

**KHS “Looking Back” Column – for the Kimberley Echo, Thursday March 10<sup>th</sup> 2011.**

In October 1960 a Bill was passed to ratify an agreement with Northern Developments (Ord River) Pty. Ltd. to develop a pilot farm of 2,000 acres. By that time the whole 2,000 acres of the pilot farm had been chain-dozed and 200 acres was cleared, ploughed, and prepared for sowing the first crop of wet season rice. North-West Minister Court said the project would serve as a pattern for future farms when large-scale development took place as a result of the construction of the Ord River diversion dam. Emphasis was placed on rice, cotton, safflower and linseed production. Over three years, the Government would advance up to £100,000 for the project and would construct and maintain the main water channels to the pilot farm area. Prior to completion of the diversion dam the Government was to make available in the first three years at least enough water for the following maximum areas; 200 acres, 1960-61 (wet season rice); 200 acres, 1961 (dry season rice); 400 acres, 1961-62 (wet season rice); 400 acres, 1962 (dry season rice); Up to 600 acres, 1962-63 (wet season rice). At the same time in 1960 John Lewis and Dave Bryden, engineers from the Hydraulic Branch of the Public Works Department were visiting India and Pakistan to examine the problems of silt movement and flood control, while Works Minister Wild said that Western Australia would approach the Commonwealth Government in three or four years for financial aid to start on the main Ord River dam.



*Pilot-Farm Manager Ron Kinsey on the Flume Structure for the Pilot Farm Channel in November 1960 – Photographed by Cyril Ion – KHS-2010-2-067-bo-PD – <http://www.kununurra.org.au/>*