

My grandparents, Mr E. and Mrs M. Pearce owned 18 acres on the North East corner of Middleborough and Springfield roads, their original family home is still there at the rear of 9 Mall Court with units in front of it. Grandma sold the 18 acres in the early stages of the second World War to Mr. V. Lawford, 18 acres for £1,800.

The property had been rented out for many years. Grandma having established what is reported to be the first shop in Blackburn on the corner of Railway Road and Chapel Street about 1878 selling groceries and greengroceries, it was still selling greengroceries until sometime in 1999.

Her son, Duncan Spencer, helped her in the shop. They had a horse and cart and used to deliver around the district. As a child I used to go with uncle Spencer on his rounds.

They bought a Chev truck in the early 1920s and this used to be used on Saturday afternoon to take the Blackburn Football team to away matches.

Mrs M. Pearce was the daughter of William Slater who migrated to Australia about 1856 and bought land on the south side of Koornung Creek with frontage to tracks now known as Surrey and Springfield Roads. He cleared the land and planted acres of roses and various herbs. He came from England where he had been employed by Potter and More the perfume manufacturers. He built up a successful business in herbs and distilled essences. He produced his own brand of eucalyptus oil which was marketed as Possum Brand.

He had an orchard also which was expanded and used for university field days, my father and I kept this going until it was finally sub-divided for building blocks.

Grandma used to tell me about getting up at dawn to pick the roses for oil of roses and attar of roses.

William Slater's herb list can be found on Page 93 of Niall Brennan's History of Nunawading.

Grandpa Pearce came from Collingwood, his original house was in Fairchild Street, he was a builder by trade and presumably built his own house on the property near the corner of Springfield and Middleborough roads which is still there.

Mr Leonard Sherwin Bayley's house was on the corner of Whitehorse Road and Vine Street and in later years was used for wedding receptions etc.

I am enclosing a photo of Mrs M. Pearce taken near her shop in Railway Road, Blackburn. I spent a lot of my childhood at my grand-mother's and so was able to orient myself to be fairly certain of my bearings. As a result, I would say that grand-mother and the horse were standing on what is now the site of 71A Boutique, Railway Road and the pigeon loft at the rear of the picture was on the site of Inner East Community Options.

There was no water main along Springfield Road where we were in 1927 so my father, Mr E. H. Pearce, Mr C. R. Toogood, Mr C. G. Gill, Mr T. Lawford and Mr N. Lawford brought their own water main down Williams from Whitehorse Road to supply their properties with water. My father's copy of the agreement is enclosed.

I don't know what information you have re the Blackburn Cool Stores so am including copy of the Articles of Association of the Cool Stores, Rules and photocopy of my father's Script Certificate.