

Jimmy Buffett Opens Margaritaville Store First Annual Margaritaville Film Festival Marks Grand Opening

JANUARY 28, 1985 THE PARKING LOT AT LAND'S END VILLAGE IN KEY WEST WAS LITTERED WITH THE REFUSE OF THE EVENING OF THE 27TH

His Honor the Mayor, shrimpers going to work and neonatal Parrot Heads rubber necking to get a glimpse of Jimmy Buffett cutting the obligatory ribbon to officially open The Margaritaville Store. Of course, Jimmy was next door at Turtle Kraals checking out the menu at the Sushi Bar petting tank, where it's OK to play with your food.

The first issue of The Coconut Telegraph states that, "the store is a cheerfully shabby place, with

it's weathered front porch, wellused rocking chair and lobster trap display cases." Not any more man. Although the lobster trap displays remain, pieces of the "weathered" front porch now occupy wall space in the Margaritaville Cafe - where sentiments like "cheerfully shabby" are avoided, and someone stole the rocking chair.

Nostalgia does have a way of bringing back memories. Selective memory, of course, is best. We've selected some excerpts and features from the first ten years of the Coconut Telegraph that we hope you'll enjoy, and perhaps remember. Pack your bags, we're going on a nostalgia trip.

Key West, or Cayo Hueso as it was known 200 years ago, was awarded to mercenary Juan Pablo Salas by the Spanish Crown for "deeds and services performed." In the first documented Florida land scam, Salas sold the island...twice! In keeping with this creative real estate tradition, John Strong, one of Salas' original dupes, also sold the island twice. A rather inauspicious beginning for Key West. It took 5 years and an Act of Congress to straighten everything out.

Lt. Matthew C. Perry, sent by the U.S. on a fact finding mission in 1822 reported that, "...heretofore, the Florida Keys have been the resort of smugglers, New Providence wreckers, and in fact of a set of desperadoes who have paid but little regard to either Law or Honesty..."



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"THE CARIBBEAN DRAWS PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD AND FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE. YOU SEE NEW YORK YACHT CLUB YACHTSMEN AND YOU SEE ROGUES WHO ARE RUNNING FROM THE IRS. YOU CAN LOOK IN ONE DIRECTION AND SEE A FRENCH ISLAND, LOOK IN ANOTHER AND SEE BRITISH, DUTCH OR THIRD WORLD. YOU CAN DAY SAIL FROM ONE COUNTRY TO ANOTHER. AND ON THE WAY YOU CAN COME ACROSS SOMEBODY'S NAVY ON MANEUVERS, A FISHING FLEET AND A POD OF WHALES." Jimmy Buffett in Cruising World magazine.

The more it changes, the more it stays the same. Key West's history is an economic roller coaster; from the richest city per capita in the nation, to being surrendered to the federal government; resulting from 80% of it's population being on relief. All the while the illicit activity referred to by Lt. Perry in 1822 continued. Prohibition, the bane of the 20's passed relatively unnoticed in Key West. Smuggling; guns and rum, was a popular pastime.

In the 70's Key West was infamous as a drug port. Marijuana was the drug of choice, not the more serious cocaine. Pot was fun, cocaine deadly. Smuggling cut across many social barriers: shrimpers, charter boat captains, policemen, firemen, attorneys and judges. Reputations were made and destroyed, and the town assumed a laissex faire attitude toward the illicit trade.

Smuggling continues, but much less conspicuously. Organized crime has taken hold, the "weekend warrior" is no more. There still exists, however, an adventurous ideal of the smuggler. Phil Caputo, Pulitzer Prize winning author and Key West resident writes in The Florida Forum, "I met one of these high sea brigands after he had single-handedly sailed an 85-foot Baltic Trader from Belize to Key West. I don't want to romanticize these people, so I'll put it this way. If I am going to share a drink and conversation with a crook, I prefer the company of a man who can run through a hole in the reef at night without running lights, to that of a yuppie plotting a securities swindle in a New York fern bar."

Jimmy Buffett's odyssey to Key West is well known. "I was in Nashville in 1971. I'd been turned down by 26 record labels and couldn't get songs published. I had wrecked my ex-wife's car, and I had no alternative, I thought, but to look toward warmer climates. I was supposed to have a job at a little coffee house called the Flip, the 'in' place for folkies in south Florida at that time. At any rate, I got there, and no job. I was in





Jimmy with "God's own truck"

Florida, no job and I was broke. Fortunately my old friend Jerry Jeff Walker had a house and took me in. I lived in Coconut Grove for about 6 months and worked the folk circuit. I had always wanted to go to Key West. Watching Edward G. Robinson and Humphrey Bogart in Key Largo was the catalyst that sent me further south. So we got into Jerry Jeff's '47 Packard and took the old overseas highway to Key West. We got there sometime in November, temperature about 85 degrees, there was a sailboat race going on, I found a bar and the rest is history."

Key West in the early 70's was much different from the Key West of today. Smugglers, servicemen and shrimpers populated the island that had a reputation for harboring those seeking a lifestyle somewhat to the left of norm. Boarded store fronts lined Duval Street, and any dilapidated building housing a business invariably served alcohol; over or under the counter. The Monroe Theater, "All Deep Throat, All the Time" ran the historic porno film several times a day, every day, for nearly seven years. The proverbial end of the rainbow carried pot, but no gold.

This was the cultural condition that served as the background for Jimmy's life and is reflected in his early albums. There are those who would insist that this nurturing milieu introduced the necessary conditions for his maturational process; enabling our hero to assimilate and mold the characters who would assume their place in what the eminent psychologist Carl Jung would refer to as our collective conscious. Or, more succinctly stated in *High Times* magazine, "Every outlaw has a good story, and Buffett has an eye and ear for them."

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"I had always wanted to go to Key West." Key West's illustrious history continues, incorporating Jimmy Buffett into it's utopian legend; another stream feeding a bigger river, or vice versa. There are many towns along the vast curving expanse of the gulf coast that claim bragging rights as the geographical mythical Margaritaville. Key West fits the bill, so it was natural that Margaritaville would eventually tie off on this tiny island; the southernmost point in the continental U.S., and the northernmost point in the Caribbean. The Margaritaville Store opened on January 28, 1985. Volume 1, Number 1 of The Coconut Telegraph innocuously placed on the counter; the fabled first step with which any journey must begin.

"Once the Parrot Head phenomenon started, I had to find a vehicle to keep in touch with the

You can't

1975 Jimmy Buffett has come to The Citadel and has departed, and as long as I am here, he will never be invited back.

Foul, crude language of the gutter may be the accepted thing on other college campuses, but it is not at The Citadel. I have talked with many who attended the show and their reaction ranged from dismay to embarrassment to outright disgust. Buffett's musical talents were completely forgotten in view of his vulgarity.

Frankly, my reaction to the entire episode is simply to resolve that we will no longer sponsor anymore concerts of that type. Please remove The Citadel from your mailing list. Director of Student Activities

Back cover of Down To Earth





Parrot Heads. Using my journalism degree, which I never got to use anyway, we put together a newspaper to keep in direct contact with anyone who wanted to subscribe, and called it the Coconut Telegraph. Mainly it's to keep in touch with fans, but it's definitely for non-inquiring minds.

We try to keep the text below the 3 syllable level. I've written several articles for the newsletter. Fingers [Taylor] and Marshall Chapman have also written pieces.

On a serious note, I didn't think anyone really knew how to promote me in the first place, other than me. So I decided to make a connection with the people who enjoy this music. They don't play it on the radio anymore; which is something I wear around as a badge of honor these days the way I look at it. "...a vehicle to keep in touch with Parrot Heads."

win 'em all

1989 /n a rather unorthodox move the Williamsburg, VA. Homeowner's Council attempted to use their "welcome wagon" to run Jimmy and The Coral Reefers out of town.

The ringleader of the Homeowner's Council, George Hughes, spoke before the city commission to protest Jimmy's music citing a tune "which is an explicit invitation to get drunk and have sex." In an attempt to demonstrate Buffett's insensitivity, Hughes arrived at the council meeting packing a tape deck and a copy of the song in question. However, this ploy backfired as one commissioner "playfully tapped his desk to the beat of the music and asked if there were any margaritas available," to the amusement of the culture freaks in the audience. The telegraph is a way to extend the 2 hour concert for the people that are true Jimmy Buffett fans. I've actually become friends with people who started out as fans. It's a lot of fun, plus it's great to have your own newspaper."

This vehicle has a lot of miles on it. The pages of the telegraph have proclaimed a plethora of half truths and lies for the last decade, and shows no signs of slowing. Somehow we've managed to discuss some serious issues too; helped some people out, brought attention to worthy causes and flexed our civic-minded muscles both here and abroad. That is not our function, but serendipity happens. We're proud to report on the many activities of "local Parrot Head Clubs" in our humble rag; clubs formed, after Jimmy's fortuitous example, to assist in local and environmental concerns.

This same vehicle has entered the much touted Information Superhighway. Jimmy Buffett and Parrot Heads are represented on all major computer bulletin boards, including a file in the mysterious Internet.

Over the years the vehicle has grown from "god's own truck" to a King Tut tour bus. The Margaritaville Store moved to it's present location on Duval Street and opened the Cafe. Shrimpboat Sound, Jimmy's state of the art recording studio was built. Margaritaville Records emerged, giving rise to Evangeline, Iguana's and most recently Todd Snider. Local Key West authors and recording artists have received mention in the telegraph. In 1992 The Margaritaville Store & Cafe opened in New Orleans. All these passengers on the same bus.

The road trip continues, and Jimmy Buffett's driving.

Photo: Ray Stanyard

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KEY WEST COLOR

From the solitude and serenity of fly fishing on the crystal clear waters to the inundation of the sights and sounds at the annual Fantasy Fest Parade, the experience of Key West is a visually sensual one.

> Although Key West is rich in history and internationally renowned for its natural beauty and charm, **Key West Color** is the first book of its kind to celebrate all aspects of life in and around this 1 x 4 mile island city.

Award winning photographer Alan Maltz captures Key West and its rainbow of eccentricities in this tasteful coffee table book. **\$50.00** #BKKWCOLOR



ALAN S MALTZ

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Key West Companion A guide to the history, geography, habits and inhabitants of one of the most agreeable places in America. \$12.95 #BKCOMP

The Key West Reader Our island as seen through the eyes of 25 of our most esteemed writers. \$12.95 #BKREADPP **Undying Love**

Local singer/songwriter Ben Harrisons's account of a truly bizarre Key West love story. Great historical photos. \$12.95 #BKLOVE

Key West Woman's Club Cookbook A Margaritaville Store Best-Seller. Entrees, soups, salads and more. \$14.95 #BKKWWC One of life's interesting set of circumstances brings this pin to you. I'd been making my Techno-RomanticTM style of jewelry for several years when I met Jimmy during an opening of my work at a gallery in Key West. That night he bought one of my winged heart pins. Later he wore it on a hat that appears on one of his album covers, [Hot Water] mentioned it in his liner notes, and the rest is history. May this pin lead such an interesting life for you too.

Thomas Mann New Orleans

A number of Thomas Mann's Winged Heart Pins remain. Pin measures approximately 3" X 1". \$54.00 #JWWING

1995 Mariner's Book of Days

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Parrot Head Club Koolkups

Parrot Head Club logo printed on colorful foam can holders. Available in a variety of colors. Koolkups are \$3.00 each #PCC. Six pack is \$15.00. #PCCSET



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> able cloth strap is 4 feet long and allows a variety of carrying lengths. Purple and Emerald body with black adjustable strap. \$19.95 #NVKOOLER

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Margaritaville Store logo printed on front.

Margaritaville Records

usic may be a business, but it is also a very basic human need. It was tribal way before it became commercial. My tribe is a strange one. They wear feathers, fins, are multicolored and have become quite a large flock. The whole point of having a record label to me is to provide these people with music to fulfill that primal urge; background music for their lifestyle. The reason for Margaritaville Records to exist is threefold. First, to provide the faithful Parrot Head listener with some other kinds of music to compliment their Buffett collections. Second, to provide a label that is artist owned and artist

oriented for those young and upcoming groups who actually write songs and play instruments, and are willing to make the sacrifices it takes to make it. Third, make a little money and have a little fun.

Parrot Heads

imothy Schmidt [Eagles bass player] was in the band, and we were playing a venue outside of Cincinnati called King's Island. It was an afternoon show. People had already started wearing Hawaiian shirts to our shows, but we looked out at this Cincinnati crowd, and they were glaringly brilliant to the point where it got our attention immediately. I said "Look at that!" Then Schmidt says to me, "They look like Deadheads in tropical suits. They're like Parrot Heads!" He yelled that to me in the middle of a song. So I immediately took the term and threw it out over the microphone - the people identified themselves with the term from the get-go.

It's My Job

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asic thing is that I'm an entertainer. I always have been. I started as a saloon singer, and I'm not out there trying to save the world through my music. I'm just there to give people a couple of hours of relief from world prob lems, which historically takes you back to the minstrels. It's a really simple thing for me to be in that category. I'm not trying to do anything else. As for my politics or my passions for the environment, I do them on my own. I don't

Shrimpboat Sound

he big factor in this record (Hot Water) was that it was pretty much homegrown. I was staying at home. Every body came to Key West to work initially. The first time I went to the studio, I got on my bicycle and rode home through Key West, and I could smell the Cuban food and the flowers [night blooming Jasmine] and I thought, "Man, I like this." Then, if I felt something was different or we wanted to change things or fool around with production, we had the time and the place to do it without it being too costly.

Z HOURS ALL DAY EVERYDAY

The Coconut Telegraph is now available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Numerous phone calls and inquiries have convinced us that there is a demand. Monday through Friday, 9am-5pm, all calls will reach Margaritaville. All the same services will be offered; inquiries, orders, subscriptions, questions regarding your order, etc.

1-800-COCOTE

After 5pm and on weekends, your call will be magically routed to our operators in Toll Free Land. Please be kind to these people. They will be friendly and assist you in any way they can, but they are not here. Therefore, they are not able to check on your order or your subscription. They do not know places to stay in Key West, nor are they able to offer any travel advise and most importantly, will not know concert dates.

Their function is to take your free issue request or your order. Item numbers are now listed with the merchandise. The residents of Toll Free Land will take your name, address, credit card and order information and forward them to us daily via high speed fiber optic transmissions. Your order will be filled and shipped UPS from Key West.

We hope you like this new service, and will join Margaritaville as we stumble into the future.

Keep in touch with Key West and Margaritaville. The CoconutTelegraph is mailed 6 times a year. \$5.00 covers printing & postage. Outside U.S. \$10.00.

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Coconut Comebacks

Much of the correspondence we receive revolves around song lyrics; what they mean, where they were written or even what the hell he says. Some of the most frequent questions are included here.

Tahitian lyrics in One Particular Harbor Ia Ora Te Natura E Mea Arofa Teie Ao Nei Ua Oau Te Maitai No Te Fenua Te Vai Noa Ra Te Ora O Te Mitie Nature lives (Life to Nature) Have pity of the earth (Love the Earth) The bounty of the land is exhausted But there is still abyndance in the sea.

What is a Cajun Martini?

This is a concern of many Parrot Heads, so we dispatched the crack research team here at the Coconut Telegraph to Louie's Backyard, a local Key West dive, to try and find empirical evidence of a Cajun Martini. First, choose the alcohol to prepare the martini; some use gin, but we prefer vodka. Seed one jalapeno pepper and place in the bottle of alcohol for at leats 24 hours. Then simply follow the recipe for making a martini using the jalapeno spiced alcohol with vermouth. One final note, to really impress your friends garnish with either pickled okra or an olive stuffed with jalapeno pepper. And remember, don't drink and think.

What does La Vie Dansante mean?

This seems to be a matter of some importance to many Parrot Heads not well versed in the ways of the French (no offense). We've received a variety of responses to this question, including The Dancing Life, Dancing Through Life, The Wandering Life, Wandering Through The Dance or my personal favorite Wonder Why I'm Wandering Through My Life At The Dance. Roll your own.

> Is Jimmy the pirate in A Pirate Looks at Forty? No, the classic tune is a tribute to old friend Phil Clark, an integral part of Jimmy's early Key West days. Phil is also mentioned in Nautical Wheelers, and again in The Prince of Tides.

> Who was the poet in Death Of An Unpopular Poet? Acording to Jimmy, "I was watching Walter Cronkite on night and he mentioned that Kenneth Patchen had died...he was one of my favorite poets. So I was thinking about him, and then I thought abouth Richard Farina. These guys contributed so much, but they died and we never appreciated them until afterwards.