

1965 - Lloyd Smith Turns On, Tunes In, and Drops Out

Lloyd, in stark contrast to his brother Floyd, had no inclination toward the military. While Floyd embarked on his service adventure, Lloyd was ensconced in Los Angeles, attending college. His defiant stance against the draft was bold and unequivocal – he symbolically burned his draft card. When the inevitable draft notice arrived in 1965, Lloyd did everything in his power to be declared unfit for service. His stratagem was as unconventional as his anti-establishment beliefs.

Arriving at his draft hearing under the influence of psychedelic mushrooms, Lloyd spun a fantastical narrative. He claimed a lingering brain concussion from a childhood motorcycle accident, disrupted the proceedings with erratic form-filling, and even refused to partake in the aptitude tests. The result? A classification of 4-F, rendering him ineligible for military service. With that, Lloyd

abandoned his college pursuits and sought refuge in the desert north of Palm Springs.



Anti-war tensions were at a fever pitch in Los Angeles in the late 1960s.

Lloyd Smith was in the center of all the protest action and while Lloyd supported his brother's decision to serve at the beginning of the conflict, by the end of the decade he was actively opposed to the U.S. involvement in Viet Nam.

In this unconventional desert haven, Lloyd immersed himself in the burgeoning hippie community that had taken root near Joshua Tree. This sunbaked sanctuary attracted musicians and artists from Los Angeles, and Lloyd swiftly cultivated friendships with many of them, long before they ascended to fame.

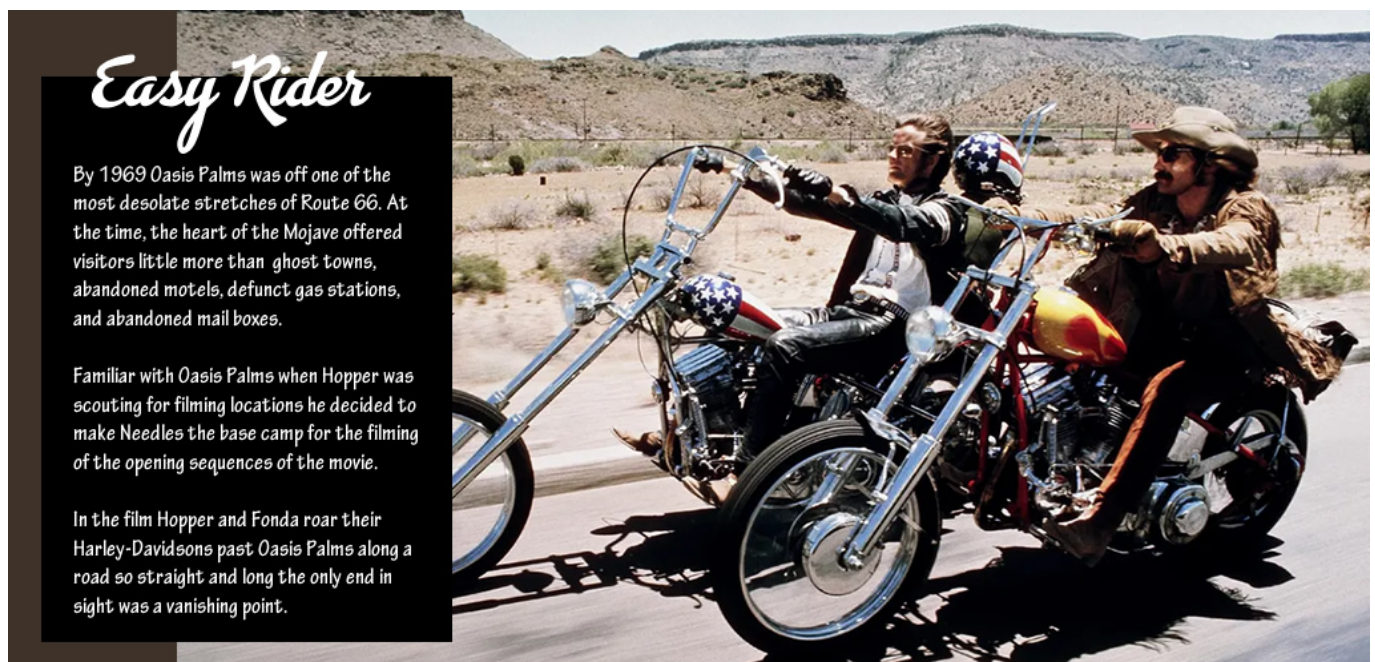
Lloyd's crowning moment in the annals of hippie pop culture occurred during the Palm Springs Pop Festival in 1969. He crossed paths with the infamous Timothy Leary, thanks to his friendship with Gram Parsons. Securing a gig as a temporary roadie for the Flying Burrito Brothers, courtesy of Parsons, Lloyd was able

to attend the festival without charge. On the inaugural day of the event, Timothy Leary witnessed Lloyd's audacious ascent up a ladder to alter the marquee sign of the Palm Springs Drive-In, renaming it the "Palm Springs Pot Festival." This daring act, performed seemingly without fear, left a lasting impression on Leary, leading to an enduring friendship and many shared "trips" in the future.

In the late '60s, Lloyd seamlessly integrated himself into the burgeoning rock music scene, becoming a fixture among the Laurel Canyon musicians. His circle of friends and acquaintances read like a who's who of rock and roll royalty: Cass Elliot of the Mamas & the Papas, Joni Mitchell, Frank Zappa, Jim Morrison of The Doors, Carole King, The Byrds, Gram Parsons, Buffalo Springfield, Canned Heat, John Mayall, Glenn Frey and the members of The Eagles, Love, Neil Young, Brian Wilson of The Beach Boys, James Taylor, Jackson Browne, J. D. Souther, Judee Sill, Linda Ronstadt and Stone Poneys, Ned Doheny, Bonnie Raitt, Linda Ronstadt, Harry Nilsson, and Micky Dolenz & Peter Tork of The Monkees, to name but a few.

Lloyd's frequent haunt during this period was

Cass Elliot's residence, a renowned party hub in Laurel Canyon, where music legends and Hollywood luminaries gathered for all-night, drug-fueled soirées. He adopted the role of the unofficial desert tour guide, leading his friends on spiritual journeys to Joshua Tree and Oasis Palms to commune with the cosmos.



It was also during this time that Lloyd forged a friendship with Dennis Hopper, a connection he later asserted played a pivotal role in convincing Hopper to shoot parts of his iconic movie, "Easy Rider," on Route 66 near Oasis Palms. The movie's opening sequence features Hopper and Peter Fonda cruising through the Mojave, with the Colorado River crossing just beyond Oasis Palms.

After the tragic passing of Gram Parsons in Joshua Tree in the autumn of 1973, Lloyd returned to Oasis Palms full-time. For the ensuing decade, he devoted the majority of his leisure hours to painting, indulging in carefree skinny-dips in the oasis pools, and partaking in leisurely cannabis sessions with an ever-rotating cast of friends and acquaintances, all of whom flocked to visit him in Oasis Palms. Lloyd's vision took shape as he transformed the Cliff Hanger trailer park into a hippie commune, affectionately christened the "Narrow Escape Campgrounds." Lloyd resided in a single-wide trailer home within its confines until circumstances necessitated its departure from Oasis Palms in 1980.