



Robert O. Anderson
1917-2008
Inducted 1983

Robert Orville Anderson was born in Chicago in April 13, 1917 to Swedish immigrants, Hugo A. Anderson and Hilda Nelson. His father was an officer of the First National Bank of Chicago and was the first banker to lend money on oil in the ground, an unheard concept in the mid 1920's. Growing up, Anderson was enthralled by his father's stories about oil-patch wildcatters.

Anderson married Barbara Herrick Phelps of Chicago in 1939. They were blessed with seven children, five girls and two boys.

Anderson became active in the oil industry shortly after his graduation from the University of Chicago in 1939 with B.A. in economics. He worked for American Mineral Spirits in Chicago until 1941 when his father helped him and his brothers purchase the Malco refineries in Artesia, New Mexico. Over the next 15 years, Anderson bought and improved other refineries throughout the Southwest.

He drilled his first wildcat well in 1942, beginning an incredible run of bad luck in drilling. After 200 dry holes, Anderson's luck turned in 1957 with the discovery of the Empire Abo field east of Artesia. Geologists at the time estimated the field to produce sixty million barrels of oil. By late 1973, the field had produced it's one hundred millionth barrel of oil.

In 1963, Anderson merged his company into the Atlantic Refining Company of Philadelphia. Two years later, he was chairman and chief executive. He led the company through two mergers, first with Richfield Oil of Los Angeles, forming Arco, and the second with Sinclair Oil. Anderson presided over Arco's discovery of the great Prudhoe Bay field in Alaska. By the time Anderson left the company in 1986, Arco was the nation's sixth largest oil company.

Mr. Anderson was also president and owner of Lincoln County Livestock Company, chairman of the boards of the Cotter Corporation, The Aspen Company, Aspen, Colorado, and an officer or director of numerous other business, civic, charitable,

educational and cultural organizations. He also served as chairman of the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas from 1961-1965.

Robert O. Anderson's business endeavors included exploration, production, refining and marketing of oil, cattle raising operations, mining, feed mill manufacturing, steel fabricating and real estate and ski area development.