

HISTORY OF HIDEAWAY VILLAGE

In 1939, when the U.S. government requisitioned the Popponeset Beach Tourist Camp for amphibious training purposes, the history of Hideaway Village commenced. For Norma Gresh, who leased that land for her tourist camp, was forced to seek a new location. In doing so, she resolved never again to lease land for her business. As a result, when she heard that fourteen acres of land and a home on Buttermilk Bay were in foreclosure, she bought the package on November 11, 1939. Her next move was to apply to the Town of Bourne for a permit to operate a tent and trailer park. This was promptly denied since overnight parks were not permitted. Thus began a series of bitter battles between Gresh and Bourne which continue to the present day.

The intrepid Norma, however, was not to be denied. She immediately contacted her former campers at Popponeset to inform them of the new Camp Hideaway. The following summer, one hundred and ten of them hauled in their tents and trailers. The Town, in turn hauled Norma into court for violations of its ordinances. The court, however, ruled otherwise. For it was determined that the sagacious Norma had required that each of the one hundred and ten pioneers sign a one year lease for a thirty by thirty foot plot assigned for his/her tent or trailer.

So the infant Camp Hideaway survived its first summer with Norma Gresh as landlord, water commissioner, resident nurse, and impressario. Later that year, the first of Hideaway's cottages was built (40D). In subsequent early years, platforms were built for the tents. These platforms evolved into foundations for cottages which, in many cases, were built with any readily available wood (crates, boxes, drift). For these were pre-World War II and end of Depression years when cash was scarce and improvisation essential. Certainly nothing out of "House Beautiful", nevertheless a magnificent place to get away from the problems of the times, to enjoy the beauty of the Bay, to soak up the sun, the sea and the sand.

In 1943 another fourteen acres of land and a home (04H) were purchased and added to the Hideaway complex. Word spread to friends and relatives of the delightful, carefree summers spent on Buttermilk Bay. Lot sizes were increased to forty by fifty. With its twenty-eight acres, Hideaway Village, as it was now named, gradually increased in number of units until the year 1950 when it reached its limit of two hundred and seventy-two.

The hurricane of 1944 which afflicted so many coastal communities was the first in a series of such storms which would subsequently dramatically impact the Village. The '44' storm washed away a number of cottages in the lowland section of Hideaway. Another hurricane, in 1954, demolished thirty-three cottages. Eleven cottages floated like boats. The floaters were navigated back into place. The others were reconstructed but not without a battle. The Town claimed that what was destroyed could not be replaced. Once again, a trip to court. The court decreed that demolished cottages could keep the same footprint. This, in effect, meant that cottages could be reconstructed but could not be expanded. In January of 1987, a severe winter storm washed away soil behind the existing seawall which was protecting the coastal bank below a major section of the Village. The resulting damage necessitated plans for a new seawall.

Though buffeted by town and nature, Hideaway Village retained its atmosphere of summer relaxation with its boating, fishing, swimming, sunning, water skiing, and any other number of recreational activities - a place with genuinely happy family memories.

In the early 1980's, Norma Gresh was offered three million dollars for the Hideaway complex by a New York land developer. The offer was declined. But the seed of change was implanted in her mind. In 1983 she planned to sub-divide the twenty-eight acres and sell the lots to the Villagers who were currently leasing the land. This plan, however, was blown out of the water by the Town. The Town claimed, and rightfully so, that the lot sizes could not meet the requirements of its zoning laws. Not to be outdone, Norma switched plans and established Hideaway as a condominium. The Town countered by claiming that this was an evasion of the sub-division act. Once again, the court was called upon to settle the issue. Once again, Norma was vindicated. The court decreed the condominium concept a valid one. Backed by this decision, she declared the Village a condominium on March 31, 1983. The Master Deed and By-Laws drawn up by Norma and her lawyers were duly recorded at the Registry of Deeds and Probate Court.

From this point on, Hideaway Village would be known as Hideaway Village Condominium Association, Inc.. It would be owned not by one but by two hundred and seventy-one (one cottage having been removed).

It would now be administered not by one owner but by seven owners elected by all owners to the Board of Directors; the Board of Directors, in turn, to be governed by the Master Deed and By-Laws. The lots would be owned not by one but by two hundred and seventy-one owners.

With the change to a condominium many in the Village chose not to buy in. These were replaced by others who were attracted to Hideaway, not as a sleepy semi-converted campsite, but rather to the idea of a more modern summer colony efficiently administered by a Board of Directors vitally interested in its beauty and appearance - still a place for active sunny days and cool, restful nights.

With the advent of increased property values, these summer homes were seen as places to be treated with respect and considerably more care to be lavished on their appearance.

For the average selling price (1988) of \$60,000 was indicative of a substantial investment which should be protected. This was not a luxury resort but a clean, comfortable, affordable and attractive place to spend the summer.