



**Martin “Bitsy” Yates, III 2005**

August 12, 1912 – August 1985

The Yates Brothers, as they are called, could not stay away from the business in which they had been raised. In their own unique style, they continued and expanded Yates Petroleum. Harvey, Martin II, better known as “Bitsy,” Saint Clair Peyton, better known as “S.P.” and John have pioneered their own oil ventures, wildcatting and risk-taking enterprises while working for the collective interests of the parent company started by their father, Martin Yates Jr., in the early 1920’s.

They have developed some of New Mexico’s largest, most significant fields and built a solid reputation for leadership in the petroleum industry. Their discoveries include the Grayburg-Jackson field, Loco Hills, Dagger Daw, Empire Abo, Eagle Creek, Penasco Draw, Pecos Slope Abo and dozens of Morrow gas fields. Their search for oil and gas has taken them into Texas, the Rocky Mountain states, offshore and overseas.

The Brothers individual awards and accomplishments are a testament to their father’s undying spirit and optimism. They and their family members have been the force behind Yates Petroleum and other Yates’ companies, guiding their future beyond Artesia’s city limits and New Mexico’s state boundaries to incorporate a world of opportunities. The Yates’ lives have always been filled with uncommon experiences. From surviving a tornado to hanging on against fierce winds of regulatory adversity, the Yates have stood together. Each son inherited the Yates’ dominant characteristic – persistence mixed with a genetic defect – a love for the oil business.

Martin “Bitsy” Yates, III was born in Mexico, Missouri on August 12, 1912. He attended the University of Texas in Austin as a law student before returning to the oil business in Artesia. His first wildcat venture with his father and Ira C. Dixon resulted in the discovery of the Loco Hills Field. He built a road by hand to the drill site and his discovery sparked an unprecedented drilling boom.

Bitsy worked with S.P. as a roustabout at Illinois Camp and the two became known for pulling rods out of a wall at an alarming rate. When the two later became successful independent operators, they were known as the Gold Dust Twins. He was an optimist and helped bridge the gap between the drillers and mud loggers in the field and employees in the office. During the mid-80s oil bust, Bitsy opted to drill about 100 wells keeping many rig hands working through lean times.

Bitsy started MYCO Industries, his own oil and gas entity in Artesia, while remaining a part of Yates Petroleum. He also was involved with Basset-Birney Oil Corporation, Dixon and Yates, Nix Oil Co., Witherspoon and Yates Oil.

His professional affiliations included Independent Petroleum Association of America and New Mexico Amigos. Many described him as a contagious optimist who was civic minded and supportive of his employees. He had a great sense of humor and always had a joke to tell. Bitsy died in August 1985.