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# New Harmony

## in K'Port

The new owner, **Phil McCabe**, is an old friend to the neighborhood.

BY COLIN W. SARGENT

**H**ere in the Kennebunks, we thought we had a trusted relationship with eHarmony.com founder Neil Clark Warren. We thought we'd won him over. Then, mysteriously, he's moved on. The perils of speed dating.

For months, there was a buzz about who'd become the next owner of the pharaonic contemporary house with Mission interiors that Warren disneyed into position across Ocean Avenue from Walker's Point.



TOP AND BOTTOM: CYNTHIA FARR-WEINFELD. INSET: DAVE CLEVELAND, MAINE IMAGING. FILE PHOTO



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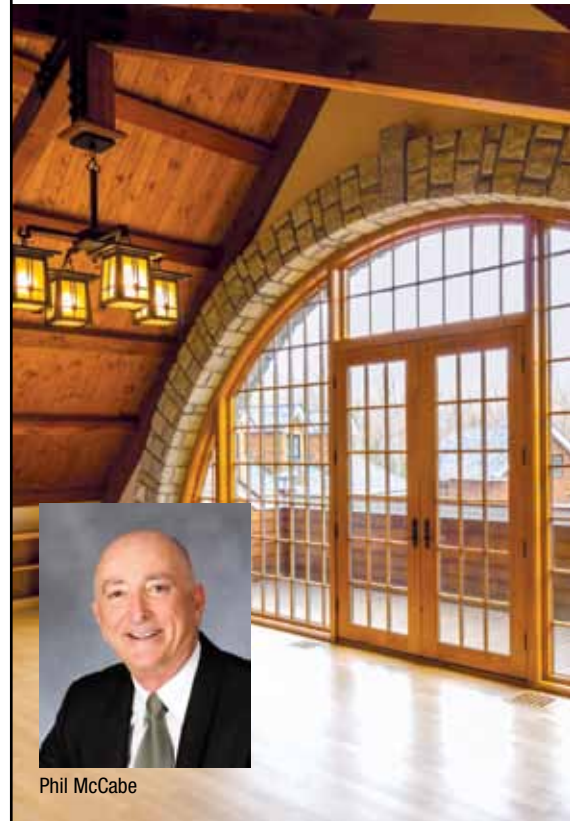
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## TALKING WALLS



Phil McCabe

*And remember, if Hillary Clinton shows up for a huge fund-raiser on this site next summer for her presidential campaign, you read it here first.*

**P**hil McCabe, 67, a Naples, Florida, hotelier and restaurateur, is a former CIA employee turned brilliant entrepreneur with a reputation for deft timing. Because he already owned 21 acres adjacent to the Warren property, and because he's also just picked up another 10 acres from a failed development plan on his north side, his new summer home combines 60 acres, a mammoth presence in Cape Arundel.

"Yes, but the Kenneth Roberts (the novelist who wrote *Arundel*, *Rabble in Arms*, *Northwest Passage*) estate is 95 acres," he says. "And that's for sale, abutting my property. Seventy-five percent of the Roberts estate is contiguous to my own land." Is he considering buying it? Time will tell.

After seeing the world via the Air Force and CIA, he saved \$25,000 and risked everything to buy a cottage colony called The Mornings By The Sea, in Scarborough. "I was just 28. It was in foreclosure. It was a wonderful opportunity. Wonderful cash flow. It gave me the opportunity to reinvest."

One of those reinvestments was in Sea-



wood, the Kennebunkport mansion of Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Booth Tarkington (*The Gentleman from Indiana*, *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Alice Adams*, *Penrod*, *Mirthful Haven*), Kenneth Roberts's best friend.

"I bought 26 acres of the Tarkington estate when it went into bankruptcy while they were turning it into four condo units" in the 1980s, he says. "Back then, I was working a lot with the RTC (Resolution Trust Corporation) in Portland" to discover such investments. "I was going to buy three of the four units the bank owned, as well as the land behind the house. I didn't end up getting the condos, but I did buy all the land."

Asked what the purchase price was for 26 prime acres in Kennebunkport, he says, "It was nothing. Nothing. Like \$200,000." He's kept it for a rainy day, and this summer, after he's made a fortune developing half of Naples, Florida, it's pouring.

"When I came to Naples from Maine, I scouted the shoreline and built a boutique hotel called The Inn at Naples. It was an instant success. On Venetian Bay in Naples, on the water, literally over the water, I ripped out the walls of a building and put in huge Palladian windows. I named it Windows on the Water."



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## TALKING WALLS

Did he name it after the former restaurant in Kennebunk?

"No. That was before the Kennebunk restaurant opened. But I got sued for using the name by another Windows on the Water on Sanibel Island. I only operated it one year.

Meanwhile, "I almost bought the Narragansett Hotel" on Gooch's Beach in Kennebunk. "It was closed two years," two dark summers. "I toured it, studied it for a winter. I wanted to make it a first-class hotel," but it went to condos.

Today, McCabe presides over a shimmering empire in Naples that includes the boutique Inn on Fifth, and restaurants including McCabe's Irish Pub & Grill, Boston's Restaurant & Sports Bar, and Avenue5.

"Naples is a Palm Beach," he says. "My properties are in the heart of downtown Naples. There's a similar demographic in Kennebunkport, a wealthy community most sensitive to architecture and planning."

**D**oes that mean he plans to develop some spec houses here in Maine on the 60 acres? "I don't see that for my 50-acre property" that goes with the house. "But for the 10 adjacent acres I've acquired, I'd like to provide access from the rotary near my front driveway. I'm looking at re-directing my private driveway to where it was, off Ocean Avenue, add a gate, and put three architecturally significant homes on the three lots.

"I learned the Warren house was for sale from my friend Frank Pack. With my two sons, 17 and 19, I'm beginning to restore it for our use. We're talking to architects, surveyors, engineers—I call them imaginers. We'll have major improvements to the kitchen, master bedroom, east wing, and west wing. There's a 1,500-square-foot game room; I'm going to take a third of that and turn it into a theater. We're calling our house Lake of the Woods.

"I looked in Boston, Portsmouth, and Maine for an interior decorator, but it just wasn't working. So we're using Lou Shafran from Naples. This summer, we're working feverishly on the interior design of the guest house so we can enjoy the property while the rest of the work goes on."

Camping out, Maine style.

Have the Bushes come over to say hello yet? "With me, it's more the Clintons. There may be a Hillary Clinton presidential fundraiser here next summer." ■

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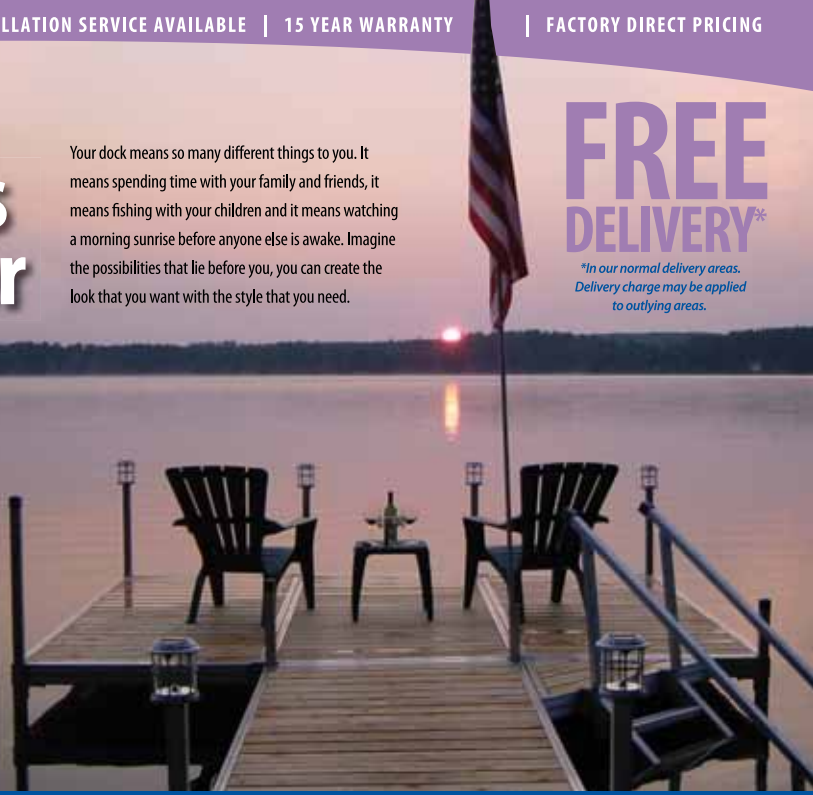
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