

Marshall Tower Huntting (1918-1996)

Former State Geologist and Supervisor of the Division of Mines and Geology (now Division of Geology and Earth Resources) Marshall T. Huntting died in a traffic accident near Morton, Washington, on December 21, 1996.

Marshall was born on October 3, 1918, in Silver Creek, WA, where his family owned a farm. He graduated from Mossyrock High School in 1936. In the summer of 1936 he worked in the placer gold fields of Alaska, and he attended the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, during the 1936-1937 school year. He then attended Washington State College (WSC, now Washington State University) in Pullman and received a B.S. degree in Geology in 1941. He stayed at WSC for graduate work and received his M.S. degree in Geology in 1942.

At that time the Division of Geology (the predecessor of the Division of Mines and Geology and the Division of Geology and Earth Resources) was headquartered at WSC, the Department Chairman, H. E. Culver, was also State Geologist and Division Supervisor. During his college years Marshall worked for the Division during at least some of the summers, serving as a field assistant in 1939 and doing geologic mapping for the Division in the Horseshoe Basin area near Cascade Pass in the North Cascades in 1940. The 1940 mapping for the Division of Geology was combined with the Department of Geology's summer field camp class (Fig. 1).

While at WSC Marshall met and later married Martha E. Currie of Cashmere, WA. She died in 1990. They had no children. Marshall served in the U.S. Army in the Philippines from 1943 to 1945. He began full-time work for the Division of Geology, still headquartered in Pullman, in May 1942. In 1945 the Division of Geology was combined with the Division of Mines and Mining and moved to Olympia. The Division of Mines and Mining was already in Olympia. The combined division was called the Division of Mines and Geology.



Figure 1. The Washington State College field camp in Horseshoe Basin at the headwaters of the Stehekin River near Cascade Pass, September 1940. Standing, left to right, Chuck Graham, Grant Valentine, Eugene Richardson, Arthur Ritchie, and Marshall T. Huntting, Kneeling or seated, left to right, Hank Wenden, Robert Stevenson, and Sherwood D. Tuttle.

Photograph courtesy of Mrs, H.E. Culver.

Some identifications courtesy of Grant Valentine,

Marshall served as a geologist with the Division under Supervisor and State Geologist Sheldon L. Glover and became Assistant Division Supervisor in 1956. When Glover retired in February 1957, Marshall was named Supervisor and State Geologist. Prior to 1967 the Division had been part of the Department of Conservation and Development. On July 1, 1967, that department was disbanded, and the Division was transferred to the Department of Natural Resources.

During his career with the Division, the major emphases were on development and conservation of mineral resources, geologic mapping, regulation of oil and gas drilling and, later, surface mine reclamation. Marshall's two most important and lasting contributions were his Inventory of Washington minerals, Part II C Metallic minerals, published in 1956, and the 1961 1:500,000-scale geologic map of Washington. The Inventory of Washington minerals has served the mineral industry well and still guides mineral exploration in this state. Marshall was a member and officer of the North Pacific Section of the American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical, and Petroleum Engineers and the Northwest Geological Society. He was certified as a registered mining engineer in 1948.

Following his retirement on June 30, 1971, Marshall and Martha moved to their farm near Silver Creek in Lewis County. The effect of retirement on Marshall was wonderful. He had retired partly because of increasing regulatory responsibilities, and his duties sometimes left him rather harried. He visited the office a few months after his retirement, and the change was marvelous. He was tanned, smiling, and physically fit. He remained that way. He also remained very, very active, so much so that it is not really accurate to say he retired. He just changed jobs, from geologist to rancher, farmer, forester, and civic leader.

Marshall continued to do occasional geological consulting jobs, and he stayed in touch with the Division, but most of his energy went into public service and raising cattle, berries, filberts, and trees. At various times he was board member for Lewis County Conservation District, member of Lewis County Farm Bureau Association, American Farm Bureau advisory committee on forestry, Lewis County Planning Commission, Lewis County Farm Forestry Association, and Lewis County Search and Rescue. In 1992 he was the Lewis County Tree Farm of the Year and in 1995 the Wildlife Farm of the Year. He served 14 years as secretary/treasurer of the Mossyrock Viking Scholarship Fund.

Marshall was always ready to share his time and talent with others, he was interested in a great variety of natural resource-related issues, and he was always ready to talk about geology. Because Marshall was at his best when working with other people, the accompanying photo pictures him with colleagues rather than alone. Those who worked with him will remember and miss him.

- J. Eric Schuster