



2020 NATIONAL INVENTORS
HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Born: July 7, 1891

Died: Jan. 7, 1975

Primary Connections:

- Cameron Iron Works (now a subsidiary of Schlumberger): Co-founder

Education:

- Public schools in Huntsville, Esperanza and Richmond, Texas

Key Memberships/Awards:

- Texas Business Hall of Fame: Member, 1997
- Texas Oil & Gas Association: Distinguished Service Award, 1952

10 Things You Need to Know About

James Abercrombie

Inventor of the Blowout Preventer (BOP)

U.S. PATENT NO. 1,569,247

1. Abercrombie was the fourth of 13 children in his family.
2. He left school at age 15.
3. Before founding several companies, Abercrombie was an oil field roustabout, roughneck and driller.
4. In 1918, he used his savings and a loan to buy a used rig to drill on his own in the Burkburnett oil field north of Wichita Falls, Texas.
5. Abercrombie helped his brother finance the Houston Carbonate Co., which sold carbonic gas to soda fountains, creameries and bottlers.
6. In 1947, James and Lillie Abercrombie and their daughter, Josephine (a Rice University graduate), gifted \$500,000 to Rice for construction of a science and engineering building. The Abercrombie Engineering Laboratory was completed in 1948.
7. There is a J.S. Abercrombie Professor of Computer Science position at Rice University.
8. He and several other prominent Houston residents founded Texas Children's Hospital.
9. In 2003, Abercrombie and co-inventor Harry Cameron's first ram-type BOP was recognized with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers Historic Mechanical Engineering Landmark honor.
10. Abercrombie held 30 U.S. patents.