

Hmolt 02-13-004



RECEIVED

JAN 16 2013

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

NOMINATION FORM  
HALF MILE OF HISTORY

**Section A: Nomination Information**

Name of Nominated person, place or event: Joe Zeppa

The nominee is being honored for outstanding contributions in the area(s) of (please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment/Media	<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropy
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Government/Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion
<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science
<input type="checkbox"/> Aviation	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention/Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/> Sports
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business/Corporate Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Law	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oil/Gas	

**Section B: Nominator's Information**

Name of person making nomination: Jim Robertson

Address: 909 ESE Loop 323, Suite 400

City: Tyler State: TX Zip: 75701

Daytime telephone: 903-509-5000 Email: jr@wilsonlawfirm.com

Relationship to nominated individual: None

Nominated Individual's year of birth: 1893 Nominated Individual's year of death: 1975

**Section C: Narrative**

The narrative section of the application is the most important. It is the primary source of information judges use to make their selection of new inductees. The two-page narrative submittal must utilize size 12 Times New Roman font and be double spaced. Please include a recommended 25-30 word marker caption at the end of the narrative. Any additional material will be referred to only for verification of accuracy of the nomination. No submitted materials will be returned.

The narrative section must contain an explanation of the nominee's enduring contribution that make this person/place/event worthy of the honor. Please describe the impact the nominee has had on the community, county, region, nation and/or world. For Individuals, please include any honors earned by the nominee as well as a list of organizations in which the nominee has been involved. Also, please indicate their educational background as well as the length of time the individual has lived in Smith County. Inclusion of photos is preferred but optional. Do not send original photos. All submitted materials will become property of the City of Tyler and its Historical Preservation Board.

Please submit nominations to:  
City of Tyler Historical Preservation Board  
Attention: Half Mile of History  
P.O. Box 2039  
Tyler, Texas 75710

Keating Zeppa - 581-4275  
P.O. 657  
Tyler, TX 75710

Legal rev. 04/29/10



## JOE ZEPPA

1893 – 1975

Giuseppe Zeppa was born on August 2, 1893, on a farm in northern Italy. He emigrated to the U.S. as a 12-year-old boy, arriving in New York in 1906. He was forced to drop out of school after the eighth grade to work for a living, but he returned to complete high school by taking night classes and continued his education, studying finance and accounting at New York University. In 1916, at the age of 22, Joe Zeppa declared his intention to become a United States citizen.

In 1917 Zeppa enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving his country for two years in Europe during World War I. In 1919 Zeppa entered Toulouse University under an education program for servicemen, studying French and international law.

In 1921 Zeppa arrived in El Dorado, Arkansas, in the midst of a wild oil boom, and then moved to Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1928 with Arkansas Natural Gas Company. During this time Zeppa made association with several partners, who formed Delta Drilling Company on November 17, 1931, shortly after the onset of the East Texas oil boom.

Zeppa moved his family to Tyler in 1933, along with the principal offices of Delta Drilling Company in 1937. Starting in the East Texas oil boom with two junk rigs, Zeppa built his company from the ground up into an American success story and a formidable empire.

By the end of 1980, when Delta Drilling Company began the celebration of its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the company operated 62 land rigs in five domestic drilling divisions and an Italian subsidiary, two gas processing plants, and more than 900 producing wells. The company had more than 2,100 employees.

Joe Zeppa died of a heart attack at his farm outside of Tyler on July 4, 1975. His son, Keating Zeppa, wrote a page in his memory in *The Delta Digger*:



Mr. Joe Zeppa lived 82 years.

He was Delta Drilling Company for 44 years.

He was my father for 42 years.

Numbers have a certain coldness and finality about them. But there is no thought of coldness nor of finality when considering the life of Joe Zeppa. He was a tough, practical businessman, who believed in hard work and perseverance. He very humanly enjoyed the fruits of his efforts, but was happiest when able to help someone less fortunate than he, and most of those kind and generous acts will be known only to those who benefitted from them.

Although we will no longer hear the familiar “What the hell are YOU doing?” his presence will continue throughout the company, the industry, and his world of friends and acquaintances. From those people have come an outpouring of cards, letters, and tributes to his memory. Thus, there can be no note of finality to the life of Joe Zeppa until the last of those who knew and loved him pass from this life.

His memory will be best honored by all of us in Delta by maintaining the high ideals that he set of strict honesty, complete integrity and plenty of plain hard work.

He may have been in error...but he was never in doubt.

Marker Caption

**JOE ZEPPA**

**1893 – 1975**

An Italian emigrant, Zeppa arrived in Tyler with the East Texas oil boom, building Delta Drilling Company into an empire with 62 rigs, 900 producing wells, and 2100 employees. (29 words)





*Zeppa*





*During a visit to his home in Italy, Joe once again worked the oxen through fields he had plowed as a boy.*



*The Zeppa home on South Broadway in Tyler, Texas, was a familiar gathering place for friends and associates.*



*"I have been in the petroleum business since 1921 and have enjoyed every minute of it, including the time when I was released and turned loose to shift for myself. That was when we decided to form a drilling company with two assembled junk rigs, which we named Delta Drilling Company. Frankly, I did not expect that we would last very long, but here we are, years later, and still in business, expecting something good to turn up from day to day.*

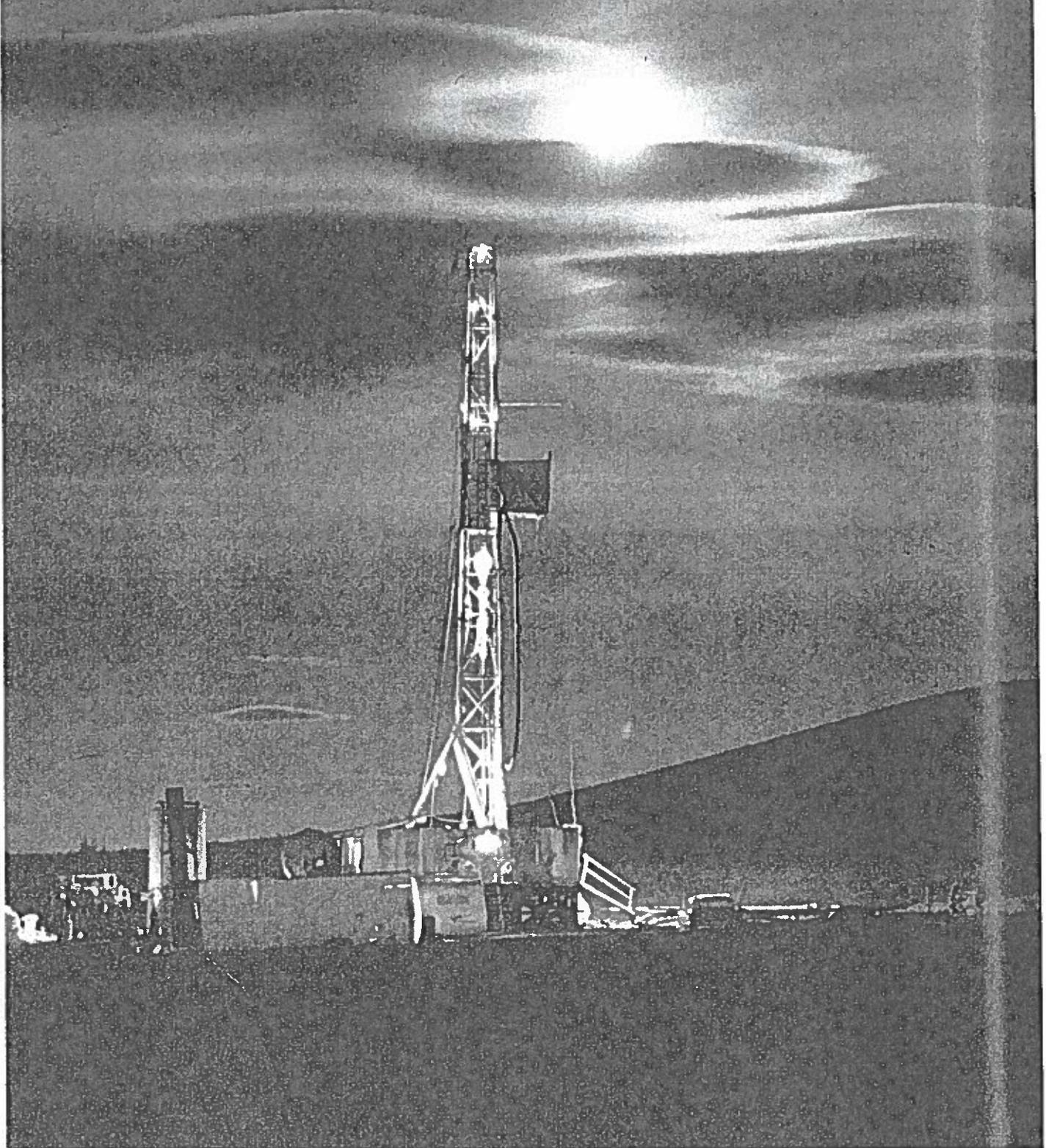
*"I cannot say that I have anything to regret, except the fact that I could have accomplished a good deal more and didn't. However, my interest has been in the oil business and in the oil people, many of whom I have met and enjoyed and I am fully convinced that it has the best people in the business world today."*

*Joe Zeppa  
July 2, 1970*

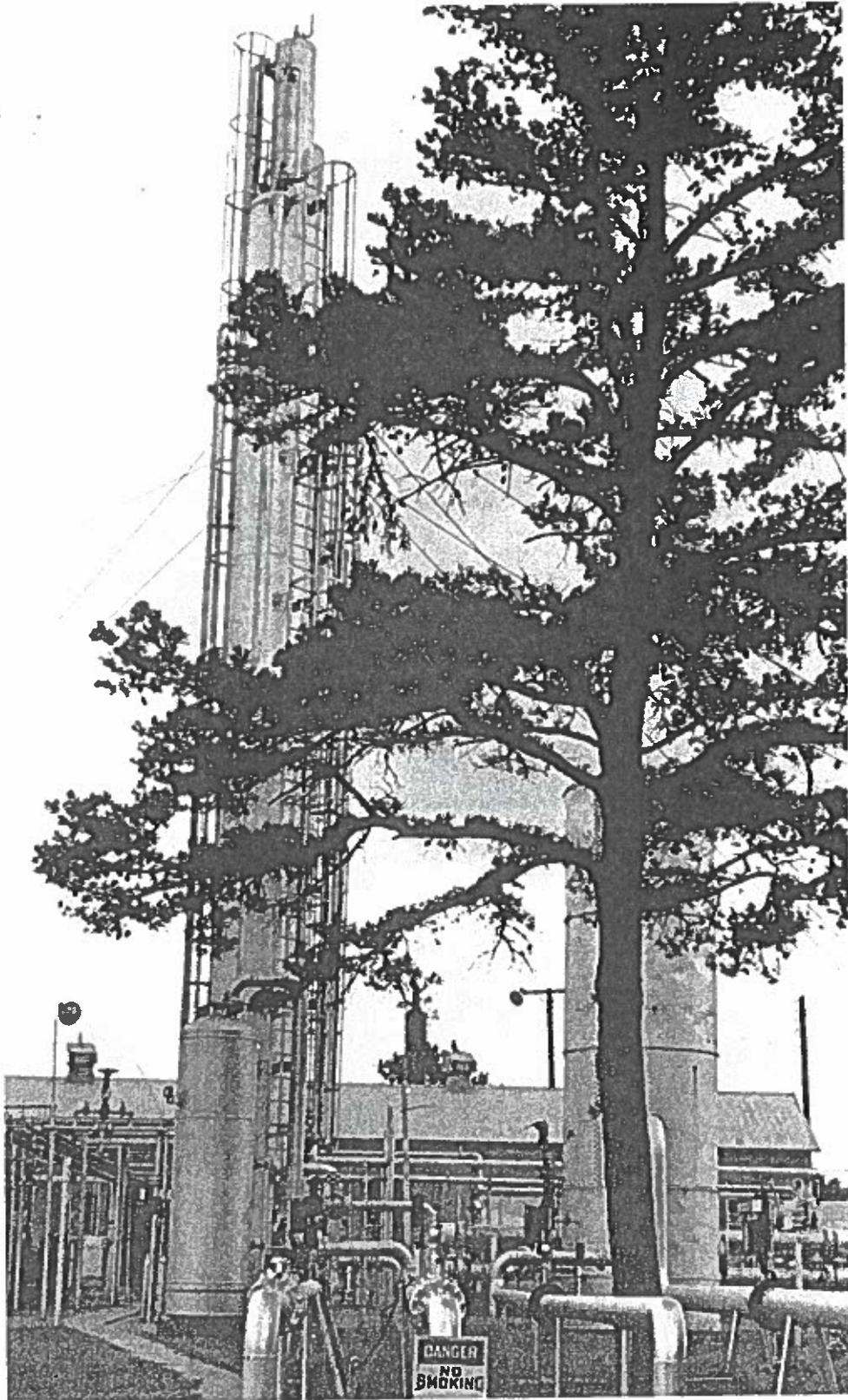




*As Delta's operations expanded throughout the United States, rigs such as this one appeared in the Rocky Mountain Division, which was based in Casper, Wyoming.*

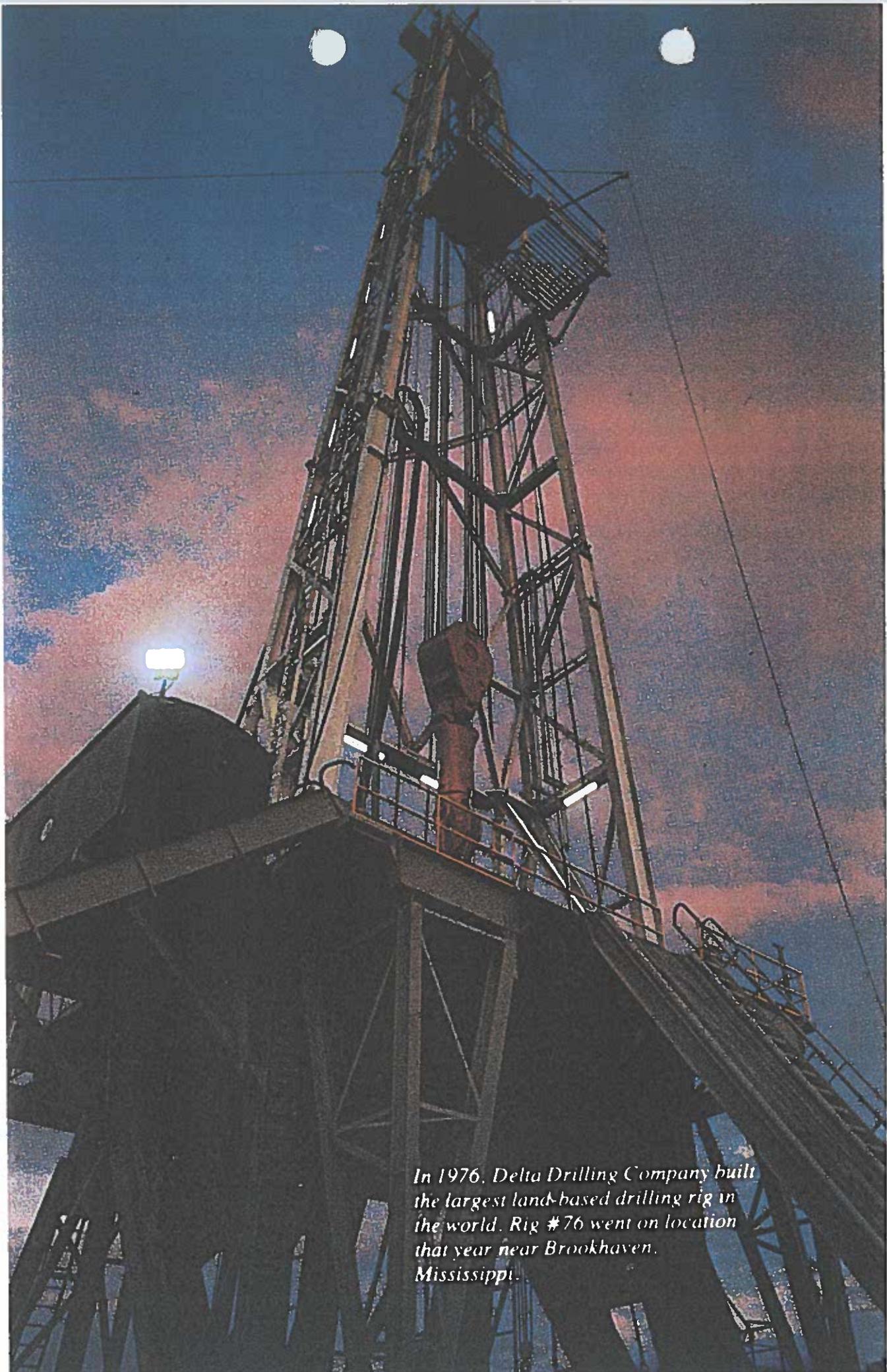






*The Etexas Producers Gas Company was organized in 1945 to process natural gas and make casinghead gasoline. The plant, designed by Chris Zeppa, was built in 1946 outside of Tyler on the Kilgore highway.*





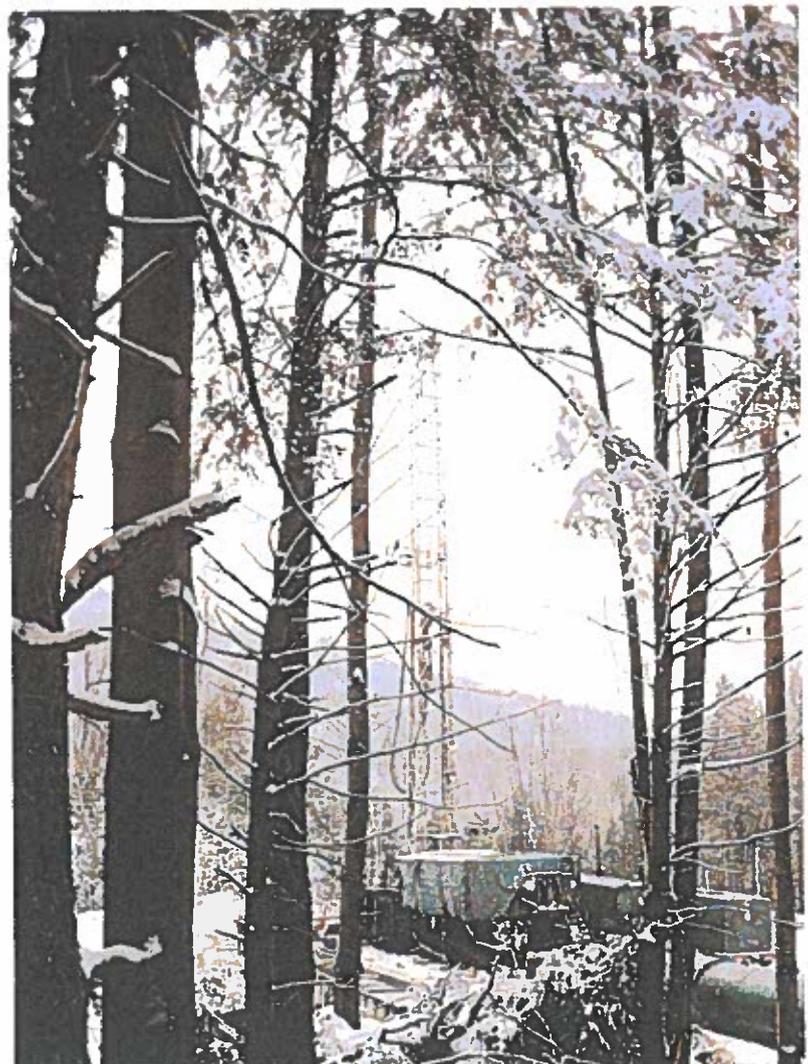
*In 1976, Delta Drilling Company built the largest land-based drilling rig in the world. Rig #76 went on location that year near Brookhaven, Mississippi.*





*Joseph Zeppa, far left, was honored with a party on the occasion of his 80th birthday. Also in attendance were (from left) his son Keating, his brother Chris, and J. M. "Joe" Bevill, corporate secretary/treasurer.*

*Operations have expanded over the years, and by the end of 1980 Delta had drilling, exploration, land, and production divisions in East Texas, West Texas, South Texas, the Gulf Coast, and the Northeast.*





## *About the*

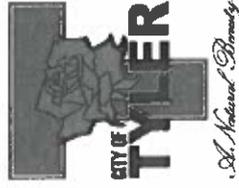
### *Half Mile of History*

The City of Tyler's historic preservation program, the Half Mile of History, resulted from a recommendation that came out of the Tyler 21 planning process. The fifth goal of the Historic Preservation Chapter is:

*"Promote and display diverse aspects of Tyler's history to enhance resident and visitor awareness of its importance."*

The goal of the Half Mile of History is to pay tribute to people, places and events that have contributed to the rich history of Tyler and Smith County.

The Half Mile of History is a permanent, outdoor, half-mile loop that surrounds the square in the heart of downtown Tyler. Stone plaques are placed in the sidewalk along the Half Mile of History to commemorate significant people, places or events.



## *Half Mile of History Marker Unveiling*

*in honor of*

*Mattie Jones*

*Joe Zeppa*

*Sarah McClendon*

*Thursday, March 7, 2013*

**Miss Mattie L. Jones** was a pioneer Tyler teacher and civic worker. For many years "Miss Mattie," as she was familiarly known to her students, taught English and public speaking in Tyler High School. She retired in 1936, having completed 41 years as a public school teacher. Miss Mattie died in 1944 and was buried in Oakwood Cemetery. The community's memorial to her is the Mattie L. Jones Elementary School built in 1955. Mattie Jones Elementary was originally located at 2521 West Front in Tyler.

**Giuseppe Zeppa** was born on Aug. 2, 1893, on a farm in northern Italy. He emigrated to the U.S. as a 12-year-old boy, arriving in New York in 1906. As an adult, Zeppa made association with several partners, who formed Delta Drilling Company. Zeppa moved his family to Tyler in 1933, along with the principal offices of Delta Drilling Company in 1937. Starting in the East Texas oil boom with two junk rigs, Zeppa built his company from the ground up into an American success story and a formidable empire. Joe Zeppa died of a heart attack at his farm outside of Tyler on July 4, 1975.

**Sarah Newcomb McClendon** was a long-time White House reporter who covered presidential politics for a half-century. McClendon founded her own free-lance news service as a single mother in the post-World War II era, and became known as a model for women in the press. McClendon was best known, however, for her questions at United States Presidential press

## *Staff Mile of History Marker Unveiling*

*in honor of*

*Mattie Jones*

*Joe Zeppa*

*Sarah McClendon*

*Thursday, March 7, 2013*

*Opening Remarks: Mayor Barbara Bass*

*Staff Mile of History honoree histories by:*

*Historical Preservation Board Member Bryan Campbell*

*Historical Preservation Board Member Jim Radtson*

*Historical Preservation Board Chair Mike Patterson*

*Unveiling of Markers and Certificate Presentation*

*Responses*

*Special Announcements*

*Adjourn: reception follows*