and Alfred E. Johnson who was H. A. Johnson's son as A. E. Johnson had passed away. C. W. "Bud" Howard always said that A. E. (Grandpa) Johnson informed everyone who did not agree with him that he started this water company and you could like it or lump it as far as he was concerned.

On May 1, 1941, a Mr. Frank Reese made a motion that Alfred Johnson was President, Lawrence Riggins was Vice President, H. A. Johnson was Secretary/Treasurer and Frank Reese and Melvin Nilsen were board members.

In 1945 the board members were Alfred Johnson, D. M. MacFarland, Lawrence Riggins, Sam Carlander and H. A. Johnson. Riggins and Carlander made a motion to have the water company books audited by a friend of the company attorney, Mr. Ralph Swing. The accountant was a Mr. Moss of San Bernardino. Mr. D. M. MacFarland had bought the house of A. E. Johnson and became a part of the new board. Lawrence Riggins came in the late 1930's and bought A. E. Johnson's ranch north of White Road and soon had a big cattle ranch on our desert. Sam Carlander was an orchard man who handled three orchards for Max White, Mrs. Martin and his own. (White Road became Smoke Tree Road later.)

In April of 1945, the Sheep Creek Board of Directors purchased \$900.00 of lumber and timbers for work on the work shaft in the tunnel. The work also included setting up the winch and related equipment. On September 30, 1946 the Board of Sam Carlander, D. M. MacFarland, Norman Nilsen, Alfred E. Johnson and H. A. Johnson were at the meeting.

1947 saw the zancarro getting \$75.00 per month to take care of the water company. The board decided that shareholders could sell water to customers, but the sale would be deducted from the cubic feet allowed the shareholder. The year 1947 has always been in my memory because of a death that happened in the work shaft of the tunnel. A Mr. Carl Jones of Phelan, and a Mr. Vernon Logue also of

Phelan were working on the south work shaft of the tunnel. This shaft was never connected to the tunnel because of a mistake by the engineer who was about 30' west of the tunnel head wall.

The two men were going to deepen the work shaft and Carl Jones was in the shaft and Vernon was running the winch on top. After lunch one day, Vernon talked Carl into switching places with him. Carl and Vernon went into the shaft and Carl showed Vernon how to load the bucket and where to stand when the bucket was going up and down in the work shaft. It was called a safety spot under the shaft wall.

Vernon was young and as he worked, he added dirt to the bucket until the metal bail failed on the way up, tore the safety chain loose and fell to the bottom. Vernon was not in the safety hole and the metal bucket struck him on the head and terminated him instantly.

Getting no answer to his calls, Carl climbed down the ladder and saw the results. He climbed the ladder, drove to Wrightwood and called the San Bernardino County Coroner. He told the Coroner to come to the Mountain Top Café and someone would show him the road into the work shaft.

Then Carl drove to Mountain Top Café on Highway 138 and Highway 2 and told my dad and I what had happened. Dad told me to stay at the service station until the Coroner arrived and then lead him into the work shaft off Highway 2. In the meantime, dad would go to Vernon's home and break the sad news to his family.

I met the Coroner, led him into the work shaft and assisted Carl in raising the body and the bucket out of the shaft. The Coroner completed the paperwork and left for town. As I turned to Carl, he was pulling the metal plate over the shaft and the tears were spilling down his face. We bolted the plate down and we sat there quietly and listened to the wind in the pines and let Carl get settled. A terrible ending to a nice spring day.

On February 9, 1950, the Board of Directors were Alfred E. Johnson, Norman Nilsen, D. M. MacFarland, Lawrence Riggins, Sam Carlander and H. A. Johnson who were trying to get the county dump removed from over the tunnel. The Board of Directors in 1951 were Sam Carlander, Alfred Johnson, H. A. Johnson, Norman Nilsen, Lawrence Riggins and D. M. MacFarland and they were still trying to get the county to remove the dump area from over the tunnel.

On March 17, 1952, the Board of Directors were D. M. MacFarland, Alfred Johnson, Lawrence Riggins, Sam Carlander, H. A. Johnson and Norman Nilsen. Later in 1952, the Board of Directors were Thomas Hickman, Alfred Johnson, H. A. Johnson, Lawrence Riggins, Norman Nilsen and D. M. MacFarland.

The Board of Directors for 1953 hired Mr. Ridley of Pinon Hills to do the accounting for the company. They had a \$1.00 assessment for working money. In 1954 the Board of Directors were Alfred Johnson, Norman Nilsen, T. H. Hickman, Lawrence Riggins, J. A. Priser and H. A. Johnson. They began work on the north work shaft in 1954 and were looking at a water softener to place on the out fall line of the tunnel.

In 1955, the board noted that they had spent \$7,609.30 on the tunnel project from the reports of Mr. Ridley of Pinon Hills. The Board of Directors of 1956 were Alfred Johnson, A. J. Kaiser, Norman Nilsen, Lawrence Riggins, H. A. Johnson and Mr. Goldsberry. They reported the purchase of the 2½ acre lot from Harold McAllister for \$1,250.00. On October the 26th of 1956, the Board of Directors voted for an assessment of \$25.00 for putting a pressure system in Phase One of a four-part project. They were going to have Coughlin Pipeline from Rialto do the contract. They had also decided to place a 90,000 gallon tank on their new property on Sunnyslope Road.

June 7, 1957 had a new Board of Directors. They were Mr. J. A. Petser, Alfred Johnson, Henry Johnson, Walter DeLaviers, Ross W. Perryman and Mrs. Marie Trip. Again they called for another \$30.00 assessment. Coughlin Pipeline Company continued to be the contractor.

They finally had Mrs. Curlett to put the water company minutes on a typewritten paper. The County Health Department sent a Mr. Elliot out to see how the Sheep Creek Water Company was progressing. His main complaint was the poor covers on the tunnel work shafts. He wanted them locked on tight to keep the vandals out. The Sheep Creek Water Company had hired a new accountant from Victorville, Mr. Alguire.

The year of 1958 continued with the third phase of the pressure system. The Board of Directors were R. D. Allison, Lawrence Riggins, H. A. Johnson, Alfred Johnson, Norman Nilsen and Mr. Priser.

In 1959 the Board of Directors was the same with Mr. Allison as President for that year. The zancarro reported that all of part four of the pressured system were in place and operating and the payment of \$30,000.00 was due and payable. A letter from Mr. Richard Elliot of the County Board of Health advised the Board of Directors to abandon the old concrete pipelines that were in place by January 1, 1960.

Late in 1959 there was a loan from the Bank of America in San Bernardino in the amount of \$10,000.00 to go with the \$30.00 assessment placed on the shareholders for the last pressured part of the project. The Board of Directors were R. D. Allison, Henry

Johnson, Alfred Johnson, Lilian Branson, and B.F.H. Smith. They noted the pressure system was now complete and working as 1960 began. Henry Johnson noted in the minutes that Phelan now needed more water customers to make the new system work properly.

The new Public Accountant is Mr. Arthur S. Shields of Victorville, California. He reported the new pipe and appurtenances came to about \$139,000.00 to pressurize the community system. At the shareholders meeting in May, they elected Mrs. Margery Allison, Henry Johnson, Alfred Johnson, B.F.H. Smith and Lilian Branson.

In 1962, they still were a one thousand share company and they elected Mr. Morton, Alfred Johnson, B.F.H. Smith, R. D. Allison, Henry Johnson as the new Board of Directors. In 1963, the Board of Directors were Frank O. Fallon, Mr. Allison, Mr. Smith, Henry Johnson and Alfred Johnson.

The Board of Directors in 1964 reverted back to a six member board. The new board were B.F.H. Smith, Henry Johnson, Alfred Johnson, Frank Forman, Norman Nilsen and R.D. Allison. The new Board of Directors in 1965 were Frank Foreman, Lester Wendt, Marie Corlett, Henry Johnson, Pricella White and Alfred Johnson. The company was still at one thousand shares.

In 1966, the Board of Directors were Bill DeBoer, Mark Presettle, Kyle Tatum, Dune Park, Norman Nilsen and Vartkes Barsam. You will note that Henry and Alfred Johnson were no longer on the Board of Directors of the Sheep Creek Water Company. Henry had passed away in 1966 and he was the sole member of the board and the original Board of Directors of 1913 when the Sheep Creek Water Company was formed. He had worked on every part of the water problem from the melting snow in the ditches to the reservoir building to the tunnel construction to the various pipelines to a pressured system in the community of Phelan. He ran a large orchard, started the school district, began the Grange, helped in the war effort, brought electrical power to the community, sold property and got a name for the town of Phelan. In his quiet thoughtful way, he was one fine man and still I miss him to this day.

Alfred Johnson was Henry's son and was a chemist for the Victorville Cement Plant. He became the second Alfred Johnson to set on the Board of Directors after his grandfather died in 1940. He also was a part of the change that brought the water system from a farmers water company to a full pressure community water system. He is still alive and lives in Apple Valley, California.

In 1967, we had Mrs. Marianne Smith working as the office secretary, Mrs. Ira Fines was helping and Fred Curlett was in charge as zancarro.

Mr. Carl Coleman and Mr. Hank Snider from the Mojave Water Agency

were at the annual shareholders meeting to tell about the wonderful aqueduct that soon would be in our neighborhood. Carl was an engineer and was the main man for the Mojave Water Agency at that time. He informed us that we would have water turnout on Johnson Road when we required additional water for our system.

Our new attorney spoke about the Farmers Loan that we were trying to get accredited to the Farmers Home Administration in Washington, D.C. He thought it was looking good at this time. The Board of Directors were Norman Nilson, Drew Park, Vartkes Barsam, Elster Weaver, Bill DeBoer and C. W. Bud Howard.

The May 4, 1968 shareholders meeting found the Farmers Home Administration would require a new resolution from the shareholders in their request for a loan. They wanted to put together a recreational area at the reservoir forty acres if the BLM would deed it over to the water company. They also wanted to have only two directors elected each year with the other four with up to three years time to serve. They passed the resolution for the loan, they will work on the reservoir parcel and they defeated the two directors per year addendum. The Directors were Vartkes Barsam, Everitt Brumment, James Hawkins, Bill DeBoer, Bud Howard and Norman Nilsen, Bud Howard showed slides of the tunnel work being done this year.

On May 3, 1969, the Farmers Home Administration turned down the loan to the Sheep Creek Water Company due to pipeline rights-of-way that were not recorded. The new attorney at law was Mr. Joe Campbell of Victorville. The shareholders agreed to split the shares of the company from one thousand to two thousand and voted it in. The new Board of Directors were a repeat of last year's board.

Norman Nilsen was killed in an automobile accident on Highway 138 in Los Angeles County this year. He had become a power in the poultry industry in the United States and in parts of the world where major farmers used his "Swish" watering systems and related poultry inventions he had put together. He was a country boy who would change the poultry industry business forever. How he managed to give his time to the Sheep Creek Water Company as much as he did was something special. He and Bud Howard had recently purchased 14 acres of land just north and west of the water tunnel in Sheep Creek and were trying to convince the water company to purchase it. This is the land that now has five working wells that feed the company water. Sheep Creek Water Company had many shareholders; when the chips were down, they came up with the solution many times over.

The board for 1971 were Bill DeBoer, Bud Howard, Clarence Morton, Ed Shieldmeyer and Bill Lukenbill. A release to put together a recreation program for the property around the reservoir was agreed

upon by the BLM and the Sheep Creek Water Company. The Bureau of Land Management still owned the 40 acres but now said we could improve the area at their direction and approval. C. W. "Bud" Howard had been trying to get a consensus for the reservoir area for some time, but he did not want to give the BLM the recreation facility and the control at the same time.

In 1972, the Board of Directors were James Cochran, Bill DeBoer, Bill Lukenbill, Drew Park, Herb Schawnitz and Loren Scott. They had finally got all the pipeline right-of-ways surveyed and recorded at the San Bernardino County Hall of Records, so they were still trying to get a Farmers Home loan for the upper pipeline. Mr. Carl Coleman of the Mojave Water Agency was there to tell the shareholders that the aqueduct was finished and was in the testing period for leaks. The dam at Cedar Springs was finished and was in the process of being filled. Mr. Cochran said the Sheep Creek Water Company was without money to build the park, but still wanted the property from the BLM.

The annual shareholders meeting on May 5, 1973 had President Bill DeBoer telling that Mr. Store's tract was finished and that four main pressure regulators had been rebuilt and the Public Utilities Commission complaint was dismissed. He also noted that a new water rate was in effect at seven dollars per month for 1973. The boundaries of Sheep Creek and County Zone L would allow property owners to go to the nearest water line for service. The Board of Directors for this year were Bill DeBoer, Mr. Olsen, Bill Lukenbill, Al McDaniels, Dennis Mitchel and Lowell Langston. President DeBoer told the shareholders that they needed a new line to the tunnel, the company needed a well on the 14 acre site and they needed a new storage tank.

The May 5, 1974 shareholders meeting saw some interesting things to talk about. The main topic was the 14 acres of land at the tunnel. Everitt Brummet had appraised the parcel at \$9,200.00 and had copies of the appraisal on hand. There was much discussion about the property and the two gentlemen who had gone to San Diego and purchased it. Those gentlemen were Mr. Norman Nilsen, now deceased, and Mr. C. W. "Bud" Howard. They both were on the Board of Directors when they purchased it. They decided to put the contract on hold and decided that the Board could spend up to \$10,000.00 if they needed to.

The new board were Richard Meyer, Joe Napote, Carol Perry, Herb Schwanitz, Logan Stogy and Chris Young for 1974. The prior board of 1974 was removed from office. Most of the problem was over the 14 acres of land at the tunnel that hastened their demise.

The board elected on May 5, 1974 was removed before the year was out and the recall board was Bill DeBoer, Herb Schwanitz, Verle Forbes, Richard Troyer, Bob English and David Barnhard.

This was the board that ran for election in 1975. There was a big turnout of shareholders at that meeting, believe me. And they had all sorts of questions. But this board was in power and they looked pretty good to run again. Herb Schanitz made a plea for \$250,000.00 to finish the upper water system from the tunnel to Highway 138. The Farmers Home loan was out and we needed the work done. Bill DeBoer brought up the property parcel of the 14 acres and the vote was 931 votes for and 531 against. The property was to be purchased by the Sheep Creek Water Company. As one man said, "If the wells work on this property, it beats the water in the aqueduct." In hindsight, this was the best money we ever spent.

The 1975 board remained the same as the recall board elected in November, 1974 which were Bill DeBoer, Herb Schwanitz, Richard Troyer, Verle Forbes, Bob English and David Barnhard. The board noted that the 14 acres was being surveyed and the engineer was trying to select a well location. They needed a large tank and the upper part of the system needed to be converted to a full pressure pipeline.

This board had some well meaning members that were trying to bring the water company up to date. However, they were simply going in different directions and the divisions got worse as they moved along. The coming high school that was starting to be built was all a part of it and the problems were going to get worse.

In 1977 the community was well divided about who was right and who was wrong. A new group had been meeting and trying to put all the pieces together and get something moving. To Herb Schwanitz's credit, he had applied to the State of California for a new water program that would give small companies a sizable loan at a reasonable interest rate and his application was close to the top. Our water company was being taken over by the State of California Department of Health Services as their health services coordinator. This would give us a state engineer to assist us in getting help for our company.

The shareholders meeting in May saw a new Board of Directors. They were Bill DeBoer, Steve Mannigal, Robert Ross, Marianne Smith, David Nilsen and John Lovett. The prior Board of Directors had hired an engineer, Joe Bondiman and Associates of San Bernardino, California. They had a brand new tank on the ground at the office Not paid for, but ready to put up when it was paid for. A high school board of directors that were very upset about losing the other board of the water company, and the new well just finished was test pumped at fifty gallons per minute.

I would like to note that David Nilsen was the third Nilsen of the same family to sit on this board. His grandfather, Melvin, his father, Norman, and David were the first family since the Johnson family to have that honor. John Lovett was the youngest son of the

man who was the miner that built the tunnel. Marianne Smith was the wife of B.H.F. Smith who had served on the board in the 1960's. A new board with a lot of old memories. This was the Board of Directors in 1977.

The 1977 Board of Directors had a load of projects to fulfill and a year to do it in. The work was as follows: (1) Put up the 480,000 gallon tank at the office property; (2) Get the State Department of Water Resources loan in place and get the contract started. This would get the new pressurized line from the tunnel to Highway 138; (3) The new pressure cla-valves at three locations; (4) A 250,000 gallon tank in the Horse Canyon-Coor-Pender Pass area with an altitude valve for filling; (5) Complete the Wild Horse Canyon line to Pipeline Road; (6) Do maintenance work on existing cla-valves in the current pressure system; (7) Install a chlorine gas unit for the tunnel outfall pipe; (8) Install a million gallon tank at the well field; (9) Install another well at the 14 acres property.

The first year saw six of the nine projects completed or in the process of being done. The new well was completed in 1979 but the million gallon tank at the 14 acre well site did not get built until 1992. This board and the ones that came during the next six years were progressive in their attitudes. We finally had a manager, a crew and an office staff that were on the ball and got things done. The Board of Directors in 1979 were Bill DeBoer, Bob Ross, John Lovett, Dave Nilsen, Marianne Smith and Hugh Savage of Wrightwood.

Manager Bob Ross reported in June of 1979 the EMC Company of Victorville was at 180 foot mark on the North work shaft duct work and could finish the shaft by August. However, any work in the tunnel would require about \$75,000.00 more in funds that we did not have on hand. But the shares in the company had been divided to four thousand in 1978. By 1980, they wanted the shares to be divided to eight thousand. The water system, now with three wells, four tanks and fully pressured from the tunnel at the South to the Northern pipelines was functioning properly. County water was costing about \$320.00 at Zone L per acre foot. Sheep Creek Water Company was \$32.00 per acre foot.

The 1980 Board of Directors were John Lovett, Bob Ross, Marianne Smith, David Nilsen, Hugh Savage and Clarence Carter. Manager Bob Ross reported the amount of 32,160,824 gallons of water had been delivered in July of 1980 was three times as much as had been delivered in July of 1978.

In November of 1981, our county testing well was ready to start drilling so that we could watch our neighbors to the South when it was finished. Lahonton had tested our tunnel last year for sewerage out fall but found no sign of it. The Board of Directors were John Lovett, Bob Ross, Marianne Smith, David Nilsen, Hugh