



Rebirth of a Tuakau Icon

Entering its third century

It's been a long journey for the Tuakau Hotel, one of the town's oldest buildings, first opened to an appreciative and thirsty clientele in 1880 and now undergoing extensive renovation. The building has seen some wild times, respectable meetings, historic occasions like the visit of Sir Charles Kingsford Smith in 1934, celebrations and wakes.

The hotel was not Tuakau's first – that was originally located in "old Tuakau," down by the river, where the town might be today if not for the coming of the railway. The first proprietor was John Collins, who was also the postmaster and chairman of the local school committee, by all accounts a very popular member of the small community. In 1880, an enterprising Mr Cohen from Sydney bought Mr Collins' inn and soon set about relocating to the new centre of activity close to the railway station, at the Harrisville end of George Street. The Auckland Weekly News of October 23, 1880 reported that "Mr Cohenpurchased half an acre of land close to the railway station from Mr Fergie, for £100, on which he has erected a commodious building to accommodate visitors who may visit this thriving settlement on business or pleasurable pursuits. It is, I believe to be opened in December."

In August 1884 the Auckland Weekly News commented "Cohen's hotel has changed hands, a Mr Septon having taken it, who purposes making some alterations to the premises, which, he thinks, will add to the comfort and convenience of all who may patronize his house."

By 1888, George Brown was in charge of the hotel and he was still proprietor in 1891. By that year, he was having problems with prohibitionists, who declared their intention, if elected, of

