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Martha's Vineyard Fishing Shack Once Owned Actress Katharine Cornell Sells for \$7 Million

The home stands on a 1.58-acre lot with a 300-foot stretch of private beach along the Vineyard Sound

BY **CASEY FARMER** Follow | ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED JAN 6, 2026, 4:21 PM EST | [MANSION GLOBAL](#)



The home has 300 feet of private beachfront.

MARC FAIRSTEIN

A beachfront cottage on the wealthy Massachusetts island of Martha's Vineyard sold in an off-market deal on Monday for \$7 million.

The seller was advertising executive Bob Schmetterer and his wife, Stacy, who had owned the Tisbury, Massachusetts, home since 1984, according to Forbes Global Properties, whose agent Jill Hobby Napior, of Tea Lane Associates, represented the Schmetterers. They had first tried to sell the home in 2017, listing it for \$4.85 million and removing it from the market a year and a half later.

Information on the buyer wasn't readily available in records. They were represented by Andrew McElhinney of Compass. He didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.



There are water views on both sides of the house.

Tyra Pacheco

In the 1950s, the property contained a small shack that was owned by a fisherman. The properties on either side were owned by Tony Award-winning actress Katharine Cornell and Standard Oil heiress Helen Pratt Philbin, and, needing to sell the home, the fisherman painted the shack bright blue in hopes of enticing one of the women to buy it, according to Forbes Global Properties. Cornell eventually bought the property, naming the house "The Swindle."

The Schmetterers completely renovated the 1,900-square-foot home in 2001. It has two bedrooms and two bathrooms, and a separate studio, dubbed "The Swindlette," has an additional bedroom and a half-bathroom.

The home stands on a 1.58-acre lot with a 300-foot stretch of private beach along the Vineyard Sound. The property backs up to Lake Tashmoo, where there's a private dock for a dinghy and the option to moor a larger vessel, according to listing information. With the beach on one side and the lake on the other, every room in the house has a water view.

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"Chappaquonsett is a coveted enclave where families tend to own properties for generations," Hobby Napier said. "The Swindle represents the best of the area, from its thoughtful renovation to its picturesque setting. The sellers enjoyed the property for over 40 years and feel confident that the new owners will be great stewards of the home and carry on its storied legacy."

Nearby Vineyard Haven, the town center of Tisbury, is reachable by a short drive or boat ride.
