

So I was trapped as I had been the whole of my life by financial problems. I lived quite a limited life and spent the little I had left over on necessities and a little bar time. Jacksonville had one disco accessible to the sailors by bus and it was an impressive set up. I think I got there once. The beaches were desolate during the winter, but they were easy to get too and spent sometime around there, but the pickings were slim in the female department and the population seemed to be poor drug prone types at the beach. Right outside the gate was a 'titty bar' as they are termed that featured young goodlooking strippers and cheap beer. The sailors paradise with no car and all, Jerry's had a couple of hundred customers a night. The routine was to get drunk and fantasize, that was my situation and the reality sunk in.

I was given to supply as a mess cook soon after I arrived and barely had my feet wet in the fireroom when I started that thirteen week ordeal. Everyone does that once in thier navy career. I got the honors when we went on a training cruise to Guantanamo Bay ,Cuba. the schedule was tortorous to say the least. Wet garbage for three hundred weighs alot. Which says little until you realize it is not thrown over the side in costal waters, but accumulated in a suitable place, places, until it can be dumped at shore. The mess cooks had to take the fifty to one hundred pound packages of garbage to the Helo garage and save it until we pulled in. So after starting the day at 4:30 am and breaking out food, washing dishes or keeping the mess decks, we hauled garbage at ten or eleven at night when the ship pulled in. If the drills didn't go to well the ship atayed out until they had caught up to thier training schedule, a couple of days running we were knocked off at 1:30 to 2:00 in the morning and roused back up at it at the regular mess cooks reville time. It makes a true difference in a persons physical makeup and psychology, there is no way around that. The whole Gitmo affair lasted six weeks. There were a couple of liberty breaks.

I mean only a couple . We took somewhere less than a week in Port Antonio, Jamaica. It is one of the true last places on earth. Ove the mountain from Kingston, it took time I didn't have and money to make it to the tourist spots. I'd get liberty at night and wasn't off of the ship more than once in that time before dark. I was so fortunate to take pictures off the ship and make one run during the day. There wasn't much to shoot anyway. The

town was of a poverty level I had never seen. The buildings were stark and undecorated and uninspired. They must have been built with tropical storms in mind. A majority of the downtown area was poured reinforced, thin, concrete; many places the reinforcement rods poked through. The frame dwellings and shops were all tumbled down looking and the pavements and walks were in a jumble of disrepair. The people dressed in warm weather wear. Women sundresses, the men dungarees and t-shirts. The professionals went for a sports wear look in general, but the population was mostly poor. I could see little of the middle class about on my ventures.

Within walking distance night clubs consisted of warm beer bars with a phonograph and reggae music. No ventilation or air conditioning. Street lighting was minimal. One hotdog stand