

FAMILIAR PLACE TO BE DEMOLISHED THURSDAY

Taken from the Cobden Sun for November 19th, 2003

COBDEN - The writing is on the walls. And the floors. And the tables. And anywhere else a marker could write. Saturday night, Joanne McKee began writing good-bye messages on the walls The North Way Restaurant. And then, customers and staff followed suit.

Mrs. McKee and daughter Patti Borutski are owners of The North Way Restaurant, a well-established business in Cobden for many years. Recently, the two celebrated their family ownership of 20 years.

At closing time Sunday, the doors to the restaurant were officially closed for the final time this year.

But, no fear. The two plan on reopening the business in the spring.

For several months, construction of the new restaurant has been ongoing behind the current building on Hwy. 17 (Pembroke Street). The mother and daughter business partners plan on reopening in the new building as quickly as possible.

But, before that happens, much work still has to be completed, including the demolishing of the current building, cleaning up the contaminated site, installing gas pumps, sewer and water lines and of course, finishing off the new building.

Mrs. Borutski says the weeks leading up to the final day were difficult, but she wasn't prepared for the emotional turmoil she is going through, as well as her mother.

Mrs. McKee said she never realized how much of an impact the business had on them. "I feel like we're abandoning our customers," said Mrs. McKee Monday morning.

Mrs. Borutski added, "We are overwhelmed by the response. People were taking our pictures."

Messages throughout the building are about a camaraderie that has built up over the years, agree the two women. "We are leaving behind so many memories. The familiar will be gone when the new restaurant is open," said Mrs. Borutski. Monday morning Mrs. McKee says people were coming into the restaurant thinking we were open for business.

Trying to find the history of the building and the business has been a bit difficult, admits Mrs. McKee. She has discovered that Lennox McLaughlin installed electricity in 1944.

And as for the people that have made a living from the restaurant?" Mrs. Borutski says it would take more than the agricultural hall to get all the people in if a reunion were held.

When the business closed for the next few months, 36