

FROM:



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For Immediate Release, Please

The Abbey, An Irish Pub in Washington Square

Damian Dowling, owner of The Abbey, worked at a nearby restaurant, the Washington Square Tavern, for several years before he realized that the neighborhood needed a pub. He opened The Abbey, a pub/restaurant at 1657 Beacon Street, Washington Square, in 2010. His parents had owned a hotel and restaurant back in his hometown of Bray, Ireland, so he was familiar with the challenges found in the business.

The Brookline Abbey pub is small, with eight tables and 14 seats at the bar. It is painted in earthy tones, with exposed brick walls and lighting that is “just right, not too bright or too dark”. On the walls are photos and art work relating to Dublin’s Abbey Theatre. Lighted candles add to the ambience after dark. Currently, there are also 12 tables on the outside sidewalk/street which Damian would like to keep if allowed.

The Abbey has an eclectic, diverse clientele. Most customers live nearby. Damian welcomes “all ages, persuasions, colors and creeds.” It is a place where older “kids” meet each other and have their first date. The Abbey is also popular with parents of local college students, as well as people who are looking for a late-night snack after most of the other local restaurants have closed. The kitchen is open from 11 am to 1:30 am. They do not take reservations.

Damian remarked that owning and running a restaurant is difficult. “It takes a lot of effort to make money. Something is always breaking.” But he is adept at fixing things. He says that all of the restaurants in Washington Square get along; the owners are friendly and helpful to each other. “A Rising Tide helps everyone.”

Damian is proud of his staff and treats them well. They learn from each other, pool tips, and are not territorial. There is very little turn-over. In fact, the Abbey retained 85 to 90% of employees during the pandemic. The pandemic was devastating and Damian lost millions in sales. He made sure The Abbey followed all the rules and regulations laid out for operating during the pandemic. Customers did not want to dine indoors, so during the winter he arranged heating lamps in outside tents. He says that the last few weeks have been very emotional as more customers are returning.

The Abbey is age-friendly. Its menu offers many choices beyond the usual pub fare, including a wide variety of gluten-free items. Staff move people to be with one another. The Abbey welcomes people in wheelchairs or with strollers. The experienced, knowledgeable team members go out of their way to make people happy.

The End