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Vol. III, No. 9

Key West, Florida

October, 1978



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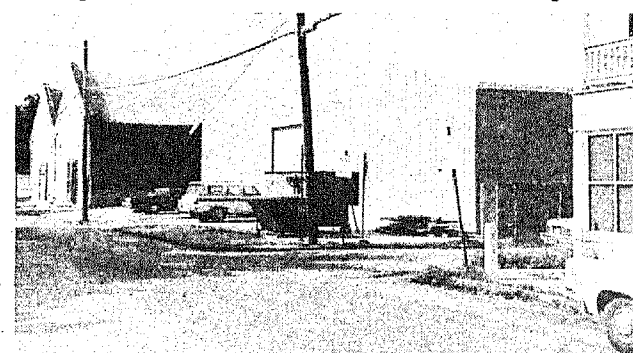
From the Editor

Hello --

THE LADY at the Good Will store on Duval Street, Mrs. Kelly, asked that the people who bring things to the Good Will box at Neisner's to please only bring things that will fit in the box. Goods left outside the box get damaged by the rains and get strewn around. I used to pick up the goods there for the Good Will, and I know that a wet mattress is not desirable, and that often other large pieces were scavenged or scattered about.

I WAS SORRY to hear that Molly, Sheriff "Billy" Freeman's friendly old dog, died the other day. Molly had had a giant litter of pups some years ago which was noted by the press at the time, and she was long a familiar and happy face to be seen in the Eaton/William Street neighborhood.

I'M KIND OF dismayed by the looks of this giant warehouse erected by Key West Handprint on Simonton Street. As you can



see from the photo, it has the same general shape as those fine old brick buildings next to it, but, at present anyway, it is very out-of-keeping with many of the handsome buildings in the area. There are plans to gingerbread it somewhat, and maybe this will help.

IT WOULD BE NICE if the candidates who are no longer in the running or who have been elected would take down their signs. Too often Key West has signs of

candidates posted long after the races are over.

IT IS VERY NICE to hear that a restaurant that will be open all day is going into the old Kress building. The lunch counter at Kress' was a very popular meeting place for years. With the planned renovation of the La Concha Hotel and the nice things happening to the Kress building, it will be a plus for that corner of Duval Street.

HEY, I don't think that we are ever going to get an article on the ambulance situation in Key West. It is just one of those articles that won't jell, but don't give up all hope yet.

WELL, we have a small victory. In my suit against the townhouse construction on Rest Beach by Carl Rongo, Inc., I won a final judgement that refuses him permission to continue his townhouse development unless he obtains a special exception from the Board of Adjustment of the City of Key West. Even though the City Commissioners (with the exception of Commissioner Weekley) refused to consider the townhouse project by Vincent Caselles a townhouse project, the Rongo townhouse development is now officially defined as a townhouse development, and it has to follow procedures set up for such a development.

SEE YOU in November.

WJ

Cover artist this time is Richard Silverman. Richard is the owner of the Herb Garden store on Southard Street.

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With a little help from our friends . . .

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CARL DEAN

by Phoebe Coan

photo by Richard Marsh

CARL'S BEEN ON the Key West music scene for a long time now. Music has been his first love, and ever since he can remember, he has been drumming with silverware while listening to the radio. He had always expressed that desire. "I just felt a natural inclination from within," he claims. "I don't think artists are made, they're born."

"My parents didn't have much to do with it. I was just born to do it. They said, 'Go be a doctor or a schoolteacher.' They didn't understand. As a young teenager I was on my own in Charleston, finding it out."

"It was my grandfather who did understand. He told them to let me do it and got me my first set of drums. He took me to a music store on Duval Street and told me to pick out what I wanted."

CARL'S GRANDDAD, George, came from the Bahamas at the age of 28. He put on minstrel shows and did some singing. He was the first Black man to have a horse and buggy around town, and was also into the grocery business, trucks and wrecking. Carl worked on the trucks with him.

Carl, Key West bred, was one of ten children born of George Jr. and Valderine Dean. He has many relatives in town, but has cultivated his own musician's lifestyle.

Carl played with the school band, but ended up studying with William McKenzie. His cousin, John Higgins, was a drummer with a band on weekends with McKenzie. Carl, then 16, loved dancing, and so he went. During the band's break he stepped up to take a turn, and ended up with an invitation to play with the man.

The following weekend Carl was cleaning windows after school, and McKenzie came to where he was working and told him to come and play with him that night. He promised to teach Carl what he didn't know. Carl ended up being under his tutelage for 3 years.

"When you come out from under him it's like having been in any conservatory."

THEN CARL went to Miami with Nature Boy, a guitarist from a spot called Bubba Jack's. Carl sat in with him and hung out in Miami for quite a few years thereafter. He became a drop-in student at the University of Miami, and filled in any other gaps in his musical education through Pops Archie, a jazzman. He was also with Bill Peoples, another drummer. He played in places up there like the Sir John Lounge and the Mary Elizabeth Lounge.

Carl began to realize what he always intuitively knew, which was that the happiest moment in life for him was when he was playing -- or when he was with a lady. "Playing drums is like being with

a beautiful woman," he says. "The music goes hand in hand with the spiritual."



Carl at the Pier House

"When I work some gigs, it's for the money I need to survive. And sometimes the money doesn't matter -- just the music."

AFTER CARL'S mother died, he came back to Key West, being no great fan of city life. He worked around and was with many different musicians and groups.

Carl played in many places in Key West then. Places no longer here such as: the Top Hat, Regular Fellows, Jungle Bar, Rudy's, Midget, Anchor Inn, All That Jazz and Cecil Bain's Club 21. He says the happiest musical periods of his career were in the early 60's, when he played with the Larry Vance Quintet and the Mellowtones. He even did a stint for Record World on Duval Street, peddling the sounds that way. (Record World, I can attest, was a brief but colorful institution for the young people of Key West. You could go there to listen, dance, perhaps to buy.)

CARL WAS OUT in California for a couple of years and had a chance to be with various players. There was Kenny Burrell and just as many unknown musicians, who were as good as those known. He was there after The Haight and lived in the same house with Bobby Hutchinson (played vibes).

At 38, Carl feels he is still developing, playing with other musicians. "We get each other high up there, when we play together," he says. "It is a communication that grows from experience."

CARL LIKES TO PLAY with his eyes closed. This way he is picking up and sending out messages (like a ham operator). It is akin to what was represented in the movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Here, in the final scenes, the Martians land after being contacted by musical notes from a great xylophone. The universal language (music) is expressing a universal truth (love). The peace, well being and immediate understanding are experienced and passed on even to the observers.

"Carl has a good wrist. He keeps it going," says an old friend who has watched him play many times.

"You forget your worries when you play. You paint a picture...Try to get a message across," says Carl.

"I have played dance music, but I prefer others to see what's going into my music. If they're dancing they don't see the creative thing going in the music."

"The music itself is a God-given gift. That's where it comes from. With a group sometimes, improvisations become very dynamic."

"Also, I feel that if a drummer takes time to sing, it takes away from the actual force of the music. Some can do it. I just like to be able to close my eyes and cook. The voice is another instrument."

"Now I'm into jazz and jazz rock type music; but actually, I'm into all

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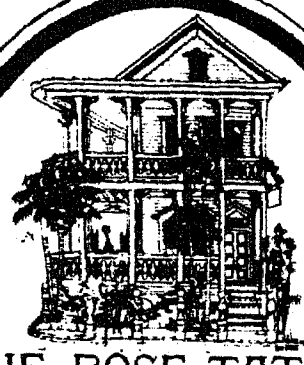
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of it. I can go either way."

CARL'S FAVORITE composers are people like Quincy Jones, Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Thelonius Monk, to name a few. (I can remember hearing some of these people playing at 63rd and Cottage Grove around Chicago 17 years ago. And I would say Carl is a smooth rendition here of his own kind. He's a very good, polished drummer. He's got that beat.)

AS FOR growing up here on the island, Carl says he likes the slow pace. "But the musical outlet isn't that much. I like not having to worry about a car to get around, things like that. I like the waters. The somewhat free spirit that it used to have -- that's fading from Key West. That's in the air of a place, and I miss it very much."

"Downtown people get to be like New York City or something. The lifestyle is too sophisticated for Key West."

AS TO the state of music today, Carl feels "it's good and it's bad. It just depends on whose you're hearing. But there's not enough live music in Key West. Too much disco, which is sloppy, emotional stuff. Music should be uplifting to the soul."

"I'd like to see a series of jazz concerts started here in town. The Bull gets the only decent action right now. We need more places."

"The club owners need to open their minds up to live music...to take a chance. At least on the weekends there are enough local people around to support it."

"I like to hear Sambo and Dwight play the congas at Sunset," says Carl. There has always been a colorful influx here of street musicians.

HE HAS PLAYED with Dick Wilson and

Sandy Allen from Band of Fools. He has been playing with John McGahee, the trumpet player, at the Pier House for many weeks now. He will be moving on to a new place, Vito Scargetti's, with this group on Duval Street the second week in October. He's also spent a lot of time with Coffee Butler ("Solid with talent") on and off for ten years.

THROUGH THE YEARS, there have been many musicians such as Edwar Weech, Warren and Bobby Lowe, Shana La Verne, "Miller," Robert Butler, Harry Chipchase, etc., with whom Carl has collaborated to keep people listening, feeling and stomping as well.

FUTURE PROJECTIONS for Carl's group, Wind Song, include the group going to Washington D.C., where Dick Wilson, pianist, plans to study for a doctorate and Carl plans to learn piano. "We're both interchangeable, yet truly individual," says Dick of his musically telepathic relationship with Carl.

"A true musician dedicates himself to his music, and there is no other satisfaction like it. This is a oneness -- almost an addiction -- more important than yourself," Wilson said.

"If you are playing you are being natural. You have to give it all, and this is a very demanding thing. But it is a demand that you love and need to fulfill."

THEY AGREE THAT, like love, music keeps life from being colorless and dull. When the music flows, life flows within. A friend told me once, "When you haven't been listening to music, it's like you've been away from where it's at."

some remarks

IN OUR special election issue last month, *Solares Hill* again backed candidates for public office in the Monroe County area. Our endorsement meant that we were unanimous in our approval of the candidate, and our preference meant that there was some hesitation about our all-out support, but that we felt that the candidate was the more favored by our group.

There are just three seats with which we will be dealing this issue for the run-off on October 5. They are State Senator, District 40; County Commissioner, District 4; and the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, District 1.

FOR STATE SENATOR, District 40, we were strongly behind Mike Simonhoff.



Simonhoff, who finished third in this race just behind local candidate Jack Spottswood, has publicly pledged his total support to Spottswood in his run-off against Dick Anderson. We like many of Spottswood's feelings on issues, and he is our preferred candidate in this race.

FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONER, District 4, we wholeheartedly endorse Jerry Shipley. To quote from last month's paper "we think



that he (Jerry Shipley) has been one of the finest commissioners that we have had in the Keys," and we still feel the same.

FOR THE FCAA seat in District 1, we fully backed new-comer Bob Archer, but he lost out to Ed Jackson for the run-off. We said about Jackson in September's issue, "Ed Jackson has previously impressed us with his independence of decision and his aggressiveness for that which he believes." We might add at this point that when Jackson was on the Utility Board, he sounded the alarm about future problems that would beset City Electric unless proper maintenance procedures were followed. They weren't, of course, and we all know what happened. We prefer Ed Jackson for this seat with the FCAA.

THERE IS GOING TO BE a raffle to aid the newly formed Stock Island-Key. Some Remarks continued on page 18

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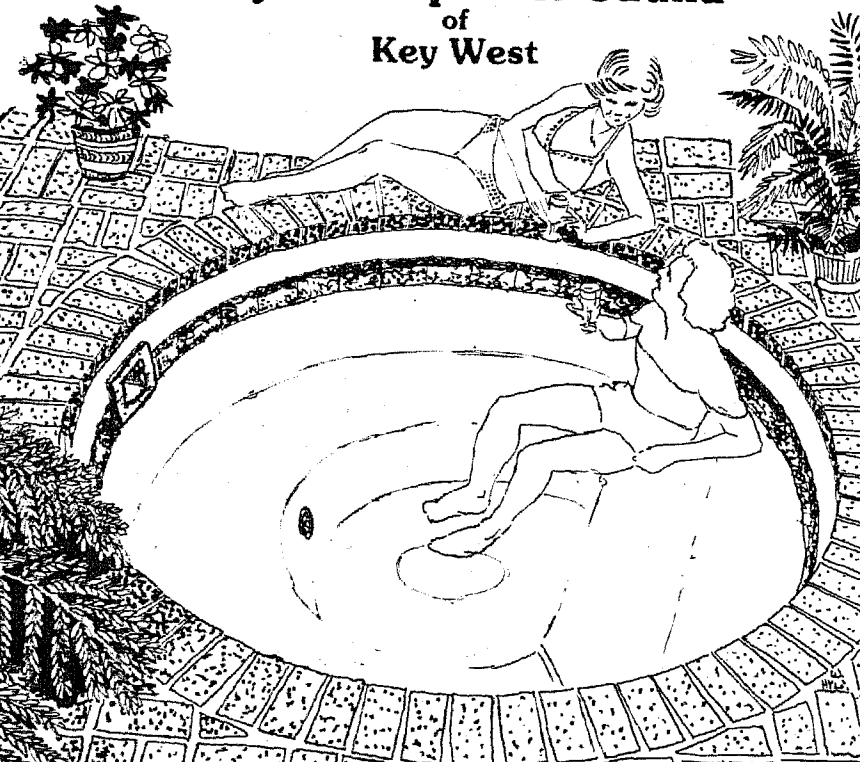
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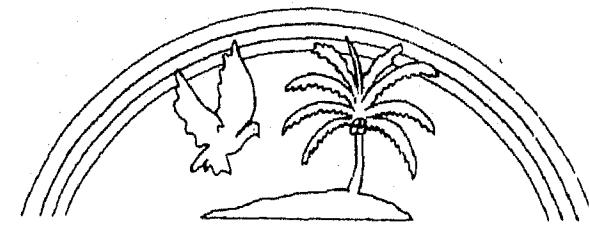
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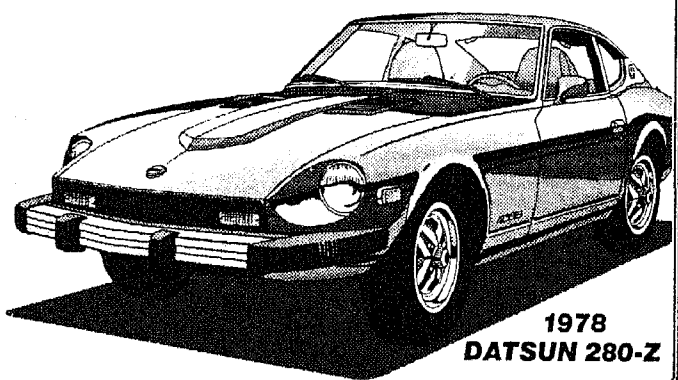
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notes and antic-dotes

by Dorothy Raymer

THE COLOR SCHEME of a new paddy wagon "acquired" by the Key West Police Department intrigues me. It's a maroon and white job with a blue bubble light atop. I asked what the inside was like, but my informant didn't know. I'll bet it isn't any more comfortable in the interior than police vans were years ago. I know from personal experience.

Now before I get into this part in The Dire Episodes of Dorothy (like the Perils of Pauline), let me give the prelude.

ACCORDING TO official record, when Harry S. Truman was President of the United States, he spent eleven working vacations on the island, staying on the Naval Station at the Little White House. His arrivals were always signaled by an advance squad of Secret Service men, who filtered into town in advance of the main Presidential party, and scouted the area.

More of the SS agents accompanied Truman's retinue. They protected the President, his family, and any VIPs around the clock.

THERE WAS A Cuban-American resident who delighted in entertaining the Secret Service men and the special U.S. Marines on duty. The host and hostess always provided a lavish Cuban-style feast at their home. Since the governmental watchdogs could never be present all at the same time, arrangements were made so that the honored guests could attend the festivity in relays.

Preparation for the festivity began in early morning. A suckling pig was put on a spit to roast over a trench-pit dug in the back yard. The pork was cooked all day, basted at regular intervals. All sorts of Cuban dishes, plain and fancy, were also on the list: paella, arroz con pollo, frijoles negros, piccadillo, yucca, and on through to flan and tropical fruit served on ice.

As for drinks, an amazing array of cocktails and frothy rum concoctions were dispensed from an outside bar on the grounds, as well as from a bar set up in the dining room near the buffet table.

I ARRIVED for the second phase of the evening escorted by a lieutenant in the Navy whom I had known for several years. He was aboard a visiting destroyer, which was here for Truman's visit. Luke, his nickname, had once been stationed in Key West and was well known to most of the politicians and other military officers present at the fete.

As the evening became night, the food was consumed at an appreciative rate, so the hostess brought on a huge turkey, which had to be carved. My escort volunteered to perform the task and did so with professional skill. The hostess was so grateful that she and her husband presented him with a bottle of aged, rare brandy.

Luke was elated with all the compliments and generously offered to share the brandy, which he had opened. Since most of the crowd had been quaffing rum, only two or three sipped some of the fine liquor, but Luke began nipping frequently. I couldn't pry him away from his scene of triumph for nearly two hours. By that time it was past midnight and the party was breaking up.

I HAD WORN a long-skirted evening gown, since we had planned to go dancing at Fort Taylor. Luke was not in uniform, having donned a pair of dark slacks and shirt. Under the circumstances, I thought it best to forget any further expeditions for the night. In fact, I even suggested getting a taxi and leaving the car

where we had parked it near the site of the party.

But Luke's machismo had ballooned, and he insisted that was insulting him. Rather than stir up his antagonism in front of so many people, I got into the ancient black Packard he had borrowed, and we set out on a somewhat erratic course for my cottage near the crest of Solares Hill (ah, coincidence!), around the corner from Weintraub's grocery store where Angela Street joins Elizabeth.

THERE HAD BEEN a rash of prowlers in the vicinity, so there were police lookouts posted in the neighborhood. One of them stood watch from a second story balcony at the store. Of course we were unaware of this vigilance, or of the accompanying police van nearby.

We pulled up on Angela Street in front of my place, and Luke jockeyed to park the big car in a space too small for it. He started to make room by backing against the front of an auto parked behind him. In so doing, he banged into the other vehicle, creating a loud noise in the still night.

The sound of the contact alerted "the law."

By the time I climbed out of the front seat and reached the safety (I thought) of the sidewalk, only a few yards from my own front door, I was converged upon by two burly cops, one from the patrol wagon which had swung around the corner, and the other who had come down from the store balcony.

THE PATROLMAN approached the Packard. Luke was still behind the wheel and the motor was running, so he couldn't claim he was parked and not driving.

"Let's see your driver's license," demanded the cop, leaning in the car window. Luke hauled out his wallet and searched it to no avail. Then he shuffled the contents of the glove compartment. Still no license.

He mumbled, "I must have left it in my other trousers aboard ship."

By that time, the policeman had evidently got a strong whiff of Luke's brandy-scented breath. He ordered Luke out of the car. Unfortunately the bottle of brandy rolled out on the street from the car floor. The bottle was about a third full. The policeman retrieved it and announced, "How's that for positive evidence?" He reached in and removed the ignition keys, then again ordered Luke out of the car.

THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED with complaints and great effort, until Luke stood teetering back and forth on the road. He was nudged to the sidewalk beside me. There he assumed an arrogant attitude and intoned, "Do you happen to know who I am? I am a naval officer and I demand release."

I kicked Luke in the ankle and warned, "Shut up!" I didn't know the cops, but I could sense the rising antagonism between Luke and his captors.

The patrolman asked, "What did you say?" He glared at me. "I said 'Shut up,' sir, but I meant it for Luke, not you," I replied.

The policeman snorted, and brandished his nightstick. He gestured toward the waiting Black Maria and commanded "Get in! Both of you!"

THE BACK DOORS were swung wide, and we climbed the mounting steps to enter the dark interior. Inside there were two long, wooden benches lining the sides of the wagon. The seats were smooth, hard and slippery. There were no hand grips. When the doors were slammed shut, the driver started off with a lurch, and we slid halfway down the bench toward the front of the van.

It was almost pitch black inside. We couldn't see out, but from the tilt of the vehicle I realized we were going down Angela toward Duval Street.

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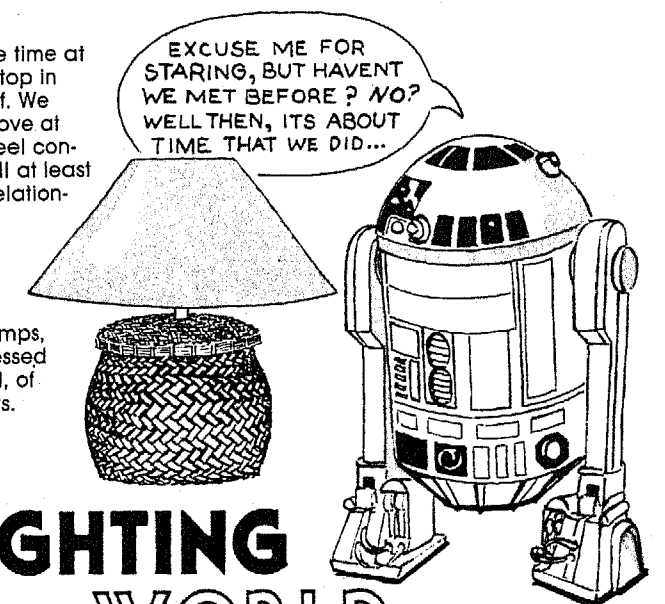
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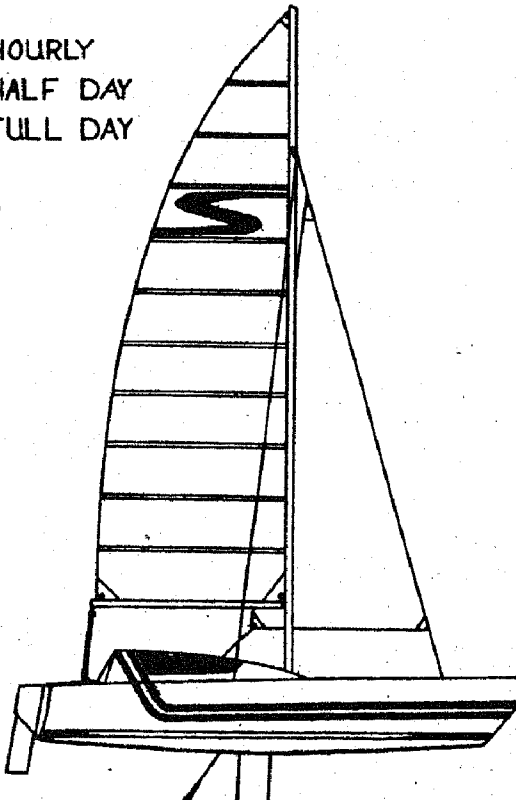
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WE SLID along the seats toward the front, then back again as the wagon came to an abrupt halt. The rear doors were yanked open, and I could glimpse just enough of the outside setting to know we had stopped alongside the Tropics, a rowdy night spot, corner of Angela and Duval Streets. It's now the site of the highly respectable Lowell C. Restaurant.

Within seconds, a mob of white-hat sailors appeared, shoved along by members of the Shore Patrol. Evidently, they had been fighting, for their uniforms were in disarray, and faces looked battered, but they were in a laughing mood as they stumbled aboard and fell onto the benches.

One young serviceman leered at me, shoved his round hat over an eye and saluted. "Hi, Babe!" he said.

AT THAT POINT Luke assumed his officer's dignity and retorted, "How dare you speak to her like that? She is a lady!"

The sailor grinned and retorted, "Yeah? Well, then, what's she doing in the paddywagon?"

"You've got a point there, Bubba," I said as the van jolted off, all the "inmates" slipping and sliding on the slippery seats.

A guard was balanced on the van steps for the rest of the journey, and as the doors were slightly ajar, I could see out along the route. We rattled on to our destination, the Old City Hall at Ann Street and Greene.

Police department offices were on street level, and we were just a stone's throw from *The Key West Citizen* office. I hoped none of my staff colleagues were hanging around the locality. I thought that I might be able to ease into headquarters undetected, if you will excuse the expression.

SMALL CHANCE of that! The wagon doors were slammed wide open, and the

sailors scrambled out, then formed a double line through which I was obliged to pass. They bowed in ragged array and made comments such as "Make way for her ladyship," and "Royal escorts at your service."

I decided I might as well face the situation with humor. Assuming a mock haughty pose, I gathered up the hem of my gown and swept regally into the station.

In the outer office I recognized the police lieutenant on desk duty. He looked shocked as he saw me and exclaimed, "What are you doing here?"

GLAD TO SEE a member of the force with whom I was acquainted, I launched into hurried explanation about saying "shut-up" to my date, but not to the arresting officer.

The desk official studied me for a few seconds. "Okay. You can wait in the Chief's office," he said. I was ushered into the adjacent room with a noisy background sendoff from the sailors. Comments included, "Bye-bye, Queenie, give 'em the royal what for!" and "Good night, your ladyship," plus some bawdy remarks which don't bear repeating.

I WAITED for at least a half hour while the booking process went on in the outer office. The door was half open and I could see and hear what was going on. The "disorderly dozen" were relegated to shore patrol control.

Then the assistant to the Chief of Police came into the inner room. He said, "I want you to witness this."

Luke was brought in glaring and belligerent by a city policeman. The chief's assistant said, "Now watch this closely. We give a few tests to determine degree of intoxication."

First, he tossed a dime on the floor and ordered Luke to pick it up. Luke, who had sobered up a little, sneered and snarled, "Make it a fifty-cent piece and maybe I will." He added, "I can't walk

a straight line, either, so don't bother to have me try. So what's next?"

A balloon "breathalyzer" test, that's what! But that didn't come off either. Luke was so inebriated he failed to blow up the balloon used in the process.

THE DETECTIVE in charge of the demonstration pointed out with heavy sarcasm, "Your lieutenant claims he forgot his license. Let me tell you, he has a record of repeated drunken driving, and his license was suspended for a year. That was several months ago."

So it was back to the drunk tank for Luke, and a police officer was assigned to drive me home.

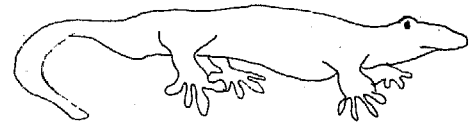
AS WE LEFT the station I spotted a Navy security officer and managed to tell him about Luke's plight. I suggested he should get in touch with the executive officer of Luke's ship, since I thought things were going to be tough for Luke. I learned later that this was done.

Within a few days, Luke was transferred to San Diego.

No story concerning the bizarre episode was printed in the newspaper, for which I was thankful.

A LONG TIME after the experience was all over, I couldn't resist inserting a cryptic line in my column, "Conch Chowder." It was merely an oblique reference on a list of items due for city improvement.

"Recommended: better padded paddy-wagons."



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Northside Drive by Mack Dryden

ALMOST \$100,000 has already been spent on the Northside Drive repaving project, so with 15 per cent of the job completed there's no turning back. However, we promised our readers back in June that we'd try to find out why the county commission accepted a bid that was \$240,000 higher than the county engineers estimated it would be.

Not surprisingly, considering the Monroe County Commission is involved, our question triggered personal insinuations and charges, some of them aimed at us for "making trouble" over something we can't change now.

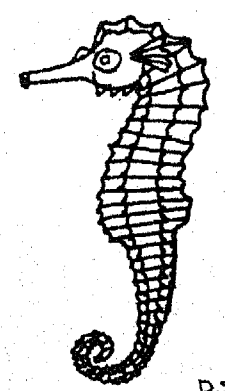
BRIEFLY, what happened was that in May, Charley Toppino and Sons, Inc. submitted the only bid for the project. Toppino's bid was \$720,000, which shocked the commission and the consulting engineering firm of Post-Buckley, Schuh and Jernigan, who designed the project and estimated it would cost a mere \$481,000. By the now-traditional 3-2 vote -- with the Key West commissioners outvoting Middle and Upper Keys commissioners Shipley and Schloesser -- the bid was accepted. Shortly thereafter, the county and the contractor sat down and hammered out a new contract that trimmed \$100,000 off the price without significantly affecting the quality of the job.

HOW? ONE MIGHT ASK. The answer explains a lot, including what could be one reason behind the commission's replacement of Post-Buckley -- which had been the county's consulting engineering firm for 16 years -- with the firm of Reynolds, Smith and Hills. The switch was a little-noticed event that could very well have a noticeable impact on the "style" of roadbuilding in the Keys.

No reason was given for Post-Buckley's sudden termination, but when asked why he thought his firm was ousted, the


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Post-Buckley spokesman said, "Maybe a grand jury could find out."

Although Post-Buckley had the job of overseeing and inspecting the Northside Drive project, they resigned when their contract with the county was not renewed. "We were placed in an untenable position," the spokesman said.

It was no secret that Post-Buckley made several mistakes in the design of the project, one of which involved a large mistake in cost. For example the county and contractor negotiators were able to trim \$58,000 from Toppino's price because Post-Buckley's design mistakenly called for 10,000 feet of curbs and gutters when only 4,200 feet are required. Another \$35,000 was saved by dropping Post-Buckley's recommendation for using a special skid-resistant surface that is usually used on highways with faster traffic (Northside Drive's speed limit is 30 mph). The rest of the savings were due to non-physical changes such as a time extension, the re-routing of traffic during construction, and using the contractor's own surveyors.

"IN MY OPINION it was over-designed," said Commissioner Jerry Hernandez, the man Shipley and Post-Buckley say was primarily responsible for the engineering changeover.

"If Post-Buckley could build it for \$400,000, I'd encourage them to go into construction," said Hernandez. "But you won't get quality roads unless you pay quality prices. It's easy to say that the county could build it for less, but what you get are inferior, low-quality roads. I don't like the prices of roads today, either, but the county has to get out of the road-building business and give it to professional people. And the longer you keep stalling these projects because of negative thinking, the more you shoot up the price."

HE SAID he voted to accept the bid because it was the only one submitted and Northside Drive was a "priority

item" that was "four years overdue." He said he voted to switch engineers because it was "time for a change" and that of the proposals the commission received from other engineers, "Post-Buckley didn't even come in second."

Commissioner Jerry Shipley said, "I can understand a job running 10 or 15 per cent over, but this one was way over what is normal (42 per cent higher than the estimate -- Ed.). I think our board's action was irresponsible. When you spend money that's in excess of what's essential it means something else suffers and you're ignoring the needs of others."

MEANWHILE, a spokesman for Reynolds, Smith and Hills said that "having experienced the realities of (the construction business) down here, I don't have any reason to believe that the final contract price is significantly out of line."

While being careful not to cast aspersions on Post-Buckley, Robert Connelly of the consulting firm said he thinks there was "some cloudiness in the plans" and that the \$100,000 was lopped off the bid price "without affecting the quality of the project hardly at all." Of Post-Buckley's \$58,000 miscalculation, Connelly said, "With a project that big you're bound to have some mistakes. It happens to all of us." He said he thinks the change of road surface -- while sacrificing some skid-resistance -- will actually give the road "greater structural quality" and be just as durable as the one recommended.

CONNELLY SAID the work on the storm drains -- now completed -- went much slower than expected because of the density of the subsurface material. "Trenching in that rock is tough, and it took him a lot longer than he's anticipated," he said, "so that was an expense he didn't count on."

Commissioner Shipley volunteered that he thought Connelly was "a straight

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shooter" and that he agreed that the project "will probably be more than adequate" with the changes.

STILL, ONE COULD reasonably ask why the project is costing so much. Bob Harris of Post-Buckley, contacted in Homestead, said that only Toppino can answer that. "We admit that we may have been low on a couple of items," said Harris, "but we felt there was too vast a spread to be that low." He said his firm used up-to-date Florida Department of Transportation standards and prices to calculate the cost, and that the "area differential" caused by Key West's isolation was figured in. "There was still quite a spread," he said, "so we couldn't justify recommending action on the bid."

FOR INSTANCE, Post-Buckley allowed \$4,000 for "clearing and grubbing" because, said Harris, "There's already a road there. There's just not that much to do." Toppino's unit price for clearing and grubbing was \$48,000.

Post-Buckley allowed \$5 per cubic yard for the estimated 2,600 yards to be removed in regular excavation. Toppino's price was \$18.50 per cubic yard.

The engineers estimated that "final dressing," such as cleanup and removing construction materials, would cost only \$398. Toppino charged \$11,400.

Two manholes that Post-Buckley said should cost only \$4,000 each had a price tag of \$7,400 each on them in Toppino's bid.

FRANK TOPPINO, president of Charley Toppino & Sons, said he was somewhat surprised at the outcry, because the state Department of Transportation estimated the job at \$600,000 two years ago and even allotted that much money for it before deciding to postpone the project. "I can't base my figures on public sentiment, anyway," said Toppino. "It's mathematical. There's a dollar value on everything, and I can either

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do a job for a certain amount or I can't."

Toppino said Post-Buckley underestimated the cost of the job. "It's a real dirty job," he said, "with numerous utilities involved. I think it says something about the job, when we were the only ones fool enough to bid it."

Commenting on the cost cuts and the quality of the road, Toppino said, "We haven't cheapened the job by anybody's standards."

I THINK

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And now that I am twenty-five
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That nothing held my weight,
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I've fallen with my fate.

To stand alone below the ground
So low the walls are wet,
To drag myself up to the top,
And never once forget
That love is there and all around,
Somewhere, somehow, someday.
This love is here in front of you,
A light that's here to stay.

Somehow I've lived here long enough
To see and be a part
Of all there is and what will be.
I've learned much from the start.

by Jimmie Joe Gibson

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editorial

by Richard Marsh

WHO WILL POLICE THE POLICE?

SINCE THE poet Juvenal said it 1900 years ago, although in a different context, people have asked, "Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?" -- "Who will guard the guards themselves?" -- and they have directed the question to the matter of police corruption.

One could almost write an editorial on police corruption by quoting from Juvenal: "Honesty is commended, and starves;" "No one ever reached the climax of vice at one step."

NO ONE DISLIKES a crooked cop more than an honest one, because any scandal that touches the police department soils every policeman by the suspicion that is created in the minds of the citizens. "The policeman is your friend," we learned in second grade ... but sometimes only for the right price, we discover as we grow up and learn to be cynical.

THE KEY WEST POLICE DEPARTMENT is reeling from a one-two punch of recent scandals. First, there was the matter of Sergeant Bennett, who was only fired when he stole or caused the theft of a sum of money that was entrusted to him and which he put in his locker against the rules of police procedure. This was such a blatant act of irresponsibility that the police department was too embarrassed to keep him on the force any longer.

But this was only the latest in a long series of misdeeds, derelictions in duty, and dangerous and improper actions that have been attributed to Bennett for too many years. He should have been fired long ago.

THERE ARE MANY good arguments for the legalization of marijuana, but as long as the weed remains illegal there will be smugglers and cops on the take. We don't know at this point if the four city police officers who have been implicated in last month's interrupted smuggling attempt were engaged in their first illegal venture or one more in a series of steps to "the climax of vice."

One can wander into a discussion of how bad is marijuana and how bad is smuggling marijuana, especially in a community which has prided itself on its heritage of rum-running (after all, "decent" people drank during Prohibition) and filibustering, that is, the smuggling of arms, supplies, and volunteer and mercenary soldiers to liberate Cuba from a series of dictators. And if you compare smells while walking down a Key West street and a street in another city, it becomes obvious that marijuana is in popular use here.

BUT AWAY FROM the consideration of the legality of the victimless "crime" of dealing in or using marijuana, there is the question of what the citizens of a city, state, or country should be able to expect from the officials who are entrusted with the enforcement of the laws that those citizens -- wisely or unwisely -- have democratically ordered to be enacted and enforced.

A policeman is expected to judge only if an action that he has witnessed is a violation of the law, not whether the law is a good law or whether the person committing the act has a right to violate the law. A judge will decide the constitutionality of the law or the application of extenuating circumstances.

IF A POLICEMAN sees or knows of an illegal act, he is expected to make an arrest or issue a summons or in some way make sure that the perpetrator of the illegal act is brought to justice. While this responsibility rests on all citizens, it rests more heavily on those who have been hired to enforce the law.

A private citizen who commits or abets an illegal act should be judged, and if found guilty, punished for breaking the law. But a law enforcement officer who does the same thing is not only guilty of committing an illegal act, but also of violating a special trust. Who will protect the law-abiding from the law-breakers if the enforcers of the law are the law-breakers themselves?

EACH TIME a policeman winks at a crime, either out of friendship or for profit, he takes one more step toward that "climax of vice," or complete corruption, and he drags his fellow police officers with him. And when a policeman not only resists temptation but actively opposes corruption, as Marine Patrol Officer Pedro Ruiz did with the resultant arrest of the four city policemen, he helps to offset the damage done by crooked cops.

THERE ARE TWO THINGS we would like to see done in the wake of the recent police scandals, and we feel that they are both positive and necessary actions.

First, we feel that special commendation and public recognition is due to Officer Ruiz for his bravery. If all citizens who, regardless of their opinion of marijuana or marijuana smuggling, feel uneasy about crooked cops (who are just as likely to beat in the head of a Duval Street hippy as they are to skim the cream off the top of recovered loot stolen from a big house on the other side of town) -- if everyone lets Of-

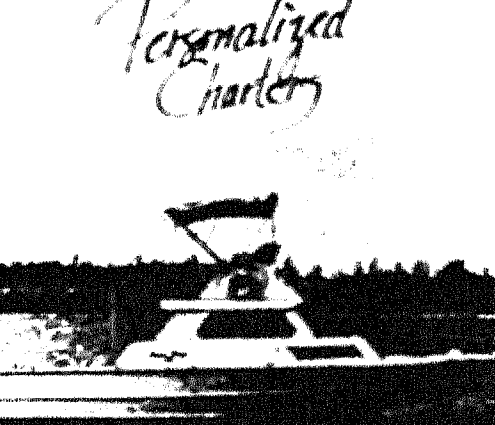
ficer Ruiz know that his action is supported by public opinion:

- 1) other honest policemen will feel more secure in reporting their dishonest fellow officers and clearing their police forces; and
- 2) crooked cops will get the message that their actions will not be tolerated, and some might even back away a step or two from that "climax of vice."

SECOND, we feel that it is time for a comprehensive, outside investigation of the Key West Police Department to find out if there are any more rotten apples. Everyone along the legal chain of command -- from Police Chief James to Police Commissioner Guy Thomas to the City Commission to the State Attorney's office -- has allowed scandals and misdeeds to go uninvestigated. Incidents have been "investigated" locally, like the New Year's Eve police rampage a couple years ago, when irresponsible and illegal police activities stirred even the most apathetic citizens to protest; and the time when a large collection of stolen jewelry was recovered by police, and the police officers were "lost" before the owners could claim them.

MANY CITIZENS question the morality of the police force as a whole because of the actions of a few dishonest policemen. The only way to restore confidence in the Key West Police Department is to sift through the personnel carefully to weed out the undesirables, possibly with the aid of a confidential questionaire and a lie detector test, as Sheriff Freeman wants to do with the Sheriff's Department, and to review thoroughly procedures and personnel policy to make sure another Sergeant Bennett does not get hired, promoted, and protected.

Then we can confidently tell our children, "The policeman is your friend."



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KEYS CHILDHOOD

by Lee R. Rohe Illustrated by Malcolm Ross

STORY NOTE:

Visualizing the Keys in the 1930's, I go mentally back to the small, shopping centers, little home motels, condos and tourist junk before the "boom," living in Key as not much different from early pioneer life. The following device offers a true account of one life to grow up in the Keys a crocodile nearly outnumbered me.

REMEMBER shaking scorpions out of us in the morning. And the mosquito, in summers, could drive you to madness. At dusk, we closed every coiled mosquito punks were and the fans turned on. But



ill got into the house along with flies. On those nights, I would be sweating and listening to the whirring sound of the swallows dove and dipped, chasing insects wing. Waiting for sleep while moon climbed the sky, I would slightly intoxicated by the per-night-blooming jasmine.

LIVED on the bayside of Key Largo King Buttonwood Sound. Our house was at the end of a long and oral rock road. Occasionally a urist or sightseer came bumping a road to ask directions or in about the fishing. We would all e of the approaching car before had our place and long after it d, coral dust hung in the air over d.

area where we lived had once lime grove. Alongside the high-od a packing house from where es were shipped to northern mar-the railroad. As a boy of seven, ed inside the lime shed and played old-fashioned, chain-driven con-elts. Sometimes, sitting in the ht among the cobwebs, I tried to the packing house in full oper-the machinery clinking away as erolated in the tin hoppers or onto the inclined chutes.

SIDES THE LIME SHED, my other e spot was among the mangroves urished behind the house on the e of the canal. Flamingoes, spoonbills, herons and ibises in silently at twilight to roost night. In a single salt pond I anted twenty-three flamingoes. re beautiful to watch in flight the fading sky. It seemed, with ink and orange coloring, as if d just been hatched from the set-a.

LDLIFE ABOUNDED. Giant grouper fish meandered under the dock of se in the shade. Manatees came canal in pairs, breaching the so that you could see the bristles nacles that grew on their rounded Upon first sighting, the sea cows

were ugly and frightening. I never could get used to the fact that they were harm- less.

With a dozen ducks and several pet turkeys, our place was like a farm. At nightfall, the turkeys had the habit of roosting on the boom of the sailboat. Infrequently, the ducks made long forays to the other side of the Sound, but they always returned at day's end. Knowing this, I became puzzled one evening when only eleven of the ducks returned. Then, a couple of days passed and another duck was missing.

Bobcats roamed Key Largo, but it seemed odd that none of the turkeys was missing. The turkeys' wings were clipped, and they presented excellent targets for a hungry bobcat. Not until I went mullet fishing one afternoon did I realize what

day before we had been swimming in the canal.

I summoned my two brothers, and the three of us walked up and down the length of the canal until we saw the crocodile. Watching our step along the soft bank, we got close enough to see the details of the creature's head and its unblinking yellow eyes. The beast, we estimated, was approximately seven or eight feet long.

Later, we discovered that our new canal resident had chosen an abandoned boathouse for its den. Coming home from school in the afternoons, we taunted and dared each other to open the door of the boathouse. For my brothers, the crocodile was a real "honey man," and the boathouse a forbidden place that constantly tempted our curiosity.



had become of my pet ducks.

STALKING THE CANAL BANK with bow and arrow, I had not yet spotted a bullet when it started to rain. On cue, the ducks took to the water, quacking happily in the downpour. Amused, I watched them as they splashed stubby wings against the water and wiggled their white tails dlely. After taking shelter to wait out the squall, I saw it happen. One of the drakes raised a loud, squawking protest. The other ducks joined in the outcry as they followed the leader towards the shore, paddling desperately. That is, the other ducks followed with the excep- tion of a fuzzy-headed duckling, which became confused and swam in circles while flapping its wings in vain. I still re- tain the clear image of what happened next. There occurred the sudden splash -- as if a curtain of water was created to block my vision while some sleight of hand performed its trick -- and after- wards, the water quiet again, tiny rip- ples radiating outward from where the duckling had just vanished.

THE SIGHT ITSELF triggered the word as I shouted in the downpour, "Crocodile! Crocodile!" I waited and watched but saw nothing. Then I ran back to the house shivering from the cold rain, as well as from the realization that on the

As for me, my imagination ran wild when I read, in the encyclopedia, the following information:

"The crocodilians living today represent only a small portion of the crocodilians that lived in the Age of Reptiles some 230 million years ago...The largest of the crocodilians lived in the lower Rio Grande Valley and grew to be 50 feet long; it probably fed on dinosaurs."

SO THAT WAS HOW I thought of him: the denizen of the boathouse was a pre- historic animal. At home, one of my responsibilities consisted of checking the boats at night after a storm. How I hated to go out on the dock in the dark. I could visualize the crocodile below me, following along as I went up and down the dock. Or I would see a black shape on the canal bank and have no trouble making out the thick, horny scaled, webbed feet and crooked teeth that glimmered in the shadows.

WHEN WE FIRST reported the presence of the crocodile to our father, he told us to keep quiet. He feared that some fool would hear about it and, thinking himself a hero, shoot the reptile. Keeping the secret was not difficult until one windy afternoon when I saw

several cars parked at the end of the canal. I hurried down to find about ten people lined up along the edge of the canal bank. They were dressed in white gowns and singing hymns. A Baptist preacher stood waist-deep in the water, reading from the Bible. Next to him was a stout woman with long, blond hair. She too wore a white gown and began crying as the preacher concluded his reading. Too timid to interrupt the baptism, I sat down and listened to "How Great Thou Art," while praying that the crocodile was not lurking nearby. I wanted to shout a warning or rescue them heroically. Paralyzed by shyness, all I could do was



watch mutely as the woman was immersed sacrificially, the white gown and long, yellow hair flowing around her.

Being a hero was not as easy as I thought it would be. I had failed to sound the alarm.

LATER, WE WENT SWIMMING after not seeing the crocodile for several weeks. Yet my dread of the creature had not abated. While treading water off the dock with my brothers, a fiendish notion would arise saying: I hope the crocodile goes for the other rather than me. Final- ly I gathered my courage and went into the dark boathouse to confront my terror. It was empty but for the strange echoing of my own footsteps and heavy breathing.

WHEN WE LEARNED that the boathouse had been vacated, we went to other loca- tions where we found crocodiles nesting. One site was near the old wooden bridge at Steamboat Creek in North Key Largo. Another area, along the banks of Taylor River in Everglades National Park, could be reached only by boat. But it was at a third site in Key Largo, a water-filled quarry dug by the railroad, that we saw the biggest crocodile, a monster measur- ing thirteen feet in length. He had many battle scars and a rusty fishing lure hanging from his back.

On the opposite side of the quarry he lay basking in the sun, nearly indis- tinguishable from the marl bank. He could have easily been forty to fifty years old. Others were lying about in awesome poses; as if each crocodile had been turned to stone while climbing or crawling along the shore. Their studied indifference was absolute until a fish came too close. Suddenly, one of the sluggish-looking reptiles would twist around in a lightning move, slapping the water with its tail. Then within moments the croc would return to its former pose, nonchalant, working the jaws slightly to quell the disturbance in its gullet.

THE BIG CROCODILE was supposedly a man eater. According to the story, a road gang convict escaped while working on the highway. Running down the path that led to the quarry, he hid in some bushes. But when it looked as though the guards were going to find him, the convict dove into the quarry and swam for the other

side. Hearing a scream, the guards rushed to the edge of the shore to find the water churning red.

After I heard that story, I could not help but wonder whether human bones jangled, like spare change, in the big croc's stomach. And every time I viewed them through the binoculars, I kept a lookout behind me, expecting a crocodile to come lumbering out from the woods or anywhere.

LATER ON, my older brother tried to capture one of the creatures for sale to a Miami tourist attraction. Roy had had numerous encounters with big alligators

(I had no idea how we would get an angry crocodile into the back of the truck).

WITH MASK AND FLIPPERS, Roy slid into the water very quietly. The croco- diles on the opposite bank did not seem to notice. All went well. From the shore, we paid out the rope as he swam across. Then, just as Roy was halfway across, the giant croc launched into the water and sounded. It happened so sud- denly that we barely had time to shout a warning. No sooner did we yell when Roy's legs flipped up into the air, and he dove straight down. A minute of un- bearable tension passed, and still there was no sign of my brother. I ran back to the truck for a rifle, but, as I re- turned, Roy's head popped up in one cor- ner of the quarry. Like a gymnast on the rings, he grabbed for a rock above his head and vaulted out of the water in one swift motion. We cheered.

I LEARNED LATER that my brother had used this trick before in the Everglades. "If he dives, you dive with him," he said. "Then go to the bottom and follow it all the way to the other side. He'll be looking for you above him."

For myself and the others this was merely academic advice. Having lost the net and rope, we ended our crocodile hunt. In fact, we never went crocodile hunting again, although we continued to observe them at the quarry.

THAT WAS twenty-two years ago, when we tried to catch one. A few years passed and they were suddenly gone. To this day, I do not know whatever became of them. I have a hunch that someone shot them.

About seven years ago, I heard of a large crocodile that was struck and killed on the highway at Lake Surprise



diles, we said, are much fiercer than alligators. But they remained uncon- vinced and I went along to watch.

Arriving at the quarry, we counted the crocodiles to make sure that they were all out of the water. In order to decide who would swim and wade over with the rope and net, Roy and his friends drew straws. Roy lost. But before al- lowing himself to think too much about his mission, he nervously donned a face mask and flippers.

THE STRATEGY of catching a crocodile called for: (a) getting close enough to throw the net over one of them; (b) haul- ing away on the rope from the opposite shore once the creature was entangled in the net; and (c) if we were not strong enough, using the truck to pull him in.



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Would You Repeat That Question, Please?

by Phyllis Dwyer Pope

AS AN ENGLISH teacher in Key West I was constantly depressed by the lack of intellectual activity I saw daily. Then I became a Reference Librarian at the Monroe County Public Library, and since that time I have been constantly surprised and delighted at the zeal of the average "atron" (library term meaning you, the customer) in his/her pursuit of obscure knowledge. The curious, the well-read and the eccentric intellectual are all alive and well in Key West. Let us rejoice!

BECAUSE I KNOW many will persist in thinking that the sun has baked the brains out of many of our island residents, I am prepared to support the above statement with some curious and strange (but always interesting) examples of reference questions that have sent me on tangents daily over the past two years.

First let me summarize my duties for you. When you enter the pink library on Fleming Street, look towards the far right and there, sitting behind an "office green" desk, is your friendly Reference Librarian waiting to help you in person or by phone.

IF YOU NEVER thought of using the Reference services by phone, consider this sampling of telephone requests I've received:

Where are some Kapok trees in Key West and what is that gorgeous tree on the corner of such and such?

Find a 5 letter word that begins with 2 i's for my crossword puzzle.

What is the Chinese word for red pepper (in Chinese of course)?

How do you say "welcome" in 6 different languages?

What is the immediate treatment for a dog who has bitten a Bufo (answered to the frequent interruption of a sobbing

child on the extension)?

What is the formula for tie-dyeing jeans?

How do you say Parrot Stolen in Spanish for a newspaper ad? (Cotorra Robada)

What are the names of Snow White's Seven Dwarfs and Santa Claus' reindeer?

What are the dates of full moons in past, present and years to come?

What are the religions of all the members of the House of Representatives?

I BEGAN my phone reference work with some problems in understanding my patrons' requests. Since then I have developed a sharp ear for regional accents and unclear speech. After hunting all over the library for a picture of James Beard to determine whether he was blond, I found that he was bald. I called the patron to deliver the news that it was difficult to discern what color his hair had been and the question was repeated, "Is James Beard blind?" Off on another search! (By the way, he is not.) Another request for books on "making a will" was misinterpreted by me as "making a whale." These are just some of the hazards in phone Reference work.

ON THE OTHER HAND, dealing with people in person can be unnerving at times. How many people could nod politely and not flinch (or chuckle) when patrons ask for books on the following:

Pysanky (After tactful questioning I found this to be the Ukrainian method of decorating Easter eggs);

Black magic, alchemy rituals, crystal ball gazing, divining rods and dowsing;

Enbalming techniques;

Veterinary drug books (after perus-

ing our human drug book selection);
Tropical diseases (like the festering one here on my hand);
Cleaning and preparing octopus for dinner;

The history of saltpeter;
In-depth research on rhinoceroses.

THEN THERE IS the usual assortment of amusing but always interesting requests that come in daily:

How to build things out of toothpicks;

What to feed a horned toad;

Research on the can-can;

Did Eve (of Adam and ...) have a last name? (never found one);

How to build a dumb waiter;

Pictures of everything from a snowmobile to Ed Sullivan;

The name of the Indian on an Indian head nickel (the artist combined 3 heads: Chief John Big Tree - Seneca; Chief Two Moons - Cheyenne; Chief Iron Tail - Sioux);

The phobia for crossing bridges (geophrophobia);

How cold is it in mid-July on Easter Island?

PERHAPS THE TITLE "reference librarian" conjures up the typical image of a dowdy woman draped in a cardigan with horn-rimmed glasses, sitting at a desk absorbed in a book, with little or no human contact. On the contrary! Over the phone I have: settled arguments in bars; given endless "Dear Heloise" tips on stains, spills, and mildew; and advised patrons on every topic imaginable. I have dutifully recorded the answers to some of the more obscure questions in hopes that the next time the question is repeated I can pull out the gray filing box and presto! there's the answer. But the patrons keep outwitting even the most earnest attempts at predicting curiosity and I know that tomorrow I will

receive at least 2 (if not more) questions that I will not have an inkling as to what the answer might be. But what I can offer to the patron with such fascinating quests is perseverance, a general knowledge of where to look in the library and unmitigated enthusiasm for those who love to learn!

(Phyllis is no longer a reference librarian but has changed jobs and is now a mother.)

Fall is upon us;

a cool wind,

a change to the air.

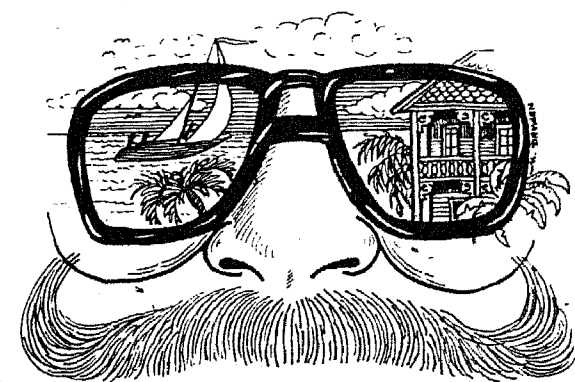
The plants know

and the dog

sleeps inside.

I love you, Lord.

JIM PICKING



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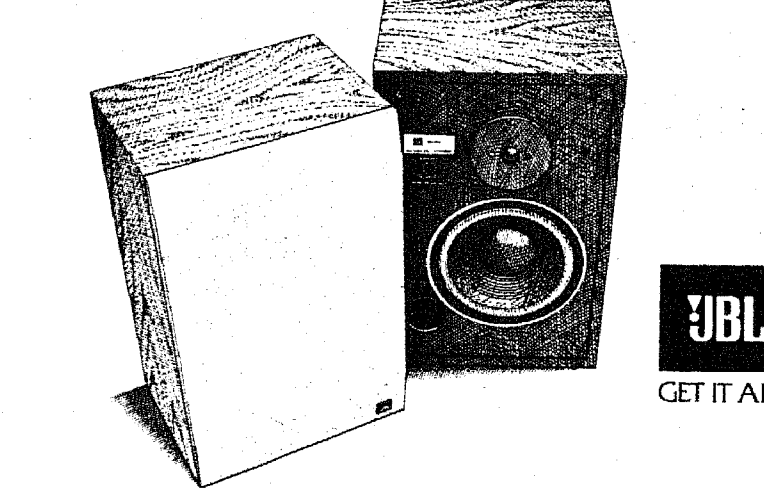
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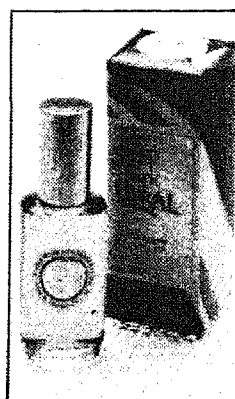
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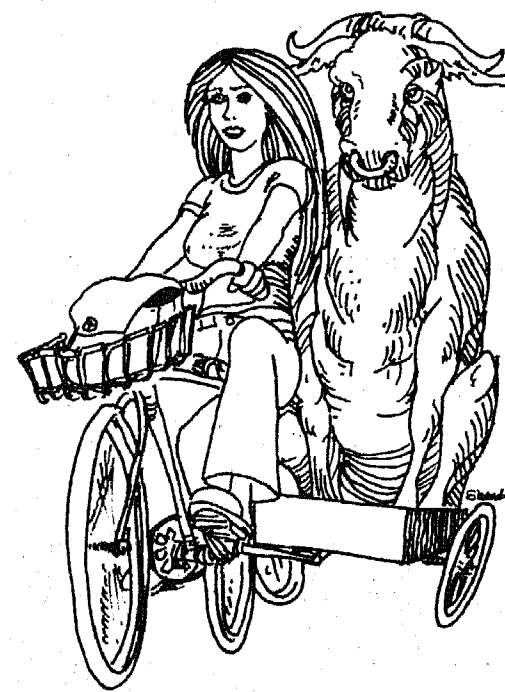
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Body Wash, with Aloe	(969)	8 oz.	6.00

Key West Fragrance & Cosmetic Factory

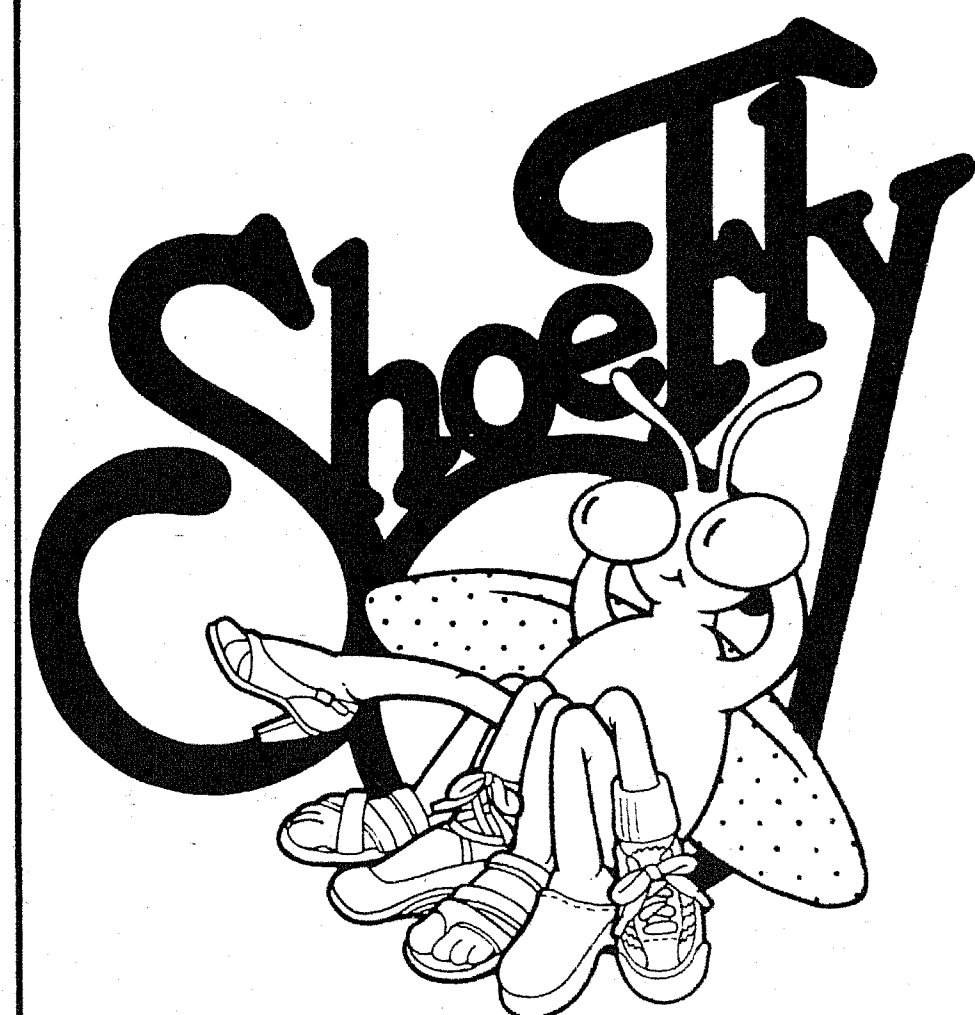
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Remarks continued from page 5
 Volunteer Fire Department.
 Now that Key West is no longer
 to provide fire protection for
 rea, area residents have had to
 le to put together men and equip-
 o create an effective fire-fight-
 rce. The purpose of the raffle
 turn the proceeds over to this
 ing group, and, with this in mind,
 50 prizes with a value of over
 have been donated by leading mer-
 and concerned citizens thus far.

JUST A FEW of the many prizes to
 are:
 dinner for 2 in over thirty restau-

any valuable gift certificates
 printing calculator

B
 igital watch
 -track tape deck
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windows at 500 Simonton Street. For in-
 formation on tickets or making a dona-
 tion to the raffle, please call 294-9600.

CITY ELECTRIC UPDATE

AT THE END of September, the crip-
 pled generators of Key West's City Elec-
 tric System (CES) had a maximum output
 capability of 69.5 megawatts (MW), with
 every piece of equipment in need of re-
 pair or overhaul, to meet a peak demand
 of 57.5 MW, leaving a slim margin in the
 event of the failure of one or more gen-
 erators.

The 37 MW unit at the Stock Island
 plant, the system's largest generator,
 was producing only 23 MW. The "firm
 capability" -- the output capability of
 the system with its largest unit off the
 line -- is less than the current peak
 demand, which means that we are still
 liable to experience the "rolling brown-

outs" of August, when the 37 MW unit
 broke down.

THE NAMEPLATE capacity of the sys-
 tem's units totals 110 MW, but because
 of age their effective capacity is cal-
 culated at 85% of that, according to
 Utility Board Chairman Gayle Swofford,
 leaving 93.5 MW. Installation of a new
 unit after the first of next year will
 boost the system's capacity by the new
 unit's full nameplate capacity of 22 MW,
 to total 115.5 MW of effective capability.
 Subtracting the largest unit's 31.5 MW
 of effective capability leaves 84 MW of
 firm capability to serve a projected
 peak demand next summer of 68 MW.

UTILITY BOARD MEMBER Leland Roberts
 says that a promised investigation into
 the causes of last summer's month of
 intermittent power outages will be con-
 ducted by the Utility Board this month.

As we go to press, Governor Askew
 had not yet decided whether the present
 situation should be defined as an emer-
 gency. Federal generators of about 2 MW
 each are available through the state, if
 the state agrees with the Utility Board
 and the City Commission that a state of
 emergency exists. The Utility Board has
 agreed to pay for the transportation of
 the units.

MEANWHILE, there is talk that the
 city might enact an ordinance prohibit-
 ing the use of air conditioners during
 the kind of power outages we had last
 summer. CES Engineer James Massey said
 in answer to a question from the audi-
 ence at last month's emergency Utility
 Board meeting that if all the air con-
 ditioners had been turned off everyone
 would have had power.



HIDDEN TALENTS

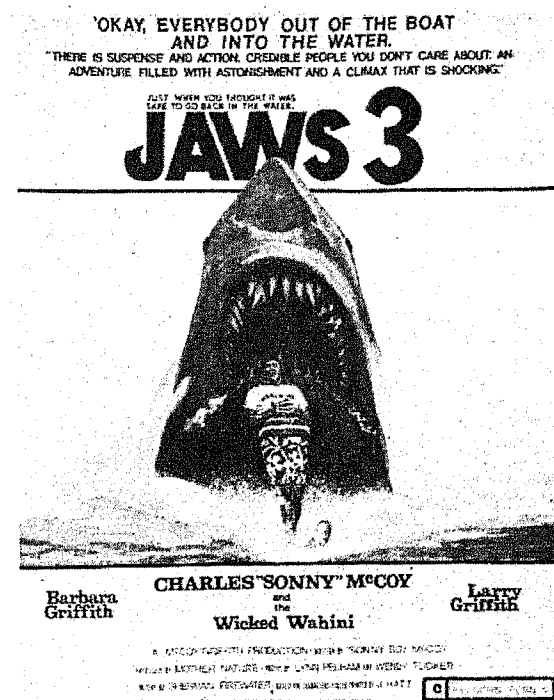
Tourists have complained that they
 can't find the street names on the low
 white cement posts: "Why don't they put
 the signs where you can see them?"
 "They" are doing so now. City crews
 are erecting new, tastefully designed
 signs like the one in the photo on the

left. Not only are the signs eye-pleas-
 ing and easy to find, they also include
 the block number and street direction
 and a space for the former (and often
 more colorful) street name.

The young woman in the photo is
 Jamie Bishop, secretary and assistant to
 Mayor Charles "Sonny" McCoy (see poster
 on the right), and this is how the photo
 and the poster come together here.

Solares Hill made two separate in-
 quires into details of the new street
 signs and the possibility of reproducing
 the poster, which has been on display in
 the Mayor's office for several weeks. We
 learned that McCoy, in his effort to
 beautify the city, had applied for a
 federal grant for the signs and that Jamie
 Bishop had designed them, and that Jamie
 had created the poster as a cover for a
 photo album of the Mayor's recent slalom
 ski run to Havana.

Jamie, a commercial art graduate of
 Ferris State College in Big Rapids, Michi-
 gan, is also assistant grants coordinator
 for the city. She does some art work on
 commission in her spare time.



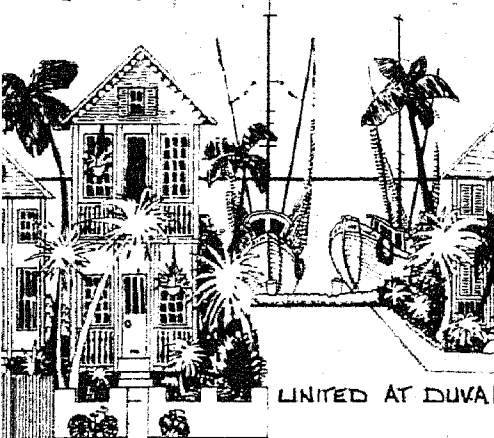
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Chicken Dinner \$1.69

With Cole Slaw, Fr. Fries or Mashed Potatoes,
 Roll and Honey

SPECIAL EVERY DAY 10:30 TO 10 PM

Fish Dinner \$1.99

With Cole Slaw, Fr. Fries or Mashed Potatoes,
 Roll, and Tartar or Cocktail Sauce

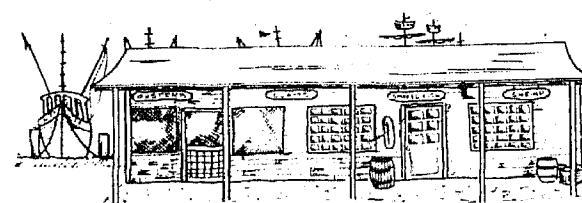
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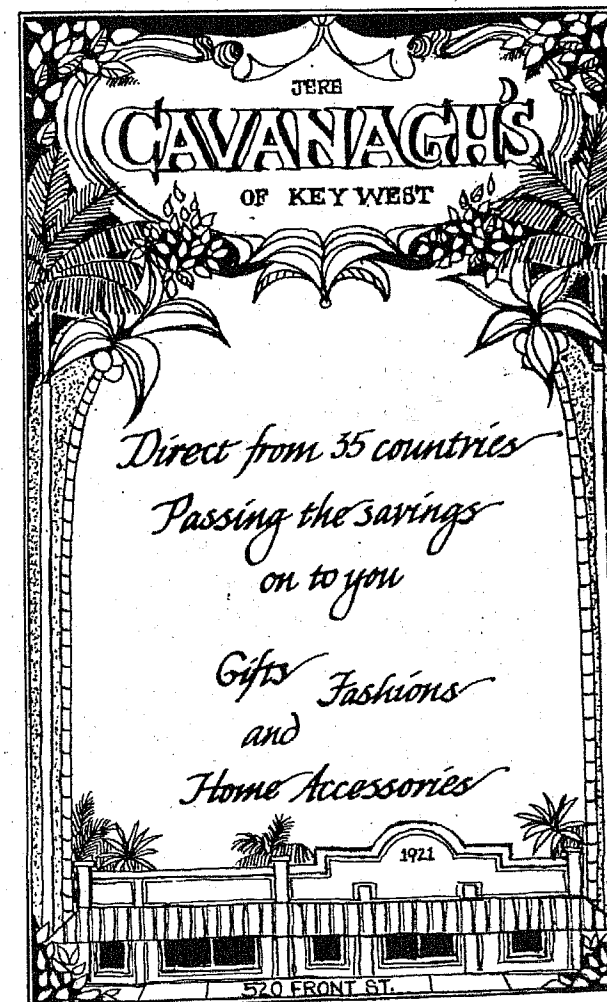
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TAXES

by Mack Dryden

SEPTEMBER, 1978, probably won't be listed in local histories as a turning point for Key West, but it could qualify for the distinction. Property reassessments just aren't as memorable as, say, hurricanes or military withdrawals. But 1978 will no doubt be remembered by many Key West property owners as the year the value of their property doubled. It will be remembered by some as the year they had to give up "the old place." It might even be remembered as the year the city sued the county to end dual taxation.

Everybody knew this year's equalization of the tax rolls would shoot property values sky high, but not many guessed they would rise an average of 48.7 per cent in Key West. Some went up as much as 175 per cent, and property values in the county rose an average of 37 per cent.

AT THIS WRITING, the county and city commissioners are working overtime juggling figures and chopping wish lists to decide how much to tax the people for what they own. The city commissioners have already carved big chunks out of their proposed \$5.1 million budget for fiscal 1979, meaning that services to the taxpayers are going to be curtailed even though property taxes for most people will rise.

City Commissioner Alton Weekley, Jr., admitted that the situation looks "bleak" even with the budget cuts. "We've got a two-edged sword to deal with," he said. "We've got the elderly on fixed incomes who can't stand any more tax increases, and we've got a city that's underbudgeted today and has been for years."

City Manager Ron Stack said he has advised the commission that "there will have to be a reduction in the work force," probably of around 40 people out of the 260-employee force. Needed new equipment won't be bought this year, car allowances are being slashed, and no wage increases are budgeted.

LAST YEAR the total millage rate for Key West property owners was 28, meaning they paid a total of \$28 per \$1,000 worth of property they owned. Ten dollars of that went to the city and \$18 went to the county. So the owner of a home worth \$25,000 paid \$700 in city and county taxes last year. This year, if the value of the same home rises according to the average, it would be assessed at \$37,500 and the owner would pay \$1,050 in city and county taxes.

The city's ten-mill levy is the highest allowed by state law. If it is not lowered by the commissioners, the homeowner in the above example who paid \$250 to the city in 1977 will pay \$375 this year. The county's share would rise from \$450 to \$675.

LOUIS CARBONELL, the president of the Lower Keys chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons, said the increased tax burden on the elderly can't be tolerated. "We're definitely going to have to do something to help these poor people who have lived here all their lives," he said. "Right now it costs more to live here than anywhere in Florida. We just can't go along with this new budget of five million. That's a 39 per cent increase, and the people just won't accept that. They'll be up in arms."

Carbonell has been looking over the shoulders of the city commissioners ever since they started the budget-cutting procedure. "We'll see what they come up with," he said, "then we'll tear it apart."

COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER Ervin Higgs agreed that the new assessments will be "toughest on the elderly." Said Higgs, "Inflation is really catching up with them. There's got to be some more relief. People over 65 in Florida get a \$5,000 exemption in addition to homestead exemption, but that's been completely wiped out by inflation. Now they find themselves in property they bought in 1920, and their income hasn't kept up with their ability to pay taxes on it."

Higgs said that, regardless of the consequences, there has to be a cutback in government spending. "It's necessary that the word 'conservative' not be a dirty word any more. We have to have some liberal thinking as far as getting things done, but it has to be tempered with conservative spending policies."

RIGHT NOW the city commissioners are seriously considering a rather dramatic step to take some of the tax burden off their constituents. City Attorney Joe Allen III said he would submit a report by the second week of October outlining the feasibility of successfully suing Monroe County to end dual taxation of city residents.

Allen said cities in Sarasota and Broward counties have successfully sued those counties to force them to provide revenues and services proportionate to those provided outside the city limits.

IN KEY WEST, for example, property owners contribute the same amount in taxes to support the sheriff's department as Marathon residents do. The sheriff's department, however, provides only a fraction of the services to Key West that it does for non-incorporated Marathon, since Key West has a police department. "There's no question of the duplication of services in law enforcement," said Allen. "It's very definitely dual taxation there."

The same is true for other divisions of the government. Key West taxpayers support the county zoning department, but that department regulates nothing in Key West, and its inspectors have no authority in the city, Allen said.

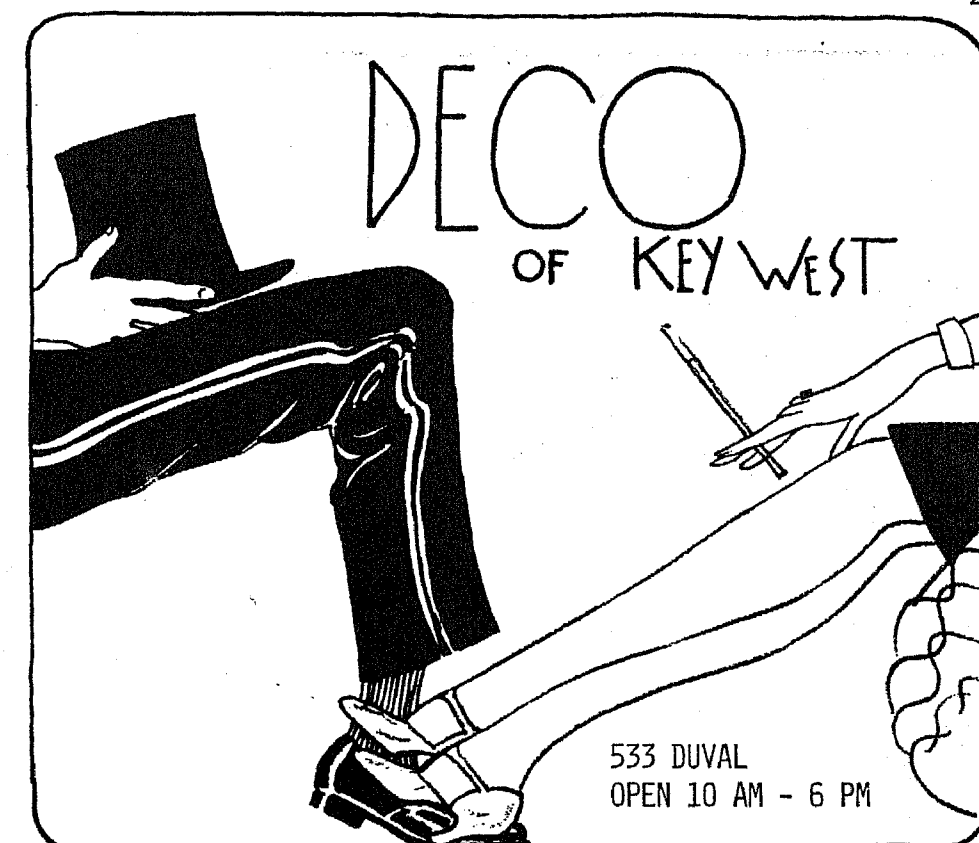
"We haven't been able to sit down and successfully negotiate these things among ourselves," said Allen, "so we might have to go to court." Asked how receptive the city commissioners are to the idea of suing the county, Allen said, "It might be the proper thing to do. The city commissioners have to protect the interests of their constituents, and they're trying every avenue to do that."

IF THE CITY sued the county and won, a judge would then decide how much of the sheriff's budget must be set aside to make sure the citizens of Key West get what they pay for.

Another possible solution to reduced government spending -- consolidation of city and county services -- has been bounced back and forth for years but is now apparently becoming a necessity. A number of former city services have already been absorbed by the county, and City Manager Stack admits that the city is "moving in that direction."

IRONICALLY PERHAPS, two government services that the two entities share are the appraisal of property and the collection of ad valorem (property) taxes. "I find it's just as easy to do appraisals for both the city and county," said Property Appraiser Higgs. "And it's just as easy to collect city and county taxes together. I'm sure with a little study some more services can be consolidated."

Carbonell of the AARP thinks consolidation is inevitable. "It's coming just as sure as God made little green apples," he said. "There's strong discussion right now to abolish the city altogether. There's a movement to see if the sheriff could take over communications and the jail and the detective



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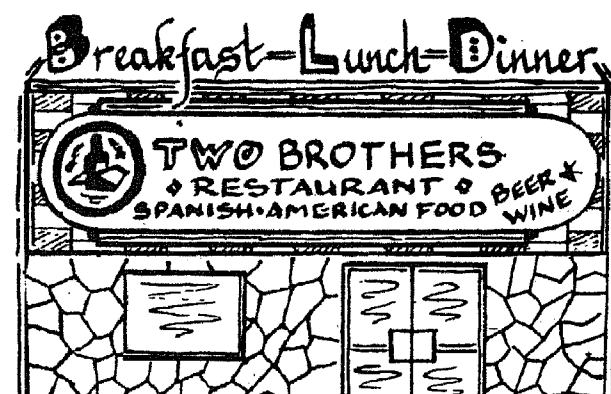
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division. That would be a big chunk. I think that would be the ideal way to save some money. The sheriff's detectives are handling all the felonies now anyway."

INDEED, long-time Key West property-owner Lawrence Gomez is pushing for "the abolishment of this city" by "referendum or petitions." Gomez said "all city functions" have been taken over by the county "and it is foolish to keep on the farce of being a city." He added that losing the city "will be better than losing our homes" because of the increased taxes. Gomez is apparently serious enough in his proposal to have started a petition whose goal would be to dismantle the city government altogether.

IN THE MIDST of the gloom, however, there are a few flickers of hope. Harry Knight, the county tax collector, said he doesn't think the negative impact on the community "will be all that dramatic" in the wake of the new valuations. He said the governing bodies will do all they can to ease the burden on their constituents, and that if the millage rates are rolled back, some people's taxes will actually go down. "It's 28 now in the city and county," he said, "and if they go down to 20, the people with the newer houses will probably see a decrease in their property taxes."

In addition, said Knight, the state legislature is taking steps to ease the burden on the elderly and lower income homeowners. "I expect the 1979 legislature will pass a bill to allow payment of taxes in installments so the crunch won't come all at once," he said, and he and Property Appraiser Higgs said there will probably be legislation forthcoming that will gear taxation to the property owner's ability to pay.

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RECENTLY some people have called to ask about the construction over the water at the foot of Vernon Street. David Wolkowsky, the owner of the house there, assured us that all permits were secured for the construction of a dock where he will keep his boat. "Inky" Bean of the Key West Building Department confirmed that everything was in order and all the permits had been secured.



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MOTHER'S OUTING

BUDDY AND I set out to take Mother on an island outing, loaded into our proud Businessman's Coupe.

Behind the wheel, in this chariot, there's a compartment the size of a half-ticket pullman berth or a large man's casket where travelling salesmen in 1940 stowed their wares when they took a run out through the midwest farm-lands.

I AM at the command post, pumping the gas feed and slanting the mirror lower.

"Pull out the choke," says Mother. "Fasten the seat belts," says Buddy. As there is neither a choke nor seat belts, these commentaries are disregarded. But it is perceived that Mother's "choke" and her grandson Buddy's "seat belts" neatly cover a head-swimming 75-year altering world.

Buddy's 21-year-old kind, strong, tan, young arm encircles her scrawny, frail, picky, 89-year-old shoulders, snug in her going-riding shawl.

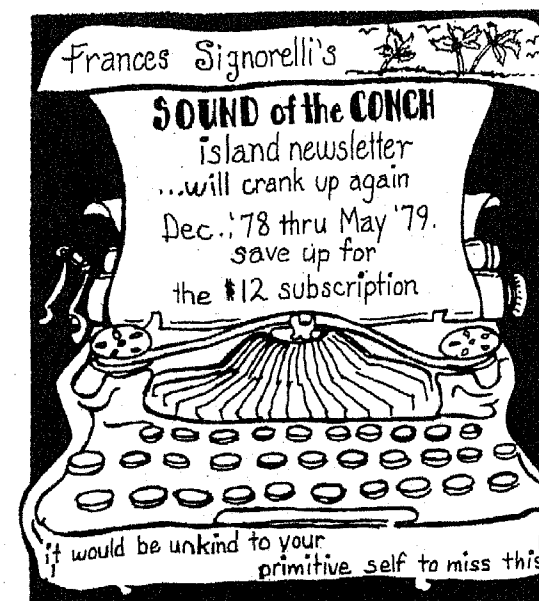
THERE IS a thrum of life from the motor, and we are off in my antique car, which is the color of a lamp post, or more than one lamp post.

My body man was applying a beautiful green coat to the fenders (after that time a potato chip truck creamed me down at Sunset), when he unceremoniously was busted for a few plants under cultivation behind the garage.

And where his son picked up on the paint job is sadly discernible. Though perhaps no more than a sleeve of a dress which has faded on a trip through the washing machine.

Frances Signorelli's

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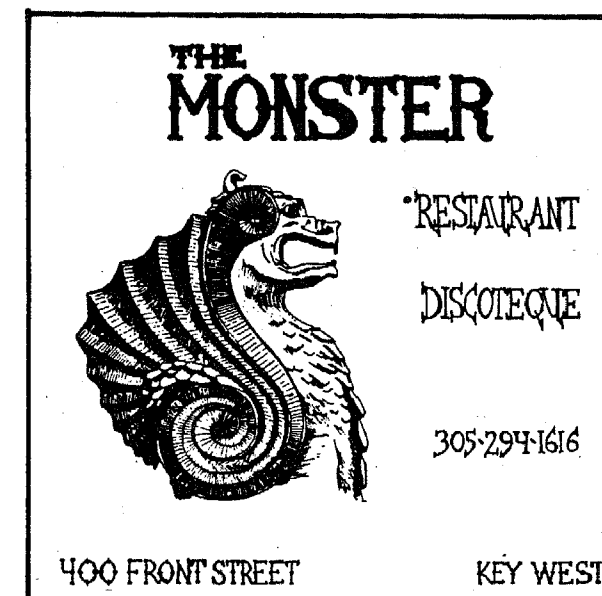
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MOTHER ADJUSTS her purses on her bony lap. She always carries two hand bags with straps. That there does not appear to be anything at all in the red plastic one is academic.

Passing slides of Simonton Street glint through her cataract glasses, distorted like strange beings whisked alarm- edly around in an aquarium.

"Does this remind you, Grandma, of when you rode the government immigrant car for homesteaders going to New Mexico?" Buddy fondly presses her stringy, blue- veined hand where she wears her two small engagement rings, now circling one finger.

"No. I took against it. Their water was warm," said Mother with alacrity.

Present her with an idea from those long gone days and she snaps to, her little lips pursed, as if she is regard- ing over her Gladstone valise the west- ern sun glinting on the Oklahoma prairie and Indians by the tracks en route to the Pecos Valley rancho, as yet uncleared of mesquite trees.

I EASE US into a vantage spot at Mallory Square, and Buddy strolls off to mingle with his peers -- two fiddle-play- ing groups and walkers of most every flavour of homo sapiens, peaceably taking the air, with an uncensused number of dogs, too.

I embark to find us a coke.

"Will you be all right, Mother?"

"I won't tell them a thing," she assures, with equanimity.

I RETURN with a sack of bollos, and there stand seven hippies and a couple of polyester pants-suited lady tourists around Mother.

She sits firm as an isosceles tri- angle. She is in command.

There is a ripple of amusement, and they walk off. I never knew what she said.

"Were you talking to that fellow with the long hair and a head band,

Palms and Pelicans continued on page 24

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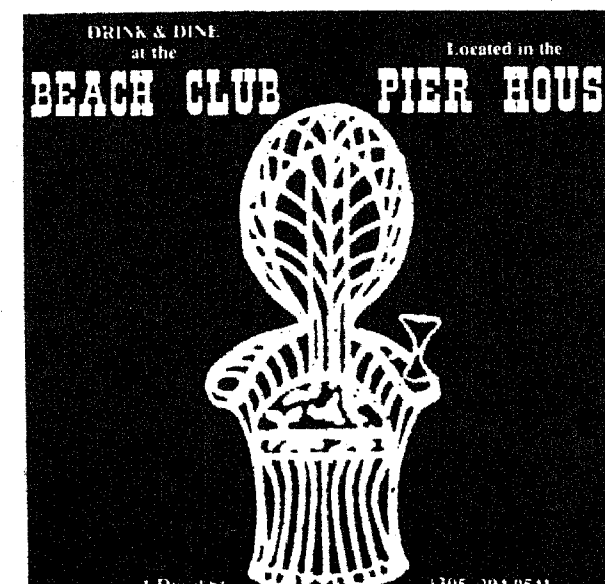
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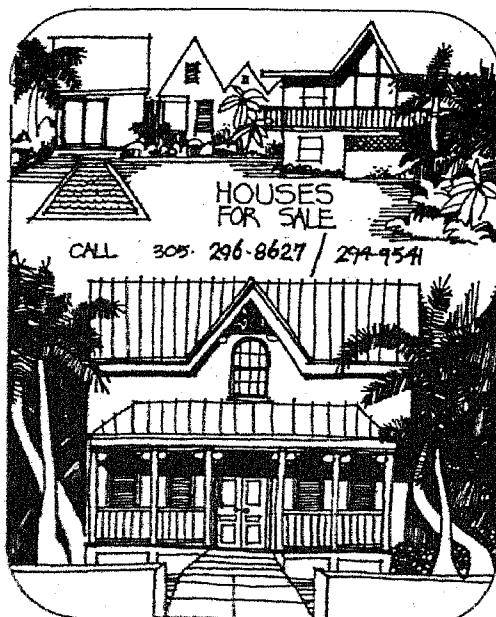
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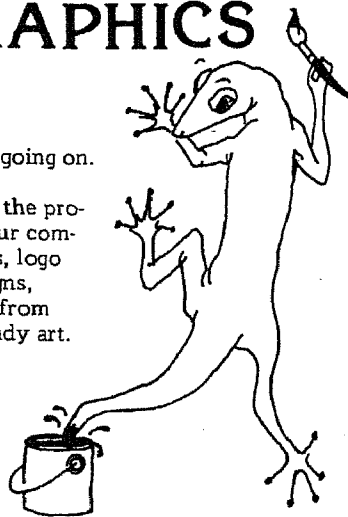


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Reviewing Stand by Dorothy Raymer

POETIC PROSE is a rare literary gem these days, so it is a special delight to find this classic form in *The Shore of Two Worlds* by Richard Marsh, accomplished writer and editor who lives in Key West. He is associate editor of *Solares Hill* and a poet as well as being editor and publisher of *Pocket Poetry* magazine. Marsh notes that *The Shore of Two Worlds* is the first volume of an epic fantasy novel, *The Unremembered*, which is designed to run to six or eight volumes.

THIS FIRST EDITION is published by the Mazzeen Press, PO Box 70, Key West, FL 33040. Marsh asserts that he has turned to self-publishing because major publishers no longer deal with "quality fiction"; small presses do not pay and fail to get books to readers; and adds, what I, as a long time bookreviewer, have always contended -- that the vanity publishing method has "no credibility."

THE ILLUSTRATIONS, done with skill and delicacy, are created by Paul Stevens, Jr., renowned artist.

THE TIME AND PLACE of this initial story: Key West environs, July 1958. There are glimpses of the town and the Cuban influence, but the main descriptive passages are about shore-life and a salt-pond bower.

At the opening, a young woman, Elizabeth, who has just finished graduate work in college, comes to the island, lured by a curious compulsion. One dawning, she wanders in solitude along the seashore, considering her past and thinking of what the future may hold for her.

THE INTERLUDE permits flashbacks of the young woman's background, insight into educational experiences, her emotion-

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al involvement and a mystic force which can be traced in Welsh legends.

Out of the dawn and the sea comes a mysterious figure, a handsome stranger who denies that he is Welsh, but who is decidedly "foreign." The encounter leads to enchantment, and the pair drifts into love relationship briefly, living a dream-like life in the secluded island Eden.

AUTHOR MARSH has done meticulous research on flora and fauna of the Keys with focus on birdlife and a botanical theme.

An excerpt from this idyllic sequence reveals an intermeshing of emotions and the natural beauty of the setting: "They soared together into the dappled blueness and greenness of their eyes and the trees and the ocean and the sky, a perfect blending of elements, a sudden fusing with the bright colors of the birds and the flowers and the voices of the birds and the aromas of the flowers into an intense white light more felt than seen, and then a long, slow fall into sleep and dream, to rise again easily into the participation of the sounding of his name and the hearing of her name when she awoke."

ALTHOUGH THE UNION of Elizabeth and the Man of Dawn ends, there is a definite promise of a sequel evolving from the birth of a daughter.

Palms and Pelicans continued from page 23 Mother?"

"He's queer as a chicken hatched in a thunder storm," she stated. (A western lady of 90 winters would mean odd or teched in the head.)

SUNSET RITUAL attended to, we trundle home.

Buddy helps Mother out of the car. "What's that you've got, Grandma?" "It's a roach," she said, opening her red plastic purse.

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KEY WEST'S HOROSCOPE BY EMMA CATES

Sun in Libra, after 23rd in Scorpio
Venus in Scorpio
Mercury in Libra, after 13th in Scorpio
Saturn in Virgo
Jupiter in Leo
Mars in Scorpio
Uranus in Scorpio
Neptune in Sagittarius
Pluto in Libra
North Node in Virgo

On October 2nd there is a new moon and a partial eclipse of the sun in the constellation Libra. This aspects the fourth (4) house of the chart of Key West. There should be a form of spiritual revival for our city. The inner, subconscious will be activated, and a new beginning may be the outcome. This may pertain to the scandal in the police department and other areas in our city

that would be greatly benefited by a renewed sense of decency and honesty on the part of government at all levels.

Venus, Mars, and Uranus conjoined in Scorpio strongly aspects our chart. There may be a decision from the military this month pertaining to its future here. I will say that the decisions overall will be favorable for the community financially most of all, but also in the area of government influence.

The moon will be in the sign of Scorpio on election day, October 5th -- conjoining the stellium of planets already in Scorpio. This relates to our chart in a positive manner in our sixth (6) house of work and health. The winners in the election will certainly be the persons who have the best interests of Key West in their hearts.

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A Tale Of Two Islands

KEY WEST and Ireland are both islands washed by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean, but Ireland is about a hundred times larger. Other similarities and differences are less obvious, and it was to discover these that I spent a month hitchhiking in Ireland recently.

I was mostly researching impressions and atmosphere for a novel and for a place to live sometime in the future, so I burdened myself with as few facts as possible -- only enough to serve as a framework to give form to the impressions.

I HAD COMPLETED about half of a disjointed figure 8 around Ireland --



Traveller Marsh in his American tourist costume -- "the Bludy eefit wi the Davy Crockett hat" in the native dialect. (Camera held by Mary Magnier of Fermoy, County Cork)

Belfast south to Dublin, west to Galway, north along the west coast to Sligo and into County Donegal -- when I got a ride from Collooney, south of Sligo, back to Galway with an American businessman.

He had been all over the United States and Ireland, and he said, "We have more spectacular scenery back home, but what makes Ireland for me is the people." We exchanged observations on ways in which the Irish enjoy a higher quality of life with a lower standard of living than Americans, whose quality of life is eroding with ever-increasing speed.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION briefly is this: the Irish have an average income that is about 25% less than ours, and things are slightly more expensive. For example, I can get a roll of Ektachrome film at Woolco for \$5; it costs nearly \$6 anywhere in Ireland. Some items, like milk, are "less dear" (as they call "cheaper"); some are dearer.

Incongruously, all over Ireland it is almost impossible to find paper matches. The British Isles are nearly denuded of trees, and the government promotes reforestation with rows of planted trees. In Britain and Ireland it is almost impossible to find paper matches. The British Isles are nearly denuded of trees, and the government promotes reforestation with rows of planted trees.

Sweden. (A pence -- "p" -- is about two American cents, 100 pence to the pound.)

IN SPITE OF the relatively low income and high cost of luxuries (cigarettes at a little more than American prices; pipe tobacco outrageously high), I never saw anyone take a cigarette from a pack for himself without offering one to everyone nearby, stranger or friend.

Absorbed as I was in learning and digesting all I could about the Irish and their way of life, I often thought back to Key West in comparison and contrast.

IRELAND IS BILINGUAL, as Key West is. Irish is the official language, and everything to do with the government is in Irish: schools, street signs, town names, government buildings, etc. Irish is a required subject in school. After Ireland won independence from England, and the post office building was labelled "Oifig an Phoist," an English-speaking Irish gentleman is said to have remarked to a friend, "If 'oifig an Phoist' doesn't mean 'men's room,' I just did a silly thing in the post office."

There is also a language barrier between Irish English and American English. A waitress in Killarney asked me, "Are you all right?" I was going to tell her about my sprained foot, but then I realized that she meant, "May I help you?" A Breton in town for Pan Celtic Week spoke little English, and I had to translate the waitress for him.

THE IRISH are proverbial drinkers, and alcoholism is recognized as a national problem. Booze can no longer be advertised on television. But I found little use of drugs, except among the more liberal college students, and it seemed to be mostly marijuana.

THE SUN is not as bright in Ireland as it is in Key West, and it sets in the northwest. Sunset watching is popular where the sun sets over water.

I was walking with Malachy from McDaid's pub in Dublin, where Brendan Behan, the Irish playwright, used to fall off the stool, to Malachy's flat, where I was staying. At the top of Grafton Street, where it meets St. Stephen's Green, I pointed to a street fiddler with a money box at his feet. "That," I said, "is illegal in Key West."

Malachy looked around, unable to see anything that looked illegal, and I had to explain about our strange law here prohibiting professional street musicians, and the even stranger law that forbids two or more musicians to play in public even if they are not asking for money.

MALACHY IS A medical student at University College -- Dublin, so he was not with me at the Suffolk House, a Trinity College hangout, when I met Donal, a law student at Trinity.

Donal and I had reached the top of Grafton on our way to his flat to continue our discussion of American Constitutional law, which his class was studying then, after the Suffolk House had closed at the legal but unreasonable hour of half-eleven (11:30). A tinker woman was begging in the same phrase and with the same woe-begone facial expression to be found all over Ireland: "A few coppers for food to feed the baby." Our discussion then extended to the panhandling law in Key West.

In Key West, where it is illegal

story and photos by Richard Marsh

to ask for money, we are spared the responsibility of deciding for ourselves whether or not to give money to a beggar. The Irish are required to make up their own minds: will the few coppers feed the baby, help the old man get drunk, or buy the young boy a horse; and is that really a baby or just a bundle of rags in the woman's arms? The Irish have the freedom to say "No" to a beggar or a hitchhiker, as they have the freedom to beg or hitchhike.

I FOUND HITCHHIKING the ideal way to meet the real Irish and talk to them. I also met Danish, South African, and other tourists.

In County Donegal, Banbo, a tele-



Maggy from New Zealand at Grianan Ailigh

vision repairman from Buncrana, gave me a ride from Letterkenny to Grianan Ailigh, an ancient sun temple and fort near Buncrana. Down the road a ways, Maggy, a young woman from New Zealand who was hitching around Ireland, was heading for the Grianan also, and Banbo picked her up and dropped us both off at the bottom of the Grianan Ailigh hill. As we climbed up two steep miles, ate lunch, and climbed down, Maggy and I traded stories, and I was able to satisfy my curiosity about the situations a young woman hitching alone might encounter.

MAGGY SAID that she had hitched safely through Australia and Ireland, but "I am convinced that every Irishman over the age of six is a sex maniac." However, they gracefully took "no" for an answer, which indicates that there is a bit of the opportunist in the most chivalrous Irishman.

I saw Banbo later in Buncrana, and he asked the obvious question. He seemed disappointed when I told him that Maggy had gone south from the Grianan, where I continued north.

THERE ARE few shopping the death stroke to the do of many cities -- in Ireland, Byran McMahon, in a Celtic Week in Killa main shopping street

(often called "Sraid Siopi" -- Shop Street) as "crooked like a dog's leg" where there is "room for the human spirit to hide." Women and girls bustle along with their market baskets on their arms or stop to chat briefly with friends. A street fiddler, guitarist, or accordion player stands in the middle of the sidewalk, and people steer their way around. Someone is always begging for a cause -- crippled children's fresh air camp, the blind, the old soldiers -- and everywhere the tinkers with their "give me a few coppers, wull yuh, wull yuh, and I'll pray for you." It is a more fully human street life than we have here, and more completely integrated. The tinkers are safe, I was told. They will beg themselves hoarse, but they will not attack or pick your pockets. The street urchins of Dublin are another matter.

I NEARLY GOT MUGGED and pickpocketed by a group of children under the age of ten in a touristy area of Dublin. I had to run across the street through traffic to lose them, along with my dignity, but they didn't get any money.

On the first warm day of spring, St. Stephen's Green was filled with languid strollers, innocently romantic couples and men lounging with their shirts off. Catholic Ireland, where the majority of the girls are virgins until marriage ("as far as we know," a Galway cailin told me with a Mona Lisa smile), sees nothing shameful in the bare male chest. In Key West, a shirtless man can be thrown in jail.

WHEN I DESCRIBED this quaint local custom to Stephanie from County Monaghan, she simply added it to a list of known American eccentricities like driving on the right side of the road and writing dates backwards --

10-1-78 instead of 1-10-78 for October 1, 1978. Stephanie is disenchanted with America anyway. On a visit here she saw Mount Rushmore and was disappointed because "it was just the way I always thought it would be. A postcard would have done as well."



Stephanie

The electricity stayed on the whole time I was in Ireland, but the telephone and postal workers were on strike. One could call within a town (if one could figure out the system, which I never did),

but inter-city calls were impossible. The most frequent sign was not "Céad Míle Fáilte" (A Hundred Thousand Welcomes) but "Out of Order."



Dublin street musician

I WENT LOOKING for some genuine Irish music one night in Buncrana and found a local group called the Wildwood Flowers playing such American country favorites as "Knoxville Girl" and "Queen of the Silver Dollar." An out of town group sang modern Nashville songs with authentic Nashville twangs, but when they stopped singing and started talking the accent was pure Derry.

On the Irish radio network one morning, the announcer introduced -- in Irish -- a song sung by Kris Kristofferson, then one by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger, then an Uilleann pipe tune (Irish bagpipes), a gospel song, and Buck Owens singing "Truck Driving Man." You don't hear that combination of music

on the radio in Key West.

THE GREATEST SIMILARITY I found between Ireland and Key West is the friendliness among strangers. In the small towns and the countryside it was rare that a person would pass by me without a downward-sideways nod and a greeting. "Lovely day" is a common greeting, and it is used as either a wish or an observation. Anything less than a driving rainstorm is a lovely day in Ireland. "Dia dhuit," meaning "God be with you," is often heard in the Gaeltacht, or Irish-speaking area. The reply is "Dia 's Mhuire dhuit," which means "God and Mary be with you."

THE GREATEST DIFFERENCE I found is demonstrated by the fact that hitchhiking is illegal in Key West and Monroe County, and it is a popular and safe method of travel in Ireland. Being poor and without a car is acceptable there. The cars that passed me by without giving me a lift were usually full. As I was walking back to the Malin Head school from the Holy Well and the Wee House of Malin with my schoolboy guides, a man coming out of his house recognized me and apologized for not picking me up the day before because his car was full.

IT SEEMS to be an unspoken law in Ireland that you can do pretty much whatever you please, if it does not harm anyone or offend the Catholic moral sense, and even that moral sense is losing its hold among young people. Somehow, the Irish seem to be in closer touch with life, living it closer to the bone as they do, and know what it means to be freely human and natural, enslaved as they were by the British for hundreds of years until this century.

People who have lived in Key West longer than I have tell me that life here used to be freer, more natural, and happier. What have we lost that the Irish still have, and what have we gained?

(Richard Marsh will present a slide show of his trip to the British Isles at the Monroe County Public Library October 19 at 7:30 pm. Admission is free.)

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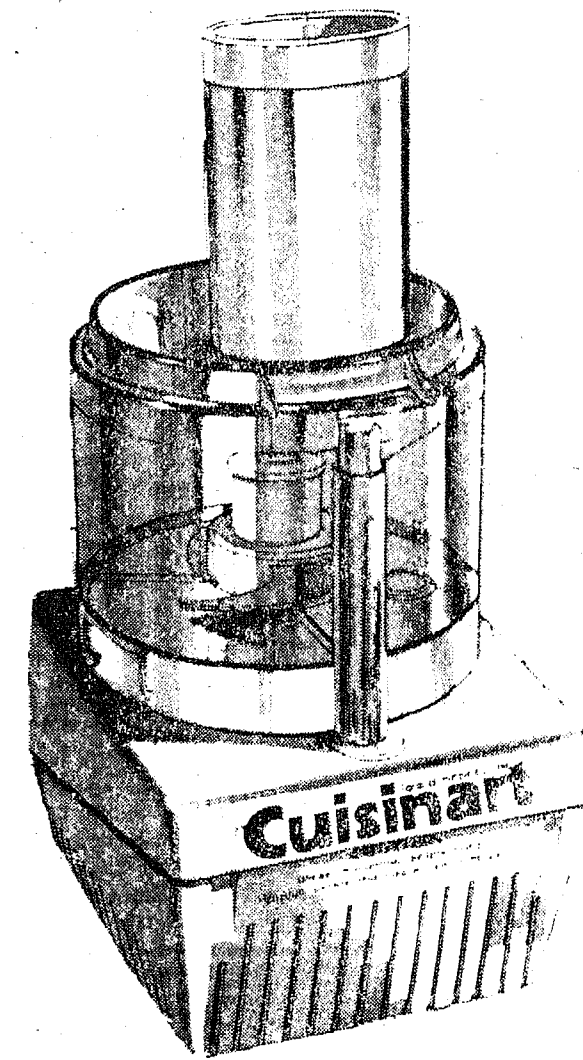
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REST BEACH TOWNHOUSE APPEAL DENIED

AFTER TWO postponements, the Key West City Commission, sitting as a Board of Adjustment, in a 4 to 1 vote denied the appeal of Bill Westray against the Casa Caselles Townhouse development on Atlantic Boulevard planned by Vincent Caselles. The hearing preceded the regular commission meeting on Monday evening, September 18th. The final issue turned on the point of whether the 20 Townhouses became Multiple Family Dwellings simply by changing the title bloc on the 14 page plans even though they were admittedly designed as townhouses. Chairman McCoy made the point that the name was changed from Townhouse to Multiple Family Dwellings before the building permit was issued on May 12, 1978. The commission chose to ignore the fact that as Multiple Family Dwellings, the project grossly violated the front and side yard setback requirements for the R2H zone. Commissioner Bruce Esquinaldo moved to deny the appeal. He was joined by Commissioners Arnold, Graham and Mayor McCoy. Commissioner Alton Weekley opposed the appeal denial. Westray has until October 18, 1978, to file an appeal in Circuit Court.



An immature yellow-crowned night heron in the mini-salt pond in a wild bird "nursery" at Rest Beach next to the Caselles property.



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