



And now, some classic content from Ohana Magazines past. First up is the first article from the 2009 inaugural issue...(with some photo updates)

The Tiki Motor Resort



in the continental US. While Disney's experience may be more immersive, it lacks that special something that the Tiki had/has.

Take a quick stroll around the grounds and look through squinted eyes, and you can still see the Tiki in its heyday. A parking lot full of Packards and Studebakers, while the atomic family grilled outdoors and thrilled at the carving and antics of Hurricane Hattie and Kaena, the resort's original Polynesian dancer.

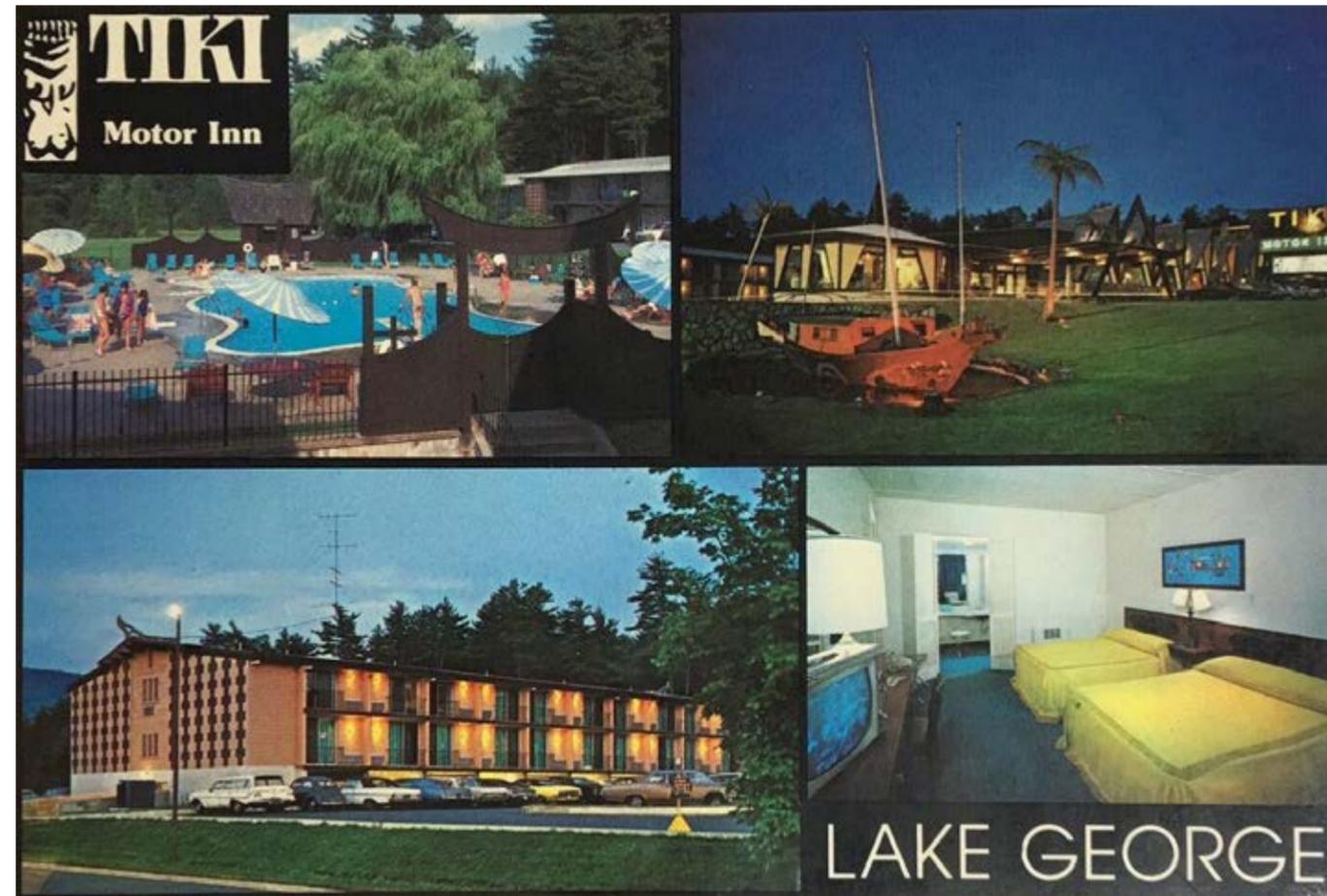
Opened in 1960, The Tiki Motor Inn was another brainchild of Lake George legend, Charles R. Wood. From all accounts, Wood was an innovator, philanthropist and all-around fun guy. He opened Storybook Village (now Six Flags, right up the road from the Tiki Resort) a Disney-esque theme park, in 1954; a full year before Walt himself opened Disneyland. Wood also beat Walt to the punch with his version of a Polynesian paradise, the Tiki Motor Inn (Walt's Polynesian Resort wouldn't open until 1971), and during the '60s and '70s opened dozens of Lake George attractions and motels, making the entire town into his own version of Disneyland, much of which is still standing today.

Why mention Disney's Polynesian Resort when discussing The Tiki Resort? Because they are the last two tiki-themed full service resorts with Polynesian dinner shows still operational



In 1960, the Motor Inn consisted of the long block of rooms by the pool (look from the side and you can still see the carved outriggers on top of the motel) and the other building next to the pool, where the lobby and show room were located. The original lobby area remains relatively unspoiled, and is currently Paradise, the bar where our ukulele acts will perform this weekend during dinner shows.

Immediately next to Paradise was the Tahitian Lounge (currently Whispers dance club/function room) where Hurricane Hattie belted out songs and jokes, before the



seductive swaying of Kaena would entrance the room. There are rumors (unconfirmed) that back in its heyday, there was an Adults Only late show, where Hattie's humor was even more risqué, and that Kaena would perform topless. We don't know if there's any truth to that at all, but even the existence of the rumor is an interesting piece of the Tiki's past.

By the mid '60s, the Tiki Motor Inn was THE hot spot in Lake George, and it needed to expand. A third building was built in 1967 double the number of rooms available. It was at

they time that the Lobby was moved to where it is now, and Paradise became the bar it is today, virtually untouched for over 40 years.

A few things *have* changed at the Tiki since those days, however. Time has weathered the tikis, and the Howard Johnson purchase in 1985 gave the rooms a much-needed facelift and addition of modern amenities. They even added suites back in 1987. An area that used to be storage space and a conference room is now Waikiki, where the Pearls of Paradise dinner show transports visitors on a journey through the South Pacific. The Tahitian Lounge is now Whispers, a wonderfully retro '80s dance club/function room, and the gift shop is now the Garden Café. Actually, more remains in tact than has been removed for the Tiki Resort. Word is getting out about the cool retro motel with the tiki theme, business is up, and the current owners are committed to adding even more tikis and décor. The Tiki Motor Resort realizes that it is a piece of Americana; something unique, and the last of its kind that's worth preserving and restoring. With support from tikiphiles and goose-freaks, and retro lifestyle buss, the Tiki and nearly all of Lake George, is seeing a boom, as the hip little town that's trapped in time.

