

## ***Ervy Christenson – Lake Village Businessman***

Julius Christensen (1857-1940) was born in Denmark and migrated to the United States ending up in Lake Village. He married Mary Ebert (1858-1924; she'd migrated from Germany). They had two sons, Ervy (8-8-1889 – 12-28-1978) and George (1880 – 1952) in Lake Village.

At an early age Ervy and his brother George were involved in farming south of Lake Village but decided on starting a business in the little town of Lake Village, IN. They built a 4,000 square foot building in Lake Village on the N.E. corner of what then was old Indiana Rt. 10 and US Hwy. 41, across the street from a grocery store that later became Hogan's Market.

During the early years they were involved in doing auto repair but eventually were able to purchase a Ford Franchise and began selling Model T Fords. Being entrepreneurs they opened a Shell Oil company and began delivering fuel oil and selling gasoline throughout the Newton County and surrounding areas.

Seeing an opportunity with the booming farming around the area, the Brothers purchased a McCormick-Dearing (Later International Harvester)

Dealership and started selling and repairing farm equipment around Lake Village.

Soon, after a few years, the brothers gave up selling Ford Model T's and started a Chevrolet Dealership along with expanding their current building, purchasing property around them and several years later purchasing the Hogan Market (across the street) for a show room and additional office space.

Their business continued to grow. George passed away in 1952 and as the Ervy got older, his son-in-law, Robert Ludwig, entered the business and took a larger role in managing.

### ***Article about G. & E. Christenson's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ...***

LAKE VILLAGE – Ervy Christenson will mark his fiftieth anniversary as a village businessman Tuesday with an open house celebration.

The public is invited to the day-long open house at G and E Christenson. The Christenson brothers, George and Ervy, first opened for business Sept. 15, 1920, after a six-month building project in which a 50 x 80 foot building was constructed.

During their first two years in business the two did automotive repair work before switching to sale of Model T Fords. When they first began selling Fords, dealers had to drive to Indianapolis or the Hegewisch section of Chicago and bring the cars back themselves.

The only alternative was having the cars shipped by rail and assembling the parts on arrival.

In 1926, the brothers obtained their Chevrolet franchise, the following year a Shell Oil Dealership and in 1930 added sale of International Harvester Farm Equipment and Tractors. At that time Chevrolets were driven in from Flint, Michigan, with the farm equipment coming from the Kankakee, Illinois Warehouse.

The brothers operated the business jointly until the death of George Christenson in 1952. During the past several years, Christenson has almost tripled the floor space of his original hand-poured concrete block building to 13,000 square feet.



**Ervy and his wife  
Minnie with their  
Daughter, Margaret**



He also has converted a former grocery store opposite the building to a showroom. Adjacent property has been used for a paint and implement assembly shop.

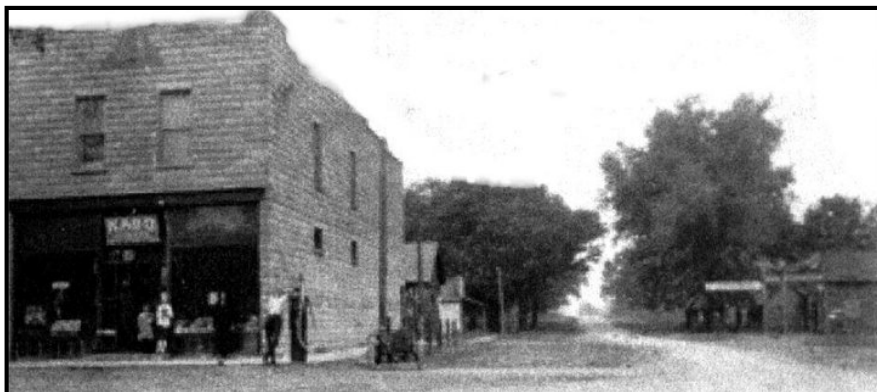
Ervy passed away at the age of 89 on December 28, 1978 at the George Ade Hospital in Brook, IN. His survivors included two daughters, Mrs. Margaret (Robert) Ludwig and Mrs. Doris (John) Petersen of Delphi. He also had four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Ervy is buried at the Lake Village Cemetery alongside his wife.



**Original Building – G & E Christenson Garage**



**Later picture showing the additions to the North & East**



**Picture of the old Hogan Market across the street, South of the Dealership**

*Information for this article was taken from various newspaper articles and pictures and Genealogy from the Christenson family by Dennis Boyd*

## Newspaper Articles

# Christenson Marks 50th

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## EVERY FARMER In Newton County

is invited to see a  
**REAL Combine Work**

**McCormick-Deering Dealers of Newton County**

Mitten and Oneal  
GOODLAND, IND.

Meyer Implement Co.  
MOROCCO, IND.

G. & E. Christenson  
LAKE VILLAGE, IND.

## ERVY CHRISTENSON

ERVY CHRISTENSON, age 89, of Lake Village, Indiana, passed away Thursday, December 28, 1978 at George A. Memorial Hospital, Brook, Indiana. Survivors: two daughters, Mrs. Margaret (Robert) Ludwig of Lake Village and Mrs. Doris (John) Petersen of Delphi, Indiana; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at Saturday, December 30 at 11:00 a.m. from the Sheets Funeral Home, 604 E. Commercial Ave., Lowell. Rev. James Lattie officiating. Burial, Lake Village Cemetery. Friends may call from 2 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m. Friday at the funeral home.

Mr. Christenson was president of the G. & E. Christenson Chevrolet Dealers of Lake Village, Indiana; charter member of the National Automobile Dealers Association; Charter member of the Auto Dealers of Indiana; was a 50 year franchise dealer with International Harvester; 50 year dealer with Shell Oil Company. He was also engage in farming.