



The Bluffs, Bay Head, New Jersey - The Story of a Hotel at the Jersey Shore

Francine LaVance Robertshaw

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Standing on a high dune overlooking the sandy beach and Atlantic Ocean, The Bluffs of Bay Head, New Jersey was one of the last great, old Jersey Shore resort hotels. For more than a century, this Victorian landmark was the summer destination for the affluent from Philadelphia, New York, and New Jersey as well as the year-round meeting place for the "locals."

Francine LaVance Robertshaw began summering in Bay Head as a child in the mid-1950s, eventually moving there in 1967. She worked at The Bluffs from 1979 through 1986, first as a desk clerk and then as assistant to Kathleen Johnson Spies, manager and daughter of owners Alfred E. (Sonny) and Martha Johnson.

This is Francine Robertshaw's inside story of The Bluffs. Through her research, interviews, experiences, photographs, and documents, you will meet the owners as well as many of the employees, hotel guests, and bar patrons who made The Bluffs unique and charming over the decades. You'll meet the "regulars" and the "eccentrics" and be taken inside The Bluff's social scene as well as behind the scenes of the hotel and bar, including details of how it functioned as a business.

Rarely has there been a book that has documented in such detail the story of a hotel. This beautifully-crafted volume contains more than three hundred historic photographs, documents, and facsimile reproductions as well as more than a dozen paintings by artists Dick LaBonte, Ludlow Thorston, Robert Loder Jr., Al Barker, M. E. Whitehill, Rodell C. Johnson, Gerard Rutgers Hardenbergh, and E. J. Meeker. The book is divided into three chapters: The Hotel, The Bar, and The Memories (written by dozens of Bluffs hotel guests, bar patrons, and employees), plus an Appendix of documents that includes twenty pull-out facsimile reproductions featuring a 1936 map of the area, a circa 1910 Bluffs booklet brochure, historic restaurant and bar menus, hotel rate schedules, vintage postcards, and more.

The Bluffs is gone forever but held in the hearts of many who had the privilege to cross its threshold. This unique book will transport the reader back into its world, preserving The Bluff--and a now lost way of life at the Jersey Shore--in memory and for generations to come.

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