

"Singer Castle" offers photo tour of "Castle of Mysteries"

1000 Islands -- A new book in Arcadia Publishing's new Images of America series, *Singer Castle* by Robert and Patty Mondore, provides a tour and history of this "castle of mysteries."

In 1905, the *New York Times* called it "the Castle of Mysteries." Located on Dark Island, Singer Castle was modeled after the castle described in Sir Walter Scott's *Woodstock*, complete with dungeons, turrets, labyrinths, and even secret passageways. World-famous architect Ernest Flagg designed it for Singer Sewing Machine Company president Frederick Bourne.

Among the vintage images featured in *Singer Castle*, readers will find:

- The construction of Singer Castle and a look inside the life of Bourne -- one of the richest men in the world.

- Secret passageways, peepholes, and dungeons not revealed on castle tours.

- Scenes from Universal Studio's movie, *The Skulls*, which was filmed at Singer Castle.

- Works of internationally known artists who have featured Singer Castle.

- Extensive quotations from Sir Walter Scott's *Woodstock*, which perhaps inspired Flagg as he designed the castle on Dark Island.

The book will soon be available at area bookstores, independent retailers, on-line bookstores, or through Arcadia Publishing at www.arcadiapublishing.com or (888) 313-2665.

Authors Robert and Patty Mondore are recognized for their videos and books dealing with the 1000 Islands area. Mr. Mondore produced the documentary video, *Dark Island's Castle of Mysteries*. Mrs. Mondore wrote music for two videos featuring scenes of the islands. The Mondores own and manage *Gold-Mountain.com*, a multimedia business through which they promote and sell locally produced documentary and inspirational videos and CDs. Patty Mondore has also published numerous articles in local newspapers.

Mrs. Mondore received her

master's degree in music from Syracuse University, and Mr. Mondore is a graduate of the Powelson Business Institute. Both are also employed by the SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse.

When not working on *Gold-Mountain.com* projects, the Mondores can be found at their summer camp on the St. Lawrence Seaway in eyesight of Singer Castle. "We are delighted to know that Singer Castle's history has been documented and recorded both in film and in print," says Mrs. Mondore. "As Singer Castle turns 100 years old and its doors have swung open to the public, we are pleased that its history will not be forgotten."

An interview with the authors

How did you come up with the idea for the book?

The idea for publishing *Singer Castle* came directly from having recently completed the documentary video, *Dark Island's Castle of Mysteries*. The idea for the video came from our personal involvement with Singer Castle (formerly called "Jorstadt Castle") for 15 years prior to its sale to a tourist organization in 2003. We felt that its rich history needed to be recorded and remembered. And having been there for as long as we had, along with our video/computer skills, we felt we were qualified to take on the project.

How long did the project take?

Fortunately for us, most of the hard work and research had already been done thanks to the documentary, *Dark Island's Castle of Mysteries*. It took us about three months to put all the data into book form.

What new things did you learn about your subject from researching the book? Did anything surprise you? Did you uncover any lost hidden treasures or secrets?

We knew the recent history of the castle quite well. We were surprised to learn more about the original owner and all of the other interests and involvements he had

beyond the castle itself. It was also fascinating learning more about Sir Walter Scott's fictional castle, *Woodstock*, which inspired architect Ernest Flagg's designs.

In addition to the footage we had from our own movie, we also uncovered some historical photographs of the castle at the time it was actually being built. As far as we know, these photos have never been seen by the public. Of course, the castle, itself was designed specifically with hidden treasures and secrets.

Why do you think people will enjoy the book?

In addition to telling the fascinating history of the castle itself, readers will also learn about the history of one of the world's leading conglomerations, the Singer Manufacturing Company. They will be able to read the quotations from Sir Walter Scott's book, *Woodstock*, which inspired the design of the castle. They will get to see views of the castle that are not open to the general public, such as its labyrinths, dungeon, and secret passageways.

What will people find most interesting about the book?

We believe that people will enjoy our insiders' history of Singer Castle, along with the photographs of "off limits" passageways and secret locales. They will also be intrigued by the exotic life of Frederick Bourne, who was one of the wealthiest men in the world, including his involvement with the famous Jekyll Island Club.