

- During the first postwar year, the United States experienced runaway prices and wage demands as most wartime controls were lifted, a desperate housing shortage as servicemen returned, and bitter labor disputes that idled five million workers, beginning with 400,000 mine workers.
- John D. Rockefeller Jr. donated property along New York's East River as a permanent site for the United Nations.
- With an East-West conflict and Communism menacing, Winston Churchill appraised the situation in Europe and warned Western nations that "the iron curtain has descended across the continent."

The Temporary National Water Well Association was formed in 1948 after years of developing interest among drillers and foundation building by foresighted men like William A. McElhiney, an engineer and drilling contractor who was chosen to lead the new organization during its formative years.

NWWA's formative years began in 1946. Although the threads of developing ideas and actions lead back to at least the 1920s, the first year after World War II ended is significant to the NWWA because it was a year of major change for the ground water industry as well as the nation.

As the atomic explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki shook the world and abruptly ended World War II, drillers were optimistic that well drilling was ready to "boom" just as the nation's economy turned to peacetime activity. Drillers anticipated high demand for new wells resulting from construction of suburban homes, factory offices, retail stores, health institutions, golf courses, and airport terminals.

The rural areas were also a potential business bonanza. Nearly 50 percent of the nation's 5.2 million farms had no electricity, and only 30 percent of the farms had electric water systems. Since one national objective was to provide electricity to all rural areas, 3.2 million farms were potential sources for new well drilling business. There was also a growing need to replace older wells affected by declining water levels in some parts of the country.

Domestic well drilling was delayed during wartime because military requirements limited the availability of

materials and manpower. The first postwar year, however, saw servicemen returning to the work force, and the government began removing restrictions on materials.

Domestic well drilling business increased and so did the trend toward government regulation. The ground water industry, which was generally neglected in earlier years, was no longer ignored by federal and state government officials who had become accustomed to controlling the nation during the Roosevelt presidency.

State Associations

During the first postwar year, well drillers' associations resumed their regularly scheduled meetings and conventions, which had been limited due to war rationing on travel. A few state associations did not hold annual conventions during 1943-45, and the government asked all to cancel or skip their annual conventions in 1945.

Some state associations were well established in 1946; others, like Louisiana, Montana and North Carolina, were just getting started. The first state well drillers' association was organized in North Dakota in 1915; Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio and Indiana followed to give the Midwest a solid footing by the 1930s. Other associations formed prior to World War II include New Jersey, Maine, Empire State, Tri-State (Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia), Colorado, Missouri, Northwest, Washington State, Texas, Florida, and Southern California.

McElhiney, Bays, and Storm

The established state associations coordinated industry work with the

War Production Board, and some of their leaders, like McElhiney, looked beyond the war and advised drillers on planning for the postwar years.

Mr. McElhiney, or "Mac" as he was affectionately called, was president of the Illinois State Well Drillers Association and president/owner of J. P. Miller Co., a suburban Chicago well drilling firm established in 1868. Mac, a graduate engineer, reportedly knew machines intimately and possessed a thorough knowledge of drilling methods, water systems, geology, sales and business in general. Consequently, his drilling, consulting and speaking work took him from coast-to-coast and to neighboring lands as well.

The J. P. Miller Co., like its president, ranged far from its Chicago base to do its drilling work. Although most drilling was performed within a 500-mile radius, some jobs were done in New York, Tennessee, Nebraska and Texas.

McElhiney, his drilling firm and the Illinois association cooperated closely with various state government offices such as the Department of Public Health and the Geological Survey. Mac assisted Dr. Carl Bays, head of the Groundwater Geology and Geophysical Exploration Division, in making geophysical logs of deep wells in the Chicago area. Since the Illinois State Geological Survey had no cooperative program with the U. S. Geological Survey, it depended on funds from the state legislature and drilling support from contractors; it was imperative that the Survey office stay on good terms with contractors.

Robert R. Storm, a young geologist who began working for Dr. Bays in

1944, was responsible for "keeping the drillers happy." And so Bob did as he joined the Illinois association and began working part time with it, becoming publications director, editor of *The Illinois Well Driller* and later, its permanent secretary. Thus, Bob Storm worked for Mr. McEllhiney at the state association as well as for Dr. Bays at the Survey office.

The Illinois Well Driller

In 1946 *The Illinois Well Driller* was revamped into a 34-page journal published by the Illinois Well Drillers Association (IWDA). Despite its name,

the journal was sent to all members of the Wisconsin, Iowa, Missouri, Indiana and Michigan well drillers' associations, and, in order to bring the circulation total to 1,000, copies were sent to some nonmembers in these states. This wider circulation base allowed for increased advertising by companies seeking broader markets and by companies servicing other states.

At Year End

As 1946 came to a close, the major pieces were in place for organizing the National Water Well Association.

• The Illinois Water Well Drillers Association Inc., started in 1928, pro-

vided a strong central organization with a leader, Mac, who saw and worked beyond his state borders.

• The Illinois association's journal was sent to drillers in six states in order to increase its circulation and, thereby, its influence and advertising base.

• A cooperative spirit existed between the Survey scientists and the contractors; it behooved each group to be amenable.

• Bob Storm's work linked him to the state well drillers' associations, contractors, technical people, and journal advertisers — manufacturers and suppliers.

1947

- Congress approved President Harry Truman's request to aid Greece and Turkey to combat Communist terrorism. This became known as the Truman Doctrine.
- At Harvard's commencement, Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed aiding free European countries to restore their economic health and to halt the spread of Communism. Congress agreed and authorized \$12 billion over the next four years for the "Marshall Plan."
- Truman created the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to counter Soviet espionage activities and Moscow's attempts to establish Communist governments in many countries.

During the second postwar year the ground water industry continued to experience difficulties in making the transition to the peacetime economy. The major problem was material shortages; copper and brass were in short supply, and the casing shortage was critical.

Drillers needed more casing because they were drilling deeper wells on the average and had a large backlog of orders on hand. Much of their work was for farmers who needed more water for irrigation.

Without the water, farmers predicted there would be food shortages. Although the national water supply was favorable, farmers were irrigating more, especially in the drought-stricken Southwest where the water table level reached a record low.

Although steel production was near capacity, drillers believed that exports were too high and that steel companies' low profits on casing caused low production. Oil well industry representatives, seeking answers to the crisis, wrote to the steel producers and received replies that offered little hope for relief.

Another attempt to solicit help came from G. M. Beers & Sons of Bismarck, North Dakota. After pursuing the well supply problem with steel manufacturers and U.S. Sens. Milton R. Young and Kenneth S. Wherry, Beers submitted an open letter to seek help from fellow water well drillers. Published in *The Driller*, the letter encouraged drillers to write to these senators and asked that they get others in their communities to do the same. Since the industry lacked a national voice, Beers wanted many voices to be heard in Washington in order to get needed well supplies.

The executive director of the Senate steel committee promised prompt action to relieve the water pipe shortage, anticipating that 250,000 feet of casing would be set aside for the areas needing it. Also, if food production on farms became impaired because pipe shortages limited well drilling for irrigation, the war assets administrator could channel pipe to the areas that needed it most.

State Association Conventions

As the postwar years sped by, well drillers' interest in state associations

continued to increase. Because of this interest, new associations developed, older associations grew and improved and annual conventions became showcase events.

The Driller praised Minnesota, North Dakota, Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin and New York association members for the successful water well conventions held in their states. However, the premier convention was held in Urbana, Illinois. This 20th annual convention, which was exceptionally well-rounded and professionally staged, was deemed a huge success when it attracted 42 drillers from 11 states outside Illinois. Total attendance was 504, including 213 drillers, 105 manufacturing representatives and 69 government employees.

The IWDA proved that an excellent convention could attract drillers from across the United States. These visitors, who came from as far away as Florida, returned to their own associations with new ideas and plans.

The Water Well Journal

Besides "going national" with its annual convention, the IWDA revamped its journal to appeal to a

national audience. Beginning with the summer issue, *The Illinois Well Driller* changed its name to *The Water Well Journal*, and distribution was doubled to 2,000 copies with wider circulation in the Midwest.

Bob Storm, editor of the *Journal* and service secretary for IWDA, was an instrumental force in gaining association acceptance for these significant changes. According to Bob, it was easier to sell national advertising than local Illinois advertising, so advertising revenue was the primary purpose for the name change. Regional distribution would lead to wider and greater circulation which would attract more advertisers.

At Year End

The Illinois association had enlarged the size of its board, adding three directors to handle the increased workload resulting from a program to expand IWDA activities. Officers and board members in 1947 were:

President	William A. McEllhiney
(third term)	
Vice president	George J. Berns
Secretary	J. T. Anderson
Treasurer	C. M. Hayes
Director	C. F. Stiegman
Director	Adolph Achmidt
Director	W. N. Boetsch
Director	L. F. Swanson
Executive secretary	Robert R. Storm
Director	T. H. Dreher

Director

Glenn Lyons

Following the big success with the March convention, the new *Water Well Journal* began promoting the June 17-19 exposition to be held in Peoria. This would be the first national exposition for the water well industry, and *Water Well Journal* promoted it as such.

The *Water Well Journal* had also begun promoting the values of association membership, which in turn prompted people to ask about the possibility of holding a national convention.

1948

- On April 1 the Soviet Union began a land blockade of Berlin's Allied sectors. Eighteen months later when the blockade was lifted, British and U.S. planes had airlifted 2,343,315 tons of food and coal into the city.
- The Organization of American States was founded April 30.
- Alger Hiss, a former State Department official, was indicted for perjury after denying he had passed secret documents to Whitaker Chambers, *Time* senior editor, for transmission to a communist spy ring. Hiss was convicted for concealing his membership in the Communist party and was sentenced to five years in prison.
- A Hindu extremist assassinated Mahatma Gandhi because he agreed to partition India.
- The State of Israel was proclaimed.
- Truman won re-election while *The Chicago Tribune* erred in proclaiming Thomas E. Dewey the winner.
- While speaking to the South Carolina legislature, Bernard Baruch introduced the phrase that would exemplify U.S.-Soviet relations for many years. "Let us not be deceived," he said. "We are today in the midst of a Cold War."

The new year found a continuation of the pipe shortage problem and the drought in the Southwest. It also found the ground water industry ready to organize a trade association that would deal with members' problems and their special business needs.

National Water Well Exposition in Peoria

The National Exposition of Water Well Equipment, Supplies and Services was sponsored by the *Water Well Journal* and held June 17-19 at the Bradley University fieldhouse in Peoria, Illinois. Conducted in conjunction with the 21st annual convention of the IWDA, this exposition was an experiment to determine if the drilling industry would support a national show. Invitations were sent to drillers throughout the country, and the planning committee

put together a technical program and group of exhibits that it hoped would ensure success for the drilling industry's first national exposition.

Initial planning had included a committee meeting the previous October where William McEllhiney and Bob Storm met with the following manufacturer and supplier representatives:

Karl L. Elliot	Acme Fishing Tool
Martin J. Rampp	Ideco
Emery M. Heuston	Bucyrus-Erie
Kenneth Saunders	Clayton Mark and Co.
John Miller	Clayton Mark and Co.
Leo Dunbar	Grinnell Co.
O. A. Larson	Larson-Becker Co.
George Drysdale	Macwhyte Co.
Robert B. Boand	Union Wire Rope Corp.

These planners believed this first exposition would result in the establishment of a regular national show. However, they agreed that it would be

best to hold the show every other year because changes and new developments in water well equipment were insufficient at the time to justify the expense of an annual exposition. They also agreed that expositions would be good for the industry only if they were well-attended by drillers.

The National Exposition in Peoria had a registered attendance of 600, but the actual number was larger because some attendees failed to register. The number of drillers attending was 302; 198 from Illinois and 104 from 18 other states, including Florida, Massachusetts, Texas and Washington. Thus, some drillers traveled long distances for special events such as this which had 48 exhibit booths in the fieldhouse and 10 rigs (eight operating) set up by cable tool and rotary drill manufacturers outside.



After the Temporary NWWA was formed in 1948 at the National Exposition in Peoria, a welcome banner was hung on the Bradley University Fieldhouse.

Friday afternoon, the second day of the convention, Bob Storm conducted a conference on Association conventions and expositions. There was a growing need to differentiate between conventions and expositions, Bob explained as he led an informal discussion. State association conventions were growing in size and scope, thereby developing into expositions which posed a problem for manufacturers and suppliers who needed to budget their time and expense. In order to control their resources, exhibitors preferred a planned program with a few expositions and greater emphasis on technical programs at state conventions.

After listening to Storm's remarks, many water well contractors suggested that a national organization could best handle an exhibition program and could also develop better technical programs for the state associations. Then, O.E. Erdman, secretary of the Washington State Well Drillers Association, rose and read a resolution from his organization that proposed the United States well drillers organize a national association.

The NWWA, as proposed, was supposed to:

1. Augment and aid the existing state associations, not replace them; and
2. Augment the interests and welfare



Exhibits in the Urbana Armory at the Illinois Water Well Drillers Association's Twentieth Annual Convention in 1947.

of the drilling profession in those problems and affairs of national scope.

Temporary National Water Well Association

The contractors present at Bob Storm's conference in Peoria agreed to form a Temporary National Water Well Association that would be directed to form a permanent organizational structure. Nineteen men representing 10 states joined the new association as charter members, contributing \$10 each so that Bob Storm would have funds to use to inform contractors and manufacturers of the action taken. All 19 were appointed to the Temporary Association's Board of Directors.

The Temporary Board chose William McEllhiney to be its chairman and the following members for the Executive Committee:

Ames, S.R.	Lincoln, Iowa
Erdman, O.E.	Elma, Washington
Freeman, F. Clyde	Orlando, Florida
Parkhurst, M.L.	Ledgewood, New Jersey
Smith, Edwin. F.	St. Louis, Missouri

Bob Storm, who agreed to serve as

secretary for the Temporary NWWA, remembers that the board wanted to organize it as a federation. However, this would have been difficult due to lack of support from the old line associations. The defunct American Well Drillers Association (AWDA) was organized before World War II as a federation. Members of the state associations involved with the AWDA remembered their federation days as a bad experience. Specifically, they wondered where their money was going as the value of benefits they received seemed insufficient.

The alternative to a federation of associations was to establish individual memberships so Bob Storm began selling them at \$10 each. Although the memberships were not to become effective until January 1, 1949, Bob began selling them in July at the Florida association's annual convention.

Vickers' Membership #1

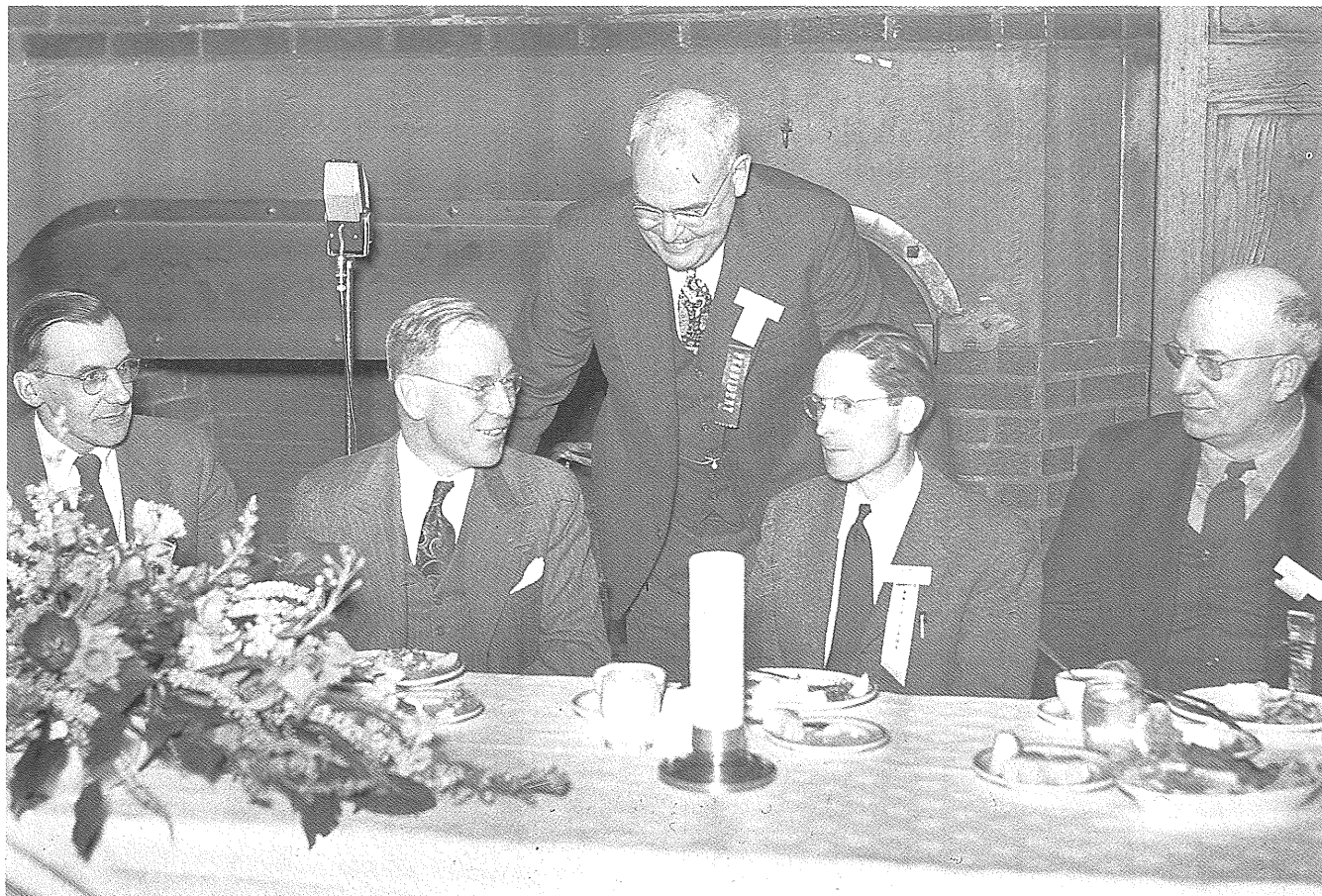
Bob Storm sold a half dozen memberships when he attended the Florida Well Drillers Association convention two weeks after the Temporary NWWA was formed in Peoria.

Dick Vickers, an Orlando contractor who joined the Florida association in 1944, attended the Florida convention in Palm Beach and remembers giving Bob Storm \$20 to purchase the first NWWA membership sold, thereby receiving membership number one.

Vickers and several other members of the Florida association were strong supporters of a national association. According to Vickers, there was a dedicated group of industrial drillers who, during the war, wanted a national organization to help resolve material shortages. Thus, Florida worked with Illinois, Michigan and perhaps one or two other associations toward the development of a national organization. These contractors understood that they would gain strength from a large association membership.

Organizational Meeting: November 19-20 at Stevens Hotel in Chicago

Twenty contractors, 25 manufacturers' and suppliers' representatives and seven technical representatives attended the NWWA organizational meeting at the Stevens Hotel in Chicago.



At the annual banquet held in the Urbana-Lincoln Hotel in 1947, Illinois Water Well Drillers Association President W.A. McEllhiney (standing) is shown talking with Dr. A.N. Sayre (second from left) and L.E. Workman. Clarence W. Klassen is on far left and Vice President George J. Berns.

One outcome of this meeting was a "Purposes" statement for the organization's constitution. Members believed the statement should be generally stated, and they adopted the following verbiage:

"The objectives of this association shall be: to maintain an organization to assist, promote, encourage and support the interests and welfare of the water well industry in all of its phases; to foster, aid and promote scientific education, standards, research, and techniques in order to improve methods of well construction and development; to promote harmony and cooperation between well contractors and governmental scientific agencies relative to the proper development and protection of underground water supplies; to encourage cooperation of all interested groups relative to the improvement of drilling and pump equipment; to encourage, serve, assist and promote closer cooperation among the existing state water well contractor's associations and to foster the development of such associations in states where they do not exist; to collect, analyze and disseminate to the public, information about the role of the water well industry in the economy of the nation; and to generally advance the mutual interests of all those engaged in the water well industry, in their own and the public welfare."

Interim National Water Well Association Board

The organizational meeting in Chicago ended with objectives met and a permanent NWWA established. It was decided that:

1. NWWA would be chartered as a non-profit corporation.
2. An interim board would serve until regional boards could be established and democratic elections could be held.
3. Membership would consist primarily of well drilling contractors. Active membership would also be open to manufacturers and suppliers of water well equipment, representatives of manufacturers and suppliers, and technical personnel such as geologists,

The following interim board was established at the Chicago meeting:

*McElhiney, W. A., Chairman	Illinois
*Smith, Edwin F., Vice-Chairman	Missouri
Contractors:	
Allen, E. D.	Ohio
*Erdman, O.E.	Washington
*Fawcett, A. E.	Texas
*Freeman, Francis Clyde	Florida
Holden, B.A.	Colorado
Hosack, Allen E.	Idaho
Kelley, E.L.	Oklahoma
Knapp, Ray S.	New York
Martin, L.L.	North Carolina
Schweitzer, Paul	Virginia
Striver, Robert O.	Indiana
Thorpe, T.W.	Iowa
Manufacturers:	
Godschalk, H.J.	Geo. E. Failing Supply Co.
*Parkhurst, Marvin L.	Parkhurst Distributing Co.
Spang, Ferd J.	Spang & Co.
Stone, Seldon A.	IDECO
Vonderheide, John	A. D. Cook Inc.
Technical:	
Anderson, Keith E.	Iowa State Geological Survey
Bays, Carl A.	Ill. State Geological Survey
Johnson, Meredith E.	State Geologist New Jersey
Klassen, C. W.	Ill. St. Dept. Public Health
Ordelheide, Larry E.	Mo. St. Dept. of Pub. Health

*Charter members on Interim Board

hydrologists, public health officials, and consulting engineers. Active memberships were thus divided into three divisions: Contractors, Manufacturers, and Technical.

4. A national meeting would be held in 1949 but there would be no large exposition.

5. NWWA would purchase the *Water Well Journal* from the Illinois Association and the *Journal* would be established as a profit making corporation partly owned by NWWA and partly by individuals in the ground water industry.

6. Dues would be: \$10 for individual contractors and manufacturers; \$25 for corporate memberships; and \$5 for technical and associate memberships.

There were 19 charter members and all were in the well drilling business. However, within one year, Marvin Parkhurst changed businesses, going from Parkhurst Well and Pump Co. to Parkhurst Distributing Co. In addition to those noted on the Interim Board, the following were charter members:

Ames, S.R.	Iowa
Heegard, Gil	Minnesota
Mercer, L.W.	Florida
Allabaugh, J.H.	Illinois
Roush, C.	Florida
Nelson, M.O.	Wisconsin
Pliefke, H.G.	Minnesota
Kemper, H.E.	Minnesota
Swanson, L.F.	Illinois
Sutherland, Roy	Indiana
Lewis, Harry	Illinois
Boysen, Henry Jr.	Illinois
Milaeger, R.E.	Wisconsin

The interim board hired Robert R. Storm to become executive secretary of the Association effective January 1, 1949, or as soon as possible thereafter. Storm, who had battled for the concept of active membership open to anyone in the industry, had divided his work hours between NWWA and the Illinois association after leaving the Illinois Geological Survey. With the sale of the *Water Well Journal*, Bob then split his hours between NWWA and the *Journal*.

Leaving the Survey for the NWWA

was a risky decision for Storm. However, William McEllhiney, whom Bob Storm likened to a second father, made the transition easier by offering him job security. One day when they were riding together in a car, Mac said, "No matter what happens here you've always got a job." Bob remembers the significance of that moment because Mac was the kind of person who found it difficult to compliment people to their face.

As a geologist with the Survey, Storm's main job was to make well drillers happy because the Survey needed their support. Now the drillers wanted Bob to be service secretary for their association.



Exhibit floor crowd at the Twentieth Annual Convention in 1947.

1949

- U.S. troops were withdrawn from Korea.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), established by the United States, Canada, and 10 West European nations, pledged mutual assistance against aggression.
- Chiang Kai-shek resigned as president of China and moved his Nationalist forces to Taiwan. Within months Mao Tse-tung proclaimed a new People's Republic of China.
- Republic of Eire was founded. England recognized Irish independence but kept Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom.

In 1949, business forecasts were down for the near future as business continued to adjust to peacetime levels. The period was ending when customers beat paths to drillers' doors; instead, drillers had to begin selling their services — namely the supply of fresh, healthful water. However, there was still a good market in the rural areas. Almost every rural U.S. family would have electric power within five years, thereby expanding the market for water supply systems and brightening business prospects for water well drillers.

During NWWA's first year, drillers, manufacturers, and technical members were generally enthusiastic about the new Association. The year was devoted mainly to recruiting sufficient membership to enable the Association to carry out its initial objectives of gaining nationwide recognition for the industry; serving as the voice for the industry; and laying the groundwork for a program of projects to improve things such as insurance, safety, standard contract

forms, and well specifications.

The first objective to meet was member recruitment. In addition to contractors, technical and industrial members were sought because their support of the Association was equally important. A prime purpose of NWWA was to promote better understanding among everyone in the industry and to represent everyone in the industry regardless of geographic area or job function.

A second objective to meet by year end was to determine the courses of action for 1950 when the first priority would continue to be an intensive membership campaign, which, in turn, would raise operating funds. Although the initial organization work was difficult, the work ahead was even harder. **McEllhiney's Message to the Industry**

In a January welcoming message to *Water Well Journal* readers, W.A. McEllhiney reviewed current status and direction for the year:

- Three employees began working full time for the National Association, which was officially located in Urbana, Illinois.

- The board of directors was working on the Association's constitution and bylaws, making necessary changes and readying the documents for distribution to all members.

- McEllhiney and Bob Storm were working with legal advisers to prepare the paperwork necessary to incorporate the Association and also the *Water Well Journal* Co.

- Storm was overseeing the design of membership cards and certificates.

After the National Association and the *Journal* were incorporated, McEllhiney directed Bob Storm to begin a vigorous membership campaign seeking the numbers necessary to provide a strong representative voice for the ground water industry. The campaign was also critical because the Association needed operating funds, and the most available source of income was mem-