For Sale: Winter Harbor Lighthouse

A writer's haven

By By Jeremy D'Entremont

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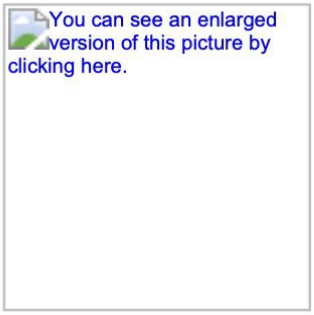


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Mark Island encompasses about four acres and is ...

Photo by: Story Litchfield

In her 1947 book Our Island Lighthouse, Bernice Richmond wrote, "It is hard for people living on the mainland to understand the contentment found on an island... I couldn't put into words... how terribly important it was to sleep on the island with sea sounds encircling me. I couldn't explain how I looked forward each morning to that first rush of salty air through my kitchen door, to the early tour I take over the vein-like paths to the gardens..."



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Winter Harbor Lighthouse on Mark Island was built ...

Photo by: Jeremy D'Entremont

When she wrote those words, Richmond and her husband, sociologist Reginald Robinson, were living at Winter Harbor Lighthouse on little (about four acres) Mark Island, west of Maine's Schoodic Peninsula. The lighthouse has served as a private haven for a series of writers, and it is now for sale once again at an asking price of $1.25 million.



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An early view of Winter Harbor Lighthouse, ...

Winter Harbor Lighthouse, also known locally as Mark Island Light, was built in 1856 for $4,000 to mark the approach to Winter Harbor between the Schoodic Peninsula and Grindstone Neck. Nine keepers and their families lived on the island during the next 78 years. The keeper's house was rebuilt around 1876.



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The interior of the keeper's house.

In 1934 the lighthouse was decommissioned and sold into private hands, and four years later Richmond and Robinson bought it. Richmond, a Maine native, wrote two books about life on Mark Island, Winter Harbor and Our Island Lighthouse. In the 1950s the property was sold to Rene Prud-Hommeaux, an author of children's books. It was later owned for a time by playwright Gerald Kean.

The most recent owner is writer and retired banker William C. Holden III, who spent about $650,000 to buy and restore the property. While living on Mark Island Holden has written several novels. He's renovated the lighthouse so that it's in its best shape in years. "I don't feel like I own it. I feel like a caretaker, like I am entrusted with it. It's a very special place," Holden has said.

According to LandVest, the company handling the sale, the three-bedroom wood frame keeper's house attached to the brick lighthouse tower includes a large kitchen with a cookstove, dining room with a wood stove, large living room with a kerosene stove, and one-and-a-half bathrooms. The upstairs bathroom features a claw-foot tub. There's even a music room with an organ.

There's a deck off the first floor and wood flooring throughout the building. The property includes a dock and float, two moorings, a boathouse with two ramps

and a workshop. The brick oil house from the light station also still stands. The 360-degree view from the island features Schoodic Point, Cadillac Mountain, and the islands of Frenchman's Bay.

The next owner may or may not be a writer or artist of some kind, but it's hard to imagine anyone not being inspired by this very special place. To learn more, on the property, please call Story Litchfield at LandVest at (207) 276-3840 or email SLitchfield

@landvest.com.

Quick Facts

Winter Harbor, aka Marks Island Light was replaced by a lighted buoy and was sold into private hands in 1934.

Tower Height: 19 feet

Description: Cylindrical white brick tower with black cast iron lantern.

Directions: Winter Harbor Light can be seen from the Loop Road through Acadia National Park's Schoodic Peninsula. From ME 186, enter the marked road leading to the Schoodic Peninsula. Good viewing spots for the lighthouse are the off-road lookouts located about 0.8 to 1.2 miles south of the park entrance.

A closer view of the lighthouse is possible from day sails offered by local cruise companies.