

# ARCHIVES

Newsletter of the Petroleum History Society

January 2026; Volume XXXVII, Number 1

## **P.H.S. Luncheon – Wednesday, January 28, 2026**

### **Discovery and Development of the White Rose Field, Offshore Newfoundland and Labrador**

***By: Walt DeBoni, Petroleum Engineer and Historian***

You are invited to our next Luncheon Meeting on Wednesday, November 26, at the Calgary Petroleum Club. The luncheon will feature Walt DeBoni who will address us about his experiences in offshore Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Please see pages 2 and 3 for talk abstract and speaker bio.**

**Time:** 12 noon, Wednesday, January 28, 2026  
**Place:** Calgary Petroleum Club  
319 - 5 Avenue SW, Calgary (Please check the marquee for the room)  
Dress – business casual.  
**Cost:** P.H.S. Members and Student Members \$40; Guests \$45 (most welcome).  
Only cash or cheque at the door. Payment can be made in advance by Interac or PayPal transfer to [treasurer@petroleumhistory.ca](mailto:treasurer@petroleumhistory.ca) Please advise payment method with reply.  
**Lunch:** Soup, sandwiches and cookies. Gluten-free? Vegan? Advise with reply.

**Reply, if you wish to attend, to Treasurer Ian Kirkland via his email**  
[treasurer@petroleumhistory.ca](mailto:treasurer@petroleumhistory.ca)

**The deadline for registration is Monday, January 26 at noon.**

**Please be advised that those who register but do not attend or cancel after the  
deadline, will be invoiced.**

**Those who do not register by the deadline may not be accommodated.**

These restrictions are related to our obligations to the Petroleum Club in terms of catering and seating.

## The Bull Wheel



**Next P.H.S. Luncheon Meetings:** The next scheduled luncheon after the January 28, 2026 event is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 25, 2026.

**P.H.S. Membership:** The Petroleum History Society welcomes and encourages anyone interested in Canadian petroleum history to consider membership. Individuals are only \$30/year, corporate \$100/year, and full-time students are free until the end of the year in which they graduate. Students receive the same benefits as regular members – *Archives* newsletters and invitations to our events.

**Membership renewals:** Renewal notices have recently been sent out to the Society's membership. Your prompt attention will be appreciated. We hope to retain your loyalty and support. Remember that membership in the P.H.S. now brings with it membership in the Turner Valley Oilfield Society, another great organization.

**Payments:** For memberships can be made by Interac or Paypal transfers to [treasurer@petroleumhistory.ca](mailto:treasurer@petroleumhistory.ca), cheque, or cash paid at events. Membership details can be found on the P.H.S. website <http://www.petroleumhistory.ca/about/member.html> and in our brochure <http://www.petroleumhistory.ca/about/phsBrochure.pdf>

**Call for contributions and speakers:** The Petroleum History Society values your input. If you have an article that you'd like to see in *Archives* or if you have a talk that you'd like to give, please get a hold of us. Contact President Clint Tippett or Editor Bill McLellan at the email addresses indicated on page 5.

### January 28 Presentation Abstract:

Drilling in offshore Newfoundland and Labrador was spurred on by the enactment of the National Energy Program in 1980. Husky and Bow Valley teamed up to drill on the East Coast with one focus area being in the Jeanne d'Arc Basin where the Hibernia and Hebron fields had been found in 1979 and 1980, respectively. The White Rose Field was discovered in 1984, approximately 350 km east of St. John's. It is a geologically complex field. A number of delineation wells were required in the 1980s and 1990s to prove its commercial viability. During the period 2000 – 2002, Husky and its partner, PetroCanada, finalized and obtained approval for development plans for this field that had 440 million barrels of recoverable oil. The project was sanctioned on March 31, 2002, with first oil being realized three and a half years later.

The development involved construction of an FPSO (Floating Production, Storage and Offloading) vessel called the SeaRose as the 120 m water depth as considered too deep for a

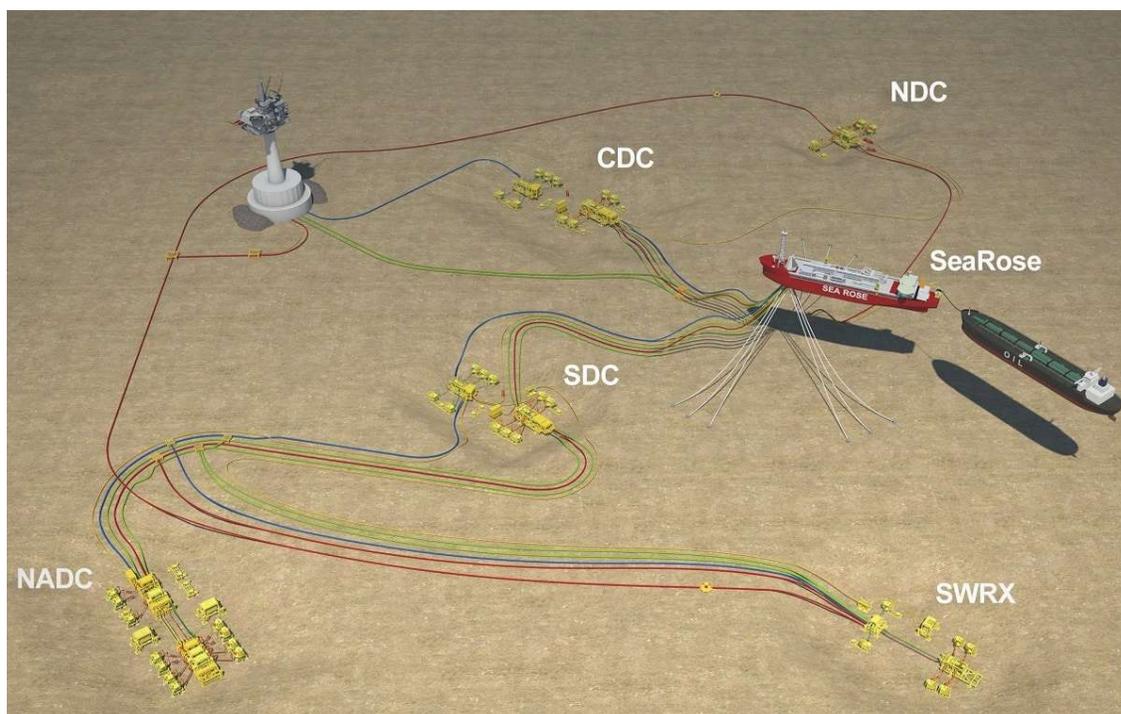
gravity-based structure. Development included the drilling of ten production, gas injection and water injection wells and their tiebacks to the SeaRose. Total development budget was approximately \$2.5 billion with expected production volumes of 100,000 bopd.

Walt's presentation will tell the story of the exploration and development of the White Rose Field during the period from 1984 to 2005. The field is now operated by Cenovus (with a 60% w.i.) following its acquisition of Husky. Suncor, as successor to PetroCanada, holds the remainder of the interests.

### January 28 – Speaker Bio - Walt DeBoni

Walt worked for forty-four years in the petroleum industry with various companies, including Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas, Dome Petroleum, Bow Valley Energy and Husky Energy with a couple smaller companies sprinkled into the mix. For much of his career he was in charge of international exploration and production activities. While always based in Calgary, he made many business trips to Indonesia, China, United Kingdom, Norway, Iran, Abu Dhabi and Romania. During his final 3 ½ years while working at Husky, he was in charge of constructing the offshore production facilities for the White Rose field, offshore Newfoundland - an engineer's dream job in his opinion! After retiring, Walt served on several company boards.

Walt and his wife, Irene, have been involved with Historic Calgary Week for the past twenty years. In retirement, they like to travel and are enjoying and supporting various arts organizations in Calgary.



White Rose Development Layout – current (2026). NDC – North Drill Centre; CDC – Central Drill Centre; SDC – South Drill Centre; NADC – North Amethyst Drill Centre; SWRX – South White Rose; Grey Pedestal to NW – new West White Rose gravity-based platform; SeaRose – moored FPSO ship; black ship – transfer tanker for shipment of crude oil to markets.

**Russian to Conclusions:** I have been curious about the structure of the Russian petroleum industry as it existed prior to the 1917 revolution. Part of the reason for this is that I reviewed a paper that appeared in *Oil-Industry History* concerning the efforts made by Henri Deterding and Royal Dutch Shell to recoup the losses that they incurred when the industry was nationalized by the Soviets. Claims for properties lost depends on the nature of those properties – were they owned outright or were they licenced from the government who retained ownership to the mineral rights. A very useful book in this matter is “*The Oil Fields of Russia and the Russian Petroleum Industry – A Practical Handbook on the Exploration, Exploitation and Management of Russian Oil Properties*” by A. Bebb Thompson, published in 1904 by Van Nostrand. I obtained a copy of it through Forgotten Books - Classic Reprint Series. The answer seems to be that the Russian Crown did own the rights that were then granted to various individuals and companies in one way or another. This sort of information has relevance to the expropriations done by various countries and therefore the validity and substance of claims for reimbursement to previous owners, for example what is now unfolding in Venezuela.

**One for the Books:** A recent acquisition was a book produced by Canadian Hunter in 2001 on the verge of its acquisition by Burlington Resources (for \$3.3 billion). Its title is “*This is Canadian Hunter: Our Relentless Pursuit of Value*”, 110 p. It is a large format, hard cover, snapshot-filled adios by CanHunter that contains lots of quotes from employees and management and some historical material. Many people passed through the company at one stage of their careers or another – and it is fun to see some familiar faces in the volume. The book covers the roles played by John Masters and Jim Grey in the early years through to those of its leaders at this last stage of the company. In many ways the organization was a nursery for some who went on to fame and fortune elsewhere. The book celebrated the successes and contributions of CanHunter over the years.

**Shellburn Story: Tanks for the Recognition.** An article from “*Burnaby Now*” on August 3, 2022 was titled “*UBC student reimagines old Burnaby oil refinery as community space*”. The topic was the redevelopment of the site of the former Shell Canada Shelburn Refinery on Vancouver’s North Shore. It was described as “*more than 200 acres of land on the shores of Burrard Inlet: The Shellburn distribution terminal at 6511 Hastings St. – Shell Canada’s first Canadian refinery built in 1932. The Shellburn site is no longer an active refinery site but had a capacity of 35,000 barrels per day in 1982. It was converted into a terminal for shipping and receiving in 1993.*” The U.B.C. student visualized the site “*as a space for collaborative community gardens, a salt marsh and a “petroleum labyrinth in which a winding path leads people around the post-industrial landscape*”. In her reimagining, the large oil tanks remain a major feature of the park to give visitors a visual shock at the size and scale of the infrastructure up close, showing the impact of industrialism. Keeping those industrial relics is a way of helping the locals remember their past.”

*An aside from the editor: When I worked for Shell I found in their records an album of black and white photographs that dated back to the 1930’s and depicted the construction of the initial Shellburn refinery including the clearing of the land and the erection of early tankage. Throughput at that time was only several thousand barrels per day. The scrapbook had been found in a used bookstore in Vancouver and donated to Shell.*

*Other interesting tidbits are the changes that were made in the refinery “diet” over the years. From 1932 to 1953 it was supplied with imported crude oil, probably from Shell sources in California and the Far East. How it fared during WWII is not known. From 1953 to 1984 it was*

*fed with Alberta crude via the TransMountain Pipeline. After the startup of Shell Canada's Scotford Refinery in Fort Saskatchewan, near Edmonton, in 1984, Shellburn received oil sands-derived synthetic crude oil, still through TransMountain. As such crude, called "Scotmix", had already been through the refining process, all that was left were the lighter ends that could be distilled out to produce gasoline and diesel fuels. The refinery was then called a "splitter". Eventually even that type of processing was discontinued and in 1993 batches of gasoline and diesel began to be batched through TransMountain for local distribution.*

*Chevron had a Vancouver refinery but sold it to Parkland Industries. It handles a relatively small volume. It is somewhat ironic that B.C. Premier Eby has floated the idea that refineries should be the focus of Canadian investment rather than new pipelines from Alberta to the West Coast. Leaving aside the very poor economics that would be involved (see Newfoundland's attempt), it is quite likely that re-introducing such heavy industry into B.C. would be met with a lot of local opposition and would struggle to gain the social licence needed to succeed.*

**He Who Pays the Piper:** TC Energy has produced a book about their recently constructed natural gas pipeline entitled "*The Coastal GasLink Project: History in the Making 2012-2024*", 119 p. It is an attractive hard cover work that contains a slew of photographs of the project and the people who were part of it. Overall, an excellent look at what's involved in such a massive undertaking. I suppose that it is not a surprise that the tone of the book is self-congratulatory although, to its credit, it does at least acknowledge the controversies that existed during parts of its evolution. My only criticism of the book is that you'd think that a book about a pipeline through the mountains would contain an elevation profile, but it does not. Overall, however, a nice piece of work documenting this important Canadian energy project.

**Three Can Play This Game:** We all recall President Trump's move to rename the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America. Apparently South American leaders are similarly inclined to go down that path for political reasons. One of the major offshore fields in Brazil has been named the Lula Field in honour of their re-elected president. Perhaps more humorous is that, according to a recently issued map, the massive ultra-heavy oil belt in Venezuela has been named the "Orinoco Oil Belt Hugo Chavez". We'll see how long that lasts if the Americans start to run the show.

**Learning from the Past:** We often invoke this rationale for studying history – but where have we seen a discussion of how the great pipeline debate of 1957 related to the construction of the TransCanada Pipeline for natural gas relates to our new efforts to build such infrastructure? Surely there are lessons and parallels that could be brought forward. Have we forgotten?

**Editorial Comment:** Please note that unless otherwise indicated, all contents of this newsletter have been created and/or assembled by P.H.S. President Clint Tippett.

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by the Petroleum History Society for Society members.**

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Back issues are archived on our website at <http://www.petroleumhistory.ca/>

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University of Calgary History Professor Paul Chastko autographs a copy of his new book *“The Boom – Oil, Popular Culture, and Politics in Alberta, 1912-1924”* following his well-attended talk about it at the Calgary Central Library on January 18, 2026. The P.H.S. has tentatively arranged for Paul to be the keynote speaker at the Annual Meeting of the P.H.S. and the Turner Valley Oilfield Society on March 25. Stay tuned for details!



Energy bar recently bought at Staples. This oddly named, New Zealand-sourced protein bar (at approx. real scale) is available at the bargain price of only \$15.00. A Diesel chocolate bar “kit” including several such items is only \$35.00. Don't miss out!

## **Petroleum History Society: Luncheon Presentation**

### **Riding the Trails of Southern Alberta Museums, Heritage and Historic Sites**

*By: Irene Kerr – Heritage Advocate, Graphic Designer and former Museum of the Highwood Director/Curator  
October 28, 2025*



#### **Irene addresses the P.H.S. luncheon crowd at the Petroleum Club**

Irene spoke to us on October 28, 2025. She has kindly provided a transcript of her remarks. The first parts are contained in this issue of *Archives*. The second part - that deals with Little Chicago and her work on that project - will appear in a forthcoming issue. We thank Irene for her talk and for sharing her experiences with us.

The communication of petroleum history is an important aspect of the P.H.S. and we have much to learn from what has happened over the years in Southern Alberta.

## **Introduction**

First of all, thank you to Clint for inviting me here today and to all of you for coming, it is truly an honour.

I am a native Calgarian. One of my first jobs was as a student photo technician at Riley's Reproductions and Riley's Datashare where, among other tasks, I reproduced thousands of well logs. I worked at the Glenbow Museum for 14 years and then as Director/Curator of the Museum of the Highwood for 17 years, which includes the Turner Valley Oilfields in its mandate. I was extremely fortunate to have taken part in preserving and sharing the history of Little Chicago/Royalties and the surrounding area. The oral history projects, programs, presentations, links and newsletters on the P.H.S. website are an incredible resource. I particularly enjoyed "The Story of Oil" video from 1947. I was drawn to the "stories" link and found the presentation by Helen Goldenberg regarding the Little Chicago Revisited cairn project. As Clint mentioned she spoke to the P.H.S. at a luncheon on October 28, 2004, exactly twenty-one years ago. When I heard this I got goosebumps. I loved Helen - she was a remarkable lady and somehow I feel her spirit is with me today. As time is limited, I'll share some of my experiences working in the Southern Alberta Heritage field for 35 eventful years (and counting). I'll also focus on the Little Chicago/ Royalties project as it will be of particular interest to this audience. I moved to High River with my young family in 1991 where I enrolled in an Entrepreneurial course and started a Graphic Design company. I was soon offered a position at the Glenbow Museum and for the next 14 years commuted between Calgary and High River!

## **Glenbow Museum**

Right after I began working at the Glenbow there were big changes when the new CEO and board laid off 1/3 of the staff - 31 full time and 11 part-time. I was so out of the loop, that I went home the day of the announcement not knowing if or when I should come back to work. I was offered a permanent part-time position which soon became full-time. Work was just beginning on the complete renovation of the 4th floor and many of the laid-off employees (including production staff) were offered contracts to finish it. This made for a very interesting and very unsettled environment.

The Glenbow adopted a team format in its exhibit production. Each team had a leader, curator(s), conservator, librarian and/or archivist, programmer, graphic and exhibit designers, production technician, and public relations/marketing. I enjoyed this approach and was able to gain more exposure to working in all museum disciplines. It proved to be a huge benefit for me in my career as I eventually filled all those roles in a small museum. The exhibit that changed my life was "Niitsitapiisini: Our Way of Life" the story of the Blackfoot People. I was chosen to be the design coordinator for the project. It was a ground-breaking exhibit. A team was formed with Elders from all four Blackfoot Tribes in the Blackfoot Confederacy, including the Blackfeet Nation in Montana. Our team was warmly received by the Blackfoot community. We met many times over the next couple of years and the Elders taught us protocol, shared traditional knowledge, developed the storyline, chose artifacts and contributed to all aspects of the gallery. The Glenbow team were there to provide museum expertise. The exhibit opened in 2001 and was a huge success. It was only taken down when Glenbow began their current renovations in 2021.

## **Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park**

After I left Glenbow in 2004, I continued to do contract work. One day I received a call from an Elder at Siksika who knew about my work on the Blackfoot Gallery and asked if I would be interested in the exhibit design and production of the new Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park Interpretive Centre. I had heard about the project a few years earlier at an Alberta Museums Association conference and was very impressed. I called the exhibit designer I had worked with on the Blackfoot Gallery and asked if he was interested in partnering on the project. We immediately formed a company and got to work. The shovel had just gone into the ground and the architect had completed his design. Our previous experience at Glenbow working with the Elders was invaluable and we followed the same process. A storyline committee was formed that included Siksika Elders, Siksika museum curators and Blackfoot Crossing staff. The existing museum at the Old Sun Residential School was to be moved to the new centre and incorporated into the lower level. It was a fantastic project to be involved in and I am incredibly proud to have been part of it all. Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park opened in July 2006 and I have remained involved with the it in several capacities ever since.

### **The Museum of the Highwood**

After I moved to High River, I volunteered at the Museum of the Highwood (located in the 1911 former CPR station) and eventually joined the board. There were many challenges, most of which are all too familiar to the museum community. The station received designation as a Municipal Historical Resource. In 2006 it was designated a Provincial Historic Resource. The station and the Museum of the Highwood are both listed on the National Canadian Register of Historic Places. This allowed the museum to apply for and receive funding for the remediation of the station. In 2008 I was offered the position of Director/Curator - only the 4th person to take on that role in a "paid" capacity since 1961! When I accepted the position, I probably should have listened to the words of the second Director who told the third Director who told me "you don't really want this job"! I had no idea what I was getting myself into. It was a steep learning curve - especially after Glenbow. My support staff of over 120 employees was reduced to one. I was so grateful for our volunteers.

### **The Museum of the Highwood 2008 – 2010**

Work continued at the museum with the creation of new exhibits and a general clean-up and reorganization. Like many museums, one of the biggest issues was storage for the collection. There were no clear collections policies in place and nowhere to properly store the many artifacts and archival materials that had been accessioned. There was also a large backlog of material to be dealt with that had been taken in but not processed. The collection was stored in the basement, telegrapher's office and attic of the museum. There were a couple of very sketchy offsite storage spaces, including a SeaCan and a box car. The Town of High River agreed to fund rental costs for offsite storage of oversize objects that had been stored in the SeaCan.

### **Fire 2010**

The storage problem and the issues with the building were eventually solved but in a way that no one ever could have imagined. On July 28, 2010 in the early morning hours, a fire started outside the southeast corner of the station building and spread into the attic where part of the collection and all the programming materials were stored. Volunteer firefighters quickly

responded, chopped holes in the roof and poured massive amounts of water on the building. The fire was contained to the attic. The damage to the building and the collection was severe, and we were forced out of the building for the next 22 months while it was upgraded and renovated. We managed to keep the museum going through outreach programs and exhibits, and many other creative methods. We upgraded our disaster and emergency preparedness plans and revamped our policies and procedures, including an updated, intensive risk management policy. In the meantime, we moved the collection to a nearby Quonset, hired Collections staff, and with the help of dozens of incredible volunteers, cleaned and restored thousands of artifacts that were smoke and water damaged. The estimated loss of collection items was less than 2% although the database was a long way from being updated.

## **The Museum re-opens**

It was not until November 2011 that we had approval from the Town of High River to move back into the station. In May 2012, the museum had a wonderful grand re-opening – almost exactly 100 years after the original station had opened. We built an area for kids called the Imagination Station with interactive play area. There were all new exhibits – featuring many of the restored artifacts. In another twist of irony, one of the exhibits was called “Calamities” and featured previous disasters in the Highwood area, including fires, windstorms, blizzards, train wrecks and floods. Another exhibit was called "Found: Treasures from the Collection".

In October 2012, the Town of High River, our major funder, requested that the museum move the collection from the Quonset to the town-owned Memorial Centre less than a block away from the museum. The reason was economics – the Memorial Centre was constantly losing money and unable to rent out the newly renovated basement space. Other than the fact it was in the basement, it was ideal. We were able to purchase rolling storage units with Insurance funds. Things were going well until June 2013. We had a record year for attendance and revenue. Work continued on the collection, and the plan for the summer of 2013, with the help of our summer students was to undertake a complete physical reorganization and inventory and location documentation of the collection.

## **Flood 2013**

We had very little warning. On June 20, 2013 I went to work around 7 a.m. I noticed that there was more water than usual in the street gutters, but there had been heavy rain the night before. Around 8:30 someone came in and told us they were closing the bridge. By 10:30 everyone left the building and endured terrible experiences that none of us would know about for weeks. Most of the Board members and staff had badly flooded homes. Our families were all displaced for weeks.

The magnitude of the disaster and the ensuing circumstance made this a very unique situation, and most of the information and tasks set out in our carefully crafted disaster management documents were neither realistic nor feasible. For example, it doesn't say anywhere in Collections planning that you can leave part of your collection laid out on the grass unguarded overnight, or that you can kick an artifact across a sidewalk in total frustration, that you have to justify your actions to the media when they ask you what you say to all those people who donated their precious artifacts for the museum to take care of until the end of time, and **you** lost them in the flood.

No one was allowed back into High River for 11 days. The town and province were ill-prepared for the disaster, and as the hours and days passed, frustration grew. We had no idea what we would be facing when we returned. There was absolutely no information regarding the state of our homes or businesses. When we were finally allowed back into town, there were no volunteers available to help, and at first no one else was allowed back into town with us – we could bring one other person. I called our carpenter who had helped build the exhibits in the station. He was a huge help in so many ways. This was in total contrast to the aftermath of the fire when so many people came to help us out. When we first walked into the station and saw that there was minimal damage to the main floor I knew there was hope. Muddy footprints throughout the unlocked building gave us great cause for concern, as we had no idea who actually had been in there. I went to the top of the basement stairs and saw mud almost up to the main floor – then I knew it was going to be bad. Shortly afterwards the Board Chair of the Memorial Centre where our collection was stored showed up and insisted that we get our artifacts out immediately. I went over and it was much worse than I ever could imagine. There was only one floodlight at the bottom of the stairs and from what little I could see it was a disaster. We were severely short of support. The Town of High River, owners of both buildings had way bigger issues on their hands. Our Board of Directors were dealing with their own homes, and most of the staff was doing the same. Our Collections Manager resigned two days after the flood. Our Young Canada Works student lived outside of High River and came to help as soon as I called her. Our other summer student and a former staff member were able to help out with the cleaning in the coming days.

After I had got a better look at the spaces and the damage that was done, I was totally overwhelmed by the magnitude of it all. Throughout the eleven days that we had been locked out of town, I had been in constant touch with the insurance adjuster assigned to our claim who lived in England. The day I got back into the station I received calls from the Canadian Conservation Institute. We had a conference call and by the end, it was agreed that they could send out conservator Irene Karsten to give us a hand. She turned out to be my angel of mercy. While all this was going on the project manager from Belfor Restoration walked in and said that he had been hired by the Town to clean up and restore the station and the storage area. They were followed by an army of colleagues from museums and archives around the province, along with out-of-town family and friends. For the next six days, we removed artifacts from the basement at the Memorial Centre and triaged them. Many were put straight in the dumpster, some were cleaned, repacked – some went into freezer trucks and some into a SeaCan. We tried to photograph everything, but it was almost impossible to keep up with the volume of material coming out of the space. I was the only one making the decisions as to what should stay or go. There was no access to our database and no time. I had to do it all from memory. In many cases objects were so badly damaged that there was no choice anyway. This was enforced deaccessioning under pressure. Again – there was no time to properly document anything.

Ian Fairley, our adjuster, advised me to also carefully consider the cost of restoration when making these decisions. Is it so historically significant that it should be restored at any cost, even if it is never fully restored? Will it ever be used for exhibits or research? I knew which artifacts were “prime” and kept them anyway. Fortunately, I also knew approximately where they were, and only by some miracle was I able to locate some of them in three feet of mud. One of the most fortunate things that happened the first day of artifact removal was the arrival of textile conservator Gail Niinimaa. Gail immediately took charge of the textiles and later became an integral part of the flood recovery. Anything that was wood or paper suffered the most damage,

especially as it sat submerged in mud for eleven days. We lost approximately 70% of our collection. The negatives, tapes, files, programming and gift shop supplies and inventory stored in the basement of the station were all lost. The project manager there started to clear it out, and I went over and took one look at it and told him to bin it all. It was just too much to deal with, and the damage was much too severe. We were able to move the salvageable objects to a lab we rented in Calgary and a space in a local strip mall until we were able to secure a building and renovate part of it for storage.

I was often asked why we weren't more prepared for a flood of this magnitude. After all High River and many other riverside towns and cities in Southern Alberta had a history of flooding. I had been in High River for three flood events and in none of these events, was my home or the museum flooded. I fully expected that to be the case this time. It was a long time between floods in High River. From 1942 until 1995 there was no flooding of any significance. Even in 1995, the flooding was only in certain areas of town. In 2005 there was flooding in front of the museum, but pumper trucks cleared the water away quickly. Unfortunately, the combination of heavy rain, heavy snowpack and quick melting caused the flooding this time around.

### **2014 to COVID**

From 2014 to COVID most our time was taken up with flood recovery, project managing the new storage facility, new exhibits and keeping the museum going! 2019 was in incredible year with our attendance reaching an all-time high. I won't go into too much detail about the years between the flood and Covid.

### **Pestilence – 2020**

Like everyone else the museum faced many challenges during Covid. We were open, we were closed, we were open. We continued to work in the museum bubble with our Collections Manager working at the offsite storage. We made it through with film location revenue and grants from the Department of Canadian Heritage. The Town of High River still provided our operating grant. We had a bit of an advantage as we had already been through two major catastrophes and had already come up with innovative ways to cope with disasters.

### **Today**

The museum continues to thrive thanks to support from donors, supporters, The Town of High River and Federal staffing grants. In 2017 the museum signed an agreement with the Town to officially operate the Visitor Information Centre. Due to High River's location close to Calgary and the mountains, tourism is booming. Another huge factor has been film tourism and location filming in High River and area. Thousands of fans from all over the world have visited the area. In 2014 an exhibit was created "On Location: Film in the Foothills". This exhibit includes displays about filming in High River and area including the popular CBC television program "Heartland" and has been a huge asset for the museum and the town.

I retired from the museum at the end of December 2024 and continue to volunteer and work on projects in the heritage field.

Link: <https://calgaryherald.com/entertainment/local-arts/highwood>

## Captions for Material on Pages 14 through 19

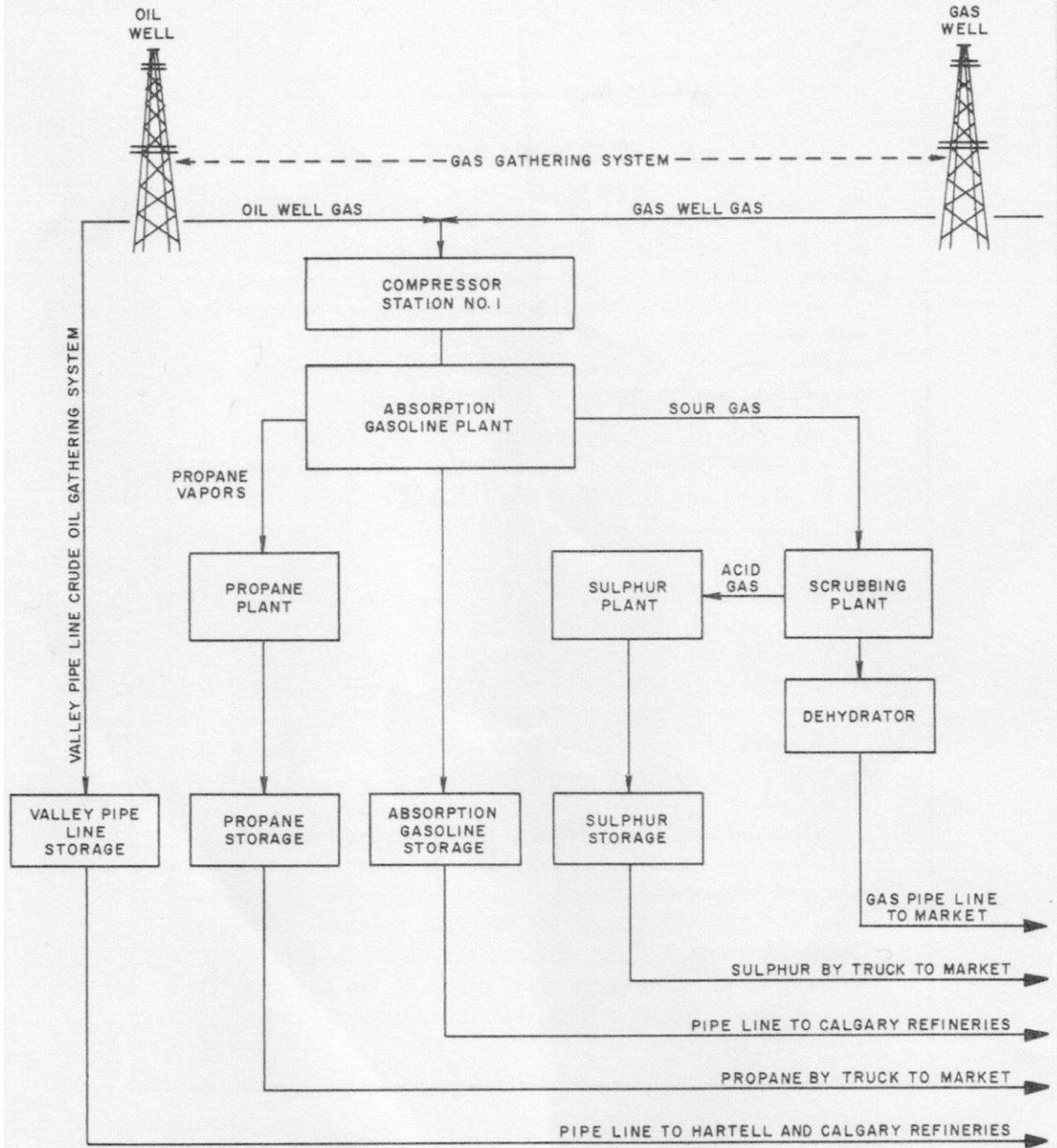
**Page 14.** Schematic Diagram – Turner Valley Gas Plant Facilities. This relatively simple diagram shows the inflow, processing and outflow at the plant. It is a late-stage (1950's or later) version as it includes both sulphur and propane production streams. A couple things of note. Firstly, the ownership structure with Royalite controlling only the liquids and sulphur aspects while Madison (a wholly owned subsidiary of Royalite) controlled all aspects of the natural gas handling. Secondly, the fact that the raw gas stream first goes through the absorption plant before heading to the scrubbing plant. This is a confusing aspect of gas plant tours as the scrubbing plant sits close to the compressor building and one can easily get the impression from that layout that the gas goes from the compressors and then through scrubbing before having its liquids removed in the absorption plant. It is actually the other way around. Gas plants and refineries are often laid out in way that optimizes processing and energy efficiency but can be counterintuitive physically.

**Pages 15 and 16.** ALERT. These are not photographs of a real railway. The fictional Turner Valley & Black Diamond Railway was built by Saskatoon's Robert McInnis and was featured in the October-November 2002 issue of *Canadian Railway Modeller* (steam era on page 15) and the March-April 2006 issue of that same magazine (diesel era on page 16). There never was a railway to Turner Valley or Black Diamond - but it is interesting to speculate why not. Other significant gas plants in the Foothills do have rail spurs – Waterton (Pecten sub), Jumping Pound (Copithorne spur) and Caroline (almost – has a loop track at nearby Shantz for formed sulphur). The Canadian Pacific Calgary-Fort MacLeod line passed through nearby Okotoks. So, was it the relative ease of trucking or pipelining that made the difference? Or were the anticipated production volumes insufficient to justify the investment in a rail line?

**Pages 17 and 18.** P.H.S. Director Doug Cass ran across an interesting volume entitled “*Seven More Sleeps – Memories of the Brazeau River Gas Plant*” by Gene Campbell, published in 2008 with the support of Keyera Energy Limited who operate the plant. It is a medium, soft cover format of 169 pages and includes numerous colour photographs. It contains about 55 chapters of various lengths on many aspects of gas plant-related activity (see Table of Contents on page 18). It is not heavily technical and has a considerable focus on the people side of the facility. The text is about font 8 and is packed into the volume. The facility itself is in the centre of a heavily forested Yellowhead County quadrangle, north of the David Thompson Highway, south of Highway 16, east of the mountain front and west of the Drayton Valley-Rocky Mountain House fairway. Its current licenced capacity is 218 mmcf/d. It is really too bad that more such books have not been written about these key industrial hubs. Many of them have been downsized or abandoned as reserves have been drained and deliverabilities have fallen off.

**Page 19.** Hudson's Bay Company land offering sign. This artifact is one of the items being offered at auction in Heffel's sale closing on January 27. The metal sign is 35.6 x 16.5 cm. It can be confirmed from the options listed on the sign that the H.B.C. had both surface and subsurface rights and was willing (and eager) to deal on either. The estimated sale price for it at the auction is \$100-\$150. It should be noted, however, that the items listed in Heffel's first sale in late 2025 generally went for about 10x the estimated sale price. So bidders are cautioned that the “estimate” is basically a floor price. Also part of the Heffel sale is a Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas HO-scale railroad tank car. The corporate relationship between H.B.C. and H.B.O.G. was complicated. H.B.O.G. was certainly never a direct subsidiary of H.B.C.

# SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM ROYALITE TURNER VALLEY PLANT FACILITIES



**OWNER AND OPERATOR**

MADISON NATURAL GAS COMPANY, LIMITED

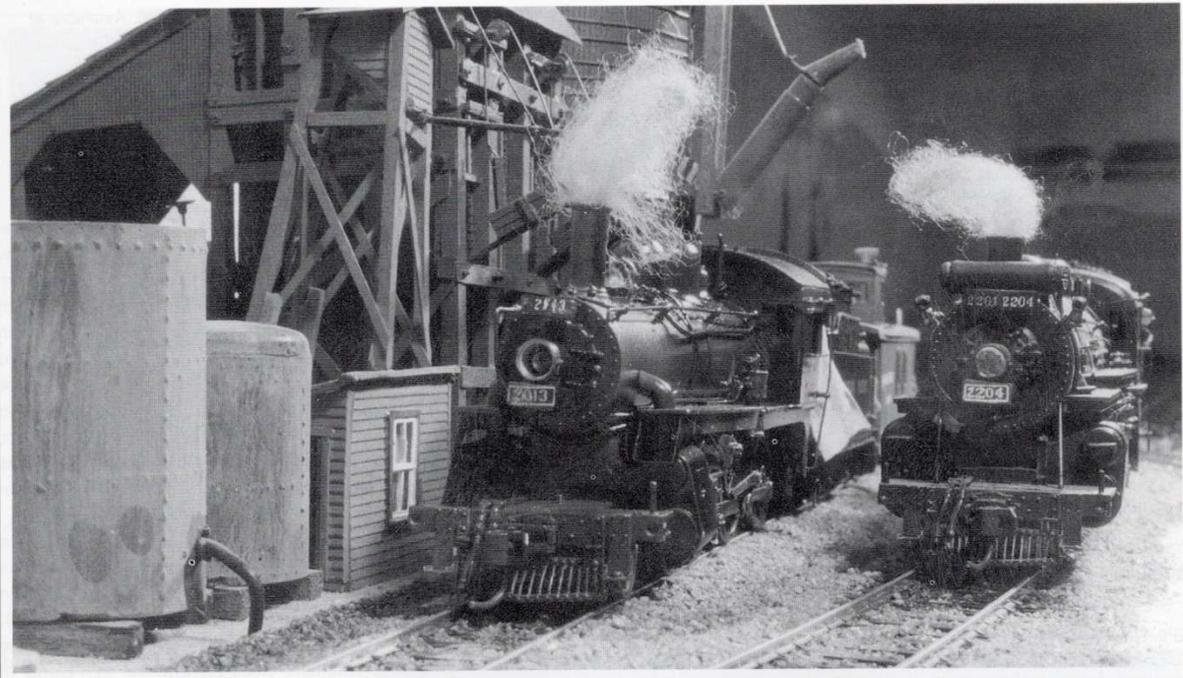
ROYALITE OIL COMPANY, LIMITED

**FACILITIES**

GAS GATHERING SYSTEM, COMPRESSOR STATION AND SCRUBBING PLANT

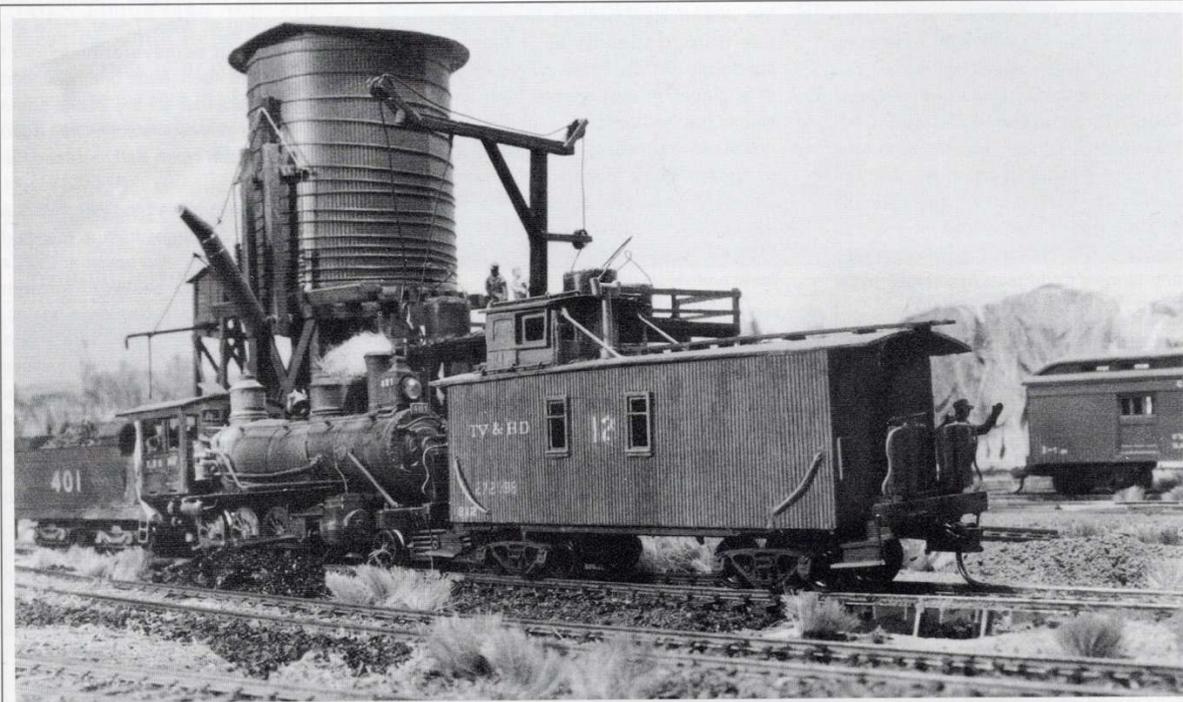
ABSORPTION GASOLINE, SULPHUR AND PROPANE PLANTS, VALLEY PIPE LINE SYSTEM.

See page 13 for caption.



*Two highly detailed CPR locomotives pass through an industrial area on the Turner Valley & Black Diamond Railway. CPR 2113 is an E3a 4-6-0 'Ten Wheeler' while CPR 2204 is a G1r 4-6-2 'Pacific', both built by Tim Rieger of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan for Robert McInnis' HO scale layout. Robert painted and decorated the models, as well as scratchbuilding most of the structures in the scene.*

ROBERT MCINNIS PHOTO.



*Ex-CPR 2-8-0 401 pushes ex-CPR caboose 72196, now TV&BD 12, through the yard turnouts and over the ash pit at Turner Valley on the Turner Valley and Black Diamond HO scale layout of Robert McInnis.*

ROBERT MCINNIS PHOTO.

See page 13 for caption.



*It's a busy day in the yard at Turner Valley, where a tank car of engine lubricant will soon change places with a tank car of fuel oil for the diesel shop. CPR's oldest and dirtiest GP9 works the shop tracks on the HO scale layout of Robert McInnis.*

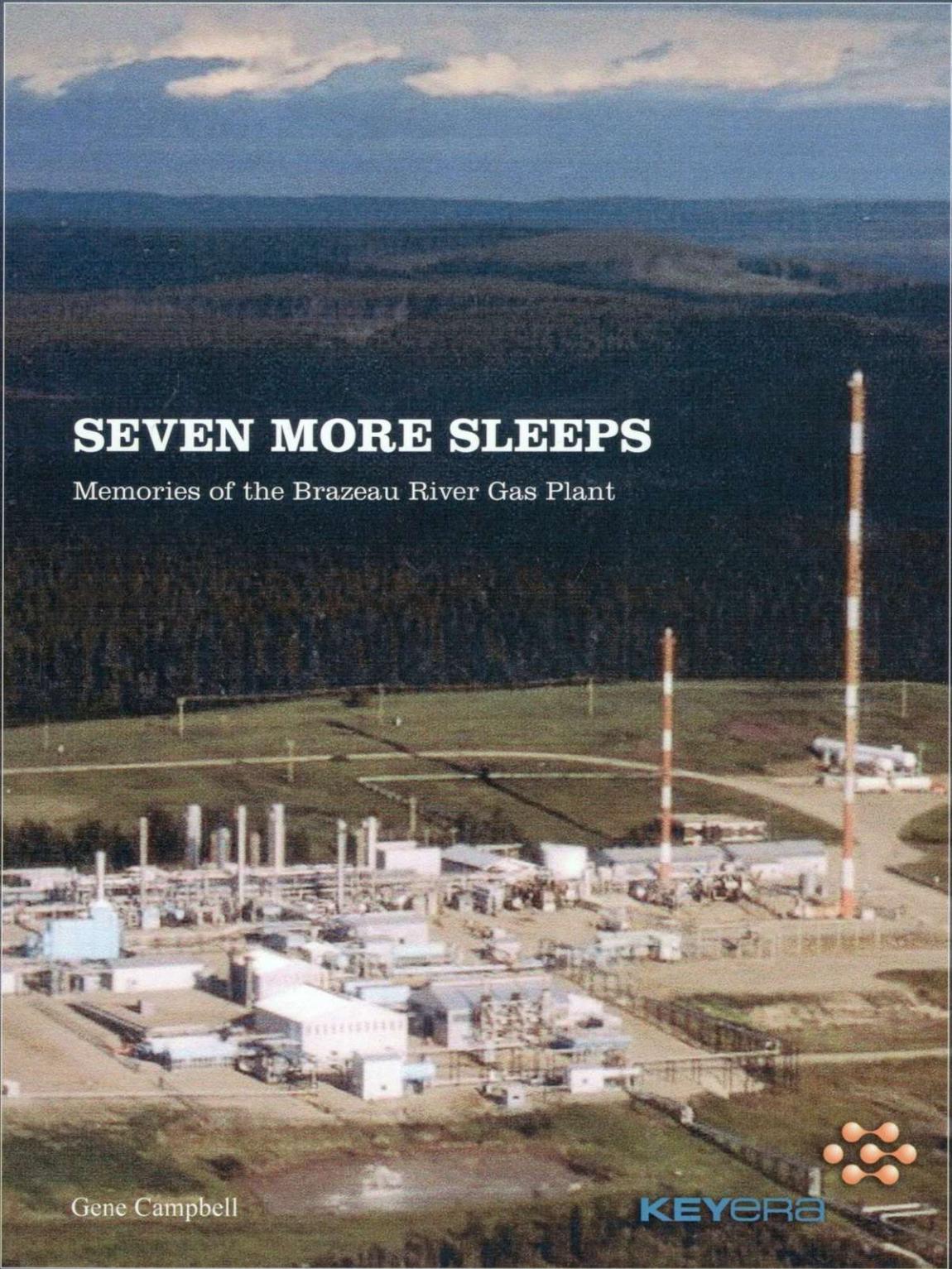
ROBERT MCINNIS MODELS AND PHOTO.



*CN's MLW-built RSC-13 1727 arrives at Black Diamond, where CN has a small servicing yard on Robert McInnis' HO scale layout. Lighter yard track dictates that only lighter weight locomotives can switch the yard here.*

ROBERT MCINNIS MODELS AND PHOTO.

See page 13 for caption.



# SEVEN MORE SLEEPS

Memories of the Brazeau River Gas Plant

Gene Campbell



See page 13 for caption.

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See page 13 for caption.

# REMEMBRANCES

*(with thanks to Calgary Herald Obituaries)*

*Note: these tributes have been thinned down from their original versions in order to focus on the industry and industry-related accomplishments of the individuals covered. No disrespect is intended by the editing out of personal information.*

*Both well-known people and the "foot soldiers" are included as they all have contributed to the growth and success of our industry. In some cases, selected family members are also added because without their support, many facets of our activities would not have been possible.*

**FISCHBACH**, Norman. Born April 5, 1931 and passed away November 13, 2025.

Norman was born in Empress, AB, a small farming community near the Saskatchewan border. Norman's father, August, was killed in a farm accident in 1934, and his mother died of cancer in 1944. He had ten older brothers and sisters he lived with. Several of them were married and had families of their own. Consequently, he grew up among 26 nieces and nephews who were more like brothers and sisters to him. In moments of wisdom, they refer to him as "Uncle Norman". From 1943 to 1949, he went to public high school in Oyen, AB, a small town near Empress.

After working on a seismic crew from 1949 to 1951, he enrolled at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, AB, graduating in 1955 with a B.Sc. in Geology. This led him to work in the oil industry for the next 60+ years. He worked in Calgary, AB, and abroad - as an employee, as the owner of his own company, and later as a consultant - until the industry collapsed in 2019. During his years in the oil industry, he pursued the study of Devonian reef oil reservoirs in Western Canada. This work led to an M.Sc. thesis on their formation in 1959 and a Ph.D. thesis in 1968. For these studies, he received the Medal of Merit Award in 1969 from the Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists, and in 2010 he received the Stanley Slipper Award from that same organization for his contributions to petroleum geology.

**HOOVER**, Reginald Wesley. Born on August 30, 1947 and passed away December 1, 2025.

Reg was born in Souris, MB, and moved to Ashern, MB, when he was young. Growing up on the farm, he excelled at academics, loved music, and filled the rest of the time with sports. In 1965, he moved to Winnipeg, MB, to attend the University of Manitoba, earning a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1969. That same year, he married his high school sweetheart, Lenore, and they moved to begin his career in Calgary with Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas. His career spanned nearly 40 years, and it was a profession he found deeply fulfilling, with his proudest achievement being the success of Mayfair Energy, a company he started with a few close partners.

Reg remained active his entire life, forming strong and meaningful friendships in these activities. His competitive fastball career in the 1980s transitioned to golf. He was a founding member of the Westgate Warriors old-timer hockey team - a team he played on for 12 years. After retiring from full-time work, Reg became a top-level distance runner who completed the Boston Marathon five times and won marathons in Las Vegas, Auckland, and Winnipeg. Reg showed how to blaze your own trail. He would cheer for the Calgary Flames, but his heart remained with the Detroit Red Wings. He chose to play the saxophone in his youth with his band, the Vestones, and then got swept up in bluegrass and learned the banjo. No one who experienced his singing and playing will forget the joy he was able to create.

**HUTCHINSON**, Kenneth “Hutch” David. Born October 25, 1935 and passed away December 28, 2025. Anyone who was lucky enough to have known Hutch will remember him for his generosity, his charisma, his sense of family and community, his laughter, his attention to detail, his hunger for learning, his work ethic as a Geologist and a volunteer, his love of adventure, his repertoire of really bad dad/grandpa jokes, his pride in Canada, and his empathy towards others. He was an amazing role model, playmate, dinosaur enthusiast, clippings provider, and debate opponent for his grandkids.

*Editor's note: Hutch was a lifetime member of the P.H.S.*

**KUNTZ**, Edward. Born July 29, 1939 and passed away January 1, 2026. Ed was a proud graduate of Walkerton High School in Walkerton, ON, serving as class valedictorian. He earned a Chemical Engineering degree from the University of Toronto in 1962 and spent 33 years working for Shell Canada. He and his family lived in Montreal and Toronto before settling in Calgary in 1984. In retirement, he enjoyed many pursuits - beekeeping, woodworking, gardening, building a cedar-strip canoe, and exploring new technologies – all while always supporting his family in their projects and pursuits.

**LEE**, Robert “Bob” Stanley. Born on March 13, 1932 and passed away January 2, 2026. Bob was born in Toronto, ON, but grew up on the family homestead near Algrove, SK, a challenging but happy upbringing. He and his three siblings were taught two basic lessons: work hard and get an education. At 16, Bob attended Normal School (later Teachers College) in Saskatoon, SK. At 17, he began teaching in rural one-room schools. Four years later, he developed wanderlust and, back in Saskatoon, he explored the trades of carpenter, gas fitter, roofer, and office clerk. At age 22, Bob joined the RCAF and became a navigator and attained the level of A-VIP ticket, meaning he could navigate anywhere in the world with passengers up to the Head of State. He was posted to 435 (T) Squadron in Edmonton, AB, a transport squadron. His duties took him throughout North America, including the Arctic, Europe, and the Middle East. In 1960, his young family moved to Saskatoon, SK, where he enrolled in the College of Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan. He joined the 406 (Aux) Squadron and became Adjutant, flew on weekends during the school term, and instructed the Air Navigational School in Winnipeg, MB, each summer.

In 1964, with his degree of Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics with Distinction, he began his engineering career in Regina with SaskPower as a computer programmer. While there, he finished his military career as Commanding Officer of #2 Independent Signals Squadron. His memories of Southern Alberta's majestic mountains and rippling trout streams beckoned him and in 1966 the family moved to Calgary, AB. He worked mainly in the oil business in computers as programmer/analyst, supervisor manager with the Oil and Gas Conservation Board, FINA Canada, Unocal and Ethier Associates, followed by eight years as an engineering consultant to smaller oil companies. His love of words and writing led to a new career as a free-lance editor and writer, which lasted until his death.

His volunteer activities included building and maintaining early websites and bylaws for several organizations. He wrote many articles for linguistic magazines and edited for several publications, as well as authoring four books. He was one of the original investors in his kid brother's business, Lee Valley Tools. He built their first website and was an editor, writer, and adviser there for 48 years. Bob was very proud of his family. He loved and was loved dearly through many adventures of hiking, cross-country skiing, camping, fishing, and travelling. During

the boys' childhood, most weekends were spent in the mountains. Bob was the epitome of a gentleman. He was polite, patient, tolerant, interested and interesting, thoughtful and a kind and caring friend and mentor. He will be well remembered and respected for his intellect, friendship, and many skills.

**LYON**, Jim. Born 1935 and passed away 2025. Jim was born in Tyldesley, England. He enlisted in the RAF at age 17. As a corporal, he witnessed British nuclear testing on Malden and Christmas Islands as a part of Operation Grapple in 1957-58. He moved to Kenya in 1960 to work as a journalist on the East African Standard where he covered everything from visiting celebrities, like Louis Armstrong, to Kenyan Independence. He moved with his wife, Ingrid, to Toronto in 1966. Jim was a lifelong journalist, editor, author and freelancer, first at the Toronto Telegram, later with the Vancouver Sun and the Financial Post where he covered forestry. His first book, "*Dome: The Rise and Fall of the House that Jack Built*", published in 1983, was a national bestseller. In his spare time, Jim loved music, especially opera, writing and long walks in Stanley Park. Self-taught as a journalist, he completed a university degree in 2005 at the age of 70 – a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy from Simon Fraser University.

**MCDONALD**, David Roy. Born May 10, 1932 and passed away November 26, 2025. David grew up as a hard-working farm boy in Clandeboye, MB, surrounded by his large extended family. He moved to Alberta to work in the oil industry after earning a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics and Physics from the University of Manitoba in 1952. After thirteen years working for Century Geophysical, he accepted a job in Sydney, Australia as Chief Geophysicist for Burmah Oil UK. A two-year contract turned into a long career in the Australian oil industry and a love affair with Australia. As a result of various mergers, David subsequently worked for Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas, Dome Petroleum and LASMO in Perth and Brisbane. He received many awards over the years for his contributions to the Australian oil industry, highlighting his importance to the discovery and development of Australia's Northwest Shelf gas fields. David finished his career in London, England working out of LASMO's head office for a year before accepting a three-year assignment as general manager of their Italian operations in Rome.

David and his wife, Jean, loved to travel. In retirement they split their time between North Vancouver and Brisbane, before settling at Westerleigh Parc in West Vancouver. He loved many things: his family and friends; his career; travelling around the world; playing cribbage; his two countries: Canada and Australia; his Australian boat; watching Canadian football, Aussie Rules football, curling and ice hockey; country and western music; and a glass of Alberta Premium rye whiskey.

**POCKRANT**, Harvey Henry. Born June 24, 1936 and passed away November 26, 2025. Harvey began his career in 1956 with the Government of Alberta in Edmonton. In 1967, he moved with his family to Calgary, AB, where he joined Chevron Canada Resources as a Surface Landman. Harvey's outgoing personality and genuine interest in others served him well as he negotiated deals across Canada and the northern United States as a Landman and later as Supervisor, Field Land Operations for Chevron. Well-regarded for his superior negotiating and legal skills, Harvey built a successful consulting company after his retirement from Chevron, representing clients in the field for 25 years until his "second" retirement at age 84. Harvey was proud to hold one of the first land agent licenses (#60) in Alberta and was an active member of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Landmen (C.A.P.L.) and Canadian Association of Land and Energy Professionals (C.A.L.E.P.) for 56 years.

Beyond his career, Harvey was a gifted athlete and avid sportsman; golfing and curling with friends well into his 80s. Harvey was part of a championship curling team that won the Alberta Senior Men's title and then went on to represent Alberta at the Canadian Seniors Curling Championships in 1987, where he was selected to the All-Star team. He curled in countless bonspiels and most notably, skipped his team to a win at the 1989 International Oilmen's Bonspiel in Edmonton. There are numerous trophies that bear Harvey's name in curling clubs across the prairie provinces. Harvey also gave back to the sport he loved so much, serving as the Director of Marketing and Ticket Sales at the 1997 Labatt Brier in Calgary, which set a record for total attendance at any curling event in the world.