

THE CAROUSEL

By: Cece Allman

ASBURY PARK– The Seventies

My favorite horse was the gleaming black stallion with the carmine red saddle and golden eyes. His partner was a lovely white Peruvian Paso mare, bedecked in turquoise and gold blankets and sequins. They were located two rows behind the painted swans...

The summer was almost to an end. So was the resort era of the New Jersey seaside town of Asbury Park. The carousel would never start up again, her calliope silent, her horses dismantled and sold off to collectors. The sweet smell of cotton candy and Madame Marie's booth would be just memories to those of us who thought of them as constants in our lives.

But, for those of us who worked in the bars and hotels and lounges along the Jersey shore, if we didn't drink and had an ABC card, we could still work. The Sunshine Inn, Stoned Pony and the Student Prince were home for many of us not only on stage, but after hours, too. Long hair, bell bottoms and flashy vests, I kept to myself, mostly. Except when we played music – Southside Johnny, Bruce Springsteen and various other musicians all gathered after the gigs were done to jam. And jam we did. We saw a lot of sunrises from the doorway of the Stoned Pony, I can tell you.

