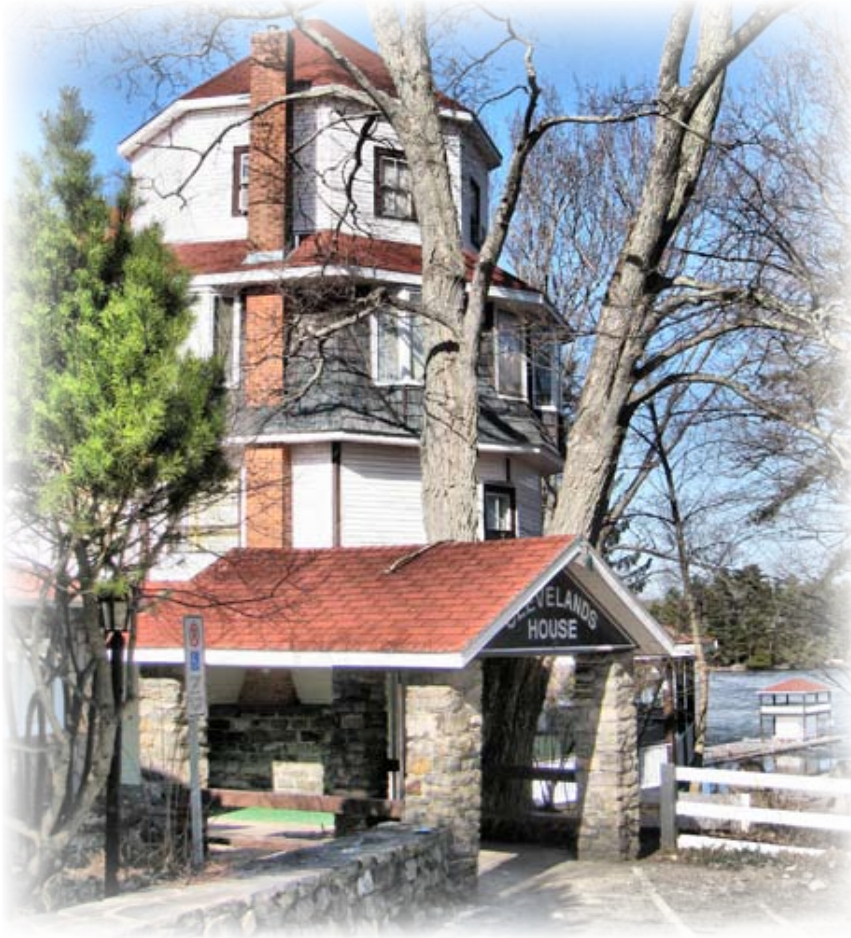




John and Thelma Jarvis

Sales Representatives

MAKING THE JOURNEY AS REWARDING AS THE DESTINATION



Cottage Sales

It is still early to be assured of the 2009 sales trends, and to see how they differ from previous years. By the end of March 2009 there had been more sales than in the same period in 2008, but fewer sales than in 2007. April appears to be following the same trend, but since sales normally jump in May, we should be a better position, by the end of May, to gauge how the year is going to go as far as real estate sales. The list to sale ratio is lower, to date, in 2009, than in previous years. To see the exact statistics, email us our monthly market report.

Win \$25,000.00 or a monthly prize of \$500.00

On March 17th, Royal LePage launched the “My Great Neighbourhood Contest!”

This Contest calls on consumers to submit videos, photos and stories on why they love where they live, or where they cottage, for a chance to win a monthly prize of \$500 and/or the Grand Prize of \$25,000, plus a \$5,000 donation in the winner’s name to a women’s shelter.

It is not hard to describe why you love your neighbourhood in Muskoka, so start your entry now! www.royallepage.ca/mygreatneighbourhood



Sleep Well at the Cottage

Sometimes it is hard to leave the problems of work behind when you are at the cottage. Nothing is as frustrating as not sleeping well.

If you sometimes experience trouble getting to sleep, or staying asleep, try using your iPod as the solution, rather than watching television, or resorting to sleeping pills. Research shows that if you turn a light on, your REM sleep is disturbed and you will not wake up as well rested. This is why we like to keep our iPods beside the bed, so we can use them without turning on a light.

Depending on our mood, we like to use our iPod to put ourselves to sleep with sounds of natural Muskoka, or interesting podcasts.

There are many selections of loon calls, ocean surf, summer rain storms, or other sounds from nature, which slow your breathing and relax you. Dan Gibson has produced a wide variety to choose from, and they can be purchased in stores or on iTunes. Some of these selections have restful music combined with the sounds from nature, but my favourites are simply the natural sounds themselves. We could recommend a few titles if you call or email us.

You can also download podcasts, with topics of your personal interest, for free from iTunes. This is a better choice than watching television, as you can keep the volume very low and listen with your eyes closed, having a better chance of drifting off to sleep.

You don't have to wake yourself up to turn the iPod off, as it shuts off automatically when the program is over. Listening to a podcast stops you from thinking about work related issues, and allows you to stay calm and listen to a relaxing topic of personal interest.



We make it our business to know the Muskoka Real Estate market, thoroughly.

“We are never too busy to receive your referrals. Count on us to work hard for your family and friends.”

thelma@royalpage.ca or (705) 645-5257

Ways to Appreciate and Protect Muskoka

The Heritage Foundation's Cottage Tour will be on Lake Muskoka again this year in mid July. Three wonderful cottages have been chosen to give people a taste of life on the lakes, past and present. They present a variety of design and age, but all are so interesting to see.

If you have never been on this tour and luncheon, you are really missing a wonderful experience. Call The Heritage Foundation for more information and to book your tickets-they sell out very quickly. Tickets will go on sale around the 19th of May.

You can also appreciate heritage from your living room with the purchase of the DVD "Life on the Edge, Stories of Muskoka's Past", for \$20.00 at the Heritage Foundation, 9 Taylor St in Bracebridge. This is an excellent addition to a permanent cottage library.

You can purchase Muskoka Envirocredits from the Muskoka Foundation, (705-645-7393, www.muskokaheritage.org) to offset all, or part, of the

carbon emissions for which you are responsible. No amount is too small or too big to contribute for this purpose. There are carbon calculators on the web (www.carbonfootprint.com) or use the average cost of a compact car as \$99.20/yr and an SUV as \$173.91/yr. Credit for annual use of 8000 kWh of hydro is \$461.20, and 3000 litres of oil is \$277.90

Draw

The name of the Winner of our \$100.00 draw, from the last newsletter, will be picked by John O'Rourke, our Broker, on May 1st, too late to be named in this edition. Thank you to all of you who contacted us to indicate how you would prefer to receive your newsletters. Many cottagers are also choosing to receive our monthly Muskoka Real Estate Market Report to stay on top of real estate news, and receive full statistical reports. If you have not already, email us, to let us know if you want to receive this detailed report.

We keep our blog updated from March through December. To stay current, or for your "Muskoka fix" go to www.muskokablog.ca



Be Prepared!

Many people are reviewing their personal budgeting systems after the economic events of this past year. Remember to take a look at whether you are putting enough money aside for the proper maintenance of your cottage. The figures may surprise you. As you decide on the amount of money to put aside, you have to remember all the items that will come up for renewal within a twenty year period, and account for those costs. For instance, each year you should be putting aside money for about 1/20th of the cost of renewing your decks, docks, furnace, A/C, windows, roof, appliances, septic, and so on. On a yearly basis, the costs are for taxes, insurance, heating, hydro, regular maintenance and repairs like painting, screen replacement, chimney cleaning, septic pumping, driveway topping, snow removal, and other elective updates that improve your enjoyment of the cottage.

Add these together and they will come to about 2% of the value of your cottage.

Yes, 2% is a good figure. It won't be that number every year, but according to Carson Dunlop, it will average 2% over time. We often forget how expensive home and cottage ownership is. But if you do not set this money aside, then you will find yourself in the situation of not being able to make a repair that is needed and having the condition of your cottage declining right before your eyes. It is a great source of stress to see docks tops that are fast decaying, and windows with broken seals, when you do not have the money set aside to install new ones. Putting enough money aside for property maintenance is important for peace of mind and proper stewardship of a valuable asset. There is excellent information on maintenance costs available, (updated yearly), on the Carson Dunlop website www.carsondunlop.com (report library)



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