



Dino Thompson

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Dino Thompson grew up overtop the Kozy Korner restaurant in the 40's, 50's, and 60's. A stone's throw from the Myrtle Beach Pavilion, Dino fell asleep to the smell of cotton candy, the electric from bumper cars, the squeals of roller-coaster riders and the driving beat of the greatest music on earth boogied by some of the world's smoothest jitterbugs, fastdancers, and Shaggers.

Dino currently owns Cagney's Old Place and Flamingo Grill. His book *Greekboy-Growing Up Southern*, is a thigh-slappin memoir about his old Myrtle Beach and O.D. Days.

Prologue- From *Greekboy- Growing Up Southern*

"So WHERE YOU FROM?" some pasty-face tourist would ask while they were fingerin their plastic coin purse, tryin to tip you a quarter for bussin their table, rentin em some swim trunks, deliverin their foot long, putting away their luggage, or rockin their red rental umbrella in the hot sand.

"I'm from here mam," I'd say.

"I mean where do you live during the wintertime?"

"I live here all year long mam."

That's when they'd freeze in an open-mouth drool. Their eyes would glaze over, their head would RCA dog to one side. They'd just had a close encounter.

Next question would dive even deeper. "Are there schools and things like that here?"

"Yes mam. WE go to school in the wintertime."

"Do they teach, uh, you know, normal type school stuff?"

Tip or no tip, that's when you had to cut em off at the mental knees.

"Yes mam. We learn reading, writin, how to shortchange customers, shaggin, sashayin, thumbin, moochin, beachbummin, burger flippin, bingo callin, bikini removal, float expansion, umbrella placement, coconut carvin, curb hoppin, skee-ball repair, luggage totin, innertube instruction, taffy pullin, whistle blowin, windshield wiping, and how to give real bad directions...they's even a few of us who know the secret recipe for cotton candy, corn dogs, and win spo-dee-o-dee."

Then, while they're pullin their creek-baptized daughter away hopin not to get em infected with Myrtle Beachitis, that's when you'd wink, smile all thirty two teeth and say....."Anything else I can getchall?"

YEA...THAT WAS US IN THE 50'S AND 60'S.

We were lean, mean, charmin, hard working and always looking east. We were Myrtle Beach bums. Boogiein through a salt spray world of sandcastles, sticky sunburns and soda fountains. A world of Budweiser blankets, beach balls, and baby oil. Lemon juice blonds and bronze bad boys in ragtop Vettes. Pegged pants, pedal pushers, tight T-shirts and tighter tuber tops. Double-dips, double-fries, and foot longs. Moonlit walks, summer flings, and so sweet first kisses. A world of jitterbugging, jukeboxes, and projectile pukin purple Jesus. A world of sea oats, lifeguard stands and gaudy Coppertone billboards. A world of farmer-tan tourists in Jap flip-flops, and clip-on shades. A world of faces you loved for a week, a weekend, maybe just one starry sticky night.

Myrtle Beach was all that and then some.

And for bout eleven or twelve of us it.... It was home.