

RESALE HOMES

HOME OF THE WEEK CHAMBERLAIN ISLAND, GEORGIAN BAY

A family compound with comforts outdoors and in

This 'flawless' recreational retreat is set amid the rocky islets of Georgian Bay

THE LISTING

Asking price: \$6.8-million

Taxes: Not available

Agent: George Webster (Moffat Dunlap Real Estate Ltd.)

CAROLYN IRELAND

The Island

In the 1930s, the islands of Georgian Bay near Parry Sound, Ont., were mostly untamed wilderness. A Toronto-based family purchased 12-acre Chamberlain Island from the Crown and have been spending their summers there ever since.

During the past 80 years, the owners, who asked that their name not be used, have built a family compound for the grandparents, kids and grandchildren.

The family has planted gardens that have become well-established through the years, with beds of flowers surrounding a kitchen garden that provides lettuces and herbs.

Granite pathways and wooden walkways wind throughout the island to link the terraces, cottages, gardens and waterfront.

The geography of the island and its surrounding waters provides two protected deep water harbours.

Kids can swim or launch their canoes and kayaks from a protected sand beach.

And for those with a float plane, Chamberlain Island's waters and harbours can accommodate that too.

Lots of big, smooth rocks let swimmers ease into the bay.

The main vistas face west-northwest for sunset views, notes real estate agent George Webster of Moffat Dunlap Real Estate Ltd.

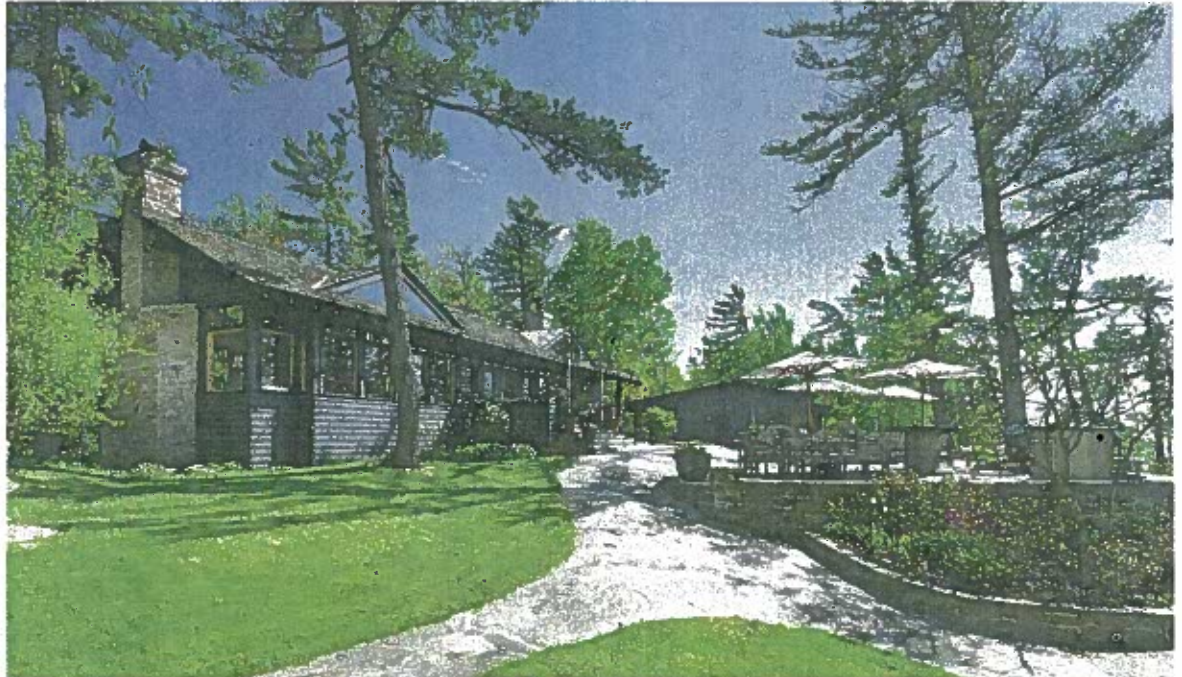
"It's practically a flawless island," Mr. Webster says.

The cottages

The tradition among cottagers on Georgian Bay is to build a main cottage and then place smaller sleeping cabins around the island to take advantage of the views, breezes and privacy that island living allows.

On Chamberlain Island, the main lodge is the home base for four separate sleeping cabins, two boathouses, a laundry house and a sauna.

Family and guests congregate in



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the 1800-square-foot main lodge. Timber frame construction creates soaring vaulted ceilings and expansive windows that can disappear to let in the fresh air. There's a floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace in the combined living room and dining area.

A large separate kitchen has a six-burner gas range, two ovens, two built-in refrigerators, two dishwashers and a brick, wood-burning pizza oven.

At the rear of the lodge, the owners have a floor-to-ceiling

wine cooler, a walk-in cooler, butler's pantry and wine bar. Outside, large expanses of flat rock have been used as the setting for a series of terraces leading to the shore.

The master bedroom cottage provides 3,000-square-feet of space. The living room has a fireplace and views to the water. There's a master bedroom with his-and-hers ensuite bathrooms and a separate office with fireplace. Two more bedrooms and a bathroom accommodate family

members.

Guests to the island often jostle for a place in their preferred sleeping cabin. Most seem to favour Sunset Cottage, which is the island's original log cabin from the 1930s.

But others are attracted to the waterside setting of Pink Cottage, which at one time provided accommodation for the cook.

The Sunrise Cottage is big enough for a family with its two bedrooms, two bathrooms, living room and kitchenette.

The boathouses are rare on Georgian Bay, where townships often ban anything more than a single-storey floating boathouse.

In this case, the island has a large main boathouse with a second-storey loft containing two bedrooms and a bathroom. The first floor houses a cedar sauna, kitchenette, a bathroom and a 40-foot boat slip.

A single-storey boathouse in its own protected harbour has a single slip, workshop, kitchenette, office and bathroom.

Sans Souci

Sans Souci is one of the more highly-coveted areas within the thirty-thousand islands of Geor-

gian Bay. The cottagers include wealthy industrialists and tycoons from both sides of the border.

The area is near the southern end of the chain of islands, which makes it about a two-hour drive from Toronto.

"It's a really established cottage community. People have been coming here since the 1800s," Mr. Webster says.

Originally many Americans came up to fish for lake trout. Some of the Pennsylvanians created a fishing lodge that still operates today, notes Mr. Webster.

As part of Lake Huron, Georgian Bay can require great skill of boaters when the weather and waters occasionally become wild. Navigating between the rocky islets can be challenging too. But it's a relatively easy cruise to Chamberlain Island from Parry Sound.

"You come out the South Channel," Mr. Webster says. "It's all protected water."

Local boaters often drop anchor at the uninhabited "picnic islands" known as The Umbrellas and The Minks.

Sans Souci also has a tennis club, community centre and day camp for kids.