

Business Profile

Hogan's popular prescription for 75 years in family business



by Bernie English
bernie@limerickpost.ie

When Pat Hogan unpacked boxes and stocked the shelves for the first time at his new pharmacy in Upper William Street in September 1940, you would have to wonder: did he ever imagine that his children would be dispensing medicines from that same shop 75 years on?

Pat was joined in the enterprise by his wife, Peg Hanly, who brought her own touch, experience of working in the family bar and shop in county Limerick and her understanding of cosmetics and grooming as well as a keen eye in dressing the shop to dispel any sterile air.

Now, on the 75th birthday of the pharmacy, their daughters Elenora and Marie have taken the reins and Pat and Peg would be proud to say that not only is this a second generation Limerick business, but it has fourth and fifth generation customers.

Elenora Hogan seems to surprise even herself when she says this out loud: "We're interested in what we do and I suppose we must do it well for people to come back."

"The needs of people who came to the shop at the start were both very different and, in some ways, the same as they are now."

"Back then, there would only have been raw materials available. There were very few bottled goods to be had," says Elenora.

Pharmacists worked hard, mixing medicines on their own premises, using names to conjure with such as Laudanum, Gentian Violet and Balsam of Peru.

Times were hard and many customers then, as now, turned first to the pharmacist for help before incurring the expense of a visit to the doctor.

"And then, as now, customers wanted comfort for the spirit as well as the body and came to Hogans for fragrances, soaps and creams as well as prescriptions."

Some wanted comfort for their self-medicating of the night before and



Pat Hogan (right) and his daughter Marie (left) celebrating the pharmacy's 50th anniversary in 1990.

preparing 'cures' on a Saturday or Monday morning were a regular task for the pharmacist.

Others needed cures for their animals and Hogans was a first point of contact for farmers and pet-owners looking for advice and treatment.

The pharmacists all had their own closely guarded formulae and in times of shortage, during wars and recession, stocked their own essential oils to add a tincture to locally-produced creams.

"The first big shift Dad saw was the mass production of antibiotics," says Elenora. "When he started out he had no choice but to work hard. No one had anything. No one had money."

Elenora and Marie knew from a very young age that they never wanted to do anything other than be pharmacists and they studied,

We're interested in what we do and I suppose we must do it well for people to come back

ELENORA HOGAN

qualified and worked in Dublin before coming home to the family business.

They are optimistic about the future, and point to the many "for let" signs coming down and new businesses bringing fresh air and fresh hope to the city centre.

"Our Dad always said, 'you have to go the extra mile for people'. That's

what we try to do and we'll keep doing it," says Elenora.

His love of his chosen vocation saw Pat Hogan don the white coat every working day until he was 77 years old and Peg was at his side and retired around the same time.

"Even after he retired, he would come in a couple of mornings a week. Customers become friends. He loved people and loved meeting them," Elenora tells the Limerick Post.

Marie and Elenora, along with their customers and pharmacy staff are celebrating the pharmacy's 75th birthday this Saturday, September 19, with a family fun day, face painting, candy cart and daily draw for prizes.

Why not drop in and experience a true Limerick institution at 46 Upper William Street. Tel. 061 415195.

TIMELINE

1940



Hogans Pharmacy opens, Friday 20th September

1957

Pat Hogan and peg Hanly marry in University Church, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin

1961

Elenora qualifies as Pharmaceutical Assistant

1982

Marie Hogan qualifies as a Pharmacist

1989 Pat Hogan retires and Marie and Elenora take over the business

1990

Pat & Peg Hogan celebrate 50 years in business

2000

Marie Hogan is the first woman to be elected President of the Irish Pharmacy Union

2005

Hogans Pharmacy moves to 46 Upper William Street

2015



Hogans Pharmacy celebrate 75 years in business.



Marie and Elenora pictured at a reception at Hogan's Pharmacy William St to mark their 75th year in business.



Pat Hogan and his wife Peg with their daughters Elenora and Marie (left) celebrating the pharmacy's 50th anniversary in 1990.