

2014 Grand Marshal Morrow County Grain Growers

Long-time Morrow County institution, the Morrow County Grain Growers, has been honored as the grand marshal for the 2014 Morrow County Fair and Rodeo. MCGG was first organized on March 18, 1930 in the Ione High School gym when 100 farmers pledged 183,000 bushels of wheat to cooperative selling. The cooperative was formed to give the local farmer more leverage and higher prices in the market place. The articles of incorporation were filed on April 2, 1930. On April 18, 1931, the Lexington Oil Cooperative was formed. The oil Cooperative began purchasing gas and lubricating oils from Portland, passing the savings on to the producers in the area that were shifting their farming from horses to tractors. The producers found that just as with wheat, oil prices were more to their advantage through cooperatives.

In 1932, the cooperative went into wheat storage. On April 1, 1940, Morrow County Grain Growers purchased the assets of Farmers Elevator Company adding Heppner, McNab and Ione Elevators. In 1952, North Lexington and Ruggs Elevators were built. In 1954, the cooperative built a grain elevator on the Columbia River at the site where the Patterson Ferry took vehicles across the river from Oregon to Patterson,

Washington. The Ferry ceased operation when the Umatilla Bridge was built several miles upriver. The company bought the property from the last operators of the Patterson Ferry, gentlemen whose last names were Hogue and Warner, hence the name, Hogue Warner.

Hogue Warner has evolved over the years to become one of the most efficient facilities on the lower Columbia River for unloading trucks. The company

currently operates eight-grain elevators, one of which is leased. Total license capacity is 3,934,000 bushels.

In 1967 Morrow County Grain Growers, Inc. merged with Lexington Oil Cooperative, placing the company in the retail business, selling hardware, fuel and tires. About that same time, the company bought Lexington Implement Co. from Red Leonard and became an International Harvester Farm Equipment and Truck Dealer.

In 1971, the cooperative moved into the building now occupied in Lexington, putting all three of the former

companies in one location.

In 1976, the company bought the Cenex Soil Service Center in Ione, Oregon, adding Fertilizer and Chemical sales to its retail business.

In 1987, the company purchased Pettyjohn Oil Co. in Ione, doubling the petroleum

volume the company was doing at that time. The Fertilizer Department moved their office to the building Pettyjohn operated from.

In 1988, they expanded its farm equipment dealership into Sherman and

Wasco counties by opening a parts store at Sherman Farm Cooperative's new Farm Store in Wasco, Oregon.

In 1989, the company bought Heppner Nor-Gas, adding more diversification and helping with cash flow during the winter months when seasonally things were slow for the other departments within the company.

In 1991, they began selling fertilizer and chemicals at Wasco. In 1997, the company built a new facility at Wasco, putting the Agronomy and Machinery dealership together in their own facility.

In 2002, MCGG sold its

tire inventory to Les Schwab and exited the tire business. Also in 2002, MCGG purchased the Polaris ATV and Snowmobile dealership in Lexington.

In 2005, the cooperative purchased Green Feed and Seed in Heppner. The company consolidated its inventory of clothing, fencing, livestock equipment, and animal health products to the Green Feed and Seed store in Heppner. In 2006, the cooperative purchased the inventory of Heppner Auto Parts in Heppner and moved the NAPA inventory to its Lexington store.

One January 1, 2007, the cooperative purchased NAPA Auto Parts stores located in Boardman, Oregon, and Umatilla, Oregon. The acquisition of these two stores complemented the vision of the company to strategically focus the organization for long-term success at serving the members by focusing employees on delivering maximum value at what they do now and looking for new products and services in growing markets

to properly balance the portfolio of services and mitigate market risk.

Currently, the cooperative is serving 7 counties in north central Oregon and Klickitat



County in Washington, with its Farm Equipment dealership and its Agronomy department. The Energy department serves 5 counties in Oregon. Grain comes to Hogue Warner from as far away as the state of Idaho. Hogue Warner Elevator is strategically located, making it a terminal of choice for trucks needing a back haul of grain out of the Boise Valley area. With over 70 full time employees and now over 600 members, Morrow County Grain Growers Incorporated is a story of growth, diversification, consolidation and vision for the future success of its members

MCGG celebrated its golden anniversary with festivities in 1980. In addition to current manager John Ripple, past managers include Larry Mills, Harlan McCurdy, Jr., and Al Lamb. The first general manager was Amil Swanson.

Morrow County Grain Growers, Inc., serving your community since 1930



MCGG main office in Lexington