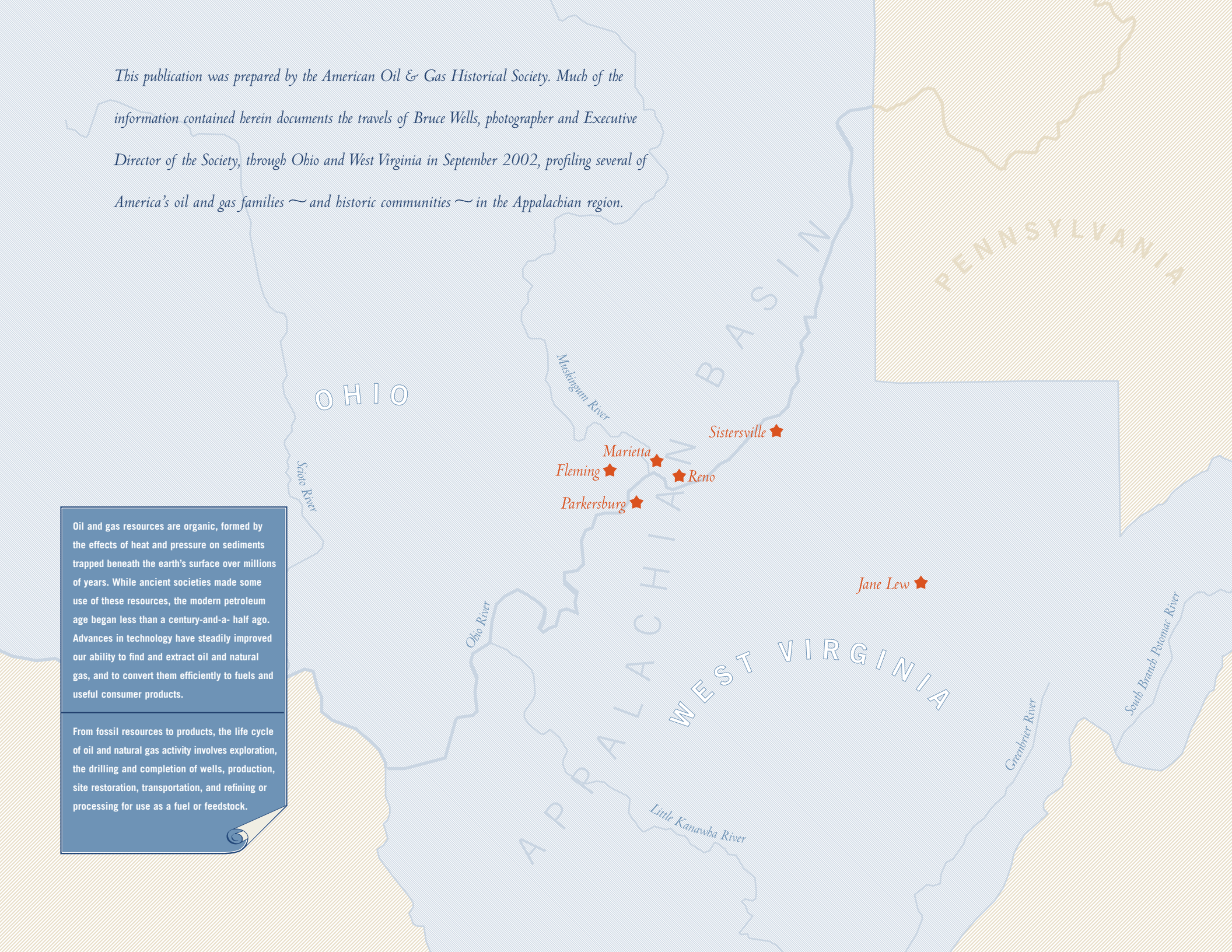
American Oil and Gas Families

APPALACHIAN BASIN INDEPENDENTS

This publication was prepared by the American Oil & Gas Historical Society. Much of the information contained herein documents the travels of Bruce Wells, photographer and Executive Director of the Society, through Ohio and West Virginia in September 2002, profiling several of America's oil and gas families — and historic communities — in the Appalachian region.

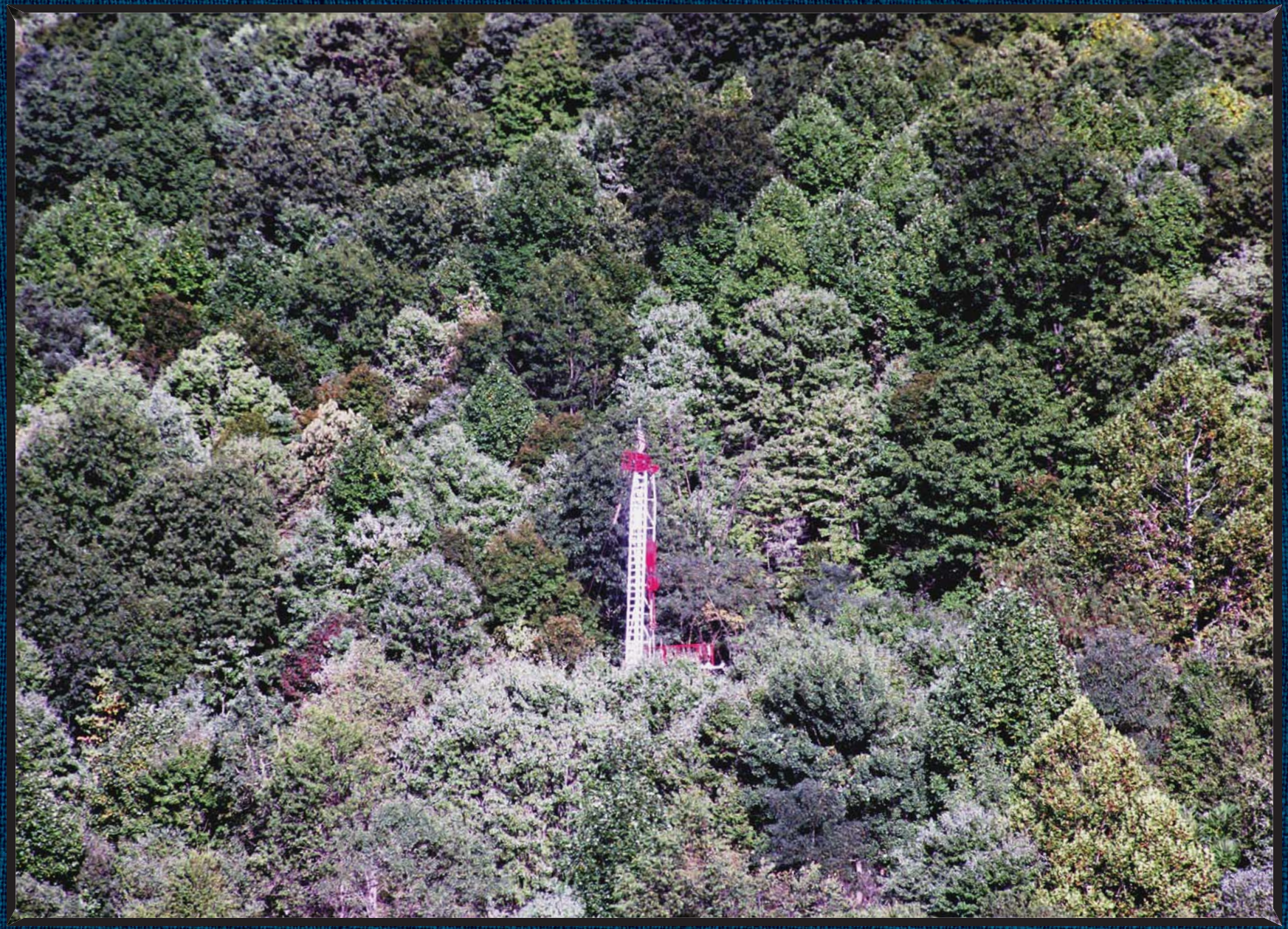


Oil and gas resources are organic, formed by the effects of heat and pressure on sediments trapped beneath the earth's surface over millions of years. While ancient societies made some use of these resources, the modern petroleum age began less than a century-and-a- half ago. Advances in technology have steadily improved our ability to find and extract oil and natural gas, and to convert them efficiently to fuels and useful consumer products.

From fossil resources to products, the life cycle of oil and natural gas activity involves exploration, the drilling and completion of wells, production, site restoration, transportation, and refining or processing for use as a fuel or feedstock.

Contents

front cover:
The Oil and Gas Museum in Parkersburg, West Virginia features an operating pump jack and a 16-foot bank wheel among its many exhibits and artifacts. The wall mural is designed by Pamela Porter, Jeff Shenkle, and David L. McKain.



Say "American oil" and many people immediately think of the Texas Panhandle, Oklahoma Plains, or Louisiana Gulf. But the cradle of the American petroleum industry is Appalachia. In the late 19th century, the Appalachian Basin — comprising more than 35,000 square miles in West Virginia, eastern Ohio, southwestern New York, and western Pennsylvania alone — attracted a wave of inventors, speculators, entrepreneurs, and wildcatters determined to make their fortunes.

In the space of a decade, these pioneers created a dynamic new industry, one with ramifications far beyond anything they could have imagined. Petroleum drove the nation's westward expansion and fueled its burgeoning industrialization. It created extraordinary wealth, reduced the need for manual labor, and became the mainstay of modern transportation. In many ways, it came to define life in the 20th century and beyond.

Today, thousands of people in the Appalachian states are employed by the oil and gas industry, the vast majority by small independent producing companies. This publication profiles several West Virginia and Ohio communities built on a legacy of petroleum and the individuals and families who keep the industry productive, providing the nation with a vital source of domestically produced energy.

below left:
Travelers are welcomed to Ohio as they drive west across the U.S. Highway 50 bridge spanning the Ohio River between Parkersburg, West Virginia, and Marietta, Ohio. The river once represented the edge of the nation's first "Northwest Territory," where the earliest settlers arrived near Marietta in April 1788.

opposite page:
A natural gas drilling rig nestled within the trees is part of the rural landscape in Lewis County, West Virginia.

Inventing a New Industry

Today, oil and natural gas are essential to the U.S. economy and the quality of life that Americans have come to enjoy. In 2003, oil and natural gas supplied the energy for 99.9% of transportation, 48% of businesses, 58% of homes, 71% of industry, and 16% of electric power generation in the United States.

Demand for oil and natural gas is growing and is forecast to comprise 64% of total U.S. energy consumption in 2025.

States, through organizations such as the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, have long recognized the integral role of oil and natural gas in their economies and the well-being of their citizens.

Oil and natural gas were discovered in the Appalachian region long before they were first commercially produced. In fact, it was hard not to discover petroleum in some areas, where "oil seeps" left their dark signature on land surfaces and stream beds. Oil is mentioned in the journals of 17th century French missionaries in western New York, and was traded in Niagara by the Seneca Indians. Revolutionary War soldiers reported scooping it from seeps as a balm for sore muscles.

Appalachian salt miners were, inadvertently, the first Americans to drill for oil and natural gas. A well drilled for saltwater struck oil in Noble County, Ohio, in 1814, and another struck gas at Charleston, West Virginia, in 1815. While petroleum was valued by some as a patent balm (said to cure a host of ailments in humans and animals) or as a machinery lubricant, salt producers regarded it as a sticky and odorous nuisance. (Ironically, salt brine is now the "nuisance," a byproduct of petroleum production.)

A challenge faced by early industry pioneers was creating new markets for oil and natural gas. The first marketing breakthrough came with progress in refining petroleum into an illuminant, which proved to be a superior and lower cost alternative to mineral oils for fueling the newly invented kerosene lamp.

Soon, demand for petroleum illuminants in such major markets as New York City was outstripping available supplies, and investors competed not only to find new reservoirs, but also to develop cost-effective ways to drill for and produce petroleum in large quantities. This challenge required innovations in drilling technologies, building on methods used by salt producers. Several oil wells were drilled nearly simultaneously in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

The best known was Colonel Edwin Drake's well in Titusville, Pennsylvania, brought in on August 27, 1859, on behalf of the Seneca Oil Company. Major wells also were drilled at Petroleum, West Virginia, outside Parkersburg, early in 1859; California, West Virginia in the summer of 1859; and Burning Springs, West Virginia, and Washington County, Ohio, in 1860.

opposite page:
Ohio drilling contractor Dean Decker's grandfather traveled from Washington County to Oklahoma to seek his fortune in the oil and natural gas fields, where discoveries of the late 1920s led to work as a roustabout. The elder Decker was still in his twenties when he joined the other oilfield roughnecks who gathered in makeshift "oil patch" towns. Two carefully restored Decker family photographs show him in the Oklahoma oil fields at this time: middle row, second from left.

below:
Dean Decker's grandfather, standing at right.

DRAWN BY T.M. FOWLER, PARKERSBURG, PA.

PUBLISHED BY T.M. FOWLER & JAMES B. MOYER.

1. HIGH SCHOOL.
2. HOTEL WELLS.
3. ——— OLSTON. G.B. THOMPSON, PROP.
4. NEW ARLINGTON HOTEL. JAMES F. DOLAN, PROP.
5. RIVERVIEW ——— W.P. BOWMAN.
6. P.R.R.R. STATION.
7. SAFFER OIL CO.
8. RIVERSIDE MILLS. E. ROOME, PROP.
9. JUMBO MANUFACTURING CO.
10. LEUCKER TOOL CO. GENERAL MF'G. & REPAIR SHOP FOR OIL WELL TOOLS.
11. SISTERSVILLE OIL & GAS WELL TUBE WORKS. JOHN FINLAYSON.
12. RUSSELL PLANING MILL CO.

SOLD ONLY BY FRANK PHILLIPS SISTERSVILLE W. VA.

SISTERSVILLE,

WEST VIRGINIA.

1898.

14. GOLD & JONES TANK M'F'S.
15. STONER MACHINE SHOP.
16. EUREKA LAUNDRY. N.B. BARBER, PROP.
17. SISTERSVILLE LAUNDRY. E.Y. COFFIL, "
18. THISTLE STATION. EUREKA PIPELINE.
19. CATHOLIC ——— CHURCH
20. EPISCOPAL ———
21. METHODIST ——— } CHURCHES.
22. BAPTIST ———
23. PRESBYTERIAN ———
24. SISTERSVILLE STEAM FERRY BOAT ORION.

opposite page:
Thaddeus Mortimer Fowler of Massachusetts painted hundreds of prospering towns and cities during the industrial revolution, many depicting oil and natural gas "boomtowns." This 1896 lithograph features Sistersville, West Virginia.

below:
Offshore platform Neptune Star operated by Kerr-McGee Corporation, an independent producer, in the Gulf of Mexico.

Boom times

The Appalachian region yielded vast deposits of petroleum at remarkably shallow depths by today's standards. Drake struck oil at only 69 feet, and many of the other early wells were between 50 and 200 feet deep. (In contrast, 70 percent of today's U.S. natural gas comes from wells 5,000 feet or deeper, and the latest frontier in deep-drilling technology is 15,000 feet plus, in the range of three miles below the earth's surface.)

Early successes inspired hundreds of small exploration and production companies throughout the world. In 1860, world oil production was 500,000 barrels annually; by the 1870s annual production had soared to 20 million barrels.

Appalachia was the heart of the global industry. Populations boomed, towns sprang up almost overnight, and many fortunes were made (and some lost) in the scramble to produce, refine, and market oil. Entrepreneurs battled for dominance in transporting oil, quickly creating a network of pipelines that connected to major rail lines throughout the region. No longer were producers dependent on floating barrels downriver on rafts or loading them into wagons. Production ramped up to massive-scale operations.

Independents in action

Then, almost as quickly as it began, the boom in Appalachia ended. California drilled its first oil well in 1879, and Texas, in 1887 — regions that soon became the new centers of the domestic industry. Many Ohio, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania families moved west, taking their exploration and production skills with them. Oil production in the Appalachian region peaked around 1900.

Yet a century later, the Appalachian Basin remains an active petroleum-producing region, accounting for about five percent of U.S. crude oil production. Regional natural gas production, which accounts for about three percent of the national total, has been increasing recently in West Virginia thanks to new investments in exploration and production.

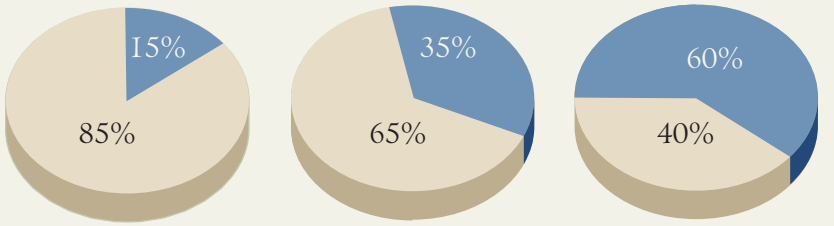
Virtually all exploration and production in the region are now conducted by small independent companies, many of them family owned. These independents operate with an entrepreneurial spirit matched in few other American industries, continuing the wildcatter legacy. They are an integral part of the Appalachian economy and play an important role in domestic energy production.


Photo courtesy of Kerr-McGee Corporation

The Vital Role of Small Companies in Exploration and Production (E&P) in the United States

There is no doubt the United States will rely on oil and natural gas well into this century. What's uncertain is how much of our critical petroleum supplies will come from domestic sources and how much must be imported.

Small independent producers play a key role. If our nation is to maintain abundant, reliable domestic oil and natural gas supplies, it will need to depend on small, independent exploration and production companies. The role of small companies in the lower-48 states has grown dramatically since the mid 1980s, as major integrated energy companies began concentrating their exploration and production in frontier areas such as the deep offshore areas off the U.S. coasts and foreign countries. Thousands of small independent companies, most employing fewer than 20 people, now account for 40% of U.S. oil and 65% of natural gas production in settings as diverse as rural Appalachia, offshore Gulf of Mexico, and urban landscapes in California. They play a critical role in ensuring that domestic petroleum remains a significant part of our nation's energy portfolio.



SOURCE: IPAA, 2001

Oil and Gas Community on Parade

below:
Ed Broome (with plaque), named 2002 Oilman of the Year, is joined by honored oil and gas men of past years. He is pictured with (left to right) John Wright Sr. (1976), Steve Williams (2001), Duncan Malcom (1998), Tom Dunn (1982), Larry Woodfork (1991), I. L. "Ike" Morris (1994), and Jim Ryan (1993).

Sistersville was named in 1815 for the daughters of its first settler in 1776, Charles Wells. In 1895, his grandson Ephraim Wells opened the elegant Wells Inn, which remains in business today.

You might not consider the petroleum industry a natural subject for tourism or a hobby. But don't say so to those at the annual West Virginia Oil and Gas Festival in Sistersville or to the collectors and their families camping beside hundreds of antique, oil-field engines at the town's fairground. If you have a chance to join them for the weekend celebration, you'll come away with a true appreciation for the inventive, colorful history of petroleum production in the Appalachian Basin.

A few miles northeast of Parkersburg on the east bank of the Ohio River, Sistersville can make a strong claim for being among the nation's earliest oil and gas capitals. The town sits on a geologic formation where rock folds create a dome containing rich oil and gas resources. For 35 years, Sistersville has celebrated its historic industry with the September festival — including a beauty pageant, downtown parade, antique engine show, and award ceremony at the Wells Inn.

Edward Broome, named 2002 Oilman of the Year (and parade grand marshal), participated in the first Sistersville festival in 1968. After earning a petroleum engineering degree, he went to work in oil fields in Texas and New Mexico. Moving to the Appalachian Basin in the late 1960s, he supervised more than 500 wells in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. He now runs his own business in Glenville, buying and selling oil and gas leases.

below:
2001 Festival Queen Kristen Morrison acknowledges admirers along the downtown Sistersville parade route.

opposite page:
Cub Scouts and vintage cars lead off the West Virginia Oil and Gas Festival parade.


Dairy
CUB SCOUT
PACK 153
SISTERSVILLE, WV


PERKINS
OIL & GAS, INC.
US DOT #759483

opposite page:
Beside his service rig truck, Carl D. Perkins stands with son Deryl and grandsons Clay and Clint. Carl Perkins also is an independent producer, president of Perkins Oil & Gas, Inc.

below:
Derrick models, built by Burl Eddy of Newport, Ohio, resembling the original Sistersville drilling rig, hand-sewn quilts, plenty of oilfield memorabilia, and other "oil patch" collectibles are among the campers that line the Ohio River every September. More than 100 antique oilfield engine collectors (and their families) annually gather for the festival. Among the few non-antique engine or quilt tents, Carl D. Perkins displays his own oilfield supply equipment with his grandson Clint. Also shown (far right) is a photo of the steel derrick of Sistersville well.

Reviving a landmark

Along the riverbank, where the vintage engine collectors gather, the sound of single-piston engines popping competes for attention with the Little Sister well's restored steel derrick and walking beam pump. Among the tents, trucks, and trailers crowding the well site, a bandstand rests on home plate of the baseball diamond, and portable aluminum stands sell funnel cake and hotdogs. Attractions include a wrench-throwing contest and Saturday-night performances by the Steppin Country Dancers.

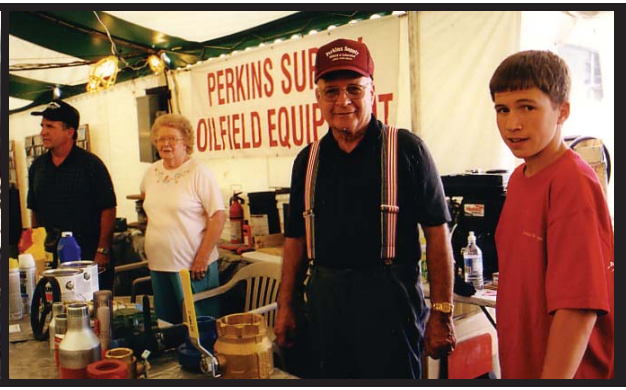
Among the engine displays at the festival stands Carl D. Perkins, a veteran of the region's oil patch since 1947 and owner of Perkins Supply (a branch of Perkins Oil & Gas Company) of Pennsboro, West Virginia. Recently, Carl's son Deryl and other volunteers returned the historic Rathbone well to production using an antique Bucyrus-Erie rig. The well site, donated by retired petroleum geologist George Grow, Jr. to the Parkersburg Oil and Gas Museum, is in the nearby ghost town of Burning Springs, along the banks of the Little Kanawha River.

The well originally produced oil at the same time as the famous Titusville, Pennsylvania, Drake well of 1859 — considered the nation's first. Because the Drake well no longer produces oil or gas, some consider the Rathbone well to be the oldest producing well in the world. Indeed, Burning Springs and Titusville were the only two oil fields in America before the Civil War. According to David McKain, Director of the Parkersburg Oil and Gas Museum, the war temporarily halted development in West Virginia. "Parkersburg was put under martial law," he explains. "Everything collapsed for the duration." In 1863, the Burning Springs field was destroyed by Confederate raiders, but it was rebuilt after the war and played a central role in the 50-year industry boom in West Virginia.

A visit to Little Sister

Another must-see for festival-goers is the restored Little Sister well down by the ferry landing. Originally called the Polecat well, it sits over what was once the world's largest known oil field. Drilled in 1891, the Polecat went much deeper into the oil sands than early wells such as the Rathbone, relying on the insertion of large iron pipes to prevent soft-rock walls from crumbling and clogging the wells. This deep-drilling innovation greatly boosted oil production in the Appalachian region.

The Polecat well, which pumped water for a year before it pumped oil, brought to Sistersville an influx of drillers, speculators, followers, floaters, wildcatters, and hangers-on. The agricultural village of 300 people boomed to a metropolis of 15,000 people almost overnight. Ultimately, more than 2,500 derricks dotted the countryside. Today, the well site features a 1911 rig, restored by retired welders and crews from the Quaker State Refining Corporation. The well "pumps oil" recycled from a small, inconspicuous tank.



Today's Independents

below:
Independent producer Carl Heinrich frequently reviews old well logs from natural gas wells drilled decades ago. He often finds hints of production missed or ignored during operation by the well's original owner. As an award-winning petroleum engineering graduate of nearby Marietta College, Carl is well versed in knowing what it takes to keep marginal wells producing.

Oil collection tanks are typical scenes in the Ohio countryside. Small amounts of oil accumulate as natural gas is produced, requiring producers to periodically bring trucks to empty the tanks.

opposite page:
Natural gas meters, pipe connections, engine parts, and a host of other material can be found in Carl Heinrich's workshop, where he has been known to convert hay balers into oil well pumping units.

Whether engaged in exploration, drilling for new wells, or maintenance of existing wells, today's Appalachian oil and gas entrepreneurs continue in the roughneck tradition. Their livelihoods depend on geological knowledge, petroleum engineering, skilled crews — and luck. Even with advanced technologies — such as horizontal or directional drilling and seismic mapping — there are no guarantees that their investments and hard work will pay off. Yet their work is vital not only to the Appalachian region, employing thousands in Ohio and West Virginia, but also to the health of our nation's domestic energy supplies. Over 1.5 million people were employed in the oil and natural gas industry in the United States in 2001.

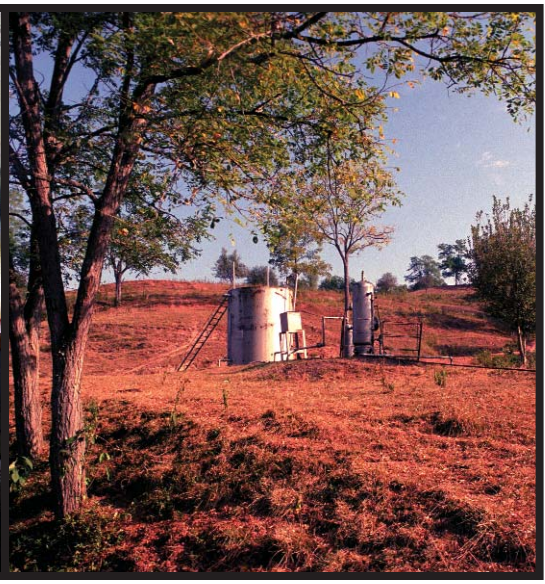
Extending the life of wells

"We're in the recycling business. We recycle old wells," says independent oil and gas producer Carl Heinrich, who works in partnership with his wife from a home office in Reno, Ohio. A Pennsylvania native, Heinrich worked in oil fields as a roustabout before attending Marietta College for degrees in petroleum engineering and geology in 1964. He worked for Quaker State in Parkersburg, as district engineer before going into business for himself in 1978.

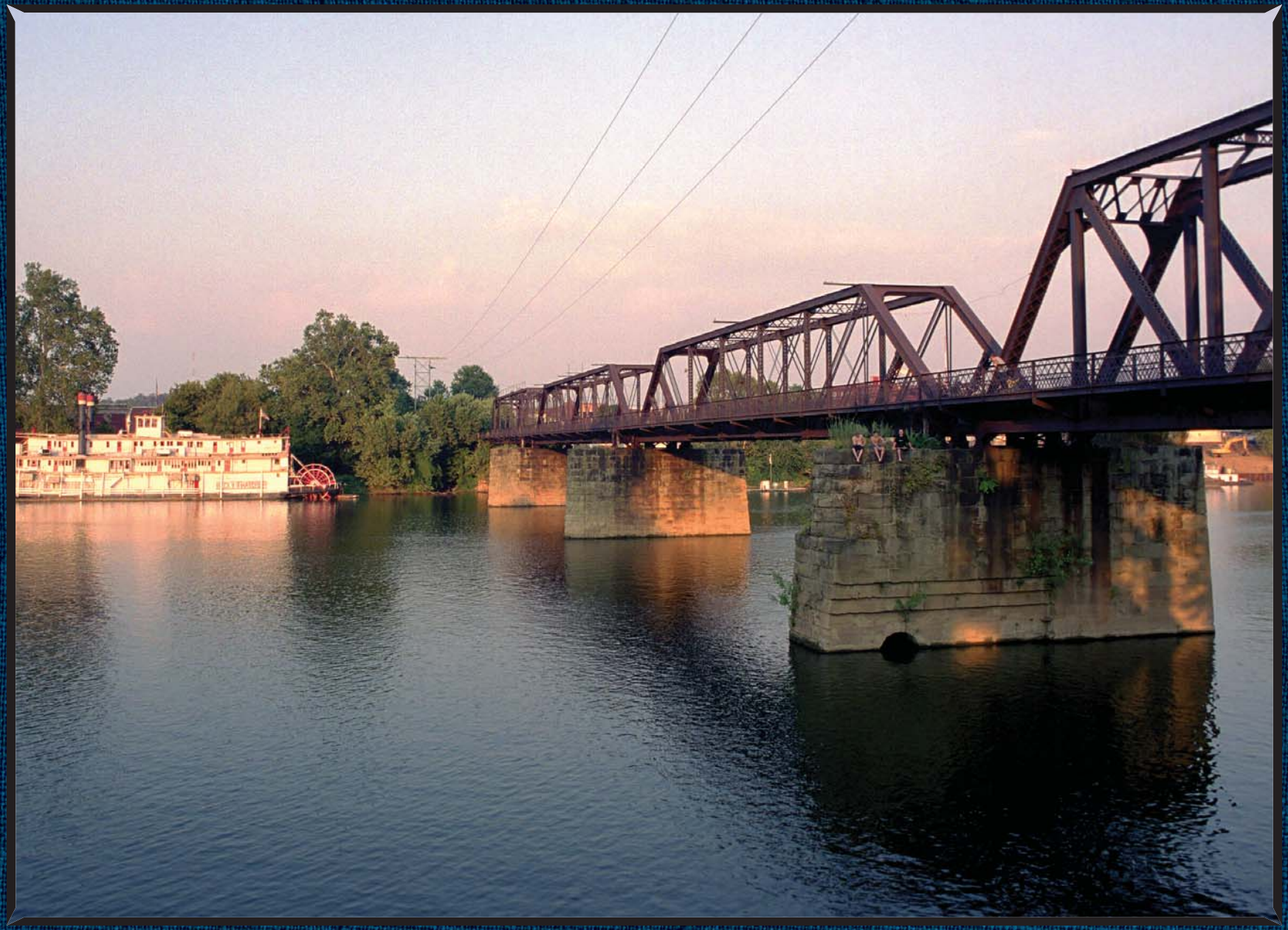
"Orphan wells" are important to Heinrich, who has adopted many. "These are the kinds of wells the average large operator will not fool with," Heinrich explains.

He most often acquires orphan wells, where the state of Ohio seeks a company to plug or produce wells abandoned by previous operators, usually due to bankruptcies. Some have been idle for decades.

The state is faced with plugging the well at public expense or finding somebody who can take it over and make it a "useful citizen" again. According to Heinrich, "Our oldest well goes back to 1889, and it's still productive." A typical lease will include a one-eighth royalty on the oil and gas to the landowner — and free gas up to a limit. Oil production is small, but the oil is one of the finest grade in the world.




QUAKER STATE OIL
THE RENO OIL CO



opposite page:
The sternwheeler Becky Thatcher, a dinner theater, is moored on the Muskingum River in Marietta, Ohio. Can you find the kids?

below left:
Field production manager Stanley Wilson and petroleum engineer Kathleen Hill help keep marginal wells producing.

below center:
Three decades ago, Dennis Blauser founded the well servicing company now run by his daughter, Lynn Blauser-Foster. She serves on a state oil and gas association technical committee and attends seminars to further master the business of coaxing oil and gas from the ground.

below right:
Three generations of Deckers include Dean (at right) with his son Pat and grandson Colton. Pat credits his father, Dean, for instilling his desire – and skill – in mastering the intricacies of drilling into the producing sands of Appalachian oil fields.

Keeping it in the family

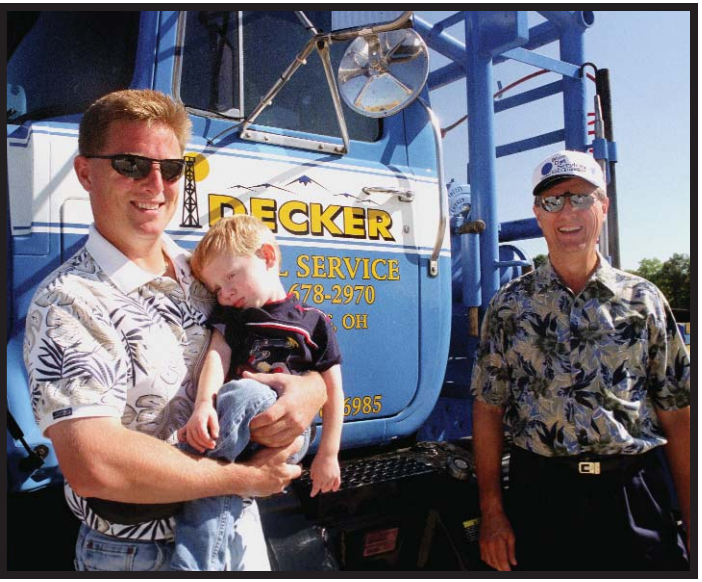
Lynn Blauser-Foster is president of a small E&P company in Marietta, Ohio, that maintains almost 215 oil and gas wells. The company was founded by her father, Dennis Blauser, who died in 2001. "It became important to learn what I needed to know to help preserve my family's business," says Blauser-Foster. The company employs ten people and has two service rigs for maintaining well production.

Blauser-Foster has found that maintaining productive wells hinges on good relationships with surface owners. "Our landowners like us. It is an investment, so you do not go out and trash somebody's property," she says. "Your landowner is your best defense if you do have something go wrong. They will call you if they see something, and a little problem will not become a big problem."

Blauser-Foster's company has participated in seven new wells as farmouts on Blauser leases. But a few miles down the road — in densely forested Fleming, Ohio — her brother-in-law Dean Decker, Jr. has made drilling the focus of his business. Decker has been in the oil patch for 30 years. He works from a home office with his wife Cheryl — Lynn's sister — and his son Pat.

Decker's connection to the oil business goes back generations. His grandfather, originally from Washington County, Ohio, went to Oklahoma in 1911 to work as a roustabout in his twenties. He later returned to work in the Appalachian Basin.

Decker started his own company in 1980, after a decade working for Dennis Blauser. Along with managing 40 wells on a natural gas pipeline, the company now drills as a contractor for various independents.



above:
Oil and natural gas can be trapped in tight sandstone or limestone formations that require fracturing. Today the fracturing process uses hydraulic pressure to create an extremely thin split in the rock. But in the industry's infancy, a dangerous and far less precise method was used: dropping "go devils" — cans filled with nitroglycerin — down a well bore. The collection at Ken Miller's Oil, Gas and Truck Museum includes this Big Shot Company wagon.

Equipping an industry

Outside Shreve, Ohio, stand two large buildings that house Ken Miller's Oil, Gas and Truck Museum — a privately financed museum totaling more than 40,000 square feet.

Ken Miller started out in business in the late 1950s by molding cement plugs for wells at home with his wife. A few years later in 1959, he opened his first storeroom in a 30-foot semi-trailer and soon traded up to a surplus Army barrack without heat or electricity. From these modest beginnings, Ken Miller Supply has grown into one of the largest oilfield supply companies in the eastern United States, explains museum curator Ernie Wolf.

Today, the third generation is running the company, which has nine stores in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio. Miller's oilfield equipment yards in Shreve include a shop for rebuilding pumps, most removed from wells that have been shut down. The company also specializes in threading drilling pipe and performing critical quality testing. Wolf has seen a test where 3,000 pounds of pressure opened a 20-foot gash — half the length of the drill pipe. "You want to know that is going to happen up here and not in a well," he says.

Wolf says Miller organized the museum on his own, starting more than 20 years ago. Among the museum's enormous collection of oilfield artifacts, antique gas pumps, signs, and vehicles is a turn-of-the-century oil tank — outfitted as a home as it was during an oil bust in Ohio.

below:
Ernie Wolf frequently hosts tours inside the Ken Miller Oil, Gas and Truck Museum outside Shreve, Ohio. The private collection began more than two decades ago with a few of Mr. Miller's company trucks. It now includes thousands of oil and gas industry artifacts. Among the museum's displays are sports trophies from Ohio community youth leagues Miller Supply has sponsored over the years. Wolf says Miller also maintains a nearby campground and park for area schoolchildren, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts.

opposite:
Ken Miller Supply of Wooster, Ohio, sells new and refurbished oilfield pumping units from nine supply stores in Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky.


Dominion

opposite page:
Teamwork, specialized skills — and trust in your fellow roughneck — make a typical drilling crew a tight-knit bunch. Dominion Exploration and Development Co. drilling manager Nathan Rakestraw, center, frequently visits this Lewis County site to monitor geological data and the bit's progress at the Nexus Rig #2. From left to right are crew members Randy Riffle, Brent Hunt, Rakestraw, Robert Cummings, and Joe Adkinson.

A major independent

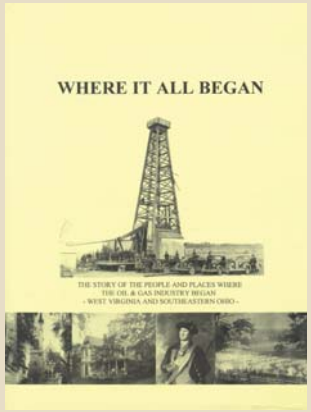
One of Miller Equipment's customers is Dominion Resources, an integrated energy company whose business lines include power generation and retail electric service, along with natural gas development and retailing. With more than 10,000 producing wells in the Appalachian Basin, its exploration and development company is among West Virginia's three largest independent natural gas producers.

Ben Hardesty serves as vice president of exploration and production for the company. He was a co-founder of a contract drilling business in 1978. He joined Stonewall Gas Company in 1982 and served as president until 1995 when Dominion acquired Stonewall and two other West Virginia producers and merged them into Dominion Appalachian Development, Inc. In 2000, Dominion merged with CNG, which gave birth to Dominion Exploration and Production, Inc. The company drills about 200 wells a year in Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Nathan Rakestraw, drilling manager for Dominion, indicated that the cable tool techniques used to drill wells over a century ago still have some application today. The cable tools were forged to a specific diameter with a chisel bit on the bottom that was conveyed thousands of feet into the well by a wire cable. On a good day, the old timers could make 50 feet of new hole. In comparison with today's rotary drilling, operators can expect to drill 2,000 feet per day. Utilization of compressed air as a drilling medium and hammer technology has made it possible for the Appalachian drillers to be the fastest in the world. Because drilling on the rigs goes on 24 hours a day, it takes only four days to drill a 5,000-foot well. Then on the fifth day, the rig is moved to another site and drilling starts again.

below:
Vice president Ben Hardesty leads the Dominion Resources' exploration and production effort in the Appalachian Basin. His family originally moved to West Virginia from Pennsylvania in the 1840s and by the turn of the century was involved in the oil business. Technology for improving production has come a long ways from nitroglycerin "torpedoes" dropped down the well bore (left). The Hardesty family well No.1 (center) was drilled in 1910 near Shinnston, West Virginia.

Documenting a Colorful History:



Where It All Began, **by David L. McKain and Bernard L. Allen, Ph.D. (1994), chronicles the discovery of oil and development of the oil industry in West Virginia and southeastern Ohio from the mid-18th century. It shows the importance of the Parkersburg area and West Virginia in the development of one of the world's most powerful and significant industries. The book contains pictures and maps and original historical material with analyses covering a range of political, social, and economic events from the early 1800s to the early 1990s.**

Oil and natural gas have been integral to the fabric of Appalachian life for generations. The region spawned innovations in oil drilling, transportation, and marketing that were instrumental to the industry's growth and success.

Fortunately, the colorful history of the regional industry is well documented in many community-based museums. These museums not only feature a wealth of artifacts and interactive exhibits, but also enable research by historians who continue to write the ongoing story of America's oil and natural gas families.

At the Oil & Gas Museum in Parkersburg, for example, director David L. McKain is a leading oil historian who recently co-authored *Where It All Began,* along with Bernard L. Allen. McKain also organized the restoration of the Rathbone brothers' well at Burning Springs. In addition to managing the museum, he is co-owner of a small oilfield tool manufacturing business founded by his grandfather in 1903. The museum is filled with models, actual rigs, engines, pumps, tools, and even an early office setting. A video created by McKain makes the case that West Virginia was commercially producing oil before the more famous Titusville, Pennsylvania, well. He notes that George Washington acquired 250 acres in what is now West Virginia because it contained an oil and gas spring. This was in 1771, making the father of our country "the first petroleum speculator."

To learn more about our nation's oil and gas industry, past and present, you'll find no better sources than the public and private museums located throughout the United States. For a partial listing, see the following pages.

Located in a historic hardware building at 119 Third Street in downtown Parkersburg, the Oil & Gas Museum was opened in 1989 by volunteer curator and historian David L. McKain, co-author of *Where It All Began.* The museum, sponsored by the Oil, Gas, and Industrial Historical Association, covers both West Virginia and southeastern Ohio.

Oil and Natural Gas Museums of the United States

Communities across the nation have recognized the dramatic heritage of oil and natural gas exploration by establishing local museums. State historical societies have placed road side markers noting the location of the first discovery wells. Many of the "producing states" support community oil and gas museums — and host public events honoring the legacies of wildcat discoveries and the pioneers who made them.

Among prominent museums dedicated to oil and gas are the Drake Well Museum in Titusville, Pennsylvania; two museums in Kern County, California; the Petroleum Museum in Midland and the Spindletop Museum in Beaumont, Texas; and the East Texas Oil Museum in Kilgore. Kansas and Oklahoma also have several energy-related museums.

Hours of operation may vary, particularly at small museums, so it is best to call before making your journey.

What follows is a partial listing of public and private museums throughout the United States devoted to the history of the oil and gas industry.

Alabama

Choctaw County Historical Museum
This small museum's fossil collection includes the vertebrae of a giant whale that once swam in the prehistoric sea that covered Choctaw County. Bottles of oil from Alabama's first oil well at Gilbertown (1944) are exhibited. The museum is located at the intersection of Alabama Hwy. 17 and County Road 14, The address is P.O. Box 162, Gilbertown, AL 36908. For hours call (251) 843-2501.

Arkansas

Arkansas Museum of Natural Resources
Formerly the Arkansas Oil and Brine Museum, the museum has examples of Arkansas' oil and brine industries and an adjacent oilfield park. Outdoor exhibits include four derricks, including a 1930s standard rig with a 112-foot derrick, and equipment depicting historic and modern production methods. A 25,000-square-foot exhibition center has both permanent and temporary exhibits. Admission is free. Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday. Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas. The museum is located at 3853 Smackover Hwy., Smackover, AR 71762. Call (870) 725-2877 for more information. Website: www.amnr.org

California

California Oil Museum
This museum in Santa Paula is housed in a restored Queen Anne Italianate-style building, built in 1890 by the Union Oil Company. Exhibits tell the story of the "black bonanza" that created wealth, work, and prosperity for generations of Californians. The museum highlights the inner workings of the oil industry through interactive displays, videos, working models, games, photographs, restored gas station memorabilia, and an authentic turn-of-the-century cable-tool drilling rig. Visitors see how Native Americans used natural oil seeps, watch a miniature drilling rig bore into the earth, and experience "wildcatting" for petroleum. Located at 1001 East Main Street, Santa Paula, CA 93061. Call (805) 933-0076 for more information. Open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Website: www.oilmuseum.net

Kern County Museum
The Kern County Museum's newly opened "Black Gold: The Oil Experience" is a permanent science, technology, and history exhibition. The interactive facility includes a 9,640-square-foot exhibition surrounded by 2.3 acres. It presents a complete overview of how oil was created, different methods of discovery and extraction throughout history, and the changing role of industry workers and their families. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. The Kern County Museum is located at 3801 Chester Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93301. Call (661) 852-5000 for more information. Website: www.kcmuseum.org

West Kern Oil Museum
The West Kern Oil Museum, Inc., located at 1168 Wood Street in Taft, California is dedicated to preserving the heritage of the west side of Kern County. The museum, run entirely by volunteers, is dedicated to collecting, preserving, exhibiting, and interpreting artifacts, books, and equipment that tell the story of oil in California. The museum is open five days a week from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and it is open Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tours are given for schoolchildren and adults and may be arranged by calling (661) 765-6664. The address is P.O. Box 491, Taft, CA 93268. Website: www.westkern-oilmuseum.org

Illinois

Illinois Oil Field Museum and Resource Center
This museum, still growing with a new building under construction, is located at the 4-H fairground, outside Oblong, off Illinois Route 33. Exhibits include machinery used in Crawford County and surrounding counties during the early 1900s. Visitors will find large oil rigs, motors, and other equipment both inside the building and outside on the grounds. The Illinois Oil Field Museum Foundation has acquired a 5-acre tract adjacent to the Village of Oblong with the goal of erecting a new museum building to more adequately display the collection. For more information on the Oil Field Museum and to book tours call (618) 544-3087 or write to P.O. Box 69, Oblong, IL 62449. Website: www.theonlyoblong.com/oil_field

Museum of Science and Industry, Petroleum Planet
Chicago businessman Julius Rosenwald, then chairman of Sears Roebuck & Co., in 1933 created America's first center for "industrial enlightenment." Rosenwald restored and converted the Palace of Fine Arts, the last remaining major structure from the 1893 World's Fair, into a new type of American museum where visitors could interact with the exhibits, not just view displays and artifacts. A recently added permanent exhibit, the Petroleum Planet, offers innovative and interactive looks at petroleum chemistry, distillation, and transportation – and the many finished products. Petroleum Planet is open every day of the year, except December 25. It is located at 57th St. and Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60637. Call (773) 684-1414 for more information. Website: www.msichicago.org/exhibit/petroleum

Wood River Refinery History Museum
Formerly known as the Shell History Museum, this museum was established in 1986 by a small group of retirees who used a small trailer to sort, categorize, and store the historical artifacts. In 1992, Shell volunteers began renovating an unused research building adjacent to the refinery. The museum has over 1,000 artifacts and offers a visual review of the refinery's progress from 1917 to the present. Exhibits, photo displays, and a videotape tell the story of the Shell Wood River Refinery. Located along Route 111 in Roxana, the museum is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday, except holidays. There is no admission charge. To arrange large group tours, please call (618) 255-3718 or write to Wood River Refinery History Museum, P.O. Box 76, Roxana, IL 62084-0076. Website: www.wrrhm.org

Wabash County Museum
Oil has been important to the economy of Wabash County since 1912, when the first well was drilled on the Lucy Courter lease. A discovery of oil at Griffin, Indiana, in 1938 led to an oil boom at Keensburg, in southern Wabash County. The Oil Boom Exhibit at the Wabash County Museum is housed in a red brick Italianate house, one-half block from the business district, at 119 W. 3rd Street, Mt. Carmel, IL 62863. Mt. Carmel is on Illinois Routes 1 and 15 in the southeast corner of the state, 45 minutes north of Evansville, Indiana. Museum hours are Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday afternoon from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is closed Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Tours may be scheduled for groups at other times by calling (618) 262-8774. Website: www.museum.wabash.il.us

Indiana

Trump's Texaco Museum
East of Indianapolis along the Old National Road, stop in Knightstown to visit Trump's Texaco Museum with its displays of nostalgia from the 1950s, when U.S. 40 bustled with cross-country travelers. The museum is housed in an old service station, which was once the location of Tydol Gas Station. Trump's Texaco opened in 1996, and the 2,000-square-foot museum houses everything from gas pumps with globes to oil cans dating from the 1920s. The "gas station" looks so authentic that people stop to buy gas. The museum is located at 39 N. Washington Street, Knightstown, IN. For directions and an appointment to visit this museum call (765) 345-7135. Admission is free. Website: www.southernin.com/Pages/archives/april_00/henry_county.html

Red Crown Mini-Museum
The Red Crown Mini-Museum is a gas station built by Standard Oil Company of Indiana in 1928 and operated until 1979. The interior and exterior is filled with gas station memorabilia, mostly related to Standard and Crown Gasoline. For information, call the Knightstown Chamber of Commerce at (800) 668-1895. The museum is located at the corner of 6th and South streets in downtown Lafayette, next to Tippecanoe County Library. This is a "walk by" museum and can be viewed at any time. Admission is free. Website: www.oldgas.com/info/redcrown.htm

Kansas

Kansas Oil Museum
The Kansas Oil Museum and the Kansas Oil and Gas Legacy Gallery in El Dorado are operated under the auspices of the Butler County Historical Society. The museum is dedicated to the history of the discovery and development of the oil industry in the state of Kansas. It celebrates the oil industry's growth from 1860 to the present, with emphasis on the El Dorado Field and its pioneers. The museum incorporated in 1956 and moved to its current location in 1977. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The museum is closed Sunday except during May to October when it is open from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is located at 383 E. Central Ave., El Dorado, KS 67042. Call (316) 321-9333 for more information. Website: www.skyways.org/museums/kom

The Kansas Oil and Gas Hall of Fame & Museum
The museum was founded in 1990 in Great Bend by a group interested in preserving the history of the oil and gas industry. The main building houses the Kansas Oil and Gas Hall of Fame. The Drilling and Completion Room has a model drilling rig and explains the procedures for drilling a well from filing the "intent" to running the open hole log when the rig reaches total depth. The museum is located on 10th Street past Patton Road. Call (620) 793-5742 or (620) 792-7033 for more information or to set up an appointment to visit the museum. Admission is free. Website: www.greatbend.com/visitor/oilgasha.htm

Hill City Chamber of Commerce Oil Museum
The Hill City Oil Museum in Graham County is 12 miles east of Morland. Located beneath an oil derrick on west Highway 24 in Hill City, the museum tells the story of oil from deep formations in northwest Kansas. The museum opened in May 1958. Call (785) 421-5621 for more information or to set up an appointment to visit the museum. Admission to the museum is free. Website: www.ruraltel.net/gced/oil.htm

Norman No. 1 Oil Well and Museum
This small museum's exhibits include an outdoor replica of the first oil well west of the Mississippi. It is located at First and Main, Neodesha, KS 66757. Call (620) 325-5316 for information and hours. Wilson County Website: www.neodygrads.com/pages/museum/norman.html

Stevens County Gas and Historical Museum
The Stevens County Gas and Historical Museum was established in May 1961 to preserve the heritage of the Hugoton Gas Field and the progressive development of Stevens County. A natural gas well drilled in 1945 is still producing. Well equipment is also on display at the site. The museum is located at 905 S. Adams, Hugoton, KS 67951. It is open 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday. Other times by appointment. Call (620) 544-8751 for more information. Website: http://skyways.lib.ks.us/towns/Hugoton/museum.html

Oil Patch Museum
The Oil Patch is a place to see, feel, and learn about oil and the machines for producing it. The story and events of the history of oil in Russell County are vividly portrayed at the Oil Patch. The museum of the Russell County Historical Society tells the story and events that make up the dramatic history of this area. The museum is located at 331 Kansas St., Russell, KS 67665. Call (785) 483-3637 for more information. Hours are daily 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., Memorial Day through Labor Day. All other times are by appointment. Admission to the museum is free. Website: www.rchs.rwisp.com

Louisiana

The International Petroleum Museum and Exposition – Rig Museum
The museum depicts the early offshore oil industry. Visitors can walk aboard an authentic offshore drilling rig, "Mr. Charlie," which drilled hundreds of wells off the coast of Morgan City in the Gulf of Mexico from 1954 to 1986. It was the first transportable, submersible drilling rig — and an industry springboard to the current offshore rig technology. The museum's mission is to gather, save, preserve, and interpret artifacts and information about the offshore petroleum industry and to educate others concerning the impact and significance of Cajun-born industry. The museum is located on the banks of Atchafalaya River at the intersection of Intercoastal Waterway, Morgan City. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mailing address is P.O. Box 1988, Morgan City, LA 70381. Call (985) 384-3744 for more information. Website: www.rigmuseum.com

Caddo-Pine Island Oil and Historical Museum
The Caddo-Pine Island Oil and Historical Museum is dedicated to the history and preservation of northwest Louisiana's natural resources. This is one of the few remaining regions with undisturbed oil history, where a country drive reveals steel derricks in the pine forests. The original bank building and post office of Trees City, one of the first U.S. oil company towns built by the famous wildcatter Mike Benedum, are preserved on the museum grounds. The museum is located in Oil City, about 20 miles north of Shreveport on State Highway 1. Admission to the museum is free. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. Call (318) 995-6845 for more information. Website: www.members.aol.com/CaddoPine/

New York

Pioneer Oil Museum
The Pioneer Oil Museum, run by a small staff of volunteers, is located in Bolivar, Allegheny County. The museum preserves the history of southwestern New York and northwestern Pennsylvania oil regions. Its collection specifically describes the history of the industry in Allegheny and Cattaraugus Counties and includes photographs, maps, machinery, and local history. The museum is located at Main St., P.O. Box 332, Bolivar, NY 14715. The museum is open between Memorial Day and Labor Day, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Website: www.rin.buffalo.edu/c_alle/comm/cult/muse/agen/pioneer.html

Ohio

Ken Miller Supply's Oil, Gas, and Truck Museum
This privately built museum has large interior and exterior exhibits documenting Ohio's extensive oil and natural gas exploration and production history. The state's first commercial oil and gas well was put into production in 1860 at Macksburg in Washington County. From 1860 through 1998, over 267,000 wells were drilled in Ohio, ranking it fourth nationally behind Texas. Admission is free. Tour arrangements can be made upon request. Call Ken Miller at (330) 567-2489 or write to 7945 Shreve Road, Shreve, OH 44676.

Oklahoma

Healdton Oil Museum
The opening of the Healdton oil field in 1913 set into motion one of Oklahoma's greatest oil booms, establishing southern Oklahoma as a major petroleum area. By 1937, this field, the largest of nine such fields located in Carter County, had produced over two million barrels of oil, making it one of the most productive pools in the state. The museum tells the story of oil development in Carter County and provides a glimpse into the early days of oil boomtowns. The museum is located at 315 East Main Street, Healdton, OK 73438. Take State Hwy. 76 to East Main in Healdton. Admission is free. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Oklahoma Historical Society maintains these hours; due to limited staffing, the museum may occasionally be closed. Call (580) 229-0900 for more information. Website: www.healdton.org

Marland Oil Museum
The Marland Estate has several small historic museums housed in original buildings that have been restored. The Marland Oil Museum presents the saga of the amazing success of E. W. Marland's early oil company. Visitors learn about the Marland family, the industry that made it possible, and the oil boomtown. The estate is open daily, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is located at 901 Monument Road, Ponca City, OK 74604. Call (800) 422–8340 for more information. Website: www.marlandmansion.com/Pages/mmaroil.html

Pennsylvania

Drake Well Museum
Drake Well Museum collects, preserves, and interprets the founding of the oil industry by "Colonel" Edwin Drake for residents and visitors by educating its audiences about the persons, places, and events important to the development of the petroleum industry and its growth into a global enterprise. The museum tells the story of the beginning of the modern oil industry with orientation videos, exhibits, operating oilfield machinery, historic photographs, and historic buildings in a park setting. It showcases the world's most significant collection of documentary material focusing on the beginning of the petroleum industry, including the papers of the Seneca Rock Oil Company, well records from the Oil Creek Valley and Pithole, over 800 maps, petroleum periodicals, diaries of oilmen, pamphlets, and more. Hours: May through October, Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.; November through April, Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. The address is Drake Well Museum, 205 Museum Lane, Titusville, PA 16354. Call (814) 827-2797 or fax to (814) 827-4888 for more information. Website: www.drakewell.org

The Pithole Visitors Center
The Pithole Visitors Center, off Rt. 227 south of Pleasantville, in Venango County, is an abandoned oil boomtown that sprang up on the Thomas Holmden Farm in May 1865. By September, 15,000 people lived in Pithole. A combination of oil running out, major fires at wells, and new wells in nearby places caused the population to shrink to less than 2,000 by 1866. Today little remains of the boomtown except cellar holes in a hillside meadow. Visitors can walk the paths of former streets and view a scale model of the city at its peak in the center, which is open Memorial Day through Labor Day, Wednesday through Saturday, and weekends in September and October from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Penn-Brad Oil Museum
The Penn-Brad Oil Museum preserves the philosophy, spirit, and accomplishments of an oil country community by taking visitors back to the early oil boom times of the nation's first billion-dollar oil field. Guided tours are conducted by over 100 oil country veterans who volunteer their time to relate firsthand experiences. The museum, just south of Bradford on Rt. 219, Custer City, McKean County, is open Memorial Day through Labor Day. Exhibits describe past and present methods of exploring for oil. The museum features one of the few remaining wooden oil derricks in the country. Many of the historic displays were found in local homes and donated to the museum by the neighbors in the Valley of Oil. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and noon until 5 p.m. Sunday, Memorial Day through Labor Day. For more information write to The Penn-Brad Oil Museum, 50 Parkway Lane, Bradford, PA 16701. Website: www.bradford-online.com/pennbrad

Venango Museum of Art, Science and Industry
The Venango Museum of Art, Science and Industry, located in Oil City, is a private, non-profit general museum that offers displays about early oil exploration, discovery, and production in the surrounding area. Changing interactive exhibits are also offered. The museum is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. It is located at 270 Seneca St., Oil City, PA 16301-1304. Call (814) 676-2007 for more information. Website: www.ibp.com/pit/venango

Texas

Houston Museum of Natural Science
Among the comprehensive energy exhibits, the Houston Museum of Natural Science's Wiess Energy Hall explores the application of scientific concepts and advanced technology in the oil and gas industry. Visitors can explore the entire process of energy development, from how oil and natural gas are formed to the ways in which various types of energy are used. The hall incorporates interactive learning methods such as computer graphics, touch screens, holographic video displays, and virtual reality. The exhibit hall is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is located at One Hermann Circle Drive, Houston, TX 77030. For information call (713) 639-4629. Website: www.hmns.org

Early photographers set up shop wherever wealth accumulated. Ken Miller's museum in Ohio, includes this carriage, advertising a business that photographed oil fields as well as the homes and families of boomtown oil magnates.

The *Ocean Star* Drilling Rig and Museum
Less than an hour from downtown Houston, the Offshore Energy Center (OEC) operates its one of a kind museum, the *Ocean Star* Offshore Drilling Rig and Museum, at Pier 19 in Galveston. Visitors step on board the completely refurbished jackup drilling rig and learn about how the oil and gas industry discovers, produces and delivers the energy resources from beneath the world's oceans in a safe and environmentally responsible way. In addition to the rig's pipe deck and drill floor, visitors can examine the three floors of equipment exhibits, interactive displays and videos. The OEC's Offshore Pioneers Hall of Fame is located in the museum, which chronicles the unique heritage and technological accomplishments of the Pioneers of the Industry. The museum offers educational programs developed for students, teachers and the general public, through workshops and tours. In addition, the museum offers a one-day course — "The Basics of Oil Well Drilling" — that introduces how a well is drilled and evaluated, from the rig and drilling equipment to setting casing and evaluating the formation thousands of feet below the sea floor. The museum is located at the intersection of Harborside Drive and 20th Street (entrance is on the east end of Pier 20). Call (409) 766-STAR (7827) for more information. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (until 5 p.m. Memorial Day to Labor Day). Website: www.oceanstaroec.com

The Petroleum Museum
Located on 40 acres just south of Midland, the museum, founded in 1975, teaches the cultural and technical stories of the oil and gas industry. Interactive exhibits cover all aspects of the petroleum industry from the formation of oil, its exploration, geology, pipelining, marketing, and refining to the economic and political impact of the industry. The museum's 40,000-square-foot facility houses photographic wall murals depicting early life in the oil fields, a West Texas boomtown, a marine diorama allowing visitors to travel back 230 million years, and taped interviews with industry pioneers. The Archives Center ranks second in size to the National Archives in Washington, DC. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is located at 1500 Interstate 20 West, Midland, TX 79701. Call (432) 683-4403 for more information. Website: www.petroleummuseum.org

East Texas Oil Museum
The East Texas Oil Museum at Kilgore College is a tribute to the independent oil and natural gas producer. A few miles south of Longview on US 259 was a 1930 "Christmas present" in the form of a gusher that changed life in East Texas forever. It was a Sunday morning on December 28, 1930, when a Bateman Oil Company well blew in at 22,000 barrels a day. This well was nine miles from the October 1930 discovery well drilled by Columbus Marion "Dad" Joiner. Only later did people realize that the two wells had reached the same giant oil formation. The East Texas Oil Field has produced over 5 billion barrels of oil. The oil gave the Allies the petroleum reserve needed to win World War II. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is located on the Kilgore College campus at Highway 259 at Ross St., Kilgore, TX 75662. Call (903) 983-8295 for more information. Website: www.easttexasoilmuseum.com

Spindletop/Gladys City Boomtown Museum
The museum, operated by Lamar University in Beaumont, is a 15-building complex, which recreates Gladys City, an early 1900s-era Texas boomtown on the Spindletop oil field. The museum is an educational facility open to the public year-round. Visitors can relive the boom days on a tour through the buildings representing actual businesses in operation during the boom. The original Gladys City played a major role in the rich and colorful history of Spindletop. The museum is open for self-guided tours Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (closed major holidays). Group tours may be arranged in advance by calling (409) 835-0823. The museum is located on Highway 69 at University Drive, Beaumont, TX. The museum mailing address is: P.O. Box 10070, Beaumont, TX 77710. Website: www.spindletop.org

Texas Energy Museum
Located in Beaumont's downtown Museum District, the Texas Energy Museum allows visitors to explore the fascinating world of petroleum formation and geology, historical and contemporary technologies of oil well drilling, and chemistry of petroleum refining. Talking robotic characters tell colorful stories of Spindletop and early Texas oil. Visitors take a trip on an oil tanker and experience the making of gasoline from a molecule's viewpoint. The address is 600 Main Street, Beaumont, TX 77701.The museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call (409) 833-5100. Website: www.texasenergymuseum.org

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum
The museum, located in Canyon, is the largest history museum in Texas. It was founded in 1921 by college professor Hattie Anderson, whose dream of preserving the region's history has grown considerably. About 100,000 guests visit the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum each year. On the campus of what is now West Texas A&M University, the museum has a million artifacts, ranging from the Comanche Chief Quanah Parker's eagle feather headdress to collections of historic New Mexico and Texas art. The Don D. Harrington Petroleum Wing tells the story of the oil boom years in the Texas Panhandle during the 1920s and 1930s, and the men who made it happen. Two floors of exhibits help visitors understand the oil and gas business as it was during the early days of discovery and development. The museum is located on the West Texas A&M campus at 2503 4th Ave., Canyon, TX 79016. The hours are Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., June through August; and Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., September through May. Call (806) 651-2244 for more information. Website: www.panhandleplains.org

Oil Patch Museum
Located in Batson, the Oil Patch Museum is a tribute to drillers, tool pushers, roughnecks, and companies. Batson is on State Hwy. 105 and Farm Road 770 in southwestern Hardin County. With the discovery of an oil field a half mile north in October 1903, the town and post office were moved to a site just south of the oil field, and a city of 10,000 sprang up overnight. Museum exhibits include pictures, models, and equipment from the early days of the oil industry. Events include the annual Oil Patch Festival on the third weekend in June. Tours of the museum are by appointment. For more information call (936) 262-8162. Website: www.bigthicketdirectory.com/museums/oilpatch.html

Central Texas Oil Patch Museum
The Luling Oilfield was discovered by Edgar B. Davis on August 9, 1922, northwest of the small town. The field's annual production peaked at more than a million barrels in 1924 and leveled off at an average of 2.5 million barrels annually in the 1930s. In 1989, residents of Luling formed the Luling Area Oil Museum Association, and established the museum, located at 421 E. Davis St., Luling, TX 78648. Local businesses and citizens have donated historic items, time, and financial assistance to help maintain the building and displays. The Chamber of Commerce helps in keeping the museum open and offers assistance to sightseers. Hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon; 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Call (830) 875-3214 for more information.

Van Area Oil and Historical Museum
The Van Area Oil Museum is located in an old warehouse originally built in 1930 by the Pure Oil Co. to house oil field materials used in the development of the Van oil field. All the oil derricks in the Van field have disappeared – but the museum obtained a derrick and relocated it on the grounds as a reminder of the bygone days. Displays include various types of oil-related memorabilia as well as history of the area and city. Open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. The museum is located at Texas Hwy. 16 and County Road 1501. For more information call (903) 963-5435.

West Virginia

Oil and Gas Museum
According to David L. McKain, Volunteer Director of the West Virginia Oil and Gas Museum, George Washington once acquired 250 acres in what is now West Virginia — because it contained an oil and gas spring. This was in 1771, making the father of our country the first petroleum industry speculator. The oil and gas museum is housed in a historic hardware building downtown, first built in 1874. It was burned and then rebuilt in 1900. An outside exhibit area shows a Parkersburg pumpjack (in operation) and a Spencer Machine pumpjack. The address is P.O. Box 1685, 119 Third Street, Parkersburg, WV 26101. Open weekdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 12 p.m. to 5 p.m.; closed Sunday. Call (304) 485-5446 or (304) 428-8015 for more information. Website: www.little-mountain.com/oilandgasmuseum

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IPAA will be celebrating its 75th anniversary in June 2004. The Educational Foundation, established in 1996, is a non-profit organization that supports charitable and educational programs related to energy education. One unique educational initiative funded by the foundation is the George and Barbara Bush Excellence in Education Award, which has been awarded to six Houston-area charities since the program's inception in 1997.

The American Oil & Gas Historical Society is dedicated to preserving the history of the U.S. oil and natural gas exploration and production industry. The Society provides advocacy and service for organizations that work to preserve industry history through exhibition, educational programming, and material preservation.

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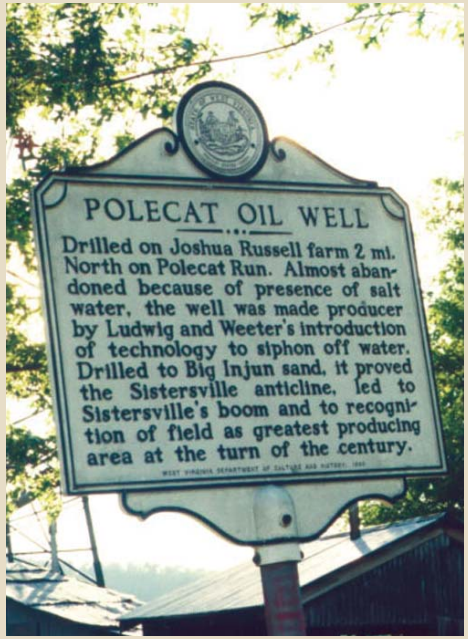

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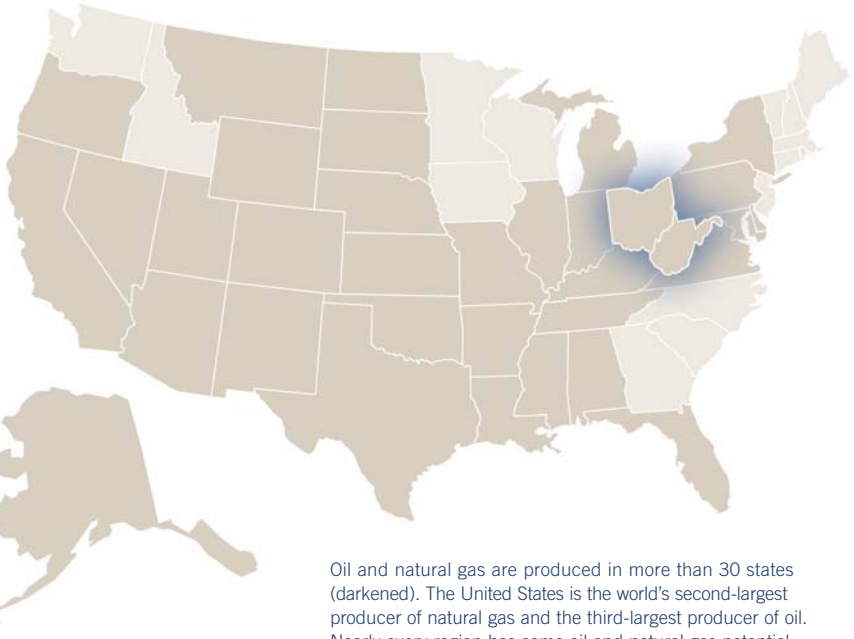

Oil and natural gas are produced in more than 30 states (darkened). The United States is the world's second-largest producer of natural gas and the third-largest producer of oil. Nearly every region has some oil and natural gas potential. This document focuses on West Virginia and Ohio.

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