

Industry Pioneers

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Elsewhere in this issue is the obituary of Charles S. Matthews, coauthor of SPE's first monograph and the recipient of some of the Society's highest honors. The longtime Shell reservoir engineer and manager did pioneering work in well testing, enhanced recovery, tar sands, and geothermal energy.

His monograph, coauthored with D.G. Russell, *Pressure Buildup and Flow Tests in Wells*, was published in 1967 at a time when SPE was putting great effort into building up technical offerings to members and to the industry, and enhancing member services in general. In addition

to the monograph series, the 1960s saw the creation of the Distinguished Lecturer Program, continuing education courses, standing technical committees in the major disciplines, the *SPE Journal*, and the Videotape and Traveling Lecture Series. The standing committees improved the content of SPE's Annual Technical Conference and Exhibition (ATCE) by securing papers in the major technology fields.

Matthews' and Russell's monograph was followed by publication of *Hydraulic Fracturing* by G.C. Howard and C.R. Fast. Both monographs were widely praised for their technical accuracy and breadth, and quickly became required reading in both college petroleum engineering courses as well as continuing education courses. Fast, who was involved in the first hydraulic fracturing job in 1947 on the Klepper No. 1 well in the Hugoton field in Kansas and conducted the first commercial fracturing job in 1950 on Willis Wooley No. 7 in the East Texas field, died earlier this year as well. His obituary was in the July JPT.

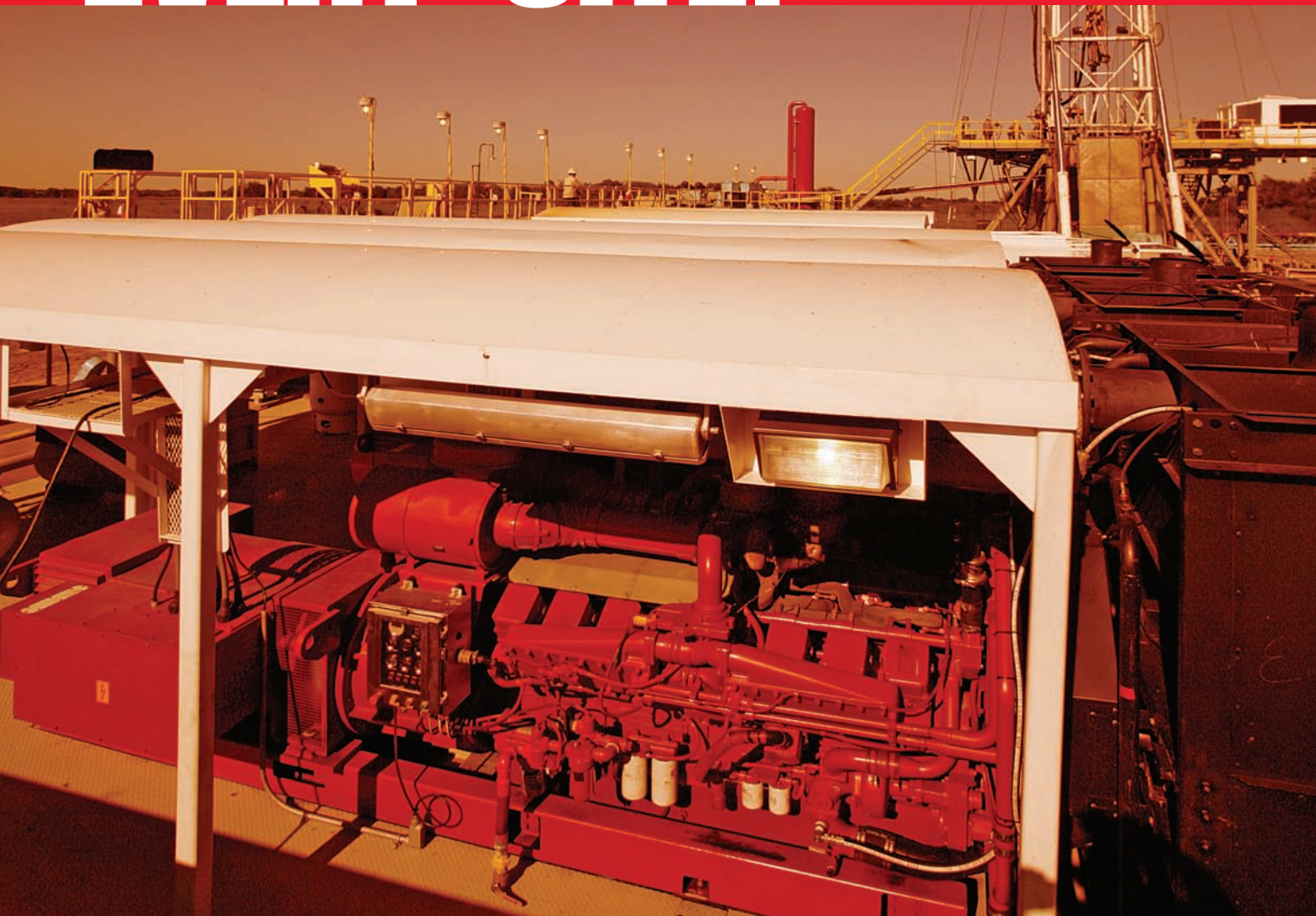
Howard and Fast were honored in a special event at ATCE 2 years ago called "The Legends of Hydraulic Fracturing." The reception paid tribute to several of the pioneers in the first generation of hydraulic fracturing technology. Similarly, at last month's ATCE, pioneers in the drilling field were honored as "JPT Legends of Drilling." Honorees included William C. Maurer, Martin Chenevert, William Rehm, Marvin Gearhart, and Leon Robinson.

SPE, and the industry at large, dole out lots of awards, recognizing excellence in technical innovation, competence, and the transfer of knowledge. That dissemination of technical knowledge is a crucial need today, given rising global demand projections and the increasing difficulty of finding and producing oil. As 2008 SPE President Bill Cobb pointed out during ATCE, the challenges facing the industry now appear to be as great as they ever have been. Even as alternative energy use grows, hydrocarbons are likely to be in great demand for at least another quarter- to half-century. Some projections show global oil demand during the next 25 years rising 50%, to more than 120 million BOPD. With current decline rates, that means the industry will have to double current production of 80 million BOPD in the next 25 years. That makes efforts to transfer technical knowledge as critical as ever, and it makes honoring those who have played a key role in developing and disseminating knowledge equally as important. **JPT**

JPT is always eager to hear from its readers. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact me at jdonnelly@spe.org or by phone at +1.713.779.9595 ext. 616.

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