

## DEE DRILLING COMPANY

Mt. Carmel, IL

Dee Drilling Company was founded by brothers J. Roy Dee and John G. Dee in 1939 in Mattoon, Illinois. At that time it was known as Illinois Mid-Continent Company. Over the next few years, in an effort to stay at the center of the drilling activity, the organization moved first to Fairfield and then on to Mt. Carmel, into its first office, what was then the Wabash hotel, in 1942. In 1948, an oil yard was set up at 530 West Third Street. It remains in use today. At this time, the Dee brothers were engaged in the discovery and production of crude petroleum mostly in the Illinois Basin.



J. ROY DEE

In 1949, Dee-Watson Drilling Company was organized to drill wells for Illinois Mid-Continent Company. They drilled many sites, a memorable one being the Burkett Well in Gibson County, Indiana. They hit a gas pocket and a fire started. The rig was completely destroyed, but fortunately, there were no serious injuries. Red Adair was called to extinguish the fire, but it was put out shortly before he arrived. They later replaced the rig and continued drilling operations until J. T. Watson was bought out in 1957 and the organization became known as Dee Drilling Company.

In 1951, Illinois Mid-Continent Company moved into the upper floor of the new Brubeck Building on outer West Ninth Street in Mt. Carmel. They shared the upper floor with Mr. Brubeck, while the downstairs was shared by Schlumberger and the Pappas Brothers. At this time, the company had a number of notable oil men working for them, including Jack McIntosh, Bernie Podolsky, James T. Watson, Jr., Frank Goodman, Lester Moore, Mike

Bielaczyc, and Bob Kelly. The company also had a long-term relationship with Stephen H. King, former IOGA president and winner of the IOGA 1993 Petroleum Professional of the Year Award. Steve began working on a consulting basis and later came to work for Dee Drilling Company full time. In 1964, Dee Drilling Company moved to its current location at 431 Market Street, site of the former American National Bank built in 1919.

"J. Roy" Dee, one of the original founders of Dee Drilling Company, was also very active in politics and community affairs. He served two terms as Mayor for Mt. Carmel and was instrumental in preserving Beall Woods as a state forest. He founded the Wabash Valley Association, which at one time had more than 8,000 members. The Association raised the political support necessary to construct the reservoirs and levees which control flooding along the Wabash River. An annual scholarship is funded by the Association in "J. Roy" Dee's name and honor to a prospective water management student. J. Roy Dee also brought Fibber McGee and Molly, notable radio personalities and company investors, to Fairfield for a tri-state oilfield celebration at the Harry Short lease! In 1965, he was able to obtain six steer, courtesy of President Lyndon B. Johnson's ranch, for Mt. Carmel's Sesquicentennial celebration and barbecue. J. Roy Dee died of cancer in St. Petersburg, Florida, April 10, 1966.

Upon J. Roy's death, J. "Roy" Dee, Jr. became President of Dee Drilling Company. Roy was the only son of Page and J. Roy Dee.



J. ROY DEE, JR.

He began working on a rotary rig at the tender age of 11 or 12. He attended college at the University of Alabama, and married his wife, Mary Ann Fanning, there. After several years in the Florida banking

industry, Roy returned to Mt. Carmel with his growing family. The oil boom was on and Roy took a rotary rig to Ohio to operate. Despite using an older rig, he out drilled more modern rigs by using advanced techniques in hydraulics. He was later written up in "Hughes Rigway", a quarterly national magazine for this accomplishment. As the boom ended, Roy sold the rig in New York and returned to Mt. Carmel to look for oil, drill wells, and operate the company's production, besides raising 12 children and serving on St. Mary's School Board. Currently, Roy spends most of his time in Alabama working at Dee River Ranch.

In 1978, Roy's oldest son, "J." graduated with a degree in Finance from the University of Florida, married his wife, Debbie, and returned to Mt. Carmel to work for Dee Drilling Company. In his early years at Dee Drilling, J. worked as tank truck driver, roustabout, pumper, and was the first operator of a double drum when Dee Drilling became active in service work in 1983. It was this same year that a second yard on West Seventh Street was added and J. became President of the Company.

In 1992, Deecane, Inc., an oilfield rental and fishing tool company, was started to serve the needs of the industry in the Illinois Basin. Deecane exhibits at the annual IOGA meetings, and won "Most Original Exhibit" in 1994 and "Best Display of Product" in 1995.

Currently J. is First Vice President of the Illinois Oil and Gas Association and serves on the Executive Board. He continues the tradition of community involvement by serving as Past President of the Mt. Carmel Chamber of Commerce, two terms on the Area Industrial Development Committee and Past President, two terms as Parish Council President at St. Mary's Church, member of the Diocesan Finance Council, and as a Director at Security Bank and Trust. He is the father of three children, "Joseph" Roy Dee, IV, Erin, and Patrick.

Many changes have occurred in the oil industry in the last 50 years. We are proud of Dee Drilling's heritage and hope to continue serving the oil industry in the coming years with the same hard work and foresight displayed by our founders.