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Falls Village Inn has reopened

BY RUTH EPSTEIN REPUBLICAN-AMERICAN

FALLS VILLAGE — The Falls Village Inn reopened Thursday after being closed for several years.

At the soft opening Wednesday and the official one Thursday people were giving rave reviews to the completely refurbished interior. Owners Susan Sweetapple and Colin Chambers worked since April to transform the space, which was in a total state of disrepair, into one that boasts a look of bright clean comfort.

"For seven weekends Colin's parents, my daughter and I peeled wallpaper," she said. "I thought we'd smell like vinegar forever."

The 176-year-old inn has a tap room, a small dining area and four rooms upstairs for overnight guests.

Sweetapple said they were renting a house in Cornwall when they saw an ad for the property. While they had no intention of running an inn, they found the possibility intriguing. She has been in the hospitality business for 25 years.

The couple feels extremely fortunate that noted designer Bunny Williams, who has a home just down the road, approached them about helping with the interior. She knew the importance of the property to the town.

"We knew it had possibilities, but having her expertise was invaluable," Sweetapple said. She was in constant contact with them and had local residents Robin Cockerline and Peter Rich scouting out items in antique, thrift and secondhand shops for the decor.

On the second floor are the rooms for overnight guests. Two are regular size, the yellow and blue rooms, and two are suites.

The green suite, which has been dubbed the "Hollywood room" because of its movie theme design, also has a claw-foot bathtub. The other suite is beige highlighted by lush green plants.

The heating, plumbing and electrical systems have been updated. But, Sweetapple said, much of the charm revolves around the quirkiness found due to the age of the building, including its sloping floors.

The tap room, which Chambers designed, is filled with memorabilia relating to Lime Rock Park. He is in charge of the park's advertising. A small adjacent room, whose walls are covered with prints and maps of Falls Village and the surrounding area, will serve as a dining room for now. Eventually the large room and porch will be completed for additional dining space.

Sweetapple said the menu consists mainly of comfort food, including mac n' cheese, chicken pot pie, shepherds pie, crab cakes and strip steak. Salads, burgers, soups and appetizers that include wings, chili and shrimp round out the offerings.

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Jose Lalvay, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and formerly of the Hamilton Inn in Millerton, N.Y., is the chef. Joy Martorell is the general manager.

The dining room is open Thursday through Sunday from 5 to 9 p.m. and the bar from 4 to 10 p.m. Lunch is available starting at noon Saturday and Sunday. The phone number is (860) 824-0033.