

Movie shooting at Turner Hill

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IPSWICH - Wedding bells have been ringing at Turner Hill this past week, but it was all an act.

For a movie, that is.

After scouting various country clubs in the greater Boston area, Ipswich's own Turner Hill was selected as a filming location for "The Box," a thriller starring Cameron Diaz, James Marsden, and Frank Langella. It's being directed by Richard Kelly of "Donnie Darko" fame.

Crews have been shooting night scenes at Turner Hill using both the mansion and the newer dining facilities of the estate. The facility was the setting for both a rehearsal dinner and wedding.

"We were looking for a very old and classical setting," Producer Sean McKittrick said. "It's such a beautiful place."

Aesthetically, Turner Hill had just what they were looking for and even with the added snowfall this past week the location has been charming, he said.

"The snow came and made it more beautiful," McKittrick said.

While the cast and crew are lodging in downtown Boston, he said, they've enjoyed Ipswich during production.

The movie is based on an old short story by Richard Matheson, a writer for the former Twilight Zone series. The story was adapted into an episode for the newer Twilight Zone series and then McKittrick and Kelly developed the screenplay.

The story follows a young couple who have received a small wooden box as a gift, a box that holds both promise and consequences. With the push of a button, a million dollars is theirs but will also bring death to another human being unknown to them, stirring a dark moral dilemma for the couple.

Scenes have also been shot at the former Lucent Technologies building in North Andover, and also at the Boston Public Library.

Bob Talbot, Turner Hill owner, said he was delighted to have the country club be the setting for a movie. And McKittrick said the crew has been delighted by the hospitality they've been shown.

"The owners have been very accommodating," he said. "It's just turned out to be great."