

## TRUE TALES OF THE SNAKE PIT

By Tom Corcoran

Many characters in Jimmy Buffett's lyrics seem to live in Key West or unpredictably pass through. Fifteen years after "I Have Found Me a Home" and "Nautical Wheelers," they are here in spirit and in person. But things change, and they no longer congregate in any single place. One thing we post-Woodstock crazies and nautical vagabonds thought would last forever was the infamous "Snake Pit," The Old Anchor Inn.

In the early '70's, hanging out at the Anchor was like living in a wacko film. It was episodic, a street opera, a circus where at center ring all performances were tolerated. The mysterious Club Mandible congregated there in purple shirts and inspired Jimmy's irreverent "My Head Hurts, My Feet Stink, and I Don't Love Jesus."

The Anchor was so funky the State tried to close it on principle. It finally shut down when the revolving credit plan spun out of control.

Bud MacArthur ran the place. A highly decorated war hero, "Budman" had a heart of gold and a tolerance for offbeat behavior. A large laughing man, always holding a glass of wine and accompanied by his wife Dorothy, Bud lorded over the Anchor in a jovial, gentle way. The MacArthurs were parental figures, psychologists, money lenders, and everyone's common conscience.

Somehow The Old Anchor Inn's presence didn't sit well with the authorities. There were strange odors: ganja in the backyard, faulty plumbing in the men's room, last night's beer under the floorboards.

Inside were dozens of Monkey Tom's paintings: psychedelic shrimp-boats and witches' eyes. The jukebox was a music salad: Hendrix, Cocker, Joplin, Clapton. After every third song came the house favorite: "I Can't Get Started" with Bunny Benigan's trumpet solo.



The Old Anchor Inn — a limited-edition color photo by Tom Corcoran, who has done more than one album cover for Jimmy. An 8x12 photo, matted and shrink-wrapped, is available for \$32.00 through The Coconut Telegraph.

The regular customers were very irregular. Their nicknames were pseudonyms, hippie monickers, and jokes, and they made for great storytelling. Any time, day or night, one could bend elbows with Smilin' Jack, Killer Mike, Captain Berserko, Taco Tom, West Coast Nancy, Indian Ron, or Marcus the Hook. Shrimpers, wanderers, winos, and pets. A tropical gathering of the tribes.

When the Day of the Sad Closing finally arrived, the ceremony was in keeping with the ambiance: Bud and Dorothy gave away free drinks until the last drop was gone.

Today? It's an Atari Game Arcade. The MacArthurs retired to upstate New York. Everyone still keeps in touch.

## JIMMY BUFFETT'S MAIL ORDER!

**"THE COCONUT TELEGRAPH":** Read about all the latest Buffett doings. \$2.00 for a year's subscription.

Yes, you can still order from Jimmy Buffett's Caribbean Soul T-shirt Line. Choose from the following designs: Cheeseburger in Paradise, Son of a Sailor, Changes in Latitude, Hurricane, Fins, Migration, One Particular Harbour, Margaritaville, and Why Don't We Get Drunk and Screw. All shirts are \$12.95, and come in S, M, L, and XL.

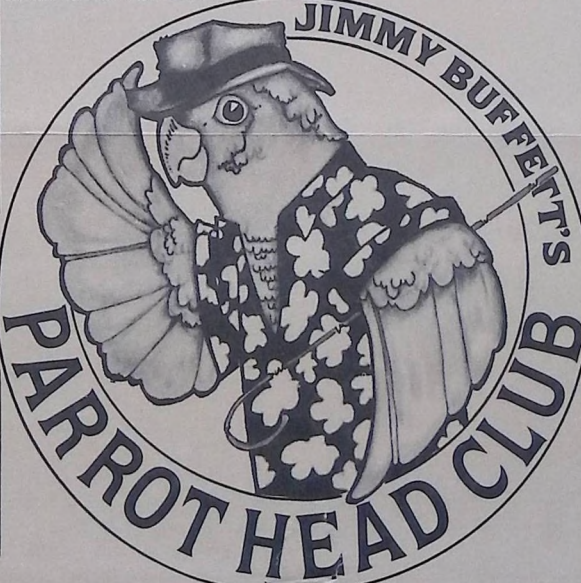
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**MARGARITA GLASSES:** Large, long-stemmed glasses engraved with Jimmy Buffett's signature. \$10.00 apiece.

To order, send your check or money order to T-SHIRTS, The Margaritaville Store, P.O. Box 1459, Key West, Florida 33041, or call 1-305-296-8981.

There is a \$3.00 SHIPPING AND HANDLING CHARGE for orders of 6 items or less, \$5.00 for orders of over 6 items. The shipping charge for any glassware order is \$3.50. Florida residents, please include sales tax. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.



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THE COCONUT TELEGRAPH  
The Margaritaville Store  
P.O. Box 1459  
Key West, Florida  
33041

Dear Jimmy,

AFSIN, TURKEY

Holiday greetings from this remote little mountain valley at the eastern end of the Anatolian plain. We are a member of the American expatriate community living in every imaginable place around the world who are ardent Buffett fans.

We have often wondered if you realize how your music speaks to this particular group of Americans who have a little gypsy in their soul, and who travel this old world always wondering what lies behind the next mountain or over the next wave. We are extremely loyal Americans, because perhaps we realize more than most what our country has to offer in comparison to anyplace else on earth. We live our lives daring to take a look at life from a different perspective.

May I hasten to say that we are not a part of the government or military network, but work for American business concerns who do business abroad. We live on the local economy without benefit of commissaries, APO boxes, government housing, etc. When we say we live abroad—that is exactly what we mean.

We have played "Coconut Telegraph" on an Arab dhow while sailing and snorkeling in the Persian Gulf, brought your music for the first time, we believe, to the Chinese-Russian border in an area formerly known as Manchuria, and dreamed of Burger King while listening to "Cheeseburger in Paradise" while traveling through Kurdish country west of the Iranian border.

You have traveled with us through Europe, the Middle East, South America, the Orient, and now the Near East—and soon with Pat as he

makes a trek in Katmandu. We have introduced you in many languages, but the understanding of the beat and the sound is universal.

Enclosed please find a check for \$2.00 to put us on the Telegraph mailing list. You can send it to the company home office in New Jersey and it will only require regular U.S. postage. It will be forwarded to us by courier.

I think we will be one of the more remote destinations for the Telegraph. A film crew from New York came here last year and named their film "The Farthest Place"—which seemed pretty appropriate.

It would be difficult for most people to imagine what life here is like. The countryside is very mountainous, not unlike the area we lived in in Colorado in the Crystal River Valley, but there's no Ajax Mountain to ski on and no wonderful restaurants to go for an evening. It's a wild, open place with miles of nothing but sheepherders and mud villages, and after awhile you

either despise it or grow to love it—we fall in the latter category.

You have more important things to do than read this letter, so may we just wish you and all the staff at The Margaritaville Store very happy holidays.

We will soon be building a home on a hill on the North shore of St. Croix, east of the Buccaneer Hotel. We hope when it's finished you will feel free to come by for a cool drink and enjoy the view. We are putting in a racquetball court and Pat is always ready to take on all comers. The house has been years in the planning and dreaming stages, and we hope it will say welcome—come in and relax.

Have a great year—follow a dream and take care of yourself and those you love.

Gwen & Pat Foley

## COCONUT CHATTER

By Margaritaville's Own  
Rona Ferret

Well, you can't say the folks at Margaritaville don't know how to celebrate. Late January marked The Margaritaville Store's first anniversary (nobody can recall the exact date—too much tequila on opening day), and the revelry is still going on! In fact, a crew from "Entertainment Tonight" came down to film JIMMY and the Store in the middle of it all—stardom (or infamy) is coming our way!

The Margaritaville Store has grown by leaps and bounds in the past year—new items all the time. Rumour has it that a complete Couch Potato Accessory Kit is in the works—I'll keep you posted!

Look for a new JIMMY BUFFETT album early this summer. Its tentative title is "You'll Never Work in This Town Again"—clearly not referring to our JIMMY! Steve Winwood will probably be making a guest appearance on the album, and JIMMY has been kicking around some tunes with the creative Ralph MacDonald. . .

This album marks a major change for The Coral Reefers. Beloved Timothy B. Schmit has decided to pursue an acting career, and will be replaced by fine musician Willie Weeks. Tim, we'll miss you—catch you on the silver screen!

JIMMY is also writing an article for "Wooden Boat Magazine" . . . and he says a big thank you for all the Christmas and birthday cards he received, but hopes nobody's counting the years!

That's all for now, dears . . . have a boat drink on me . . .

"... aah, the stories we could tell . . ."  
photo by Henry Diltz

