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OPOTIKI NEWS

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Plans link to grim history

ROSS MCCULLOUGH Mr Cookson views the land the building is on as "the most historic place in Opotiki, outside St Stephen's Hiona Church."

Until the end of last year, Kowhai Takeaways operated out of the building.

Mr Cookson said that on March 2, 1865, during the colonialist era of that century, James Volkner was hung outside the church across the road. That was the precursor to large-scale confiscations of Whakatōhea land.

"This is historic central in my opinion. It all started here, which has been part of the motive for acquiring this land."

He said the land and building had a nice connection with his family, but it was also of significance to the district.

To begin preparing the site for development, the car park area at the back of the building underwent a transition recently and a fence was built on the property.

With the assistance of Waio-

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The rear of the Kowhai building, accessible from Potts Avenue, has undergone changes recently, signalling potential for an exciting development for the town, should it be found to be structurally sound.

With the integrity of the building yet to be assessed, new owner Fred Cookson has hinted that what ends up in the building could complement what the Opotiki Museum already offers visitors.

Museum manager Dot Wilson confirmed discussions have taken place and that she and others are receptive to some of the suggestions put forward by the building's new owners.

One such option is a cafe that could work in tandem with the museum.



> **OPOTIKI** Greypower committee chairwoman Josie Mortensen presents New Zealand Manuka Group chief financial officer Jerome Brosnahan a gift of appreciation for the insight he provided the group.

Photo Ross McCullough OB1749-1

Company operation blossoms

ROSS MCCULLOUGH

OPOTIKI Greypower members and visitors were given a rare insight on Tuesday into the blossoming operations of New Zealand Manuka Group, which continues to grow rapidly.

Chief financial officer Jerome Brosnahan was invited to the Opotiki Greypower meeting to give an overview of what the

company does, and highlighted the impact the company has had since establishing a base in Opotiki.

As a memento of the visit, everyone was gifted a complimentary pack of manuka-based skincare products, lollipops and lozenges.

Mr Brosnahan said the company started near Whakatane with a honey processing plant,

the main markets being in China and Australia.

With bases in Whakatane, one in Opotiki which continues to grow and one established in Masterton eight months ago, the company had some 10,000 bees hives all over the East Cape and Wairarapa regions. The company employed some 125 people,

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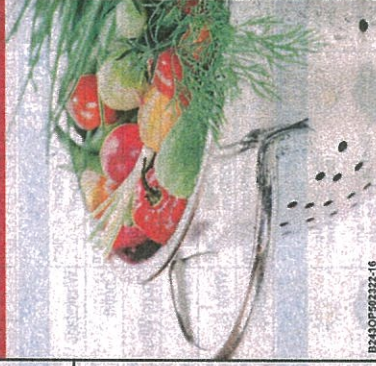
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