

A New and Rough-Hewn Tavern

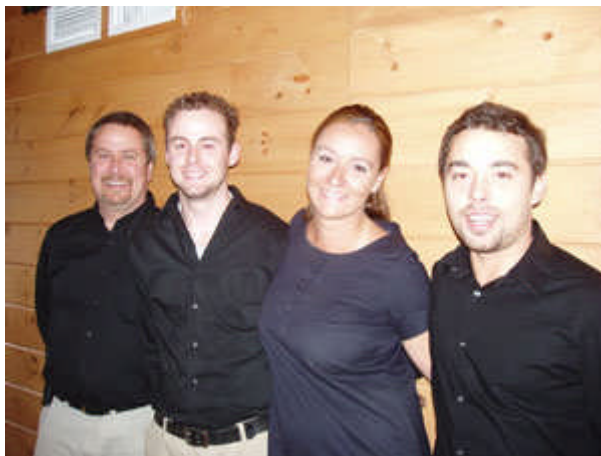
By Janis Hewitt

(3/26/2008) Second House Tavern is a new restaurant in Montauk on Second House Road. Formerly known as Ruschmeyer's Inn, the place is now under new ownership. Ruschmeyer's L.L.C. bought it from James Hewitt, who owns the Shagwong Tavern in the hamlet.

The spacious establishment has been renovated and refurbished and is now a stark, modern hideaway whose path has recently been found. Inside, the main bar has been stripped down and refinished, and a pub-style grill has been added to the north side of the building. Both bars have mirrored backsplashes and similar menus, but with slight variations.

Abby Monahan of Montauk is running the ship. She comes by her experience from the work she did in other establishments in the area when home from college on summer vacations. Her mother, Lili Adams, runs the Ditch Witch food wagon at the eastern end of Ditch Plain Beach in Montauk. Ms. Monahan helped manage that too over the years.

The grill in Second House Tavern was open for a brief stint in December and January. Ms. Monahan said she wanted to open as soon as a space was ready in order to give Montaukers another dining option and a place to hang out in the colder months.



Janis Hewitt

Abby Monahan, the general manager and go-to-girl at Second House Tavern, flanked by her bar staff, from left, Dave Ryan, Chris Hart, and Jay Anderson

“It was a risk. But I believe the local community is the best PR machine. I wanted to get the locals in here and get them to love our product. I think it worked,” Ms. Monahan said from the main bar recently.

The executive chef is Richard Soriano, who has cooked at Maloney and Porcelli restaurant and at the Park Avenue Cafe, both in Manhattan. His most recent gigs were at Cipollini in Manhasset and at Nonnina, an Italian restaurant in West Islip.

In addition to a wide selection of liquor, beer, wine, and specialty drinks at the bar, the grill’s menu includes burgers, paninis, mac and cheese carbonara, chowder, soups, and other comfort food. The pub-style room has large rough-hewn tables and cozy seating arrangements.

When the tavern closed in January, additional renovations began. The cabins that surround the sprawling back lawn where many a wedding has taken place over the years will be refurbished and should be open by Memorial Day. They will have wireless connections and wide-screen televisions, among other amenities. Second House reopened on March 12.

The tavern’s larger room has been stripped down. Sleek black tables are decorated with chunky white candles. A majority of the windows in the big room look out over Fort Pond.

The menu in this part of the tavern is a bit fancier and offers a selection of hors d’oeuvres, including steak tartare and lobster sliders. The dinner menu has a more formal selection of items, including wood-roasted chicken, sirloin steaks, rib-eye, fish, vegetable dishes, and a vegetarian cassoulet. Wines are listed on both menus by the glass or bottle.

Second House Tavern is available for catered events, weddings, and other functions, and can accommodate up to 500 guests. The restaurant is kid friendly and offers takeout. Through May, it will be open Wednesday to Sunday from 5 to 10 p.m.