

HISTORY

THE WHEATON STORY 50 YEARS

The Wheaton family has grown from a small GM dealership to the largest General Motors merchandiser in Canada. Don Wheaton Sr. started with a hot dog stand in Bessborough Park in Saskatoon. In 1948 he got married and moved to Porcupine Plain Saskatchewan, population 600. He entered into a business partnership at the town's only General Store. He saw an advertisement at the local Post Office, asking people to write their name down if they were interested in buying the GM dealership. Don became the owner in 1955 and ran a successful business. In 1961 Hood Motors became available in Edmonton.

The second dealership was purchased in New Westminster and operated by Will Wheaton. Will moved to begin with the purchase of Art Hauser's thriving Chevrolet store. Dave Wheaton took over the reigns of the New West location, being the youngest person ever to be awarded a GM store. After a short stint, Dave moved to Victoria with the purchase of Empress Pontiac Buick. Other moves included Ross taking over the reigns of the Pontiac Buick GMC line in Saskatoon; while Herb, the youngest Brother, moved to Red Deer. Herb is currently the dealer principle at the Regina location.

Jane Wheaton became the driving force in Nanaimo until moving to England. Steve Laird, the brother-in-law runs this store, and in 2009 acquired Tom Harris Chevrolet.

Dave Wheaton has been on the move in Victoria by also owning the Saturn Franchise. He moved the Saturn car line twice to keep up with the expanding car line. In 2009 GM started winding down the Saturn line, but fortunately Dave had already purchased Cornell Chevrolet Cadillac two years earlier. This purchase gave the Wheaton's the much desired Cadillac line of cars and trucks for half of Vancouver Island.

2008 and 2009 brought many changes to all businesses and as you know to the car business in particular. In Nanaimo, Victoria, Prince George, and in the Vancouver area where two separate dealerships have been combined to operate as we call it to "operate all carlines under one roof top". Having the full carline that includes Chevrolet, Buick, GMC, and at some locations Cadillac actually strengthens the entire business. You, the customer can do all your shopping at one Wheaton location. The expense of operating two separate service departments, parts and sometimes body shops is now gone.

Each Wheaton dealership whether owned and operated by the Wheaton family or not has made an investment in every community. The investment is not just in bricks and buildings, but in the many employees that it takes to run a dealership today and to many charitable organizations that help other people to build strong families and strong communities.

Today 7 of the 8 Wheaton children are involved in the day to day operations of the car business in Western Canada. This all started because Don Sr. would take a child to the car dealership on a Saturday. They learned how exciting the car business could be. Now the second generation of Wheaton's are taking their kids down to their work on Saturday mornings.

For over 50 years the Wheaton family has proudly served Western Canada. With the dedication of the Wheaton's, the strengthened dealer network, the new GM and the experienced staff, success will continue in the automotive industry. This means YOU the customer will get the best service as affirmation to commitment.

Submitted by Ken Osman
Fleet and Lease Manager with the Wheatons for over 30 years

CITY'S SERVED

CAMROSE	ALBERTA
EDMONTON	ALBERTA
GRAND PRAIRIE	ALBERTA
RED DEER	ALBERTA
CHILLIWACK	BRITISH COLUMBIA
KAMLOOPS	BRITISH COLUMBIA
NANAIMO	BRITISH COLUMBIA
PRINCE GEORGE	BRITISH COLUMBIA
VICTORIA	BRITISH COLUMBIA
REGINA	SASKATCHEWAN
SASKATOON	SASKATCHEWAN

