

# APEA Yearbook 2008 Registration

By Jane Mardell, APEA Business Manager

I am writing this article this year to make sure you understand the procedures for inclusion in the 2008 Yearbook.

In order to ensure that your details are included in the Yearbook it is essential that you complete the registration form and return it to the APEA office. I register all forms received on the membership database against the members' name.

As shown on the form enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin, your Registration Form must be returned to the APEA office for your details to be included by **1st April**. This ensures that the information in the Yearbook is correct.

Even if you do not wish to advertise in the Yearbook, to be included in the

Classified and Directory pages you should complete the form as follows:

1. Check your contact details are correct on the form and that these are the contact details that you wish to be included into the Yearbook. If you wish to change them please amend the form. As an APEA member you receive one free 'Classified' entry.

2. Complete the Directory table. This contains a list of the Directories that will be included in the Yearbook.

Please tick the box next to the Directory listing that is relevant for your business. You receive one free box. Additional boxes are charged @ £26.00 plus VAT.

3. If you have ticked additional

'Directory' boxes, complete the payment box at the bottom of the form.

4. Fax or post the form to the APEA office by 1st April 2007. This enables the production of the Yearbook in time for Autumn delivery.

I will then record the details from Registration forms received.

If you have any queries or need another form or a advertising booking form please do not hesitate to contact me at the APEA office on 0845 603 5507 or by email at [admin@apea.org.uk](mailto:admin@apea.org.uk)

Additional forms can be downloaded from the APEA website on the Publications page at [www.apea.org.uk](http://www.apea.org.uk)

## A History of Petrol Filling Stations - Part One The Coming of "Rock Oil"

By Brian Baker

*"Then there was the matter of the \$526.08"*

To pinpoint exactly when the petroleum downstream industry started is like asking "When did man first start to walk?" Simply we do not know but there are several incidents that occurred within a few years of each other to give us some insight as to when it all started.

Oil, it is said, has been with us for at least 3,000 years when reports of a black 'tar-like' substance oozed its way through the rocky areas of the Egyptian city known as Hit (where the ancient civilisation known as the "Hittites" resided on the banks of the River Nile) They and indeed the other ancient civilisations of both the Chinese and Greek have a black oily substance recorded in the annals of their respective histories and applied the substance to the skin as it seemed at the time that it had healing properties and helped deal with such ailments as back pain, headaches, diarrhoea, stomach upsets and skin disorders. In

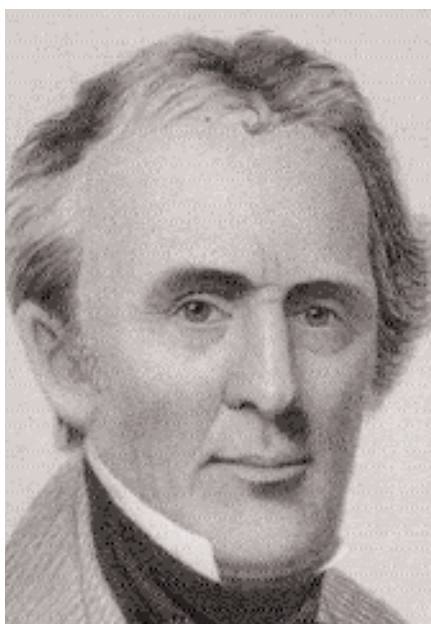
fact it was the Greeks that first recognised that the use of Oil could be used in warfare to bring down their enemies in battle by either tipping it hot or on fire or catapulting it over considerable distances.

Indeed the word petroleum never existed until the middle of the 1850's when scientists coined the phrase from the words "Petra" which is Greek for "Rock" and "Oleum" that is Latin word for 'Oil'. It was applied in the same sense as a codeword, much like we use acronyms or letters to identify a particular item.

You will have noticed the saying at the head of this article "Then there was the matter of the \$578" This comes from the opening words of book known as "The Prize – The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power" written by Daniel Yergin in 1991, that tells the story of the Oil Companies that dominated the world as well as a short history on the coming of petroleum and its powerful use as a political and aggressive tool for bargaining on the world stage.

The sum mentioned is referring to an unsettled bill for a report conducted by a Professor Benjamin Silliman Jr, a chemist from Yale University who undertook private appointments in between earning his modest salary at the University

Silliman (1779-1864) actually developed a technique to fractionate



Professor Benjamin Silliman Jr

petroleum. which is a method of distillation. Silliman's report, though brief was summarised to say that the sample of "Rock Oil" he had been handed was indeed valuable and could rival the lighting fuels in common use at the time which was Whale Oil.

The Whale Oil used extensively at that time smoked considerably and offered a poor light. The first petroleum oils used before fractionalisation/distillation was invented offered a brighter light but were found to be more dangerous and caused many fires. It was only after the Scientists learned to separate the different "fractions" to use the higher flash point oils that petroleum (or Kerosene as it became known) as a fuel for lamps became successful. The same technique was used a generation later after the combustion engine was invented when the lower flash products were needed.

The sample that Silliman was supplied with came from an area in North West Pennsylvania in the close proximity of a small town known as Titusville. The Town itself was very close to a locally named area referred to as "Oil Creek" that which was known for the black sticky and odorous liquid that seeped through the rocks and locals applied rags to soak it up and squeeze into small wooden barrels.

We do however have to refer to the mastermind behind the commissioning of Silliman's report, George Bissell, an Industrialist (1821-1884) who had originally observed the primitive oil gathering industry in Titusville. After



George Bissell

Silliman's report in 1855, he founded the Pennsylvania Rock Oil Company in 1856 with a colleague, James Townsend, a Merchant Banker and began selling oil as a fuel for lamps.

After seeing pictures of a derrick drilling for salt, Bissell conceived the idea of drilling for oil, rather than mining it. At the time such an idea was thought ludicrous but the technique was used

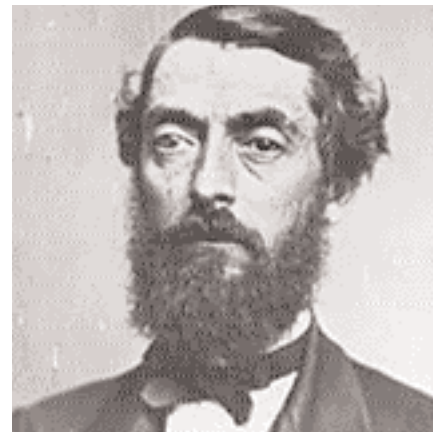


Drake's Oil Well

eventually and on Saturday 27 August 1859 on a far at Titusville, Pennsylvania, oil was struck at a depth of 69 feet (about 21 metres) Bissell invested heavily from this day on and went onto become known as the father of the Oil Industry.

Curiously, the whole sequence of events was observed by the local tribe of Indians, known as the "Seneca" which is why Rock Oil was also known as "Seneca Oil" and their Chief's name? ....Chief Red Jacket!

Returning now to a defining moment in our history is man called "Colonel" Edwin Drake (1819-1880), who used the military title to impress the backwoodsmen of the area as he was never in the army but by appearance had a strange bearing and likeness to Abraham Lincoln, the US President of the day. Drake was a Railroad Conductor, suffered poor health and was unemployed at the time. He bordered on being an eccentric and drank heavily and was appointed by



Colonel Edwin Drake

George Bissell to commence the drilling process in the search for Rock Oil in 1856. Drake recruited a local Blacksmith, "Uncle" Billy Smith to assist him and they commenced the slow process in 1858. Smith also employed his 15 year-old son, Samuel and his daughter, Margaret Jane to assist. Their pay was just \$2.50 per day for all three of them.

After a year there were no signs of oil and funds were running too low to continue drilling. The other director of the Pennsylvanian Rock Oil Company, James Townsend had written to Drake a few days earlier asking him to stop the exploration but by the Saturday (27th August 1859) the letter had not arrived and overnight a gusher from Drake's well was met in the morning of the following day with great jubilation and relief.

Word quickly spread and within 3 years there were literally hundreds of wells all across Pennsylvania and Ohio that started the "Black Gold Rush". A rival for whale oil had been found and within a couple of years, markets were being opened up beyond the USA.

So our story begins. We had the fuel before its actual longer and established use became known and it was not until the discovery of gas, then electricity that its use as a major means of lighting ceased. The invention of the combustion engine introduced a new use for petroleum and from 1880 to the beginning of World War 1 would see a phenomenal rise in the use and demand for oil, a matter that will; be progressed in the next edition of the Bulletin.