

EDITORIALS

From the Chairman

A STRONG IADC DEPENDS ON US ALL

WITH THE IADC ANNUAL Meeting coming up in September, I have been reflecting on my year-to-date activities, particularly the direction of IADC and my involvement in various IADC initiatives. It was my goal to visit and make presentations to a number of our chapters, and also to attend several of our key conferences. In addition to chapter visits and presentations earlier this year, it has been my pleasure to attend key IADC conferences such as the Health, Safety & Environmental Conference in Houston; the SPE/IADC Drilling and the IADC Directors and General Membership Conferences in New Orleans and IADC World Drilling 2000 in Paris. I look forward to attending the IADC/SPE Asia Pacific Drilling Technology Conference in Kuala Lumpur in September. I envy those who will attend IADC Drilling Middle East 2000 this October in Oman, as I must miss it.



John R. Irwin, Chairman

These are all important conferences that have given me a positive first-hand impression of the truly international scope of IADC and our diverse membership, the high level of activities, and the important issues and topics being addressed by the industry and the Association as a whole.

IADC Vice President-Land Operations Division **Ed Jacob of Grey Wolf** has been of tremendous assistance in visiting and making presentations to a number of our chapters. During our presentations to the chapters, we addressed, among other topics, the role of the IADC and the challenges to be confronted in the future in remaining a vibrant and effective association meeting the needs of our diverse membership.

In that regard, IADC's leadership continued a process of reviewing and reaffirming the Association's core values, mission statement, strategic vision, and a more specific action plan. The process involved IADC's key leadership, officers and Executive Committee. There will be continuing review as we carry out our action plan, hear feedback and learn along the way.

One of the areas that most impresses me is the strong commitment and dedication of the industry and its people to achieving safe operations. Health, safety, and the environment are clearly high on the industry's agenda and a main topic in all that we do.

HSE deserves a high profile. However, we must remember that one size does not fit all. Prescriptive solutions are not the way forward. The focus should be on results, with companies free to pursue the goal of a safe workplace as best fits their unique needs.

I believe that our Association remains strong and capable of meeting the challenges ahead. We are fortunate to have strong leaders active throughout IADC's international organization in our chapters, on our various committees, on our Executive Committee, and as officers. In working to keep IADC strong and effective as the single voice for the international drilling industry, we will continue to depend very much on the volunteer efforts of our members and on a strong full-time staff organization. ■

From the President

100 YEARS OF PROGRESS

WHEN J E BRANTLEY, first President of what is today known as the International Association of Drilling Contractors, led the first Annual Meeting at the Baker Hotel in Dallas in November 1941, there were approximately 4,000 rotary drilling rigs and 2,800 cable tool drilling rigs "available for quick use in the United States." There were plenty of rigs, but not enough jobs. Low day rates and onerous contracts plagued the drillers. Rotary drilling rigs were taking jobs away from the cable tool boys.

Times were changing swiftly.

Also during that inaugural IADC Annual Meeting, **Frank Stickle** of Tulsa-based **Mabee Oil & Gas Co** addressed the drillers at the Baker Hotel. He reminded them that rotary drilling tools were first used in the Spindletop field about 1901. Rotary drilling equipment was costly and so different in principle from cable tool drilling that many contractors were slow to see its possibilities.

Wryly, Mr. Stickle observed, "Rotary tool and cable tool drilling crews fought to hold whatever ground they had gained, but they were not wholly unfriendly when they were sober."

Today, rotary tables idle beneath top drives. Coiled tubing snakes past both, twisting down, down the wellbore on special missions in niche applications.

Technical visions of the future read like a **Jules Verne** novel. Some see a day when the engine of drilling will be downhole motors powered solely by drilling fluids, eliminating rotary tables, top drives and the need to rotate drill pipe. Others ask why offshore wells shouldn't be drilled from the ocean floor, challenging the industry to push its ingenuity to a new level.

It is up to individual companies to push the leading edge of technology. IADC, through its Drilling Services Division, provides the industry forum where all stakeholders—contractors, operators and service companies—can come together to solve mutual problems of safety, regulation, and other issues connected with emerging technologies such as underbalanced and coiled tubing drilling.

Maybe one day, an intergalactic drilling executive will address an IADC conference on Mars. Perhaps that individual can start by observing: "Rotary drilling was widely used in Earth fields in 2001." ■



Lee Hunt, President