

When The Automobile Came To Town

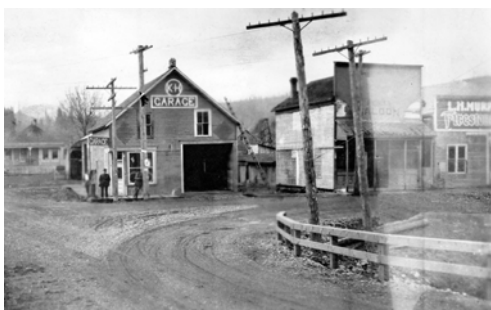
On July 23, 1900, an automobile travels on Seattle’s streets for the first time, owned by “capitalist” Ralph S. Hopkins. Here in Fall City, it was just a few years later that George Carmack and his wife would drive their Stanley Steamer through town, stopping in front of Charles Bonell’s store. This was the beginning of a transformation of Fall City businesses, with the rise of auto tourism on the Sunset Highway, creating restaurants, lodgings, and auto repair and service stations.



First car to visit Fall City, 1905. George Carmack and his wife in front of C. Bonell’s store

One of the first of these garages was K&H Garage, opened in 1916 by Jesse Kelley and Frank Howell, converting McLean’s Livery Stable in to an auto repair garage. K&H has changed hands through years, but remains in our community as the Tesoro station.

Model Garage also started in the early days of tourism, opening in 1920 by Lud Peterson. Lud began his auto repair business in the corner of a blacksmith shop, but quickly found larger space when the operator of Murphy Garage left town. Tourism continued to grow, and he invested in changes like adding a restroom and electric gas pumps in 1931. Though the garage has changed over the years, and is no longer a gas station, it is still open and family owned!



K&H Garage at intersection of River and Taylor streets, 1916



Lud Peterson’s first Model Garage, 1924

When rationing of gas and tires began with WWII, and later the construction of Interstate 90, the auto tourist industry all but left Fall City.