

Pirate prose remains mystery



Hāwera

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A patch of pirate prose came to light as an old building was demolished to make way for South Taranaki's \$12.5 million library, arts and culture centre, Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga.

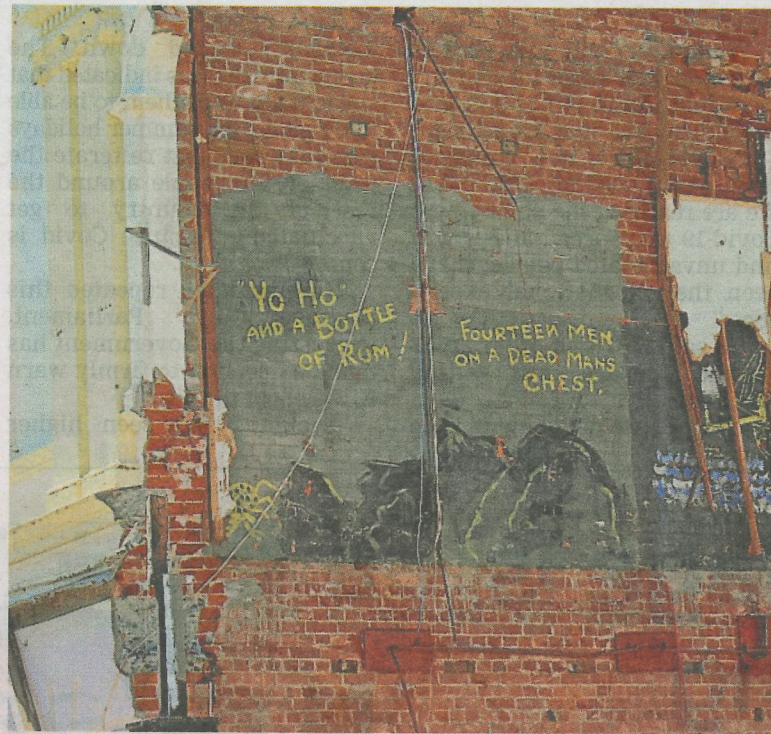
The identity and circumstances of the person who scrawled "Yo ho and a bottle of rum" and "fourteen men on a dead man's chest" on a first floor wall at some time in the past are unknown.

"It could have been someone who lived up there and was having a party, or having a staff party, we don't know," South Taranaki District Council communications manager Gerard Langford said.

The council bought the building, on the corner of High St and Regent St, in 2016, choosing it for its central location.

The demolition work is set to continue until mid-December.

"The tender process for construction of the new facility is under way, and we expect the tender will be awarded by Christmas," Langford said. "The intention is that the successful contractor will be able to start early in the new year and con-



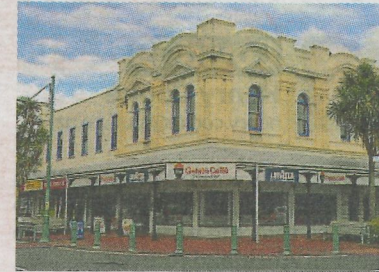
A rough beginning of a mural was discovered on a second storey wall during the demolition of a building in Hāwera.

struction will take 15 - 18 months."

Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga, the key project in the Hāwera Town Centre upgrade, is designed to create vibrancy and stimulate economic activity. The development will include a bigger library, meeting rooms, public toilets, a heritage exhibition

space, the Lysaght Watt Gallery, a visitor centre and café, and a communal public outdoor space.

The name Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga refers to the beacon, or signal fire, that Ruapūtahanga, a famous Taranaki Māori ancestress, would light so iwi could gather to share ideas and knowledge.



How it used to look - part of the building was the Gelato Caffè.

CATHERINE GROENESTEIN/STUFF



It took a few days to reduce the site to rubble.

VANESSA LAURIE/STUFF



An artist's impression of Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga - Hawera's new civic centre.

SOUTH TARANAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL