Beaumont and the Oil Industry

As we make our way into Beaumont, imagine a small town with only five buildings including a saloon, school building, and a two-story jail. The city has come a long way since these humble beginnings in the late 1800s. That improvement has a lot to do with a seasoning that we use on our dinner table today - salt.

Did you know that oil fields are often capped by a huge dome of salt? There was a salt dome over an oil field close to Beaumont. It went by many names in the past, but today it is known as Spindletop. For many years, crews tried to capture the oil underneath this salt, but many inventions and technologies proved unsuccessful. Finally in 1901, a group of men tried a more efficient rotary type drill bit and succeeded in the mission. The earth started to rumble and mud bubbled everywhere. Workmen fled as pipes, mud, gas and then oil came shooting out of the hole, forming a 100 foot high geyser. It took crews nine days to cap the geyser and control the flow.

Spindletop was like an ice cream man giving away free items because his truck broke down - people came from all over to try and get a piece of the action. Beaumont needed to grow, and fast; houses were built and the city's population grew exponentially. While people were moving in, so were the businesses and entertainers. Would you want to live in a town with nothing fun to do?

So, when you are in the city, or just passing through, have fun at some of the highly recommended tourist spots, such as the Civic Center for the classical arts, Crockett Street for the night life, and Ford Park for sporting events and premier entertainment. Just remember to thank your table salt for what it did to help this great city become what it is today.

Source(s):

http://www.cityofbeaumont.com/

http://www.priweb.org/ed/pgws/history/spindletop/spindletop.html

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