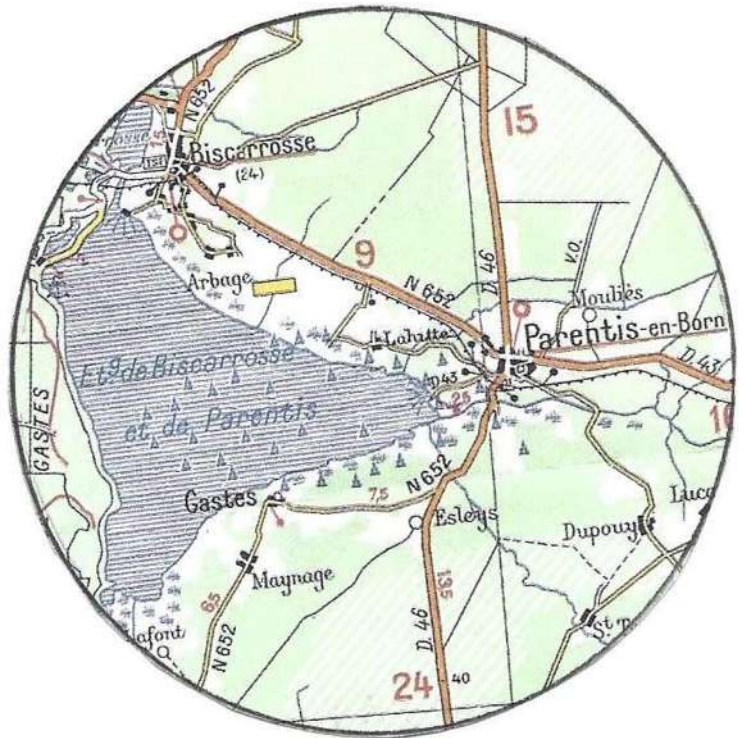


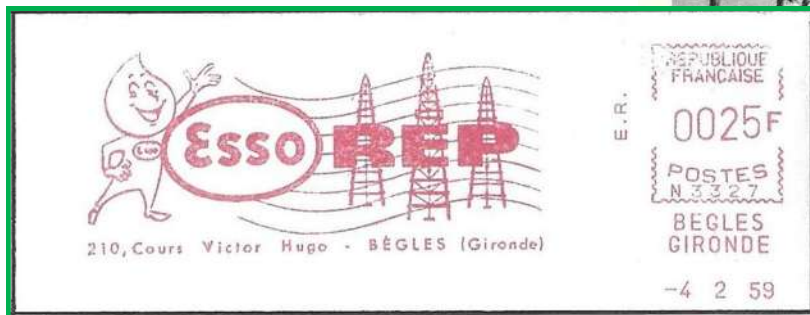
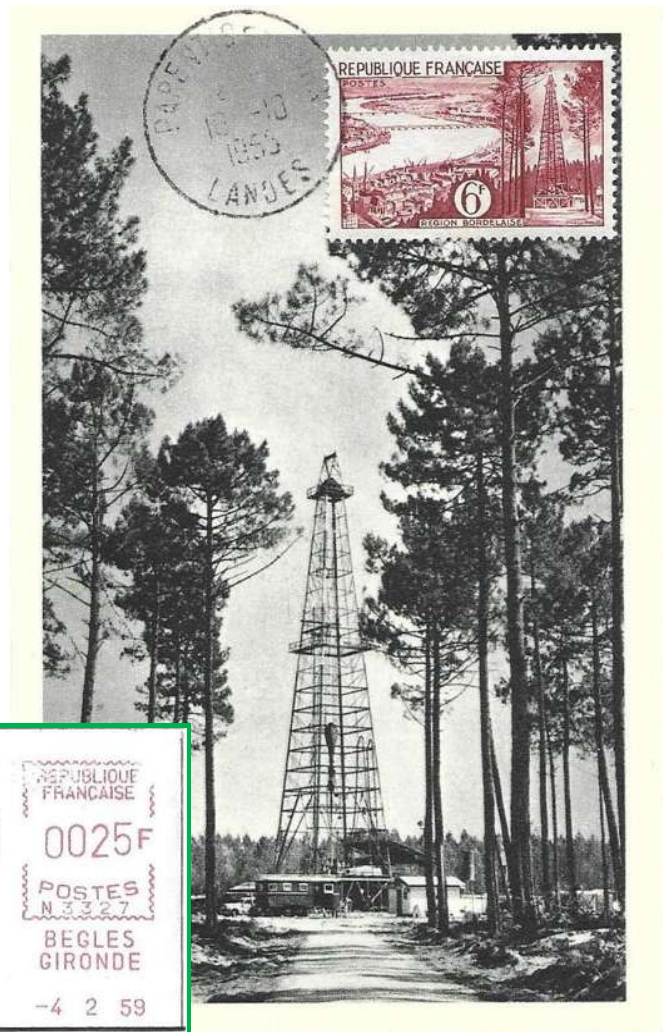
# PARENTIS PETROLEUM

*"The small French Maracaibo" by Pierre Generosi*



**We always pump at Parentis. It has been 67 years since oil was discovered there, in March 1954, making the Landais village (location as shown on the maps above) a small "French Texas".**

In the middle of the 50's, France timidly started its transformation from coal to oil. For several years, geologists had been assuming that the Landais sub-soil and its sedimentary basin must be favorable for the composition of gas and oil. The first geological studies, carried out by a geologist from Bordeaux





and two American geologists, date back to 1939.

The exploration work really started at the end of the Second World War, after obtaining the first research permits. It was thus true, the French subsoil did contain oil.

On March 25, 1954, Victory! A borehole drilled by Esso REP (see meter mark overleaf), a subsidiary of Esso SAF on the shores of Lake Parentis in Born revealed this existence.

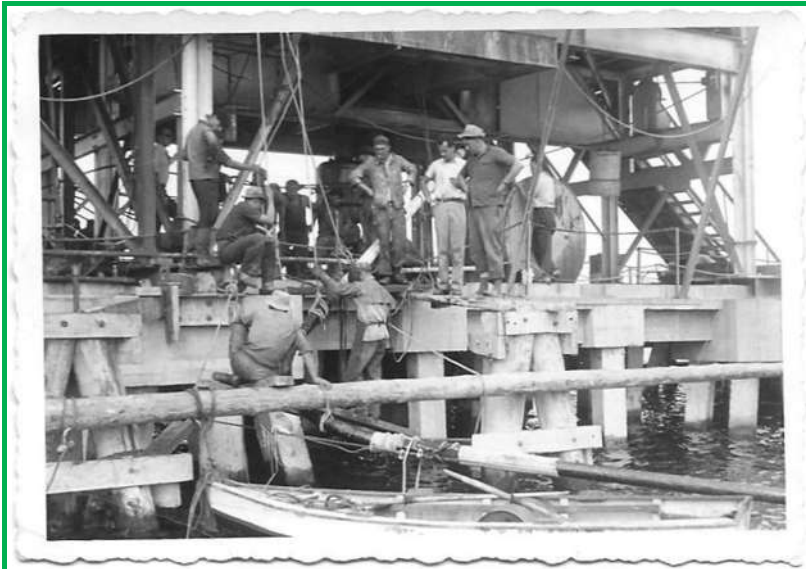
The well, Parentis 1 (shown on the postcard below), was cased down to 2250m and produced 500 to 600 M<sup>3</sup> of crude oil per day. The P1 well was then one of the most powerful wells in Europe, and one of the best quality (very low sulfur content). Following the drilling of about thirty wells around the lake of Parentis, it was realized that the most important part of the deposit was under this lake.

In 1955 the first underwater drilling in Europe "Parentis 11" was carried out at a point where the depth of the lake varies between 4.80m and 5.50m. The chief engineer of the project was inspired by the Lake of Maracaibo in Venezuela for the develop-

ment of the Parentis field. The lake of Parentis could be assimilated to Maracaibo for its shallow water depth (10 to 20 meters). The central platform that carried the derrick and the winch was made up of a 125 m<sup>2</sup> concrete slab, supported by 36 4-ton reinforced concrete piles, 15 m long and driven an average of 7m into the ground. This platform supported 550 tons of material (as shown on the postcard above).

The 2 linked platforms (for tanks, housing, sludge pumps, rod reserves) cover 830 m<sup>2</sup>, and are built on 386 pine piles 11 m long. The floor that covers them is very tightly assembled (identical to an apartment floor) with a bund, all caulked to avoid pollution of the lake by infiltration of the chemicals that are used





*Piping Installation - Pierre's father is at the right, with hat and hands on his hips! As usual, you have three watching, for each worker...*

From the outset, Esso REP applied water injection to maintain reservoir pressure, and in a quarter of a century Esso REP has extracted just over 29 million M3 of crude oil from some 40 wells, most of them drilled from lake platforms. After having produced more than 4000 M3/day until 1969, the output gradually declined, reducing production down to 1000 M3/day, in 1975. The abandonment of the deposit could then have been considered.

However, after the oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 and the resulting increases in oil prices, the production of Parentis, even though quite modest compared to French needs, is not considered as negligible. Esso REP (meter mark at foot of page), the concessionaire of the operation, reinvested for a few more years and decided in 1980

in mixing the sludge. (See the photo at right). To exploit the black gold, collection networks were built from the producing wells: comprising sub-lake pipes and buried pipes (see above and overleaf), treatment and storage facilities. The oil was first evacuated by rail and sea to the ESSO refinery in Port Jérôme on the Lower Seine.

to launch three drilling campaigns on the lake. It was necessary to carry out additional drilling without an excessive increase in the number of platforms to protect the environment. In the event, 7 new metal platforms of 60 m<sup>2</sup> each were installed on the lake, each of which could accommodate 4 wells, 3 of which were drilled with horizontal sections. These new wells were drilled from a Catamaran barge supporting derrick and auxiliaries, and all utilize a "Gas-Lift" activation technique.

Most of the crude oil was later processed in the new ESSO refinery in Ambés, commissioned in 1959 (meter mark overleaf), to which Parentis was connected by an 80km 12" pipeline. At that time it was a real economic revolution for southwestern France. Nowadays, the pipeline evacuates the crude oil directly to the Bec d'Ambés oil terminal (the refinery having closed in 1985). From there, it is transported by tanker to the Total refinery in Donges.

However, in the mid-1990s, a change in strategy



*Meter Marks shown At Right and Below: Top: Esso Refinery at Ambes Middle: Vermillon Rep SAS Below: Esso REP*



**ESSO REP**

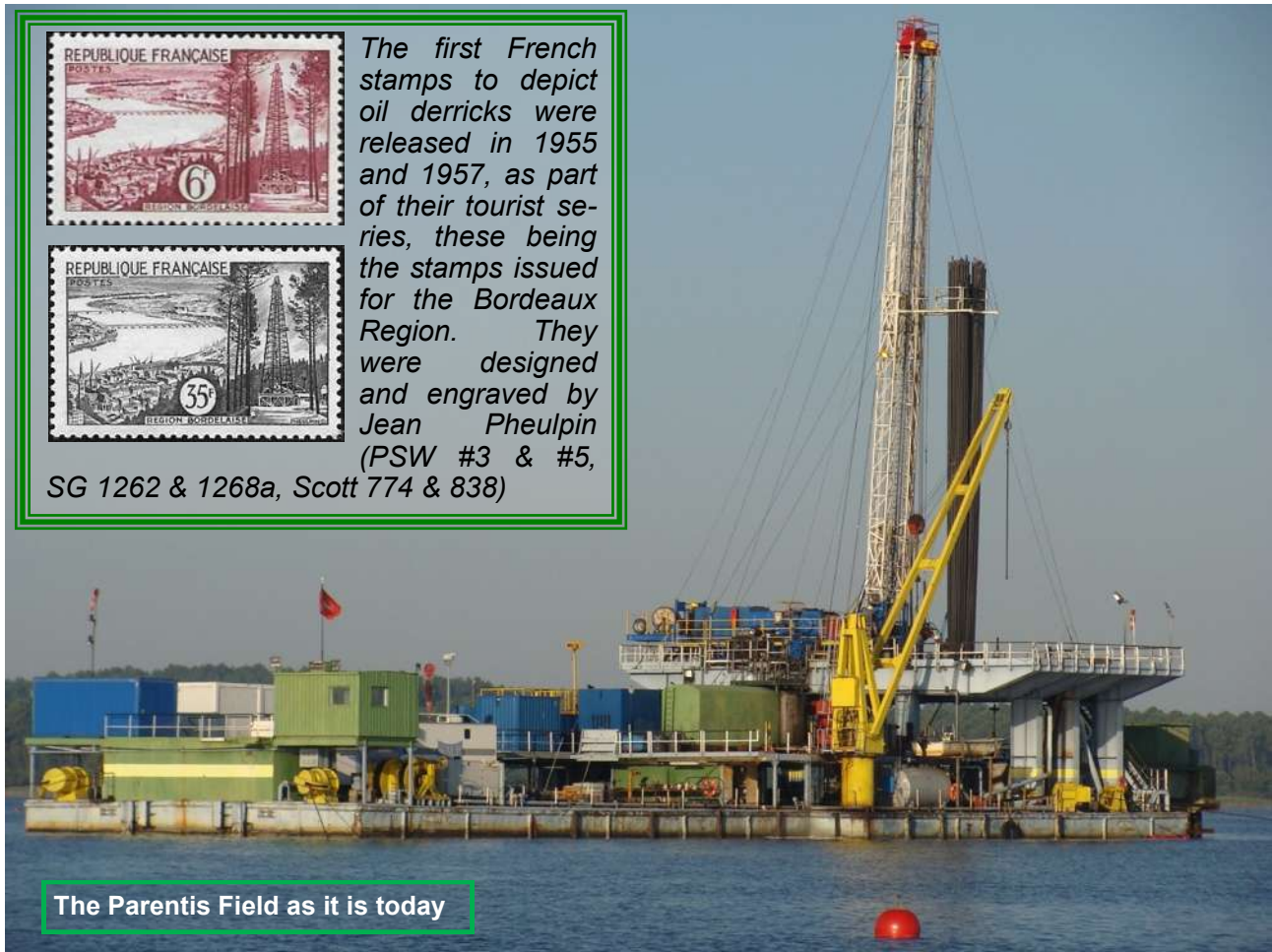
SOCIETE ESSO DE RECHERCHES ET D'EXPLOITATION PETROLIERES  
Société Anonyme au Capital de 50 855 200 francs  
213, cours Victor-Hugo - 33323 BEGLES CEDEX  
Tél. 56 49 82 00



**ESSO REP**

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33323 BEGLES CEDEX





took place. Exxon/Esso withdrew from the Landes in favor of more profitable oil zones. The Parentis site was not abandoned for all that. In 1997, Esso REP's assets were taken over by the Canadian company VERMILLON (meter mark on previous page), an oil company specializing in the ultimate pumping of hydrocarbon reserves.

Since 1997, it has been constantly optimizing the site, with several wells being reconditioned and then put back into service using new pumping techniques. (see the image above)

Today, Parentis retains its position as the leading French deposit. Since 1954, 130 wells have been drilled on the concession, 70 operating platforms are distributed on and around the Parentis lake. The concession produces an average of 1500 barrels of crude oil per day.

The concession has been granted until 2031. According to some specialists, it is a deposit that could produce until 2055, or even 2060. A hundred-year-old producing field?



In 1958 to celebrate the launch of the **Esso Parentis tanker** the bronze artist Georges Guiraud was commissioned to produce a souvenir medal. One side shows the tanker, and the other a nude woman and oil wells in the Parentis field. The medal is over 3 inches in diameter and weighs 10.4 ounces. The tanker was launched from the Chantiers deL'Atlantique yard in St. Nazaire.

She had a displacement of 38,000 tons with a length of 212.6m, a beam of 28.8m and a capacity of 51,500 cubic metres. On November 6, 1977 she arrived at Kaohsiung, Taiwan for breaking up ♦