

It's not just an urban legend.

## Ingrid Bergman

lived here among us in the icy summer of 1946, at 9 Ironclad Road. And now you can, too—for \$679,000.

# NOTOR

*In Cape Elizabeth*

BY COLIN W. SARGENT

**A**fter flying from Sweden, the two tourists hopped the State of Maine Express in Manhattan and headed for Union Station. Both striking and lovely, they'd have turned heads even if they hadn't been Kay Brown and Ingrid Bergman.

From Portland, they breezed to 9 Ironclad Road in Cape Elizabeth, where Kay's college roommate lived with her family above the booming surf.

"Kay called my mother from Sweden," says John W. ("Jack") Deering, Jr., of Falmouth. "She said, 'Tref, it's Kay. May we please stop on the way home to New York? Ingrid is exhausted, and so am I!'"

"My mom called me at Governor Dummer Academy, where I was going to school. She asked me if I wanted to help out."



# IOUS





# STARRY SOJOURN

She'd just filmed *Notorious* with Cary Grant. A trip to **Maine**—whose **coastline** resembles **Sweden**—would be a **nice introduction to the U.S.**

FROM LEFT: JESSE STENBAK; COURTESY PHOTO

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He laughs.

"I was sixteen."

Kay Brown and Eleanor Trefethen Deering "were thicker than fleas," Jack Deering says. "They were both Wellesley College, class of 1924.

"It was Kay who brought Ingrid Bergman to the United States. Kay was working for David O. Selznick at the time," as an agent and book editor famous for snapping up the rights to *Gone With The Wind* for her boss to make the blockbuster film.

"Selznick told Kay, 'Look, this Swedish girl's making quite a ripple over there. I want you to go over and check this thing out.' Kay went over and liked what she saw."

So did young Jack Deering. "Ingrid Bergman! Absolute-

**"Tref, it's Kay. May we please stop on the way home to New York? Ingrid is exhausted, and so am I!"**



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## STYLE

ly beautiful.

"She stayed with us three days [May 18-21, 1946]. Ingrid got my bed. Lucky me, I wasn't in it. I have a photograph where my brother Robinson and I are flanking her on the porch—two basketball stars."

More often than not, the subject was lobster.

**"The girls wanted to take off their girdles and relax. And they did!"**

"We had lobster three times a day. My mother could serve it fabulously any kind of way. Her brother ran a big lobster pound on Custom House Wharf in Portland."

This interlude has a silvery significance for film buffs. Bergman had just shot Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious* with Cary Grant. The film would light up the screens just weeks



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Kälek,  
Ingrid





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**After she left, shy neighbors knocked on the door, hoping for a glimpse of “Ingrid’s shower.”**

after her departure from Maine.

It’s tempting to say this was the time when Bergman, 30, was at her most beautiful. Her next assignment was a starring role in Broadway’s *Joan of Lorraine*, November 18, 1946 to May 10, 1947. Her Maine sojourn also catches her on the edge of becoming notorious herself.

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## STYLE

No trip to Maine would be complete without lobster at Boone's on Custom House Wharf. That afternoon, Ingrid got to be just another girl in a bib.



"It's fair to say she was in ice here in Maine," Deering says.

Soon enough, after she'd shot *Stromboli*, the fanzines would scream with headlines about Bergman leaving her dentist-turned-neurosurgeon husband, Dr. Petter Lindström (with whom she'd had a daughter, Pia Linström), for "Roberto Rossellini, the Italian stallion," Jack Deering says. "She and Rossellini became the parents of a son, Robertino, and twin daughters Ingrid Rossellini and the actress Isabella Rossellini."

Here in Maine, on the eve of the scandal that would get her blacklisted in America, the Oscar-winner (in 1945, for *Gaslight*) just palled around with Brown,

curled up on the stone sun seat to drink in the spectacular views of Beckett's Castle and Ram Island Light, and just find a quiet place to hear herself think.

"I think the girls just wanted to take off their girdles and relax. And they did!"

As for Bergman's state of mind here, she seemed released from pressure and remarked that she loved this part of Maine because it reminded her of Sweden.

"I never saw her anything but polite, friendly, and always with a smile," Deering says. "I was in love. It's easy at 16."

Lovely as she was, it wasn't easy for Bergman to overshadow Brown, who, according to Wikipedia, was—in addition to being the story editor for Hitchcock's *Rebecca*

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## STYLE

(1940)—the real-life model for the beautiful young screenwriter Betty Schaefer, who dreams of collaborating with William Holden in the movie *Sunset Boulevard*.

Kay Brown's daughter, Laurinda Barrett, 79, who herself has acted in films from *The*

## Kay Brown was the beautiful young screenwriter Betty in *Sunset Boulevard*.

*Wrong Man* (1956) to *The Heart is A Lonely Hunter* (1968) to *A Perfect Murder* (1998), tells us from New York:

"My sister thinks she has a photo of Tref and my mother together. Tref was an old and close friend, and they held their friendship through the years.

"At the time you mention, mother was working for David O. Selznick as his representative in NYC, and it was she who went to Sweden to bring Ingrid to the USA," with Maine the soft landing.

"Maybe 'they' decided that a trip to Maine—whose coastline somewhat imitates Sweden—would be a nice introduction to the U.S.?"

Told as an aside how much we enjoyed *A Perfect Murder*, in which Laurinda plays one of the women in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, we get a taste of her inherited gift for dialogue when she twinkles, "*A Perfect Murder* was not a good movie."

Upon Bergman and Brown's departure, "She wrote a beautiful note to us, addressed to 'The Lobster Family,'" Jack Deering says. "She also sent us a present, a beautiful Steuben glass vase that we have to this day in our home in Falmouth. I was sad when she left."

The recollection of that lost summer touches Deering's voice when he tells us on the telephone, "My brother Robinson Adams Deering, the other boy in the photograph, died four years ago."

He's about to ring off when his wife, Falmouth real estate executive Ann Deering,

quips, "There's another story in all of this that's so 'Maine.' The neighbors were overcome with curiosity while all of this was going on. From what I understand, Ingrid took a shower in a bathroom the Deerings had just upgraded before they knew she was coming, and after she left the neighbors called and wanted to take a look at 'Ingrid's shower.'"

No, thank *you* for visiting, Mrs. Kravitz. Now there's a steamy scene.

It can be your scene. This singular stone-and-stucco love nest, built in 1923 for Fred W. Deering and perched on a scenic bluff above romantic Beckett's Castle, is listed for sale this summer for \$679,900 through Joe Flynn of Joe Flynn Real Estate.

The seller, Barbara Newcomb, is proud to possess the original blueprints to the cottage. "There's a tradition that the ghost of Longfellow still prowls the parapets of Beckett's Castle down there, where he's said to have written some of his poetry," Newcomb says.

The intriguing name Ironclad Road devolves from the former Ironclad Club near-

**Everyone loves walking in from the ocean porch to see the birch paneling, anchored by a toasty chateau fireplace.**

by (with iron straps on its doors and windows), where Portland society swells—"young men bent upon a spree of fishing, gourmandizing, and camaraderie"—used to gather to cast their lines for cunners, now an extinct species. When every last cunner disappeared, there were only stars out here. The Club broke up in 1908, with the clubhouse demolished and the original stones

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## STYLE

This **1923** stone-  
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breath and sat on the wicker chairs on the giant, wraparound porch.

"There are four bedrooms and three baths," Flynn says. "People's eyes open wide when they walk in from the ocean porch to see the original birch paneling in the living room, anchored by a toasty chateau fireplace. This cottage is ideal for entertaining."

The dining room and family room, also in birch with coffered ceilings, "open right up to the ocean."

A drive-up convenience: "There's a connected two-car garage."

The lot is generous at .69 acres, spilling below gardens to an exquisite rocky sun seat "where you can see Ram Island Light and the Atlantic" heaving below.

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