



TIME, PLEASE: Breakwater Tavern publican Kevin Harbrow in front of his pub, which will close by the end of March.

Photo: MARK DWYER

It's achy breaky heart time for port

By ROB MAETZIG

THE Breaky is soon to be no more.

The Breakwater Tavern, New Plymouth's portside pub that over the years has also been known as the Moturoa Hotel and the Paritutu Tavern, is to close its doors some time between now and the end of March.

The actual closure date isn't yet known because publican Kevin Harbrow hasn't decided — but what he did confirm yesterday was that he had sold the Breaky's lease to its owner, Port Taranaki owner Westgate Transport Ltd, and under the terms of that agreement he has to be out by March 31.

And when that happens, the closure will

mark the end of a pub thought to be as old as the port itself.

"The current Breaky building has been here since 1916, and it was built on the site of a wooden hotel that was built in 1893 but burned down. And that building had itself replaced a wooden hotel which had also burned down," said Mr Harbrow.

"So there's been a watering hole down here for a long time. It'll be sad to see it all end — but, unfortunately, you can't stand in the way of progress."

Westgate chief executive Roy Weaver confirmed his company had bought the hotel's lease, and he added Westgate had no intention of keeping the Breaky open.

"We're assessing our options for the future of the building and the land surrounding it — we've also purchased

some adjacent land off the Magog Motorcycle Club.

"It's unlikely the tavern will be demolished, because it is a good, solid building."

Mr Harbrow said he decided to sell the tavern's lease because, after three years, he had had enough.

"Old pubs like these are a dying breed — there used to be plenty around, but now there are hardly any. They're being replaced by all those bars in the central city," he said.

"In many respects that saddens me. The Breaky always seems to have had a reputation as a place where real hard bastards drink, but that reputation is a joke. In fact it's always been one of the friendliest places around."