

**THE PRIDE OF ELK CITY:**

CIVIC LEADERS STAND IN FRONT OF RIG 114 ON DISPLAY IN DOWNTOWN ELK CITY. FROM LEFT, EVERETT WILSON, CURATOR OF THE ANADARKO BASIN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, JOHN WEST, INITIATOR OF THE RIG PROJECT, GUY HYLTON, MAYOR OF ELK CITY, AND CHARLES BAWDEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE RIG MOVE AND INSTALLATION COMMITTEE.

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**DEEP  
BIGGINGS**  
PARKER DRILLING'S COMPANY MAGAZINE

# On location in down- town Elk City



*A Parker rig with a colorful past is part of community's tribute to energy heritage*

Out of the 118 rigs listed on Parker Drilling's monthly operations report, one stands out from the rest. It notes that the operators of Rig 114 are the People of Elk City and the toolpusher is Mayor Guy Hylton. The location is the Oil & Gas Museum #1 and the spud date was December 15, 1990. So far, the fabled rig that set a world's record has drilled to the topsoil in downtown Elk City.

That's the story of this deep-capacity drilling rig since it went on permanent display next to Elk City's Anadarko Basin Museum of Natural History along historic Route 66. The Parker rig towers over the Elk City skyline and draws tourists off busy Interstate 40 to sample a bit of oil and gas industry history, along with a healthy dose of Elk City hospitality.

The western Oklahoma city of 10,000 is the unofficial capital of the Anadarko Basin. Over the years, Elk City's strong pride and community spirit helped residents weather the ups and downs of the cyclical oil patch. The opening of the museum and introduction of Rig 114 only underscored Elk City's place in the history of the American petroleum industry.

Parker has enjoyed a long presence in Elk City. Parker people live throughout the area and in 1979, the company built a shop and yard on the west side of town. During the boom of the early '80s, Elk City was the center of activity for Parker's deep gas drilling rigs and crews. A decade later—in 1989, 1990 and 1991—the nation's deepest wells for each of those years were drilled by Parker for Exxon west of Elk City.

For years, Rig 114 played a role in the 1970s and '80s' development of the Anadarko Basin. The rig drilled ten wells from 1973 to 1982. For a while 114 was pressed into service in Texas, but was later returned to Oklahoma to drill natural gas wells, four with TDs of 20,000 feet or deeper. But perhaps the most colorful work done by the Parker rig was back before it was called 114.

In 1967, the newly-christened drilling rig was shipped to Alaska's remote Aleutian Islands for a project that was to be like no other. Parco Rig 2, as it was called, became one of three Parker rigs under contract to drill nuclear test holes for the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. For three years, on a cold, desolate dot of an island, the trio of Parker rigs did the incredible—they completed the largest diameter holes ever drilled.

First, crews on the future Rig 114 drilled three exploratory holes to test the island's geological structure and confirm an absence of hydrocarbons. Then Parker-designed technology allowed the rig to bore a big hole—120 inches in diameter—to 4,500 feet. It was a world record. Another record came for sister Rig 3, when it completed a 96-inch hole and ran casing 6,150 feet deep. In that excavation, the AEC detonated a three-megaton bomb—an underground blast several times larger than those of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. AEC funding was reduced and Rig 2's larger-diameter hole was sealed. No further tests were undertaken on that drillsite.

At the time, Rig 2 was claimed to have the world's largest mast. With the giant Pyramid mast and Ideco 3000 drawworks, Rig 2 boasted a 1.5-million pound hook load capacity. After the project ended, Parco Rig 2 was deployed to the Texas Division yard in Odessa. There it was modified and refitted to conventional deep gas drilling projects. It became Parker Rig 114.

Eventually the drilling boom of the early 80s played out and the rig was stacked in Parker's Oklahoma Division Yard in Del City. There it rested, the once grand mast on its side, like others that were once so active in the oil patch.

Meanwhile, in Elk City a new museum opened in 1984—the Western Oklahoma Earth Science Museum—when an Elk City native retired from American Airlines and returned to his hometown. A year later the museum's founder, Lynn Bileau, along with John Cooper West, Jr., an oil and gas lease broker and insurance agent, arranged for the gift of the historic Casa Grande Hotel. The Casa Grande was a splendid old structure which, for many years, served as a busy tourist haven located along the once-bustling Route 66.

The former hotel's owner, Elk City surgeon William M. Leebron, gave the building to the museum before his death, with

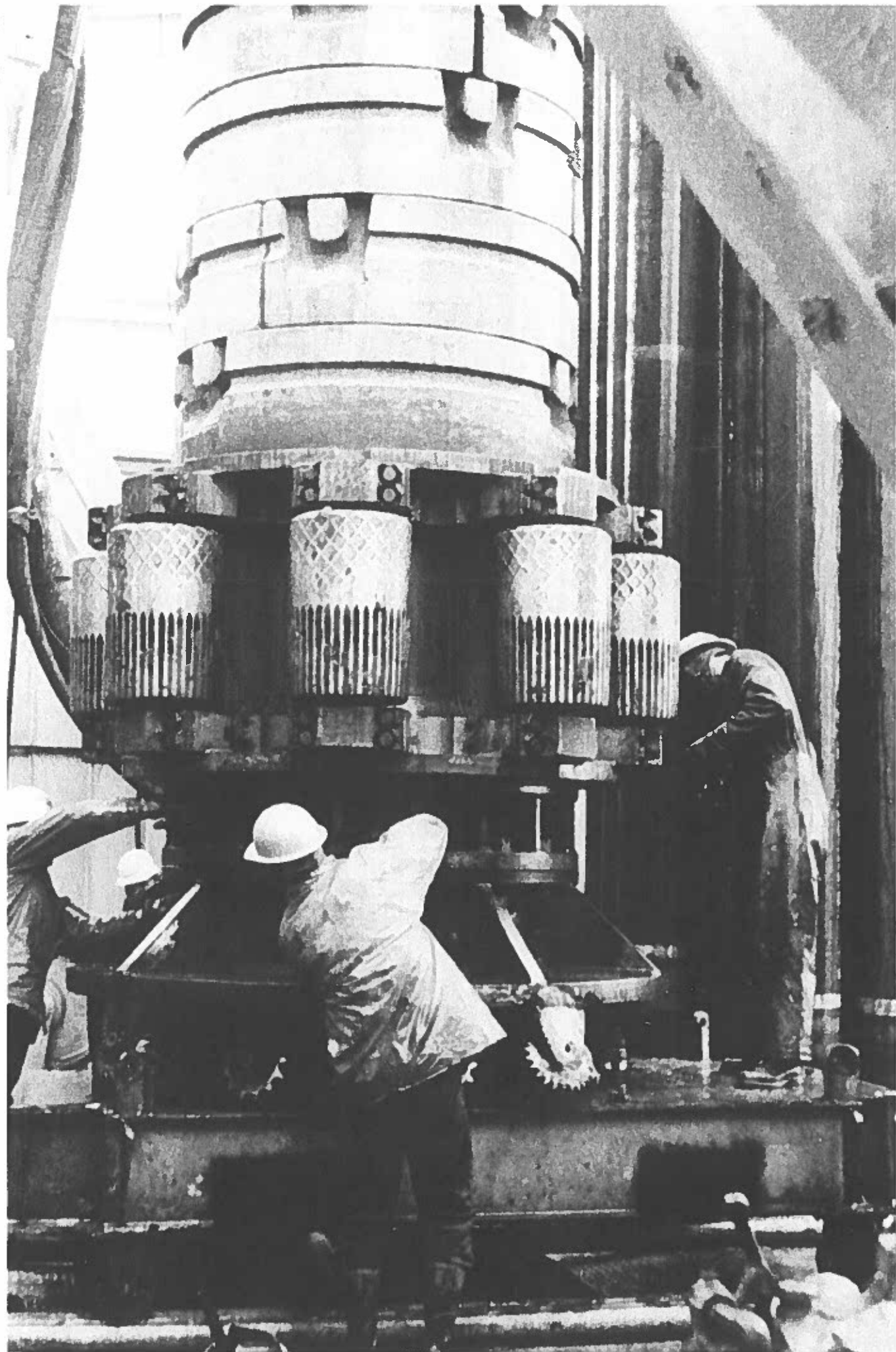
**MEANWHILE, NEXT DOOR:**

RIG 114 IS LOCATED ADJACENT TO THE ANADARKO BASIN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY ON THE "MAIN STREET OF AMERICA," HISTORIC U.S. ROUTE 66.

**NO ITTY BITTY:**

ON THE RIGHT, A PARKER CREW PREPARED THIS GIANT BIT TO DRILL A WORLD RECORD 120-INCH HOLE TO 4,500 FEET AS PART OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM ON ALASKA'S ALEUTIAN ISLANDS.







**TIGHT SQUEEZE:**  
SCENES OF THE DOWNTOWN ELK CITY RIG-UP IN DECEMBER 1990.

a request that the organization be renamed the Anadarko Basin Museum. Dr. Leebron also asked that the museum place a strong emphasis on the area's rich oil and gas heritage. Lynn was only too happy to honor the request. The museum was moved to the 30,000 square-foot building and today the oil and gas industry is honored with museum exhibits, along with displays on the area's natural history. The building was renamed the Leebron Building and plans call for a suitable marker to acknowledge the museum's benefactor.

John West and other civic leaders believed a drilling rig beside the museum would be a fitting touch to complete the museum. After all, a rig would only draw attention to the museum and help people see what real oil and gas drilling was like. John contacted Parker, one thing led to another, and today Rig 114 proudly stands as a tribute to the industry, its leaders and workers.

The project wasn't easy. The Elk City Chamber of Commerce established a special committee and worked closely with the museum and city officials. Fifty one thousand dollars was initially raised for site preparation and to help defray trucking, rigging, fencing and alarm costs. Once on location, the rig could not be erected in its usual jackknife position, there wasn't enough space. The street was blocked and a crane brought in as Parker crews rigged-up the 181-foot tall Rig 114. Besides the donation from Parker, other firms contributed time and resources to the community project. Since then thousands more has been raised to continue support of the museum and rig site.

"We hope the rig site will develop into a centerpiece for the community," said project initiator John West. He noted that during the Persian Gulf war a sign with names of area service people was placed in front of the rig and during a war-effort support celebration, the officials' reviewing stand was erected near the site. Plans call for additional development and landscaping around the rig.

"Parker Drilling was pleased to play a role in this project," said Jim Linn, executive vice president and chief operating officer. "Rig 114 has played an important part in the history of our company and we are glad to be able to share it."

Oklahoma Division Operations Manager Phil Hamner agrees. During part of the time the Hamner family lived in Elk City Phil was toolpusher on Rig 114. "I'm glad that rig ended up in such a good place," said Phil. "For 12 years Elk City was special part of our life. Our two oldest children graduated from Elk City High School and we still have lots of friends there. Elk City is a terrific place to live," he declared.

Jim Linn added, "We hope this permanent loan from Parker will help focus attention to the spirit of the community and to the role of the energy industry in that part of Oklahoma. Rig 114 is a fitting tribute to the top notch people of Elk City." ■

 **Parker Drilling Company**