

New proprietor keen to lift profile

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The new owners of the White Hart Hotel in Hawera have big dreams.

Shiv and Kiran Mattu and their two children shifted from Oamaru in the South Island to chase their hope of running a successful business.

Mattu said he sees potential in the lease only hotel.

"I first heard about Hawera in 2005, and I was just shopping around for a business and I found this," he said.

Mattu said he would like to attract the corporate market.

"I know that this is a big dairy farming area here plus the Taranaki oil so I thought there must be a few corporate travellers travelling around," he said.

"I would like to tap into that market."

Mattu said he would like to spice up the hotel.

"I am very interested in the heritage of the building and will endeavour to keep its traditions

strong," he said.

"I would like to do some construction work and to paint the front of the building to make it more top-notch."

Mattu said he could not believe the hotel had no website.

"Everyone uses Google these days, and it was very surprising when I found out it had no website," he said.

"I have one getting set up at the moment and am keen on getting into the online booking market."

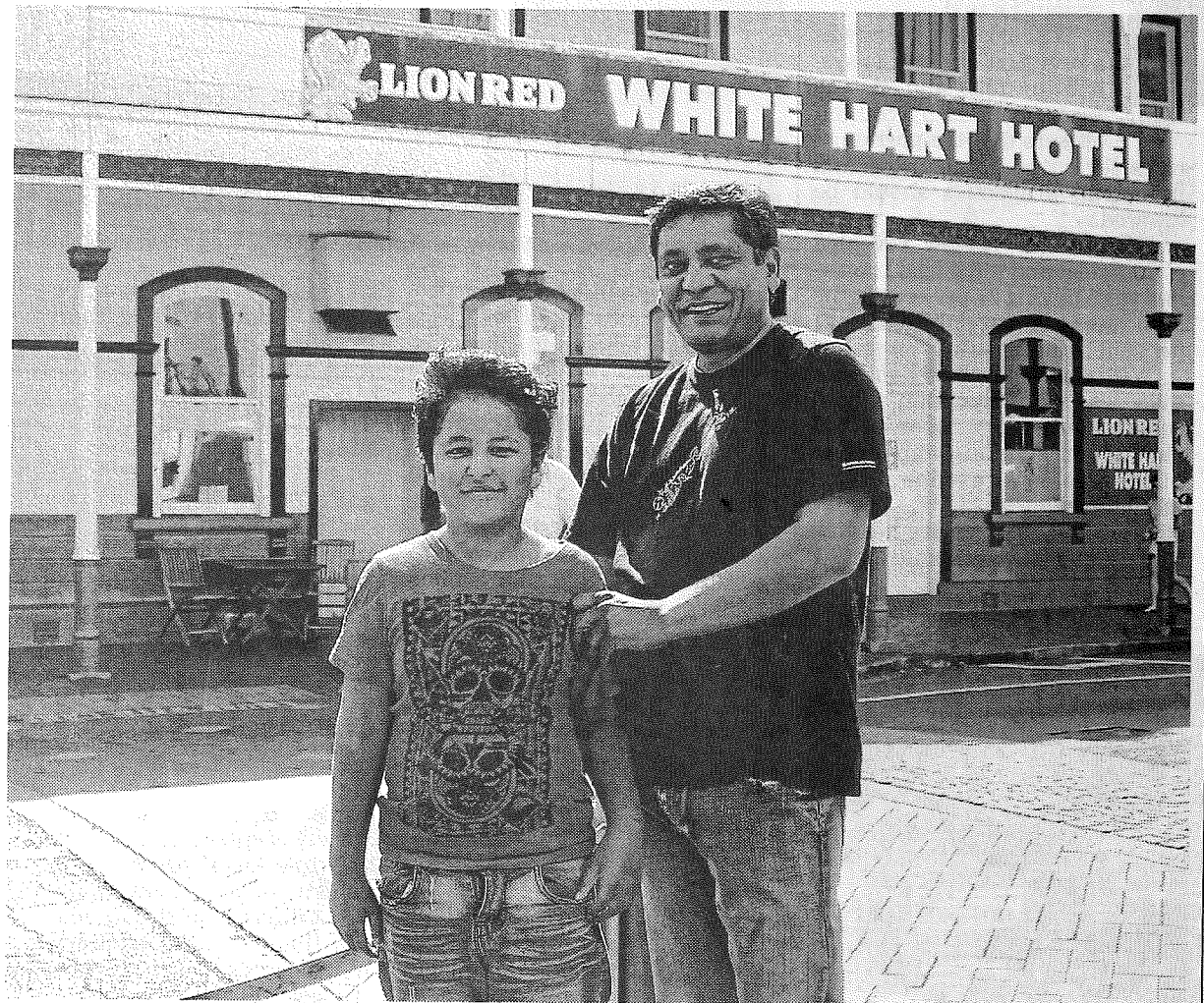
Mattu said he would like to get involved with the community.

"You have to be part of the community to receive something from the community," he said.

"I will sponsor the local darts and rugby clubs and have sponsored the Normanby School.

"But I want to have a look to see if I can increase my sponsorship in the clubs."

The White Hart Hotel is listed with the South Taranaki District Council as a Heritage Building and as a Category 2 building with the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.



Shiv Mattu with his son Droun outside the Hawera White Hart Hotel, which the family have leased.

Photo: BRAD ROBERTS/FAIRFAX NZ

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