The Mine That Ate a Town

The story of the Sans Bois Mine, the town of McCurtain and the mine's owners, U.S. Industrialists Henry Clay Frick, Andrew Carnegie & Andrew Mellon

About the Author



David D. Roberts is an accomplished political strategist, author, and advocate from Oklahoma whose career is dedicated to advancing progressive policy, economic development, and historical preservation.

A recognized expert in campaign strategy and public affairs, Roberts founded and led Sooner Strategies, a prominent political consulting firm, from 2020 to 2022. His executive success led to key leadership roles within the Oklahoma Democratic Party as Director of Development and External Relations and, subsequently, as Political Director for the Oklahoma AFL-CIO. In the latter role, he served as a principal lobbyist, successfully advocating for legislation that protected and expanded workers' rights across the state.

Roberts is the author of the influential "Political Campaign Playbook," a definitive guide that distills his extensive frontline experience into actionable insights for running and winning modern political campaigns. The work is hailed for distilling complex, insider knowledge into an accessible and powerful resource.

His dedication to public service is rooted in his Oklahoma upbringing in rural McCurtain, Haskell County. A standout scholar, he was awarded the prestigious Charles L. Ford Scholarship to Northeastern State University (NSU), where he earned a degree in Political Science. At NSU, his leadership was profound: he served as President of the NSU College Democrats, President of the historic Phi Lambda Chi Fraternity (Beta Chapter), and on numerous boards including the Model United Nations and the Interfraternity Council. His early excellence was recognized with honors such as the George W. Bush Volunteer Service Award, an Oklahoma State House Citation for Leadership, and an invitation to serve as Governor Brad Henry's student-host at the inaugural ball.

Beyond politics, Roberts is a committed historian and civic entrepreneur. His archival research into the Sans Bois Mine disaster culminated in the 2024 publication of his preliminary findings, contributing valuable scholarship to Oklahoma's historical record. In addition to his civic contributions, Roberts famously secured over $1.5 million in state and federal funding for rural community projects and local government organizations in Southeastern Oklahoma, further demonstrating a tangible commitment to Oklahoma's growth and prosperity.