



PETROLEUM
HISTORY
SOCIETY

ARCHIVES

Newsletter of the Petroleum History Society

March, 1999; Volume X, Number 2

NOTICE

1999 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4:00 p.m., Wednesday, 31 March 1999

Palliser Hotel, Turner Valley Room

AGENDA

- 4:00 – 4:30 Reception (cash bar)
4:30 – 5:00 Business Meeting
5:00 – 5:30 Awards
5:30 – 6:00 Guest Speaker – Don Axford, President, D. W. Axford & Associates Ltd.

TOPIC

REFLECTIONS ON PETROLEUM DISCOVERY & DEVELOPMENT ON CANADA'S EAST COAST

Don Axford's contributions to the Canadian oilpatch began in 1942. After serving in the Royal Canadian Naval Reserve (Atlantic theatre of operations) from 1943-1945, he went on to serve with distinction at industry majors Mobil and Petro-Canada as well as proactively on a wide range of committees and organizations from AAPG to CPA. Don's strengths (B.Sc. Geology & Physics-U of M, 1948) earned respect and recognition from his peers, culminating in the AAPG Distinguished Service Award in 1982 and CSPG Gold Medal Award (one of only five ever awarded) in 1996 for outstanding contributions to petroleum development in the Canadian Offshore. We are fortunate to have such a deserved and knowledgeable presenter for uncovering "everything you always wanted to know about the East Coast energy potential but were afraid to ask" – Sable Island, Panuke-Cohasset, Hibernia – from early exploration to actual and proposed production. Join us for an entertaining and educational conclusion to another very rewarding year for the Petroleum History Society. Thanks to all our Members for their support and participation during the past twelve months.

- 6:00 – 6:30 "Mix and Mingle" (sandwiches and hors d'oeuvres provided; cash bar)
RSVP Bill McLellan, 286-2191 by Noon, Monday, March 29

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Next luncheon—May '99; guest speaker Jim Gray	

if you missed the...

EARLY OILPATCH HISTORY & ROLES OF THE HERRON FAMILY

Luncheon

Wednesday, January 27, 1999

with Frank Dabbs-author, historian, journalist

...enjoy a condensed version of Frank's presentation in this issue of Archives.

Petroleum History Society 1997 Awards

At our March 31, 1999 Annual General Meeting the Society will present the following Awards for 1997 in recognition of outstanding achievement in a number of areas important to the preservation and dissemination of the history of the petroleum industry in Canada:

- Book of the Year Award** - to Sproule Associates Limited for "*Spirit of Success: The Sproule Story*".
- Article of the Year Award** - to Aubrey Kerr for "*Historical Snapshots*", published in the CSPG Reservoir newsletter.
- Preservation Award** - to Canadian Petroleum Hall of Fame and Leduc/Devon Oilfield Historical Society jointly for their contributions to the 50th Anniversary of the Leduc Discovery.
- Multi-media Award** - to The Petroleum Club for their "*Legacy*" exterior wall mural, visible from 6th Avenue SW.
- Lifetime Achievement Award** - to Earle Grey for dedicated service and professional scholarship in the study of Canadian petroleum history.

THE PETROLEUM HISTORY SOCIETY - Calendar of Events and Daily Tips

Next Director's Meeting: 3:30 p.m., 31 March 1999, Turner Valley Room, Palliser Hotel

Society Web Site: Volunteer expertise to design and install PHS web site required. Contact Dag Nilsen 260-1026. Goal is to be up and running Dec 1999 to prepare for the 2000 World Petroleum Congress.

Society Library: Archives book & video inventory on page 6. PHS may joint venture with Glenbow Museum and Archives to store/display our collection. Any Members with additional donations, contact Bill McLellan 286-2191.

Significant Wells of Western Canada: John Frey's 50 candidate goal close. Could be ideal gift and/or collectible for 2000 World Petroleum Congress. Photo detective/literary editor? John 264-3693(B)/287-7930(H).

1999 Field Trip: Repeat of August '98 Turner Valley tour planned by CSPG June 19, '99 & co-sponsored by PHS. Guides-Aubrey Kerr, Clint Tippet and Clark Siferd. Tour Book redesigned. Contact Clint 691-4274(B).

New Society Goal: Public & industry awareness of objectives & contributions. 1999 Archives copies provided to Rick Charland-DOB; Ian Doig-Doig's Digest; Gordon Jaremko-Oilweek; Mike Byfield-Alberta Report, Scott Jeffrey-Roughneck Magazine; AEUB, CAPL, CAPP, CSEG, CSPG, NEB, & PSAC; Calgary Herald/DOB ads.

1999 Membership Fees: B of D have revised 1999 calendar year fees, now due. Individual Membership \$20.00; Sustaining Individual Membership \$50.00; Institutional/Corporate Membership and LifeTime Senior (+65) \$100.00. Application Form attached. Note **NEW** forwarding address. Attn. Doug Cass 268-4203(B)/932-6505(H).

Potential Gas Committee: This body's first report on Canada's gas potential in 1997 is being followed up by a more extensive re-assessment. PHS volunteers/referrals needed. Contact Ed Petrie 268-6395 or FAX 268-7520.

Daily Tip:(365 *Stupidest Things Ever Said*-Ross & Kathy Petras)"**They couldn't hit an elephant at this dist__**" last words of Union Army Commander John Sedgwick, addressing his troops during a US Civil War battle.

PRESENTED BY AUTHOR AND JOURNALIST FRANK DABBS TO THE PETROLEUM HISTORY SOCIETY
LUNCHEON - 27 JANUARY 1999

(edited liberally from notes by Neil Leeson for PHS)

Canadians, particularly Albertans, often forget the prominence and influence credited to local oilpatchers in the global energy industry. One of the most colorful, hard working, hard playing cowboy and oilman of the 20th century was a member of the legendary Herron family. William Herron, son of Bill Herron of 1914 Turner Valley discovery fame, is the subject of a soon to be released book by Frank Dabbs. Here is just a taste of the nostalgia and surprise you can expect.

On July 28, 1914 Austria declared war on Serbia. World War I began with Germany's mobilization and declaration of war with Russia August 1. Coincidentally Britain's Duke of Connaught was visiting drilling operations at Turner Valley. It is a turbulent era as Germany invades Belgium August 3, followed by a state of war with Germany by the British Empire (including Canada) on August 5.

So what is so special about Connaught? He is a special emissary sent by Whitehall/Westminster (Winston Churchill mainly) to report on the area's oil potential. Churchill, ahead of his time as always, fears the British Navy's command of the seas is threatened without safe, plentiful supplies of oil. With the advent of world war and the end of the coal era, he foresees the day when war is not a matter of "blood and iron" but of "blood and oil". Connaught reported Turner Valley to be one of the biggest, most important (militarily) oilfield in the British Empire. Hence we have the match that lit the fires of exploration and discovery that continue to this day in Alberta.

In 1919 Bill Herron, founder and driving force behind Turner Valley exploitation, published a lengthy report on the geology and politics (strange bedfellows) of the Turner Valley oilfield. The findings were widely acclaimed.

Winston Churchill himself, along with his son and brother, visited Turner Valley in 1929. During his stay he meets the stalwarts of the Alberta oilpatch at that time: Bill Herron, J. H. McLeod, Senator Pat Burns, Mayor Osborne and a host of oil company executives from Imperial Oil, Home Oil and Royalite Oil. During the next decade infill drilling and new depth discoveries expand the wealth and boundaries of the Turner Valley field.

In 1939 the outbreak of World War II also heralded the War Measures Act, which was enforced by an Oil Controller until 1942. Stable flying weather, flat countryside for navigation and emergency landings, and plentiful supply of aviation gas all contributed to Western Canada's unanimous selection for hosting the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). During the course of the war, over 131,000 Air Crew from Commonwealth countries (55% Canadian) were trained by the BCATP at communities such as Claresholm, Penhold, Lincoln Park (including my Dad, enlisting out of High School in Nova Scotia and graduated as a Wireless/Air Gunner in 1944 before Overseas posting to No. 6 Bomber Group, RCAF – Neil L). Secure, plentiful and easily accessible reserves of Turner Valley were the primary source for aviation fuel to facilitate BCATP's ambitious plans. Desperate times warranted desperate measures, leading to unprecedented intervention in Canada's energy industry by the U.S. Government. Without Ottawa's knowledge or approval, the U.S. Army funded Imperial Oil's drilling at Norman Wells field and the subsequent Canol Pipeline through the Northwest Territories and Alaska to service the U.S. Pacific Fleet. Readers requiring more detail should visit David Breen's September 1981 *Canadian Historical Review*.

According to Northrop Frye, every society has a story or myth by which it is defined in history. Calgary's reputation is built on highly visible cowboy, oilmen and volunteer personalities. William Herron, the archetype of a Calgarian, earned recognition as one of these personalities. Generous, hard working, warm, gregarious, aggressive, high-spirited, successful and affluent; he lived the life by which we now define Alberta's identity. Synonymous with oil rigs, pump jacks, drilling exploits, gushers, wildcat wells, William Herron's passion for saddle horses, show horses, Calgary Stampede, Stampedor Football Club are often overlooked. Who has not heard of Calgary's support and enthusiasm for their Stampedor football team's 1948 Grey Cup win in Toronto? The migration of Albertans to the eastern Canadian debonair and sanguine metropolis with their horses and wild party habits was headed by no other than William Herron.

Frank and George McMahon, Bob Brown Jr, the Herrons – all legends of the Alberta oilpatch. William Herron carved out notoriety different from the stereotype oil baron. Hard work and family experience shaped his perspectives. He was very pro-British in the Anglo-American conflict over ownership and development of Canadian natural resources. His dislike and mistrust of Bay Street, multinationals and the capital market system was open and well known. Unlike his competitors with whom he shared the spotlight, he preferred individual, rather than team, strategy and personality. Not one to seek attention and praise, he disapproved and shunned the combat of competition.

So why are we so quick to forget our history, to lose sight of our 1998 Grey Cup victory as a 50 year tradition carved in the marble entrance of Toronto's Royal York Hotel, to stand by and watch our White Hat symbol demigrated? What do we lose if we lose history? The Calgary Professional Club closed its doors last month for lack of industry support. After serving the oilpatch for more than 50 years, including PHS monthly luncheons, we forgot our heritage and simply let it go. If not for literature, our history would not survive.

We should not underestimate the commitment, contribution and passion of local authors like Frank Dabbs. The Petroleum History Society thanks Frank for reminding us of how fragile tradition is without our support and determination to sustain it.

THE PETROLEUM HISTORY SOCIETY: PURPOSE AND GOALS

contributed by Neil Leeson, Director, PHS

INTRODUCTION:

The Petroleum History Society began in 1985 to collect, archive and communicate the story of our industry's past. It is one of the few historical societies in Canada which focuses on a single industry. The Canadian petroleum industry has been one of the country's leading enterprises in terms of application of science, economic impact and employment opportunities. Technology developed in Canada enhanced the global petroleum industry with improved methods of drilling, sour gas production, and sulphur recovery to name a few accomplishments. In opening new frontiers like polar exploration and oil sands extraction, Canadians exported a sense of responsibility for all non-renewable resources. Conservation initiatives and environmental strategies, which were implemented in Alberta in the early 1930s, have been adopted by resource producing nations worldwide. This well-earned legacy is a tribute to each and every contributor to the Canadian oilpatch throughout the 20th Century.

PURPOSE:

Research, disseminate, record, distribute and preserve the history of the Canadian petroleum industry. The Society's Oral History Project has assembled and recorded more than 250 interviews. Insights such as Turner Valley's boomtown excitement, struggling with the Canol project to fuel the U.S. Pacific Fleet during World War II, and the early quest to release the riches of the Tar Sands. The challenge is to harness these firsthand recollections of the participants while they are still with us. A list of people interviewed for the Oral History Project is contained on page 5 as well as a current Board of Director contact list.

Oral history is a vital tool in any attempt to understand growth and development. While interviews cannot replace preservation of original archival records, they are critical in providing personal opinion; experience and knowledge of those intimately involved in the day to day operations of this remarkable industry.

Between 1981 and 1985 over 200 interviews were conducted with oilpatch pioneers and half were transcribed to paper. Organizations such as CAPL, CSEG, Turner Valley Oilfield Society, and PanArctic Oils conducted and contributed their own organizational interviews. There remain many significant individuals to be recorded. Canadian Society of Exploration Geophysicists has graciously donated \$12500 to fund ongoing research and documentation during 1999. Budget permitting, contributions from neighbor oilpatch societies would be greatly appreciated and recognized. Contact Peter Savage 249-3532.

Oral History Project material has been used as background for several books on the Canadian petroleum industry. Also two ACCESS radio series and a half-hour television show, leading to the production of a video cassette. ACCESS reported the radio series was one of their most successful, with several requested repeats. PHS and the Senior Archivist of the Glenbow Museum jointly manage the Oral Project.

GOALS:

PHS collaborates with other groups working toward shared goals. Examples are a chair on the advisory board for the Turner Valley Hell's Half Acre Interpretative Centre, liaison with ACCESS Radio, and sponsoring a series of radio docudramas with audio teaching materials for schools. The Society has established also a scholarship at The University of Calgary to support petroleum research.

Oilmen no longer chip at permafrost with picks and shovels, grind through dolomite from rickety wooden derricks, or drill dozens of wildcats across the prairies sustained by little more than faith in geology, God, and gamblers' odds. But let's not forget the people who did.

We seek to strengthen the PHS organization in numbers and experience to preserve our history now and in the future. Your participation will help meet our goals and ensure the generation succeeding us preserve the next chapter, your story. If your conscience tells you it is time to give something back to the industry, get involved and contribute your enthusiasm to PHS. The 2000 World Petroleum Congress in Calgary grants us the forum to display our history. Be a part of the planning and celebration.

People Interviewed in the Petroleum Industry Oral History Project

1	Harold	Arbore	31	Manon	de Chantillon	180	Charles	Hollington	133	Arg	Nelson
2	Harry	Alger	32	George	de Mille	181	Tom	Hicks	134	Mar	Norvell
3	Bill	Allen	33	Man	Dickson	182	Paul	Holten	135	Carl	Noble
4	Garth	Andrews	34	Water	Dodge	183	Harley	Holmsten	136	Art	Nordstrom
5	John	Andrichuk	35	John	Dowling	184	Al	Hovens	137	Troyan	Norris
6	Jan	Angus	36	Jan	Drum	185	Michael	Hindsvick	138	Lauder	Norris
7	Jack	Armstrong	37	Jim	Drumheller	186	Harry	Hunter	139	Ralph	Oborne
8	Eric	Arkness	38	Charlie	Duckley	187	Vern	Hunter	140	Ernest	Pullman
9	W. L. "Pete"	Arkwright	39	Ralph	Ede	188	Alban	Incity	141	E. O.	Perry
10	Don	Asford	40	Garnet	Edwards	189	Jim	Irwin	142	Raymond	Peterson
11	Herb	Bagnall	41	Oscar	Edwards	190	John	Jackson	143	Maurice	Peterson
12	Audy	Bailey	42	Art	Feldmeyer	191	Marg	James	144	Tom	Peterson
13	John	Bellamy	43	Ralph	Flecken	192	George	Jones	145	David	Peterson
14	Ed	Belmont	44	Glass	Fox	193	Gordon	Jones	146	John	Pettenger
15	Ray	Berk	45	Larry	Francis	194	Stan	Kaulk	147	W. A.	Phillips
16	Ed	Berrill	46	Bill	Friday	195	Stan	Kerr	148	Jack	Pinner
17	Peter	Berwick (Revised)	47	George	Furnell	196	Tom	Kerr	149	Mary	Pipe
18	Peter	Bullis	48	Bob	Galloway	197	Stu	King	150	Mel	Pipe
19	Elmer	Burke	49	Jack	Galloway	198	Howard	Kirk	151	Jack	Pinner
20	Ted	Butt			Gallagher (Revised)	199	Margaret	Koehn	152	John	Pinner
21	"Tay"	Brown	70	Ed	Gahrle	200	Lobby	Laberge	153	Wes	Rabey
22	Don	Brigham	71	Alvin	Geddes	201	E. H. "Eddie"	Laberge	154	Gordon	Rae
23	Don	Bruce	72	Les	Geddes	202	"Gee"	Langens	155	Mel	Rosenow
24	"Swade"	Black	73	Ken	Gerrard	203	Douglas	Layr	156	Don	Rudman
25	Mark	Blain	74	Kathy	Gibson	204	Lois	Lebl	157	Bill	Ruffell
26	George	Blanchard	75	Margaret	Gibson	205	Charles	Lee	158	Alvin	Russ
27	Bob	Bridgman	76	Shelton	Gibson	206	D. E. "Ed"	Lewis	159	Charles	Selback
28	Don	Brown	77	Willis	Gibson	207	Fin	Linburn	160	Jim	Sext
29	K. A.	Brown	78	D. P.	Goodall	208	Jim	Linburn	161	Bob	Shaw
30	R. S. "Spika"	Brown	79	Jack	Goodman	209	Bill	Livingstone	162	Ernie	Shaw
31	Jack	Brownrigg	80	Jack	Guth	210	Emily	Loucheur	163	Charles	Shipp
32	Don	Burgess	81	George	Gunter	211	W. D. C. "Doc"	Mackay	164	Clark	Sillard
33	Don	Caine	82	David	Gray	212	Ray Harry	MacKenzie	165	Robert	Somersville
34	Thomas	Cameron	83	Jan	Gray	213	Gerry	McMillan	166	Bobby	Spawson
35	Don	Campbell	84	Earle	Gray	214	Paul	Mason	167	Lloyd	Stafford
36	Harry	Carlyle	85	John	Gray	215	Rud	Marshall	168	Daryl	South
37	Lyle	Capell	86	W. C. "Bill"	Gessner	216	D. P.	McDonald	169	Peter	South
38	S. K.	Chalmers	87	Cornel O.	Hage	217	Bill	McGeorge	170	Charles	Seick
39	Carl	Chapman	88	E. T. "Tony"	Hall	218	Don	McInnes	171	Bill	Smart
40	Bill	Charles	89	Willis	Hansen	219	Don	McKay	172	Hans	Soper
41	Norm	Cherise	90	Stan	Harting	220	Frank	McKenzie	173	Kathleen	Taylor
42	Bill	Chen	91	Don	Harris	221	Norman	Meach	174	Vern	Taylor
43	C. E.	Cleveland	92	Dallas	Hartman	222	Archie	Miller	175	Ann	Taylor
44	Gordon	Conwell	93	John Homer	Hayden	223	Jack	Mitchell	176	Ben	Teague
45	Eugene	Cook	94	Cecil "Harry"	Heath	224	David	Mitchell	177	George	Tenn
46	Bert	Cory	95	M.	Hellwell	225	Rowley	Mitchell	178	Ed	Tennil
47	Pete	Cox	96	Alan	Hemstock	226	Carl	Moss	179	Ray	Tull
48	Colin	Crickmay	97	Emily	Hemstock	227	Paul	Moss	180	Wes	Turgeon
49	Marshall	Crowe	98	Gerry	Henderson	228	J. V. "Ty"	Murray	181	Mary	Penitachuk Turner
50	Stanley	Devies	99	W. S.	Hewson Jr.	229	Scott	Murray	182	Bill	Tweats
						230	Clair	Nelson	183	Leo	Vielicka

