

Share your memories of the Queen's Hotel

BRACEBRIDGE – Architect Don Skinner, who is spearheading the restoration of the old Queen's Hotel on Manitoba Street in Bracebridge, is seeking information from residents about the building's colourful history.

"If only these walls could talk," said Skinner. "This building has a fascinating history, and we want to learn everything we can about it in order to pay homage to it in our restoration. So we're appealing to anyone who can share their stories and images."

The Queen's Hotel, as it was originally known, was built in 1885 by local entrepreneur Alfred Hunt. In 1892 then-owner John Higgins put a large addition onto the north end, much of which was destroyed by fire in 1910 (and then later rebuilt). It was purchased in the 1930s by the Patterson brothers who remodelled the building and put in the chamfered corner.

In addition to being the site of The Queen's Hotel, The Patterson Hotel and Hotel Patterson, 63 Manitoba St. has housed a barbershop, billiard room, banquet hall, drugstore, variety store and pharmacy. Al Beverley purchased the building in 1986 from which he operated his paint store and home decorating business, with offices above.

Don and Jen Skinner purchased the building in 2007. It was briefly home to the Lampost, and this summer was the site of Six Degrees Muskoka, a not-for-profit pilot project supporting Muskoka's youth and arts community.

CHANGING FACE. The Queen's Hotel as it appeared in 1930 (below), and as it appears now (right). Owners Don and Jen Skinner are seeking information from residents about the building's colourful history.

"We're looking for stories from people who worked in the shops or families who might have had their wedding reception or some other event here," said Jen Skinner, "as well as photographs, letters, postcards, anything that can help us fill

in this wonderful building's history would be greatly appreciated."

Please phone 705-645-6313 or email tamsen@sixdegrees-muskoka.com to set up an appointment.



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