
Russ, as he was known by his many friends, was born in Elwood, Nebraska, on May 12, 1912, the only son of John A. and Alice Burns. He received his elementary education in the Elwood public schools; later he attended the University of Nebraska from which he graduated in January 1937 with a major in geology. Following graduation he remained in the university for a semester engaged in post-graduate studies and in assisting "Prof" Schramm in his field geology course.

On June 1, 1937, Russ accepted a position as geologist with Union Oil Company of California, which led to a very successful and rewarding career as a petroleum geologist. In June 1938 he married Clee Ann Robinson of Hastings, Nebraska.

Russ spent the first 12 years of his association with Union on varied assignments of surface and subsurface geological work in West Texas, the Rocky Mountain province, and California. The wealth of information and experience gained in stratigraphy and structure was the foundation for his highly successful career in Western Canada.

In 1949 he came to Calgary, Alberta, as chief geologist for the newly formed Canadian Division of Union Oil Company of California. It was largely through his efforts and persistence while chief geologist and later exploration manager that the major Canadian oil and gas discoveries of Union were made.

In 1961 Russ retired from Union Oil and went into consulting. In the fall of 1963, after a period of association in a consulting capacity, he accepted a position as vice-president in charge of exploration with Central-Del Rio Oils Limited. Here again it is largely through his foresight and efforts that Central-Del Rio obtained such a large and favorably located land position in the prolific Rainbow area of northwestern Alberta.

Russ will be greatly missed and warmly remembered by his relatives and his host of friends in Calgary and elsewhere. His former classmates at the University of Nebraska will always remember the tall, industrious, and capable student with the warm smile and good humor. Wherever Russ went he made friends who admired and respected him for his professional ability, his sincerity, and above all his integrity. Many will remember the assistance and helping hand he gave when jobs were scarce and hard to get.

Russ was a member of The American Association of Petroleum Geologists, the Alberta Society of Petroleum Geologists, the Association of Professional Engineers of Alberta, the Board of Governors of the Canadian Petroleum Association, the Board of Directors of the British Columbia Division of the Canadian Petroleum Association, and the Calgary Petroleum Club; he also was a director of Canyon Meadows Golf and Country Club.

RUSSELL WARREN BURNS
(1912–1967)