

Oral History

O'Neill's Greengrocer's Main Street, Greensborough

My parents Mavis (May) and William (Bill) O'Neill had a Greengrocer's shop in Main Street next to Bob Willett's Butcher's shop from 1953 until about 1969.

Bill and Bob had a reciprocal deal whereby they provided each other with weekly supplies and no money needed to change hands.

Dad got up at 2 am three days a week to go to the Victoria market and filled the truck with fruit and vegetables. His mate Bruce Wadeson who had a shop in Diamond Creek did the market on the other days and on the way home they both provided the fruit and vegetables to a little general store (owned by the Cook family) in Watsonia.

Bill had a delivery service on a Friday and people would phone in their orders to be delivered to the door.

His shop served a high quality product but was not the cheapest in town and his biggest customer was the Diamond Valley hospital which received a delivery several times per week.

Dad was approached by members of the Hospital Board who were trying to cut costs to see if there was any way they could save on the fruit and vegetables and he told them he could provide seconds (not the top quality product).

My father said that upon his next delivery to the hospital kitchen and before he could take the box of vegetables off his shoulder he was met at the door by Matron Rita Glen.

Matron Glen said to Dad "Mr O'Neill, nothing but the best is to come into MY hospital," and it never did.

Nancy Fowkes nee O'Neill