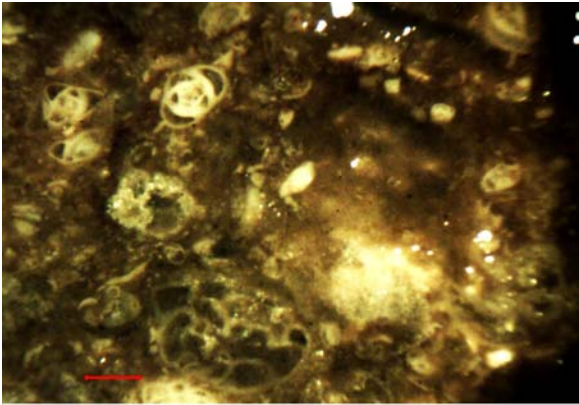


Cuttings and cores represent a vast knowledge resource that has been underutilized in recent years because the skills to comprehensively describe them have not been renewed as geologists retired. In place of cuttings and core description the industry has grown around sequence stratigraphy using seismic data and geophysical logging data.

There was a time when every geologist entering the oil and gas business spent time on well site and with mentors describing samples. As technology changed the industry began to rely more on geophysical response to describe the rocks encountered in a wellbore. The connection between the rocks and their geophysical characteristics was lost for many geologists. Thomas Wynn and Fred Read in the December



2006 AAPG Bulletin published *Sequence Stratigraphic Analysis using Well Cuttings, Mississippian Greenbrier Group, West Virginia*. Using cuttings, they were able to build a high resolution sequence stratigraphic framework for this reservoir. Interpretation using rock data enhances interpretation using only geophysical data (wireline logs and seismic) clarifying subtle facies changes, subsidence patterns, and regional structures.

The image to the left shows some of the detail that can be seen within a well cutting of foraminiferal limestone using techniques learned in the descriptive lithology course.

The [Descriptive Lithology](#) course is designed to bring basic interpretive skills back to the geologist to enhance their ability to find oil and gas by focusing on the fundamentals. These skills supplement modern wireline logging technology and can be applied to development geology and exploration geology to better describe reservoirs, recognize by-passed pays, etc.