

THE CONCRETE HERALD

Formerly the Hamilton Herald Established Nov. 23, 1901. Oldest Paper in the Upper Skagit.

January 12, 1961



—Photo by Jack Grider

DEDICATION OF GORGE HIGH DAM OF MANY YEARS OF CONSTRUCTION ON UPPER SKAGIT

Formal dedication ceremonies at the new Gorge High Dam, above Newhalem on the Skagit River, was held last Friday afternoon with two bus loads of dignitaries and guests making the trip from Seattle, and many others also present from the Skagit projects.

Guests included Mayor Gordon Clinton of Seattle; members of the Seattle city council and other officials; Dr. Wm. A. Pearl, Administrator of the Bonneville Power Administration; Henry Heckendorn of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce; City Light officials; newspaper and television men from Seattle and from Skagit and Whatcom county.

Due to threatening weather, the dedication ceremonies were held inside the

small building beside the dam, where a speaking platform had been set up and seats were available for about half the crowd. At the conclusion of the program an additional bit of ceremony was held out on the dam, where Mayor Clinton pushed the button that closed the gates on the new dam and cut off the beautiful display of rushing water that greeted the guests on their arrival.

The program was conducted by Dr. Paul Raver, City Light Superintendent, who made introductions of guests and of the speakers. Called to the platform were Councilmen Dave Levine, Paul Alexander and Bob Jones of Seattle; Dr. Pearl; Henry Heckendorn; Harry Carr of the Central Labor Council; I. B. Purdy, project manager for

Merrit-Chapman & Scott; and John Nelson, Executive Assistant Superintendent of City Light.

Mayor Clinton made the dedication address, stressing the efforts made over the years by the City of Seattle to develop the upper Skagit power resources, while at the same time endeavoring to maintain a policy of neighborliness and cooperation with Skagit and Whatcom counties. This, he said, they felt had been accomplished and would continue many years into the future following the close of construction work.

The Gorge plant was the first of the three Skagit plants built by the City of Seattle and was started in 1919. The first generator was started by President Coolidge in September of 1924. A second generator was installed later the same year and a third in 1929, giving the plant a capacity of 60,000 kw.

In 1950 a fourth generator was added and the old wooden crib dam was replaced with cement, bringing the plant up to 108,000 kw. Work on the high Gorge dam began in 1955 and modernization of the four generators started in 1959. There is still modernization to be done on the fourth generating unit this summer and the ultimate capacity of the plant will be 178,000 kw.

Completion of the Gorge dam will be the final step of construction on the upper Skagit for several years. With a full lake at Ross, the total output of the projects as a whole will be 789,000 kw. Cost of the work to date is estimated at over \$165 million dollars, all to be paid out of earnings.

The work on the upper Skagit has been a great factor in the development of the Skagit valley and has added much to the prosperity of the local community. Almost all of the cement used has been from the local plant. The High Gorge Dam just completed required 312,000 barrels.