

The Pad

By Phil Sawyer

The Pad, the legendary joint that opened in 1955 became an institution in Ocean Drive Beach and was known far and wide by generations of shaggers, stranders, lovers of beach music and the coldest beer on the grand strand.

Built below a crash pad for life guards and stranders, dancers built a dance floor on the sand, and used old number 3 wash tubs for coolers.

The wash tubs were soon replaced by old surplus sale claw foot bath tubs, the juke box filled with the hottest music available from Charleston to Virginia Beach, and the party people came by the hundreds. They left their names on the walls and politically incorrect graffiti, danced and drank beer the nights away, and probably did some other things they could not do back home.

Over the years, there were many ideas and a lot of talk about saving the Pad, but alas, since it was not built to "specifications" it could not be restored. It came down by demolition in 1994. The end of the Pad was indeed an end of an era. There will never be another one like it.