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MISSISSIPPI GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY *eBulletin*



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~ PRESIDENT'S LETTER ~
Tony Stuart



Greetings,

Personally, I'm getting tired of cold weather. It's time to fish a little now, if the weather will cooperate.

As usual, we had a busy month in March. As most of you already know, Harry Spooner was inducted as our newest honorary member. Congratulations, Harry.

We also enjoyed a superb Penn and Teller Smackover presentation by Larry Baria and Ezat Heydari. These guys are doing some ground-breaking work on the Smackover in spite of Larry's coiffure issues. Thanks for the presentation Larry and Ezat, we look forward to more in the future.

We had anticipated a larger than normal crowd, but this one filled the place up to overflowing. I'm sorry that we ran out of room. We've had several well attended meetings this year, and I would like to thank all who came. Next time we expect a large crowd, we'll make better arrangements to accommodate everyone.

The U.S. Oil & Gas Technology Summit Conference and Prospect Exposition will take place in Natchez on April 6-8. The chairman, Brent Adkinson, handed out brochures at the March meeting. If you need more information, call 601-442-5033, or visit their website at www.usogexpo.com.

This month, we'll have our annual awards day and present the Boland scholarships. As usual, Dave Cate and the rest of the Boland committee have worked hard to identify and evaluate the candidates. From what I have seen of the resumes, we have an outstanding group of students this year. I encourage you to come to the meeting and meet the recipients. Some of these kids will be our replacements.

Until next month,
Tony

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**Crystal Cave of the Giants - Discovery
of the Largest Crystals on Earth**

MGS Boland Scholarship Fund

MGS Honorary Members

Members in good standing.

Jay Leno

MGS Membership Application

MGS Advertising Notice

MGS MEETING SCHEDULE

When	What	Where
September 20, 2007	Fall BBQ	Jackson Yacht Club
October 11, 2007	Jim Mulligan & Bob Schellhorn Denbury Resources – Introduction to Lower Tuscaloosa Geology, Why Seismic Matters, “Or does it”?	River Hills
November 8, 2007	Rick Taylor – Inconvenient Evidence, Global Warming Goes On Ice	River Hills
December 8, 2007	MAPL / MGS Christmas Party	Colonial Country Club
January 10, 2008	Michael Geffert, Greystone Oil & Gas The Revitalization of Sligo Field	River Hills
February 14, 2008	Larry Hall, Baker Hughes Optimization of Core Quality	River Hills
March 13, 2008	Larry Baria and Ezat Heydari – A Regional Erosion Surface and its Effect on the Smackover Reservoir-Seal	River Hills
April 10, 2008	Honors Meeting: Boland Scholarships	River Hills
May 12, 2008	Spring Fling	Jackson Yacht Club

LOOKING FOR A NEW JOB OPPORTUNITY?

The State Personnel Board is currently advertising for a Geologist. For additional information please visit their web site at: www.spb.state.ms.us and click the link titled "Active Recruitment List" and scroll down to the announced vacancy - Geologist I. This position, as currently offered, requires that you must be a Registered Professional Geologist.

If you qualify and have an interest in this position, contact the State Personnel Board for instructions on how to apply. Closing date for this position is April 30, 2008 - so act quickly.

I just read an article on the dangers of heavy drinking....

Scared the s**t out of me.

So that's it!

After today, no more reading.

Submitted by Phil Cook

OFFICERS MEETINGS

September 4, 2007

October 3, 2007

November 7, 2007

December 4, 2007

January 8, 2008

February 6, 2008

March 4, 2008

April 1, 2008

May 6, 2008

Harry Vernon Spooner
Honorary Member
Mississippi Geological Society
March 13, 2008

Harry Vernon Spooner was born in the middle of a giant Arkansas oil field – The Stephens Field – in 1932. At the age of 17, he worked in the oil field as a roustabout and a derrick hand. He always knew he wanted to be a geologist. Harry graduated from Oklahoma University with a Bachelor of Science and completed a Masters Degree in Geology in 1955. After graduation, he began his career with the California Company in Harvey, Louisiana. He moved to Shreveport with Colorado Oil and Gas Corporation in 1957 and then to Houston in 1959.

He became an independent in 1963, moving to Monroe, Louisiana to work the Tuscaloosa and Wilcox in Northeast Louisiana and the lower Cretaceous/Smackover trends in South Arkansas. He drilled 40 prospects in these trends and had discoveries in Louisiana at Swim Lake, Clarks, Standard, North Standard, Rabbit Branch and North Rabbit Branch Fields.

Harry joined Pruet and Hughes Company in Jackson as Exploration Manager in 1971. During his career with Pruet and Hughes, the company drilled 87 exploratory wells in which he had a specific involvement with discoveries at Barrytown, North Choctaw Ridge, Sugar Ridge, Mill Creek, Silas, Womack Hill, Mount Olive, Fourmile Creek and Splunge Fields. How about this direct quote from Dudley Hughes, renowned geologist and oil finder. He said quote, “Harry is the best geologist I have ever worked with, before or since.”

In 1976, Harry formed his own company with Dudley Hughes and Chesley Pruet as partners. Since that time, he has been primarily involved in exploration in the Jurassic and Lower Cretaceous in Mississippi and Alabama.

In the past 32 years, Harry has helped generate plays which resulted in the discovery of many new fields or new pool wildcats. These wildcats found production at South Kraemer, Stave Creek, Welcome Home, East Sardis Church, Satartia, Monticello, Grange, Waldrup, East Flora and Hickory Branch.

In addition, he and his partners generated plays that resulted in discoveries in Alabama, namely Sizemore Creek, Catawba Springs, Hall Creek, Foshee, West Foshee, Ocean Forest, Jones Mill and new field plays at Pollard Field.

More recently, Harry pioneered the first Coal Bed Methane play in Louisiana resulting in the finding and development of Riverton Field which at this time has 29 completed wells.

With each success, Harry has gained the respect of all us involved in exploration and production in this area. He is regarded among his peers as an exceptional businessman and as the consummate explorationist. In 1992, Harry was presented with Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association's "Wildcater of the Year" award. Indeed, his wildcatting spirit today is undiminished.

Harry has been a member-in-good-standing of the Mississippi Geological Society for 37 years. He served as president of the Mississippi Geological Society in 1987-1988. He is an Emeritus Member of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists. He is a member of the Independent Petroleum Association of America, and he is a Board Member and member of the Executive Committee of the U.S. Oil and Gas Association. He is also a member of MIPRO. Harry is a Registered Professional Geologist in Arkansas, Alabama and Mississippi.

A significant publication by Harry titled, "Basal Tuscaloosa Sediment of East Central Louisiana" won the President's Award by American Association of Petroleum Geologists. His paper, "Fourmile Creek and Splunge Fields of the Black Warrior Basin, Monroe County, Mississippi," was published in the Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies.

Harry, like most geologists, is an avid outdoorsman and nature lover. He went to Africa in 1985 to photograph animals in the wild. Some of these photographs are displayed on the wall at his office. He has made numerous pack trips into the wilderness areas of the Rocky Mountains with family and friends.

In the 90's, Harry's successes allowed him to begin to "smell the roses" a bit. He purchased a condominium in Crested Butte, Colorado, so he could pursue a sport he had fallen in love with – fly fishing. Later, he moved up to Montana, where, he told me, the fly-fishing was better. He spends at least three months every year in Bozeman, Montana.

Harry met Jewel, his wife-to-be, during their college days, and they are the parents of 2 sons, Michael and Wade.

It is a special privilege to recognize Harry Vernon Spooner as Honorary Member of the Mississippi Geological Society where he joins an impressive list of Honorary Members of the Society.

Congratulations, Harry. The MGS is proud of your accomplishments.

AAPG OUTSTANDING EXPLORER AWARD*

Dudley J. Hughes

Citation: To Dudley J. Hughes, scientist, gentleman, gifted oil finder, whose unique understanding of petroleum geology was clearly ahead of his time and his peers.

“The search for petroleum is a fascinating business. Once caught in its web, few are ever content with any other lifelong occupation,” (excerpt from *Oil in the Deep South, A History of the Oil Business in Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, 1859-1945*, published in 1993 by Dudley J. Hughes).

Dudley could just as well have been describing his own passion for the search for petroleum. This soft-spoken, unassuming gentleman has, by any measure, been the dominant oil finder in the southeastern states since he came to prominence in the early 1960s. Subsequent drilling and the application of 3-D seismic have largely proven. Dudley’s early theories of how structures are formed and how hydrocarbons are trapped in the subsurface. He has put his own money into his geologic concepts and innovations and has been richly rewarded for it. Dudley has been a willing teacher and many who have listened and learned from him have also had success.

This remarkable oil finder has been involved in the discovery and development of 65 oil and gas fields from 1961-2006. Thirty-seven of these fields have produced more than 1 million barrels of oil and 5 Bcf of gas. The significance of Dudley’s discoveries is highlighted by the number of fields found and established in Alabama and Mississippi after he made the initial discovery for the play. Many explorationists have used the play concepts he developed.

Dudley has been recognized with numerous honors for his remarkable contributions to the field of petroleum geology. Among them: in 1971, he was elected to membership in the All American Wildcatters; in 1994, he was presented with the lifetime achievement award from the Alabama Oil and Gas Board in recognition of his pioneering success in the Smackover of Alabama; in 1997, Texas A&M University honored Dudley with the Geosciences and Earth Resources Distinguished Achievement Award and in 2002, Dudley was appointed to the National Petroleum Council.

Dudley’s interest in science goes beyond geology. His studies and publications have delved deeply into subjects such as our atmosphere and the errors associated with the now popular global warming theory. In 1998, he published *A Geologic Reinterpretation of the Earth’s Atmospheric History, Inferring a Major Role by CO₂*.

If a geologist finds a large oil field, that might be considered luck, two large oil fields, possibly incredible luck. As many significant discoveries as Dudley has made is beyond luck. He is a genetically gifted oil finder. The proof: his identical twin brother, Dan, also is an extremely successful oil finder.

In the Deep South and beyond, the name of Dudley Hughes is legend.

—Robert Schneeflock

—Ernest A. Mancini

** This award will be presented to Dudley on April 20th at the annual AAPG Convention in San Antonio, Texas.*

Crystal Cave of the Giants - Discovery of the Largest Crystals on Earth

Richard D. Fisher

Photographer/Explorer
Crystal Cave of the Giants

In what has proved to be the discovery of the largest known crystals on earth, work is underway to document and preserve this historic find. While some minor damage has already occurred in the primary cave and secondary cavern, called Cave of Dreams, iron doors have been installed by the Peñoles company to prevent damage to the giant, magnificent crystals. While investigations are underway the mine is closed, but with the newly installed lighting system, it is expected to open in the fall 2001.

Found deep in a mine in southern Chihuahua Mexico, these crystals were formed in a natural cave totally enclosed in bedrock. When I first stepped into the cavern it was like walking into the Land of the Giants. I have often admired crystal geodes held in my hand, but when photographing these unique natural structures it was almost impossible to get any sense of scale. This is a geode full of spectacular crystals as tall as pine trees, and in some cases greater in circumference. They have formed beautiful crystals that are a translucent gold and silver in color, and come in many incredible forms and shapes. Some of the largest are essentially columnar in shape and stand thirty to fifty feet high and three to four feet in diameter. Many of the smaller examples



are four to six feet in circumference, have many incredible geometrical shapes, and probably weigh in excess of ten tons. The columnar pillars are at first the most striking shape, but later I noticed there were thousands of "sharks teeth" up to three feet high placed row upon row and dispersed at odd angles throughout the caverns. While some of the crystals are attached to the ceiling walls and floors of the cave as might be expected, some exist in great masses of spikes and almost float in air. These crystals seem to defy gravity, as they must weigh several tons.



The crystal cavern was discovered within the same limestone body that hosts the silver-zinc-lead ore bodies exploited by the mine. The cavern was probably dissolved by the same hydrothermal fluids that deposited the metals with the gypsum being crystallized during the waning stages of mineralization. The crystals probably grew relatively quickly to their im-



mense size within a completely liquid-filled cavern. As a professional photographer who specializes in environmentally difficult, narrow and wet canyons worldwide, it was almost impossible to obtain clear photographs even using every trick and technique I know, because of the extreme ambient environment. These crystals are probably stable, as the temperature in the cave is over 150 degrees Fahrenheit with 100% humidity. In other words, these structures are enveloped in steam. As a photographer used to working in dark and dangerous environments, this experience was unique. A human can only function in this environment for six to ten minutes before severe loss of mental functions occurs. I was so excited while photographing the crystals that I really had to focus and concentrate intensely on getting back out the door, which was perhaps only thirty to forty feet away.

The Naica mine was first discovered by early prospectors in 1794 south of Chihuahua City. They struck a vein of silver at the base of a range of hills called Naica by the Tarahumara Indians. The origin in the Tarahumara language seems to mean "a shady place". Perhaps here in the small canyon there was a grove of trees tucked away by a small canyon spring.





From the discovery until about 1900, the primary interest was silver and gold. Around 1900 large-scale mining began as zinc and lead became more valuable.

During the Mexican Revolution the mine was producing a great deal of wealth. Revolutionary troops entered the town and demanded money from the owners. One of them was assassinated when he refused to pay, causing the mine to shut down from 1911 to 1922.

Just before the mine was closed, the famous Cave of Swords was discovered at a depth of 400 feet. Due to the incredible crystals, it was decided to try to preserve this cave. While many of the crystals have been collected, this is still a fascinating cave to visit. In one part there are so

many crystals on one of the walls, they appear to be like an underwater reef moving in a gentle undulating motion in an ocean current.

In April 2000, brothers Juan and Pedro Sanchez were drilling a new tunnel when they made a truly spectacular discovery. While Naica miners are accustomed to finding crystals, Juan and Pedro were absolutely amazed by the cavern that they found. The brothers immediately informed the engineer in charge, Roberto Gonzalez. Ing. Gonzalez realized that they had discovered a natural treasure and quickly rerouted the tunnel. During this phase some damage was done as several miners tried to remove pieces of the megacrystals, so the mining company soon installed an iron door to protect the find. Later, one of the workers, with the intention of stealing crystals, managed to get in through a narrow hole. He tried to take some plastic bags filled with fresh air inside, but the strategy didn't work. He lost consciousness and later was found thoroughly baked.



When entering the cave our group is issued helmets, lanterns, rubber boots, and gloves. We are then driven by truck into the main mining tunnel called Rampa Sn. Francisco. While the vertical drop is approximately 1000 feet, the drive is almost a half mile long. The heat steadily increases and the ladies could be observed to begin "glowing". The truck stops in front of a concrete wall with a steel door. I start working frantically to put the final touches on my pre-prepared camera outfit. I usually have four separate camera units, but they must be padded for the trip and then receive a last minute detail check. Every single item is preset before entering the cavern, as every moment inside is precious and concentration must be focused strictly on the crystals and people. The photographic machinery must work perfectly as the heat almost immediately begins to impair brain function.

At the end of the tunnel there are three or four steps into the aperture of the cavern itself. It is in this short tunnel that I move very quickly and concentrate on focusing my mind and that of my group on the task of photography. In this short distance the temperature and humidity goes from being uncomfortably warm to literally a blast furnace. Almost immediately our clothing is so soaked in sweat that it becomes heavy and starts to slide off our bodies. On my first trip it was really hard to keep my pants up, which was a new and unexpected experience.

Momentarily, the penetrating heat is forgotten as the crystals pop into view on the other side of the newly named "Eye of the Queen". The entire panorama is now lighted and the cavern has a depth and impressive cathedral-like appearance that was not visible on earlier trips with just our headlamps.

When inside the great cathedral of crystals, the pressure of intense heat makes my feelings run up and down the emotional scale from sheer religious awe to outright panic. The ladies are no longer "glowing" and indeed are "red hot". When I'm done working after three trips into the great cavern, my friends almost have to carry me out. We want to see more, but physically cannot. When the experience is over there is a great relief, but all we can think about is when can we go back in.

When I talk to professional geologists about crystals they tell me that these natural forms are incredibly complex, yet so simple. They have a magical or metaphysical personality independent of their chemical structures. These geologists have explained to me that there is a magma chamber two to three miles below the mountain and that heat from this compressed lava travels through the faults up into the area of the mine. Super heated fluids carry the minerals the miners are seeking as well as form the crystals. The mine is ventilated; otherwise, it could not be worked. Some parts, however, are not air-conditioned, such as the Cave of the Crystals, and there you feel the heat from the magma deep below.

When describing the crystal formation the geologists' eyes light up with a special emotional fascination. They tell how the fluids travel along the Naica fault, enter voids in the bedrock, and then form entirely natural structures that are not easily explained by science.

I have been told that the mining company was afraid to tunnel through the Naica fault for fear of flooding the entire mine. In April 2000, the company became confident that the water table on the other side of the fault had been lowered sufficiently to drill. When they did this, it is almost as if a magical veil of reality was breached and an entirely new world was discovered. Two caverns filled with the Earth's largest crystals were immediately revealed. More discoveries are expected to be made in this magical kingdom of intense natural beauty.

Selenite, the gypsum crystal, named after the Greek goddess of the moon due to its soft white light, is said to have many metaphysical and healing benefits. Selenite powder has been used cosmetically for thousands of years to enhance one's natural beauty. It is believed that this crystal assists with mental focus, growth, luck, immunity, and soothes the emotions. It is unquestionably magical that the cool white rays of moonlight can originate deep underground in a black chamber that is, at least in my perception, white hot.

MGS BOLAND SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The Society's L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund is open to donations (tax deductible) year round. Your contribution will help the Society recognize and reward outstanding earth science students at its annual Honors Day meeting in April, 2008. Since inception in 1980, the Society has honored 108 students with the Boland Award.

If you would like to contribute, please contact Dave Cate at 601-718-9397 or mail your check (L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund) to him at 217 W. Capitol St., Jackson, MS 39201.

The MGS gratefully acknowledges the following contributors to the L. F. Boland Scholarship Fund for the 2007-2008 year:

Dave Cate	Jim Furrh, Jr.,
Maurice Meylan	Jim Michael
Donnie Lambert	George Puckett
Bob Schneeflock	James Starnes
Tony Stuart	Mark Teague

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paid their "07-"08
dues and are
members in good
standing.**

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(H) = Honorary Member
(O) = Officer

Something to think about in an election year as we listen to political promises:

About the time our original thirteen states adopted their new constitution in 1787, Alexander Tyler, a Scottish history professor at the University of Edinburgh, had this to say about the fall of the Athenian Republic some 2,000 years earlier:

"A democracy is always temporary in nature; it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government."

"A democracy will continue to exist up until the time that voters discover they can vote themselves generous gifts from the public treasury."

"From that moment on, the majority always vote for the candidates who promise the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse due to loose fiscal policy, which is always followed by a dictatorship."

"The average age of the world's greatest civilizations from the beginning of history, has been about 200 years"

"During those 200 years, those nations always progressed through the following sequence:

1. from bondage to spiritual faith;
2. from spiritual faith to great courage;
3. from courage to liberty;
4. from liberty to abundance;
5. from abundance to complacency;
6. from complacency to apathy;
7. from apathy to dependence;
8. From dependence back into bondage"

Let's see now, we're at about number

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Jay Leno wrote this; it's the Jay Leno we don't often see....

"The other day I was reading news week magazine and came across some poll data I found rather hard to believe. It must be true, given the source, right?

The Newsweek poll alleges that 67 percent of Americans are unhappy with the direction the country is headed, and 69 percent of the country is unhappy with the performance of the President. In essence, 2/3's of the citizenry just are not happy and want a change.

So being the knuckle dragger I am, I started thinking, "What are we so unhappy about?"

Is it that we have electricity and running water 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

Is our unhappiness the result of having air conditioning in the summer and heating in the winter?

Could it be that 95.4 percent of these unhappy folks have a job?

Maybe it is the ability to walk into a grocery store at any time, and see more food in moments than Darfur has seen in the last year?

Maybe it is the ability to drive from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean without having to present identification papers as we move through each state?

Or possibly the hundreds of clean and safe motels we would find along the way that can provide temporary shelter?

I guess having thousands of restaurants with varying cuisine from around the world is just not good enough.

Or could it be that when we wreck our car, emergency workers show up and provide services to help all, and even send a helicopter to take you to the hospital.

Perhaps you are one of the 70 percent of Americans who own a home. You may be upset with knowing that in the unfortunate case of a fire, a group of trained firefighters will appear in moments and use top notch equipment to extinguish the flames thus saving you, your family and your belongings.

Or if, while at home watching one of your many flat screen TVs, a burglar or prowler or intruder, an officer equipped with a gun and a bullet-proof vest will come to defend you and your family against attack or loss.

This all in the backdrop of a neighborhood free of bombs or militias raping and pillaging the residents. Neighborhoods where 90 percent of teenagers own cell phones and computers.

How about the complete religious, social and political freedoms we enjoy that are the envy of everyone in the world?

Maybe that is what has 67 percent of you folks unhappy.

Fact is, we are the largest group of ungrateful, spoiled brats the world has ever seen. No wonder the world loves the U.S., yet has a great disdain for its citizens. They see us for what we are. The most blessed people in the world who do nothing but complain about what we don't have, and what we hate about the country instead of thanking the good Lord we live here.

I know, I know. What about the President who took us in to war and has no plan to get us out? The President who has a measly 31 percent approval rating? Is this the same President who guided the nation in the dark days after 9/11? The President that cut taxes to bring an economy out of recession? Could this be the same guy who has been called every name in the book for succeeding in keeping all the spoiled ungrateful brats safe from terrorist attacks?

The Commander-In Chief of an all-volunteer army that is out there defending you and me? Did you hear how bad the President is on the news or talk show? Did this news affect you so much, make you so unhappy you couldn't take a look around for yourself and see all the good things and be glad?

Think about it...are you upset at the President because he actually caused you personal pain OR is it because the "Media" told you he was failing to kiss your sorry ungrateful behind every day.

Make no mistake about it. The troops in Iraq and Afghanistan have volunteered to serve, and in many cases may have died for your freedom. There is currently no draft in this country. They didn't have to go.

They are able to refuse to go and end up with either a "general" discharge, an "other than honorable" discharge or, worst case scenario, a "dishonorable" discharge after a few days in the brig.

So why then the flat-out discontentment in the minds of 69 percent of Americans? Say what you want, but I blame it on the media. If it bleeds, it leads; and they specialize in bad news. Everybody will watch a car crash with blood and guts. How many will watch kids selling lemonade at the corner? The media knows this and media outlets are for-profit corporations. They offer what sells, and when criticized, try to defend their actions by "justifying" them in one way or another. Just ask why they tried to allow a murderer like O.J. Simpson to write a book about "how he didn't kill his wife, but if he did he would have done it this way"...

Insane!

Stop buying the negativism you are fed everyday by the media. Shut off the TV, burn Newsweek, and use the New York Times for the bottom of your bird cage. Then start being grateful for all we have as a country. There is exponentially more good than bad.

We are among the most blessed people on Earth, and should thank God several times a day, or at least be thankful and appreciative.

"With hurricanes, tornados, fires out of control, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, and with the threat of bird flu and terrorist attacks, "Are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?"

Jay Leno

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2007-2008

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We know exactly where one cow with Mad-cow-disease is located among millions and millions of cows in America but we haven't got a clue as to where millions of illegal immigrants and terrorists are located. Maybe we should put the Department of Agriculture in charge of Immigration?

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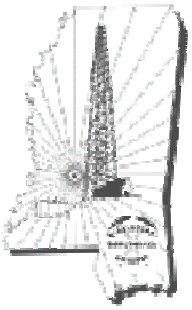
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"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure." - Clarence Darrow



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