PHOTO BY AMY SYLVESTRI

Banchero's opened its doors in 1948, but owner John Banchero and his son Joe decided to close this week.

By Amy Sylvestri

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After over 60 years serving Italian family-style meals in unincorporated Hayward, Banchero's restaurant has closed.

Owner John Banchero said that closing has been on his mind for a long time, but he didn't make the final decision until Monday night.

Banchero inherited the business at 20102 Mission Boulevard from his father and it has always stayed in the family. He said that he wanted to honor his father's memory by "going out on top."

"The building is getting old, I'm getting old and I just really felt it was the right time to let it go," said Banchero. "There was a lot of soul-searching."

Operating costs had gotten higher and higher and a big piece of kitchen equipment needed a costly repair and Banchero said that was the final straw. He called his staff in for a meeting on Tuesday, had his son cook them a big meal, and broke the news.

"It was a great meal, but no one really felt like eating, it was a somber mood," said Banchero. "But I wanted them to hear it first. I wanted to let them know they should be proud to have been a part of a place that's sort of legendary in Alameda County."

Banchero said that he definitely doesn't want to sell the business under the Banchero name but it's too early to say what will become of the restaurant in the future.

Banchero said that business never suffered and they had many loyal customers until the end – and that he hopes those customers understand his decision.

"I know that people will miss us and I know there will be complaints, the phone is already ringing off the hook," said Banchero. "It's nice to know so many people care, but we had a good run."