

Tell Ertl Oil Shale Repository

Arthur Lakes Library

Colorado School of Mines

Thomas N. Beard Collection

Background Information

Thomas N. Beard

Thomas N. Beard is a petroleum geologist whose career focused on energy -oil exploration, oil shale, and synthetic fuels. His interest in oil shale began while a student at Ohio State where one of his professors was Dr. Tell Ertl. Although a major part of Tom's career focused on Shell Oil and energy exploration in the Rockies, a large portion of his career was spent as an independent consultant. At Shell, Tom developed an In Situ method for obtaining shale oil and was named as inventor on numerous U. S. patents. As a consultant Tom had numerous clients including the Naval Oil Shale Reserves, the Oil Shale lease Tract Cob, and numerous foreign oil shale interests. Tom worked closely with John Ward Smith, from the Laramie Research Center, for many years and they co-authored numerous papers on oil shale geology. Upon Ward's death, Tom arranged to have Ward's papers donated to the Arthur Lakes Library at the Colorado School of Mines where they became the foundation of the Tell Ertl Oil Shale Repository.

The Thomas N. Beard Collection

Most of the Beard collection consists of reports, reprints, and government documents. The Thomas N. Beard Collection in the Tell Ertl Oil Shale Repository reflects Tom's career. Most of the documents in the collection focus on oil shale geology. A small portion of the Beard Collection contains some of Shell Oil's oil shale patents many of them listing Thomas N. Beard as the inventor. Most of the documents in the Thomas N. Beard Collection deal directly with oil shale in the Piceance Basin although there are numerous documents focused on the Uinta Basin in Utah and the Washakie Basin in Wyoming, the saline minerals in oil shale and oil shales throughout the United States. Archive boxes containing information on the Naval Oil Shale Reserves, the Cob Oil Shale Lease Tract, and foreign oil shales reflect Tom's consulting career in oil shale.

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