



Nash's Garage, 1 Pier Street

Before 1971, the site currently occupied by the Co-op supermarket was for many years the home of Nash's Garage. Gerald Kimber Nash came from Datchet, near Windsor, where he was indentured as an engineering apprentice with G.D. Peters Ltd of Slough. At the start of the Great War, he worked at the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, where he met his future wife who worked as a secretary there.



Soon after the war, Gerald Nash decided to set up in business on his own account and heard of an opening in Ventnor for a garage. He set up initially in a former bookmaker's office with one petrol pump, a taxi, and offering motor-car repair services. By 1927, he had moved the business to 1 Pier Street, the location in the photo. Simultaneously he had also become a pioneer motor-coach proprietor, as well as servicing the local GPO by picking up mail from villages around Ventnor using solid-tyred Trojan vans.

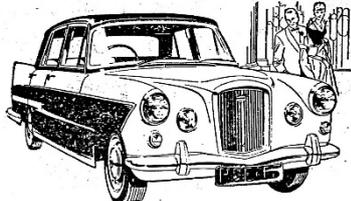
The forward part of the site at 1 Pier Street was used as the car

showroom and is pictured in about 1960. Behind it were extensive further properties that had been acquired around 1927 and it was here that the motor engineering workshop was established. The workshop area had formerly been stables and had a cobbled floor. In the early 1960s, the three resident mechanics (Alf Sprack, Bert Rummey and Mick Toomer) could together claim 75 years of service with Nash's. At one time, the garage mechanics used to get a jug of tea and a bag of stale cakes daily from Booth's bakery opposite for sixpence.

Nash's went on to build a very substantial trade in new vehicles, eventually holding franchises for Citroen, Morris and Wolseley and others. After the Second World War, Nash acquired the Undercliff Garage at Niton, expanding it to include a filling station. His younger son, Douglas, went to live there, but sadly died in 1948 at the young age of 17.

Gerald (Gerry to his friends) died in 1970 aged 82, leaving his widow and son John.

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Ventnor & District Local History Society: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre, notably the late Fay Brown's index.



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