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Pick of the bunch

By Diana Cormack

Just two months ago Tricia, Mike and Jimmy, who run Josephine's the florists, completed 40 years of trading at the longest-running shop on the High Road. But their celebrations were tinged with sadness, for they knew that it was only a matter of time before they would be moving on.

Tricia Blan and her brother Mike took over Josephine's in 1964. Jimmy Olney joined them four years later as Tricia's husband. In fact, it was flowers that brought the couple together, for Jimmy sold sundries to the flower trade at Covent Garden market where Tricia bought stock for the shop every morning. They got married three weeks after their first date!

Customers and friends

For the following 35 years they have visited the market together, getting up at 4.30 am on six days of the week. "It's the best time to see London," said Tricia as she graphically described her favourite sights on the familiar journey. Both of

them say they will miss this as much as the many other aspects of their work, including the relationship they have with their customers.

"If a person comes through that door more than once, then they're our friends," Jimmy told THE ARCHER. In the 1970s they also had a shop at 91 High Road and lots of locals,

who have marked all their major family events with flowers from Josephine's, will be really sad to see them go towards the end of this month. There have been many customers of note over the years, from members of the cast of East Enders, to pop singers and television personalities, but I was amazed to hear that once a chauffeur driven car drew up outside and Katherine Hepburn strode into the shop!

Taking a store of local memories with them, Jimmy and Tricia are going to live in Frinton-on-Sea, though Jimmy intends to keep up his regular involvement with the Air Training Corps here. Tricia wants to continue providing flowers for private functions and weddings, which she really enjoys. But Mike could be taking the biggest step of all, for he has plans to set up his own floral business in Calgary, Canada.

THE ARCHER would like to thank Tricia, Jimmy and Mike for many years of support through their advertisements and to wish them well for the future.



Jimmy, Tricia & Mike at Josephine's. Photo by John Dearing

Two High Road pharmacies merge

By Daphne Chamberlain

The Cory Pharmacy and its near neighbour, Cootes Pharmacy, have merged. The arrangement, completed last month, is another expansion for Cootes, the shop at 134 High Road, on the corner of Leicester Road. Earlier this year, they took over the former Boots premises in Ballards Lane, Church End.

Cootes told THE ARCHER that no services will be lost, but there will be a reduction in shop opening hours. All dispensing will take place in the Cootes premises, which are open from 9am-6.30pm Monday to Friday, and 9 am to 6 pm Saturday, with a duty rota on Sunday.

The therapists – such as the homeopath, physiotherapist and chiropodist – do not expect to change their hours. Cory Phar-

macy based chiropodist Mary Goulbourn told us, "We work independently, and are continuing as before."

The Cory Pharmacy, at 166 High Road, is well known for supplying medical equipment, including items such as wheelchairs. This has been a feature of its provision since it changed its owner and its name from Aldington and Lewis in 1969. This provision will also continue.

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