



NEWSLETTER

February 2006

MAKING THE JOURNEY AS REWARDING AS THE DESTINATION

Thelma and John Jarvis

Sales Representatives

Lake Muskoka Real Estate Sales

Your cottage is one of your largest investments. To keep an eye on that investment, people usually watch the Real Estate market closely. But statistics given out for Muskoka usually include residential, rural areas and small lakes, etc. To give you an accurate view of what is happening, we have compiled isolated statistics for Lake Muskoka sales. In each of our newsletters, we will provide you with interesting statistics about sale prices, days on the market, price reductions, and other information that can keep you on top of the real estate market that represents big-lake cottagers.



In 2005 there were 83 cottages sold on Lake Muskoka compared to 81 cottages sold on Lake Muskoka in 2004. Because our data comes **from MLS records only**, this sales information does not include information on cottages that were sold privately or exclusively. Therefore it does not give the total picture of all sales on the lake, but it does show the patterns of the majority of sales.

76% of all cottage sales took place between May and September, with the May having 10 sales,

June having 15 sales, July having 13 sales, August having 17 sales and September having 8 sales. In 2005 there were no Lake Muskoka cottage sales in January or February.

Of the 83 cottages sold, 38 of these sales had price reductions during the listing period. 18 cottages had one price reduction, 10 cottages had two price reductions, and 10 had between 3-5 price reductions during the listing period. While some cottages sold for more than their original listing price (eg: 104.5%) other cottages sold for as little as 57% of their original list price.

Generally, the cottages with the most price reductions are the cottages that sold for the smallest percentage of the original list price, and the cottages that were on the market for longer numbers of days. 20 % of sales were island sales. Of the island sales 47 % of them had price reductions. According to 2005 MLS data, the fewest number of days for a cottage to be on the market was 4 days, while the longest number of days on the market was 731 days.

New Year, New Cottage Kitchen

You can update your cottage kitchen for as little as \$250.00. Sound impossible? With your own labour and several cans of paint you would be amazed what you can achieve if you have the courage to paint your cabinetry. It makes a much greater difference than painting the walls. Cabinetry is the largest part of a kitchen and the thing that can make it look the most outdated. If you do not love your cabinetry anymore, what do you have to lose by painting them?

Cottages are a place where playfulness is appropriate, so you can move outside what might usually be your comfort zone when choosing colour. Over the last two years, we encouraged two somewhat conservative couples to take a chance on the colours of their kitchens and the results were stunning. One couple redid their cabinets in red and the other couple painted their cabinets black. They are both thrilled with the results and have had rave reviews from friends and family.

The New Neutral

The colours red or black may seem like pretty radical choices for kitchen cabinetry, but they are really not. You know that white and black are neutral colours, but you may be surprised to know that red also functions as a neutral. If you think of a neutral as something that goes well with everything, it is easy to see that white and black are neutral, but try putting red against other colours and you will be surprised how neutral it is. When I looked at my scarves I realized that I had scarves with red and purple, red and blue, red and green, in fact, red was paired with everything.

You can choose any colour you love, however it is a safe decor choice to paint your cabinets white, black or red. But remember that the shade you choose is important. With white, you have to be careful to not get a colour that is too stark. A very safe choice is Cloud White by Benjamin Moore. It is one of the favourite shades of white of most designers. While it reads white, not yellowish, it is a soft white that goes well with antiques.

Paint it Black

Black paint is wonderful on cabinets as it looks very smart, while also covering up flaws in cabinetry that is not high quality. My friend called after she painted her cabinets black and said, " Oh they are

wonderful. I have put a tuxedo on my old cabinets!" With black paint you have a challenge, because it is very difficult to find a true black outside of oil based paint. Latex paint tends to have blacks that are very dark grey/blue and not true black. Sue Vibert from Custom Woodworking and Design advised me to use a black latex paint from Canadian Tire called Deep Onyx. This worked really well



For an effective red colour, we have had success with Rex Sox by Para Paints or Barn Red from Homestead Paints. A red that has some black in it will give an old look. It is effective to brush the paint on rather than spraying it so that you get the custom, old fashioned look of brush strokes. Many high end cabinetry companies hand brush their cabinetry.

Why be Distressed?

You can get a distressed look, which gives your cabinets better wearability, if you simply sand a very small bit of paint off every edge. With any of these paint colours, when you are using latex paint, you get better wearability if you overcoat the latex paint with water based urethane. We have used a Flecto brand of urethane with success. It is important to let the paint dry for two days before you overcoat it, and then do not wash the overcoat for one month.

If you have been wishing for a new kitchen at the cottage, get out your paintbrush and make it happen. You'll be glad you did. Remember, a change is as good as a rest.

Thinking of Selling?

We'll put the *power* of TWO
To work for YOU

*We would love to talk to you about
marketing ideas for your cottage.*

Complimentary staging is provided

John & Thelma Jarvis

Emergency Supplies to Keep In Your Car

Compiled By John And Thelma Jarvis For Your Safe Trip To The Cottage In Winter

Winter is a time when dangerous travel can become a factor when you have not expected it. Mother Nature demands respect, so do not underestimate the dangers that being stranded in cold weather can put you in. Be prepared. This list should help.

1. First Aid Kit- This can be purchased as a kit or made by the family. Include: artificial airway, several sizes of bandages, first aid cream [spray could explode if it freezes], roll gauze, antihistamine, Aspirin or Tylenol, baby wipes, tissues
2. Energy bars or chocolate bars
3. Telephone numbers to call for help
4. Blanket or heat capturing reflective blanket
5. Hat
6. Gloves
7. Scarf
8. Trash bags and elastics to serve as boots
9. Candles and matches, or better still, rippable heat packs
10. Reflective vest (so other cars can see you if you are outside of the car)
11. Water
12. Lock de-icer
13. Flares or strobe lights
14. Tow rope

15. Jumper cables no shorter than 12 feet
16. Car jack
17. Flashlight
18. Duct tape (do not use in the engine as it will burn)
19. Old pantyhose to use as temporary belt replacement
20. Shovel
21. Kitty litter (for traction)
22. Ice Scraper
23. Extra windshield washer fluid (not seeing clearly causes accidents)

Very inexpensive backpacks are available in dollar stores so that you can assemble an emergency pack for each family member. The backpack keeps the items tidy in your car and makes them easy to store in a closet over the summer, to be put back in the car each fall.

It is important to keep extra clothing like hats, gloves and scarves in your car so that you have dry ones to put on should your others get wet. Wet clothing could put you in danger of frostbite. There are also times that you go out, when a sudden change in the weather makes your clothing inadequate, so your spare items keep you protected. Inexpensive polypropylene winter items of clothing are available at most dollar stores. Reflective blankets come in tiny packages in most dollar stores.

Smoke Alarms on Each Floor

A new Ontario Fire Code regulation mandates a smoke alarm on each floor level in homes in Ontario, in addition to the existing regulations that require smoke alarms outside all bedroom areas. This December 13th 2005 announcement set off a province wide awareness campaign designed to stop anyone from dying in a house fire. According to the Ontario's Fire Marshall's office, approximately 50% of all fatal home fires that occur in Ontario involve victims that had no smoke alarm warning.

Fines can be issued for lack of compliance. Call the Township of Muskoka Lakes Fire Department for more information: 705-765-3156

Keep your family safe. Put a smoke alarm on each floor in your home and cottage.

Early Summer

You may want to mark the date of the Cottage Life Show (March 31st - April 2nd) on your calendar. This precursor to summer helps us dream through the winter.



Sad News of a Historical Loss

If you have not been to the cottage since mid December you may not know that the heavy snows made the historic Duke boat storage shed in Port Carling partially cave in and sink into the water.

Nothing was inside the boathouse at the time of the collapse, so no antique boats were damaged.

The boat shed was built around 1930 as a warehouse for Disappearing Propeller boats.



Ed Skinner of Duke Marine said that during his 30 years of using the shed, the trusses were actually fastened to nearby trees to keep it from falling over.

The shed was listed on the Heritage Committee's Inventory list as a potential site to be considered for heritage designation. Being on the Township's Heritage Committee, we received notice by email as soon as the cave-in occurred. Mayor Pryke referred to it as an historical icon and added that the interior of the structure was framed using the same techniques used to frame a boat.

Luckily John and I had taken some time this fall to get a variety of pictures of the old Duke boat storage sheds. If you would like pictures for your collection, you can e-mail us at Thelma@royalpage.ca. We also have pictures of the collapsed sheds.

We know the cottage experience and would love to be of service to you.

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