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"Hufham" Is A Name Synonymous With Quality Signs Used In The Roseburg Area For Upwards Of Some 40 Years

This sign business was established here in 1913 by Roy Hufham and has been in continuous operation since that time with the exception of a short period during World War One — Paul Hufham is the owner and operator today.

BY R. KENNETH EVANS

Along in 1913, when Roy Hufham designed and painted a sign to be used by some Roseburg firm, it was necessary for him to put the name "Hufham Signs," down in a corner in small letters, so the people would know who created it. Today, when one sees the average attractive sign gracing some commercial or industrial establishment in Roseburg, the Hufham technique and style, in itself, shows that it is a Hufham sign. The sign shop was located in the building occupied, today, by the Local Loan company. With the exception of a short period during World War One — while Roy Hufham served with the United States air-corp, this sign company has been in continuous operation since its founding, almost forty years ago. Roy Hufham passed away in 1949 but, not before this sign firm had been established as an important and integral part of the commercial and industrial economy of Roseburg and this region.

It would be hard for the majority of the residents of Roseburg, today, to recall anytime that they have not seen a sign made by Hufham Signs. The sign shop, 430 North Jackson Street, operated by Hufham Signs, is one of the most completely equipped sign shops to be found anywhere in southwest Oregon and one of the few that can supply any type of sign that might be needed or desired. This includes signs of any reasonable size in hand lettering or, a custom made Neon sign, in colors, can be designed and manufactured. Never is a sign designed, manufactured and placed in position that does not have behind it, efficient service, to keep it in the "pink" of condition. This policy, alone, has built an enviable reputation for Hufham Signs, for quality and dependability.

Sign Art Is A Century Old

With the exception of new lettering styles, better weather resisting paints and, individual techniques in designing, the painting of signs is done, practically, the same way that they have been created in the last century. It takes from 8 to 10 years of training and experience for a sign painter to acquire enough knowledge to do a good and acceptable job. It requires as much time to get the basic knowledge for painting signs as that necessary for a student doctor, including his internship, before he is licensed to practice internal medicine or surgery. A customer who orders a sign from a recognized and capable sign painter such as Hufham Signs need have no worry about its quality. The sign painter, himself, is always trying to improve his skilled art in order that he can do a better job of creating and making a sign.

There is no creation that has changed and revolutionized the appearance of the small towns, principle cities and metropolitan centers in the nation, in the last quarter-of-a-century, as neon lighting. Long before the traveler reached the average trading center like Roseburg, he can vision colored lighting reflected in the sky and, he knows he is nearing a modern community. Business streets have been changed from the dull and drab impression created by the incandescent street lights that are, today, overshadowed by the canyons of colored lights, constantly changing their appearance and awe inspiring effects.

Moving Neon More Valuable

Stationary units or flood lighting or sign lighting reflectors make use of several glass tubes to combine colors but, the resulting hue is permanent, and, does not have the attention value of movement, dominant today, which gives the rotating effect. For example, with Hufham Signs, neon glass used in connection with this type of lighting, can be made to provide considerable variation in effect, which, materially increases its attention compelling value. These signs, by Hufham Signs, can operate on the principle of continuous color light movement which gives the effect of constantly flowing color. Various types of glass are used to create these effects and real skilled art is required to bend these glass

tubes into the desired design, and to form the letters.

Gold Leaf Lettering An Art

Gold leaf window lettering is, perhaps, the last stages of sign education the new man receives, according to Paul Hufham, who operates Hufham Signs, today. The gold leaf lettering and signs are done with pure 23 karat gold. This type of window lettering or signs has individuality for certain types of business that makes it different from what other firms might use and is, therefore, of more value from a commercial standpoint. To make these signs thin leaves of gold are beat out by hand, just as they were scores of years ago. Paul Hufham, who owns and operates Hufham Signs, today, started acquiring his basic education in 1911 attending the Roseburg grade schools. During his school days he spent much time around the sign shop that was being operated by his brother, Roy Hufham. Through this concentration and actual practical experience, by the time Paul Hufham graduated from the Roseburg High School, he had acquired a basic knowledge of the sign business.

Following his graduation Paul was employed by Roy Hufham, regularly, until by 1929, the fore-running economy of the greatest depression ever leveled on a nation caused Roy Hufham to reduce the operation of his plant to a one-man unit.

Fortunately, Paul Hufham had gained sufficient background in art to do a good job writing show-cards and trimming windows and, he was employed by Montgomery Ward & Company to do this work. He remained with this large commercial institution, creating signs, window and show cards, until he resigned and between the years 1941 to 1944 he lettered signs for war projects. He was located at the atomic plant, in Hanford, Washington, for three years.

Established Company In Portland

With the cessation of hostilities of World War Two, Paul Hufham left the Hanford plant and established his own sign shop in Portland located at 1530 West Burnside. He chose the name "Central Sign and Neon Company" and, from the very beginning, as a partnership, it was a very successful operation. When Roy Hufham, Paul's brother, passed on Paul disposed of his interests in the Portland sign company to his partner and returned to Roseburg. He negotiated with Roy's wife for purchase of the Hufham Signs and, the sale was consummated in March 1949. Since that time it has been operated under his ownership and management.

Paul Hufham was married in Roseburg to Eugenia Randall in 1928. Today, they live in their new home located at the fork of the north and south Umpqua rivers on Melrose road.

"Show card writing is a separate skill and, is a business all its own," stated Paul Hufham. "It is entirely different from painting signs. It requires a different type of brushes using water colors. There are many good sign painters who have not been able to acquire the art of show-card writing," Paul continued.

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