

The *Banbury Guardian* of 20 February 1986, reporting on the end of Hayward's grocery stores in the Market Place, ran a story entitled 'Shop doors close and end an era'. Another era ended in March 2008 when the name Hayward disappeared from the estate agent's next door, to be replaced by Hamptons International.

The era started in 1927 when James Levi Hayward started up business in the premises at the end of the Tchure now used by VivaSacs. The back of the shop was a barber's (one penny in old money for a shave and tuppence for a haircut), and the front a fishmonger's. Fish was brought fresh from auction in Oxford at 6 o'clock every morning and, in the war years, local shop owners would save petrol by taking turns to go to the market and then divvy up the fish in a layby. James's wife Lily was a dab hand at gutting and filleting enormous cod and plaice at the kitchen sink – health and safety, what's that?

The shop expanded into a grocery and greengrocery business, with son Walter and daughters Peggy and Doreen all helping run the shop, and in 1936 the barber's shop gave way to the grocery business. But Walter wanted to move the business on and left to set up a general store on his own, initially with a mobile shop and then in what is now Tchure Cottage on the High Street. Again it was very much a family concern with Walter's wife Joan, and sons Rodney and Martin, involved in a seven-day rota, with no time off for holidays.

When James Hayward retired in 1972, Walter bought the shop in the Market Place and closed the High Street store. Still the family was involved, with Rodney working in the shop and Martin running a mobile delivery service around a five-mile radius until as recently as 2001. In 1974 the shop was refitted as a mini-supermarket, it started selling wines and spirits, and became part of the VG marketing group.

But by 1984, Rodney, sensing that the life of a village corner shop was becoming hedged around with too many difficulties, had moved into the estate

agency field, working in Oxford and Banbury.

The Old Bakery shop next to Haywards had for many years been the home of John and Lawrence Wallin's bakery, and the family influence extended here too, for Walter's sister Peggy married John Wallin, and was delivering bread three times a week from a huge basket until well into the 1980s. And when the Wallins retired in 1989, Rodney, along with business partner Lewis White, bought the premises to set up Hayward-White, a traditional-style estate agency with no corporate financial services and concentrating on village and country houses in North Oxfordshire. Over the years it grew to six branches (Banbury opening in 1990, Brackley 1991, Buckingham 1992, Winslow 1997 and Chipping Norton 2004), and acquired three associated businesses. It has a staff of over 40, most of them long serving, and continuing with Hamptons.

In April 2007 Hamptons made a direct approach to HW, identifying them as 'the most successful and dominant agent covering three shire counties'. Rodney Hayward emphasises: 'HW was not up for sale and never had been ... an acceptable offer was received and as I was considering taking a lesser role in the business this made my exit route easier to plan'.

The rebranding of Hayward-White as Hamptons is well underway and for the first time since 1927 there will be no Hayward on a Market Place shopfront. The gentle tones of brown and cream will be replaced by the brighter blue

and white, and whether the twenty-first century business retains its traditional values in the future only time will tell.

**Mary Robinson**



*Walter Hayward outside the shop in the early 1960s*



*Latter-day Hayward-White*

*(There are more early photos of the Haywards shop and mobile van in the gallery on Deddington OnLine; go to <http://www.deddington.org.uk/gallery/main.php>)*