

THE CAPTAIN & THE KID

A Conversation with Peets Buffett

Recently, Rona Ferret had the distinct pleasure of interviewing Jimmy Buffett's mother, Peets, about her son's abiding love of the ocean. Peets is a fine and gracious lady—and "aah, the stories she could tell..."

Here, in Peets' own words, are some of those stories.

"It's quite obvious that Jimmy's initial interest in the sea stemmed from stories his grandfather had spun... At the age of sixteen, Jimmy's grandfather, James Delaney Buffett, left his home to go to sea as a cabin boy on a whaling ship. He never really returned until he was 80 years old, after spending over 60 years at sea—during which time he spanned the globe many times, and was also happily married for 50 years to Jimmy's grandmother.

"When I first met him in 1942 he held a Master's License for both sail and steam (which was quite rare even then), and he maintained them both in active status until his death in 1970.

"Listening to the Captain's sea adventures was a favorite pastime of all his grandchildren, on whom he made an impression that would never diminish. As a result, Jimmy has immortalized his grandfather in song, while emulating his deep love for the sea.

"...the Captain wasn't Jimmy's only influence as far as his interest in



the sea goes. His uncle, Bill Buffett, entered the Navy at the age of 17, and, after World War II, served in the Merchant Marine for years.

"Jimmy's interest might even have something to do with the fact that the first date that his dad, J. D., and I ever had was a moonlight sail on the Gulf... and we're still sailing together 43 years later.

Jimmy's most persistent ambition was to enter the Naval Academy and eventually become a ship Captain..."

Peets mentions Jimmy taking his six-year-old daughter fishing, an experience treasured by both Jimmy and the child. If Jimmy has immortalized Captain James Delaney Buffett in song, he is also doing so by instilling a great love of the sea in his daughter Savannah... another Kid to

hang on every word of the Captain's tales.

I never used to miss a chance to climb upon his knee... listen to the many tales of life upon the sea.

We'd go sailing back on barkentines and talk of things he did... tomorrow just a day away for the Captain and the Kid.

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DIRT FROM THE ROAD

The Inside Tour Scoop from Fingers Taylor

So it's finally over—"The Tour That Wouldn't End"—100 days on the road, 48 shows in 42 cities... coast to coast twice, and then some... three months on "road time" with my home at the Hyatt, battlin' hotel maids... the Summer Tour of '85 is history, and we made it through another one.

In 1985 the Coral Reefers have slowed down some—matured, I guess, drifting into some semblance of sanity as the decade slips by. Maybe it's simply a matter of survival; we all want to be around for the 1986 Tour (alive, that is), so we roll with the punches. We're growing older but not up, though older and a trifle wiser.

The fact that the "End of the Tour" party, a get-together traditionally characterized by wanton acts of abandon and serious debauchery, was highlighted by a *domino game* this year makes some sort of statement. Could this be the legendary party band that used to drink 14 cases of beer for starters, before the two bottles of Chivas and Mount Gay arrived? This year nobody trashed the room, and the cops never even showed!

Well, things ain't what they used to be, but they aren't exactly dull, either. In Chicago, members of the Cubs joined the Reefers for a motel bash that wore into the wee hours. Guitarist Josh Leo, with the help of a couple of baseball players, solved most of the world's problems that night—though no one remembered those solutions the next day.

It has been speculated that the Cubs' poor showing in a game two days later may have been the direct result of hanging out with us. There is a good possibility.

Other celebrities showed up along the way. *Miami Vice* star Don Johnson joined the Reefers for two concerts at Miami's Marine Stadium—both filmed for a future video. And at the final show in Aspen, John Denver, CBS anchorman Ed Bradley, and Glenn Frey all contributed a fewlicks onstage.

Our biggest concern this year on the road wasn't hangovers—it was weight control. Most of the late night parties (aka Club Orco) were highlighted by the arrival of a thick-crust pizza and cold milk, rather than dancing girls or mysterious characters named Pepe. Vince Melamed, keyboards and Reefer Health Director, tried to keep us in shape by urging daily workouts at the gym—with only partial success.



Miami Vice's Don Johnson joins Jimmy and band onstage. Photo by Martin Lehmann.

Our Holiday Inn in Evansville, Indiana, was definitely a contender for "Motel of the Tour." It featured not only a basketball court, but two sets of washing machines—clearly some sort of road oasis. It's the little things that mean so much when you're out of clean socks.

Whether your readers are concerned at all with the fate of our socks (or consider any of this the least bit interesting), the fact remains that the Summer Tour of 1985 was perhaps

one of the most professional and musically satisfying JB tours that this vet can remember.

Jimmy was never better in the spotlight, the band cooked right along, the crew worked especially hard, and the audiences were exceptional. Our reward was a memorable show every night.

We set attendance records in several places, including the Blossom Music Festival in Akron, Ohio, where almost 19,000 Parrot Heads

came to urge us on. Thanks for the support, and thanks for letting us do our job.

Oh, we played a few weird shows (I dare say we won't be playing after Minor League baseball games next summer!), but never a bad one. I think the Parrot Heads got their money's worth, we played some good music, and we all survived another tour. What more could you ask for?

I can't wait until next time. See you then.

COCONUT CHATTER

by Margaritaville's
own Rona Ferret

Rona's congratulations to the winners of the Last Mango in Paris Cruise—Richard Walker of Arlington VA, John Blocker of DeLand FL, Bruce Lawson of Culpeper VA, Richard Pfluger of Quincy MA, and Ruth Hauser of Cary NC, are the lucky Parrot Heads...

Has Rona got a scoop for you! I have finally discovered the true identity of JIMMY B's fishing guide, the elusive Captain Caribe... that handsome devil, master of the vessel "Polecat," is Key West's Captain Tommy



"Songs you know by heart..."

Robinson...

Guess who is now working diligently on a book of short stories—

come on, guess—tentatively titled *The Swamp Creature Rides Again and Other Tales...* (What else could we expect from the mind that has given us titles like *A White Sport Coat* and *A Pink Crustacean...*)

Speaking of titles, *Songs You Know by Heart—JIMMY B. FETT'S Greatest Hit(s)* has recently been released—get a copy and sing along...

Special thanks go out to Kaaren Van Putten Vink for the large-size laundry bag she made just for JIMMY... he needed one!

Did you know that our JIMMY is enthusiastically backing Captain Tony (of *Last Mango* fame) in his bid for Mayor of Key West? Rona will keep you posted on all the best election gossip...