

Charles Eugene Mear, #2463

Midland, Texas



Charles Eugene “Gene” Mear died on September 18, 2007, at the age of 80 years after battling Parkinson’s disease for the last few years. A productive, successful by any measure, petroleum and minerals geologist and geosciences manager, Gene had a lifetime full of accomplishments, honors, friends and a rich family life.

Gene came from a modest background; he lived much of his early life in a tent with his mother and stepfather as they followed work around during the Depression. Later, his parents settled in the country hollows of Leakey, Texas where Gene learned to hunt and fish in the beautiful forested hills and valleys. He attended school in Leakey and Sabinal. An excellent student, he graduated as valedictorian in his high school class.

One day, hunting in the hollows of Leakey, he came across a group of Texas A & M students mapping with a plane table. As they shared conversation and food, Gene learned they were geology students mapping for their field geology class. Intrigued, this chance moment made a strong impression on the youngster. He had never met college students before, nor heard of geology and knew little of college. World War II was grinding down when he finished high school; college would have to wait. He was drafted into the Army and served as a paratrooper in the 11th Airborne Division in the Philippines and Japan.

Returning from Japan, Gene received an honorable discharge and attended Southwest Texas State Teachers College (now Texas State University). Deciding that teaching was perhaps not his calling, Gene transferred to The University of Texas where he earned bachelors and masters degrees in geology in 1951 and 1953, respectively. His master’s thesis: *Quaternary Geology of the Upper Sabinal River Valley, Uvalde and Bandera Counties, Texas* was reprinted during 1989 Summer Archaeological Field course, University of Texas, Austin and partly reproduced by the Southern Texas Archaeological Society in 1990. Prior to finishing his masters degree, he was hired as a geologist by Stanolind Oil and Gas Company and began what was to be a long, distinguished geoscience career.

A certified petroleum geologist and certified professional geoscientist, Mear’s extensive professional career included 46 years as geologist and manager (35 years in petroleum, and 5 years hard minerals, 3 years as a Texas Archeological Research Fellow, and 3 years as a consulting geologist. His resume included these imposing job assignments:

- 1952 -1956 - Exploration Geologist (Stanolind Oil and Gas Company (Amoco Production Co.), Midland, TX.
- 1956 -1964 - Exploration Geologist, U.S. Smelting Refining and Mining Company, Midland, TX.
- 1965 -1967- Chief Geologist Mallard Petroleum Company, Midland, TX.
- 1967 -1971 - Exploration Geologist Louisiana Land and Exploration Company, Midland, TX.
- 1971 -1976 - Exploration Supervisor, Hard Minerals Division Louisiana Land and Exploration Company, Denver, CO.
- 1976 -1977 - District Geologist Southland Royalty Company, Midland, TX.
- 1977 -1982 - District Exploration Manager Southland Royalty Company, Midland, TX.
- 1982 -1986 - Vice President Geology and Geophysics Southland Royalty Company, Fort Worth, TX.
- 1986 -1991 -Vice President Exploration Cross Timbers Oil Co., L.P., Fort Worth, TX
- 1991-1993 - Senior Vice President Geologic Development Cross Timbers Oil Co., L.P., Fort Worth, TX.
- 1993-1996 - Research Fellow, Texas Archeological Laboratory, The University of Texas Austin.
- 1996 - Consultant, Petroleum Geology, Geoarchaeology

I worked with Gene Mear at Southland Royalty Company where he was my immediate supervisor. He became a life-long friend. The proverbial “geologist’s geologist,” teacher, thinker, field trip leader and author, Gene was well-liked and respected throughout the oil community. Gene was a great oil finder, manager and scholar, and drilled many successful wells for the companies he worked for. He supervised the work of many professional people, published more than thirty-three professional papers, and remained active in his many professional societies. Although a supervisor for much of his career, he liked to keep “hands-on” in geology. One of his favorite tasks was contouring geologic maps. When I would drop into his office, he would frequently be contouring a map. He would often look up and say with his warm electric eraser in his hands, “Oh how I love the smell of burning rubber.” He was known to use many witty, colorful phrases and metaphors to make a professional point. To answer a yes or no question, Gene would often say, “Does a frog have a water-proof ear” or “Does James Brown get down?”

He minored in archeology during his studies at The University of Texas. As a scholarly avocation, Gene maintained a keen interest in archeology throughout his life. When he retired in 1993 as senior exploration vice president of Cross Timbers Oil Company, he accepted a research fellowship in archeology at The University of Texas, and worked there until 1996.

All his life, he loved sports and remained a rabid, albeit somewhat of a “closet” Longhorn fan. He treasured The University of Texas and was proud that several of his children graduated from that institution. He enjoyed watching college football and attending high school football, basketball and baseball games. Gene also loved to fish, hunt birds and the outdoors. One of his passions was attending and often leading geology and archeology field trips. He was fond of telling stories and told many and sometimes was chided for telling the same story more than once. Gene had an uncanny memory. As someone would show him a prospect or drilling deal, he would invariably pick out some dry hole on their map and say, “Now when this well was drilled...” Frequently an interesting story would develop from what was seemingly an uninteresting dry hole.

Mear received the Monroe G. Cheney Science Award, from the Southwest Section AAPG in 1991, and the Dedicated Service Award of the West Texas Geological Society in 1982. He was awarded an honorary life membership in the Permian Basin Section of the SEPM in 1982.

In addition to SIPES, Gene Mear was a member of AAPG, GSA, SEPM, Austin Geological Society, Fort Worth Geological Society, West Texas Geological Society and the Texas Archeological Society. He was an active member of these organizations. Some of his noteworthy contributions to these groups include the following:

- West Texas Geological Society Program Chairman, Editor, Vice President, Guidebook Editor, Field Trip Leader (1961).
- Led six one-day field trips to Coke County for WTGS and PBS SEPM.
- Contributed to Cross Section Delaware Basin and Val Verde Basin 1962-1963 WTGS pub. 64-69. (Published in society transactions.)
- PBS-SEPM: President, Editor. Led 1984 Field Trip to Southern Eastern Shelf. Published in society transactions.
- Fort Worth Geological Society President, Editor, Noon Program Chairman, Publications Committee Chairman.
- Delegate from WTGS and FWGS.
- SW Section AAPG Secretary 1989-1990.
- AAPG Advisory Board Member, Division of Professional Affairs.
- AAPG: Contributed to COSUNA Project.
- AAPG Secretary, Division of Professional Affairs, 1997-1999.
- Chairman Central Texas Chapter Society of Independent Professional Earth Scientists.

His many professional articles are listed below:

1. Mear, C. E. 1948, *Folsom Culture*, *MAN Magazine*, Volume I, No. 2, p. 15, 39-40.
2. Mear, C.E., 1961, *Upper Permian Stratigraphy, Coke County, Texas*, *WTGS-SAGS Pub. 61-46. Field Trip Guidebook*, p. 42-44.
3. Mear, C.E., and D.V. Yarbrough; 1961, *Yates Formation in Southern Permian Basin of West Texas*, *AAPG*, Volume 45, No. 9, p. 1545-1556.
4. Mear, C.E., 1963, *Stratigraphy of Permian Outcrops, Coke County, Texas*, *AAPG Volume 47, No. 11*, p. 1952-1962.
5. Mear, C.E., 1965, *Concho Bluff Field*, *In Oil and Gas Fields in West Texas*, *WTGS Symposium*, p. 143, 144, 145, 130.
6. Mear, C.E., 1968, *Upper Permian Sediments in Southeastern Permian Basin, Texas*, *In Saline Deposits*, *GSA Special Paper 88*, p. 349-358.
7. Mear, C.E., 1980, *Notes on the Pre-Leonard Subsurface Stratigraphy of the Finlay Mountains, Hudspeth County, Texas*, *PBS -SEPM Pub. 80-19*, p. 53-63.
8. Mear, C.E., 1983, *Stratigraphic Column, Midland Basin Eastern Shelf*, *AAPG Correlation Chart Series (COSUNA) SSMC*.
9. Mear, C.E., 1984, *Stratigraphy of Upper Permian Rocks, Midland Basin and Eastern Shelf, Texas*, *PBS-SEPM Pub. 84-23, Field Trip Guidebook*, p. 89-94.
10. Mear, C.E., and C.K. Dufurrena; 1984, *Pre-Leonardian Geology of Midland Farms Field Area, Andrews County, Texas*, *S.W. Section AAPG Transactions Pub. 84-78*, p. 111-123.
11. Mear, C.E., and J.W. Becker; 1986, *Geology of Ellenburger and Fusselman Reservoirs, Midland Farms and Inez Fields, Andrews County, Texas*, *S.W. Section AAPG Transactions*, p. 97-106.
12. Mear, C.E., 1989, *Ellenburger Reservoir Development at Midland Farms and Inez Fields Andrews County, Texas*, *PBS-SEPM Research Seminar, The Lower Paleozoics of West Texas and Southern New Mexico*, Pub. 89-31, p. 169-174. Mear, C.E., 1989, *Fusselman Reservoir Development at Flying W Field, Winkler County, Texas* *PBS-SEPM Research Seminar, The Lower Paleozoics of West Texas and South New Mexico*. Pub. 89-31, p. 203-207.

13. Mear, C.E., 1989, Quaternary Geology of Upper Sabinal River Valley, Uvalde and Bandera Counties, Texas (Master's Thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1953), Texas Archeological Research Laboratory Special Pub., p. 88, 19 p. Supplement.
14. Mear, C.E., 1989, Petroleum Geology of Mississippian Carbonates in North Central Texas, Fort Worth Geological Society Special Publication, C.E. Mear, C.L. McNulty, M. McNulty Editors.
15. Collins, Michael B., Glen L. Evans, Thomas N. Campbell, Melissa Winans, and Charles E. Mear, 1989, Clovis Occupation of Kincaid Shelter, Texas, Current Research in the Pleistocene, Volume 6, p. 3-4.
16. Mear, C.E., 1990, Quaternary Geology of the Upper Sabinal River Valley, Uvalde and Bandera Counties, Texas, Southern Texas Archaeological Association, Special Pub. No. 6, p.55.
17. Mear, C.E., 1992, Developing and Extending Oil and Gas Fields Without Use of computers, Remote Sensing, Seismic and Non-Conventional Methods, S.W. Section AAPG Transactions Pub. SWS 92-90, p. 261-266. Reprinted by Gulf Coast Geological Society and Kansas Geological Society.
18. Mear, C.E. and Keith A. Hutton, 1992, Petroleum Geology of an Unconventional Upper Hunton Reservoir, Southwest Ringwood Area, Major County, Oklahoma, Oklahoma Geology Notes, Oklahoma Geological Survey, Volume 52, No. 5, p. 164-172.
19. Mear, C.E. and John M. O'Rear, 1993, Developing new oil reserves in the N.E. I.A.B. Unit, Coke County, Texas, an abandoned waterflood project, S.W. Section AAPG, p. 52-54.
20. Mear, C.E., 1993, Reservoir characteristics of an upper Hunton gas-producing zone, southwest Ringwood area of Major County, Oklahoma, Oklahoma Geological Survey Special Publication 93-4, p. 41-44.
21. Collins, M.B. and C.E. Mear, 1993, Geological Investigation of Selected Archaeological Sites, South Hallsville Mine Property, Harrison County, Texas, for Sabine Mining Company.
22. Mear, C.E. and K.A. Hunton, 1994, Southwest Ringwood Hunton, Major County, Oklahoma in Oil and Gas Fields of Oklahoma, Volume 2, Oklahoma Geological Society, Inc., p. 161-164, S. Takken and E.P. Kerr, editors.
23. Mear, C.E., 1994, Geomorphology and Quaternary Geology of the Wilson-Leonard Site Area. On file, Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, The University of Texas, Austin.
24. Mear, C.E., 1994, Quaternary Geology of the Wurzbach Project Area. On file, Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, The University of Texas, Austin.
25. Mear, C.E., 1995, Quaternary Geology of the Upper Sabinal River Valley, Uvalde and Bandera Counties, Texas, in *Geoarchaeology*, John Wiley and Sons, p. 457-480.
26. Mear, C.E., 1995 and M.B. Collins, Geomorphic Investigations, *in* Archaeological and Geomorphological Investigations at the Anzalduas International Crossing, Hidalgo County, Texas, John E. Keller Principal Investigator, Southern Archaeological Consultants, Los Fresnos, TX., p. 8-11, plus figures and charts.
27. Mear, C.E., 1998, Terrace Deposits and Late Quaternary Climate, South-Central Edwards Plateau, Texas, in *Bulletin of The Texas Archeological Society*, V. 69, p. 79-88.
28. Mear, C. E., and C.D. Frederick, 1998, Late Quaternary Stratigraphy of Panther Springs and Salado Creeks, San Antonio, Texas, *in* Archeology along the Wurzbach Parkway, Module 5, Studies in Archeology 29, Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, The University of Texas at Austin, Texas and Department of Transportation, Environmental Affairs Division.
29. Mear, C. E., 1999, Geological-Engineering Teamwork: Key to Successful Development of Two Stratigraphic Traps, *in* Oklahoma Notes, V. 59, No. 1, p. 29, (Abstract from AAPG Bulletin, V. 81, p. 868-869, May 1997).

30. Evans, G.L. and C. E. Mear, 2000, *The Odessa Meteor Craters and Their Geological Implications* Strecker Museum, Baylor University, Waco, Texas, Occasional Papers No. 5.
31. Mear, C. E., N.D., *Geology of the Coleman Site (4IBX568) Bexar County, Texas*, on file Texas Historical Commission, Austin, Texas.
32. Mear, C.E. and G.P. Bolden, 1999, *Stratigraphy of Cretaceous and Upper Permian rocks, Robert Lee and Bronte Area, Road Log, PBS-SEPM One-day Field Trip, Coke County, Texas, November 6, 1999.*
33. Collins, M.B., and C.E. Mear, 1998, *The Site and Its setting, in Wilson-Leonard an 11,000 Year Archeological Record of Hunter-Gatherers in Central Texas. V. I, p. 5-16. Assembled and Edited by Michael B. Collins. Studies in Archeology 31, TARL, The University of Texas at Austin. Report No. 10 Texas Dept. of Transportation, Environmental Affairs Division.*
34. Mear, C.E., 2000, *Not Your Usual Anecdotes, unpub. Ms.*
35. Mear, C.E., 2000, *More of Not Your Usual Anecdotes, unpub. Ms.*
36. Mear, C.E., 2002, *Everything Considered It Was Fun While It Lasted, unpub. Ms.*

Gene Mear married his high school sweetheart, Tonie, who, like Gene, was valedictorian of her Sabinal high school class. They had eight children and eight grandchildren. A consummate family man, he was proud of his children and their accomplishments. A scholar, teacher, author, major industry contributor and a friend to all, he leaves a vacuum in the oil community.

Submitted by
A. Darryl James, #2259
Midland, Texas