

Keith's Corner/McGill News

February 7, 2020

O'Neil Service Station

Ray and Mary O'Neil had a gas and service station on main street in the building that is now called the Standard Market building. There were two gas pumps on the edge of the street, with just enough space to park a car and get gas. In those days there were only two pumps needed as there were only two grades of gas, ethyl and regular. There was a third kind that was kept inside the lube bay. It was called white gas and was used in Coleman lanterns and stoves. White gas was the original stuff for gas engines, but as the engines became more advanced they developed a "knock" so leaded gas was introduced to stop the "knock". Now of course the price of gas had to rise to compensate for the added lead. Ironically in later years the government outlawed lead in gas and of course the price had to rise to compensate for taking out the lead.

The O'Neil station had a lube room on the south end of the building. On the north end the school buses were kept. Both places have been bricked up. As a bus driver in the 50s I remember how small the entrance was and how little room we had to get in and out.

Up on the second floor were two apartments and some rental lockers to store frozen foods. The basement in the back was a car repair garage.

I tried to find out what year it was built. There is a photo taken from atop the Clubhouse looking south and shows the Boarding House, built in 1924. It is not clear whether or not the O'Neil station is there.



This is a photo taken in the late 40s. I enlarged this to show the sign better.



It reads “Nash” at the top and “Storage” on the vertical and “Lafayette” on the bottom. Lafayette was a Nash model. It was introduced in 1922. In later years it had the first electric clock to be in a car.

Here is a different photo of the sign enlarged, to read easier. Nash on vertical, “parts” on top and “Service” on bottom. The other sign is on the McGill Club and is for Budweiser. The McGill Theatre is visible. I think the black sign on the left, just above the car, is mounted above the gas pumps. Can’ make out what it says. Some kind of gas additive?? Early 1950s.



The photos I took these from are shown in the Old Photos section below.

McGill News

The month of January went out like a lamb with some nice 40 degree days. Not much snow yet.

Recently McGill got hammered with some horrible winds. Yeah, as if that has never happened before. The roof on the old "Standard Market " building has been peeling off for years and during this wind storm, a lot of it flew off. Much of it hit Marie's Café owner's car. There was over \$8000 damage. Her husband Dave's truck was also hit. The insurance company tried to sue the buildings owners, the O,Neil Bros., but one had died and the other is in a nursing home. The rumors around here now are that the place is for sale. Will have more on this next week.

Old Photos



This is the photo I enlarged to try to read the Nash, Lafayette sign. Notice the Texaco star on the gas pump at the left side o. This was the pump in front of the Goodman-Tidball store. Don't see any 1950 or later autos.



This is the photo I enlarged to get the Sales and Service sign. I plan to enlarge this one to work on the other side of the street. Lots of stuff to discover. I will have it for next week.

I am always looking for old photos of McGill. Maybe there are some in some old pictures in your family albums. I would appreciate any that show parts of McGill. Just return email me. Thanks



What the O'Neil place looks like now.