

Nomads Induction Ceremony Address, 10 Nov 2009

In May 1978 I was preparing to go to the OTC for the first time. From the schedule of events I noted there was a NOMADS cocktail party after the first day of the conference. I was relatively new to the oilfield industry. When I asked a long time friend, "What is NOMADS?", I was told it is a secret sales organization. You had to be asked to join, and it is really hard to get in. They don't just take everyone.

For many years I didn't attend the OTC cocktail party because I wasn't invited and I wasn't a salesman. Later after a number of overseas sales trips as a company officer, I inquired about joining and since have had a wonderful experience with my association with NOMADS. Even after retiring, I have been able to keep up with the oil service industry by attending NOMADS events. Many friends and colleagues remain active members. Wanda Baker, NOMADS secretary, was my secretary for many years while I was President of Houston Engineers, Inc. As you know she is a genuine asset to NOMADS.

Earlier in my career before I was in the petroleum equipment industry, I went into the office of a vice president of sales (I was an engineer.) and saw a sign which said, "If someone doesn't sell something to someone else, a terrible thing happens. Nothing!" NOMADS is designed to insure that this terrible thing seldom happens in the international oilfield equipment industry.

We all stand on the shoulders of our ancestors or on those who have gone before us. We are lucky enough that our ancestors caused us to land in the great country in which we live. We are further lucky that events in our lives have occurred as enumerated here.

1. We live in the great state of Texas.
2. We work in one of the most important industries of our country.
3. We are employed in one of the key parts of that industry--SALES.
4. We are substantially involved in the growth of that industry.
5. We have been invited to join a special select sales organization of that industry.
6. The ideals of that organization are of the highest order.
7. We have passed through the screening process of that organization and have been found to be qualified to be a full fledged member.

Congratulations to each and every one of you!

Since you are about to be initiated into this fraternity of men and women employed in the selling of oilfield products manufactured in the United States of America worldwide, let's review our history. What is NOMADS? Why was it founded? How did it get started?

With the invention of the automobile and the aircraft around 1900, it became increasingly important that we be able to find crude oil in promising regions of the world. We began drilling in Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, California, and other states including Texas. Products were invented to make drilling more efficient. Oil industries expanded to include exploration in many areas around the world; Canada, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. In the late 1930's while travelling back from a sales trip to Venezuela, Elmer Decker, founder of Martin Decker, realized there was no travel information available to someone before he travelled to those countries. Information like what hotel to stay in, who to see, what was the drilling program, what was the best time to call, what route should one take to the oil company's office, etc. Elmer decided it would be more efficient if there were an organization available where one could share that kind of information with fellow salesmen, but keep confidential company information.

So what is NOMADS and how did it get started? It is an organization which stands at the heart of the international oil field service industry. When one travels the world selling his company's products to foreign companies or to US companies operating in foreign lands, one needs to know about the countries and the peculiar areas of each particular country. Let me give you a direct quote from Elmer Decker, "The thought of such an organization first occurred to me as I was flying back from an extensive trip to the South American oil countries and I was greatly impressed by the opportunities that presented themselves, not only to people in my line of business but for petroleum equipment manufacturers generally. I was also impressed by the difficulties that had to be faced -- the language barriers, local customs and conditions completely different from our own, unusual immigration laws, transportation problems, and many other matters that one had of necessity to become familiar with in order to do a satisfactory job as an equipment company representative. It seemed to me that I had gathered a lot of information that would be very valuable to other equipment people interested in finding export markets; and that for the future exchange of information an effective medium might be an association of export representatives."

He formed NOMADS on 12 October 1938 in Long Beach, CA. The Houston chapter was formed in the spring of 1939, with Rex Hamaker of Reed Roller Bit as the chairman and Bill Gross of Gulf Publishing as the secretary. Houston has been the largest chapter for many years and is 70 years old this year. Chapters were established in Los Angeles, Tulsa, Houston, and New York.

What is a good NOMAD? A good NOMAD learns about the organization he has joined. He knows the by-laws. He participates regularly in attending the meetings and social activities of the organization. He supports the chapter and chapter officers. A good NOMAD is a sales professional of the highest integrity who promotes good will with everyone with whom he comes in contact. A good NOMAD is always honest, always a gentleman or a lady, and one who spreads good will about our industry and our country wherever he travels at all times. He is always helpful to other NOMADS, but does not reveal company proprietary or confidential information. If you understand what I am talking about, you will be a good NOMAD, and there must be no other kind.

What does the name NOMADS stand for? “National Oilfield Manufacturers and Delegate Society.” It should foster good will between our members, our customers, our companies, our industry, our country, and the countries we visit.

It is an honor to be a NOMADS member and a distinct honor and privilege to be a former NOMADS officer and regent. Remember NOMADS are much more than sales associates; they are your friends.

Thank you for your attention, and good luck in the years to come as good NOMADS. Good evening.

Dwight E Beach Jr
Past President NOMADS, 1999