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OUTER BANKS Diary

Continued & Climax

I have always found excuses to go wandering the planet in the name of book or song research. Though you have to spend a lot of time at a desk when you become a writer, being an obvious admirer of people like Hemingway, Beryl Markham, Mark Twain, Ian Fleming, Bruce Chatwin, Anne Lindbergh and a host of other writers, I believe you have to find the substance of a story or a song, as Twain said "out there in the territory". Thus my writings cover my love of different latitudes, hot climates and remote stretches of beach front, which is what brought me to the Outer Banks in the first place.

When I was "researching" the character Charlie Fabian for my book "Where is Joe Merchant?" I knew I wanted to model him on the notorious pirate Edward Teech, better known in the pirate culture by his bad ass name of "Blackbeard". I had seen a movie about Blackbeard when I was a kid and the image of this wild pirate with pigtails in his flaming beard swinging through the rigging from his ship to the one he was attacking, stuck with me. And when I needed a likeable villain for my novel, I knew Blackbeard would be the model. It was in the Key West library where I first discovered the North Carolina connection to Blackbeard, which took me to my aviation charts to figure that Ocracoke lay almost directly on the air route I usually traveled in my plane back and forth between Florida and Long Island. It is always nice when your work and your fun can come together like that. Ocracoke was now on my song line.

I drove past the airport at twilight, stopping for a moment when I saw several wild ponies loping along the beach. I love the fact that as much as we all perceive of the East Coast of the United States as one continuous string of cities, sidewalks shopping malls and endless streams of traffic along Interstate 95, there is still a lot of land left where wild horses rule the beach. One of the things I always try to find when I am on the road in a place like Ocracoke is authenticity. In too many coastal towns that I have lived in or visited, progress, or what some people call progress, seems to take hold in more ways than some of us not so progressive types would like. To me, that means finding a local cottage or funky beach hotel to sleep in that reminds me of the kinds of places I used to go with my parents down on the Alabama and florida Gulf Coast when I was a kid, as opposed to a hotel chain or high rise. The same goes for eating. It comes down to one of my simple rules of travel. Sleep local and eat local.

Eating by one's self might seem very lonely to some people, but when you are a road dog, you get used to it. Besides, if you aren't looking to do anything but enjoy a good meal, dining solo is quite relaxing. When eating by myself, I always prefer the bar, or a table close to it, because there is always entertainment, and talking is an option. The hostess seated me at a table near the bar, and I ordered a "boat drink" and sipped my rhum as I listened

in on the local chatter and gossip from the customers on the barstools behind me. The topics in beach town bars stays pretty constant no matter what coastline I find myself hugging - weather, boats, love, local scandal, sports, fishing, surfing, over-building, and how it used to be ten years ago. I opted that night not to join the discussion and just fiddled with my cell phone until my dinner arrived.

After dinner, as I headed back to the cottage, I noticed the moon and stars were now hidden from view by what I suspected might be low hanging clouds that were announcing the bad weather that had been predicted, and as I read myself to sleep that night, the light from the lighthouse swept by my window in a constant pattern like some guardian angel standing watch.

I had spent 36 hours traveling, at times at light speed, along highway 12 with certain fantasies filling my brain - fly around the Wright Brothers Monument, test the SUF board, find some stand up waves, connect up with surf buddies, find some great seafood joints. Then, there were the unpredictable events that you always have to leave room for in your travels. There were plenty of those as well. Yes, my creative reservoir was overflowing, but then there is always the core truth that as a writer, you must leave the world of making up a story and simply do the hard work it takes to get it on paper.

Alone in the Green Tomato, bobbing across Pamlico Sound on a ferry boat, I knew it was my time to do the work, and that is where this journal began. It ends this evening watching the sunset from my desk on the Continental Drifter to the west over the Sir Francis Drake Channel in the British Virgin Islands where I am here to surf with my buddies from the Outer Banks. I never planned it to conclude this way, it just did. The actual journey was something I had promised myself I would do and from that came the idea for the journal. I have had a ball doing both and I hope you have enjoyed the trip as well.

As I was finishing up this journal today, the thought popped into my brain, that I am often accused by those who know me well, of trying to cram thirty-six hours into a twenty-four hour day. To that crime, I plead guilty as charged. To quote my favorite lines about the passage of time, which I saw long ago scribbled on the men's room wall of the Napoleon House Bar in New Orleans, "Life and ink run out at the same time." - The Squid. So, when someone tries to tell you there are just so many hours in a day, don't believe them. Fit in as many as you can, because unlike my friend the squid, we don't really know when the ink is going to run out. You really never know if the next day is going to come or not. Over and out,

Jimmy, Aboard Continental Drifter Somewhere In the Caribbean Sea

Read Jimmy's complete diary at www.margaritaville.com/obx.mv

Playing For Change Peace Through Music

Grammy winning producer/engineer Mark Johnson and his Playing For Change Team traveled the globe with a single-minded passion, to connect the world though music. Their ambitious journey took them from postapartheid South Africa, through the ancient sites of the Middle East, to the remote beauty of the Himalayas and beyond. Using innovative mobile technology, they filmed and recorded more than 100 musicians, largely outdoors, in parks, plazas and promenades, in doorways, on cobblestone streets and amid hilly pueblos. Each captured performance created a new mix in which essentially the artists are all performing together, albeit hundreds or thousands of miles apart. PLAYING FOR CHANGE - Peace Through Music is the story of this unparalleled international musical collaboration and its remarkable power of redemption.

Playing For Change has been one of 2009's most unlikely and startling cultural phenomenons. Hear Music's two-disc CD/DVD Playing For Change - Songs Around the World, released on April 28th, stunned the music industry selling over twenty-six thousand copies in it's first week and landing at #10 on Billboard's Top 200 Pop chart. This remarkable and unpredicted popular response has been driven by more than twenty million video hits, countless blogs and pure viral communication between fans and followers. The project's deep emotional resonance, combined with the muscle of the internet and word-of-mouth has struck a profound and enduring chord world-wide.

Playing for Change is a multimedia movement created to inspire, connect, and bring peace to the world through music. The idea for this project arose from a common belief that music has the power to break down boundaries and overcome distance between people.

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Werewolves of Margaritaville

Jimmy & The Coral Reefers in London

On July 5 Jimmy performed at Shepherds Bush Empire in London, England for the first time in his career, 233 years and one day after the rockets red glare first lit up the north American sky. Let's hope that the interval will be less before his next visit. Londoner John Graveling posted his thoughts on the appearance in an online forum, and excerpts are presented here.

After 40 years of gig-going I thought I had seen it all, but last night was something the likes of which I have never seen. Complete reverence of the man by a sell-out crowd, decked in grass skirts (even some men), scantily clad women of all ages in coconut bras and other beach regalia. Not a normal shirt or t-shirt in sight and more inflatable beach balls, sharks, dolphins and parrots than I have ever seen in one place. The crowd demographic must have covered all ages between 25 and 70.

Twenty minutes or so before he was due on the stage the chant "We want Jimmy" went up and the lights eventually dimmed. Then onto the stage came the man wearing a bright orange t-shirt, Bermuda shorts and no footwear. He bounced around and from the opening chord of the first song (Will Kimbrough's "Piece Of Work" with Will trading lead vocals with Jimmy) the crowd sang along, very loudly, in time, and in tune.

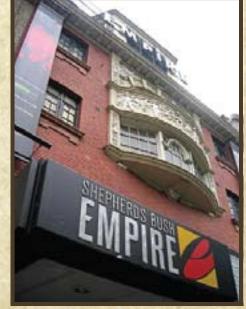
For the next two and half hours the stage was his, the crowd loved every moment and he said he could not believe he had not played London during his 39 year music career. It was a total experience, not like any gig I have ever been to. Sure I've heard crowds sing along with Bruce etc., but nothing on this scale. To his fans this man means good times and up beat music. The crowd upstairs stood most of the night making the moves in all the right places at all the right times. As he says, "it's summertime music to enjoy". Lyrically he is witty, sarcastic, writes from everyday experience, is topical, political and has great pop sensibilities. He is close to John Prine in many ways as an observer of life's trials and tribulations e.g. "We Are The People Our Parents Warned Us About". The eight piece Coral Reefer Band consisting of three guitarists, keyboards, bass, drums, percussionist/steel drummer and a backup singer, plus Jimmy's own, rather good guitar work, gave it their all. We had a calypso "Brown Eyed Girl", a storming encore (there were five total encores) of "Werewolves of London" and a finale of

"Yellow Submarine". In between, apart from a rousing "Southern Cross" it was all Jimmy and his songs of the past 39 years.

I can guarantee you will never have witnessed anything quite like it. I was lucky enough to get an invite back to the after-show party at the band's hotel where Jimmy told me he was absolutely blown away by the reception. He thought a few might turn up, not the 1,900 who did.

John Graveling

Next Issue: Peter Mayer writes of his experience in London.



Immy took time out of his busy schedule; and by busy we mean trying to put an hour glass of sand in an egg-timer and by schedule we mean surfing, singing and socializing, to answer a few Survival Skills questions from Alexandra Wolfe at Men's Journal. Highlights below.

What advice would you give the younger you?

To learn to play the piano, and I wish I would have learned another language earlier. I struggle with both now, but music is the universal language.

What's the best piece of advice you ever received?

Herman Wouk gave me this advice: "As a prose writer, just get a page a day done and don't try to do anything else." That seems to work. The task of writing a big book, it takes discipline, while writing a song is so refreshing it's like skipping along like a stone on the ocean.

What one skill should every man have?

To be a good reader, because then you don't have to be a good conversationalist to be knowledgeable. I'm shy.

What is the handiest survival skill you have?

I'm a pretty good field medic. From my Boy Scout days I can patch people up. I can do stitches, which comes in handy in remote surf breaks.

What do you want to do before you die?

Learn to hang ten. Go to space. Go to Pitcairn Island, where my Buffett ancestors are from. And go to Antarctica.

How do you make your favorite drink?

It's basically good Caribbean rum, coconut water, a fresh piece of lime and lots of ice. No bubbles, lots of electrolytes, and no hangover.

What's the secret to staying young?

For me it's being in the water everyday, whether it's surfing or swimming. I look at these guys in Hawaii and they're 80 years old in the surf break and look great.

And that's all they do. I want to be in that club when I'm that old.

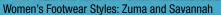


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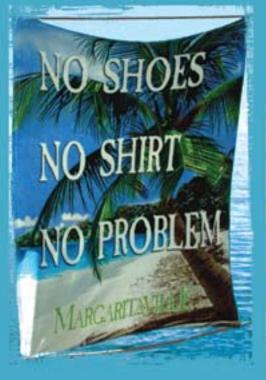


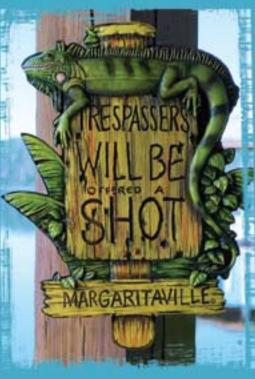


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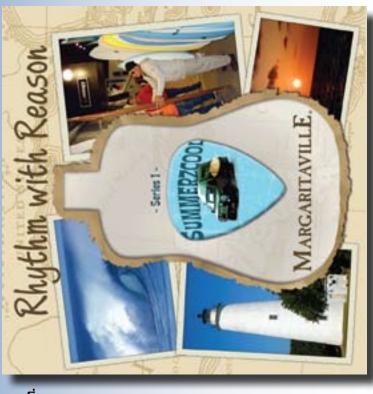
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