

From "Business Biographies" in the Farm Bureau News, Oct. 26, 1933:
The Farm Bureau News was published by the Island County Farm Bureau in Oak Harbor, WA between 1920 and 1950.

JOHN RIENTJES

It takes more than the ordinary amount of determination when a family of six moves from the home land into a strange country and begins farming on a barren prairie twenty miles from the nearest town.

That is what John Rientjes, proprietor of the Oak Leaf Bakery, with his wife and four of their children did in 1910 when they moved from their home in Nyverdal, Netherlands, to eastern Canada and began farming in a small Dutch settlement. None of the family could speak English at first, but it was not long until, by considerable reading and study, Rientjes had mastered the language.

John Rientjes was born at Dedemsvaart, Netherlands, in 1877. When he left school at the age of 13, he began working in bakeries and learning the trade. He worked from place to place, gaining experience and when 23 years old started a business of his own at Nyverdal.

It was here that he and Wilhelma DeYoung were married in 1904. Six years later they left their business there and decided to move, with their two sons and two daughters, to Canada, where some friends were already located.

They farmed near Allison, Canada until 1923, and two more children, Cornelius and Johnny, were born there. There were many changes in the little town of Allison during those thirteen years, one of the most important being the founding of a branch of the Dutch Reformed Church.

It was through the Rev. M. Cook of the Oak Harbor Dutch Reformed Church, who preached some during the summer at Allison, that the Rientjes family became interested in Whidby Island.

So in 1923, after Rientjes made a two months' visit here, the entire family moved to Oak Harbor. He continued farming here, working on the Klock ranch for six years where he was manager. Cornelius, the next to the youngest son, was working in the bakery formerly where Barney's store is now located, when, in 1930, the owner offered to sell to Rientjes.

Since then, John Rientjes with his son, Cornelius, have operated the Oak Leaf Bakery which has been one of the growing businesses of Oak Harbor. "When it comes to a hobby, there's nothing I like better than to read a good book," Rientjes said. "I've spent several years farming, but like the bakery business better than any other." Like most other Oak Harbor folks, Rientjes is enthusiastic about the climate and the people.

JOHN RIENTJES

It takes more than the ordinary amount of determination when a family of six moves from the home land into a strange country and begins farming on a barren prairie twenty miles from the nearest town.

That is what John Rientjes, proprietor of the Oak Leaf Bakery, with his wife and four of their children did in 1910 when they moved from their home in Nyverdal, Netherlands, to eastern Canada and began farming in a small Dutch settlement. None of the family could speak English at first, but it was not long until, by considerable reading and study, Rientjes had mastered the language.

John Rientjes was born at Dedemsvaart, Netherlands, in 1877. When he left school at the age of 13, he began working in bakeries and learning the trade. He worked from place to place, gaining experience and when 23 years old started a business of his own at Nyverdal.

It was here that he and Wilhelma DeYoung were married in 1904. Six years later they left their business there and decided to move, with their two sons and two daughters, to Canada, where some friends were already located.

They farmed near Allison, Canada, until 1923, and two more children, Cornelius and Johnny, were born there. There were many changes in the little town of Allison during those thirteen years, one of the most important being the founding of a branch of the Dutch Reformed Church.

It was through the Rev. M. Cook of the Oak Harbor Dutch Reformed Church, who preached some during the summer at Allison, that the Rientjes family became interested in Whidby Island.

So in 1923, after Rientjes made a two months' visit here, the entire family moved to Oak Harbor. He continued farming here, working on the Klock ranch for six years where he was manager. Cornelius, the next to the youngest son, was working in the bakery formerly where Barney's store is now located, when, in 1930, the owner offered to sell to Rientjes.

Since then, John Rientjes with his son, Cornelius, have operated the Oak Leaf Bakery which has been one of the growing businesses of Oak Harbor.

"When it comes to a hobby, there's nothing I like better than to read a good book," Rientjes said. "I've spent several years farming, but like the bakery business better than any other."

Like most other Oak Harbor folks, Rientjes is enthusiastic about the climate and the people.