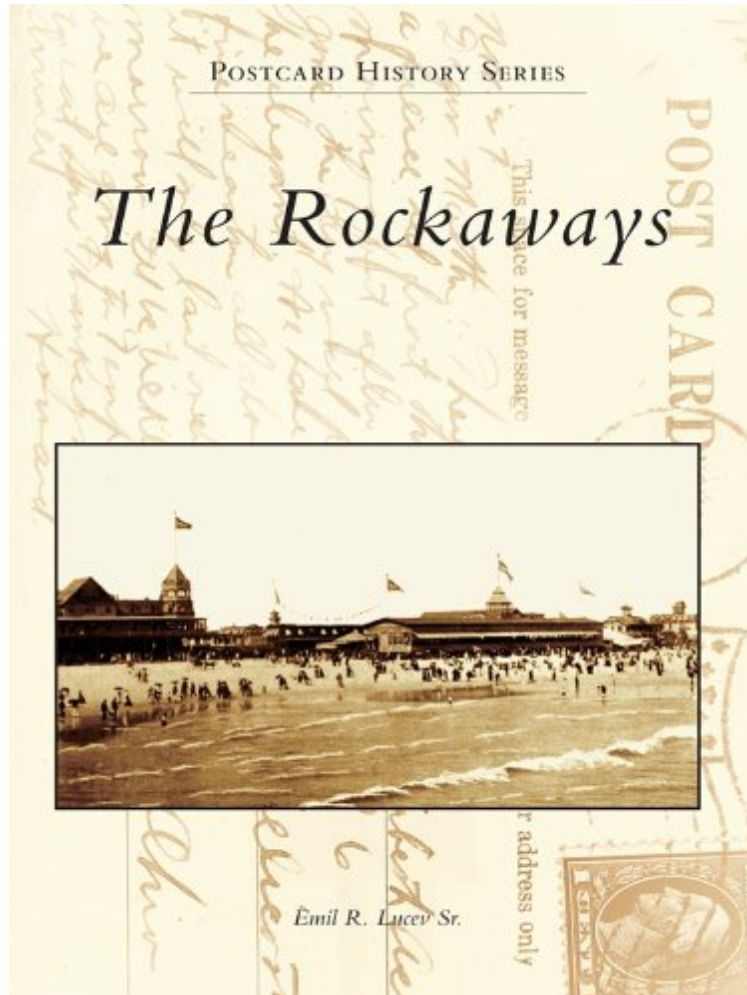


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## The Rockaways (Postcard History)

*Emil R. Lucev Sr.*

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**Emil R. Lucev Sr. : The Rockaways (Postcard History)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rockaways (Postcard History):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. A True Historian...By Clemuel.Emil is a true historian. The lifetime of work he's put into charting the Rockaways' early years, brought to life from the pages of the contemporary newspapers of the ages come alive in this work.If not for the thousands of images saved during the postcard craze of the last century, this first generation of development would be lost to memory today.A great book from a fellow historian!- Ed G.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Hurricane SandyBy Fernanda McGrathArrived on time. Wanted to purchase it as a gift for someone who grew up in the area. It is exactly as I was expecting.10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. The Rockaways (A Postcard History)By Alan PetrusI was living in Baltimore when the Ramones released their song "Rockaway Beach". I had argued with my girlfriend who thought this was meant to be a generic name for a beach. Like the Ramones I grew up in Queens and I knew it was impossible to offer the name Rockaway Beach generically when it loomed so large over all our lives; "for its not hard, not far to

reach we can hitch a ride to rockaway beach". While the reputation of Brooklyn's Coney Island has grown to international proportions the communities and amusements of the Rockaway Peninsular are far less known today. This was not always the case, easily proved by the myriad of postcards that were produced of this area. This eleven mile long strip of white sand was annexed from the Long Island town of Hempstead and added to the lands of Queens County when the five boroughs consolidated into Greater New York in 1898. But its connection to the people of Queens and the City at large go back much further. In a sense Rockaway is not one place but a series of ten communities, each founded and developed at a different time for different reasons but all sharing this one giant spit of sand. This is the approach taken by Lucev who divides his book into ten chapters to present the history of Far Rockaway, Edgemere, Arverne, Hammels, Holland, Seaside, Rockaway Park, Belle Harbor, Neponsit, and Breezy Point. While it would have been easy to concentrate on the large resort hotels and Rockaway's Playland, Lucev gives equal shrift to each of these areas. Every chapter is well supported by a number of illustrations, nearly all of which come from postcards with only a handful of maps and photos thrown in to complete the historical narrative. While some captions are a bit general in nature and others a bit antidotal, great care is given to most of them to create very accurate descriptions. I was actually astonished by some of the rich details provided within them. This propels this work far beyond being a mere picture book. The Rockaways have seen many changes in a relatively short period of time, going from barren beach to high-rise development with a vast heritage as a resort in between. Unlike many other places nearly everything captured on the postcards that illustrate this book have since disappeared. While Lucev passes this off to progress and change being inevitable, I like to see the issues revolving around change discussed on a broader level than are presented here. But when facing my own prejudices I realize this can't be that book, for the issues involved are far too complicated for a this type of format and what is provided is more than adequate. This book remains an interesting study of the metamorphosis of a part of New York that has seen more change than most. And for the collector of Rockaway postcards or imagery this book is a must for it goes far in creating order among the many neighborhood names and matching old images to modern streets. I'm sure even long time residents of the Rockaways will discover a neighborhood they never fully knew. Lucev has been writing about the Rockaways since 1980 and is now a columnist and historical editor for the Wave newspaper in Rockaway Beach. His many years of research have paid off in this book with its highly detailed observations and many rare postcards. While not trained as a professional historian or writer, this native of the Rockaways natural love of history and community is so strong it comes through to create a professional work. Even while I wished some parts of the narrative were a bit clearer, I found Lucev's writing style friendly and down to earth making the presentation of so many hard facts far less dry than they might have otherwise been. His is the voice of this community, giving it the respect that it has rarely seen from City administrators and State commissions, but that is its due.

The Rockaway Peninsula, also known as the Rockaways, is located off Long Island, within the borough of Queens. Its remoteness from Manhattan has made it a popular retreat and has provided an out-of-the-way area for families looking to relocate and live by the sea. The Rockaway's became a popular area for seaside hotels beginning in the 1830s, and its popularity grew with the coming of the Long Island Rail Road in the 1880s. In 1893, Hog Island, a resort known for entertaining Boss Tweed and Tammany Hall, sank into the sea. Located a few miles east of Breezy Point, and also known as Rockaway Island, the entire island disappeared during a storm. The Rockaways was also the home of Rockaway's Playland, a world renowned amusement park from 1901 to 1985. Through vintage postcards, The Rockaways captures the history and charm of this seaside community.

About the Author Emil R. Lucev Sr. was born and raised in the Rockaways. Now retired, he is the historical editor and columnist for the Wave newspaper in Rockaway Beach, and he contributes as the part-time curator for the Rockaway Museum. He has been writing columns for the paper since 1980, and he wrote the paper's centennial edition in 1993.