



MATT STENSLAND/STAR

Fawna Odom, owner of the HiWay Bar, walks on scaffolding Monday to try to make out an old sign painted on the building.

Owner: Building's history 'has been so fun to research

HiWay Bar continued from 1B

Among them is a picture of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid standing outside Norvell's dry goods store. Odom said she learned a lot about the property, which she has owned since 1990.

"It has been so fun to research," Odom said.

Fun doesn't mean cheap, though. The kitchen has been closed for about a month because of the renovations. She hopes to have the kitchen open by August. She said her customers have understood.

"They're mad at me because I can't feed them," Odom joked. "But they've been awesome and so loyal and great. I can't wait to get everyone back together again."

Although Odom thought she would be able to restore the HiWay Bar for less than \$100,000, "surprises" along the way have pushed the cost into the six figures, Odom said.

There have been good surprises, though. While pulling up old linoleum in the building, workers found copies of the *Denver Post* from the 1930s.

Some changes already are noticeable at the bar, including the replacement of floors that weren't level. Odom said it had been so long since her pool tables sat on level ground that people "don't know how to walk around" them. On the front of the building, the HiWay Bar's previous names, such as "Candy's Place," can be seen printed beneath the brown wood siding that was added in the 1970s and is being removed in favor of the clapboard siding underneath.

Karolynn Lestrud, also a member of the historic preservation board, applauded Odom's renovations, especially the rectifying of "very unfortunate modernizations."

"It's very exciting that an owner is that interested in a building that they want to



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Fawna Odom has been documenting construction by taking pictures and is using photos as a guide for restoring the building.

restore it," Lestrud said.

Both Holderness and Lestrud said Odom's decision to restore the bar to its historical state were positive factors in the preservation board's decision to recommend that it be added to

the Routt County Register of Historic Properties. If approved Odom may see some financial relief — historical designation can mean state and federal tax credits for preservation in addition plaques and certificates.