

From "Business Biographies" in the Farm Bureau News, Sept. 28, 1933:
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BARBARA (NIENHUIS) VANDERZICHT MINNIE DEVRIES

“MINN AND BAR”

"Service with a Smile" would be inadequate as a slogan for Oak Harbor's only cafe. Because within the short time that "Minn" and "Bar" have been in the business, service, and smiles however important, have become but part of the good things one gets at Minn and Bar's Cafe.

Before May, 1932, neither Minnie DeVries nor Barbara Vanderzicht had any experience in the restaurant business. But thanks to their mother, Mrs. Chas. Nienhuis, both are good cooks and that was more than a sufficient asset for them to open their cafe, in partnership, May 1, 1932. Since then, persons stopping at Oak Harbor arrange to stop at mealtime.

Minnie and Barbara Nienhuis were both born near Oak Harbor, in Clover Valley, the daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Nienhuis. They both attended Oak Harbor schools and Bar, after being graduated from high school, attended Wilson's Business College in Seattle for two years.

Bar was bookkeeper at the creamery before she and Allan Vanderzicht were married in 1927. Minn was married for 11 years and has two children, a boy, 15 and a girl, 14 years old. When they went into business in 1932 they purchased the restaurant formerly operated by Mrs. Koetje which was across the street from their present location. They moved into new quarters upon buying the business.

"Everyone pulled for us when we opened the cafe," Minn said, "So it wasn't really hard for us to get started, but we certainly had a lot to learn those first few weeks."

Minn usually takes care of the cooking and meal planning, and Bar serves. A great deal of their trade comes from the summer tourists, but they have regular salesman customers besides a great deal of local trade.

"Most persons are easy to wait upon," Bar smiled, "But once in a while we get a person who just can't be pleased, but everyone seems to come back again."

Their business during the week days is the heaviest, but it's difficult to tell just when a crowd will come in, making it hard to plan ahead. At such time, it's only by very efficient work in the kitchen that the day is saved.

"Yes, we get along well together and never fight," Minn began, "At least not orally," Bar interrupted laughing, "But sometimes we think things about each other!"

Both Minn and Bar belong to the Rebekah lodge. They expressed a belief that it was all right for women to be in business but that it was really best for women with families to spend their time in the home. Minn enjoys sewing and working with drygoods. Bar's hobby is driving in her and her husband's new car, according to Minn.

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