

GEORGE EYNON

William C. Gussow
1908-2005



William C. Gussow published his seminal paper - *Differential Entrapment of Oil and Gas: a Fundamental Principle* in 1954. With its emphasis on fluid flow, regional migration paths for hydrocarbons, and the displacement of oil by gas on a regional scale, his thinking paved the way for petroleum systems analysis as we have come to know it. Simple and obvious though his concepts might seem to us now, they were at the time both controversial and contrary to accepted ideas.

All of us who have successfully explored for oil and gas in basin flanking traps owe a debt of gratitude to his clear thinking and explication. The lucid simplicity of his ideas was illustrated by now classical figures, one of which—a profile showing differential entrapment and displacement of hydrocarbons in the Devonian Leduc reef trend of Alberta—we have adapted and adopted for the logo of the CSPG's eponymous William C. Gussow Geoscience Conference Series.

Not content with just a single such accomplishment in his geological career; in the late 80s Bill Gussow patented methods of tertiary recovery from partially depleted reservoirs using natural gas for displacement of the oil. Application of the techniques resulted in dramatic increases worldwide of recoverable reserves in already discovered reservoirs, and helped alleviate the gloom being spread that we were running out of oil.

Bill was born in London in 1908, and his family soon moved to Canada when his father was appointed as the first Dominion botanist. Bill obtained BSc and MSc degrees at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, and his PhD from MIT. His early career included surface mapping with the Geological Survey of Canada, various mining projects, and engineering geology for hydroelectric power developments. In 1945 Bill joined Shell Oil Company and worked in eastern and western Canada. From 1956 to 1971 Bill worked for Union Oil Co. California.

Bill's wisdom, experience, and thoughts are reflected in a long list of publications, and have been recognized by the many honors he has received. In 1999 he received the Stanley E. Slipper Award, the CSPG's highest honour, and in 2000 was the recipient of the AAPG's Pioneer Award.

Bill will always be, for so many geologists, a classic role model, continually coming up with new and often startling ideas, and being so generous in sharing his experience with others. Perhaps most of all we appreciate his kindness, his friendliness, and his gentle sense of humor.

As a thoughtful, incisive and visionary thinker, there is no-one more fitting in the ranks of illustrious CSPG members than William Carruthers Gussow for whom to dedicate and name the CSPG Geoscience Conference Series.

*Written by
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(Author's title given as of the time of writing)