Jim’s Clam Bar
the early days of Wildwood

California’s Top Secret Recipe Revealed

Jim’s Clam Chowder

Ingredients
- 1/2 Gallon Clams with juice (37 medium/31 Large)
- 2 1/2 lbs. Potatoes
- 1 Lb. Onions
- Oil
- 1/4 stalk Celery
- 2 Carrots
- 1/4 tsp. Cayenne red Pepper
- 1 qt. Water (approx)
- 1 c. Flour

Directions
1. Dice Potatoes
2. Chop Carrots in blender.
3. Chop celery in blender.
4. Combine above ingredients with water in large pot and bring to a boil.
5. Chop onions in blender, drain juices, and saute in oil. Add to pot and cook for 10 minutes.
6. Add pepper.
7. Add ground clams. Bring to boil, stirring down until smooth. Scoop off foam.
8. Mix flour with a little water, stirring until there are no lumps.
9. Stir flour mixture into pot, remove from heat as soon as chowder comes to a boil.

Serves: 2 Gallons

“Nothing is more memorable than a smell. One scent can be unexpected, momentary and fleeting...”

Interview & Story
by Jessica Westerland

Jim Neill stirring up a pot of chowder

Inez Neill

When Snow’s factory moved farther away, Jim worked at Snow’s factory the rest of the year. Previously he was only open in the summer, and also sold half shells of clams, muscles, and oysters, and also bait and tackle.

Customers. He sold half shells of clams before. He usually made 16 gallons of chowder a day, sometimes more. “Tons of people from all over came down for my stews as well as the chowder, especially the old timers.”

For 32 year Jim’s Clam Bar prospered. He was written up in Philadelphia newspapers. Jim’s sister even told him a rumor was going around that Campbell’s soup took a sample, “but they just couldn’t get the potatoes to stay solid,” Jim laughed. “I had to close the next day as well, because there was nothing left to sell, I was cleaned out!”

The best day he ever had was one Memorial Day, when a nor'easter was blowing through. All of the people were forced indoor, and Jim sold 28 gallons of chowder, as well as other stews and 10,000 clams. Jim usually woke up at 4 a.m. to prepare the store, and was open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. He was closed by 3 in the afternoon. “I could have sold more, but I just didn’t have it,” Jim laughed. “I had to close the next day as well, because there was nothing left to sell, I was cleaned out!”

He closed a little after his wife’s stroke, and sold the house as well as Jim’s Clam Bar around 1986. Jim’s Clam Bar still stood there until a...
Jim’s Clam Bar

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few years ago around 2006, when it was torn
down to put up sets of new condominiums.

You can read about the history of Wildwood;
how it looked, what was happening, and what
businesses thrived in books, magazines, or on
T.V. We learn this way all of the time, even on
a daily basis. However, there is something more
personal about learning the past from some-
one that lived through it, by their stories. It
captures the imagination and lingers longer,
like stories we were told as children. This story
from a Wildwood local, about our Wildwood
locale, is no exception.

Behind Jim’s wife, Inez, is North Wildwood Blvd.

before it was completely changed in the 1990’s.

Jessica Westerland graduated Valedictorian of ACCC in 2007, and went on to Rowan University to graduate in 2009
with a Bachelor’s Degree in Journalism. She is enjoying her first freelance stint with The Sun. She is employed as a teller
with TD Bank in Wildwood. You may know her as ‘the girl with the long hair.’

Jim’s Clam Bar, Anglesea
Poem by David Hovan Check of Wildwood Crest, Spring 1978

From the collection “In Quest of the
Endless Vacation”, a poetic collage of
shore-resort life which David tries to
capture the heart & soul of some of the
more unique facets of the Jersey
Shore. Jim’s Clam Bar was one of those
special spots.

JIM’S CLAM BAR
Clams on the half-shell! Steamers! Stews!
Chowder that sticks to the soul!
And clams to go! By the bushel! . . . the dozen!
Little Neck! Cherrystone!
Clams! Clams! And nothing BUT clams!

Hewn
from the sweat and sinew
of one man’s simple vision,
clams raked
from the waters of a clean bay,
the frame
of home and shop,
both structure and demeanor,
constructed with
one, bare set of hands. . .

All the character and spirit
of an older, more rugged America,
of a place where
the pride of self-sufficiency
was once enough
to sustain a dream,

built
into the practical ambiance,
the raw wooden counter and stools,
the sacred chowder and stew recipes,
the mollusk bins
and congenial, self-taught service. . .

A rare marker
of a man
who took the lessons of the land
to heart,
and survived in an era
that valued
quiet achievement,
cool perseverance,
plain self-satisfaction,
and even courage.