

From the cutting room to cutting edge

John Deignan's Menswear

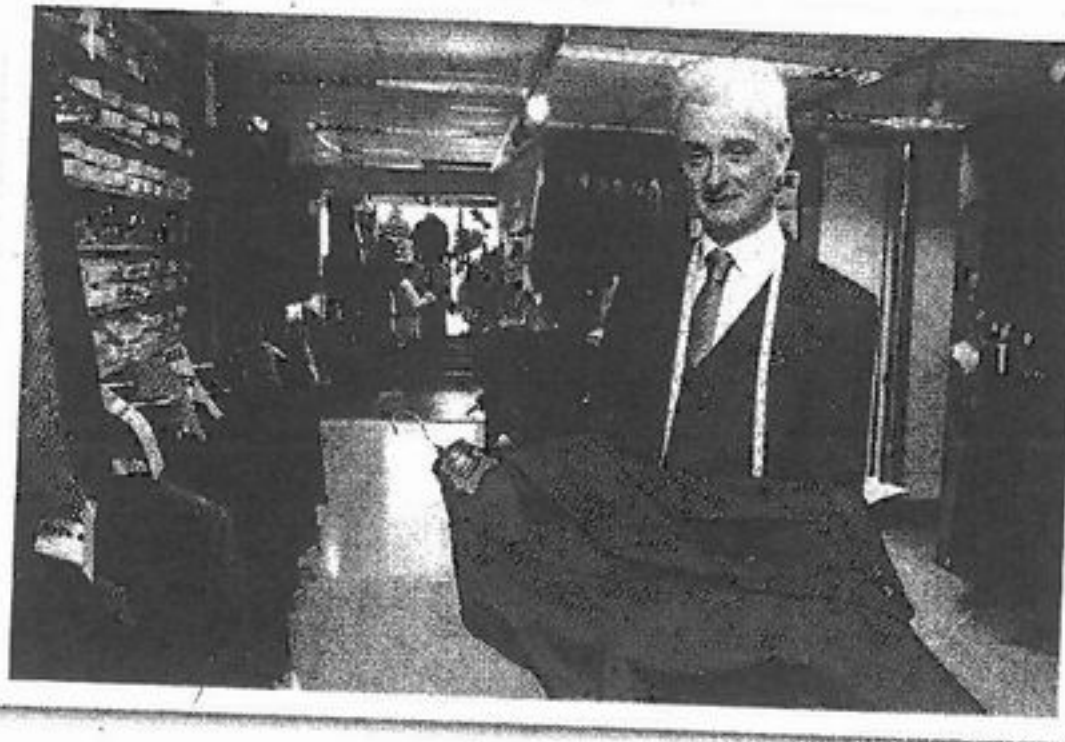
SARAH O'DWYER

His great grandfather Charles was head of the Cutting Room in the Old Limerick Clothing factory, so it's little surprise that John Deignan feels the weight of his family's history in the menswear business.

John Deignan's Menswear at 2 Lion Mount on O'Connell Avenue can trace its lineage back to early 1930s, when John's great grandfather Charles was already busy passing on his knowledge to his sons.

One of Charles' sons worked in the Old Clothing Factory as a designer. Another son, Bernard - John's grandfather - then opened a tailoring shop in 1932 to fit the people of Limerick with specially made suits.

The only way of purchasing a suit at the time was to have it specially tailored - and Duignan's Menswear has continued this practice to the present day.

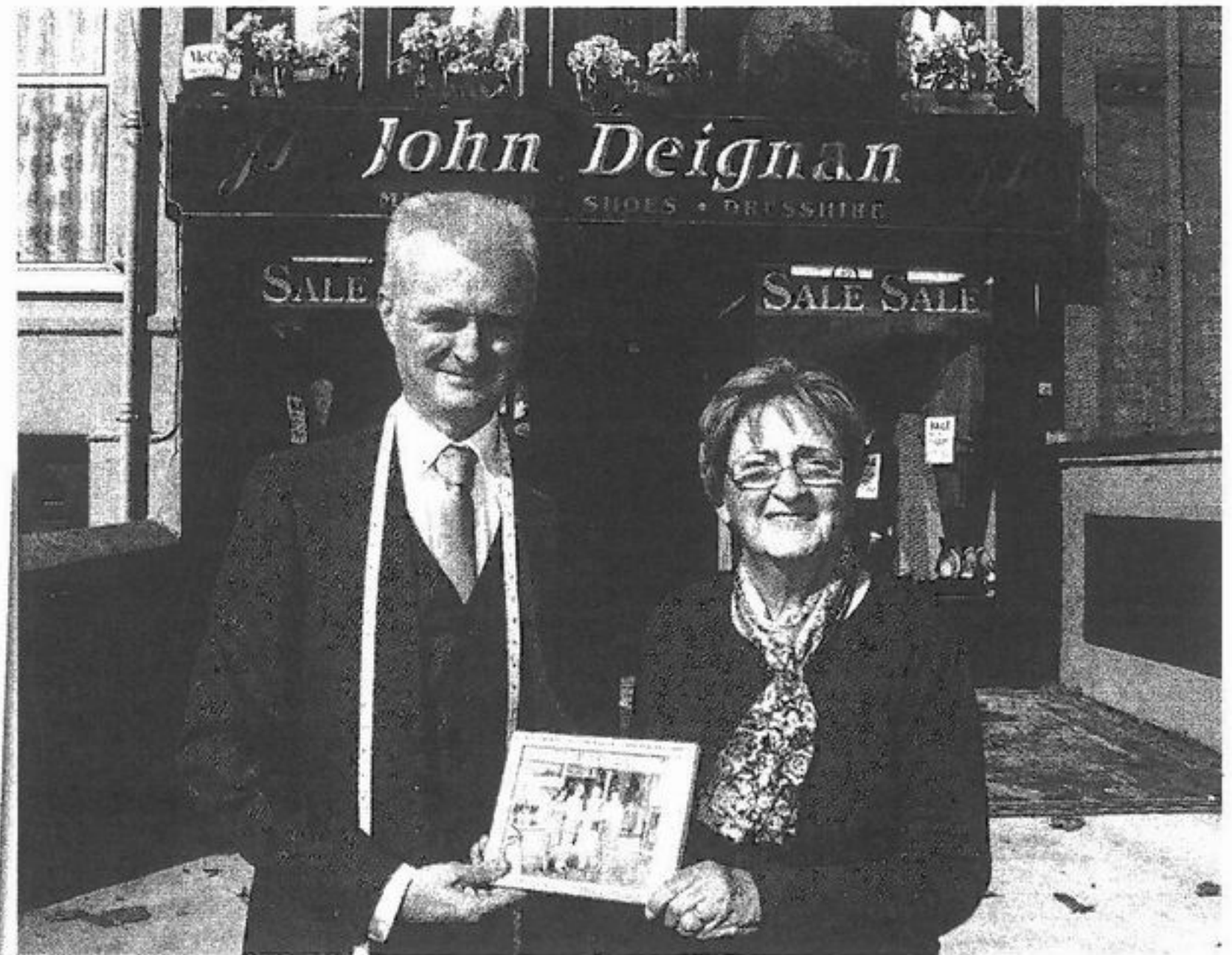


John's grandfather Bernard Greene was known as one of the finest tailors in Limerick. "All of the suits made back then would have lasted for years," John says, "and we still make tailored suits."

The tradition of working with clothes was evidently very strong among the many generations in John's family, on both his mother and father's sides. John's father, Eddie Deignan, who originally came from a farming background

in Co. Meath had uncles in the clothing business, and he was sent to Bray aged 14 to learn his trade. He later moved to Limerick and began working in Roche's Stores, where Debenhams is now, and it was there he met and married John's mother Marie, daughter of Bernard Greene.

When Bernard passed away, the tailoring store was closed for about two years, but John's father Eddie then took over the family business,



John, and his mother Marie, outside John Deignan's Menswear at 2 Lion Mount on O'Connell Avenue. Pics: Keith Wiseman

opening the shop in 1979 in its current form as a shop and tailors, in a location it still occupies today.

Then, in 1990, just before Eddie passed away, John himself took the reins of the family business, where he had been working from the age of 14.

Being at the helm of the successful business for more than 25 years, John says: "The suit is the backbone of the business," but Duignan's also

cater for more casual wear such as polo shirts and chinos.

The main brands in suits in the store are Magee, which are an Irish brand, and Baumler. They also carry Bertoni and White Label which are on the lower end of the price range. They carry a range of footwear also, with Bugatti shoes being their biggest dress shoe seller.

John, and his mother Marie, who still works in the store alongside her son, aim to provide high qual-

ity customer service that will make people feel welcome, will leave them wanting to come back, and wanting to pass on the word to their friends and family.

The business has stood the test of time, with it being located in a relatively non-retail area, halfway between the city centre and the Crescent Shopping centre, just showing the quality of clothing and customer service in the shop.

