

Getting gassed at Leland's garage

Smuggler stopped at service station

Pumping gas and fixing cars wasn't all that happened at Fred Leland's Service Station in Trenton.

The garage — at the base of Gilmour Hill where Lange & Fetter's is today — was also a stopping point for a liquor smuggler in the early '30s.

"At that time, we stayed open maybe till 10 p.m. I can't tell you how many times late at night. ...Dad would get a phone call from somewhere west of Trenton and he'd stay open until this guy got there from Toronto. One night, I

stayed with Dad," remembers Alfred Leland.

His father was on the creeper under the car when he asked him to bring a tool. Alfred got the tool, got on the creeper, got under the car, and then got the shock of his life.

"I don't know how long this went on with my Dad and this guy, but he was a smuggler. ...I didn't have a clue until I got under there and Dad moved

something and I heard a clink."

In those days, cars had storage room which was put to unforeseen uses.

"It was under the floor. They had a heavy frame (a foot) so deep. It was packed in there. You couldn't see it. The guy was really a bootlegger I'll tell you. ...He made these regular trips all the time. It was him and Dad that had this little

thing."

Originally the garage was owned by John Coleman. In 1930, the City Service Oil Company bought it, and a man named Jackson got involved.

Before long, the garage was known as Jackson & Leland's service station. The Lelands believe Fred leased the land from the City Service Oil Company.

"This was just about the time the Air Force boys came into Trenton. Then, the Long family — across the road from the garage — they ran the hotel there. ...Most of the Air Force boys parked their cars (in the garage) in the winter-time. We could fit 14 cars in there."

As far as he can recall, his father's service station had the only heated garage in town at the time. It was also used by Dr. McQuaid, who kept his car

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downtown."

Where exactly they drove the cars to Marguerite and Alfred are unsure of. But, they believe their father learned more about mechanics in the process.

When Fred started at the service station, Marguerite remembers he wore a uniform most gas attendants today

Leland's Service Station

Arthur Hyman,
Remembers Leland,
Sept. 18, 1995

Can't
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