

Peaches Corner -- a lasting legacy

County honors Myrtle Beach restaurant

BY TOM O'DARE
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Ocean Boulevard in Myrtle Beach has seen a lot of changes over the years.

Ripley's sits where Sloppy Joe's used to serve up hot dogs and Bingo. The lights and sounds of the Pavilion vanished a decade ago.

But some things haven't changed.

One of those is Peaches Corner, a small restaurant that's occupied the intersection of Ninth Avenue North and Ocean Boulevard for almost 80 years.

The family-owned icon has served food at all hours of the day to generation after generation of visitors and locals, alike.

Recently, the Horry County Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation honored the restaurant by naming Peaches Corner a Legacy Business, a recognition bestowed on businesses that have made a lasting impression on the community and beyond for more than 50 years.

Mary Catherine Hyman, liaison for the board, presented the award to owner Pam Crutchfield and general manager Briggs Dickerson, a Conway native. Hyman said Peaches Corner has been one of the most recognized businesses in Myrtle Beach since it began in 1937.

"Visitors often use Peaches Corner as a means of giving directions on Ocean Boulevard," she said.

Crutchfield and son-in-law Dickerson talked about the history of the popular restaurant that's been in her family since 1943.

"It was started right here in 1937 by Peach Justice or Mama Peach as she was known to everybody in town," Crutchfield said. "There were actually three — this one and one in Folly Beach and Carolina Beach in North Carolina. This is the only one that's lasted since then."

Her parents Eunice and Johnny Burroughs purchased the small restaurant on the corner in 1943 and it's been in her family ever since.

And now three generations have served foot long hot dogs, cold beer and a variety of other foods to millions of customers who have sat along the same counter and booths watching folks walk up and down the boulevard.

For most of the years since the early '40s, Peaches Corner was part of the Myrtle Beach that thrived only during the summer months.

"It used to be that after Labor Day, you could lie down in the middle of Ocean Boulevard and not have to worry about getting run over," Dickerson laughed.

Up until the '80s, Crutchfield, who turned over the reins of running Peaches Corner to Dickerson a few years back, said you could get something to eat at the restaurant 24 hours a day.

She attributes the longevity of the restaurant to all the hard work her parents put in to make it a success.

"They worked hard to pay off the mortgage on the building," she said. "When other businesses struggled to pay rent during the tough times, ours was paid for."

And to do that meant everyone worked long hours during the summer months before the tourists went home.

"My parents worked here seven days a week during that time," she said. "In the summer, they even lived upstairs. My mother told the employees that nobody working here was allowed to get married or die during the summer."

Dickerson said the restaurant has played an important role in the lives of a lot of locals.

"Over the years, most locals who grew up in Myrtle Beach have either worked here, the Bowery next door or the Fun Plaza," he said.

Speaking of the Bowery, country super-group Alabama



TOM O'DARE / FOR THE HORRY INDEPENDENT

Peaches Corner general manager Briggs Dickerson, a Conway native, laughs it up with customers sitting at the counter that's attracted diners for more than 70 years at the popular Myrtle Beach restaurant.



The Horry County Board of Architectural Review and Historic Preservation recently designated Peaches Corner in downtown Myrtle Beach as a Legacy Business. This honor is given to businesses in the county that have been around for

more than 50 years and have been integral parts of the county's history. A ribbon-cutting ceremony marked the occasion.

made sure to mention Peaches Corner in its hit song, "Shaggin' On the Boulevard."

"Yeah, I knew the Alabama boys when they played next door for tips," Crutchfield said. "They were always in here getting a bite to eat."

The sign over the front door may be a little bigger and flashier than the one that sat atop the building some 70 years ago; but inside customers still belly up to the counter to get some good "beach" food or maybe a cold

one or two and to talk and laugh about everything in the world just like they did when Mama Peach first opened the

doors or when the boys from Alabama grabbed a hot dog and dreamed of someday becoming country stars.

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By: **Katie L. Brookshire**

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