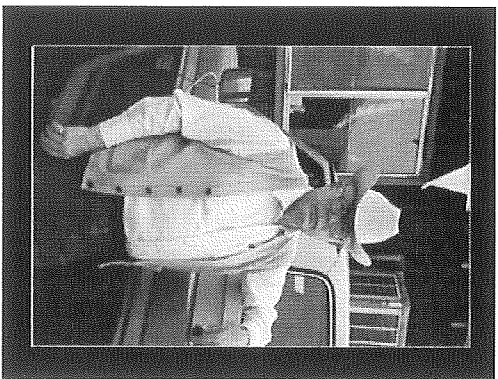


GEORGE R. RUSSELL

George Russell was born a few miles south of White Bird, Idaho on January 20, 1921. He grew up on the 100 year old family ranch on the Salmon River where his grandfather claimed and settled a homestead to mine. Russell's family was education-minded and encouraged him to attend the University of Idaho because it was relatively close to home. Throughout his career, he was responsible for surveying property along the Salmon River. Russell says his high school math instructor was probably responsible for his decision to study civil engineering because he was a good math student.



When asked how students are different today he says, "Entering students generally come with a higher level of preparation in math and science than in my early years and, of course, most all are computer literate. And, he adds, "They look younger every year." When asked how the study of civil engineering has changed, he says, "We had lots of labs – four days a week. Now there's less emphasis on 'hands on' laboratory experiences." Other differences he notes are the advent of the computer age and more emphasis on graduate study. He credits Dean Allen Janssen and Professor G. A. Riedesel for being his mentors during his early years as a young faculty member.

Many remember the influence of Professor and Associate Dean George Russell who, in addition to surveying, taught transportation engineering, strength of materials, engineering economy, engineering law and contracts. "I have followed the careers of many of my first students for the past 50 years," says Russell, adding "that personal contact with many students and faculty is what I enjoyed most." Russell graduated from the University of Idaho in 1943, and then served in the Civil Aeronautics Administration in Alaska and in the U.S. Navy Civil Engineer Corps in the Aleutian Islands. He returned to the University in 1947 and taught surveying and field engineering to students the same age as himself who had just completed their military service. In 1951, Russell returned to Alaska where he met Lois, his wife. After working for the Alaska Road Commission as Chief of Surveys, he again returned to the University in the spring of 1958 and remained with the College of Engineering until his retirement in 1985. He became Assistant Dean in 1967 and Associate Dean in 1980 with a joint appointment in Engineering Administration and Civil Engineering.

Asked what he considers his most memorable accomplishment, he says, "Learning to interact with all levels of people – students, faculty, college and university administrators, state legislators, civic and political leaders.

"There was never enough money to do all the things necessary so we became experts in making it go as far as possible," he states. Russell served as the College of Engineering Advisory Board Secretary and spent time "training deans" by providing continuity after others left the College. In his book, *A Spirit of Excellence*, former civil engineering Professor Cal Warnick wrote, "Russell had the attributes of friendship. He was always cultivating friends, and as a faculty member he always had time to talk with students, with faculty colleagues, with university administrators, with city officials, or with state leaders. It did not matter who it was. He became acquainted with everyone and won their respect and confidence. He then could always turn to these same friends for favors, for advice and counsel, and did so to the welfare of our college."

Among Russell's honors, awards, and contributions are: 1989 Distinguished Service Award, National Society of Professional Engineers; 1988 Engineer of the Year, Idaho Society of Professional Engineers (ISPE); 1983 Distinguished Service Award, National Council of Engineering Examiners; 1979-81 Vice President, National Society of Professional Engineers; serving 12 years on the Moscow City Council – one year as acting mayor, and nine years on the State Registration Board. In 2002, Russell was inducted into the Idaho Engineering Hall of Fame. Upon receiving the ISPE Distinguished Service Award, William Smith, Northern Chapter President of ISPE wrote, "George's contribution is people...values, ideals, and ethics are a lasting legacy, and these are what George creates in people. Hundreds of engineers have left the University of Idaho bearing an imprint from George Russell." The year he retired, a computer lab was dedicated to Russell, describing him as "a practitioner of engineering who worked to satisfy the needs of society, a professor who understood the needs of the student, and an administrator who could blend the needs of students and faculty." The members of the College of Engineering Advisory Board solicited funds to prepare and equip the George Russell Computer Lab. "It was a great honor for me when they together with the College and University Administration decided to name it after me," says Russell.

His advice for those wanting to enter civil engineering is to "get the best possible background in math and science and oral and written communications." For those already in the field, "Don't think that job and family are the only things that need to be important to you," he says, "Join and get involved in your professional and technical engineering societies. Be aware of what's going on in your local city government, school system, and state legislature. Your opinions count and can make a difference."

The Russell's contributions to the College are significant. George and Lois have cared deeply about this campus and are forever a part of its history. George's and Lois's extraordinary generosity in their concern for students has resulted in The George and Lois Russell Family Engineering Scholarship Endowment. The Russell's have made a significant difference to the College of Engineering.