



## Haugen In Oil Business Since Kerosene Days

John Haugen, one of the oldest men in point of service in the oil business in Merrill, founded his Haugen Oil company in the spring of 1929.

He had been in the oil business for twelve years at that time. He started in 1917, working for Andrew Arveson in the Standard Oil company. The main product sold was kerosene, and oil trucks were unknown.

Driving a team for Standard he worked from five in the morning until ten or twelve at night, covering a route that included all the rural centers such as Dudley, Bloomville, Gleason, and Irma. The company had a small gasoline bulk plant, but the use of automobiles was only then becoming wide enough to make gasoline a generally-sold product.

When Mr. Arveson founded his own Arveson Oil company Mr. Haugen continued under his employ until Arveson left the business, when Haugen started in for himself.

At present Mr. Haugen has his own 48,000 gallon capacity bulk plant at the foot of West Third street near the gas plant. He has two trucks with which he supplies his dealers. Since he started he has handled Deep Rock products with a few Pennsylvania oil products not handled by Deep Rock.

Mr. Haugen is now opening a station at the corner of First and Pier streets, which is to be named through a contest closing the twentieth of this month.

## Goetsch, Last Livery Man, Now Garageman

Gustave C. Goetsch knows now that life is composed of a series of new starts. Three times in his 71 years he has seen some changes come about that compelled him to quit the occupation in which he was comfortably established and start all over in something else. Each time, however, he has been able to turn the trick and come out on top.

When he was 65, after a lifetime of working with and handling horses, he closed up the last livery stable in Merrill and transformed it into a garage. Now his garage business is going along nicely and he hopes that it will not stop, for he says, he is tired of making new starts.

Born in a pioneer home, Mr. Goetsch's boyhood was spent in the woods way back before there was any Merrill. He got scant schooling, as scant as came the way of most boys who lived in Wisconsin's timber country of that time. At 16 he got a job with a road crew.

Even in his youth, young Gustave was so adept with horses that after a few months he was made a full fledged teamster and given \$25 a month when the scale was only \$18. He worked as a teamster and in the woods around Merrill, Schofield and Mosinee. After a time at various jobs he saw his chance to get into business for himself.

With his savings, \$115, he bought a horse, harness and rig and set himself up as the first busman in Merrill, then a sprawling sawmill town. For several years he prospered. Money came easier and more abundant than in his teamster days.

Then in 1889, the franchise was let for the first street car line in Merrill. Goetsch knew that his little business was doomed. He knew, however, that he wasn't licked and he soon found a way out. With his savings he bought a small piece of land with a little wooden barn on it and four or five more horses and some buggies and became a liveryman. He was abreast of the times again and soon more prosperous than ever.

In 1895 he built a new and larger barn to shelter his increased number of horses and equipment. For 30 years he prospered in the livery business but the number of automobiles increased yearly and he finally realized that the livery business, too, was doomed. Reluctantly he disposed of his horses and buggies in 1926, and called in a construction crew to pull out the stalls of the barn. A concrete floor was laid and the livery stable became a garage over night. A man who had spent more than half a century in working with horses could hardly be expected to become a first rate automobile mechanic so Mr. Goetsch decided to pass up all the complicated repair work and to sell gasolene, oil and accessories and to attempt only the simpler repair jobs. These he learned to do well and the garage became a going concern.

Right now there is considerable interest in aviation in Merrill and talk of a city airport. But Mr. Goetsch says that he has gone as far toward keeping abreast of the times as he is ever going to go. If airplanes run out the automobiles as the cars did the horses, he will, he says, retire.

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