

# New premises for Friendly Societies

## Chemist shops attract many job seekers

Chemist shops are popular workplaces for women according to the manager of the New Plymouth Friendly Societies' Dispensary Ltd, Miss Jessamine Weber.

She says she gets called at least once a week whether there is work in her shop. Miss Weber believes the reason is that some people, particularly young girls see glamour in the job, mainly in the selling of cosmetics. "There is a certain

appeal in cosmetics to younger people." Men were not as interested in assistant jobs in chemist shops because they were expected to be chemists.

Miss Weber agrees with the recent government move to reduce the stocks of drugs held by chemist shops. The Friendly Societies' shop has not suffered a drug related break-in yet.

She says the decision to move the business came from a growth in trade motivated by an overall national increase in the standard of living.

The new shop is three times the size of the old shop while the new dispensary will be the same size as the previous one.

She is "quite looking forward to having more room to display stock," as this is the area in which the old shop was most deficient.



Miss Weber is slightly unusual in the city as one of its few qualified woman pharmacist managers.

She has held the job since October 1974 and finds it surprises some people who do not expect to see a woman in charge of a business of this kind.

Miss Weber, was originally from Northland and undertook her training while working for a chemist at Stratford.

She says the Friendly Societies' pharmacy is a good training ground in managerial aspects of the business and, of four managers before her, most moved on to their own businesses.

On problems related to the pharmacy business and drugs in particular, she feels that if young people were educated in the dangers of hard drugs, the long term trend for chemist shop burglaries would decrease.

### DOWN THE HILL

The Friendly Societies' new, larger dispensary in New Plymouth opens this morning. The society operated from its former premises at 45 Devon Street East for 20 years and it has now moved temporarily "down the hill" to 38 Devon Street East.

The extra room will be necessary at the peak time of the year, Christmas, when the old shop became quite crowded.

The other main advantage of the shift will be a more convenient layout with the store room on the same level. In the old store a lot of time was spent running up and down the stairs shifting stock.

Beside Miss Weber there are three shop assistants, a chemist and a woman employed part time unpacking bulk stock.

### Major changes to premises

The New Plymouth Friendly Societies' new dispensary was the home of L. A. Nolan and Co. Ltd for more than 70 years before the business was closed and the property bought by the society last year.

The building, which has undergone a vast transformation to become a chemist shop, was put up in 1903 by Mr W. Courtney. It was sold in 1906 to Messrs L. A. Nolan and J. W. Wilson and Mr Nolan bought the building outright in 1907.

It was then used for many purposes by the Nolan company including auctions, an insurance business and a land agency. The societies' present premises were originally owned by the late Mr H. Homer, who had a saddlery business. Part of the building was also a sweet shop with its own factory in an excavated basement.



The manageress of the Friendly Societies' dispensary, Miss Jessamine Weber.

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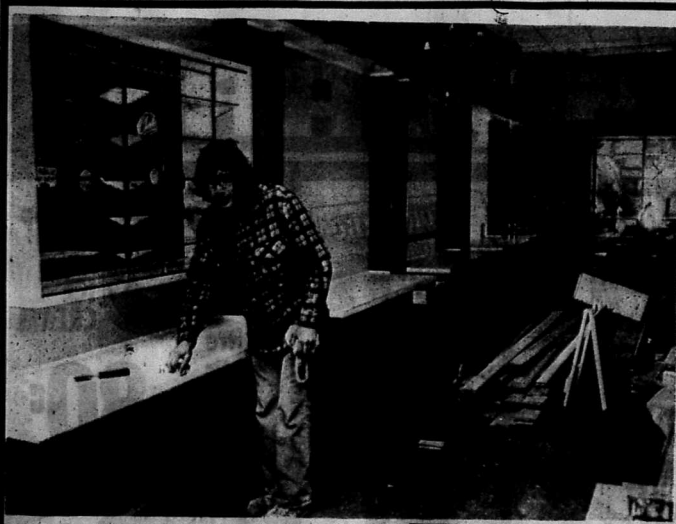
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A workman odds finishing touches to the new pharmacy during the last stages of reconstruction.

# Chemists mixed own pills

The days when chemists mixed their own pills and ointments with pestle and mortar are recalled by one of New Plymouth's longest serving chemists, Mr G. M. Chong.

Mr Chong retired as manager of the New Plymouth Friendly Societies Dispensary Ltd. in 1964 after 30 years with the business.

He said he studied pharmacy during a correspondence course from Wellington while the necessary practical work at the New Plymouth Boys' High School laboratories at night.

Before he took over as the manager of the New Plymouth pharmacy he was the first manager at the Watarua UFS pharmacy for a year.

When he joined the business there were five or six chemist shops in New Plymouth; now there are 18.

Ointments and pills were made by the chemist himself rather than pre-packed as they were now. Mixing and making the pills was all part of the chemist's everyday work.

### MAJOR CHANGE

Major change was social security. Before this was introduced had debts were a common problem as 'you couldn't turn anybody down' if they wanted a prescription, he said.

Sending medicines on the buses north and south of New Plymouth to people with false addresses was also a common occurrence, he said. The advent of social security provided a regular income for chemists.

Although chemists had always handled cosmetics there had been major changes in the manufacture and presentation of these products since the early 1950s.

In those early years most were imported from overseas but there were several New Zealand manufacturers in the market now.

Mr Chong said things had changed so much he would have difficulty entering the business again today because of its complexity and the need for increased training.



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# IN PURSUIT OF BEAUTY

**DAILY NEWS**  
Special Feature

## Began in 1921

The New Plymouth Friendly Societies Dispensary Ltd was formed as a co-operative venture by the city's friendly societies in 1921.

Establishment of the dispensary was financed by the groups although individuals from the lodges had to purchase shares in the company to fully finance the venture.

A directorate of members from the lodges controls the company and is trying to regain shares owned by individuals to bring the dispensary back under full lodge control.

The original aim was to give lodge members a better facility for purchasing pharmaceutical supplies but its scope has since broadened considerably and now it is the same as any other pharmacy.

Lodge members have the advantage of buying at 10 per cent discount.

# SHARING IS DANGEROUS

Sharing of doctors' prescriptions with family and friends is dangerous according to the medical officer of health in New Plymouth, Dr A. L. Cowman.

Dr Cowman says the practice is widespread and warns it will not prevent disease and may build up resistance to drugs in fit people.

"A medication which suits one person could have a disastrous effect on another who appears to have the same illness," he said.

"A lot of thinking goes on before a doctor makes a prescription and parents and lay people are not able to make a proper decision on medication."

Prescriptions are influenced by the individual and doctors take into account such things as age, sex, weight and drugs previously prescribed.

Many children are poisoned by taking drugs prescribed for their parents because medication for adults is often too powerful for the young.

He also urges people to complete a course of medication. Many modern antibiotics begin to improve a patient quickly but do not necessarily clean up the infection.

Some bacteria are quick to build up a resistant strain and he cited the case of the H-bug which develops a resistance to all antibiotics of the time and cannot be treated by them.

Since time immemorial women have tried to make themselves look more beautiful by the addition of make-up and powders.

The taste for beauty culture was introduced into medieval Europe by crusaders from the harem of the east. The cult of cosmetics grew rapidly in Paris and by the 18th century hair dyes, cosmetics, depilatory ointments, tooth powders and ointments were in strong use among the ladies of France.

For beauty treatment in modern times began during World War I, when women began to move from home life into commerce.

Now, large beauty salons cater for almost every aspect of feminine good looks.

Pharmacies are the biggest retail outlet for cosmetics in Taranaki and, despite recent heavy price rises through the imposition of sales tax, sales are booming.

"Cosmetics do something for a woman," says pharmaceutical beauty consultant, Mrs B. N. Ridland. "Makeup also protects the skin and sensible application can be nothing but beneficial."

The accent today is on a natural look, although the latest shades of lipstick are vivid with a gloss slick to brighten this even further.

Teenagers were encouraged at school to start basic skin care and this showed up in their early purchases, said Mrs Ridland. They bought their cleansers first and then checked to see if the purse would stand the makeup.

Exclusive brands of cosmetics grant a franchise for the sale of their products. Some allow only one outlet per town.

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Mr G. M. Chong retired in 1964 after managing the dispensary for nearly 30 years.

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