

several of these engines, illustrated with photographs of some of the original engines, both in the field and restored.

THE LAKEVIEW GUSHER IN VINTAGE POSTCARDS

Jeff A. Spencer
675 Piney Creek Rd. Bellville, TX 77418
jspencer@blackpoolenergy.com

One of the most photographed oil wells of the early twentieth century was the Lakeview gusher near Maricopa, California. Touted as the “world’s greatest gusher”, many early picture postcards show the gusher reflected in a lake of oil. The stream of oil and sand shot up over 200’ above the derrick, making for impressive scenes for the “Golden Age” of postcards (1907-1915). On January 1st, 1909, the Lakeview Oil Company spud their No. 1 well within the Midway-Sunset Field. At a depth of 1655’ and faced with financial problems, the company approached another nearby operator, Union Oil Company, to take over the drilling of the well. In return for a 51% interest in the well, Union took over as operator and on March, 15th, at a depth of 2225’, the well blew out. Estimates had the well gushing 125,000 barrels of oil in the first twenty-four hours and averaging 60,000 barrels of oil a day during the first three months. Earthen dams, and later a sixteen acre reservoir, were constructed downstream to contain the oil. On September 9th, 1911, the well finally caved in and the gusher was quiet. The cumulative oil spewed from the gusher was estimated at over nine million barrels, of which only four million barrels were recovered.

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANET EARTH: WHAT’S IT ALL ABOUT? ...AND...WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

Larry D. Woodfork
*Representative for North America and Acting Chairman,
Board of Directors
Morgantown, WV
woodfork@earthlink.net*

The International Year of Planet Earth www.yearofplanetearth.org is a joint global initiative of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and the United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The IYPE is in reality a triennium (2007-2009) with the central year 2008 having

been proclaimed the International Year of Planet Earth by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 22, 2005. The IYPE, subtitled “Earth Science for Society”, has two major components - a science component focusing on 10 major societal relevant themes and outreach and education component. The actual implementation of the IYPE mission, goals, objectives, programs and activities is accomplished through National Committees (NCs) constituted for that purpose in individual countries around the world. The oversight of the National Committees and general management of the global IYPE initiative is conducted by the International Year of Planet Earth, Inc., a USA-based Delaware not-for-profit, 501 c. 3 corporation, and administered through a Secretariat and its Executive Director. Many diverse IYPE programs and activities are now planned and/or already taking place around the world. Many more exciting and diverse activities will be undertaken as triennium progress. One universal goal on which much effort will be focused around the world will be making the general public, governmental officials and other decision-makers at all levels more aware of the contributions that geoscientists and the geosciences have made to date to modern society, but also their still under utilized potential to make even greater future contributions to our planet and our society’s safety, health and prosperity. The USA geoscience community can and should play a very major role in this noble global endeavor.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT AWARDS BANQUET

A BRIEF HISTORY OF OIL IN CALIFORNIA

Stephen M. Testa
*California State Mining and Geology Board
stephen.testa@conservation.ca.gov*

California has a rich heritage in oil. Oil seeps have been noted by Native Americans and Spanish explorers in the vicinity of Los Angeles since about 1543. The post gold rush era of the mid-to-late 19th Century represented the first major phase of oil exploration and production in California. It was a period when the State legislature was concerned about a declining economic climate and explored means to spur the economy, and encourage growth and development. Some individuals, such as Benjamin Silliman, Jr. and William P. Blake, expressed optimism. Josiah D. Whitney, State Geologist and Director of the first California Geological Survey (1860-1874) presented a pessimistic view of petroleum as a true commodity, and this pessimism eventually sealed the fate of the Survey. By the turn of the Century, things would however turn around. The Los Angeles City Oil Field was discovered in 1892 by Edward L. Doheny, Sr., and would be the most historically significant