

REMEMBER WHEN

A look back at the nation's oil & gas industry.



The nation's, as well as Oklahoma's, oil and gas industry is rich in history. As part of a new partnership with the American Oil & Gas Historical Society (AOGHS), Exploring Energy will bring you energy stories from the past in each publication. Also catch "Remember When Wednesday" each fourth Wednesday of the month with AOGHS Executive Director Bruce Wells joining the discussion on KECO 96.5's Exploring Energy show from 8 to 9 a.m. and on 102.3 KWDQ, sponsored by Big Chief Plant Services. For more articles, photos and features, or to support AOGHS, visit www.aoghs.org.

Meet Joe Roughneck

BY BRUCE WELLS
American Oil and Gas
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Joe Roughneck's battered mug first appeared as the advertising face of an oilfield tubular goods manufacturer before becoming an industry award in 1955. His bust has been presented to top independent oil and gas company executives, dedicated in parks by Texas governors, displayed at oil museums, and featured in newspaper and magazine articles.

A bronze bust of Joe Roughneck is annually presented as the petroleum industry's "Chief Roughneck Award" honoring an independent producer whose character represents the highest business ideal. Joe symbolizes the "leadership and integrity of individuals who have made a lasting impression on the energy industry."

Texas artist Torg Thompson created Joe Roughneck, who began life in the 1950s as an advertisement for Lone Star Steel Company, now U.S. Steel Tubular Products, a subsidiary of United States Steel Corp. The character became so popular it was adopted by the industry, prompting the company to declare, "Joe doesn't belong to us anymore. He's as universal as a rotary rig."

Joe's oil-patch career started on the sketch pad of Thompson, best known for his 124-by-20-foot mural, "Miracle at Pentecost," at the Biblical Arts Center in Dallas (the mural was destroyed by fire in 2005). For the ad campaign commis-



A Joe Roughneck bust greets visitors outside the East Texas Oil Museum in Kilgore, Texas.

sioned by Lone Star Steel, Thompson portrayed Joe with the countenance of a man who had spent long hours working in oilfields.

"Joe's jaw was squarely set to denote determination, his nose flattened as a souvenir of the rollicking life of a boom town. His eyes indicate the kindness and generosity of his breed. His mouth wore the trace of a smile, but there was a quizzical expression of one who had to see to believe," declares the Depot Museum in Henderson, Texas. "When the completed picture came into being on canvas, there was no doubt Joe was the heart of the oil patch," adds the museum. Today, Joe is the mascot of the White Oak Roughnecks, a high school football team west of Longview, Texas. He also can be seen in petroleum clubs, where he serves as a symbol "to recognize the pioneers of yesterday and today whose perseverance and courage made our nation the world's leader in petroleum."

The first Joe Rough-

neck monument was erected in March 1957 in Joinerville, Texas. It was dedicated to the pioneers of the Great East Texas oilfield.

Nearby is the 1930 discovery well, Daisy Bradford No. 3, which continues to pump oil for the Hunt Oil Company of Dallas. The 140,000-acre oilfield was discovered by Columbus "Dad" Joiner and H.L. Hunt.

Also dedicated in 1957, a Joe Roughneck monument north of Houston in Conroe celebrates the discovery of a 19,000-acre field discovered by George Strake in 1931, "and others who envisioned an empire, dared to seek it, and discovered the Conroe oilfield."

Texas Gov. Preston Smith dedicated another monument in Boonsville in 1970, the anniversary of a 1945 natural gas discovery well that produced 2.5 billion cubic feet of natural gas in its first 20 years. "Dynamic symbol of the petroleum industry is Joe Roughneck, who is hereby appointed guardian of this memorial commissioned by the Wise County Roughnecks Club," the Boonsville plaque notes.

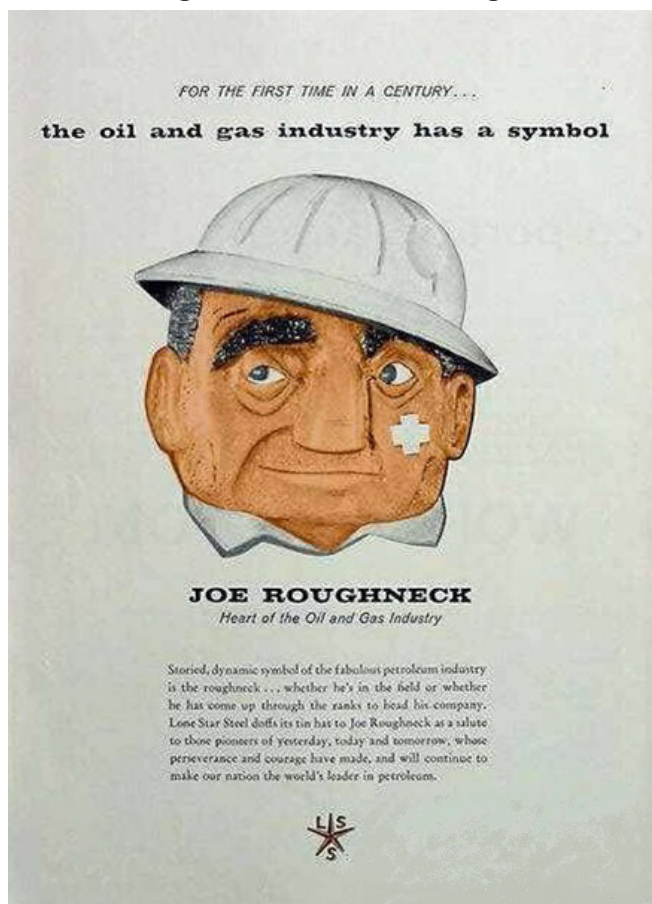
A Joe Roughneck from 1986 today greets visitors to the East Texas Oil Museum in Kilgore. He celebrates the giant oilfield's "boomers" of the 1930s, when Kilgore had the densest number of oil wells in the entire world.

The first recipient of a bronze bust of Joe was independent producer R.E. "Bob" Smith, who received Lone Star Steel's Chief Roughneck

Award in 1955 during the annual meeting of the Independent Petroleum Association of America.

On November 10, during the latest IPAA meeting, a U.S. Steel senior vice president

presented the 2017 Chief Roughneck Award to Ryan M. Lance, CEO of ConocoPhillips. Lance accepted the 62nd bronze bust of Joe, who still symbolizes the best of America's oil patch.



Lone Star Steel Company ads of the 1950s featured the "Heart of the Oil and Gas Industry."



Joe's first monument was erected in 1957, "to the pioneers of the Great East Texas oilfield."

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