

The ceremony to inaugurate  
THE WIMBLEBALL RESERVOIR PROJECT

BY

THE LORD NUGENT OF GUILDFORD, P.C.,  
Chairman of the National Water Council

27th September 1974

- 10.00 a.m. South West Water Authority Chairman with Lord and Lady Nugent and Managing Director to leave Judges' Lodgings, Larkbeare, for Haddon Hill, Brompton Regis.
- 11.20 a.m. Chairman and party to arrive at Haddon Hill and proceed to dais.
- 11.30 a.m. Chairman to make speech of welcome to Lord Nugent and guests.
- 11.40 a.m. Lord Nugent to respond.
- 11.50 a.m. Lord Nugent to cut turf.
- 12 noon Reverend D N Francis, Clerk to Brompton Regis Parish Council, to offer prayer for work at site of reservoir and persons to be employed there.
- 12.05 p.m. Apertifs prior to lunch.
- 12.20 p.m. Buffet lunch.
- 1.30 p.m. Disperse

The Statistics

The cost:	£6 - 7 million
Gross storage capacity:	4,500 million gallons
Height of the dam:	161 feet
Cubic content of concrete in dam:	126,500 cu. metres
Area of water:	370 acres
Catchment area:	7,200 acres
Average annual rainfall:	52.3 inches
Yield;	7 m.g.d direct supply to Wessex area, 12.8 m.g.d augmentation of River Exe.

## WIMBLEBALL RESERVOIR

" The official start of the work of constructing the Wimbleball Reservoir is an event of major importance in the life of the South West of England.

Although rainfall is fairly plentiful in the South West, large - scale storage capacity is dangerously limited and summer shortages during the prosperous summer holiday period have been a serious risk. This major new reservoir with a total capacity of about 20 million gallons per day will go far to relieve the danger of shortages in this part of Devon and Somerset for some years to come.

While it is to the credit of the South West Water Authority that this major work is being put in hand, we must also pay tribute to the three local Water Boards who came together in 1965, later joined by the Devon River Authority, to do the preparatory work.

I am very honoured to perform the official opening for a of great value to the life of the local community"

Nugent

LORD HUGENT, a Life Peer and former MP, was appointed Chairman of the National Water Council, after being Chairman of the Thames Conservancy since 1960. He is the present Chairman of the Standing Conference on London and South East Regional Planning and Chairman of the Animal Virus Research Institute.

Up until this year he was President of the Association of River Authorities.

From 1951 to 1957 he was Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and to the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation from 1957 to 1959. He was Chairman of the Select Committee for Nationalised Industries from 1961-64 and of the Agricultural Marketing Development Committee from 1962-68. He was MP for Guildford from 1950 - 66 and was created a Life Peer eight years ago.

## THE HISTORY OF WIMBLEBALL.....

Wimbleball - the name comes from Wimbleball Wood - was the product of a survey that covered seventeen possible reservoir sites in Devon and Somerset.

The story started back in 1965 when the West Somerset, North Devon and East Devon Water Boards agreed to get together to promote an investigation into the water resources of the River Exe - one of the larger river catchments in the West Country. The aim: A reservoir big enough to stave off a crucial water shortage expected in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

A final report recommended Wimbleball in the Exmoor National Park.

From then on - in the words of the South West Water Authority's Chairman, Mr George Gawthorn - patience, co-operation and consultation paved the way to a successful promotion of the scheme by the Devon River Authority.

The scheme has now become an exercise in joint co-operation by the South West and Wessex Water Authorities.

A start on the concrete dam and ancillary works will be made later this year and the reservoir will be filled by the Spring or Summer of 1978.

## A NATURAL ATTRACTION.....

Great emphasis has been laid upon landscaping and environmental aspects of Wimbleball, which will supply water to Tiverton and Exeter districts, as well as the Taunton and Bridgwater areas, which come within the Wessex region.

Wimbleball is designed to be a natural and attractive feature - a place for quiet enjoyment, but also recreation. Conservation and wild life will be encouraged. Water tolerant trees will be planted at certain points to shield low-water marks. Wild flowers will be planted to enhance the bordering woodland. There will be fishing and sailing facilities, landscaped car parks and a landscaped picnic area - all carefully planned to provide one of the best water schemes in the country.

