



Jack E. Brown
1925 -
Inducted 1999

Jack E. Brown was born on August 16, 1925 in Brownsville, Texas to Dewey and Gracie May Frierson Brown. He graduated from Breckenridge High School in San Antonio in 1942 and three days later headed to Texas A & M to study aeronautical engineering. In 1942, a few days after his 18th birthday, Brown signed up for the military. After serving in the Pacific with the Army's first occupation troops in Japan, he returned to A & M in 1947, graduating with petroleum and mechanical engineering degrees in 1950.

There he met Mary Frances Van Fleet and they married in 1951. After graduation, Brown was sent to Sonora where he spent seven months drilling one well. From there he went to Abilene, roughnecking and drilling for Drilling & Exploration Company. He worked as an engineer for four years in Alice, Texas until 1955 when he relocated with Texaco to Venezuela for two years. The Browns returned to Texas and he joined J.E. Jones Drilling in 1957.

It was there that he met Cyril "Cy" Wagner. On April 1, 1962, Stoltz, Wagner and Brown was formed. Their business grew little by little and in 1964 their first major effort took place in the Bagley Field in New Mexico where a major oil company had lost interest in the field because of the excessive amounts of water produced with the oil. Led by Brown's problem-solving engineering, the enterprising group developed the Burro Pipeline to dispose of water. Quietly, the team began drilling as fast as they could. Brown would set pipe while Wagner prepared the geology for the next well. They averaged two wells per month, most paying out in eight months. The team drilled fifty wells between 1964 and 1969 before they hit their first dry hole.

In 1969, the three men exchanged most of their interest in the Bagley for a 25% equity position in Tipperary Corporation, to be run by Stoltz and control of the partnership was turned to Wagner and Brown. By 1970, Wagner and Brown had successfully developed the Highlight Field and Muddy Play in the Powder River Basin of Wyoming.

In 1975, the partnership initiated its largest drilling program ever on 30,000 acres in the Conger Field in Sterling and Glasscock counties. Wagner and Brown operated over 600 wells that have combined to produce more than 11 million barrels of oil and 265 billion cubic feet of gas.

Wagner and Brown built their company with acknowledged expertise in many areas beyond the oil and gas business. With more than 180 employees in its Midland and Houston exploration offices, Wagner and Brown, Ltd. and its energy related enterprises are involved in natural gas gathering and marketing, crude oil purchasing and reselling and pipeline development, construction and operation.