

# Ironshore

## SUNSHINE VILLAS LTD

### A company that has watched Ironshore grow and change

Jovel Johnson

**I**ronshore, a community just outside of Montego Bay, is a community that has seen its share of changes and developments since its humble, official beginning in 1962. Although it is mainly a residential community, there are opportunities to do more than just find a place to live.

According to Doris "Parchi" Parchment, managing director of Sunshine Villas Ltd., and a long time resident of the community, Ironshore was the first planned resort villa community in the Caribbean. "Ironshore started around 1969 and the first house went up in 1962."

Real Estate is a very important business in Ironshore, as many people go there to buy or rent houses or villas. Ms. Parchment said that Sunshine Villas Ltd. located in the Blue Diamond Mall has been integral in the business of helping prospective home-owners get what they want. "Sunshine Villas was incorporated 25 years ago and is owned by the Parchment/Gourzong family. We were already involved in tourism and villas. When Trans Caribbean Estate Ltd. sold to S.B.J. Whitter, the home owners felt more comfortable dealing with other people who they already knew, and that opened our eyes to open a business in Real Estate," she said.

#### HOUSING

"When Ironshore started, the designs of the homes were vacation style homes. They were built for a tropical feel with an open design, no carports, and they all had pools. There weren't much security problems. Now, the designs of the houses have changed from villas to private houses because times have changed - they changed for security reasons. Now some houses have no pools and garages with doors. The houses are built to be more secure," Ms. Parchment said.

#### WHAT ABOUT CRIME?

Ms. Parchment said there hasn't been any upsurge in crime, however, they are not taking any chances. "There are expensive homes and properties with people of good standing. We can't afford to have any crime such as break-ins," she said.

"There was a time in Ironshore when it got a bad name in the 70s. That's when the international airlines stopped coming into the area - only Air Jamaica could fly into the country. Many villas were empty because many Jamaicans were leaving their homes. They were caught up in the foreign press with them saying that Jamaica would be called communists. With everybody leaving, homes were being sold for \$15,000 to \$60,000. Interestingly enough, the same Americans who were putting out bad press bought most of the property. The Jamaicans who ran out tried to come back, but the houses were too expensive because the Americans were selling them for about \$250,000," said Ms. Parchment, as she explained the hard times Ironshore once experienced.

#### EMPLOYMENT

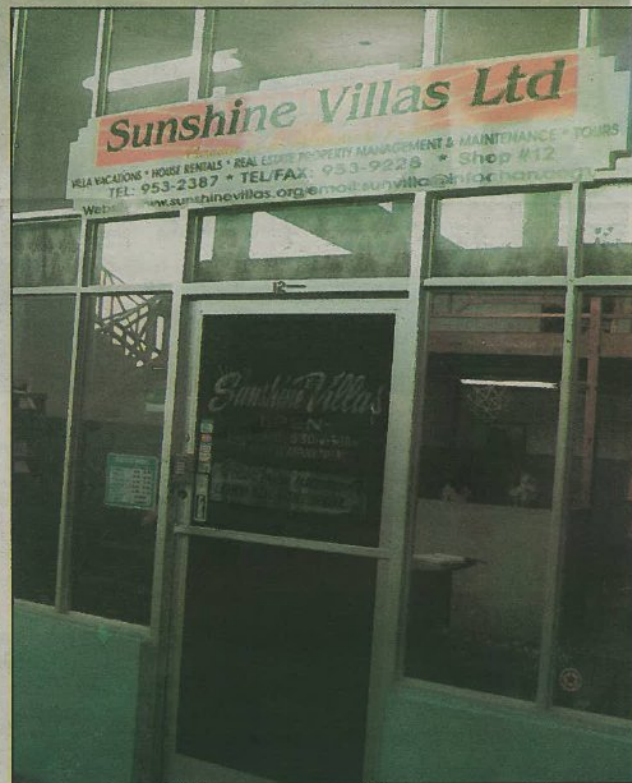
According to Ms. Parchment, there is not a lot of room for employment in Ironshore, as the area is mostly residential. The main jobs that are available in Ironshore are household helpers, cooks or gardeners. Then there are the plazas.

#### DEVELOPMENT, SALE AND STYLE

Ms. Parchment said that development has been tremendous over the years. "Fewer and fewer empty lots are now seen - lots have been built on," she said. The houses are three bedrooms to six bedrooms and range from JA\$18M to JA\$45M," she said.

She said that the houses were simple bungalows. Now, they are two storey houses, town houses and apartments. "Most houses are two storey buildings," she said.

Sunshine Villas Ltd. started out as Villa Management and Marketing and over the years, developed in domestic touring and real estate. "The domestic tours have been around for two years. We do heritage tours and offer tours to Marcus Garvey's birth place, Accompong - home of the Maroons, south coast towns, Appleton Estate, Seville Great House and Heritage Park. We do tours by bookings based on guests request," Ms. Parchment said.



Sunshine Villas Ltd. has seen Ironshore grow from strength to strength.



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