

# Utilities director retires after 27 yrs

ST. GEORGE — If there was a job people said couldn't be done, St. George City Utilities Director Rudder McArthur went ahead and did it anyway.

McArthur, 62, who announced his retirement May 17 after 27 years in city government, has done just that. His determination to complete difficult jobs developed early — ever since being asked by Washington County Commission chairman Arthur Barlocker to see about getting the Central to Pine Valley road paved.

Back then, McArthur said Barlocker told him the county "would do the easy tasks and you do the jobs that can't be done."

Eventually, McArthur, the son of Wilford W. and Lea Morris McArthur, said through his and other individuals' efforts, affected agencies were brought together and got the road finished.

Born in 1921, McArthur attended the St. George West Elementary, was a member of the first graduating class of Woodward Junior High and also attended Dixie High School before graduating from Dixie College in 1944.

His formal education stopped at that point as he joined the Utah National Guard during World War II. From 1943, he also served a mission for the LDS Church in the northern states.



Rudder McArthur

From 1943-48, McArthur worked as an accountant and also as a car salesman selling cars, trucks, tractors, bails and other farm machinery for Ashby & McQuaid, a St. George auto and farm dealer.

In 1948, McArthur became city manager for the City of St. George. At that time, Mayor Joseph T. Atkin told him every yard in town had a corral and a chicken coop and even some pig pens. The streets also became red mud after every rainstorm.

Atkin said it was time the city passed a zoning ordinance to create a special service district and in doing so, put in curb and gutter. That was the beginning of the town's street improvement project, said McArthur.

McArthur also acted as city treasurer, secretary of the city planning commission and director of the city utility operation. He remained here until 1951 when he returned as an accountant for Ashby and McQuaid. And it was while in private service that he had the opportunity to help the county commission on the Central to Pine Valley road.

In 1961, McArthur came back to St. George City as office manager in charge of utility billings. At that time, Kate Milne sent out all the utility bills, with Loy Gubler helping part-time.

McArthur then became secretary director of the city utility commission on July 9, 1969.

Two years prior to that, he oversaw construction of the Gunlock wells which became a major source of the St. George water supply.

In 1970, when the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation took Gunlock Reservoir out of the proposed Dixie Project, McArthur asked permission from the city to get the reservoir built.

McArthur said he got the Four Corners Regulatory Commission, the Utah Division of Water Resources, the City of St. George and the Utah Fish and Game Department together to buy the land and fund construction of the reservoir.

To make it go, the entities needed the signature of every shareholder of the four irrigation companies involved: St. George Seep Ditch, Bloomington Canal Company, St. George-Santa Clara Fields Canal Co. and the new Santa Clara Field Canal Co.

McArthur's secretary, Joy Frei, told him she and Flor-

ence Frei would get the signatures if McArthur would get a sewer line into Santa Clara. McArthur said he would, so after the two Freis took the petition around to homes, to church and the post office, only three signatures were lacking.

That was enough for the Board of Water Resources to proceed with the project, said McArthur. Meanwhile, Bingham Engineering's services were retained and it prepared the reservoir's design and specifications and called for bids.

Gov. Calvin Rampton told the reservoir proponents if they could get a bid for under \$1 million, the state would back it. Jack Parsons' bid of \$970,000 did just that and the reservoir was completed in 1970.

In the early 1970's, McArthur said he also helped get the St. George Industrial Park started. Next, came funding from the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation for the new municipal swimming pool.

After that, McArthur helped establish the J.C. Snow Park and four, city ball diamonds, along with a general use park.

He was also the city's major spokesman on the ill-fated Allen-Warner Power project from 1973-1982 when it was finally tied up in court with environmental restraints.

McArthur also served as secretary-treasurer to the Washington County Water Conservancy District from 1973-83.

During this time, he also helped, on his own, several Pine Valley residents obtain a community power system and worked with the Pine Valley Irrigation Co. to get a culinary water system installed.

Now, St. George City is attempting to wheel more power into the city's service area and entered into a memorandum of agreement among, Desert G & T, UAWPS, and the city to build what is identified as the Dixie Transmission System.

That will bring capacity energy from the Intermountain Power Project to St. George, he said.

In 1980, six second feet of water (2,700 gallons of water a minute) was obtained through a Snow Canyon Water Project where three wells were drilled.

The city presently has under construction what it calls the Mill Creek Water Project which, when finished, will produce 2,700 gallons of water a minute.

In the planning stage, McArthur said is a proposal to pipe water from Gunlock Reservoir to Ivins, Santa Clara and St. George area for irrigation and domestic purposes.

The city has approved for a hydroelectric unit to be placed on the outlet of the Gunlock Dam for the city's use. It would generate enough energy to run the city's pumps, said McArthur.

In addition, to his government responsibilities, McArthur has also been involved in civic, religious and music activities.

In 1926, he sang his first duet with his sister, Adrene, in which they sang for LDS President Heber J. Grant. McArthur was six and she was eight. "I've been on and off the stage ever since," he said.

He has also been a member of the St. George Lion's Club and now is a Rotary Club member.

Other responsibilities include executive secretary of the Lower Gunlock Reservoir Corp. and one of the directors of the St. George Valley Irrigation Co., director of the Southwest Utah Power Federation, director of the Southwest Power Agency and vice president of the Santa Clara River Water Users.

He also sings, on occasion, with Dixie College music professor Howard Putnam, along with singing in the Southwest Chorale and in Dave Brown's barber-shop quartet.

McArthur presently serves in the Pine Valley summer group branch presidency of the LDS Church.

In reference to his present position, McArthur said his replacement will begin work on Jan. 1, 1985. He will work with the new individual until Dec. 31, 1985 when McArthur will officially retire. However, he has been asked to remain as a consultant to the city after that time, he said.

Looking back over past endeavors, "the things we (the city) have accomplished have been because we've had people dedicated to their jobs," said McArthur who noted that several people supported these projects and helped the city grow in an orderly manner.

"I didn't do those things on my own. I did them with a lot of support from many people," he said.

McArthur, who has filed as a Democrat for state representative in district 73, said he retired because he has been tied to the job for so many years and wanted to do something on his own.

He said he and his wife, Erma, want to do some traveling and "it's time to have them (the city) start training someone else."