

*Quality and service, a tradition for over a 100 years*

# OWENS MEATS

~ Est. 1887 ~



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The story of Owens Meats began an astonishing 128 years ago in Roslyn, Washington. The family business was established in 1887 -two years before Washington officially became a US State- by Morgan Owens. Lured to the region as a result of the coal rush, Morgan soon found that there was an entirely different market to be explored: feeding the legions of coal miners.

In 1906, after operating out of several different locations in Roslyn, including the first store which burned down, Owens Meats relocated to what is now the Past Time tavern. It was here where Morgan and his wife, Etta, handed the responsibility of the market to their sons Richard and David. Unfortunately, it wasn't long before the Owens brothers were faced with two daunting challenges for

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Though the business endured these hardships, the Owens brothers soon parted ways, which led to Richard bringing Owens Meats to its current location on First Street in Cle Elum. Along with his wife Francis and their two sons, Richard Jr and Ray, Richard Sr rebuilt the business after the incredibly trying depression.

Now in 2015, Doug Owens -fourth generation family member and President of Owens



Meats- detailed more of his family's history and how the store has changed over the years.

"After the difficulties of working through the depression," he said. "Grandpa Richard and his brother Dave went their separate ways. Granpa moved Owens Meats to Cle Elum in 1936. As a family, they all worked in the market. In 1948, they built a beautiful, state-



of-the-art slaughter house with a feed line, so they could control the quality of the beef they sold."

The 1960s saw another passing of the torch for Owens Meats. As business continued to boom, Richard Sr called it a career and his sons took over the family establishment. This development brought about another era of change for Owens Meats' business model.

"In 1968, Richard decided to retire, so the meat market and meat ranch were divided between Rich Jr and Ray," said Doug. "Ray ended up with the meat market, and he decided to do away with the retail side of the



business and focus on locker beef and custom kill and cutting. The retail counters were taken down and covered until 1982."

Ray Owens and his wife Janet ended up having five children who all worked in the shop until they made their career choices. Twin brothers Don and Doug were the youngest of the fourth generation, and even early on, the pair had a strong influence on the business.

"We worked the shop steady since we were children, and in 1982, we talked dad into putting up a retail counter again," Doug explains. "We bought a smoker and a stuffer,



and we started making all of our own smoked meats. Our retail business continued to grow, along with the wholesale side where we sold carcass beef to 30 different shops around the state. "

In 1988, Ray Owens was elected County Commissioner and retired from the meat market, leaving his shares to Don and Doug. And just as they had convinced their father to bring back the retail aspect of Owens Meats, it didn't take long for the twins to implement their retail strategies as they took over the business.

"Don and I have quit doing custom killing

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and cutting," Doug said. "We quit cutting deer and elk, and we quit selling wholesale meats to other meat shops around the state so that we could focus entirely on the retail end of the business. And boy, has it paid off!"

"We've also gotten into specialty foods," he added. "Such as barbeque sauces, pickles, fruits and a wide variety of delicious and hard-to-come-by products."

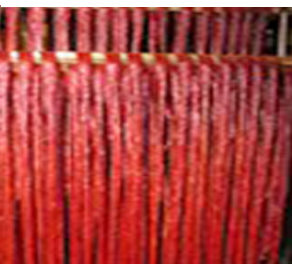
## CRITICAL ACCLAIM

In order for a business to thrive for well over a century, it requires passion, hard work, and a product which resonates with its custom-

ers. It's clear that the Owens family possesses all of these qualities, and Owens Meats was awarded the 2014 Family Business Award for a Small Firm.

"It's hard to explain how proud we are," Doug said of the award. "And I believe a lot of our employees as well. They're proud to be in this business."

"It means the world to us," he continued. "We've never been people who go out of our way to try and get recognition, all we've done is work our tails off here for our whole life. But to be able to have built a business



that touches as many people as it does, and then have the recognition for it, we're just extremely proud to be a part of this business."

## THE FUTURE OF OWENS MEATS

As the shop will celebrate its 130th anniversary in 2017, it's a good time to look to the future, as well as reflect on the past. While Doug wouldn't "let the cat out of the bag" about the next phase of Owens Meats, he did say that the next generation is gearing up for their chance to lead.

"We have been grooming the fifth generation

for some years now, and they're excited to take on larger roles in the business," he said. "We think in the next five years, we will look back and think 'Man, we thought we were busy back then!'"

Doug also took a moment to reflect upon his family and their loyal customers, "We're so blessed and thankful for our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents, we could never thank them enough for the commitments they made. And we love and appreciate our customers more than words can say."

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