



## **Mack Chase    John R. "Johnny" Gray**

Inducted 2011

Both **Mack Chase** and **John R. "Johnny" Gray** with modest educations began their careers as contract pumpers. Born in 1931, and raised in Artesia, New Mexico, Mack Chase served the U.S. Army as an A & E mechanic. He started in the oil and gas industry working for his father and brother George. By 1968, he had established his own business, Mack Chase, Inc., operating eighteen to twenty-one rigs. In the 1950s, Johnny Gray worked as a drilling superintendent for C. H. Mahres Drilling. His work ethic as a driller established his reputation throughout the region. After moving to Eddy County, New Mexico, Gray was soon hired by National Drilling Company as a company pumper. He then established Gray Pumping Service which grew from a one-man operation to thirty employees pumping wells in three counties. Together Chase and Gray formed Marbob, named after their wives, in 1974, which offered pumping services and well servicing in Eddy County, New Mexico. Initially, Marbob purchased wells or leases with marginal production, reworked the wells and produced them. As the company grew, they began their own drilling and development program. As the first to discover the productive capacity of the Yeso Trend in Southeast New Mexico, Chase and Gray were the pioneers of the field that would become the largest oil producer in New Mexico. By 1991, Marbob properties were producing about 3,000 barrels per day. Soon after, Chase put his assets into a new company, Mack Energy Corporation, while Gray retained his assets with Marbob Energy Corporation. They then went onto build their respective companies, with combined production approaching 20,000 barrels per day. Gray passed away in 2001. Today, Mack Energy, with close to 800 employees, has many business pursuits from oil and gas production to farming and ranching. In 2007, Chase sold a large property to Concho Resources, and today remains one of its largest shareholders. Until recently, Marbob continued as a wholly-family owned business with fifty employees, including Johnny C. Gray as President and Douglas R. Chandler as Vice

President. Marbob was purchased by Concho in 2010. The combined value of the sales was more than \$2 billion. Together, Chase and Gray have also done much for others, with Artesia, New Mexico, a principal beneficiary, from its schools and athletic fields to downtown renovations to the health-care facilities. Through the Chase Foundation, Chase provides college scholarships to every qualified graduate of Artesia High School as well as children of employees. For the past four years, Chase also hosts wounded soldiers at his NX-Bar Ranch in Wyoming, providing the severely injured veterans the chance to enjoy the ranch and hunt despite physical handicaps.