

the dark commodity that drives our world. In lean, muscular prose and through relentless storytelling, “OIL IN THEIR BLOOD (The Story of Our Addiction)” weaves hard fact with adventure, romance and melodrama to explore the metaphysical and stark cold truths about love, family, oil and modern society’s addiction to it.

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN, HERITAGE, AND FORMATION OF THE PETROLEUM HISTORY INSTITUTE: AN EYEWITNESS REPORT**

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The Petroleum History Institute (PHI) had its origin in standing committees of the American Petroleum Institute (API) in the 1930s. From these committees, the Drake Well Foundation (DWF) was formed in 1951 and The Colonel Inc. in 1990. The DWF was dissolved in 2003 to create the Petroleum History Institute with an expanded vision, international mission, goals, objectives and programs. This vignette reflects the views of the author, who was an eyewitness to and a participant in the latter part of the process of this evolution. A more complete discussion of the Drake Well Foundation can be found in the article by Samuel T. Pees, *Oil-Industry History*. v.1, no. 1, 2000, p. 2. This issue of our journal was the first to appear under the imprimatur of the Petroleum History Institute (PHI) (previous issues were published by the Drake Well Foundation). That merits explanation.

The Drake Well Foundation (DWF) was established in 1951 as an outgrowth of an earlier committee of the American Petroleum Institute (API). The DWF’s major initial charge was support of the Drake Well Museum at Titusville, PA. Over the years, circumstances evolved and various changes ensued. Among them, the Drake Well Museum became a Pennsylvania State Museum and a part of Pennsylvania state government. Subsequently, about a decade ago, a new private organization, The Colonel, Inc., was established and assumed the role of the major external support for the Drake Well Museum.

Concurrently, under the presidency and leadership of Samuel T. Pees, the Drake Well Foundation assumed a more expansive vision and pursued a broader mission to promote public awareness of the history and heritage of the international oil industry as it grew from its 1859 roots in Oil Creek Valley to a worldwide enterprise.<sup>1</sup>

In recognition of these changes and to put in place a new framework to more clearly reflect current realities and facilitate future opportunities for all stakeholders, on June 28, 2003, the Board of Directors of the Drake Well Foundation unanimously voted to dissolve that corporate entity and create a new corporation, the **Petroleum History Institute** (PHI), a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. The mission of the **PHI** is to pursue the expanded vision of the history, heritage and development of the oil industry from its inception in Oil Creek Valley, Pennsylvania, as well as its early roots in other regions, and its subsequent spread throughout the world to its current global status. Thus the torch has been passed!

The first major milestone of this newly chartered enterprise was the continuation of the publication of this oil history journal. Its next major venture was the sponsorship of the 2004 International Symposium on the History of the Oil Industry held September 8-11, 2004 in Morgantown, West Virginia.

### **THE “OIL BREAK”- A 200-YEAR SAGA OF WEST VIRGINIA OIL AND GAS ACTIVITIES**

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From the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, oil and gas activities along the Burning Springs Anticline (referred to in early literature as the Oil Break) have played a major role in the history and heritage of West Virginia’s petroleum industry. Specific examples are:

- 18<sup>th</sup> century observations of “burning springs” from ignited gas seeps in streambeds and surface oil seeps observed by Indians and early European explorers and settlers
- First sale of bottled oil from surface seeps in 1810