

LI home



MONEY HIT

LI MANSION
FROM '86 MOVIE
'MONEY PIT' LISTED
FOR \$12.5M **E10**

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You can star in **THE SEQUEL**

Lattingtown estate, setting for Tom Hanks comedy 'The Money Pit,' is on the market

BY LISA CHAMOFF
Special to Newsday

Last year, while Tom Hanks was starring on Broadway as New York tabloid columnist Mike McAlary in "Lucky Guy," Rich and Christina Makowsky got to meet the Oscar-winning actor after a performance and showed him a photo of their Lattingtown home on Rich's phone. They thought Hanks might find it familiar.

Hanks had spent plenty of time at the mansion in the mid-'80s filming "The Money Pit," a Steven Spielberg-produced film about a couple who buys an antique house for what they think is a steal but end up encountering a series of renovation disasters.

Hanks regaled them with stories about his hours on the property at the start of his film career.

"He talked all about working with Spielberg and [director] Richard Benjamin," recalls Rich Makowsky, a shoe manufacturer who bought the 5.4-acre estate in 2002. "He said his father was out



The house's reception room.

market for \$12.5 million, is a far cry from the creaky mansion that literally fell apart in the film.

Shawn Elliott of Shawn Elliott Luxury Homes and Estates, which is listing the house, calls it "The Money Pit" no more."

At the time the movie was filmed in the front and back of the house, Eric Ridder of the Knight-Ridder newspaper family owned it. The interior scenes were shot at Kaufman Astoria Studios in Long Island City.

NORTHWAY RENOVATIONS

The Makowskys spent millions of dollars to renovate and restore the more than 100-year-old home, called Northway, in the years after they bought it, giving it the feel of a grand European estate. Along with updating the plumbing, heating and electrical systems and installing a cedar-shingle roof, they added intricately designed plaster crown moldings and brought in brass sconces and chandeliers from Europe.

The sleek media room has a 500-year-old marble fireplace imported from France and a climate-controlled wine cabinet made of black lacquer and glass. The wall opposite a massive flat-screen TV is made of Venetian plaster, and on the wall across the room is black suede studded with nail heads.

There are eight fireplaces, including one in the foyer and another in the kitchen, which has Calcutta gold marble countertops and top-of-the-line appliances, including a white Viking range.

Upstairs is a master suite with walk-in closets, a sitting area with a fireplace and a bathroom with an oval soaking tub that won't fall through the ceiling. A gym and recreation area, along with staff's quarters, complete the home on the lower level. The home has eight bedrooms, eight bathrooms and two half-bathrooms.



HERE AND ON THE COVER A scene from the 1986 comedy "The Money Pit," featuring Tom Hanks and Shelly Long, shows the house looking dilapidated, but it really wasn't.



The hill that Hanks hurtled down before having an accident with a che

RICH ORIGINAL TOUCHES

The Federal-style house was built on 22 acres by stockbroker H.W. Warner and was later owned by William McNair, who served as a vice president with the Unadilla Valley Railway Co. His wife, Elvira Brokaw McNair, was the daughter of figure skating champion and Locust Valley resident Irving Brokaw. Their daughter, Elvira McNair Fairchild, subsequently owned the

house. After Ridder died in 1996, the estate was purchased by Steven Thurman and all but 5.4 acres were sold for a development, according to the book "Long Island's Prominent North Shore Families: Their Estates and Their Country Homes."

Some items are original, including the carved staircase balusters — no need to worry about the staircase collapsing, as it did in the film — and the rich oak



rub in "The Money Pit" ■ See video, more photos: newsday.com/home

floors with mahogany inlays. The leaded-glass windows and some of the hardware also came with the home. But the owners have added their own touches. Christina Makowsky, a clothing designer, has filled the house with high-end furnishings, including golden yellow and black Versace furniture in the living room.

Next to the heated saltwater gunite pool (not taken care of by Adolf Hitler's pool boy, as in the

film) is a newly constructed pool house with slate floors, a high-end kitchen, a full bathroom and a laundry room. Next to that is a fountain that may look familiar to anyone who has seen the film. After a Rube Goldberg-esque chain of events sends Hanks' character, covered in plaster, hurtling down a hill in the backyard in a plastic bin, he lands in the small fountain, where water streams onto him from a cherubic

statue. The cherub is still there, but the water now shoots up from the middle of the circular pool.

Hanks wasn't available to talk, but in a video about the making of the film on "The Money Pit" DVD, he talks about how he had to be covered in plaster of Paris to film the scene. On a recent afternoon, the backyard was more serene, with music playing from speakers hidden in bushes around the pool.



You could watch video of the house in its media room.

HEATHER WALSH



For the masters of this sprawling house, a master bath.

HEATHER WALSH



Some items in the more than 100-year-old house are original, including the carved staircase balustrades.

HEATHER WALSH

ABOUT NORTHWAY

WHERE Lattingtown
ASKING PRICE \$12.5 million
TOTAL TAXES \$65,992
SQUARE FEET 14,000
ACREAGE 5.4
YEAR BUILT 1898
BEDROOMS eight
BATHROOMS eight full, two half

AMENITIES Heated saltwater pool, 800-square-foot pool house with kitchen, gazebo, six-car garage
LISTING AGENT Shawn Elliott, Shawn Elliott Luxury Homes & Estates, 516-364-4663