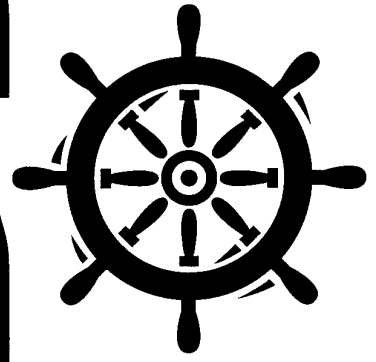


# REFLECTIONS

Arkansas River Historical Society



Fall 2010

## HALL OF FAME HONORS FIVE IN 2010



Above from left: Glen Cheatham, James E. Danaher, J.D. Metcalfe, Col. James H. Phillips, and H. Nelson Spencer.

CATOOSA, OK –The Arkansas River Historical Society hosted five honorees at its Hall of Fame awards dinner during the annual Arkansas Oklahoma Port Operator’s and U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Navigation Conference on October 4<sup>th</sup>, at the Doubletree Hotel, Little Rock, AR. The five honorees are: James E. Danaher and Col. James H. Phillips, of Arkansas; Glen L. Cheatham and J. D. Metcalfe, of Oklahoma; and H. Nelson Spencer, owner of the *Waterways Journal*.

The Hall of Fame is a tribute to those who have contributed “outstanding service to the development of the Arkansas River, its basin, and the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System,” said Randy Tardy, former business and transportation writer for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* in Little Rock, AR, and president of the Historical Society.

James E. Danaher of Jefferson County, Ark., had his farm cut in two by construction of the Boyd Point Cutoff just North of Pine Bluff for what was to become part of the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System. He made land separated by the waterway from his farm available for commercial and industrial use. In addition, he personally developed an extensive recreational marina as well as Island Harbor Estates, a residential subdivision offering home sites along canals for pleasure craft with access to the navigation system. As a farmer, Danaher recognized the great potential the waterway would offer agriculture through the cost saving shipment of grains and fertilizer. He became a staunch promoter of the river transportation.

Prior to being appointed a member of the Pine Bluff-Jefferson County Port Authority, he was a non-paid civic volunteer involved in numerous projects that benefitted the

waterway, port and community. While Port Authority Chairman in 1985 and 1986 Jim Danaher was intimately involved in expansion of the harbor and Industrial District through the use of hydraulic fill, creating additional barge transport oriented industrial sites. He served on the board from 1978 to 1990.

Using his yacht, he often provided visiting industrialists with on-the-water tours on the navigation system, lock and dam operation, and the Harbor Industrial District of the Port of Pine Bluff. His warm reception and hospitality was legendary and contributed to the attraction of waterway oriented industry and jobs.

Col. James Phillips is a native of Little Rock, and holds degrees from the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville and Lehigh University. Phillips spent 30 years in the U.S. Army as a commissioned officer. As an Army Engineer, he served various levels of command. They included deputy commander of the then-Lower Mississippi River Valley Division, Vicksburg, Mississippi, which included the St. Louis, Memphis, Vicksburg and New Orleans engineer districts. He also served as secretary of the Mississippi River Commission and deputy commander of the Lower Mississippi Valley Division, both based in Vicksburg.

Phillips points to numerous accomplishments during his tenure on the Arkansas Waterways Commission. He worked to improve navigation on the Arkansas through adequate channel markings that could withstand very high and swift flows. Phillips also worked with the Commission to retain the officer grade of Colonel for the Little Rock District. He also helped in the effort to create a Slack Water Harbor at the Port of Little Rock.

Phillips had a strong interest in realizing the need for a lock and dam on

the White River entrance linking the Mississippi and Arkansas rivers. Because of his persistence, the Waterways Commission recommended a more detailed study of the problem, and after more public meetings and hearings, what is today Montgomery Point Lock and Dam was approved and the project funded.

Glen L. Cheatham entered the port and waterway business in 1973, at the Port of Muskogee, as Assistant Port Superintendent for WillBros Company. During his 13-year employment, Cheatham became active in several water-related organizations, including treasurer and member of the Executive Committee of the Oklahoma Governor’s Waterways Advisory Team.

He joined the Oklahoma Department of Commerce as director of the newly formed Oklahoma Waterways Office in December 1986. In July 1993, the Oklahoma legislature transferred that office to the Department of Transportation, where he recently retired as head of the Waterways Branch.

Cheatham has served as executive vice president of the Arkansas Basin Development Association, Inc. since 1989, and has prepared the annual testimony for water resources funding needs for Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma to present to the U.S. House and Senate Subcommittees on Energy and Water Resources Development.

He served on the Board of Directors of the Arkansas-Oklahoma Port Operators Association for four years, and as president in 1986. He is a former Executive Committee member of the Water Resources Congress, and is a past Chairman of the Board of the Inland Rivers Ports and Terminals, Inc. (IRPT). He also served on the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of

-See “Hall of Fame” on reverse-

*The Arkansas River Historical Society seeks to preserve the history and increase public awareness of the Arkansas River and the development of its basin. Through the acquisition, research, interpretation, and display of artifacts, and the development of educational programs, the River's contributions to the future will be secured through the preservation of its past.*

**Editorial contributions to Reflections are appreciated.**

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**Hall of Fame—continued**

the National Waterways Conference, Inc., and has been on the executive committee of the Oklahoma Transportation Center at Oklahoma State University & University of Oklahoma since 2001. Cheatham has been a member of the Oklahoma Maritime Security Committee, and has also been active as a member of the AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials).

J. D. Metcalfe, Tulsa's last street commissioner, was one the "fathers" of the city's flood-management program. Among his greatest legacies is the city's stormwater drainage system. And while that might not seem glamorous, it has had far-reaching effects, including saved lives. Metcalfe established a system to regulate development in floodplains, maintain the storm-drain system and build flood control projects in 1985. The reform followed a 1984 flood that led to 14 deaths and \$200 million in damage across the city.

"J.D. was an absolute gem to know," said Susan Savage, Oklahoma's secretary of state and former Tulsa mayor. She said she knew Metcalfe for more than 20 years and worked with him for much of that time. "He really understood the role of a public servant," she said. "He carried out everything he did."

Metcalfe established a system to regulate development in floodplains, maintain the storm-drain system and build flood-control projects in 1985. The system was ranked No. 1 in the nation by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He also supervised about \$275 million in major street and flood-control projects paid for with sales tax and bond issue funds. He later served on the Tulsa Metropolitan Utility Authority from 1993 to 2001, and served as chair from 1997 to 1999.

H. Nelson Spencer is the president and owner of The Waterways Journal, Inc., a 123-year-old publishing company based in St. Louis, Mo. The company's largest publication focuses on the inland river barge transportation industry as covered in its weekly trade magazine, *The Waterways Journal*. It also publishes two annual books, the *Inland River Guide* and the *Inland River Record*. Spencer was named Publisher of *The Waterways Journal* prior to being its owner in 1980 and he retains that title to present day.

In 1969 Spencer joined *The Waterways Journal* masthead, primarily writing stories and selling advertising space. Later, he established an office in New Orleans and was responsible for expanding the business and adding new titles. He steered the company through hard times and challenges specific to publishing. And after 41 years, he continues to cover issues important to the industry and help companies get their sales messages in front of loyal readers.

He is currently on the Board of the National Waterways Foundation, National Waterways Conference, Upper Mississippi Waterways Association, Inland River Ports and Terminals, and the National Association of Marine Surveyors. He is an active member of numerous other organizations, including Waterways Council Inc. and the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association. Additionally, *The Waterways Journal* is a co-founder and sponsor of

the annual Waterways Symposium.

"Thanks to the industry's valued support," says Spencer, "*The Waterways Journal* will continue on, like river commerce itself, well beyond my tenure and on to the next. It's been a privilege to document the development of projects like the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System, to watch them grow and prosper and return to the nation benefits far beyond what was projected, and we're sure there will be much more to report in the future." \*



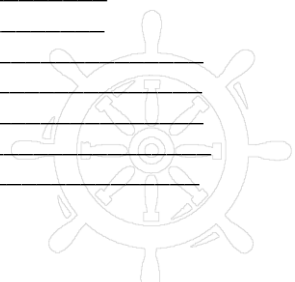
Above and to the right are photos of awards being presented from the Hall of Fame/AOPOA/COE Navigation Conference: From Left, Glen Cheatham and Steve Taylor, Director of Johnston's Port 33; Randy Tardy, Wally Gieringer, and James E. Danaher; Paul Revis and Col. James H. Phillips. At right is a photo of Stephen Gambrell, Director of the Mississippi River Commission. He gave the keynote address, "Mississippi River Commission's 2010 Inspection of the Arkansas-White Basin: What was Learned and How Will it Impact the McClellan-Kerr?" His conclusion was that all inland river organizations across the United States unite in their effort to underscore the importance of our waterways to the well being and economic health of our country. \*



**ARKANSAS RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY ----- MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

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