

IADC-led museum forum targets industry image

International Forum of Energy Centres & Museums participants

- Canadian Petroleum Interpretive Centre, Devon, Alberta, Canada
- Caspian Energy Centre, Garadag District, Azerbaijan
- Deutsches Erdolmuseum Wietze, Wietze, Germany
- Dukes Wood Oilfield Museum, Nottinghamshire, United Kingdom
- East Texas Oil Museum, Kilgore, Texas
- Houston Museum of Natural Science — Weiss Energy Hall, Houston, Texas
- The International Petroleum Museum & Exposition, Morgan City, La.
- Museum of the Hungarian Petroleum Industry, Zalaegerszeg, Hungary
- Norwegian Petroleum Museum, Stavanger, Norway
- Offshore Energy Center, Galveston, Texas
- The Petroleum Museum, Midland, Texas
- Texas Energy Museum, Beaumont, Texas

To get more complete information on each participating museum, please refer to the 2006 IADC Membership Directory. Contact IADC's publications department at 713-292-1945, ext 215.



Sandra Mourton (standing), executive director of Galveston's Off-shore Energy Center, speaks at the first meeting of the IADC-hosted International Forum of Energy Centres and Museums, held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on 27 February.

Energy centers, museums join hands to improve public perception of oil and gas industry

By Linda Hsieh, Associate Editor

PERHAPS NO OTHER industry is as misunderstood as the oil and gas industry. Its high-tech orientation. Its environmental efforts. Its safety achievements.

There's also virtually no other industry with a product that's as ubiquitous in everyday life. Yet worldwide, public misconceptions run deep, often resulting in unfounded opposition to industry operations. A tainted image also has contributed to a long-growing personnel shortage.

Early this year, 2006 IADC Chairman **Claus Chur** asked: "What can IADC and its members do to communicate a better image of the industry to the young generation? What can we, as drilling contractors, do to correct public misconceptions?"

Working with IADC President **Lee Hunt**, an answer was



Dr Martin Salesch, director of the Deutsches Erdolmuseum Wietze in Germany, emphasized that the industry must improve general knowledge of the production and use of hydrocarbons.

formed: better support from the industry for energy centers and museums.

Many such facilities around the world are already hard at work promoting the public education of this industry's

past, present and future. Many also offer outreach and educational programs to assist public schools incorporate oil and gas technology into science curricula.

With a global reach in mind, IADC created the International Forum of Energy Centres and Museums to allow energy museum directors and representatives to join forces.

Response was overwhelmingly positive, and on 27 February, IADC held the Forum's first meeting at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Amsterdam, led by Mr Chur and Dr Hunt. Dr **Patrick Porter**, Director Emeritus Hagley Museum & Library, attended as adviser to IADC.

Directors of museums across the globe, from Azerbaijan to Germany to the US, came together not only to share past experiences and ongoing projects but also to learn from their peers and grow ideas for the future.

“The range of outreach and education programs already under way at each museum, especially ones aimed at teaching young children, was tremendously impressive,” Dr Hunt said.

Mr Chur also praised the variety and extent of the participants’ offerings. “The industry needs to make use of this network of resources that already exists. I’m more convinced than ever that IADC has put together a forum that will enable communication among museums representing our industry,” he said.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

A roundtable discussion at the meeting touched on information/educational roles and goals; outreach and public education programs; sources and types of industry support; financial foundations for energy museums; and museum marketing strategies.

Among the agreements reached at this initial meeting are:

- The industry and its museums must try harder to get children involved by engaging them on multiple levels.
- Participating museums hope the industry itself — including IADC members — can raise its own awareness of ongoing



Kevin Topham, curator of the Dukes Wood Oil Museum, located in the UK, speaks on the museum’s need for more funding.

educational and public outreach programs. Increased industry participation in such efforts is also needed.

- The Forum will allow everyone to share best practices, to understand what energy museums are doing, to find partnership and a wider audience, and to put ideas together and work collectively.

Mr Chur was enthusiastic about the Forum’s potential: “This won’t just be one meeting in Amsterdam. It will be an ongoing effort that I hope will go on for years and help to promote an increased awareness of what our industry is really about.”

More information is available at www.iadc.org/IFECM.htm. ■