

NOW and THEN

Article and photo kindly supplied by Mary Baldwin

Champion Hair Salon and Co-op Funeralcare High Street, Ringwood.

These two premises were possibly built as one house during the 18th century but by Victorian times the house had been split into two properties. The right half became Ringwood's first Post Office run by postmistress Miss Sarah Benson for 36 years, as described in a Now and Then article in 2008. (Go to www.roundaboutmags.co.uk and click on Articles/News – Ringwood Now and Then Post Office High Street).

After the new post office opened in Southampton Road in 1909, the old property became a shop with a new shop front, for many years Palmer's jewellers. This shop was then left shuttered up for well over a decade until it re-opened as Ringwood Book Shop, 32-34 High Street in the 1980s. Since then it has a number of different occupiers and is now Champion hair salon owned by Daniel Champion.

During the 19th century the half of the original house on the left remained a private

1988



dwelling named The Haven. In 1871 this was occupied by Isaac Veal, a retired brewer whose brewery was in what is now the oldest part of the Furlong Centre, around John Grant estate agency. Twenty years later after she retired from the Post Office it became the home of Miss Sarah Benson and her niece Mary. Miss Mary Benson was a talented Professor of Music who became the organist for the Parish Church.

Sometime after Mary's death in 1925 this house was split into two shops, shown in the 1988 photograph as Thorners shoe repairs at 38 High Street and Ringwood Fisheries at number 36. About 2010 the fish shop which belonged to Mike Patterson transferred over the High Street to be adjacent to his butcher's shop. Numbers 36 and 38 were once again combined and given a completely new shop front to become Co-op Funeralcare.

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