



BILL FOLEY/SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

Roy Scheider (left), Blythe Danner (right), Noah Wyle, and the rest of the cast and crew of *The Myth of Fingerprints* stayed at the Bethel Inn last year during filming.

Tales of the Grand Hotels & Inns

Story By Gwen Thompson & Frank Bishop

If you need anything, just press zero and call me, any time,' I said to our two new guests at the Pomegranate Inn in Portland's West End historic district.

"Okay, Miss Zero."

Nobel prizewinning author Toni Morrison and her sister laughed as they checked in. "She and her sister teased me and called me 'Miss Zero' all that fall weekend," says proprietress Isabelle Smiles, who has owned the inn since 1988.

"They obviously were having a good time together and enjoyed the second-floor front room, the one with birds hand-



TONI MORRISON/PHOTO BY KATE KUNZ/RANDOM HOUSE

Painted on the walls by Heidi Gerquist." For breakfast, they chose from delights available to all guests at the inn, from "apple pancakes to poached eggs florentine, french toast with raspberries. She did tell me 'I'll be writing a new book,' so it's really exciting to think that she was here with *Paradise* in her head."

Published by Random House, *Paradise* is zooming up the bestseller lists. Morrison is just one of a long list of distinguished writers who have found respite and, in some cases, inspiration in Maine.

From Mark Twain ("The coldest winter I ever spent was a summer in Maine") to

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Woody Allen (remember the lobster scene in *Annie Hall*?), a neverending parade of celebrities, saints, and strangers has stayed in our hotels and inns and created a guest tradition that no other state's visitor industry could ever hope to match. Who else has been coming here? Read on!

Regency, Portland

John F. Kennedy, Jr. is one of the most vehemently tracked celebrities in American society, so it was quite a surprise when he showed up in the Old Port's premier hotel, the Regency, during the off-season without a reservation. He must have chosen the Regency for the same reasons that Drew Bledsoe, Ron Brown, Kirstie Alley, Bruce Springsteen, and Billy Joel among many other prominent figures have since its opening in 1987.

The brick structure that houses the Regency was built in 1895 as an armory for troops bound for the Spanish American War. In World War II the building was utilized as an armory for the National Guard. In between it was a public bath house where for five cents one could get a clean towel, a hot shower, and a bar of soap. The armory was abandoned in 1962 and sold to the State Paper Company for \$28,000. It functioned as a paper warehouse until 1984. Eric Cianchette, the owner of the Regency, built the owners of State Paper a warehouse on Presumpscot Street in addition to the price of the building. The paper company had refused to sell the property without the construction of the warehouse. —FB

The Eastland Plaza, Portland

The Eastland Hotel, situated at the corner of High Street and Congress in downtown Portland, opened in 1927, culminating a grand and expensive venture by owner Henry Rines. Rines set out to create accommodations that could rival the great hotels of Boston and New York. In the early years the halls echoed with the steps of luminaries from Charles Lindbergh (shortly after his famous flight), to Dorothy Lamour (*The Road To Bali*, *The Road To Morocco*, *The Road To Singapore*, and on and on). Radio commentator Graham McNamee dropped the keys to the front door of the hotel into Portland Harbor shortly after the grand opening in the summer of 1927 in a flight that is often erroneously credited by Portlanders to

Lindbergh, but either way symbolic of the grand hotel's pledge never to close its doors.

In the present day the hotel has become the lodging of choice for visiting performers and rock acts. Portland urban legend contends that deceased Nirvana guitarist and songwriter Kurt Cobain, who stayed at the Eastland during the finishing touches of Nirvana's breakthrough album *Nevermind*, tried on several pairs of shoes from the window bin at Len's Grocery. Cobain rival Billy Corgan and his Smashing Pumpkins cooled their heels here, as did Bob Dylan, who stayed at the Eastland shortly after his heart troubles a couple of years ago. Rather than room service, Bob had exercise equipment delivered to the room.

B.B. King and his famous guitar Lucille stayed here as well as Cheap Trick, who were said to raise quite a ruckus in the Top of the East, the rooftop lounge, before being politely asked to return to their quarters. Billy Joel stayed for two weeks a couple of years ago and Sara McLaughlin, the queen of the Lillith Fair, stayed here after performing in Portland.

The Eastland has also hosted a variety of speakers and political figures, from Rose Kennedy, Newt Gingrich and President George Bush to "all of the presidential candidates of the last five years." —FB

Captain Josiah A. Mitchell House, Freeport

The namesake of this bed and breakfast was indirectly responsible for launching Mark Twain's literary career in 1866. As Twain recounts in "My Debut As a Literary Person," he was stationed in Honolulu as a correspondent for the *Sacramento Daily Union* when "fifteen lean and ghostly [shipwreck] survivors arrived there after a voyage of forty-three days in an open boat, through the blazing tropics, on ten days' rations of food." Though laid up in bed himself, Twain knew the scoop of the century when he saw it, and had himself carried on a stretcher to the hospital where the survivors were being treated so that he might spend the night interviewing them and writing up his notes, thereby getting the jump on his more dilatory colleagues. A fortnight later, Twain sailed for San Francisco with the survivors, and made use of a two-week calm in the middle of the Pacific to copy the diaries kept by the Captain and two passengers during their ordeal.



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Twain remembers Captain Josiah A. Mitchell of Freeport "with reverent honor" and describes him as "a New Englander of the best seagoing stock of the old capable times." When Captain Mitchell's clipper-ship, the *Hornet*, caught fire, burned, and sank on May 3, 1866, it was one hundred-and-twenty days out from port and thousands of miles from land. Against all odds, this "bright, simple-hearted, unassuming, plucky, and most companionable man" kept his crew—who



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before long were half-crazed and murderous with thirst and hunger—from mutiny or cannibalism and eked out their meager provisions as long as possible with shoe-leather and wood chips from the butter-cask. After reading all three diaries, Twain concluded that "those men did not survive by any merit of their own...but by the merit of the character and intelligence of the captain; they lived by the mastery of his spirit. Without him they would have been children without a nurse; they would have exhausted their provisions in a week, and their pluck would not have lasted even as long as the provisions."

Twain asked for, and received from the Sacramento paper, an unheard-of hundred dollars per column for his gripping account of the disaster. Both Twain's original newspaper story and his later retrospective, as well as all three of the survivors' diaries, have been published in *Longboat to Hawaii* by Alexander C. Brown. This book—together with original paintings and daguerreotypes of Captain Mitchell himself and other *Hornet* memorabilia—is available for interested guests to peruse at the Captain Mitchell House, which is now owned and operated as a bed and breakfast by Alan and Loretta Bradley and their son, Dr. David Bradley.

The circa 1789 building still retains many original fixtures, such as a brick fireplace and beamed ceiling in the kitchen and crystal chandeliers in the front hall and dining room. The floors are covered

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with oriental rugs amassed by David Bradley while working for the government in Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan; and the walls display an eclectic collection of paintings by Loretta Bradley and other contemporary artists. Guests in need of deep relaxation can take advantage of the hot tub, the herb and flower gardens, or the neuromuscular treatments, cranial sacrotherapy, and stress management workshops offered by Dr. Bradley. (If you don't like to get that relaxed, he also runs workshops on stock options.)

During their twenty-year tenure, the Bradleys have witnessed the transformation of Freeport from a one-store town into the shopping mecca of the universe. "When the Ralph Lauren outlet first opened, he and his group checked in here with all their limos," David Bradley recalls. "Lily Tomlin, Billie Jean King, and Robert Forbes have stayed here too. Robert was my college roommate at Chapel Hill. We've also had these people who won't say who they are—I think they're CIA agents. We used to try to offer more entertainment for our guests, but all they ever did was check in at three, go shopping until midnight, get up at six to shop till noon, and then leave. When U2 stayed here, they went shopping at 2 a.m. to avoid being recognized by tourists."

In addition to never-say-die shoppers, the Mitchell House is also haunted by the ghosts of the Captain and his wife. In 1975 the Rhine Parapsychology Lab at Duke University sent up a team of researchers to analyze the appearance of a woman's face at a window during the full moon. "They brought all this magnetic measuring equipment with them," says Bradley. "People were lined up in the street outside to watch." The result of their investigations? Check in and find out for yourself! —GT

Isaac Randall House, Freeport

The 1823 Federal-style farmhouse that was reputedly a stop on the Underground Railroad is only the tip of the iceberg. This six-acre, wooded property complete with spring-fed pond—situated within easy walking distance of downtown Freeport!—also sports the most eclectic amalgamation of outbuildings you're likely to encounter anywhere. The barn, for instance, used to be a dance hall with a wild reputation, thanks to its convenient location right

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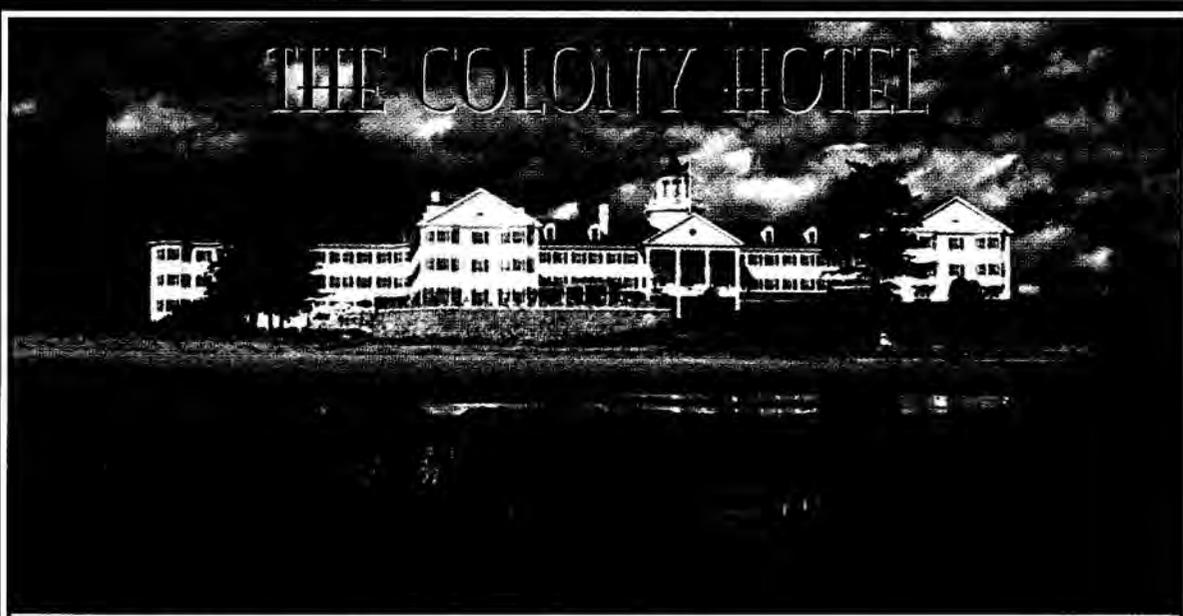


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on the trolley line that ran between Portland and Brunswick during Prohibition. "Lots of leftover bottles still turn up every spring," says current proprietor Jim Friedlander. "As the ground freezes and thaws, they float up to the surface."

Then there's the summer room made out of a train caboos. "I saw five cabooses for sale in Illinois while I was driving back from the West Coast," explains Friedlander, who is a staunch railroad advocate and a member of Train Riders Northeast. "I'd already looked for one around Maine, but I couldn't find any, so I had it taken off the track with a crane and put on a flatbed truck to get it here. It cost me \$3,500."

By this time it's not so surprising that Friedlander himself lives in the basement of the former Freeport police station. "When the town built the new public safety building, they decided to get rid of the old station, which had previously been a house. They were only moving it a quarter-mile down the street, but they had to cut it in half to fit under L. L. Bean's fiber-optic phone line on two flatbed trucks. Then we had it raised high enough to build a cellar underneath, and that's where we live."

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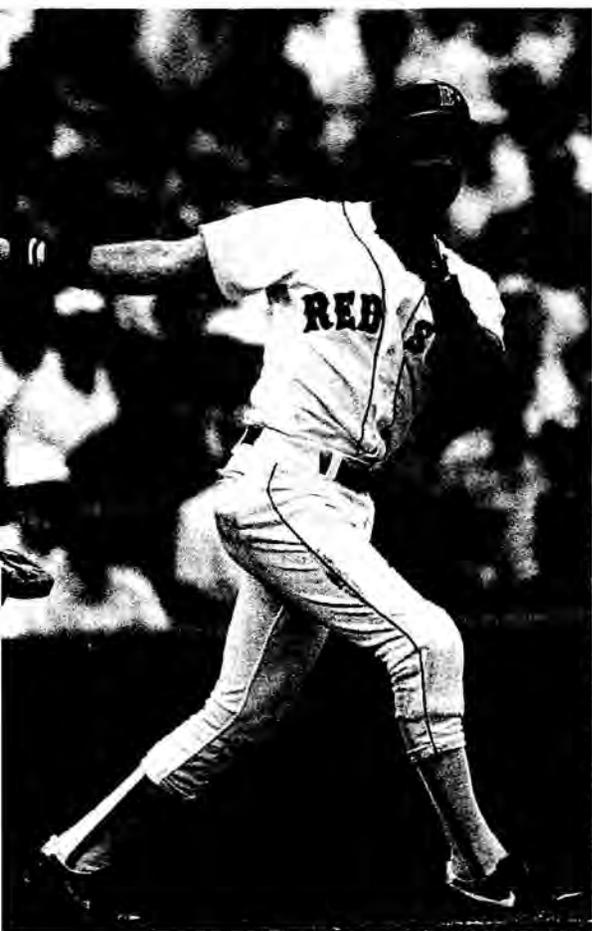
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In addition to operating as a bed & breakfast, the Isaac Randall House caters conferences and business meetings of up to twenty people, and makes a handy stopover for L. L. Bean vendors (Bean's offices are right across the street), outlet shoppers, and the visiting parents of college kids and summer campers. It has even served as a weekend sanctuary from irate baseball fans for Red Sox first baseman Bill Buckner. The winter after his infamous fielding error lost the Red Sox the 1986 World Series to the Mets, Buckner found it impossible to show his face in Boston, and fled to Freeport. "I asked him why they didn't pull him from the game," recalls Friedlander, "because I could see that he was still in serious pain from his hip injury even while he was here. They wanted to replace him, but he insisted on staying in to see the game out. It's too bad, because it wasn't a mental error—he was just too crippled to deal with that ground ball. Eventually the razzing he took got so bad that it drove him away from Andover, Massachusetts, to a ranch out in Idaho."

Didn't discussing all this make for rather awkward conversation? "No, he was OK about it," Friedlander says, "and at least he didn't have any trouble with people recognizing him here. Besides, I was rooting for the Mets—only of course they didn't win so much as the Sox lost!" —GT

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mile strip of sand, does not appear on many maps, and the summer residents—who are very protective of the oceanfront properties that have been passed down to them for generations—emulate the denizens of Cape Cod by removing road signs to prevent discovery by outsiders.

Not only is the Tides the only inn on Goose Rocks Beach, it is also one of only a few buildings there to have survived the great fire of 1947 that drove the wild animals out of the woods and into the ocean as it swept out across the jetty and torched Timber Island, burning to the ground the Goose Rocks casino and bowling alley and everything else in its path—until it came up against the formidable woman living next door to the Tides, whose house still stands. Legend has it that she refused to leave when the powers that be tried to evacuate her, and remained stubbornly standing on the beach with her arms crossed, staring down the presumptuous blaze. “The Flames Will Not Come Here!” she declared—and lo and behold, the wind shifted, and the Tides was spared.

The Tides owes both its original existence and its miraculous preservation to women of unusual determination. The building was commissioned from Portland architect John Calvin Stevens by Emma Foss of Biddeford in 1899. Although Foss was married, there is no record of her husband, which was very unusual for the time. As is typical of Stevens' creations, the inn's design emphasizes bay windows, gambrel rooflines, staircases, and ornate fireplaces—in particular a huge, eight-by-fifteen beachstone fireplace that dominates the front lobby.

Early guests of note included Theodore Roosevelt and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose visits are memorialized in trompe-l'oeil wall murals painted by itinerant artists from Freedom, Maine. The former charges up San Juan Hill in the stairwell, and the latter—fitted out like his own detective with meerschaum pipe and deerstalker hat—has frightened many a guest curious enough to ignore the “Do Not Disturb” sign on the door to his closet.

Despite the auspicious beginning of her enterprise, Foss was eventually forced to sell the inn to her desk clerk, who removed the fourth floor and its trademark gambrel roofline in order to avoid installing the mandated sprinkler system for any building over three stories. This

architectural desecration saddled the current owners—the mother-daughter team of Marie Henriksen and Kristin Blomberg—with a flat roof in the winter. “We could’ve killed him!” Kristin says with feeling, and goes on to describe how Emma Foss’s ghost—who has been known to set off fire alarms and tuck guests into bed at night—seems on the whole to be pleased with the changes Marie and Kristin have made. “I think she likes us, because we’re the first female owners since herself. She has a real problem with mean men.”

No doubt Foss’s ghost also approves of the Tides’ female chef, Pam White, who makes everything from scratch with fresh local ingredients, luring a local clientele to the dining room all summer long. Likewise many guests from away return year after year to sip cocktails on the front porch, seated in wicker rocking chairs overlooking the ocean. The peaceful absence of telephones and TVs in the bedrooms also attracts the odd celebrity in need of an escape.

Blomberg remembers the day the script for the movie *Scandal* arrived for the English actor John Hurt (*The Elephant Man*, 1984) from his agent. “He read through it out on the second-floor front porch, to decide whether or not to take the part.” (He took it, and later described the Tides as his favorite place in America.) “And one time this guy with a ponytail and purple glasses stayed here with his family. Growing up in Maine, you know, I thought he was a little odd. He turned out to be Geddy Lee, the lead singer of Rush.”—GT

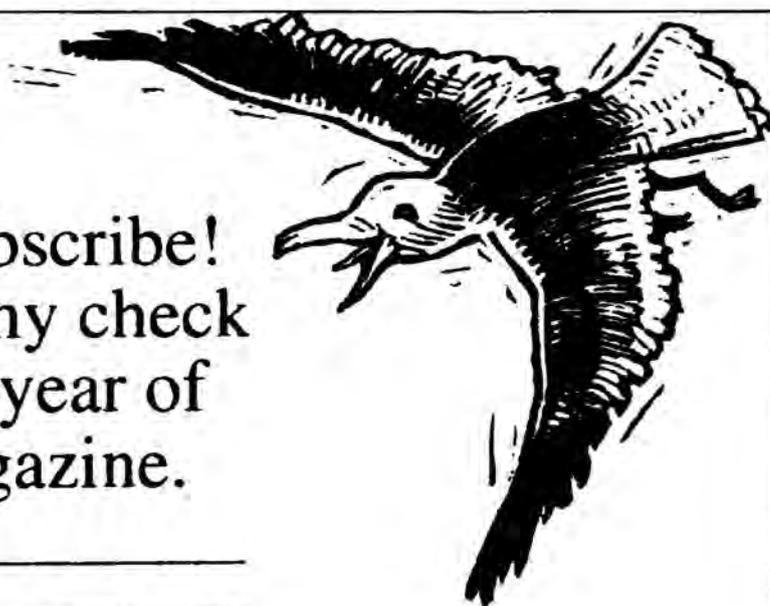
Marginal Way House, Ogunquit

It is a little known fact that Marginal Way was built upon a pathway formed by the herding of cattle to pasture. The ocean side pedestrian promenade now funnels hordes of tourists from the Shore Road along the spectacular ocean views of Ogunquit. The way’s namesake inn, the Marginal Way House, has hosted American and Canadian cultural icons as eclectic as the town of Ogunquit itself for the last century.

The owners of the Marginal Way House, Brenda and Ed Blake, cannot say for certain how long ago the four story main guest house was built. They do know that it was moved from uptown Ogunquit to its present location on Wharf Lane in 1880. The guest house has since been joined by four other buildings, all

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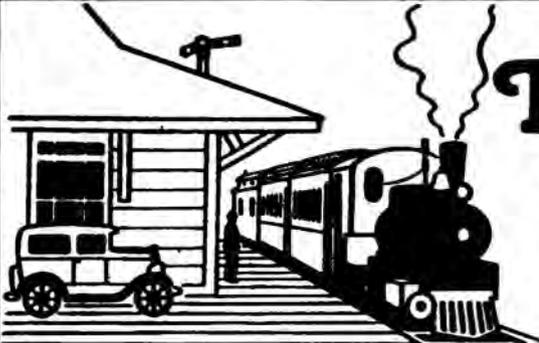


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more modern, but maintaining the throw-back feel of the inn.

The seldom disturbed attic of the main house is lined from end to end with MGM movie posters of the forties and fifties, including *Gone With The Wind* (1939). There is a good reason for this. Apparently "Mr. Fergusson," a Hollywood mogul of the time, owned the Marginal Way House and hosted many of his studio's top stars. Clark Gable is said to have stayed in the Wharf House, and apartment three of the main house still contains a signed photograph left behind by Vivian Leigh, who won best actress awards for *Gone With The Wind* and *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

The Blakes have run the Marginal Way House since the late 1960s and have adorned their lobby with photographs of the notables who have stayed there. Actors and actresses from the Ogunquit Playhouse have frequented the inn as well as perennial visitors such as Michael Ontkean of "Twin Peaks" fame. Others who grace the wall: Ruth Warrick of *Citizen Kane* (better known as Phoebe Tyler to daytime soap fanatics), Conrad Bain (Gary Coleman's father on "Different Strokes"), sculptor Nathaniel Kaz, feminist writer Mary Daly, director Penny Marshall (*The Preacher's Wife*, *Big*, *A League Of Their Own*) and Lise Payette, who, according to Brenda Blake, is "Canada's answer to Johnny Carson and a leader of the separatist movement in Canada." —FB

Asticou Inn, Northeast Harbor

It would be hard to top the Asticou Inn's magnificent perch at the very head of Northeast Harbor, within walking distance of Acadia National Park. Not only is summering on Mount Desert Island the way life should be, it's also the way life always has been. When French mapmaker Samuel de Champlain led French settlers to the Northeast Harbor area in 1613, he found a Penobscot Indian chief named Asticou summering there—probably in order to escape the black flies that made life a misery inland.

Concierge Guy Toole, who has worked at the Asticou Inn for 44 of its 115 years as potwasher, kitchen helper, busboy, dishwasher, bellhop, and head of purchasing, enthusiastically describes recent additions and improvements: a propane-heated freshwater swimming pool, all-new kitchen facilities, clay tennis courts. But he is

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quick to point out that not changing things too much is also a top priority. "You won't find a TV in every room here. There's only one in the whole inn. We're not owned by the Sheraton people, it's not a Holiday Inn—God forbid!—and it's not a Hyatt."

In fact, the Asticou is rather unusual in that it is owned and run by the Asti-Kim Corporation, a group of wealthy summer residents dedicated to preserving the inn's historic ambience. Why do people who already possess palatial summer cottages in the same neighborhood care so deeply about the fate of the local hotel? "Because Thursday is the staff's night off at all the summer estates," Toole explains, "which means there's no one to cook their meals. It's been that way ever since the 1920s, so every Thursday night we host a lobster buffet with live music for dancing. Northeast Harbor has a swimming club and a country club and a tennis club, but they don't have any lodge facilities, so the summer people get together at the Asticou."

However, Toole acknowledges that even in Northeast Harbor people don't live quite so extravagantly as they did in the good old days. "Mrs. Brooke Astor has a house here with a staff of seventeen or twenty people," he estimates, "but that's one of the largest staffs left. She's one of the last 'grande dames.'" Nevertheless, once it was determined that the Asticou needed a swimming pool, one of the Asti-Kim directors volunteered to pay half the cost if his colleagues would put up the rest—which they did. Similarly, the celebrated Asticou Azalea Garden—located just across the road from the inn and boasting sixty varieties of azaleas, rhododendrons, and heathers collected by noted landscape architect Beatrix Farrand in the early part of this century—owes the continued maintenance of its splendors to the largesse of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Although Toole loved working in the kitchen as a teenager ("except for shelling peas"), he now finds more inner satisfaction in working directly with the guests sixty hours a week in the lobby. "Some people just want to do nothing but sit on the deck and read and sip cocktails. They become couch potatoes. But the people from California have a whole different way of life, very fast-paced. They don't sit around. If you see ladies out on the front porch of the hotel smoking cigars, you know they're from the West Coast. And I really marvel at the British. They don't

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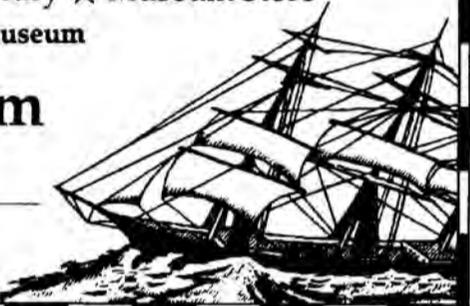
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"I really liked one fellow from California, the screenwriter Jeffrey Abrams (*Six Degrees of Separation*, *Regarding Henry*, *Forever Young*). He ended up marrying Katie McGrath, one of our waitresses. But most of our celebrity guests have to register under aliases, because people come and ask, 'Who's famous here this year?' Billy Joel stayed here for ten days while he was having a boat custom-built in Southwest Harbor. Christie Brinkley was pregnant at the time, so she didn't get around much, but he was out every day, checking on his boat. He was real low-maintenance, except he really hated having to wear a jacket in the dining room.

"But I don't mind going out of my way to accommodate the people who want coffee at 6:30, because they're always so appreciative—and I don't mean appreciative with a dollar bill. They're just so appreciative of the natural beauty of Mount Desert Island."—GT

Moorings Inn, Southwest Harbor

The 200-year-old house that is now the Moorings Inn was in the nineteenth century known as the residence of "the Prussian Lady" and her second husband, Andrew Haines. This remarkable woman—whose story is recounted in *God's Pocket* by Rachel Field—was born Dorethea Albertina Wilhelmina Celeste Russ in Charlottenburg, a suburb of Berlin, but had her name summarily changed to Hannah Caroline by her first husband, Samuel Hadlock of Great Cranberry Island, who could not master such a mouthful. Hadlock, an island-bred whaler and seal-hunter, possessed an insatiable wanderlust, which, after his first wife's death, impelled him to leave his three children behind in his sister's care and set sail for Europe, with an Eskimo couple in tow to exhibit as his meal ticket.

He toured Ireland and England, and in Germany fell in love at first sight with the daughter of Ludwig Russ, the magistrate from whom he obtained his license to exhibit. Never one to let the grass grow beneath his feet, Hadlock had, by the end of the day they met, found an interpreter to present his formal proposal of marriage. Naturally the Russ family was opposed to the match: they had no intention of relinquishing their beloved daughter to an unknown American showman. But Had-

lock succeeded in overcoming each objection, even going so far as to purchase a house, and a coach and pair, when Ludwig Russ insisted that his daughter could only marry an established householder.

After their wedding, Hadlock continued touring with his bride, receiving a gold snuffbox from King Frederick Augustus of Saxony and exhibiting his Eskimos before King Joseph Maximilian IV of Bavaria and Queen Caroline Maria Therese in the garden of their summer palace, and for King William I of Württemberg in the recruiting saloon of his palace. But Hadlock's rising tide of success was soon stemmed by the death of his Eskimos; and after Hannah Caroline gave birth to a daughter in Paris, he realized that although you can take the man out of Maine, you can't take Maine out of the man.

However, once Hadlock had triumphantly returned to Great Cranberry Island with his beautiful new bride, he was only able to remain settled down for three years before his chronic wanderlust overtook him again. This time his scheme was to hunt and stuff seals to be sold in Europe. He set sail for the Arctic in the *Minerva*, a two-masted schooner, leaving Hannah Caroline behind to fend for herself and their two young children.

Four long and lonely years elapsed before she received word of her husband's fate from a Captain Stanley of Northeast Harbor. He reported encountering a party of Eskimos in Greenland, one of whom was carrying Samuel Hadlock's gun. According to this Eskimo, Hadlock had walked out across the ice in pursuit of a particularly fine seal, gotten separated from his ship by a sudden snowstorm, and had frozen to death in the act of raising his gun to take aim—which was the position in which the Eskimos found him still crouched the next morning.

No one knows whether it was the crushing irony or simple grief that temporarily unhinged the Prussian Lady when she first heard the news. Instead of bursting into tears, she immediately borrowed a horse and wagon, loaded all the seals her husband had stuffed before he left onto it, drove right down to the shore, and dumped them all into the ocean, ignoring the remonstrances for such wastefulness that were delivered by the thrifty Yankee neighbors she passed along the way. Eventually Hannah Caroline recovered sufficiently to marry Andrew Haines and to

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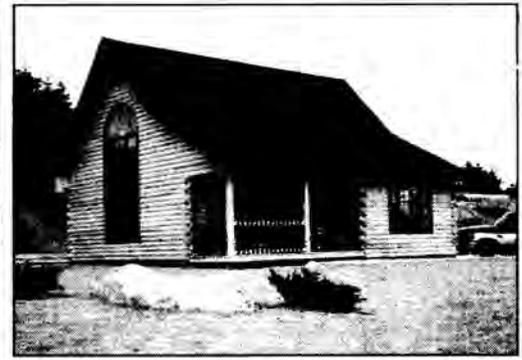
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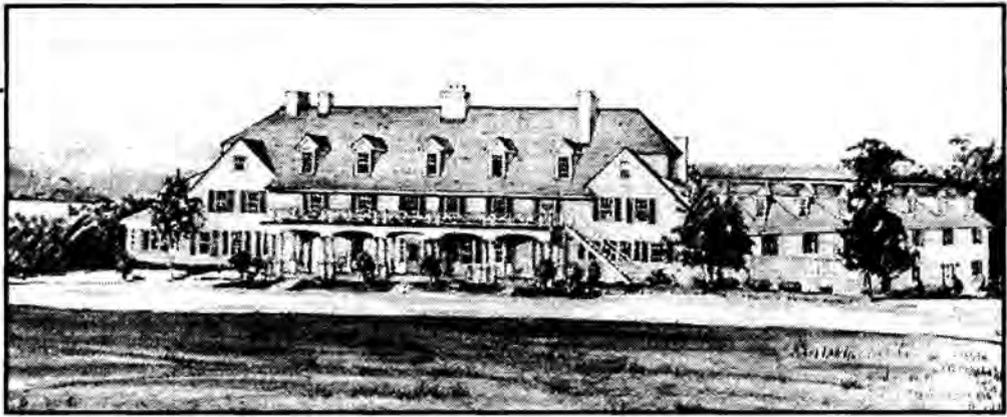
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bear him three children, moving from the largest house on Great Cranberry Island to the largest house in Southwest Harbor (now the Moorings) in the process. She remained in Maine for fifty-two years and never saw her homeland again.

These days the Prussian Lady's former home is known for its proximity to the famous Hinckley Yacht Yard, where "the Cadillacs of yachts" are built. "My wife and I, between the two of us, have over one hundred and 20-odd years in the hotel business," boasts current owner Leslie King. "I started when I was ten, and she started when she was seven." When King was a little boy, Alice Longfellow (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's niece, and the model for "grave Alice" in his poem "The Children's Hour") still lived in a nearby cottage; and King recalls watching Franklin Delano Roosevelt being wheeled up to the cottage of his friend Rev. Henry Wilder Foote for a visit on his way up to Campobello. King also remembers one of his relatives, long ago, "riding bikes around town with this summer kid named Charlie Dole. Nobody thought anything of it then, but years later we heard that Charlie had gone out to Hawaii to grow potatoes while he was visiting his parents, who were missionaries there. Eventually he switched over to pineapples."

A summer guest King remembers with particular relish was U. S. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge. "One time, when he and his wife were staying here right after he retired as U. S. Ambassador to Vietnam, their car wouldn't start, so I offered to help. I got behind the wheel, and they started pushing, and boy do I wish I had a picture of them pushing me in their car! They always locked their keys in the trunk of it when they packed up. They'd forget the keys were inside their duffel bags in the trunk, attached to a piece of driftwood they picked up while cruising, because they never needed them on the boat. Then I'd have to crawl in through the back seat to retrieve them, and sometimes I'd even have to cut their duffel bags open to get the keys out."

More recently the Moorings has been a temporary haven for Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., Dr. Spock, Steven Rockefeller, "and all those yachting folks who stay with us while they're picking up their boats at the Hinckley Yacht Yard, or who come in for a shower at the end of their cruise." From the end of his pier, King can point



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out the summer palaces of David Rockefeller, Caspar Weinberger, and Martha Stewart—all dwarfed to white dots by majestic Cadillac Mountain.

King finds that in all his years of innkeeping, the biggest change has occurred in the length of the tourist season. "It used to be July 1 to Labor Day, but now it's much longer. Last year I practically had to throw everybody out on October 17, because my son was getting married here on the eighteenth." One reason for guests' increasing tenacity may be the Moorings' very reasonable rates (\$55-\$100 per day in season)—a fringe benefit of the Kings' perseverance in their chosen field. "I got my mortgage all paid off thirty years ago, so I can have lower prices now," King explains.—GT

Atlantic Oakes, Bar Harbor

Among the lodging possibilities at this twelve-acre, oceanfront resort are rooms in the Willows, the former summer mansion of Sir Harry Oakes, Baronet—who had the misfortune to end his extraordinary life as the victim of the most sensational unsolved murder of this century. Born in Sangerville, Maine, in 1874, Oakes attended Foxcroft Academy and graduated from Bowdoin College, where he was a member of the Zeta Psi fraternity. He went on to Syracuse University Medical School, but abandoned his studies there after two years in favor of the more lucrative profession—or so he hoped!—of gold prospector. His twenty-year search for a lucky strike took him to the Klondike, Alaska, Mexico, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, California, and the Belgian Congo, and even caused him to be taken a prisoner of the Czar of Russia while shipwrecked off the coast of Siberia.

Fate finally smiled on Oakes in Swastika, Ontario, where his Lake Shore Mine became the second-largest gold producer in the Western hemisphere. Sometimes his manner of dispensing his millions was purely self-aggrandizing—as when he built himself a Tudor castle in Canada and then bought out and relocated a nearby factory simply because it was spoiling his view of Kirkland Lake. But he was also heavily philanthropic, donating huge sums of money to his alma mater and other charities, as well as large tracts of land for local parks, roads, and schools. According to *Who Killed Sir Harry Oakes*, by James Leasor, he even financed a tree-

planting scheme to ease unemployment in the Ontario Valley, but his new all-consuming interest was politics.

Oakes had high hopes of winning a seat in the Canadian Senate in return for his many generous contributions to the Liberal Party. Unfortunately, Leasor reports, the Conservatives won the election and rewarded him instead with new tax laws under which he wound up personally owing the Canadian government \$3 million dollars. Apparently this circumstance was largely responsible for Oakes' subsequent removal of himself and his family to the Bahamas, where at the time there were no taxes at all. From there, his quest for prominence took him to London, where his strategic philanthropy earned him a hereditary baronetcy in King George VI's Birthday Honours List of 1939.

Now the richest baronet in the British Empire, Oakes had also, at last, realized his political ambitions by winning a seat in the House of Assembly of the Bahamas. But on July 8, 1943—the morning he was scheduled to leave his Nassau estate to join his wife, Lady Oakes, at the Willows in Bar Harbor for the summer—Oakes was found dead in his bed with four holes in his skull and feathers stuck all over his charred and blistered body, which had evidently been doused with gasoline and set ablaze. The great benefactor of the Bahamas—who had financed many roads, airfields, and hospitals in his new homeland—was returned to Dover-Foxcroft for funeral and burial; and from this point on, his story reads like a thriller written by Scott Turow.

Appropriately, Erle Stanley Gardner, author of the Perry Mason detective stories, covered the investigation and trial for the Hearst newspapers; and his well documented jest that "Facts will never spoil a Hearst story!" applies equally well to the case itself. To begin with, the Governor of the Bahamas—who was none other than the Duke of Windsor (formerly King Edward VIII, who abdicated the British throne in order to marry the twice-divorced American, Wallis Simpson)—stuck his oar in and bungled the investigation beyond all repair. This resulted in Oakes' son-in-law, Count Alfred de Marigny, being framed and arrested for the crime solely on the basis of circumstantial—and in some cases, deliberately manufactured—evidence. One piece of supposedly crucial evidence was the singed hair in



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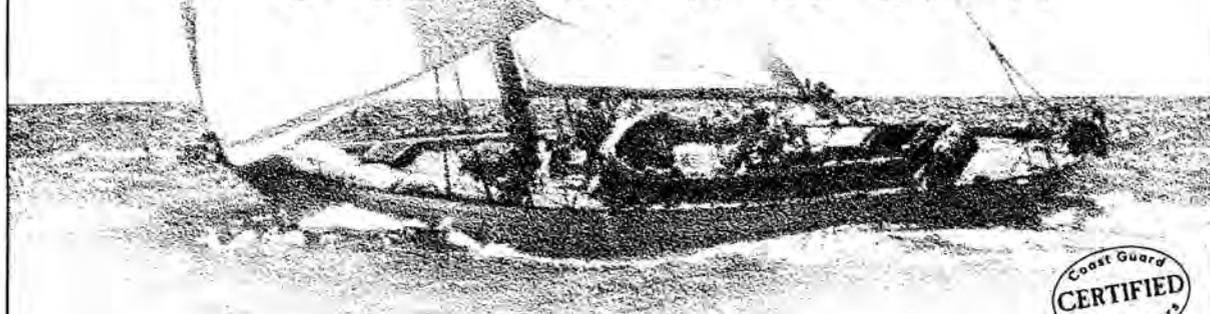


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the Count's beard—which meant that he had to get permission from the Attorney General to shave!

De Marigny, though eventually acquitted, was also deported, and—denied entry to the United States and Great Britain—was forced to take refuge with his friend Ernest Hemingway in Cuba. Meanwhile, speculation ran wild as to what had motivated the Duke of Windsor's questionable role in the debacle. Some hazarded that perhaps an affair between de Marigny and the Duchess of Windsor had prompted the Duke's vengeful prosecution of the Count. Even more serious—since Oakes' death occurred right in the middle of World War II—was the suggestion that Oakes and the Duke had been illegally transferring vast sums of money to Mexico with the assistance of their mutual friend Axel Wenner-Gren, who founded the Electrolux vacuum cleaner company and was a close friend of Hermann Goering and blacklisted as a Nazi sympathizer.

More elaborate theories even roped in the minions of the legendary American gangster Lucky Luciano. According to this line of thought, Luciano hoped to gain parole from Sing Sing and free rein to spread his gambling rackets to the Bahamas in return for rallying Sicilian support for the Allied invasion of Italy as part of a rigged election deal with New York State Governor Thomas Dewey. Sir Harry Oakes, as a vehement opponent of gambling, was a spoke that had to be removed from the Mafia's works. Ironically, Westbourne, Sir Harry Oakes' Nassau estate, was converted to a hotel—and casino—after his death.—GT

Penury Hall, Southwest Harbor

The name sounds Dickensian to the core, but owner Toby Strong has searched the literature extensively and never once encountered it. "Actually, Gretchen and I named the place to reflect the English tradition of bed and breakfasts being an affordable alternative to hotels. We could get away with charging a lot more than we do." But despite one-night rates of only \$65-\$70 in season, a stay at Penury Hall is far from penurious. The 1830s house is decorated with original oil paintings and watercolors by Rod Slater, Robert Chase, and other Maine artists; seventy-eight thriving houseplants—including many brightly colored orchid cacti—beef up the atmosphere's oxygen content; two Maine coon cats are on call for cuddling; and a

canoe awaits the adventurous, a sauna the exhausted, and an eclectic library of 1,000 books the literary. "We do serve a Penurious Omelet, though," says Strong. "It's poor because it doesn't have any meat in it, just cheese and salsa."

Why else, besides cost, do some travelers prefer bed and breakfasts to traditional hotels? "People who seek total privacy should go to a hotel. People who like to interact with other people know they'll meet folks of a similar turn of mind if they stay at a bed and breakfast. We had one couple that came here seven years in a row, until suddenly they said they couldn't come any longer, because they'd just bought the bed and breakfast up the street and become our competitors! Basically, you become an honorary member of the family while you stay here—except that you don't have to do the dishes."

Do guests ever feel so much at home that they accidentally leave some of their belongings behind? "Oh sure, I'm always finding shoes under the beds. But I don't mail everything back right away. If you find certain articles of clothing hidden away, you don't know for sure who they belong to, or where guests spent their time—and you don't want to land in hot water by returning things to the wrong person. If you're in the hospitality business, you can't make assumptions about how people traveling together are related, or raise your eyebrows when two men request a room with a double bed."

So how does one recover from the strain of being on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week during high tourist season? "We also have a house in the Bahamas, called Penury Hall South, where we spend the winter."—GT

Captain Lindsey Inn, Rockland

Amid the revitalization of Rockland stands the Captain Lindsey Inn, built as a private home by the Lindsey family in 1837. The inn strives to maintain the decor and ambience of a sea captain's home in the nineteenth century. A complete restoration and renovation since 1994 by owners Ken and Ellen Barnes, sea captains themselves, has returned the structure to its original demeanor. In fact, the rescue of Captain Lindsey from its decades long hiatus as the offices of the Camden Rockland Water Company is symbolic of the rescue of Rockland in the

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last ten years from a near ghost town to its status as an up and coming artist community in the Penobscot Bay. The inn is superbly decorated with impeccable detail.

The Captain Lindsey's restaurant, the Waterworks, has had many famous diners, but none as auspicious as frequent visitor Julia Child. Julia held her eighty-fifth birthday this past summer at the inn's restaurant, which comes highly recommended from the innkeeper, who jokes with a smiling voice, "my food's damn good." The Farnsworth Museum, featuring work by three generations of Wyeths has drawn all sorts of artists to Rockland and the Captain Lindsey. Most recently, featured artist Beverly Hallam from York (specializing in painting and mixed medium) stayed at the Lindsey while her work was displayed in the main gallery of the Farnsworth.

Owners Ken and Ellen Barnes are real Maine sea captains, owning and operating the *Stephen Taber* and the *Pauline*. According to the owner, the *Taber* is the "oldest documented sailing vessel in continuous service in the United States." She is in her 127th year of continuous sailing. The *Pauline* is an 83-foot motor yacht designed to be a "New England inn afloat."—FB



DAVE BRUBECK/SONY/COLUMBIA

Black Point Inn, Scarborough

Dave Brubeck, the great jazz piano player, went forty years between solo jazz albums. The drought was ended during a month-long stay at the Black Point Inn that gave birth to the inspiration that became *Just You, Just Me*. The album features a photo of two Adirondack chairs under an apple tree, which was taken on the grounds of the Black Point. Peter Dugas, brother of resort manager Mark Dugas, is something of a musician himself. According to Eva, the reservations manager, Peter wanted very badly to find

a way to play with Brubeck but was too intimidated to approach him. Brubeck eventually heard about this and invited Peter to jam with him for an afternoon.

The employees of the Black Point are very proud of the guest tradition at the inn and its formal policies. Eva remembers hearing about a governors conference in the sixties in which, as is usually the case, jacket and tie were required. The governor of Connecticut only had a shirt on and was denied access to the dining room. "I'm the governor of Connecticut," he retorted testily. "Well, this is the Black Point Inn," came the calm reply.

Many golfers have journeyed to secretive and private Prout's Neck for a summer stay, including Arnold Palmer (during Hurricane Gloria), Curtis Strange, and, er, O.J. Simpson (just before). The inn, which has been featured in *Travel & Leisure*, has also been very popular with film stars such as Paul Newman and Woody Allen.

York Harbor Inn, York

In the early to mid seventeenth century original settlers of the Isle of Shoals (ten miles off the coast of Portsmouth) literally

dismantled their homes and moved to York Harbor. One of these cabins was reerected in 1637 where the York Harbor Inn now stands. The inn grew from these inauspicious beginnings over the next century as a farmhouse was attached to the cabin and a horse stable was added below. The stable is now the site of the Pub, the inn's very charming English style watering hole. York Harbor became a resort hot spot at the turn of the century, connected by railroad to Boston and New York. As the rail lines fell out of use in the 1920s and fires engulfed the area's hotels, York Harbor fell out of style with big-city socialites.

Gary and Joseph Dominguez took over the inn in 1979 and rescued it from disrepair. They added onto it considerably, reestablished and expanded the kitchen and in 1984 purchased a second building, the Yorkshire House, which had been built in 1783. The Learning Channel has recently featured the inn in its "Great Country Inns" special.

Mark Twain owned a home on the York River and is said to have been a nightly guest at the pub. Nearly a century earlier, John Hancock, who owned and operated



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a wharf business on the river, is certain to have hitched up his horse at the stables. In more modern times Bette Davis, Roger Moore, and Talia Shire have dropped in (the latter pair while filming *Bed & Breakfast*). Dave Brubeck played in Cape Neddick in 1985 and stayed at the inn, and the Baldwins were in town for a wedding and stopped in for dinner. Kevin Bacon was a dinner guest as well.—FB

Bethel Inn, Bethel

The long visitor tradition of the Bethel Inn, established in 1913, was shaken by the "bad Mrs. Gucci," who stayed eight or nine years ago on a trip to Maine to deliver one of her children to summer camp. She was "short and svelte and very made up and glamorous. She drank Manhattans and talked a great deal about her massive assortment of shoes," according to marketing manager Heidi Davidson. The general manager came back from a round of golf on the inn's highly touted course to find the "bad Mrs. Gucci" sunbathing topless at the pool. Apparently there was quite an uproar — it's a family inn — and Mrs Gucci, despite a volley of protests, continued this practice for the duration of her stay. The story ends with a bizarre epilogue as "she is now evidently in prison for murdering someone."

Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward came in the summer of 1978 for a little r&r, but instead found themselves beset on all sides by the curious residents of Bethel. The country club members seldom used the pool facilities, but when Paul decided to spend an afternoon poolside mothers suddenly showed to "take their children swimming."

Noah Wyle, star of TV's "E.R." and the rest of the crew (Roy Scheider, Blythe Danner, et. al.) of the recently released feature film *The Myth of Fingerprints*, which was shot in Bethel, had a more pleasant stay. Noah considers himself a bit of a pool shark and challenged the staff of the inn to find someone who could beat him (lucky for him, Paul Newman wasn't a guest at the time). He was pointed in the direction of Wendy, a waitress at the restaurant. "I understand you're the best pool player in Bethel," he challenged, "I'll play you for a hundred bucks." Wendy searched her pockets. "How about \$5?" They played often in the evenings at the Back Stage, a local bar, and according to Heidi, "Wendy would just whip him." —FB

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