

# Owl's hoot fades away after more than half a century

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One of the oldest businesses in Goodwood, Cotton's Owl Pharmacy, is closing after more than half a century. Hyman Cotton, the 75-year-old owner and one of Goodwood's well-known residents, said after 52 years he has had his innings and has decided it is time to retire. He sold the business to Monument Pharmacy, his long time competitor, which is just across the road.

Explaining why he decided to close such an established business, and one of the few that date back to early Goodwood, Mr Cotton said: "I am getting on in years and although it feels just the other day that I came to Goodwood, I came here in 1947, more than 50 years ago.

"I made the decision because I want to enjoy my twilight years and spend more time playing golf. Besides, I owe it to myself to have some peace of mind and not to worry about business," he said.

Mr Cotton said he has experienced some wonderful moments working as a pharmacist in Goodwood and will miss his customers.

"I have seen how Goodwood developed into one of the finest suburbs in the north over the years and seen some of the amazing advances in medicine," he said.

Another area where change has also occurred is with people and the way they look at things in life. "People in their early 50s and 60s were generally more conservative and reserved about certain things of life. Sex and sexual matters were taboo and we would never have dared, for instance, to put items such as condoms on open display. They were kept out of sight in bottom drawers and in closed envelopes.

"If a customer wanted to buy one he would either flip a two-and-sixpence coin, which was the code if you wanted to buy a contraceptive, or just silently point to where they were kept," he said.

Customers would regularly come for a packet of blerrie-donner (belladonna), plasters to ease back-aches or to get some "pick-me-up- tonic" to cure the morning after blues on a Monday after a hectic party over the weekend

in the Goodwood Hotel or the local bar.

Cotton's Owl, according to Mr Cotton, is hopefully going to continue to live on after the new owner, Harry Singer, had agreed to incorporate the Cotton's Owl tradename into the new pharmacy's name.

Mr Cotton will also be working there part-time three or four days a week and for a few months of the year as a public relations officer.

"This will give me the opportunity to be involved in the job I still love so much, without the responsibilities. This way I will see some of my customers who now have grandchildren of their own. Mr Cotton and his wife of 49 years, Sheila, live in Dingle Road, Goodwood.

They were blessed with three children, one of whom passed away in 1986 and six grandchildren but have no great grandchildren yet.



■ Closing the doors of his pharmacy after 52 years of business in Goodwood is Hyman Cotton.