

# Restaurant at Tamaqua railroad station slated to reopen in spring

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Published: February 25, 2013

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andy matsko/staff photos Signs in the windows of the Restaurant at the Station in the Tamaqua Train Station building inform the public that the establishment will reopen this year and that the Still Creek Gift Shop remains open for business.

[Image Gallery for Restaurant at Tamaqua railroad station slated to reopen in spring](#)



[Image Gallery for Restaurant at](#)

TAMAQUA - While the Restaurant at the Station closed its doors in December after eight years, the site is expected to reopen in early spring under a new name and new ownership.

Yvonne Sidella, Drehersville, a chef who attended the Pennsylvania School of Culinary Arts, Lancaster, said Friday that she and her husband, Richard, will be the new tenants of the Vonz Restaurant that will feature American cuisine.

"We are in the process now of cleaning some things up," she said. "We're very excited about opening. We have been pursuing different avenues for about two and half years.

"God opened these doors and we're pursuing it. We're very excited to be part of the community and to support Tamaqua."

Sidella said while the restaurant's layout will remain the same, there are plans to change the furniture and additional dining space will be added with the use of the women's waiting room area.

Linda J. Yulanavage, Tamaqua Area Chamber of Commerce executive director, found news of a new tenant for the restaurant site at the old train station welcoming.

"We're excited to have the restaurant open again," she said.

The Restaurant at the Station closed its doors because it became too much work for Sheri Beltz and her husband, Bill.

"The economy was a part of it," she said.

While Beltz and her husband ran it for eight years, she said he eventually went back to work in another field so it was too much work for one and a half people.

While the couple closed The Restaurant at the Station in December, they plan to open another restaurant in the near future.

Beltz said she and her husband purchased the Brookside Pub in Park Place near Mahanoy City in 2002 and ran it until 2005 when the station location became available and they were asked to open that. She said they will open the Brookside Pub on Saturday nights.

According to the Restaurant at the Station website, any gift certificates from The Restaurant at the Station will be honored at the pub.

"I think things will economywise and clientalwise be a better fit for what we can and want to do," Sheri said.

Tamaqua Save Our Station, which owns the building that the former Restaurant at the Station occupies at routes 209 and 309, could not be reached for further comment about the reopening.

According to newspaper archives, the Tamaqua Railroad Station was the first commercial railroad to haul anthracite coal by steam engine by 1833. The Little Schuylkill Coal & Navigation Railroad started as a horse-drawn

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railroad in 1831, and the one-story brick building was built in 1874 by the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad after a fire destroyed the early wooden structure.

The station was the center for railroad activity in the anthracite coal region until it ceased operations in 1961 and was officially abandoned in 1981.

After exchanging hands several times, community members with the goal of preserving the building formed the nonprofit organization Tamaqua Save Our Station, or SOS. It purchased the building in 1992 for \$25,000, a \$1.5 million restoration project was completed and the building was unveiled to the public with a formal dedication ceremony on Aug. 1, 2004.

The station is in the Tamaqua Historical District. It is also home to the Railroad Gift Shop, The Old Station Candy Shop and the Still Creek Gift Shop.

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