



Hinders, Diamond Farm, Ermin Street

The story began in 1925 when Percy Hinder became dissatisfied with the quality of the canary seed mixtures available and decided to start making his own recipes. His pet canaries thrived on his mixes and soon became champions, prompting a great interest from other bird fanciers in the area. His schoolboy son, Les, was designated to deliver the goods around the Swindon area on his bicycle, so the family business was born.

The first rep was appointed just before WWII and after 1946 Les took over from his father rapidly increasing the size of the business. By this time Diamond Farm in Ermin Street housed the main part of the business with the landmark retail shop going from strength to strength in Commercial Road Swindon - at that time a busy retail road - a huge amount of 'Swindonians' seem to fondly remember the shop from their childhood - the puppies, kittens, tortoise, chicks, fish and birds, and with the huge mural on the end wall, often pictured in books of local interest.

During the next 50 years bird seed production increased dramatically, together with specialist mixes for rabbits, hamsters, parrots etc. with a customer base covering most of the South West, Wales and the Channel Islands.

The shop in Commercial Road was sold in the late 60's and a new store opened in Havelock Street. Meanwhile a small retail shop was growing back in Ermin Street. The Havelock Street shop closed in 1979 and a much larger pet shop was built at Stratton.

During the late 80's the business started a move towards its present form - a fishing superstore. The angling connection was already in place with many of the seeds in the bird foods 'crossing over' to be incorporated into carp baits - a booming market at this time. The introduction of fishing bait and tackle
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into the retail shop at Stratton caused quite a stir in the angling world at the time as no other shop had the vast array of seeds etc that Hinders could offer. The pet shop was gradually being taken over by the fishing side of the business and a decision was made in the late 90's to open a Fishing Superstore on a new site at Manor Garden Centre.

The bird seed production was sold to another producer and eventually in October 1999 the whole site was sold for development and the business said goodbye to Stratton St. Margaret, it's home for over 50 years.

The company is still trading at Manor Garden Centre, now a 4th generation family business, possibly one of the few original Swindon family businesses, looking forward to reaching their 100th birthday!