



KNOX AUTO SUPPLY  
727 MILLER STREET  
KNOX, PA 16232

Lets swing the business spotlight over to 727 Miller Street this month and feature a legendary Knox business that is now into their 57th year of operation. "KNOX AUTO SUPPLY" has been delivering the goods and providing their great service & shop work now since 1959, with no end in sight. Knox Auto Supply is well known in the entire tri state area, they have a fantastic reputation of being a high quality vendor that people in the industry can trust & count on. From day one the business has always been multi focused in providing quality auto parts, machine shop services, engine rebuilds, Knox Auto Supply has done it all over the years and continues on in the same tradition.

Lots of great history here that begins with "Joseph Fred Mays" who was born in the Callensburg area of Clarion County on May 6th, 1934. Later known to all simply as Fred, he was the oldest sibling from a family of six who all ended up relocating to Knox. Fred graduated from the White Memorial High School in 1952 and married his high school sweetheart Ruby Monrean in 1954. Ruby grew up out in Beaver City and walked daily to the Attleburger Road School, then attended the White Memorial High School where she graduated in 1953. Fred & Ruby began their life together, both always working at different jobs in those younger days. They even moved out to Hubbard Ohio for awhile where Fred worked for the Erie Railroad Company, and Ruby worked for the Federal Wholesale Company. Things changed when Fred was drafted into the ARMY on December 12th, 1956. Ruby came back to the Knox area while Fred served his active duty time in the Army.

Fred served in the Army motor pool in Germany for 2 years where he drove trucks. While he was there he competed in driving skills and won an award for his driving abilities in those mountainous regions of Germany. When he returned stateside, Fred was on "ready reserve" till he was Honorably Discharged on March 31st, 1963 with a SP4 rank.

After returning home from active duty, the Erie Railroad job was in a "lay off" status. Fred was searching for an opportunity to do something as he was never one who could sit around idle. Many of the local auto repair shop owners told Fred he should go into the auto parts supply business. The auto supply in Knox at that time had closed its doors forcing the local repair shops to drive to Clarion for parts. This former supply house in Knox was called the "Knox Auto Parts & Supply Company". A man with the last name of "Slesnick" (no known first name) operated the business. It was located up on West Railroad Street across from where the present day Knox Laundromat is now. In February of 1959, Fred Mays rented this same building & opened up his new business called "Knox Auto Supply" on West Railroad Street. Ruby tells me these were key times in the history of the business, money was tight, she said they really started with practically nothing but managed to forge ahead. Fred employed two other people at that time doing car repairs, engine rebuilds and other service work.

1959.....Things were booming in Knox Pa and so was the automobile business. There were 3 auto dealers in town at that time. Chapman's Ford, Jordan's Chevrolet & Pierce Motor Company were all selling new cars. Knox had 4 gas (with service) stations at that time, and there were a host of different auto repair shops in and around the Knox area. Knox Auto Supply started doing business with them all.

1963.....As the business grew, so did the need for a new building to accommodate larger stock. Fred had a new building erected across town at 727 Miller Street (Rt 338) and Knox Auto Supply relocated to this present day address. With the new building, the business diversified & expanded even more adding Allis Chalmers, Terra Tigers, Boa Ski and Rupp snowmobiles as retail lines. Commercial business ramped up to serve the Knox Box & Glass plants, local coal industry, local oil & gas industry & railroad industry. They also became a service dealer - distributor for Briggs & Stratton, Kohler, and Tecumseh engines. The Service shop in the new building kept busy rebuilding starters, alternators and doing engine rebuilds. Knox Auto became the "go to" place to get it done.

Fred expanded the building two more times over the years, once in 1972 and again 1977. The current size of the building today is at 15,680 square feet.

1969.....Knox Auto Supply added a store in East Brady and did business there for 30 years, closing in 2001 when longtime store manager Melvin Monrean retired.

1987.....Knox Auto Supply officially "Incorporated"

1989.....Knox Auto Supply added a store in New Bethlehem that is running strong to date.

2002.....Knox Auto Supply teamed up with NAPA (National Auto Parts Association) to broaden their buying power on the national stage level.

2009.....Fred & Ruby, along with their two children (Dan Mays, and Glenda Mays Raybuck) celebrated the 50 year anniversary of the business with family, friends, employees & customers. Sadly, Joseph Fred Mays passed away shortly after this on April 17, 2010. Fred is missed by all.....

Today you will find the Mays family at the Knox & New Bethlehem stores daily. Dan & Glenda carry on in the spirit of their father, they both grew up in the Auto Parts business and that's what they do. Ruby tells me she doesn't do much these days, but I see her in the Knox store often. Fred's brother Dave Mays is their "outside sales" guy. Glenda's husband Kim Raybuck has been in there since high school and Glenda & Kim's son "Andrew" Raybuck has been at the store since he was in grade school. Today Andrew is the manager of the New Bethlehem store. Knox Auto Supply is in good hands these days, the tradition of excellence will carry on!

This mayor salutes Knox Auto Supply and we all say THANKS for being another one of the great Knox merchants we are proud to have in Knox Pa. Long Live Knox Auto Supply!