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Diamond Cove Home and Garden Tour
Wednesday, July 28, 2010
Diamond Cove, Great Diamond Island, Maine
Proceeds to benefit Greater Portland Landmarks, Portland, Maine

Mark your calendars for July 28th, the day when some of the most beautiful private homes and gardens at Diamond Cove will be open to the public. Ordinarily Diamond Cove, a private historic community on Great Diamond Island, can only be accessible to the general public by taking pre-arranged guided historic tours. Diamond Cove was built on the remains of the 193 acre former Fort McKinley. Historic tours are a service provided by homeowners to allow the public in to see the beautiful national historic landmark they call their home. On the historic tours the visitors are driven around on golf carts and are shown only the exteriors of the buildings. The upcoming Home and Garden Tour will permit the public to view the interiors of some of these homes and gardens.

In its heyday, in the early 1900s, Fort McKinley was the pride of the U.S. Army. Its cannons were dead-eye accurate and nearly impossible to spot because of the way they blended into the seaward slopes of Great Diamond Island off the coast of Portland Maine. Military obsolescence came to Fort McKinley after World War II and it was abandoned in 1945. Almost 100 years after it was originally built, the fort was re-born as the community of Diamond Cove., It is a wonderful blend of Queen Anne style Victorian homes, ringing the old parade ground, and newer, custom waterfront homes on the perimeter of the island.

Today, the “fort” is home to almost 100 different owners ranging from single people to families with young children to retired people and all ages in between. It is the primary home to some and vacation or weekend or summer home to others. The homes range in size from diminutive 1 bedroom “sergeants quarters” to elegant architect-designed waterfront cottages. The grounds are impeccably maintained with many gardens both common and private interspersed between lawns and conservation forests.

The July 28th tour, which runs from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, will incorporate at least 6 homes, both historic and new custom waterfront homes, as well as many of the common and private gardens. Box lunches will be available to order from the General Store, (766-0078), and lunch or dinner reservations may be made at Diamond’s Edge Restaurant (766-5850) Transient slips for private boats may be made by calling the restaurant number. This is a walking tour, with maximum distance of approximately 2 miles if every site is visited. Fort McKinley was originally home to 1000 healthy young men and, therefore, was not designed to be handicapped accessible. Unfortunately, there is no way to accommodate wheelchairs or strollers. Also, the Diamond Cove homeowners ask that the tour-goers not bring dogs to the island.

Just 2 miles from Portland, the private pier at Diamond Cove is served by Casco Bay Lines (774-7871) and several water taxis (Portland Express Water Taxi 415-8493 or Presumpscot Water Taxi 879-2562). Parking is available at the ferry terminal parking garage and several other parking garages in the downtown area. Tickets are limited, \$20.00 per person, and should be purchased in advance. Tickets are available online at www.diamondcovetour.com or in person at Greater Portland Landmarks, 93 High Street in Portland or Skillins Greenhouse, 89 Fore-side Road in Falmouth.

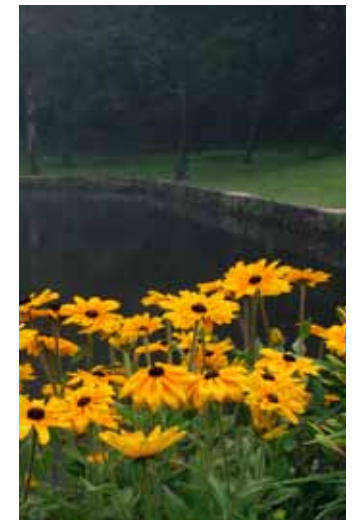


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