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Pioneer of Seismic Exploration Returns to Dhahran at 87

Cecil H. Green, who turns 88 in August, stepped gingerly off the Aramco Fokker 27 on a dirt landing strip near Mudarra on the northern fringe of the Qasim agricultural belt, in Saudi Arabia's heartland. The video cameraman and photographers had scrambled ahead of him to record the moment, but they were too late. Green was already shooting away with his own German-made Leica at the other passengers as they disembarked.

So went the amusing battle of the shutterbugs during the recent one-week visit to Saudi Arabia and Aramco by the granddaddy of the geophysical industry, friend of Max Steineke, and philanthropist extraordinaire. As Sadad Husseini, Aramco's senior vice president of Exploration and Producing, said, "Cecil Green is truly one of the pioneers of exploration." That tribute was all the more meaningful because it came from a geologist to a geophysicist. As both Green and Husseini acknowledge, members of the two schools of thought have not always seen eye to eye.

Ten years ago, Green was recognized by his peers in the Society of Exploration Geophysicists for having "done more to advance the profession...than any other living person." He is the

honorary chairman for life of Dallas-based Geophysical Service Inc. and honorary director of Texas Instruments, GSI's parent company, which Green helped found in 1941. He is also a leading American philanthropist, especially in education and the sciences. He has received no fewer than 11 honorary doctorates from institutions ranging from the Colorado School of Mines to Oxford University in England.

The trip to the Qasim was one of two Green made to sites where seismographic data is being collected. Green also flew to the Rub' al-Khali. His visit to the Kingdom marked just over a half century of seismographic activity in Saudi Arabia by GSI and corresponded with the 50th anniversary of the discovery well, Dammam No. 7.

Green can spin a good yarn. Those who attended his talk in the EXPEC Conference Center March 13 heard numerous stories selected from a rich repertoire. They also saw his color slides, taken 48 years ago, of his first trip to Saudi Arabia. It was around that time that Aramco met with its first seismic success.

In late 1939, Green, then supervisor of GSI's worldwide operations, was in Egypt with Socal Chief Geologist George Cunningham on what was sup-



Inside a seismic recording truck, Green discusses a computer printout with Aramco geophysicist Adel A. Khelaiwi. Below, Green as he appeared on his first trip to Saudi Arabia in 1940. (Photo above by Dobais)

posed to be a turnaround trip to review seismographic operations in that country's western desert. Instead, they were asked by Socal to proceed to Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province.

"There was a well, it seems, being drilled on GSI's information up at a place called Abu Hadriya," Green related.

In fact, Abu Hadriya Well No. 1 had been started a year earlier, on Dec. 8, 1938. As 1940 dawned, it was down to 8,656 feet. It was still in sedimentary rocks, but had not encountered a hint of oil. Yet, the seismographic evidence pointed to oil.

"That was in the time when a lot of geologists didn't have much confidence in geophysics," said Green. "They just thought it was a lot of black box magic...I remember before we ever came here, way back in 1935-36, I used to hold classes in Los Angeles for geologists...to demonstrate there was nothing magic about it. It was just a logical science...providing eyesight for the geologists."



Among the skeptics, according to Green, was Max Steineke, chief geologist at Casoc, Socal's Arabian subsidiary. Steineke was under mounting pressure from Socal management in San Francisco to shut down the wildcat at Abu Hadriya.

"It had gone through all the Arab zones, the Jurassic-aged producing areas at the Dammam Dome," Green said. "Going anywhere as near as deep as 9,000 feet was considered absolutely ridiculous, particularly in those days in a foreign area. You might go that deep at home, but certainly you wouldn't go as far away as Saudi Arabia drilling 9,000-foot holes looking for oil. It was too darned expensive."

According to Green, Steineke regarded Abu Hadriya as a "colossal mistake by some so-called geophysicists." But drilling foreman Bill Scribner smelled sulfur in the return mud. He convinced Steineke not to forsake the well. Green related Steineke's response: "You darned fool. You keep on if you want, but you'll have to stop when you run out



Green, an inveterate shutterbug, gets a closer look at a solitary plant on an otherwise bald patch of sand in the Rub' al-Khali. (Dobais)

World Health Fair Opens Saturday; Aramco Slates Surveys, Lectures

On Thursday, April 7, countries throughout the world will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the day that the World Health Organization formally came into being. In most countries this celebration will take the form of World Health Day, but here in Saudi Arabia the occasion will be marked by what has now become an annual event, World Health Week. This year World Health Week is dedicated to the theme, "All to Provide Health for All."

"Each year WHO selects a theme having to do with a different health issue. The idea behind this year's theme is that everyone can contribute to everyone else's good health by maintaining a clean safe environment, by following good health habits and by bringing up the next generation to do the same," says Kussay al-Rammah, supervisor of the Health Education Unit. For the past two months he has served as

Aramco's representative to organizational meetings for the annual World Health Week fair in Dammam. This year, notes al-Rammah, the fair will open at 4:30 p.m., Saturday, April 2, under the auspices of HRH Amir Muhammad ibn Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, Governor of the Eastern Province, and will remain open through Thursday, April 7.

"The World Health Fair is the biggest fair in the Eastern Province," he adds, noting that last year more than 65,000 persons attended and that this year attendance is expected to be even higher. "This is the first year the fair will be open to families four days in a row, which should bring up attendance sharply," he says, noting that the Aramco booth is bound to be one of the best attended of all.

"We've added several new features this year," he explains. "We have a



This year's World Health Week logo illustrates the World Health Organization's international theme: "All to Provide Health for All."

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