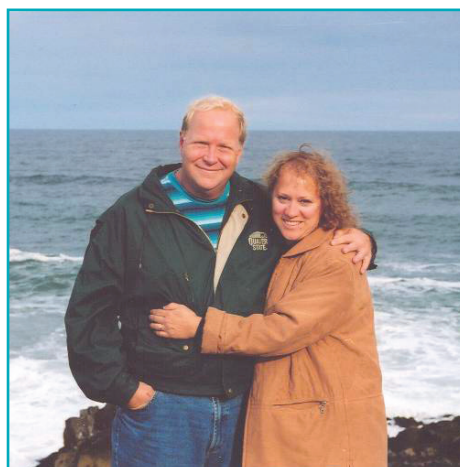




Dorothy in her prom dress



Dorothy in the Wildwood Historical Museum reminiscing of days gone by



Paul & Michele Curtis,
North Wildwood 2nd homeowners



Dorothy on the beach

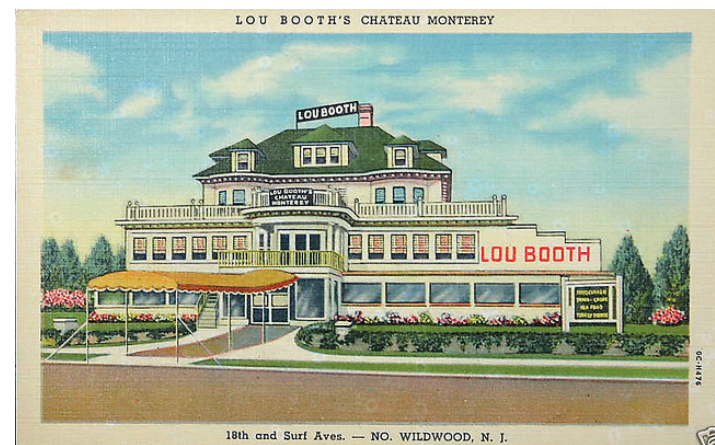


Dorothy with her 4 children at her 70th birthday party; Joseph Bucklin (now deceased), Jim Bucklin, Dorothy, Tom Bucklin, Michele Bucklin Curtis

Almost Hollywood

{ A hidden Wildwood secret-revealed 44 years later }

WRITTEN BY MICHELE BUCKLIN CURTIS
as shared by her mother, Dorothy Focoso Bucklin



From when I was 10 to almost 11 years old, every weekend my father, Joseph Focoso and my Aunt Emma brought me to the Villa Venice café on Broad Street in South Philadelphia where I would sing for the audience. Whenever there was a new song out on the radio I would quickly learn the tune as singing was my passion from my youth.

In 1945 at the age of 16, my father took me to Wildwood with my family where we stayed at the Olivieri apartments in North Wildwood. That Saturday evening my father and Mr. James the salt water taffy man, were going to the Lou Booth's Café at 18th and Surf to see Billy Hays' and his Dixieland Jazz Band. My father also took me along with them.

While watching the performance of a girl singer in the band, Mr. James said to me, Dorothy, I'm watching your face. There's something about you that I see. Are you a singer? I looked at my dad and he said to me it's okay to answer Mr. James. I told him yes, that I was a singer from when I was 10&1/2 years old.

Mr. James then asked Billy Hays' to have me sing. So I went up on stage and told Billy Hays' what key to play in and I sang Embraceable you. I received a standing ovation and the audience wanted more. I then sang, Don't

take your love from me, then ended singing Stardust.

We went home late on Saturday night with a beautiful memory of Wildwood at the Lou Booth's café.

I continued to sing for years at special occasions and when I turned 60 years old, my mother Domenica Digiuseppe Focoso, who was 80 at the time said to me, I have a secret to tell you. The day after you sang at the club when you were 16 in Wildwood, your father and I received a phone call from Lou Booth's. The female singer from Billy Hays' band quit that night after you sang and the band wanted you to join them in her place.

They told my mom and dad that I would have many chaperones from the families of the musicians and that they were going to do a movie clip in Hollywood. My mom and dad talked it over and decided that I was too young to go such a distance. It was a shock to hear this at age 60 but God had other plans as I went on to marry at age 18 and had 4 beautiful children, 9 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren in which I've seen the gift of music carry on in so many of them. I've never stopped singing, still loving those old standards but now I sing and write songs for the Lord as he gave the gift of music.

I will always remember how in such a brief moment in time in Wildwood N.J. it was almost Hollywood for me!