

## The Shell Service Station

Tony Cook

My parents, Arthur and Thelma Cook, built their Service Station on the corner of Churchill Road and the Channel Highway in 1946. It was the first Service Station in Tarooma and the only garage between Kingston and Sandy Bay. The population was growing and the traffic along Channel Highway had increased to the point where this service was necessary.

At that time each service station sold several brands of petrol. I can recall there being separate pumps selling Shell, C.O.R. (later B.P.), Ampol, Golden Fleece and Plume (later Mobil). The customer told the operator which brand of petrol he preferred.

The pumps were hand operated and the petrol was pumped up into a glass bowl by

working a long handle back and forth. When the bowl's gauge showed the desired number of gallons, the hose was put into the car's filler and the petrol released.

Petrol rationing was still in force until the late 1940s. My parents had to collect the government petrol coupons and the money from customers before they were allowed to sell petrol. These petrol coupons had to be produced to the government officials.

As the population increased the business of the service station also grew. It remained the only petrol outlet in Tarooma until the B.P. garage and service station was built on the corner of Jenkins Street and the Channel Highway in the late 1950s. By this time the service station had changed to a "one brand" station, and my parents elected to sell Shell products.

The business was sold to the Shell company and my parents retired in 1964.



*The Service Station in the year of completion, showing the hand operated pumps selling various brands of petrol, 1946.*

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*The Service Station in 1952, showing hand operated pumps selling one brand of petrol. Note the "Little Shop" q.v. on the left hand side. L to R Mr John White, Mr Arthur Cook, Mrs Thelma Cook.*

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*The Service Station in 1954 showing electrically operated pumps selling one brand of petrol.*

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*The Service Station, showing the new showroom built in 1958.*

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