

For sale: A tourist haunt

BY VALERIE KELLOGG
valerie.kellogg@newsday.com

The waterfront home that inspired “The Amityville Horror” book, films and a Long Island cultural phenomenon has come back on the market.

Owner Caroline D’Antonio has listed the 5,000-square-foot, five-bedroom, 3½-bathroom 1927 Dutch Colonial for \$850,000 with Jerry O’Neill of Coldwell Banker Harbor Light.

D’Antonio and her husband, David, who died last year, purchased the gray house with black shutters in 2010 for \$950,000. The property, which is on the Amityville River leading to Great South Bay, had been placed on the market earlier that year for \$1.15 million.

The 50-by-237-foot property at 108 Ocean Ave. is on a canal and comes with a boathouse and boat slip, which figured prominently in the book and 1979 film and still draw curiosity seekers, especially around Halloween. No-trespassing signs are staked in the ground both on the sides of the house facing Ocean Avenue — and in back facing the water, where even boaters stop to take photos.

In 1974, a then-23-year-old Ronald DeFeo Jr. killed his parents, two younger brothers and two younger sisters at the house, shooting them with a rifle as they slept. (DeFeo is now serving 25 years to life at the Green Haven Correctional Facility in upstate Dutchess County.) The Lutz family moved into the house a year later. They left the house in 1976, later providing audio-tapes to author Jay Anson describing paranormal experiences that became the basis for the book “The Amityville Horror: A True Story.”

The D’Antonios “enjoyed the house,” O’Neill said, although their time there was not neces-



The house that inspired “The Amityville Horror” book, films and a Long Island cultural phenomenon has come on the market.

sarily quiet. “Tourists came and took pictures on the sidewalk, selfies, that kind of stuff,” he said.

The couple made improvements such as redoing the kitchen and bathrooms, updating mechanical systems and finishing the basement, said O’Neill, whose brother once owned the house. “It is priced to sell,” he said. “It’s a good value, a lot of features for that kind of money.”

In an exclusive media tour inside the house last Friday — which revealed elegant period details such as oak floors, leaded glass, built-in shelves and cupboards and a heated sunroom overlooking the water with 11 double-hung windows — agents and their buyers seemed to agree.

“It’s lovely, beautiful,” said Amityville native Chris Geiger, 40, an accountant who visited the house with his wife, Kerri, who said, “It could turn into a bidding war. It’s a great price.” They said they are unfazed by the home’s history, and later



In 1974, Ronald DeFeo Jr., then 23, killed his family at the house, and allegations of paranormal activities there spawned a legend.

returned to measure closets. David D’Antonio, a teacher, died in 2015, according to obituaries. Caroline D’Antonio has since purchased a condominium, and family friends are

living in the house, said O’Neill. “Obviously she doesn’t need a house that size,” he said.

“I don’t know what to expect,” O’Neill said of placing

the house Friday on the open market. “The one thing we are doing is we are controlling the showing activity to the extent that we can only have serious, qualified buyers make appointments.”

Agents who went to a broker’s open house Friday showed their real estate licenses at the door. Before being able to tour the house, they will be required to fill out an application and provide a potential buyer’s bank prequalification and “proof of funds.”

“We want to keep the tourists away — the people who are not serious and just want to get inside the house,” said O’Neill.

There is a two-car garage on the property, and the total annual property taxes are \$27,927, according to the Multiple Listing Service of Long Island website.

The house is “on a high elevation” and was therefore “high and dry” during super-storm Sandy, O’Neill said.