

History: Successful first season

May 17, 2016

In a March 21, 1968 issue of The Snowmass Villager an article introduced Dave Peterson and Don Burnett as business members of the community. "Although Dave Peterson, owner of The Refectory Restaurant at Snowmass, worked for the IBM Corp. in San Francisco for four years, he didn't meet the company's chairman of the board until last week when Tom Watson dined at the restaurant here. Peterson was born in Wichita, grew up in Tulsa, then attended Yale University for one year before transferring to Stanford University in Palo Alto where he majored in Industrial Engineering. After college, he worked in computer sales at IBM before he and a co-worker, John Leonudakis, decided to go into the restaurant business. That was two years ago and now the two men have three Refectory Restaurants in operation and a fourth slated to open in April ... Dave designed the interior of the restaurant and built it himself with the help of local workers. He and his wife had been spending ski vacations in Aspen for years and last February when they were in Aspen for the Roch Cup they went into the Snowmass Pavilion, mentioned to John McBride that they were in the restaurant business and, within days, had signed the lease for the steak house here. ... He attributes the extremely successful first season here to the 'support from the townspeople' and also to the fact that Don Burnett, who is managing the restaurant, knows so many people. Don has been in Aspen for four years, has worked for the Steak Pit, Molly Gibson, Red Onion and managed the Knight Club, as well as working as an instructor for the Aspen Ski School. Don also comes from California where he attended San Francisco University. Although he is a ski instructor now, he had never skied before he came to Aspen. After college, someone said, 'let's go to Aspen' and he stayed because he likes the mountains and the people. ..."

Photo by Dodie Gust. Pictured here are Dave Peterson and Don Burnett standing in front of the sign for The Refectory Steak and Lobster restaurant in Snowmass.