



Robert W. Russell
1885-1972
Inducted 1969

Born in Parker's Landing, Pennsylvania in 1885, Bob Russell was the son of a Scotsman who had opened his own machine shop there in 1879. At age 13, Bob left school to learn his father's trade. Soon, the father-and-son proprietors earned a reputation for ingenuity and innovation, despite the limitations of available equipment and supplies. In 1900, Bob's father thought to install a vacuum pump on a steam engine, which greatly increased the flow of oil and gas from a well. Bob and his father began building the gas cylinders that were attached to steam engine frames, even though they had little knowledge of gas engines at the time. Eventually Bob headed west for newer fields, selling used pipe and equipment around Ranger, Texas before settling in Monahans. There, in 1935, he bought a small machine shop, rebuilt and enlarged it, and began manufacturing fishing tools for rotary drilling and anything else anyone wanted. Russell operated the shop for 31 years before retiring in 1966.