Wednesday, May 30, 2007

Petroleum Club • 800 Bell (downtown)
Social 11:15 a.m., Lunch 11:45 a.m.

Cost: $30 with advance reservations, $35 for walk-ins, space available ($15 for Emeritus and Honorary).

The HGS prefers that you make your reservations on-line through the HGS website at www.hgs.org. If you have no Internet access, you can e-mail reservations@hgs.org, or call the office at 713-463-9476 (include your name, e-mail address, meeting you are attending, phone number and membership ID#).

*by **Dan B. Steward***
Consulting Geologist
Republic Energy

The Barnett Shale Play: Phoenix of the Ft. Worth Basin, a History

Mitchell Energy performed its first Barnett test in 1982. The well was the C.W. Slay #1 in southeastern Wise County, a failed exploratory deepening for the Viola limestone. Many things had to come together in a timely manner for this test to have been considered. The limited gas recovered on the initial frac gave enough encouragement to pursue a better understanding of this source rock and the technology that might be required to make this almost slate-like rock a producing reservoir.

The Ft. Worth Basin Bend Conglomerate had been a significant source of income for Mitchell Energy and the leases, employees and infrastructure associated with it made up a large part of the company's assets. In 1982, our evaluation of the Bend Conglomerate, the dominant producer in the basin, suggested our production base could be sustained through the early 1990's, but would be impossible to maintain after that time. We were given a charge by George Mitchell to find something to take the place of the "Bend" and maintain our existing assets. Many different exploration targets in the basin were reviewed, the Barnett being one of them.

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Over the next 10 years a data base was put together and technology was developed that would allow a small area of Barnett in eastern Wise and western Denton Counties to be commercial under the favorable gas prices provided in our Natural Gas Pipeline contract. However, this contract was a two-edged sword, it provided for a production ceiling that could not be exceeded except on demand. ■

Biographical Sketch

Dan Steward is a consulting Geologist with Republic Energy Inc. in Dallas, Texas. During the period 1981–2001 he worked for Mitchell Energy and was a member of the team responsible for recognizing, evaluating and evolving the Barnett Shale play in the Fort Worth Basin.