

Musson Led Ready-Mix Parade

With construction work in full swing throughout the Northwoods, the sight of big mixer trucks hauling ready-mix concrete is a common occurrence on highways and streets.

But 33 years ago this was not the case, for the first ready-mix operation in northern Wisconsin was just being started by Musson Brothers Company of Rhinelander. At the time some people thought it was a gamble—that there wouldn't be enough

sistent or of equal quality.

The first big use of ready-mix by the Musson firm was on paving the major runway at Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport in the summer of 1948. Musson Brothers submitted the low bid of \$148,232 for the project, \$22,000 below the next lowest proposal. Five firms bid on the job.

The job called for 50,000 square feet of six-inch deep concrete pavement—a slab 3,900 feet long and 100 feet wide—on the northeast-southwest runway.

For Chet Musson the introduction of ready-mix concrete in northern Wisconsin was just another business success in a career which started after he completed the eighth grade. In those days many young men went to work after eight grades of schooling.

Born in Neecedah May 24, 1899, Chet Musson went to work in Rhinelander in 1917, being hired by the Daniels firm, now known as Daniels Packaging Co. Then he worked for the Ford garage in Tomahawk for five years, gaining experience in that field.

In 1925 he joined with the late Reuben Anderson in opening the Ford agency at Tripoli, then a thriving town. In the fall of 1928 they went to Chassell, Mich., to operate a garage, returning to Rhinelander in 1932 to open the Musson-Anderson garage at the northeast corner of Rives and Anderson Streets. A few years later the garage was moved to Stevens Street, to the site now a parking lot for First National Bank. Musson and Anderson sold the business in the fall of 1941 and Herman Persike operated it as



Chet Musson with the old type mechanized shovel and light truck used when he started in the construction business 33 years ago.

Oneida Motor Sales.

During World War II Chet Musson was engaged in logging, but in 1945 he and brother Charles began the construction business known as Musson Brothers. Chet bought out Charles in 1964.

In 1956 the Musson firm added asphalt paving to its line of construction materials and in April 1963 Chet and two sons, Bernard and Thomas, purchased the Genisot Engineering Co. concrete block plant on North Stevens Street. Thomas has managed this firm since.

While Chet devoted long hours to the construction business, he also found time to get involved in community affairs. He was a member of the Lions and Rotary Clubs, was active in the Rhinelander Industrial Development Corp. and served on the board of directors of Merchants

Bank and Trust from Nov. 16, 1960 to Feb. 16, 1976. A son, Dexter, replaced him on the board when he retired.

He took an active part in helping develop the Camp 10 ski hill and had a role in the operation of the famed Hodag 50 snowmobile races which were popular through the 1960s.

No longer actively involved in the business, Chet enjoys working in the large flower and vegetable garden he and his wife, Elaine, have developed behind their home.

But the Musson Brothers name still is applicable, for sons Bernard and Dexter and grandson Tim are running the company while Tom manages Concrete Products. There are two other Musson sons—Richard works for Daniels and Alfred is manager of Aryways Store in Champaign, Ill.

I Remember...

By KRIS
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business to warrant the expensive equipment required.

However, Chester R. Musson, who started the firm with his brother Charles in 1945, was a man of vision. He was certain the area was ready for ready-mix concrete and that there would be sufficient demand for the product to make the venture pay. He was right, and today there are dozens of ready-mix firms in northern Wisconsin.

Until 1946 concrete was mixed on the construction site, often a slow operation which delayed building work at times. And the resulting mix was not always con-