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Aug. 30	Mohegan Sun Arena	Uncasville, CT
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Sept. 5	Molson Amphitheatre	Toronto, Ontario
Sept. 8	Gillete Stadium	Foxboro, MA
Sept. 18	Madison Square Garden	New York, NY
Sept. 20	Madison Square Garden	New York, NY
Oct. 4	Waikiki Shell	Honolulu, HI
Oct. 20	MGM Grand	Las Vegas, NV
Oct. 27	MGM Grand	Las Vegas, NV

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Photo: Rob O'Neal



Photos: Jim Mayer

Oui Went To Paris

by Peter Mayer

The New Morning Jazz Club in Paris has over 25 years become a, “cult institution, much like the *Blue Note* and the *Village Vanguard* in New York.” Jimmy and an abbreviated Coral Reefer Band performed there in June and Peter Mayer kept a journal.

Wednesday June 6th

Departure day. I’m anxious to go back to the City of Lights, Paris France. It’s been 10 years since I’ve last been on my own with the Peter Mayer Group. We played about 5 shows in ’97 starting in Paris, and then going North to Le Havre, then down to Bia Ritz and ending up in the small town of St Bartheleme´ to play at a music school.

Mike Utley, Mac McAnally, brother Jim (Uncle Jim), Roger and I flew to Atlanta where we met the last 3 members of the band, Nadirah, Tina and Robert. Several of us had not had a chance to change dollars into Euros. Atlanta, now one of, if not the busiest airports in the world, had that all taken care of. We spent a couple of hours in the business class lounge getting last minute e-mails and phone calls done. The last time I was in Paris, the Internet service was a lot sketchier, so I made sure to send essential e-mails before I went. That’s all changed and while I didn’t have cell service over there on Sprint, Internet access was easy and everywhere.

The flight was comfortable, a bit more comfortable the last time I had made this trip. (I was on TWA, which since has tanked and we had to take off 3 times {seriously} before finally getting it right.) I sat next to Mac and we had a good long talk before we decided to try to sleep a bit.

Because of the route that the airlines take, a northern route over Halifax and then down towards Paris, the sun never really sets, and it takes a bit to get used to the idea that just as the sun seems ready to set, it starts rising again.

Thursday June 7th

Caught in the middle of a time twister we land in Paris a day later, 6:15 in the morning, feeling like we’ve still got one eye closed, and one foot still back in Wednesday. What strikes me first about Charles De Gaulle International Airport is the quiet. Now, remember, it’s early morning, but there are no TV’s on, and none of the ubiquitous airport smoking announcements, pages, and parking violation announcements. It’s very calm. We grab our bags and the 6 of us split 2 cabs and head to Paris through rush hour traffic. It’s good to have Euros, or we would have been walking.

A majority of the vehicles in France run on diesel fuel, so we were inhaling on a big city cigar reminiscent of an exhaust pipe on a 70’s era Mercedes for about 45 minutes. I’m a motor head (more style-wise than into fast cars) so the array of different shapes and sizes of the vehicles caught my eye. And there are hundreds; thousands, of motorcycles on the road as well. Besides the 8 lanes of traffic, 4 to a side on the freeway, add another lane in between each lane that the two wheelers dash through whether traffic is moving or not, at about 50 to 60 mph. This, my friends, is the skill of motor control that French coffee will give you.

We arrive at the hotel ready to turn in for thewait a minute it’s 9:30 am, and we’re supposed to be



Photo: Jim Mayer

enjoying Paris. I guess we'll head out and start sight....but tiredness takes over. Upon arriving at my room I lay down on my comfortable bed, with a beautiful French window in the corner that looks out onto... other beautiful French windows. But first I spend twenty minutes trying to figure out how to turn on my bathroom light. I tried turning up and down side to side every switch in the room before realizing that there is a master switch that turns off every light in the room so that when you head outdoors with a flick of a switch you are a power conserving American. Quite a good idea, except when your bladder is full and desperate for enough vision to avoid a major adult diaper situation.

I slept for 2 hours and called my brother Jim to see if he was up for some lunch. We walked around the corner and had our choice of no less than 6 restaurants in 2 blocks. We ordered with the best French we could muster; it only took 4 minutes of desperate hand signals, pointing and shoulder shrugging to finally indicate that we needed *buerre*, or butter for the bread. The food by the way was fabulous! Eating is a sacred experience in France, and that's not to say we don't have incredible cuisine, variety, and many culinary choices in the U.S., but the whole act of eating is done leisurely, happily, deliberately and expertly in France. The one time Jim and I were in a hurry and seated ourselves at a restaurant we got a few "ugly American" looks, but on the whole people treated us with the utmost courtesy and grace.

After lunch we headed over to the Eiffel Tower, which was a simple 20-minute walk down George V, onto Rapp Ave. and into the beautiful park that surrounds the world famous monument. It looked magnificent, although smaller than what you might imagine the size to be. The park that surrounds it is gorgeous, with plenty of French, and tourist couples lounging in the grass because... and it wasn't hard to understand, they simply had nothing better to do.

Jimmy had called for a band rehearsal at our hotel at 6pm, so we slowly headed back through pedestrian traffic but not before stopping at a bakery to pick up a marvelous *crème* filled something or other that I managed to wear by the time we got back to the hotel. Rehearsal was in a small banquet room and Jimmy was in great spirits. Everyone was a little jet lagged, but willing to put up with a little time travel unravel and inconvenience to experience the first all out and bonafide "We Went to Paris" (He Went to Paris) Tour.

That night we all gathered at a restaurant a few blocks from our hotel to enjoy a 2 and half hour, full production of wine and food and jokes and the ritual they call dinner here in France.

Friday June 8th

We didn't have to be at sound check at the club "New Morning" until 5pm. That gave us time to scout around Paris a bit. Mac and I decided to head to Notre Dame, the Cathedral that is considered one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture and was made famous in part by Victor Hugo's hunchback that used to live in it's bell towers. We caught the subway, which was clean and easy to use. Despite starting off in the wrong direction within about 10 minutes we were in the general area of many of the museums and tourist points of interest. I had looked on a map and saw a church labeled Notre Dame Iglesia, thinking that this was our destination. We followed curvy narrow streets with wine shops and cafes until we were scratching our heads looking for the landmark. Two friendly French ladies set us straight and we finally saw the famous bell towers across the waters of the Seine. The Cathedral sits on the Île de la Cité, an island in the middle of the Seine. It is a structure you could spend days hanging in and around (and on as Quasimodo did). The detail is rich, no,...it's stunning and once you get through a quick moving line and head into the cathedral it is a spiritual experience no matter what your weekly ritual is. Stained glass in deep blues and purple and greens; lofty ceilings that seem strong as the stone that holds them, but light enough to open a window to the sky.

We left ourselves just enough time to catch the subway back to our hotel area and to get a bite to eat at Le Avenue, one of our favorites in the area. We were down in the lobby with 3 minutes to spare to head over to the club.

It was about a 40 minute ride over to the club, but we got to do some extra sight seeing in that most of the journey was along the Seine past museums, palaces, buildings that dated back long before anything existed where I write this diary here in America. The crew had set everything up by the time we arrived and we had about an hour sound check. It was nice to be back in a club again, all on a tight stage that kept the band close and guaranteed some proximity friction between audience and band and all the sparks that happen when the *bon temps* roulette.

The crowd that night was a wide mix of Parisian locals, American Embassy people, media crew, and Americans in Paris that got a doctor's note to skip work or play or whatever it is that they do. It was 400 strong and they knew the drill, loving it as Jimmy spoke to them *en français* as we played down the set

Uncle Jim surveying the Seine.



that included songs such as Mademoiselle Voulez vous Danse, I Will Play for Gumbo and of course He Went to Paris.

No one wanted the set to end, and the audience hung around well after the show to greet us all as we climbed back into the vans to head out to dinner. We finished the night up with yet one more wonderful meal before turning in at 2am.

Saturday June 9th

Saturday was our day off before the long flight home and we decided to make the most of the few sight seeing and dining hours we had left. In the morning brother Jim gave me a call, and we went to grab some breakfast together at the café around the corner. A few eggs, pieces of toast, cups of coffee and newly learned French phrases later, we were on our way once again to the Eiffel Tower. Jim had an idea for a video for his Uncle Jim work that he wanted some help with. It was a beautiful clear day as we crossed the Seine down Rapp Ave once again. People had their blankets laid out, and couples were hanging out enjoying the afternoon. Jim and I started on his scene when I noticed the group of French teens next to us celebrating a birthday. They sang Happy Birthday, which translates easily into any language, and I turned the camera on them for a few minutes asking them if they were movie stars.

Jim decided to go to the Montmartre district and I decided to head to the Musée d'Orsay, the Impressionist museum for the afternoon. They have fashioned this museum out of an old train station. It's beautiful just as a piece of architecture, and it's magnificent when you fill it with works of art that have graced the pages of many a book on the who's who of impressionist painters and sculptors. I spent 3 hours walking through the museum with my audio "phone". You simply type in the number on the painting and place it on your ear and it gives you the historical significance and comments on the work. The Degas dancers, Monet, and Van Gogh blew me away, but an artist Gustave Caillebotte took me by surprise with his "Floor Refinishers".

I got back to the hotel at about 8pm, turned right around and walked up to the Arc De Triomphe, which was about 8 blocks from our hotel up the Champs Elyseé. This was a monument commissioned by Napoleon in 1806 to mark the victories from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. Under the Arc is the tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the eternal flame commemorating the dead of the 2 World Wars.

By that time I was ready for dinner. I called Mac and we went to dinner right on the Camps Elyseé. Man that Avenue rocks! There are restaurants and shops lining it for miles, and it has a very wide walk are on each side for people to gather and restaurants to pedal their wares. It is just getting started at about 10pm, and rocks on through the night. We couldn't quite keep pace with it all night given we had a 6am lobby call the next morning. It was a very short trip, and it was time to turn out my light in the city of lights.

"Paris was wonderful... it had been a dream of mine to play there for a long time." Jimmy Buffett

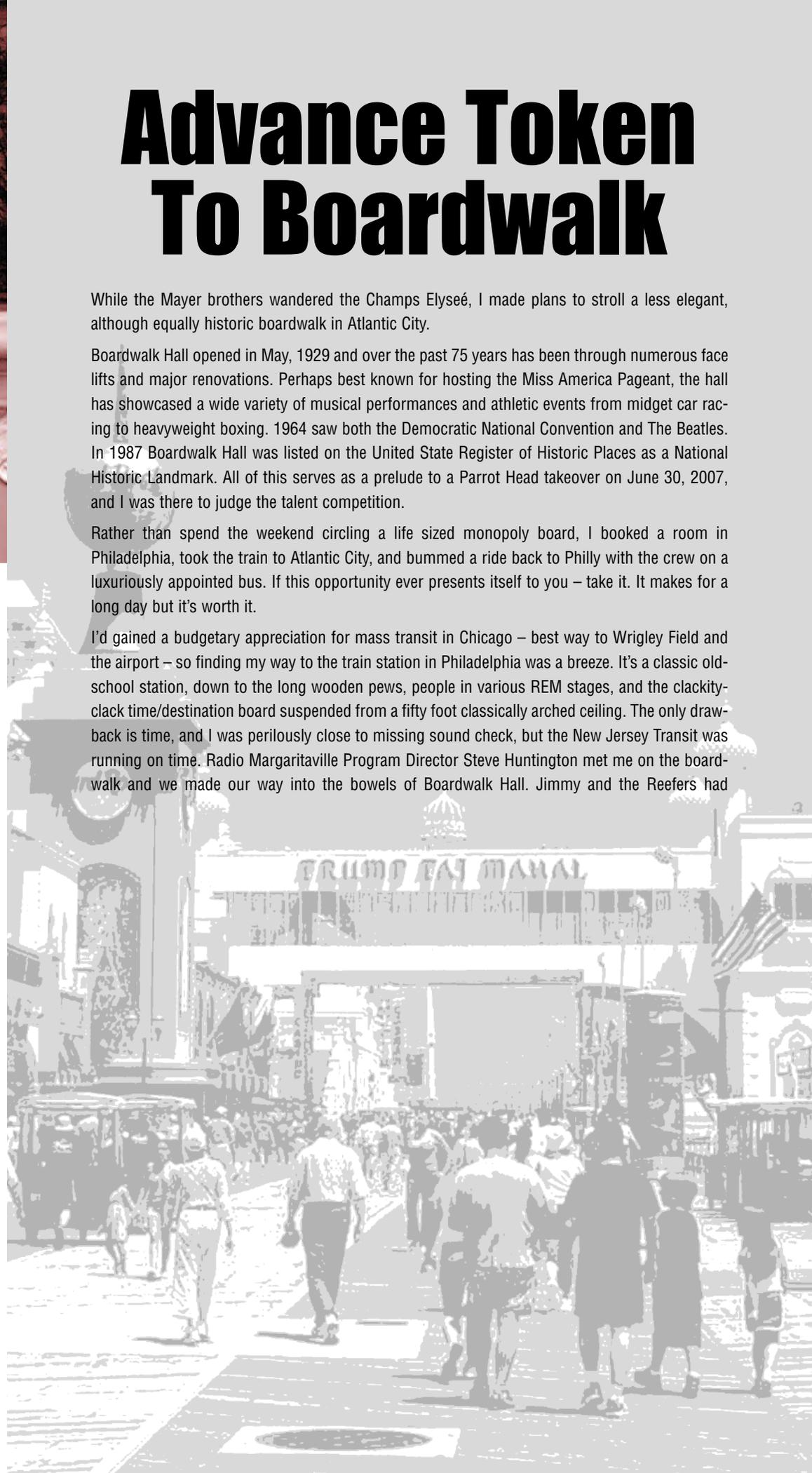
Advance Token To Boardwalk

While the Mayer brothers wandered the Champs Elyseé, I made plans to stroll a less elegant, although equally historic boardwalk in Atlantic City.

Boardwalk Hall opened in May, 1929 and over the past 75 years has been through numerous face lifts and major renovations. Perhaps best known for hosting the Miss America Pageant, the hall has showcased a wide variety of musical performances and athletic events from midget car racing to heavyweight boxing. 1964 saw both the Democratic National Convention and The Beatles. In 1987 Boardwalk Hall was listed on the United State Register of Historic Places as a National Historic Landmark. All of this serves as a prelude to a Parrot Head takeover on June 30, 2007, and I was there to judge the talent competition.

Rather than spend the weekend circling a life sized monopoly board, I booked a room in Philadelphia, took the train to Atlantic City, and bummed a ride back to Philly with the crew on a luxuriously appointed bus. If this opportunity ever presents itself to you – take it. It makes for a long day but it's worth it.

I'd gained a budgetary appreciation for mass transit in Chicago – best way to Wrigley Field and the airport – so finding my way to the train station in Philadelphia was a breeze. It's a classic old-school station, down to the long wooden pews, people in various REM stages, and the clackity-clack time/destination board suspended from a fifty foot classically arched ceiling. The only drawback is time, and I was perilously close to missing sound check, but the New Jersey Transit was running on time. Radio Margaritaville Program Director Steve Huntington met me on the boardwalk and we made our way into the bowels of Boardwalk Hall. Jimmy and the Reefers had





Little Miss Magic at the mike.

assumed their positions and were going through the routine – routine for them perhaps, but always a treat for the privileged few in attendance.

This was the last show on this leg of the tour and the band had tired of hotel rooms. They stay in nice places to be sure, but no place is like the place you get your mail. Jimmy still seemed to be riding a Parisian high, planning to perform more in small venues in out-of-the way places. “The show was great, there were about 400 people. That’s the plan to try and do some smaller things along with these big shows. Between Paris and Anguilla, we have a couple other things we are looking at.”

He asked Tina Gullickson and Nadirah Shakoor what they would be wearing for the swimsuit competition, and it took them just a moment to get it. Jimmy has an appreciation for and an historical interest in the venue, but it’s an occupational hazard for him to wander the boardwalk, so I thought that I’d check it out for him.

The boardwalk is over 4 miles long, and if you can avoid getting run over by an entrepreneurial cart pusher, it’s actually kind of interesting – that curious blend of old and new that often accompanies urban rehabilitation. There were no less than 4 “official” Parrot Head Party HQ’s, surprisingly few bootleg tour shirts and the boardwalk was packed. I assumed that this was a typical Saturday evening, but a few locals told me that they haven’t seen crowds like this in quite some time – a Buffett boost to the economy. It was time to escape the crowds and enjoy a few Landsharks backstage. Radio Margaritaville weekend warrior and host of **Savannah Daydreamin’** Savannah Buffett was interviewing Jimmy prior to the start of the show alternatively talking to singer, songwriter, author and most assuredly, dad. Dad had to go work.

Beach balls and Buffett ballads filled the hall as noisy Joisey Parrot Heads left their seats until intermission. Each year I look forward to the intermission video, and ‘07 did not disappoint; an interview with Jimmy in Paris followed the opening hilarious surfing parody video. I won’t give it away, just suffice it to say that, “I love the smell of napalm in the morning.”

Three encores and a harried band exit later, the crew and local roadies swarm over the massive stage like a flock of Atlantic City seagulls on a discarded piece of fried clam strip. In just a couple of hours, four semis are loaded and low gearin’ through the less expensive purple properties, and I’m hangin’ with the crew on a free ride back to a king size bed in Philadelphia.

Landshark Lagers and world famous sub sandwiches. I love the smell of a Buffett crew bus at night.

TEN QUESTIONS TIME

Jimmy was featured in
Time Magazine's "10 Questions"
in the July 16, 2007 edition.
Jimmy, true to form, broke tradition
and responded to more...

Photo: Rob O'Neal

