



Horace M. Bayer
1900-1975
Inducted 1985

Horace M. Bayer was born in LaCrosse, Wisconsin on January 8, 1900. As a youth he spent his free time canoeing, hunting and fishing. His love for the outdoors led him to the University of Wisconsin and then to the Oklahoma University School of Geology where he received his B.S. in geology in 1924. After graduation he went to work as a surface geologist for the Gulf Oil Corporation in Eastland, Texas beginning a career with Gulf Oil that would span nearly four decades.

While in Eastland, Bayer mapped what is now part of the prolific McElroy area of Crane and Upton counties. In 1927 he was promoted to zone geologist and transferred to Midland, Texas as an assistant to O.C. "Kip" Harper. When Harper left Gulf later in 1927, Bayer became head of the company's Midland Geological Department. He held that position until 1944 when he was transferred to Fort Worth to become chief geologist for Gulf's Fort Worth Division which covered West, Central and North Texas, as well as the Texas Panhandle. In 1959 Bayer was named Exploration Manager for the Fort Worth Division.

In December, 1953, Bayer was named Vice-President in charge of the division, which by that time also included the state of New Mexico. It was during this time that Bayer's division of Gulf yielded over one third of Gulf's national oil and gas production, with the Permian Basin holding most of that production.

Bayer was closely associated with Gulf's discovery wells in the Goldsmith Field in Ector County, Winkler County's Keystone Field and Andrews County's Triple N Field. His wildcat wells are shown on Permian Basin production maps and in counties from Hudspeth to Val Verde along the Rio Grande River. The first Ellenberger discovery in the Delaware Basin was Gulf's well that opened the Worsham-Bayer Ellenberger gas field in northeastern Reeves County, and was mapped by Bayer in his earlier years. Bayer retired from Gulf in 1960.

A dominant figure in the petroleum industry, Bayer believed that the Permian Basin an extraordinary oil and gas province. An aggressive wildcatter, he promoted Gulf's domestic exploration and production, channeling the corporation's budget into Permian Basin oil and gas fields.

Bayer was a member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists, American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, the West Texas Geological Society and the Fort Worth Geological Society.