

## EDWARD E. TUFTE, FASCE

Edward E. Tufte was born on July 30, 1912 in Northwood, North Dakota, the youngest child of Halvor H. Tufte and Kari Hansen Tufte. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of North Dakota in 1933, winning a Sigma Xi award for research there, and did graduate work in soil mechanics at Colorado A & M in Fort Collins. During most of his adult life he took University courses at night – in law, philosophy, computer science, accounting, music appreciation, literature, and a variety of other subjects.

His career as a civil engineer began in the Middle West with employment by the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, surveying land from Canada to Mexico, working on a dredge improving the channel of the Mississippi River, and designing flood control structures. In the history, “American Building” (University of Chicago Press) Mr. Tufte is credited with being engineer and co-designer in originating innovative use of wood in an auditorium in Jamestown, North Dakota in 1937, the “first large enclosure with roof framing of laminated timber”. Later he designed underground structures for the Kansas City Power & Light Company.

A year traveling in Japan and China was interrupted by the Japanese attack on Shanghai. Mr. Tufte served as a member of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps to protect the International Settlement until residents were evacuated. During World War II he served from 1942 to 1946 as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

After the war, in municipal engineering positions in Phoenix, Arizona, Covina, California, and Beverly Hills, California, he supervised the design, construction, and operation of streets and public utilities – water, sanitation, storm drains, lighting -- as well as parks, libraries, and other municipal facilities. A resident of Beverly Hills for 41 years, he served that city as City Engineer and Public Works Director from 1959 to 1976. In all three cities he initiated the concept of “mini-parks”, persuading City Councils to buy small scattered parcels of land and transform them into beautifully landscaped public parks. While working in Beverly Hills, he taught courses at night in engineering administration for three years at the Graduate School of Public Administration, University of Southern California. He helped develop a program for mosquito abatement in Los Angeles County.

A member of ASCE since 1947, Mr. Tufte was a Fellow and Life Member. He served as President of the Arizona and California chapters of the American Public Works Association and as President of the City and County Engineers Association of Los Angeles. He was a member of Sigma Xi, honorary scientific society and was an active member of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

He loved books and the out-of-doors – oceans, rivers, plains, deserts, mountains, and woods. His recreations included reading, golf, bicycling, and walking on the beach or the city sidewalks. In his long life, both in his professional capacity and as a private citizen, he planted hundreds of trees, and he knew the Latin names of every one of them.

He married Virginia James in 1940 in Omaha, Nebraska; she went on to become Distinguished Professor of English (now emeritus) at the University of Southern California. Five brothers and three sisters preceded him in death. He is survived by his widow, Virginia James Tufte of Beverly Hills; his son, Edward Rolf Tufte, Yale University professor, author, and artist; his daughter-in-law Inge Druckrey, Philadelphia University of the Arts professor and graphic designer; and a number of nieces and nephews.

Following a series of strokes which left him partially disabled for several years, Mr. Tufte passed away on November 15, 1999. His family honored his wish that his ashes be scattered in the Pacific Ocean. In his memory, his family made a gift to the City of Beverly Hills for planting new trees and shrubs in public parks and gardens.

## **EDWARD E. TUFTE**

**Edward E. Tufte, FASCE and Life Member, died on November 15, 1999 at the age of 87. He had been partially disabled for several years by a series of strokes.**

**A resident of Beverly Hills for 41 years, he had been City Engineer and Public Works Director of the City of Beverly Hills from 1959 to 1976. His long career included flood control in the Midwest, designing wood structures with innovative use of laminated timber, serving as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of engineers during World War II, and serving in municipal engineering positions in Phoenix and Covina.**

**He is survived by his wife, Virginia James Tufte, a son, daughter-in-law, and a number of nieces and nephews.**

**TUFTE, Edward E. (1912-1999)**

Edward E. Tufte, resident of Beverly Hills for 41 years, former city engineer and public works director of the city of Beverly Hills from 1959 to 1976, passed away November 15, 1999, at St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica. He had been partially disabled for several years by a series of strokes.

He was born in Northwood, North Dakota, July 30, 1912, youngest child of Halvor H. Tufte and Kari Hansen, native of Hallingdal, Norway. Five brothers and three sisters preceded him in death.

His education included the degree of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from the University of North Dakota, and graduate studies in soil mechanics at Colorado A&M, Fort Collins. During most of his adult life, he took University courses at night--in law, philosophy, computer science, accounting, music appreciation, literature, and a variety of other subjects.

His career as a civil engineer began in the Middle West with federal employment as a surveyor of land from Canada to Mexico, work on a dredge improving the channel of the Missouri river, and (in Omaha) designing flood control structures. In the history, *American Building* (University of Chicago Press), Mr. Tufte is credited with being engineer and co-designer in originating innovative use of wood in an auditorium in Jamestown, North Dakota, in 1937 "the first large enclosure with roof-framing of laminated timber." Later he designed underground structures for the Kansas City Power & Light Company.

A year traveling in Japan and China was interrupted by the Japanese attack on Shanghai. Mr. Tufte served as a member of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps to protect the International Settlement until residents were evacuated. During World War II, he served from 1942 to 1946 as an officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a period he described as the most painful part of his life.

After the war, in municipal engineering positions in Phoenix, Arizona, Covina, California, and Beverly Hills, he supervised the design, construction, and operation of streets and public utilities--water, sanitation, storm drains, lighting--as well as parks, libraries, and other municipal facilities. In all three cities, he initiated the concept of "mini-parks," persuading city councils to buy small scattered parcels of land and transform them into beautifully landscaped tiny public parks. While working in Beverly Hills, he taught night courses in engineering administration for three years at the Graduate School of Public Administration, University of Southern California. He helped develop a program for abatement of mosquitoes in Los Angeles county.

He was a member of Sigma Xi, honorary scientific society; a Life Fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers; former president of Arizona and California chapters of the American Public Works Association, and of the City and County Engineers' Association of Los Angeles.

He loved books and the outdoors--oceans, rivers, plains, desert, mountains, woods. His recreations included reading, golf, bicycling, and walking on the beach or the city sidewalks. In his long life, both in his professional capacity and as a private citizen he planted hundreds of trees, and he knew the Latin names of every one of them.

Surviving are his wife, Virginia James Tufte, Beverly Hills, distinguished professor of English emerita, University of Southern California; his son, Edward Rolf Tufte, Yale University, author, artist, professor; his daughter-in-law, Inge Druckrey, professor and graphic designer, Philadelphia University of the Arts; and a number of nieces and nephews.

His family honored his wish that his ashes be scattered in the Pacific Ocean. In memory of Edward E. Tufte, his family will make a gift to the City of Beverly Hills for planting new trees and shrubs in a public park or garden.