



Ralph J. Roberts (1911-2007)

1989 Medal of Merit Recipient

Ralph J. Roberts obtained undergraduate and Master of Science degrees from the University of Washington in geology and chemistry and was awarded a Ph.D. from Yale University in 1949. While working with the United States Geological Survey, Dr. Roberts is acknowledged to have been responsible for the development and definition of the Carlin mineral deposits in north central Nevada by the publication of his paper on Alignment of mining districts in north central Nevada in 1960. Based on the theories set forth in this and others of Roberts' reports, there are now more than fifteen mines and promising prospects along the Carlin belt, including gold reserves totaling more than 100 million ounces.

In 1971, Dr. Roberts assisted the Saudi Arabian government in identification of the ancient Mahd adh Danahab gold mine (probably the historic King Solomon's Mine) and supervised exploration of the target, which had estimated reserves in 1988 of a million tons of one-ounce of gold per ton.

After retiring from the U.S.G.S. in 1981, Dr. Roberts has continued his career providing advice to numerous companies for projects within the Carlin belt. In 1985, he was awarded the distinguished service award by the United States Department of Interior for his contribution to understanding of controls of mineralization in north central Nevada and Saudi Arabia. In 1987, he was given the "Man of the Year" award by the Nevada Mining Association for his efforts in delineating the mineral belts in Nevada. In 1989, the Geological Society of Nevada awarded Dr. Roberts its first honorary membership for his contributions to the structural and stratigraphic controls for deposits in Nevada and Utah.