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Vol. 1, No. 19

Key West, Florida

July, 1976



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Robert B. Corcoran 26 June 1976



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From the Editor

Many people were very concerned about the Cattle Quarantine Station that Gil Ryder wrote about in the June issue. Mainly they wanted to know if it was official and unstoppable and if not, what could they do to help stop it.

Gil stated in the article "that a 25 year use agreement has been made between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command." Also the City Commission adopted a resolution endorsing the Cattle Quarantine Station on September 15, 1975.

Gil feels that probably not all plans and details have been nailed down and that a fight can be carried on. He suggests that individuals write to Senator Chiles and Representative Dante Fascell and send copies of letters to the Governor and the Attorney General. "Fifty protesting letters with one signature or one letter with 50 signatures can make a big difference in the thinking on this subject" Gil says.

He points out also that a citizen who has time and money could probably get an injunction against this project. One of the points of the injunction might be questioning if the Navy has the right to turn this land over to another agency in the first place.

But, even without a citizen with time and money to personally fight it, letters with signatures should be gotten together and sent to these officials.

Our cover this time is by artist Robert Caravan. Robert has been studying at the Ringling School of Art in Sarasota and, at present, is working for Greene Street Graphics. Robert is another example of the exceptionally high calibre of art we have had on our covers. Martha dePoo, Conrad Lamm, Joe Regan and now Robert Caravan. It's a great start and we have a fine cover by Steve Roberts on tap for the next issue.

Sharp-eyed readers were able to spot a mistake in the June article on "Crip" Lastres. The paper read that he was born in 1922 and had died one year ago at the age of 46. The arithmetic doesn't work and the many people who knew "Crip" knew that he had died 8 years ago. Had I done my job and proofread this article I would have caught this error.

Another mistake and a horrendous one indeed happened in the Italian Gardens ad where we advertise a 3 oz. Martini for \$1.99 when, egad, the cost is but 99¢. What happened was that originally we had put down a \$1.99 but Richard Lischer spotted the mistake and told us to change it to 99¢. This we did by pasting over the \$1 but that piece of paper came loose during the printing and the \$1 leapt forth. Our apologies to Richard and the good people at Poor Richards Italian Gardens.

The initials G.L. on those exquisite New Yorker-type drawings in this issue belong to Genevieve Lear, daughter of Liz Lear and Bud Jacobson. Hopefully we will continue to receive these from Genevieve who is now living in Canada. For those old friends who might want to reach Genevieve write Genevieve Lear-Fulton, 87 Howland Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5R-3B2.

A good friend of many Key Westers, Murphy, is still in the hospital in Miami. A Murphy Fund has been set up and monies for her can be taken to the Chart Room at the Pier House.

There is a rumor that there will be music in Key West July 3, 4, and 5. Nothing definite yet but, if you're interested, keep your ears open.

You'll notice that we're four pages shorter this time. I think we've been able to do this without bunched up the paper. Probably the next few issues will be 24 pages unless we are deluged with new ads.

Thank you.

W. Huckel

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EDITORIAL..... BILL HUCKEL COPY EDITOR..... DONNA MARSH
ART DIRECTION..... TOM POPE

With a little help from our friends . . .

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Berlin Sawyer

written and illustrated by Malcolm Ross

Berlin (accent on the first syllable) Sawyer comes about as close as one can come to being a Conch without actually being born in Key West. Mr. Sawyer admits that he was conceived here (his parents had recently arrived from the Bahamas) but being first born his mother desired to return to Nassau to be with her mother during the uncertainties of her first experience with childbirth and it was there in 1884 that Berlin was born. Sixty days later (Bahamian doctors would not allow an ocean voyage before that time) mother and infant returned to Key West. Berlin's father, who was a worker in a Key West cigar factory and mother (her father had been a ship's carpenter and caulker) were both from the Bahamas as were their forebears and of obvious English extraction, but it remains a mystery to the man why he was named after the former German capital.

Times were hard for the Sawyers during the waning years of the last century and Berlin, eldest of five children (the other four were all born in Key West and he survives them all) and as an aid in the support of his family, took to selling newspapers around town. Noteworthy among his clientele were the crew of the battleship Maine which had to be approached by boat due to its anchorage in the deep water beyond Fort Taylor. Special permission for conduct to (via the captain's barge or launch which Berlin remembers as being coal-fired) and boarding of the ship were given the youth by Captain Sigbee of the Maine. Berlin and his papers became a common sight aboard the vessel and the youth even worked out a special arrangement with the ship's cook who saved special treats for him from the ship's larder in exchange for the privilege of reading his newspapers.

One day while aboard ship with his bundle of New York Worlds, New York Herald and other papers the boy suddenly realized that the Maine was moving. His concern was not ill-founded as the Maine was indeed under sail and headed for Cuban waters. It was explained that the officers of the ship had an evening of festivities planned in Havana and the boy was reassured that he would be given comfortable quarters in which to spend the night aboard ship. None of the enlisted men would be going ashore -- only officers -- and the next day the ship would return again to Key West. This arrangement was not to Berlin's liking and perhaps due to some premonition of coming events he became quite agitated. His protests became loud and more violent until they reached the ears of the captain and the order was given to put the bothersome boy ashore. The events of the next twenty-four hours had their impact on history as well as on Berlin's newspaper sales. He notes that all of his

former newspaper customers from the Maine now rest in the Key West Cemetery.

In the days when commercial boats were powered by sail and at the mercy of the winds, a sudden calm could cause a delay in the delivery of goods and a perishable cargo could go bad. Banana boats which suffered this turn of fate became financial prospects for the enterprising youth. The dead-ripe fruit from these boats was of no value of course to a retailer (its shelf life had become nil) and extremely difficult to handle, but for 15 or 20 cents Berlin could buy a whole stalk of the over-ripe bananas and sell them on the street at the price of five for a nickel. Also, fruit which fell in the water during the unloading of the ship was up for grabs and the inventive boy was on the spot with suitable contraption for fishing the bananas from the sea.

A morning job of selling fish around the turn of the century allowed afternoons free (after a bath) to learn the barber trade and young Sawyer advanced to earnings of \$1.25 per week. At sixteen years of age the barbering profession (a career which he would pursue a total of 68 years) found him shaving Henry Flagler every morning during his frequent stays in Key West at the Jefferson Hotel (then the only hotel in town located in the 100 block of Duval Street). His total weekly salary at this time was five dollars a week. (Haircuts were then 25 cents and shaves 15 cents.) Berlin remembers Flagler as a pleasant, clean-shaven man who always was a good



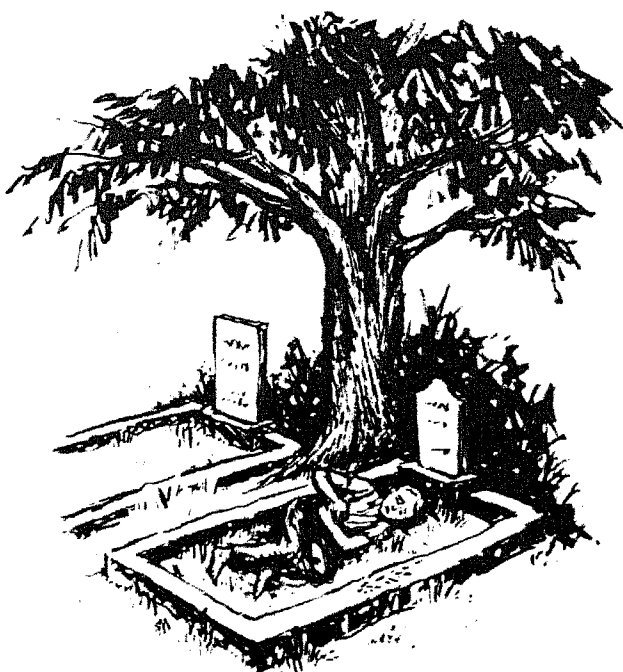
tipper. The prospect of a \$12-a-week salary at another barbershop in town prompted him to quit the Jefferson Hotel and head for better times. Through the years his barbering business flourished, expanding to an extensive establishment, The Three Friends Barber Shop, replete with beauticians and manicurists in the 500 block of Fleming Street.

Young Sawyer always enjoyed a fight ("When I was a kid I'd rather fight than eat.") And his interest in the manly art of self-defense led him to the foot of Duval Street and the Key West Athletic Club. As chairman of the board during the early years of this century he arranged two fights a week, at the club, bringing in boxers from Jacksonville, Tampa and Miami. For his own amusement he often worked out with the boxers -- ("They said they wouldn't be rough but always knocked hell out of me!") During the course of those diversions his nose was broken three times.

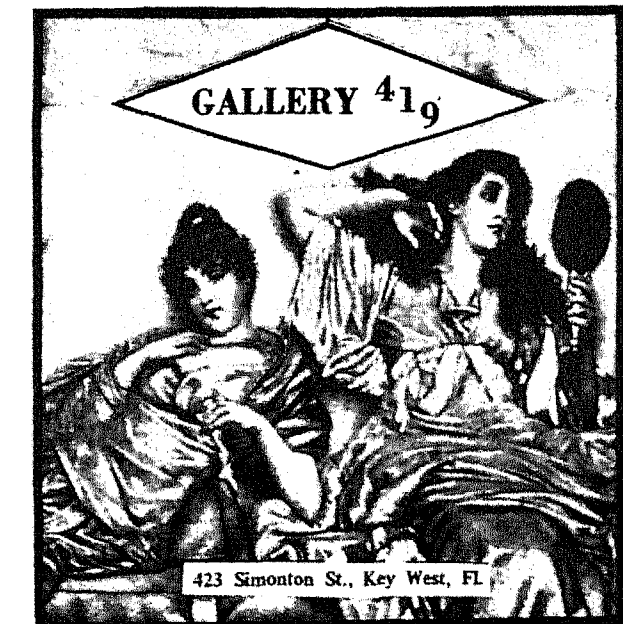
The Athletic Club building, which sat on the side of the present Southernmost Beach and its rows of rocking chairs and a steel rail the length of the veranda (estimated at about 100 feet across the front of the building) afforded for years a popular spot where locals could relax and put up their feet. The unparalleled view of the Atlantic and its gentle breezes tempted many to spend the night during the hot summer sleeping in the comfortable rocking chairs that lined the porch. Depression years, however, caused tastes to change, the Athletic Club fell into disuse and the building

Don't on p. 3

*Native born Bahamians also affect this term.



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some remarks

Here it is, July, the month that highlights this bicentennial year. Fireworks, parades and flags flying. These are good things to remind us of our heritage -- even the crass commercialism probably serves a purpose. It might be a good time for each of us to study and define our own personal individual patriotism -- or lack of it. Our feelings of patriotism are too often rather narrowly confined to wartime activities and occasional celebrations. Patriotism should really mean much more. We should be not only willing but proud to accept jury duty, to register and vote, not only for candidates but on referendum issues.

We should, each of us, take the time to study candidates and issues, and to discuss candidates and issues with our families, friends and neighbors, ready to listen quietly to opposing viewpoints.

If we all go to the polls armed with knowledge and are completely honest with ourselves, we are bound to put the right people in office and make proper decisions on issues most of the time.

Quite often the choice is limited, but there is a choice, and a small move in the right direction is better than no move at all. Improving government is at best a slow process but it can be done if enough people participate. If a particular candidate impresses you favorably, do more than vote -- send a contribution in the amount you can afford to his or her campaign fund. Volunteer to address mail, stuff envelopes, make phone calls, or help in some way. Remember, candidates favoring special interests have less trouble acquiring funds than the candidate who wants to represent the best interests of all the people.

Ask yourself what problems really bother you: Inflation? Crime? Drug addiction? Medical costs? Auto Insurance? Lack of Nursing Home facilities? Would you like to put a stop to the senseless vandalism that goes on? Would you like to see more of good things such as the beautification of Duval St.? It is well within your power to correct the evils and continue to improve the good things. You not only have the power, it is your patriotic duty to use that power for the betterment of the community, state and nation. There is an obvious effort to take the power away from you. For instance, there will be a referendum in the next election, involving doing away with the referendum law on bond issues for the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority. If you lose your right to vote on these financial matters, you are giving a few people the right to saddle you, your children, and your

grandchildren with a monstrous debt, without so much as a "by your leave". We all thought that we were going to elect our FKAA members of the board -- now that subject will be on the referendum ballot.

Thomas Jefferson said, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty", and you'd better believe it! The advocates of Special Interest are constantly working to undermine the power of the people. They even have some good people believing that only Communists advocate the power of the people. "...and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." Not a quotation from Marx, Trotsky, Lenin or Khrushchev, but from Abraham Lincoln, an American president who believed in the people. A gentleman named Alcuin, in a letter to Charlemagne (A.D. 800) advised him, "Vox populi, vox Dei". (The voice of the people is the voice of God.) God may not be as popular now as he was in those days, but the thinking is still sound. A little more Latin wisdom: "Vox pecuniae, vox diaboli". (The voice of the dollar is the voice of the devil.) See if you can locate the author of that yourself. It won't do anyone a bit of harm to study something besides the sport pages. The future of the community and the country is in your hands, for good or evil -- and the greatest evil is done by good people who do nothing.

Every flaw in our culture may be corrected by electing the right persons to the right offices. The right persons are of necessity the most intelligent people we can possibly get to accept the offices. Our revered forebears had a tendency to elect the ignorant to office. They did things like putting a bounty on bobcats and then couldn't understand why they became overrun with rats. Today we have intelligent people available who would know better -- let's work to get them elected.


Everyone who can vote cannot get openly involved in a battle for intelligent candidates and good government -- it's not the arena for sensitive souls -- but they can all vote and, in this bicentennial year, express their patriotism quietly but powerfully at the polls.

The issues are important and there are definite differences in the candidates.

Gil Ryder

GOOD NEWS! Mannie James, Key West City Attorney, said that the Administrative Appeal submitted almost two months ago will be heard after the new Commissioner is appointed. This Appeal, if you recall, asks the city to take some action on the building going on at Rest Beach. We'll let you know what happens.

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editorial

What is it about Key West that makes it so different? Other cities enjoy the same, if not a better climate. Physically Key West is not outstanding, certainly this city does not offer a variety of events, and our facilities are not really first rate. Architecturally, Key West is very exciting but while this is a strong factor in its difference it is not the most important. There are many towns with greater architectural and physical beauty that we enjoy but when their sons drift away to the cities they don't often return.

However, when a Conch leaves Key West for another city he generally returns. Why? What is its attraction? Why do people react so strongly to it? Why is it different?

It is because this town has heart. I have travelled widely in this and other countries and I know what I say. And I know that heart is fast disappearing from the towns and is gone in most of the cities. Probably the isolation of this town from the mainland played a big part in this. While other places were being overcome by the rush and the bigness of industrialization, while little towns disappeared and giant suburbs were created to siphon off people from the cities, while tensions were being created by this upheaval, while people of different color were caught in this economic race and turned against one another, while warmth for one's fellow man was replaced with caution towards him, Key West was going its own independent way -- it has been outside the waves of dissension that are ravaging this country.

Heart is the very quality that could save our country from its present agonies and it is found here in Key West. Everyone seems to know everyone else in Key West and walking down the street and being greeted by smiles is as common here as it is becoming rare elsewhere. Often strangers comment on how many characters there seem to be here -- is not a character only a man or woman who has been able to develop his or her own personality individually? In a world that is increasingly demanding conformity, the Conch still cuts his own path (many independent-minded outsiders are attracted here by this quality). In a country where larger and larger numbers of its citizens are scared to go out at night, Key West streets remain friendly and unthreatening. In a world where too many people are brought together through common fears, hates, and worries -- witness how together people become when a natural disaster strikes and how they drift apart in calm times -- the people of this island

share together a common love and that is love of their homes, their streets, their friends, their city.

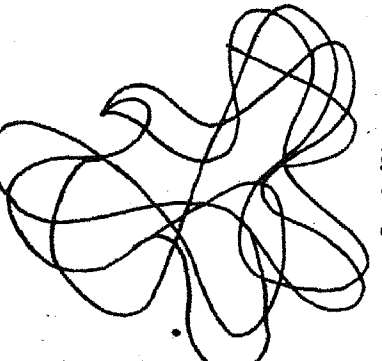
We have witnessed the harnessing of great rivers to create electricity for the good of man, we have witnessed the harnessing of great fears to create wars to the detriment of man -- let us now witness the harnessing of the great force that makes Key West so strong. Love for Key West brings us together; it can work for us, also.

If, as it appears, our economic survival depends on tourists, can we not all together paint this town in beautiful colors? Imagine a ride down tree and flower filled lanes filled with cottages painted in bright Caribbean colors. Could we not put the unemployed youth of this town to work painting, fixing up, and improving? Could we not receive funds to help us in this project from the government, thereby beautifying our town, putting our local unemployed to work, and attracting tourists at the same time? Could we not dot the whole island with beautiful little parks that would be cared for by the people of that area? Is it not possible that a large manufacturer of playground equipment would donate swings and slides to us as a community service? Would not the work being done by those who love Key West be first rate? Would not this community enterprise help overcome any angers that may still exist between different groups of its citizens?

This is not idle talk. Actually it is more important than beautifying our town, giving employment to our people, and attracting tourists. Our troubled country has no place to look at nor example to draw from where people can work together in harmony, live together peacefully as neighbors, play together happily as friends. Though in Key West we be many different people culturally, racially, factionally, religiously, and ideologically, we are united by our common love of place. Whatever wounds we have among ourselves here, they are small compared to the deep, unhealing wounds of the mainland. Key West can show our country what it desperately needs to see. And then, as the toe of the country heals, so heals the country.

(For a bicentennial message I have chosen to return to an editorial I wrote over 5 years ago. At this time I was running for City Commissioner and I wanted to put down, as close as I could, what I felt was the "why" of Key West. I feel the same now as I did then but there have been some changes in Key West's history. I wrote then about Key West that "it

Con't on p. 15



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WATER: a crisis

by Art Weiner

(This is the first in a series of scientific articles to deal with the basic resources of Monroe County and what we can do to best preserve them. Art Weiner's next article will deal with reverse osmosis well systems, cisterns, etc.)

WATER

Like a modern-day Ancient Mariner, the seeker after a water meter or a cold shower in the Florida Keys often finds "water" everywhere, nor any drop to drink. Ironically, the problem of a water shortage, rather than being local to the Keys is becoming increasingly widespread throughout the world.

The irony of the situation is that, by far, water is the most abundant single substance on the earth's surface, covering more than two-thirds of the planet. The earth's oceans, ice caps, glaciers, lakes, rivers, soils and atmosphere contain 1.5 billion cubic kilometers of water in one form or another.

So how can it be that we face a water crisis? In order to understand the problem, we must know something about the substance-water-H₂O.

In nearly all of its physical and chemical properties water is unique. And from these unusual characteristics flows the biological significance of water.

For instance, at temperatures and pressures characteristic of the earth's surface, water is one of the few substances which occurs in all three forms of matter - solid, liquid and gas. Moreover, according to results from the most recent space probes, the earth is probably the only celestial body in our solar system to contain any liquid water whatsoever.

The unusual thermal properties of water give the world's oceans an extraordinary degree of control over our climate. Because water has such a high heat capacity it can absorb great amounts of heat while its own temperature rises only slightly. Conversely, as energy is released its temperature drops more slowly than most other materials. This slow warming and cooling, together with other important factors [great thermal conductivity and large latent heat of evaporation] affects yearly, daily and even hourly changes in the temperature of oceans, lakes and the atmosphere. Thus this buffering effect prevents wide variation in the earth's surface temperature thereby creating a mild climate conducive to the existence of life.

But what is it that is so special about water itself that makes it essential to the existence of life? It is no mere coincidence that the region of the earth where life exists - the "biosphere" - is a region in which liquid water can be found in substantial quantities. Life most probably originated in water - it makes up over 80 per cent of the bodies of most organisms, serving as a medium of transport and as a solvent.

More substances can be dissolved in water than in any other solvent, and since nearly all chemical reactions take place while the reacting molecules are in solution, most life processes depend upon materials being dissolved or suspended in a watery medium. For example, during the digestive process, when large food molecules such as starches are broken into smaller sugars, water is essential.

Water molecules also directly enter into that most significant of processes - photosynthesis, wherein water is used as the source of hydrogen atoms needed in making sugars. And during respiration, the surfaces of your lungs must be wet in order for the molecules of oxygen and carbon dioxide to move to and from your blood.

As well as performing these essential functions within the bodies of living things, water also serves as the "habitat" of many kinds of organisms. A great many of the earth's million or so creatures live in the ocean or in fresh water. Those which have evolved to a land existence still carry within themselves, enclosed against evaporation their own watery worlds.

This absolute requirement for water by living things is, in the case of land-dwelling creatures, a requirement for freshwater.

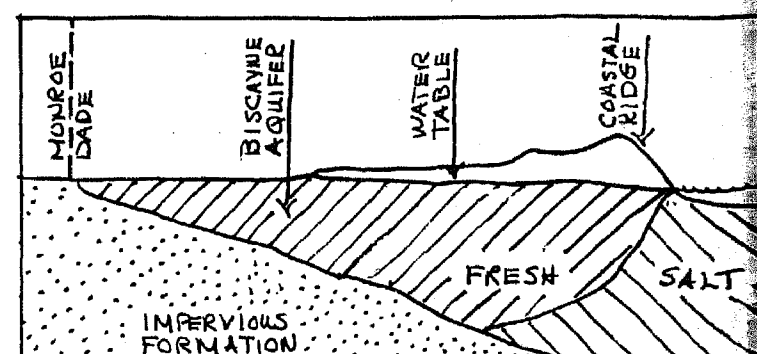


FIGURE 1
 Generalized Cross Section of Biscayne Aquifer

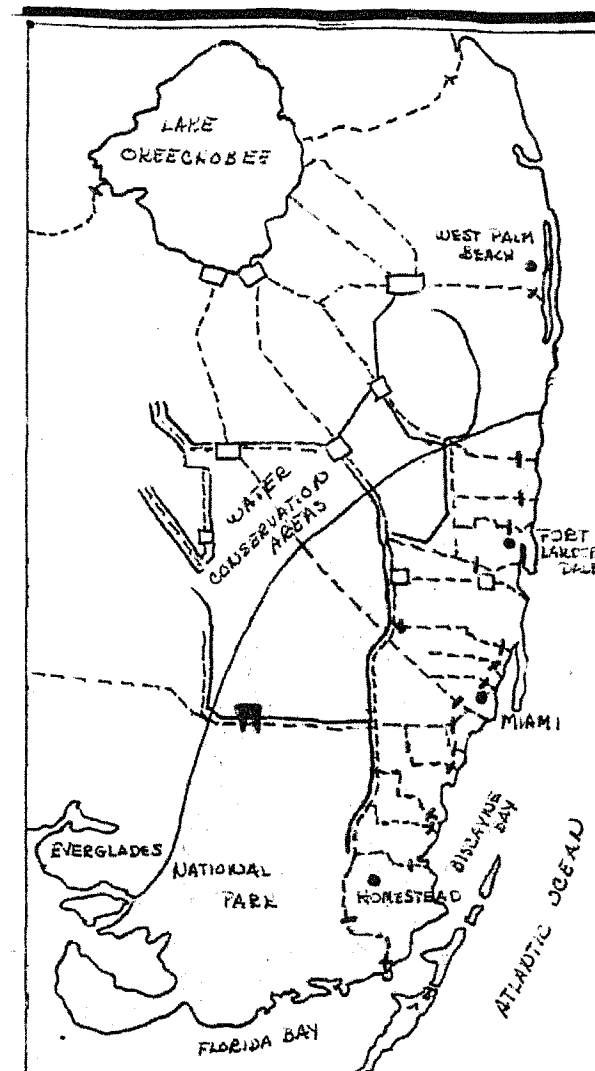


FIGURE 2

— Levee
 --- Canal and Structure
 □ Pumping Station
 ▽ Spillway
 ——— Extent of Biscayne Aquifer

Herein lies the problem.

The seawater of the world's oceans and seas make up about 97 per cent of all water. Of the remaining 3 per cent, three quarters is locked up as solid in the polar ice caps and in glaciers.

And when one measures the volume of water in all of the world's lakes, rivers and streams, one finds that it represents only 1.5 per cent of the planet's liquid freshwater, since 97.54 per cent is to be found underground. The remainder is in the form of atmospheric water vapor and moisture in the soil.

Man's exploitation of groundwater is quite extensive. Each year in the United States, about 500,000 wells are dug and approximately half the 40,000 water systems in the U.S. use some subsurface water. This dependence upon groundwater is increasing throughout the world. In the next century the world

wide demand for water is expected to increase eightfold. In the U.S., water consumption has doubled since 1950 and is expected to double again by the year 2000.

The continued availability of high groundwater is especially important to the residents of the Florida Keys since the primary source of water for this area is the 18 inch, 130 mile long aqueduct constructed by the Navy in 1940. The water for the aqueduct is pumped from wellfields in Florida City which tap into the southern end of the Biscayne Aquifer, the top of which is at ground surface throughout much of Dade County [see fig. 1].

An aquifer is essentially a porous geological formation which has formed over an impermeable or non-porous rock layer. The impervious layer serves to trap and channel the water which has accumulated in the level above it. Recharge of the Biscayne Aquifer is accomplished in two ways. Rain falling directly over the aquifer seeps through the soil and into the permeable rock below. Additional recharge is managed by the Central and Southern Flood Control District which maintains and operates a system of levees, canals, control structures, pumping stations and water storage areas [see fig. 2]. This regional water system controls the freshwater resources of Palm Beach, Broward, Dade and Monroe Counties.

The heart of this system is Lake Okeechobee whose primary source of water is the Kissimmee River, the headwaters of which lie in the Orlando area. Levees impound water in the lake and in three water conservation areas to the southeast. The system is designed to provide flood protection and to conserve water for the urbanized and agricultural areas of southeastern Florida.

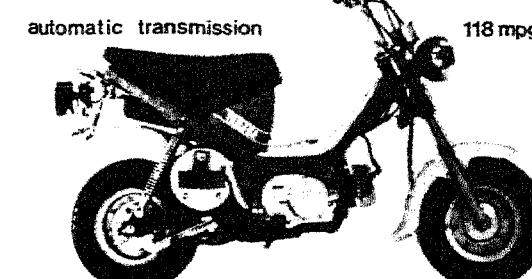
Water levels in this region rise during the rainy season until they reach annual highs, usually in October. Flow in the canals of the system is regulated so that groundwater levels in the urban areas and farmlands are maintained low enough to prevent flooding. During the dry season, these canals transfer water from Lake Okeechobee and the conservation areas to Everglades National Park, the Everglades agricultural area and to the east coast to replenish groundwater supplies thereby preventing saltwater intrusion into municipal wellfields.

As large as this water system is, it is still highly susceptible to problems of pollution and mismanagement. Damage or contamination of aquifer recharge areas in the Kissimmee watershed could have ramifications way downstream in Key West. Therefore careful management of this large and interdependent system is essential for the survival of both the natural and man-made communities of southeastern Florida.



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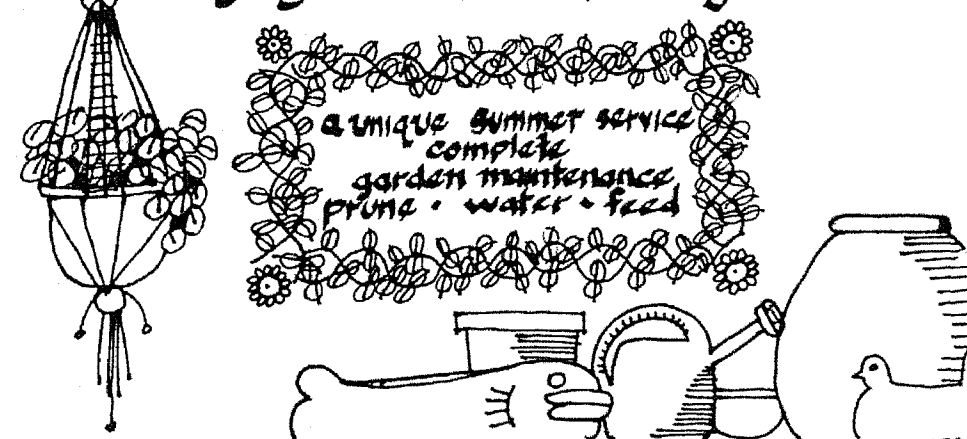
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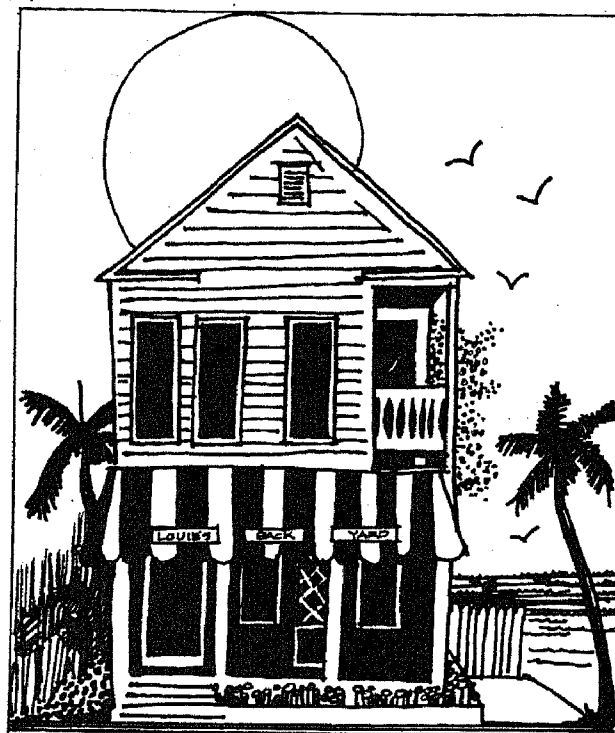
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Con't from p. 3

with its marvelous porch and 60 foot square dance hall was torn down.

Around the time of World War II an acquaintance and former colleague in the barber trade, Arthur "Kitty" Gomez, advised Berlin to run for the office of sheriff. ("What the hell do I know about being sheriff?" Gomez had traded his barber scissors (which Berlin had always sharpened for him) for a gavel, eventually becoming circuit court judge. Something convinced Berlin to give it a try. He was elected, of course, serving 12 years, and apparently the only man in Keys history to serve three terms, as Sheriff of Monroe County from 1941 to 1953. During this time he attained the standard requirement for Key West citizenship, namely, a nickname -- "Daddy". A contender for his office during the campaign for his third term turned out to be another local boy, John Spottswood, but Berlin predicted to him that he would beat him by four or five hundred votes but this apparently did not dampen Spottswood's political aspirations.

Besides his obvious spunk Mr. Sawyer attributed his 90-odd years to the fact that he "doesn't know the taste of beer, wine or liquor" and limited experience with cigarettes. That experience involved one pack of cigarettes (he still remembers the brand -- "Cycle") for which he traded three eggs (stolen from his grandmother's chicken coop and worth about ten cents at the time) to a local merchant. All twenty of these cigarettes he smoked in relatively rapid succession while sitting under a large tamarind tree which then grew in the cemetery. The resultant hours of nausea and vomiting among the gravestones (it was 1 A.M. before he left the cemetery) and a subsequent beating with a "modified" horse brace* discouraged the youth from taking up the habit.



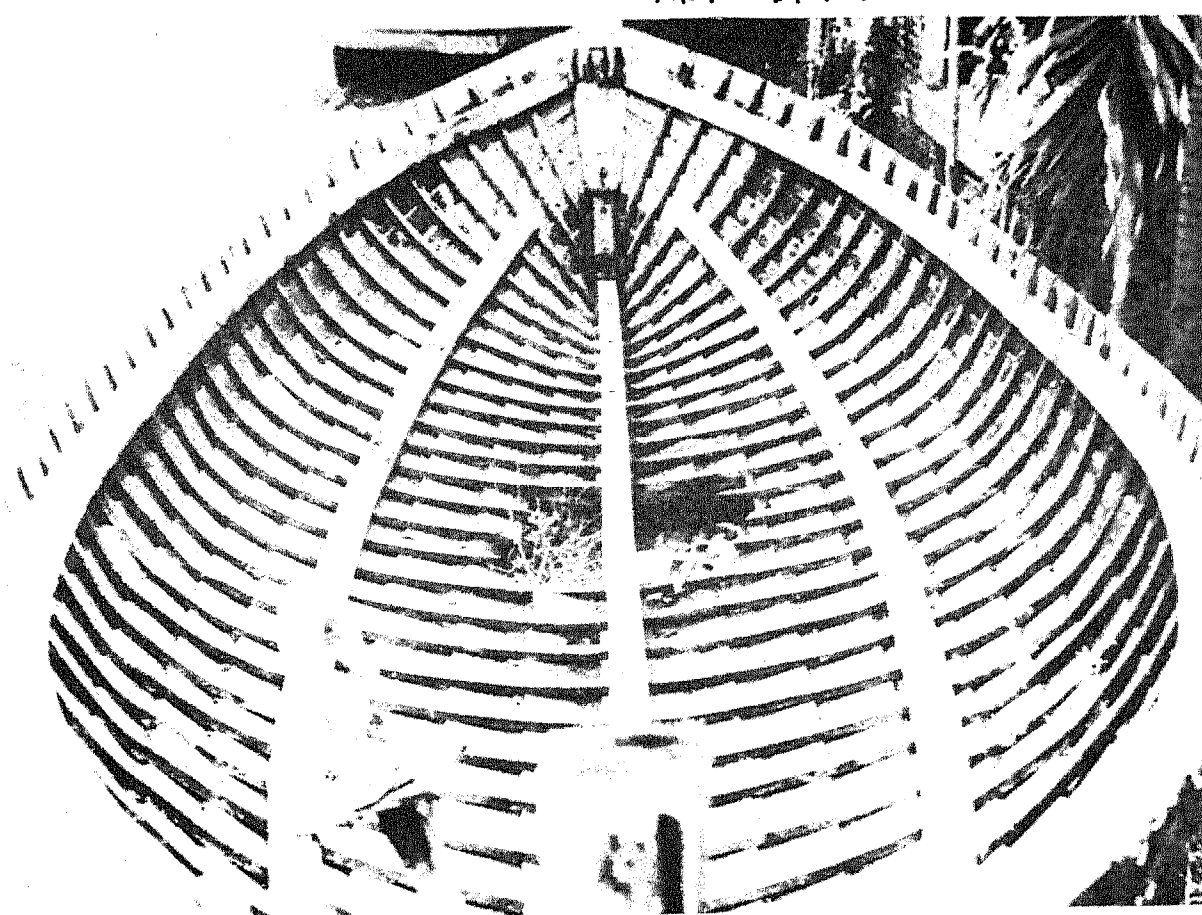
"Limpia calle! Limpia calle!" ("Clean the street! Clean the street!") yell the Spanish-speaking children as they walk by Mr. Sawyer's house in the 600 block of Fleming Street, for a frequent sight is Mr. Sawyer with rubber-tipped cane ("I wear out one cane tip a week.") coaxing a bit of litter or a leaf off his sidewalk and into the gutter. This ritual is often performed even before daybreak -- the man rises between three and four A.M., having retired at eight the previous evening -- and the day begins early for Berlin Sawyer (usually before that slugabed the sun has risen!) with a morning walk to the ocean at the foot of Duval Street.

*One of two leather straps connecting the horse's harness to the vehicle. One end had been split into five sections on the order of a cat-o-nine tails.

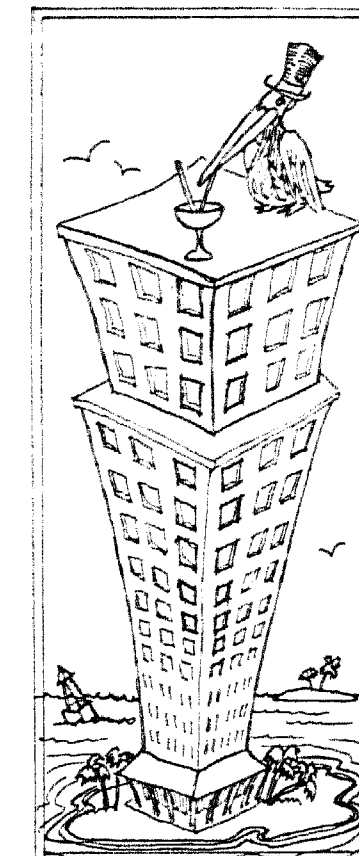


FORMS and TEXTURES

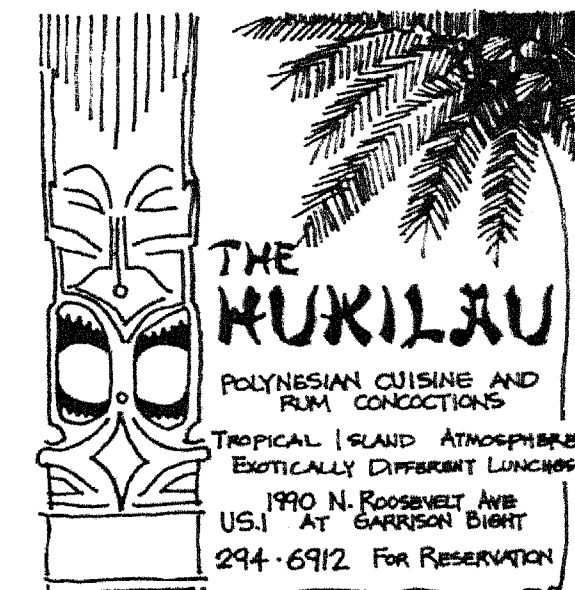
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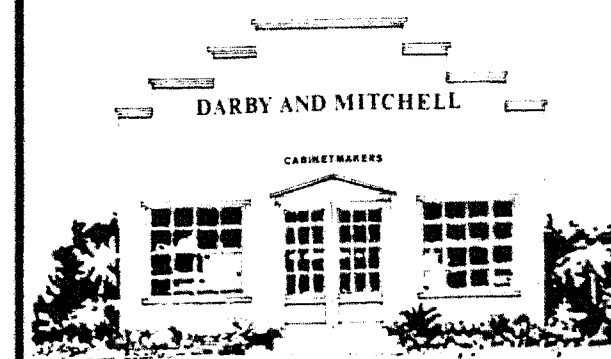


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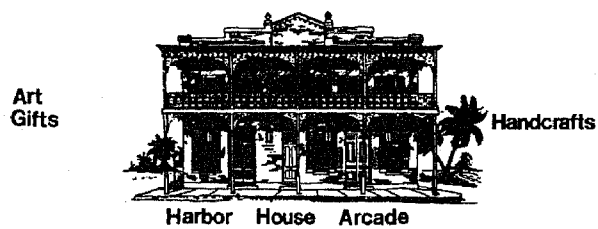
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SPEEDER

by John Hellems

THEY OFTEN CALLED HIM SPEEDO...

One thing is for certain about familiar sights: when they are no longer where they are supposed to be, they are missed. Being missed is often the only tribute paid to an everyday situation, occurrence, or person. A person, for instance, someone you see and to whom you say "mornin'" every day for years, one day dies and takes his "mornin'" with him. You feel a loss, something has been taken away, never to return. No doubt, a subtle affection has dropped from your life, and only when it is no longer there do you stop to think that a close neighbor, one to whom you've only nodded or smiled, but were close to, has met the dark moment.

That final moment (who can say whether it is dark) awaits us all, but in the interlude the loss we feel for others is partly filled by our memories of them. Anecdotal remembrances often assign a person to a higher level of esteem than he ever guessed would be his while alive.

One such everyday and unassuming person was Edmundo Gonsalves. Most of us in Key West knew Edmundo by his nickname, Speeder. Speeder was a corpulent soul who for years rode his bicycle not at all speedily around the Island City. He had been a twenty year man in the Navy, a first class commissaryman, and after his discharge he continued cooking for the Navy as a civil service employee.

Speeder's nickname had been pinned on him during his first few minutes in the Navy. Mistaking the Portuguese name Gonsalves for the Spanish Gonzalez, Speeder's first commanding officer said to him, "Gonzalez, eh, O.K. Speedie Gonzalez pick up that duffelbag and MOVE!" Speeder thereafter was referred to as Speedie,

Speedo, or Speeder, the three handles being interchangeably used by his friends.

Being a Navy cook, Speeder always got up early. In fact, he got up so early that he could have a morning beer before the bars closed at 4 a.m. He would have an eye-opener among the bedraggled remnants of the night crowd, enjoy his first cigar of the day, and then be off to work.

Speeder was punctual, and despite his steady rather than speedy pace, downtown people could always be sure that it wasn't too many minutes after 1 p.m. when his bicycling form would come drifting down Greene St., exiting the gallery after work.

Speeder's afternoons were his own, and frequently he would pass his leisure hours in the downtown taverns. He felt a home-sweet-home coziness in the bars, and he would talk with virtually anyone about anything. He especially delighted tourists intent on hearing first hand accounts of what Ernest was really like. Speeder could gossip or throw the bull to suit the occasion, and his slight drawl, somewhat akin to W.C. Fields, dusted his contrived commentaries with additional humor.

One particularly realistic put-on, perpetrated by Speeder and his good friend Bookie, used to involve an across the bar shouting argument over which of them was going to have to leave -- the place not being big enough for them both. This was the scene. Speeder sitting at the bar with some tourists. Enter Bookie, slow and wobbly, who stares across at Speeder and says loudly, "What that Portagee doin in here? Don't 'llow

no Portagees in here!" Conversation stops. All eyes are drawn to Bookie. Speeder is the last to look across at the accusative Bookie. He takes his straw hat off, sets it on the bar, stretches both arms out straight, then crosses them, flicks his cigar, and in a dry drawl says, "Boy, I thought we done straighten that out las' week? Youse Indians are off the reservation coming in here. Go back to your reservation Choocho, be a good Indian." Bookie appears not to hear. He stumbles on to a barstool, orders a beer, and commences to heap verbal abuse on Speeder and the Portagee Indians. "You dirt scratching swine ain't fit to be among people. How you ever get in here unnoticed is beyond me. How come you ain't out at the dump lookin' for lunch? You betta git out a here 'fore the Sheriff comes by an runs you in for trespassin' on human bein' territory."

Speeder, frowning, leans forward slightly and points his lit cigar at Bookie and says, "Hell no I ain't goin' anywhere. But my advice to you Tonto is to back out that door right now, before I come over there and kick your ass clear back to Alabama."

Meanwhile, apprehension wrinkles the brows of the two older couples to Speeder's right. They look at each other a bit incredulously, and they seem to wonder, "Gads, are we caught in the cross-fire of a racial incident? After all we are in the South and people here are slow to change, but wait? Why are these two curious fellows denouncing each other as Indians? This fat guy here doesn't look anything like an Indian. With that narrow chin and tiny moustache he looks maybe French, but not Indian. And that other guy is obviously Black, he's no Indian!"

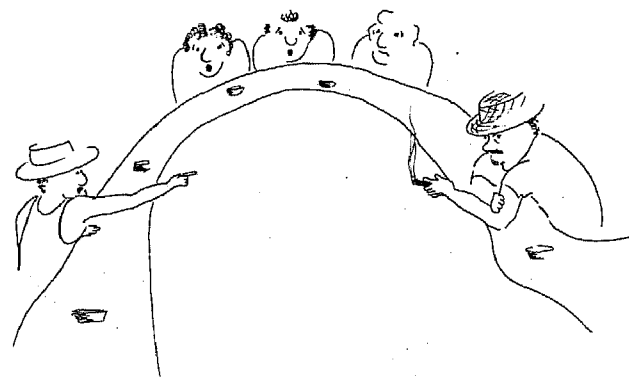
The threats continue to fly back and forth. The only concession to civility is that the combatants do not interrupt each other. They take turns like two musclemen alternately bashing each other in the bicep. If neither adversary has a new barb at his turn, he merely repeats one already used.

"Chocochos are yellow"

"Portagees drink dead rat juice"

"Chocochos are never sober"

"Portagees drink dead rat juice."



Tourist think it only bad breath. Ha, Ha, Ha."

"Come over here you sorry yellow cotton picker. You soon to be dead rat!"

"You come over here you corn fed Portagee!"

Then, just as the tourists are about to abandon their half empty drinks, Bookie and Speeder simultaneously buy each other a beer and share a long laugh.

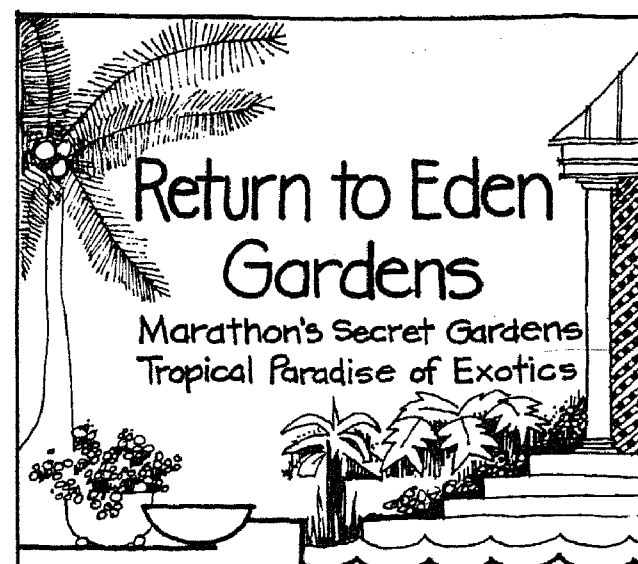
One notable characteristic of Speeder was his insistence on being a gentleman in the presence of ladies. To him all women were ladies. He was not merely an opener of doors, or lighter of cigarettes. Beyond these regular courtesies his amenities toward the fairer sex included a decent tongue, deep bows (with hat in hand), and lavish compliments running the gamut from, "My, my, you look lovely tonight" to "My word, haven't I seen you somewhere before? In the movies? Yes! You are ... no you couldn't be her, you're so much more beautiful than she..."

One afternoon several years ago Speeder stopped into the Midget to have his regular refreshment. It was quiet there that day except for three fishermen who sat across the bar behind three separate piles of money. The gentlemen appeared to have been there some time, for their laughter was somewhat raucous and very continuous. Speeder paid them no mind, got a beer, and was informed by the bartender that the fishermen had paid for it. In fact, they had bought everyone's drinks since opening time that morning.

"Huh, it's a wonder the joint ain't packed" said Speeder, and he nodded his thanks across the way. He was about to start reading the "Citizen" when a thin and drawn woman about 50 appeared at the door, and with some effort came up the two steps into the room. Speeder looked up, and with a smile said, "Hello darlin'. Wouldja care to join me for a cocktail?" The woman smiled acceptance and sat down with Speeder.

Meanwhile, the six bloodshot eyes across the bar were slowly focusing in on the new arrival. The first man to recognize the smiling woman exploded in laughter. "Whooeeeee, look who's here fellas, it's Ringworm Rozie! Hey Rozie, how's it goin' babe?" Roz, seemingly not at all perturbed by the loud greeting, kept smiling and gave a little wave to the chattering men. Another of the men then yelled for Roz to get whatever she wanted, it was on him. Roz quickly ordered a double Scotch, and the man flippantly pushed his hill of crumpled bills toward the bartender. At this, Speeder stood straight up on the bars footrest to protest, "Just one minute! Bartender don't take that man's money! I'm buying this lady's drink. I offered first, and the lady accepted." This challenge brought the men's hilarity to a sudden halt, and it was a few seconds before the first man answered, "Zat so Fatso? Well, we done bought every drink in here so far today, and till it suits us ta stop were a goin' to continue. Over dead bodies, if nec-

Con't on p. 14



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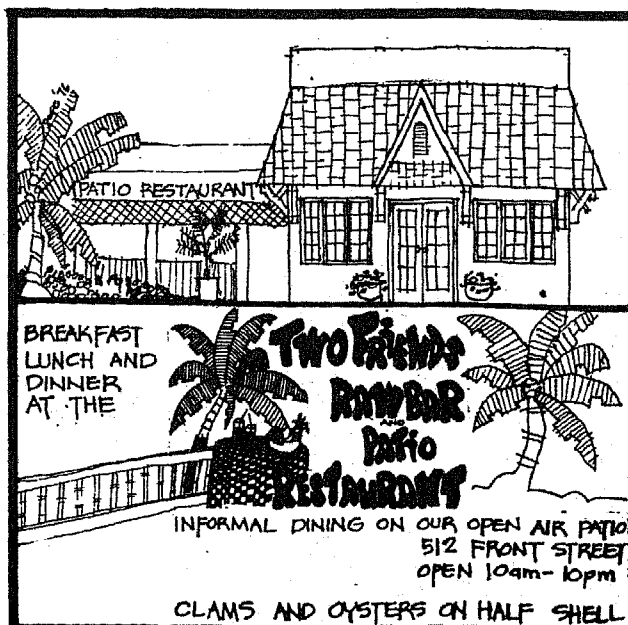


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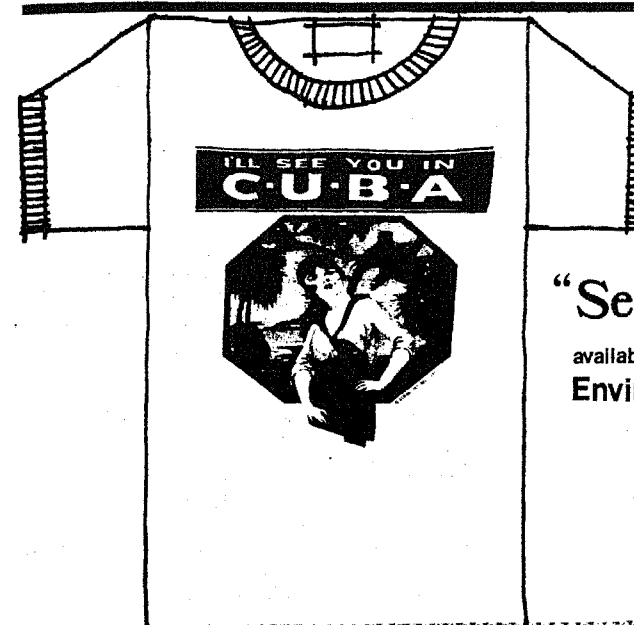
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The Florida Keys

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In 1934, two years before I first came to Key West, the city had declared itself bankrupt and turned its affairs over to the Florida Emergency Relief Administration. Once it had been the richest city per capita in the country; now it was one of the poorest, with more than three quarters of its population on relief.

The streets were filled with pot-holes and no trace of paint showed on any of its houses. But because the streets were bad what little traffic there was moved with a tranquil slowness. Because there was no paint on the houses, they were the softly silvered gray of the driftwood. Against their sides the blossoms of the bougainvillea, the hibiscus and the flame vine blazed like colored lights. Poverty and neglect lay over the town like a thin film of dust. But in the simplicity of these old houses, with their slender columns, their second-story porches and captain's walks, there was a great dignity. There was also a sense of toughness, of an ability to survive. The town, you felt, was not dead but merely going through a temporary hard time.

You felt it in the people too. No one seemed to worry or, if he did, he had the natural courtesy not to show it. From the open doors of the bars on Duval Street the radios, tuned in on Havana, blared out rumbas that covered the roll of dice and the spinning of roulette wheels in the back rooms. At Pena's Garden of Roses people danced or sat out in the warm night under the stars. A few blocks away on the dark streets there were no sounds except your own footfalls and the clicking of the coconut fronds above your head. Cuba nearer that the mainland of the United States.

Key West was an outpost. Like the rest of the Keys, its color was North American but Caribbean.

Since then much of what is happening to the Keys has also happened to Key West. The concrete-block-stucco houses are being jammed together on newly filled land on the outskirts of town. The graceful wooden fronts of many of the old houses on the main street, now turned into stores, have been covered with imitation stone and sheets of chromium and glass. Other houses have been torn down to make parking lots. On the north side of the island, where once there were bird rookeries among the mangroves, there are filling stations, supermarkets and drive-in restaurants. What used to be a small Navy yard is now a large naval base. Pena's was torn down to make room for it and there are no more roulette wheels in the back rooms. The word of Key West's incomparable winter climate has spread and people from the north and mid-west come here to retire. There are times when I have the uneasy feeling that I am living in some big-city suburb that happens to have palm trees growing along its streets. But sooner or later the feeling passes and I know that in spite of these changes Key West is still in many ways an outpost and is still Caribbean.

Sometimes it is enough just to open my eyes and look about me. The city's colors are bright but faded from the hot and steady sun. In the salt-filled damp air, under the heavy night dews of winter and the crashing rains of summer, the metal roofs of its houses quickly rust to the dull red-brown of dried blood. Where they have been freshly silver-painted the intense light glitters in every point and angle. Plants grow here that will not grow outside the tropics. When spring begins, in February, the trees burst into bloom; the yellow puffs of the Women's Tongues, the curled pink shell shapes of the frangipani, the golden shower of the yellow alder, the pure white or deep purple of the orchid tree. It is a time when people cross to the shady side of the street.

There is this heat, this slowness and this heavy bloom. There is also the past, rich in lawlessness and violence, in piracy, smuggling, gun-running and wrecking. Here, in Key West, its traces remain.

Key Westers speak casually of the ghosts that haunt their houses, of knocks on the wall and dim figures that drift over the garden or across the living room. Around the corner from my house an old man dug up a crock of Spanish doubloons. A pirate, he said, directed him to it.



Illustrated by Malcolm Ross



Key West has a past but it also has a present. It has always been a going concern. Cigar-making, salvaging, sponging, fishing have always been more important than the tourist and the winter resident. If they were to stop coming they would be missed but the city could still get on. It is something that can be said of few other Florida towns.

There is no tourist center where senior citizens gather and play checkers. There is only a token handful of shuffleboard courts. But some two hundred shrimp boats operate out of Key West, and in and above the deep water of the Straits of Florida the destroyers and submarines and airplanes of the Navy spend the day trying to outwit one another. At night their crews go ashore, the juke boxes begin to boom, and the sweet scent of night-blooming jasmine becomes laced with the malty aroma of beer. The city is alive.

The casual winter tourist has no inkling of how frantically alive it really is. He takes the Conch Tour Train around the island and visits the aquarium. He admires - or is bored by - the architecture of the old houses. He is charmed by - or deplures - the carefree seediness that clings to many parts of the old town. At the Turtle Kraals he sees the sad-eyed, deeply sighing turtles that have been brought by schooner from Grand Cayman and are waiting to be made into soup. He takes a snapshot of his family posed in front of the Southernmost House and perhaps has a look at the old brick forts or the recently restored house where Audubon once stayed. He swims at one of the public beaches and if he goes fishing he will probably catch more fish than he ever dreamed possible.

These are all pleasant and worthwhile things to do. But there is more to life in Key West. It is not so simple. In fact it is not simple at all and I think that the origin of "Rock Fever" - a generally understood term which means that there are times when you have simply got to get out of there for a while - stems from this fact. Too much goes on. Below the lazy calm of its surface Key West is in a chronic state of fermentation. It is a combination of the violent and the absurd.

This is not easy to explain. Such a place does not lend itself to the precise analysis that a team of sociologists, coming to study a town, would expect to find. If someone were to ask me to take him on a guided tour of Key West, which would include not only points of interest but comments on the habits and customs of the natives, I should be glad to do so. The subject never ceases to fascinate me.

by Benedict Thielen

Let us go down to the harbor and look at the shrimp boats, passing on the way a small but picturesque skid-row whose familiar winos seem to have discovered the secret of immortality. The shrimp fleet with its strung nets and its high-prowed boats with the engaging names - Cracker Boy, Blue Seas, Miss Pud - is a pretty sight.

Notice these handsome old houses. Some of the well-to-do Conch families live in them, as their ancestors did before them. Conch is what the native Key Wester of Bahamian descent is called, because in the Bahamas the muscle of the queen conch is highly esteemed as an article of food. It's very good, like a cross between a scallop and an abalone, and local folklore credits it with powerful aphrodisiac qualities. There used to be another really beautiful Old New England-style church just around the corner, but it burned down. So did a nearby dry-cleaning establishment, a lumber yard, a historic mansion and a gambling parlor - all within a few months. It turned out, as people began to suspect after a while, to be the work of a single enterprising pyromaniac. Key West attracts all sorts of interesting people.



The old stone house with the brick wall where the sight-seeing bus is stopping is Ernest Hemingway's. The last time he lived in it was over twenty-five years ago but that doesn't matter. Tennessee Williams owns a little house with big grounds on the other side of town.

You're quite right in your impression that many people connected with the arts come to Key West. Some spend the winter, others come for a short vacation. There are many bad painters and a few good ones. At the Sun and Sand you will sometimes find Doris Lee lying face down on the wrong side of the beach, hiding among the tourists. Sally Rand, the fan dancer, used to have a house here and I was once an interested listener to a conversation between her and Thornton Wilder. With fascination mingled with alarm I have watched Witter Bynner demonstrate a Russian dance that shook the termite-riddled floors of the hundred-year-old house I was living in at the time. I have swum with the silent Mademoiselle Francoise Sagan, fished with the S.J. Perlman and, pushing a cart of groceries, reverently followed Tallulah Bankhead through the neon-lit mazes of a supermarket. I have seen Robert Frost at a distance. For many years John Dewey was a neighbor of mine. Although Human Nature and Conduct was written before his Key West days the subject was still close to his heart and we shared an interest in the Key West brand of it as reported by the local paper.

Such as? Well, such as the large front-page ad that read: "NOTICE! The Garcia involved in the shooting at 1508 Washington St., yesterday is NOT Robert Garcia, Owner and Manager of the Key West Fence and Awning Co." Or, in a later issue, a more cryptic plea which read simply: "I HOPE that you fishermen will attend to your own business and leave someone who is trying to lead an innocent life alone. Andrew Jenkins." Or the story of the old man who beat a woman with a hammer, claiming she was a witch - and the medical examiner's report which stated, "While he talks about



witches and persons who are trying to poison him, we would say he is perfectly sane and can stand trial. It is a phobia, his talk about witches and other things that are following him." Or that of the yeggs who drew up to a centrally located store on a Sunday afternoon, jimmied the lock, rolled the company safe onto a truck and drove away. Or of the young woman who pumped a clipful of 45's into her husband, went to her room to reload, fired the second clip, and next day was acquitted by a coroner's jury on the grounds of self-defense.

If you'll excuse me for a moment I'd like to have a word with that old gentleman in the beret who is walking on the other side of the street with his husky dog. He is a Frenchman, a violinist by profession, who has been working for fifteen years on an invention, a boat whose motive power is to come from a captured shark. I heard the other day that he finally succeeded and has been whizzing all over the Straits of Florida. I want to congratulate him.

I'm sorry to have been so long but you know how these things are. Time isn't of great importance in Key West. Let's see, where were we? What? You're tired? Already? Why, we've scarcely scratched the surface. We haven't been to a single bar or seen a single stripper. We haven't been to a City Commission meeting and listened to the audience being indignant about everything from the garbage situation to the recent removal of the Cuban flag from behind the mayor's chair. We haven't been to a cockfight or bought a bolita ticket. We haven't eaten bolich or bollos or molletes or Key Lime pie. We haven't been to a rumba session at the Cuban Club.



You say one must need nerves of steel to live in this place? Well, yes, in a way that's true. Either that or plenty of adrenalin, such as you get from the barracudas when you go skin diving. There are times when I find it exhausting. Now and then it becomes necessary to leave and find relaxation in some quiet place. Such as Broadway and Forty-second Street. But I come back.

A habit? Like a drug? Probably. By the way, I know this shrimper who, whenever he comes back from the Campeche Banks, brings a supply of marijuana and ... Not now? Well, some other time perhaps. Thank you, I enjoyed it too. Though, as I said, we've barely scratched the surface. I could go on and on and on.

But I won't. Instead, I will walk down Whitehead Street, past the Naval Station and the old lighthouse with its enormous banyon tree, to its end. Lined up along the low sea wall and on the pavement below are the conch shells which boys sell to the tourists. They look like pieces of glazed sculpture, pink and gold and porcelain white against the background of the blue-and-green striped sea. Out on the water an old rowboat, sculled with the peculiar jerky grace of the Bahamian, is moving toward the shore. The man standing in the stern is big against the sky, dwarfing the freighters that make their way, huddled on the horizon, through the ocean-river of the Gulf Stream.

The boat, the man, the ships are all held in a great downpouring of light. To stand there is to be one with them, to hang for a few seconds suspended in time as though it were the clear water above a reef. Beyond the turmoil and the wonderful nonsense there are these moments of sudden beauty and profound peace. They are not hard to find. They are another reason for returning.



Bill

The article made me very nostalgic and nostalgia overwhelmed me in regard to the drawings. The Keys were this type of place when I came here 8 or 9 years ago and these were the things about the Keys and Key West that kindled the love affair that I became involved in. I hope the drawings are suitable and the sort that you wished. With more time I might have been able to come up with some more. The conch house is fictional, a ghost of the past, an essence of conch houses, a romantic impression, an ideal, the way conch houses are most comfortable, surrounded by lush vegetation - (not by neatly cropped hedges and manicured lawns), looking somewhat lonesomely out to sea or into the setting sun, aloof to the 20th century. The buttonwood is also non-existent, the essence of buttonwood-ness. The heron is another spirit, (Did you ever see one at night especially in the car lights? They light up like ghosts!) his legs lost among the spider legs of the mangroves.

Malcolm

The Florida Keys

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You felt it in the people too. No one seemed to worry or, if he did, he had the natural courtesy not to show it. From the open doors of the bars on Duval Street the radios, tuned in on Havana, blared out rumbas that covered the roll of dice and the spinning of roulette wheels in the back rooms. At Pena's Garden of Roses people danced or sat out in the warm night under the stars. A few blocks away on the dark streets there were no sounds except your own footfalls and the clicking of the coconut fronds above your head. Cuba was nearer that the mainland of the United States. Key West was an outpost. Like the water surrounding the Keys, its color was not North American but Caribbean.

illustrated by Malcolm Ross

Since then much of what is happening to the Keys has also happened to Key West. The concrete-block-stucco houses are being jammed together on newly filled land on the outskirts of town. The graceful wooden fronts of many of the old houses on the main street, now turned into stores, have been covered with imitation stone and sheets of chromium and glass. Other houses have been torn down to make parking lots. On the north side of the island, where once there were bird rookeries among the mangroves, there are filling stations, supermarkets and drive-in restaurants. What used to be a small Navy yard is now a large naval base. Pena's was torn down to make room for it and there are no more roulette wheels in the back rooms. The word of Key West's incomparable winter climate has spread and people from the north and mid-west come here to retire. There are times when I have the uneasy feeling that I am living in some big-city suburb that happens to have palm trees growing along its streets. But sooner or later the feeling passes and I know that in spite of these changes Key West is still in many ways an outpost and is still Caribbean.

Sometimes it is enough just to open my eyes and look about me. The city's colors are bright but faded from the hot and steady sun. In the salt-filled damp air, under the heavy night dews of winter and the crashing rains of summer, the metal roofs of its houses quickly rust to the dull red-brown of dried blood. Where they have been freshly silver-painted the intense light glitters in every point and angle. Plants grow here that will not grow outside the tropics. When spring begins, in February, the trees burst into bloom; the yellow puffs of the Women's Tongues, the curled pink shell shapes of the frangipani, the golden shower of the yellow alder, the pure white or deep purple of the orchid tree. It is a time when people cross to the shady side of the street.

There is this heat; this slowness and this heavy bloom. There is also the past, rich in lawlessness and violence, in piracy, smuggling, gun-running and wrecking. Here, in Key West, its traces remain.

Key Westers speak casually of the ghosts that haunt their houses, of knocks on the wall and dim figures that drift over the garden or across the living room. Around the corner from my house an old man dug up a crock of Spanish doubloons. A pirate, he said, directed him to it.



Key West has a past but it also has a present. It has always been a going concern. Cigar-making, salvaging, sponging, fishing have always been more important than the tourist and the winter resident. If they were to stop coming they would be missed but the city could still get on. It is something that can be said of few other Florida towns.

There is no tourist center where senior citizens gather and play checkers. There is only a token handful of shuffleboard courts. But some two hundred shrimp boats operate out of Key West, and in and above the deep water of the Straits of Florida the destroyers and submarines and airplanes of the Navy spend the day trying to outwit one another. At night their crews go ashore, the juke boxes begin to boom, and the sweet scent of night-blooming jasmine becomes laced with the malty aroma of beer. The city is alive.

The casual winter tourist has no inkling of how frantically alive it really is. He takes the Conch Tour Train around the island and visits the aquarium. He admires - or is bored by - the architecture of the old houses. He is charmed by - or deplores - the carefree seediness that clings to many parts of the old town. At the Turtle Kraals he sees the sad-eyed, deeply sighing turtles that have been brought by schooner from Grand Cayman and are waiting to be made into soup. He takes a snapshot of his family posed in front of the Southernmost House and perhaps has a look at the old brick forts or the recently restored house where Audubon once stayed. He swims at one of the public beaches and if he goes fishing he will probably catch more fish than he ever dreamed possible.

These are all pleasant and worthwhile things to do. But there is more to life in Key West. It is not so simple. In fact it is not simple at all and I think that the origin of "Rock Fever" - a generally understood term which means that there are times when you have simply got to get out of there for a while - stems from this fact. Too much goes on. Below the lazy calm of its surface Key West is in a chronic state of fermentation. It is a combination of the violent and the absurd.

This is not easy to explain. Such a place does not lend itself to the precise analysis that a team of sociologists, coming to study a town, would expect to find. If someone were to ask me to take him on a guided tour of Key West, which would include not only points of interest but comments on the habits and customs of the natives, I should be glad to do so. The subject never ceases to fascinate me.

by Benedict Thielen

Let us go down to the harbor and look at the shrimp boats, passing on the way a small but picturesque skid-row whose familiar winos seem to have discovered the secret of immortality. The shrimp fleet with its strung nets and its high-prowed boats with the engaging names - Cracker Boy, Blue Seas, Miss Pud - is a pretty sight.

Notice these handsome old houses. Some of the well-to-do Conch families live in them, as their ancestors did before them. Conch is what the native Key Wester of Bahamian descent is called, because in the Bahamas the muscle of the queen conch is highly esteemed as an article of food. It's very good, like a cross between a scallop and an abalone, and local folklore credits it with powerful aphrodisiac qualities. There used to be another really beautiful old New England-style church just around the corner, but it burned down. So did a nearby dry-cleaning establishment, a lumber yard, a historic mansion and a gambling parlor - all within a few months. It turned out, as people began to suspect after a while, to be the work of a single enterprising pyromaniac. Key West attracts all sorts of interesting people.



The old stone house with the brick wall where the sight-seeing bus is stopping is Ernest Hemingway's. The last time he lived in it was over twenty-five years ago but that doesn't matter. Tennessee Williams owns a little house with big grounds on the other side of town.

You're quite right in your impression that many people connected with the arts come to Key West. Some spend the winter, others come for a short vacation. There are many bad painters and a few good ones. At the Sun and Sand you will sometimes find Doris Lee lying face down on the wrong side of the beach, hiding among the tourists. Sally Rand, the fan dancer, used to have a house here and I was once an interested listener to a conversation between her and Thornton Wilder. With fascination mingled with alarm I have watched Witter Bynner demonstrate a Russian dance that shook the termite-riddled floors of the hundred-year-old house I was living in at the time. I have swum with the silent Mademoiselle Francoise Sagan, fished with the S.J. Perlman and, pushing a cart of groceries, reverently followed Tallulah Bankhead through the neon-lit mazes of a supermarket. I have seen Robert Frost at a distance. For many years John Dewey was a neighbor of mine. Although *Human Nature and Conduct* was written before his Key West days the subject was still close to his heart and we shared an interest in the local paper brand of it as reported by the local paper.

Such as? Well, such as the large front-page ad that read: "NOTICE! The Garcia involved in the shooting at 1508 Washington St., yesterday is NOT Robert Garcia, Owner and Manager of the Key West Fence and Awning Co." Or, in a later issue, a more cryptic plea which read simply: "I HOPE that you fishermen will attend to your own business and leave someone who is trying to lead an innocent life alone. Andrew Jenkins." Or the story of the old man who beat a woman with a hammer, claiming she was a witch - and the medical examiner's report which stated, "While he talks about



witches and persons who are trying to poison him, we would say he is perfectly sane and can stand trial. It is a phobia, his talk about witches and other things that are following him." Or that of the yeggs who drew up to a centrally located store on a Sunday afternoon, jimmied the lock, rolled the company safe onto a truck and drove away. Or of the young woman who pumped a clipful of 45's into her husband, went to her room to reload, fired the second clip, and next day was acquitted by a coroner's jury on the grounds of self-defense.

If you'll excuse me for a moment I'd like to have a word with that old gentleman in the beret who is walking on the other side of the street with his husky dog. He is a Frenchman, a violinist by profession, who has been working for fifteen years on an invention, a boat whose motive power is to come from a captured shark. I heard the other day that he finally succeeded and has been whizzing all over the Straits of Florida. I want to congratulate him.

I'm sorry to have been so long but you know how these things are. Time isn't of great importance in Key West. Let's see, where were we? What? You're tired? Already? Why, we've scarcely scratched the surface. We haven't been to a single bar or seen a single stripper. We haven't been to a City Commission meeting and listened to the audience being indignant about everything from the garbage situation to the recent removal of the Cuban flag from behind the mayor's chair. We haven't been to a cockfight or bought a bolita ticket. We haven't eaten bolichis or bollos or molletes or Key Lime pie. We haven't been to a rumba session at the Cuban Club.



You say one must need nerves of steel to live in this place? Well, yes, in a way that's true. Either that or plenty of adrenalin, such as you get from the barracudas when you go skin diving. There are times when I find it exhausting. Now and then it becomes necessary to leave and find relaxation in some quiet place. Such as Broadway and Forty-second Street. But I come back.

A habit? Like a drug? Probably. By the way, I know this shrimp who, whenever he comes back from the Campeche Banks, brings a supply of marijuana and ... Not now? Well, some other time perhaps. Thank you, I enjoyed it too. Though, as I said, we've barely scratched the surface. I could go on and on and on.

But I won't. Instead, I will walk down Whitehead Street, past the Naval Station and the old lighthouse with its enormous banyon tree, to its end. Lined up along the low sea wall and on the pavement below are the conch shells which boys sell to the tourists. They look like pieces of glazed sculpture, pink and gold and porcelain white against the background of the blue-and-green striped sea. Out on the water an old rowboat, sculled with the peculiar jerky grace of the Bahamian, is moving toward the shore. The man standing in the stern is big against the sky, dwarfing the freighters that make their way, hull-down on the horizon, through the ocean-river of the Gulf Stream.

The boat, the man, the ships are all held in a great downpouring of light. To stand there is to be one with them, to hang for a few seconds suspended in time as though it were the clear water above a reef. Beyond the turmoil and the wonderful nonsense there are these moments of sudden beauty and profound peace. They are not hard to find. They are another reason for returning.



Bill

The article made me very nostalgic and nostalgia overwhelmed me in regard to the drawings. The Keys were this type of place when I came here 8 or 9 years ago and these were the things about the Keys and Key West that kindled the love affair that I became involved in. I hope the drawings are suitable and the sort that you wished. With more time I might have been able to come up with some more. The conch house is fictional, a ghost of the past, an essence of conch houses, a romantic impression, an ideal, the way conch houses are most comfortable, surrounded by lush vegetation - (not by neatly cropped hedges and manicured lawns), looking somewhat lonesomely out to sea or into the setting sun, aloof to the 20th century. The buttonwood is also non-existent, the essence of buttonwood-ness. The heron is another spirit, (Did you ever see one at night especially in the ear lights? They light up like ghosts!) his legs lost among the spider legs of the mangroves.

Malcolm

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REFLECTIONS

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hold naught to one mind at peace.

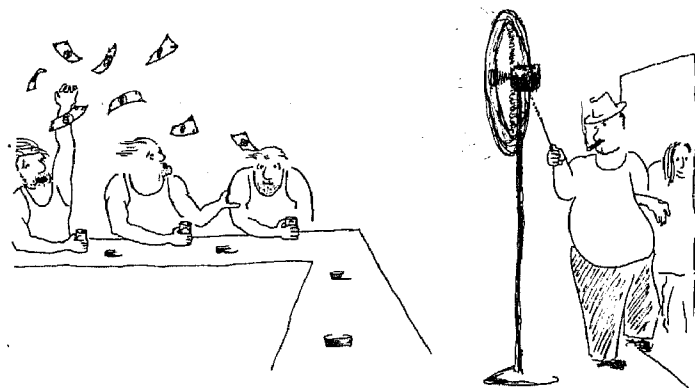
Knowledge without understanding
as words without thought.

Time is our teacher;
experience our guide.

Allen

Con't from p. 11

essary." This ultimatum was seconded by the other two men who banged their man on the back indicating their full approval. Before Speeder could reply, the mirth broke out anew among the men. Speeder screamed for the bartender to take his money, but the bartender had retreated to a neutral corner with a been-through-it-a-thousand-times-before weary look coating his face. The men's attention returned to Roz. "Hey Rozie, how's life down at the warehouse? You been out to the clinic lately? Why don't you stop by the boat later for some snapper. Haw, Haw, Haw." Speeder, by now enraged, was still trying to make it clear that he was the one buying the drink. No use. One of the men had gone to the jukebox and Charlie Pride was soon in the cacaphonic conversation. Screaming to be heard, Speeder expressed outrage at the men's crassness in the presence of a lady. "Youse damn animals sound like you're ten days out at sea looking at girly magazines. Didn't your mothers teach you any manners? Only God knows what evil lurks in the hearts of you drunken shrimpers." It was no use, he could not be heard. Reduced to sputtering indignation, Speeder reached over the bar and got two plastic cups. He transferred his and Roz' drink into the plastics, and stood up with dignity, saying to Roz, "Well, my dear Roz,



it's obvious that these cattle brained fatheads were reared by monkeys. Will you accompany me to a more civilized establishment?" Roz stood up, accepted Speeders arm, and they went to the door amid catcalls from the three men. At the door was a very large floor fan which, due to the cool day, was not in use. Speeder reached up and flicked the appliance on high speed, and as he composedly glanced back at the men, their heads were encircled in a whirlwind of bills.

Speeder's most ebullient moments were usually in the giggly presence of pretty girls. College co-eds on vacation,

sitting in the hallowed halls of Hemingway (Sloppy Joes) sipping Cocongas, at first never quite knew what to make of Speeder. Imagine, a rotund man in straw hat, wearing a flamingo emblazoned shirt and baggy pants, walks up and with one arm in the air to signal silence and the other waving cigar smoke in sweeping motions says, in the voice of a ringmaster, "Ladies, allow me to tell you about the time I was introduced to Fidel Castro." The girls would give a short, not quite skeptical laugh and then glance at each other and shrug shoulders. Speeder would interpret the girls' smiles and silence as an invitation to continue, so with vaudevillian dramatics he would sit down and continue, "We was hoisting lobster traps off the Cay Sal Banks when this mean black squall came right at us out a the East. Within five minutes the waves was up to seven feet. We had to run for it but to stay out in front of 'er we had to run West in toward Cuba. We was more than 14 miles offshore when this big Cuban gunboat come out at us..." The story would continue with embellishment so great as to be obvious to the girls, yet their attention would stay glued to Speeder's dramatization of the episodes. It didn't matter what twists or turns his narrative took, the girls always delighted at his way of telling them.

It was on a hot morning last August that the news of Speeder's sudden death in a motorcycle accident spread among his many acquaintances. It had been only a few months prior to then that he had been forced to move his mobile home across town from its berth at the Greene St. Trailer Park. Progress has forced Speeder and the other residents of that lot to move elsewhere, for on the lot was to be built a hardware store. Speeder was somewhat inconvenienced by this move, and the greater travelling distance to work caused him to replace his trusty bicycle with a motorized one.

It is ironic that the hardware store has never yet been built, and that someone so inappropriately named as Speeder would fall victim to the one characteristic that neither he nor his pedal bicycle had — speed.

Yet, the memories of Speeder's antics live on, not only among those who he knew well, but also in the memories of hundreds of visitors to Key West whom he entertained and whose legs he pulled. He was a comedian with something of Oliver Hardy or Lou Costello in him. A showman, he timed his delivery well, kept his audience in tune, and filled in the spaces with cigar puffs in the best tradition of George Burns. Speeder will be remembered as long as his contemporaries get together for a cold one and talk about the good old days — and that is quite a tribute.

Con't from p. 5

has been outside the waves of disension that are ravaging this country." Since then we had riots and people were hurt and buildings burned down.

I wrote further on "In a country where larger and larger numbers of its citizens are scared to go out at night, Key West streets remain friendly and unthreatening." Unfortunately there has been a rise in violence at night on the streets but still this is a very safe town to walk around in at night.

When I suggest in the second to last paragraph that "we paint this town in beautiful [Caribbean] colors" today I would be running afoul of a stricter painting code for old Key West.

But when I say Key West has heart and we who live here have a "common love of place" and that Key West "can show the rest of the country what it desperately needs to see" I feel I remain on target.

I feel it could be the destiny of Key West to become a town united in a brotherhood of love. We are not that way now. Confusions and uptightnesses still harrass us today and keep us divided in this bi-centennial year.

But there are some early evenings when the breeze is right and the sunset is beautiful and the air smells good and clear in which a common sense of goodness passes in us and among us and we seem to be the one we are meant to be.

To whatever degree Solares Hill can be a force in bringing about this Oneness we are so committed.

Editor



Dear Bill,

It's hard to argue with the relentless logic of Gil Ryder's last column. Yet, to help maintain a balanced perspective, I thought I'd submit these lines in defense of dung. *

Ernie Szetela

"From the dunghill he has lifted up the poor..." (Psalm 113)

TO A DUNGHILL

Hail, salubriously smelling heap! Mod man may ignore and despise you -- Yet you were the throne of Job. And you are still a rich hoard on the steppes of Central Asia and the teeming subcontinent beneath. There you are treasured. Patted and dried, you are stacked in neat cake-pyramids, saved for the hearth whence you radiate life-saving warmth in deepest winter, giving meaning to the wasteland.

Or, diluted, you coat the walls, become the floor-washing of the hovels of the masses there.

Western man has fled you. Even to his farmers you are untouchable, Scraped mechanically from gutter to spreader, Then flung afield by flailing arms of steel. Yet you serve him, Returning nourishment to the grass roots, Metamorphosed into the milk he cannot spurn.

You can be fresh, dark, warm pungent, rich, Or dry, light, thick, caked, and bleached, Yet always useful. As down to earth as a man can get, A fine foundation for humility and hope. On you Job grew a greater, godlier man. E.S.

*[Ernie is referring to Gil's article on the Cattle Quarantine Station and the impending (undesirable according to Gil) mountains of dung it will produce.]

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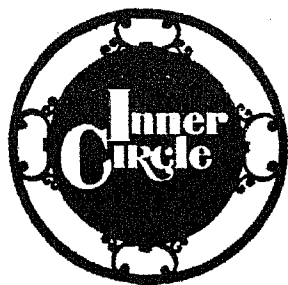
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WELFARE: HELP OR HASSLE

by Ernest Szetela

"Let us help you with your welfare hassles." This offer by Monroe County's new legal aid office, in a flyer advertising its services, gives a pretty good indication that "welfare" has a poor image, not only with taxpayers who suspect possible abuses, but also with welfare recipients themselves. Do the financial, health and social services provided by Florida's Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services, and Monroe County, deserve such an image? This is a moot question.

In this state, when one speaks of "welfare", he usually means the AFDC program: Aid to Families with Dependent Children. No one in Florida receives a state welfare check unless there is a child -- or children -- involved, and at least one of the parents is absent or disabled. A girl about to have her first baby can apply for an AFDC grant. But her application cannot be processed, or approved, providing she meets all other eligibility criteria, until she has actually delivered her child. Her application should be processed within 30 days. Then it usually takes a couple of weeks before she gets her first check from Jacksonville. If approved, she and her child are eligible for Medicaid, a state-federal program administered by HRS. But even if she receives an approval letter, she cannot get prescriptions for herself or her child paid by Medicaid until their Medicaid numbers appear on "video" in Jacksonville. This can take up to three weeks from the date of approval. Once her number appears, and she has a Medicaid card, her prescriptions and medical services can be covered by Medicaid, and, if need be, she can apply for retroactive Medicaid coverage of unpaid bills for the three months before she was approved.

In Key West, however, she might have a problem. For here, only one doctor regularly accepts Medicaid for office visits. And even if gynecologists, obstetricians, and pediatricians did regularly accept Medicaid for office visits, there would still be a serious gap. The Monroe County Clinic provides pre-natal care only during the first seven months of pregnancy. During the last two critical months, no medical coverage is provided except by doctors willing to accept the possibility of retroactive Medicaid coverage if the AFDC grant is approved.

This July, the Florida legislature is providing an increase of about \$2 - \$3 per person to AFDC check recipients. This means there is a slight increase from the former average payment of \$40.28 per month per person. This is still significantly lower than the \$70 per month national average. Before this slight increase, a family of four without child support or other income could receive at the most \$170 a month -- 74% of what is

considered a bare minimum. This has now been raised to 79%. The AFDC caseload includes about 186,918 children, and 64,000 adults throughout the state.

Of course, food stamps help. An AFDC check is counted as income, and most households have to pay for food stamps. And in Monroe County, where it now costs more to live than anywhere else in Florida, the cost of food stamps has gone up more than it has in many other parts of Florida.

Many heads of AFDC households do work, if they are able to. The Employment Service's WIN program helps them find jobs. Even so, many recipients feel that even though they are working, it is getting more and more difficult to make ends meet in Monroe County. Rents keep climbing, even in the off season. Public housing is available, but limited, and there is a long waiting list. Trailers are very dangerous. Perhaps, as water hook-ups become available, a proportionate number might be assigned to safe low-income housing throughout the Keys.

Last month, 615 persons in Monroe County received a golden-colored check from the Social Security Administration. These were disabled persons who qualify for Supplemental Security Income. They are also eligible for Medicaid. However, since apparently only one doctor in the Key West area regularly accepts Medicaid for office visits, it is very difficult for these SSI recipients to receive adequate medical care, as is the case with members of AFDC households. A possible solution to this problem might be one or more primary health care facilities, such as those projected for Dade County. If it is true that about a fifth of the population of Monroe County lives at or below the national poverty level, and medical costs lead the inflationary spiral, then serious consideration should be given to an adequate solution of this problem. For many of our marginally poor cannot get Medicaid coverage.

Besides financial assistance, AFDC and SSI recipients are entitled to certain services. Among these are free medical check-ups for children, inoculations and booster shots, and birth control assistance. The County can provide transportation, if needed, for medical assistance or appointments. Transportation is especially important for clients who live up the Keys and must come to Key West, e.g. for vocational rehabilitation or to apply for AFDC. Service workers can also assist in a variety of ways -- helping clients find housing, requesting that a sick person's water or electricity not be shut off, helping working mothers arrange for free child care at Wesley House, or for testing or therapy at the Center of Hope. Children's Protective Services can intervene in cases of child abuse or neglect, place children in foster

homes, and arrange for adoptions. Workers in this field are sometimes frustrated by continuing loopholes in Florida adoption laws, which allow doctors and lawyers to arrange private adoptions, apparently without adequate screening or safeguards.

Youth Services provides counseling for delinquents. The Big Brother program involves carefully screened and matched volunteers who do much to keep children with problems from becoming seriously delinquent. The Alternate School, conducted during this past year at May Sands School, was considered a very positive influence by Youth Services workers who deal with the same children. With the closing of the Alternate School, many youngsters will be left free to roam the streets during school time, getting into trouble, causing more work for the police. The people of Key West will suffer because of the delinquent acts these children will most likely be committing during the time they would be spending at the Alternate School, learning something positive. The new FOSI (Florida Oceanographic Sciences Institute) program is only for a limited number of older boys, ages 15 through 17. It will not replace the Alternate School, which, hopefully, can be revived, if it gets enough support.

Of continuing importance for those assisted are the Cuban and Vietnamese Refugee Assistance Programs, which, though distinct, function somewhat like the AFDC program. In programs for the retarded and the mentally ill, greater emphasis is being placed on the rights of those involved, and on providing as much assistance as possible within the community. The same holds true in providing health care for the aged. One should not be placed in a nursing home unless the levels of care which only a nursing home can provide are a medical necessity. A new nursing home facility is on the verge of becoming a much needed reality. However, adequate home health care is not yet available in the Lower Keys.

Counseling and outpatient care for the mentally and emotionally ill is provided by the Guidance Clinics. However, there seems to be a real need for inpatient psychiatric facilities. And the continuing use of jails as temporary inpatient facilities for alcoholics and the mentally ill leaves very much to be desired. The program at Marc House in Marathon is a definite step in the right direction. Acknowledgement by the whole community that certain very serious problems, e.g. drug abuse, do indeed exist here, and deserve concerted action, would be a first step towards more adequate assistance for those who suffer most. The Ministerial Association is to be commended for its persevering concern in this unpopular, neglected area.

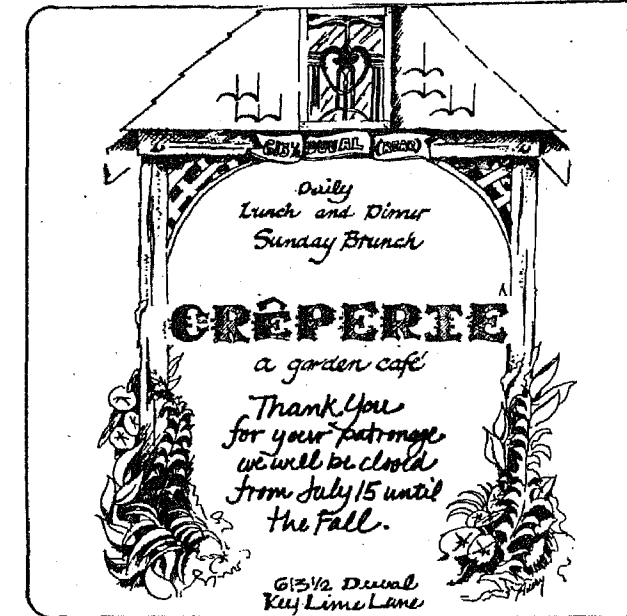
According to Title XX of the Social Security Act, even if someone is not an SSI or AFDC recipient, he or she may be eligible for certain social services, and, if so, can be aided by service workers of Florida's Social and Economic Services. At the present time, a reorganization and integration of the various available social services, offices, and facilities is in progress throughout this state. This reor-

ganization, mandated by the Florida legislature, should make it easier for one in need to get assistance in a simpler, more unified way, preferably at a single, easily accessible location. At present, a client may have to go to many places -- to the County Health Unit on Stock Island, to the Social and Economic Services of fices on Whitehead St., to the Food Stamp Office on Duval, to the Legal Aid offices on White St. Reportedly, space is available for such a single complex at the Truman Annex of the former Naval Base, as well as at the former Monroe General Hospital building on Stock Island.

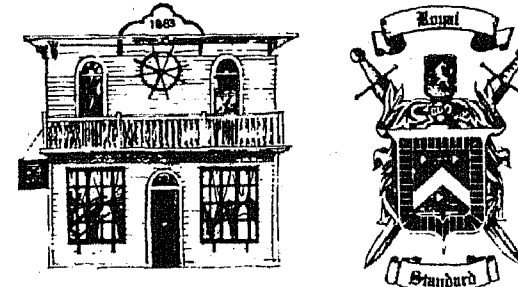
Already located in the Stock Island building are the Monroe County Health Unit and the offices of Monroe County Social Services. A recent state audit of the Monroe County Commission's accounts and records for the fiscal year ending September 30th, 1973, the first audit since 1969, stated that "...there was no written policy concerning welfare department financial operations." The report also stated, according to newspaper accounts, that "...the commissioners should have also insisted from various welfare agencies on an accounting how the money allotted them was spent."

County Social Services, in an information release dated 4/20/76, describes itself as "...a County Welfare Agency that offers emergency or temporary assistance basically for aged and disabled individuals while assistance of a more permanent nature is pending..." "Eligibility is based on guidelines and income standards approved by the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners. This agency offers vendor payments only -- cash grants are not available." A listing of thirteen vendor payment services includes an "...emergency three day food order", and "...emergency payment of rent for extensively disabled or aged individuals who are not receiving assistance from any other agency." Also listed are medical supplies, drugs, physician's services, hospital services, both in and out-patient, and nursing home care for those needing assistance who are not entitled to Medicaid, if eligibility requirements are met. Included on the list are pauper burials and "Transportation -- a one way non-refundable bus ticket to the nearest county."

Applicants for County Welfare are responsible for providing proper verification of identity, assets and income, as well as "written proof of any alleged disability from a physician, [they] must sign medical and financial releases, and must sign a reimbursement form agreeing to pay back the amount of assistance granted to them..." It is further stated, in this information release, that "...any person in need of medical assistance or treatment should be informed that there is no free clinic and no doctor in our office. A complete application must be taken and approved before we can contract for medical care with a private physician. If approved, an applicant may have to pay a discounted fee of \$1 to \$5 to this Department. If an applicant is in pain, vomiting, bleeding, or has broken bones, we urge them to seek medical treatment



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Fine Wines

Hot & Cold Sandwiches

Con't on p. 21



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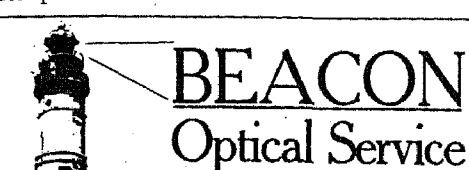
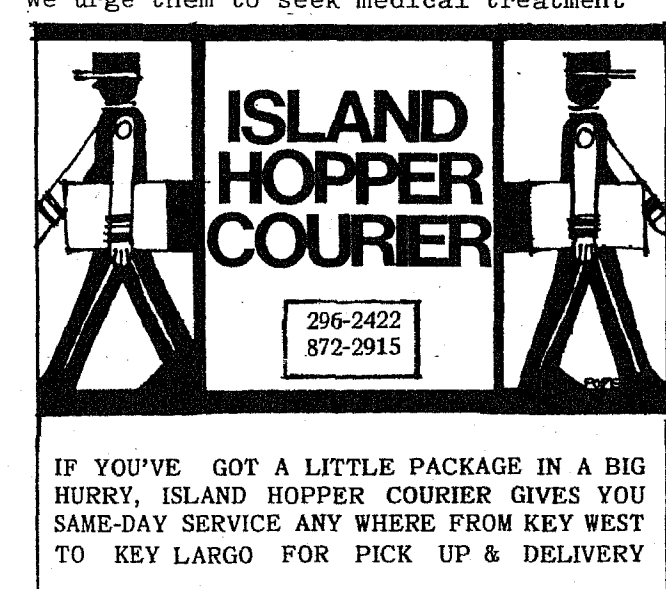
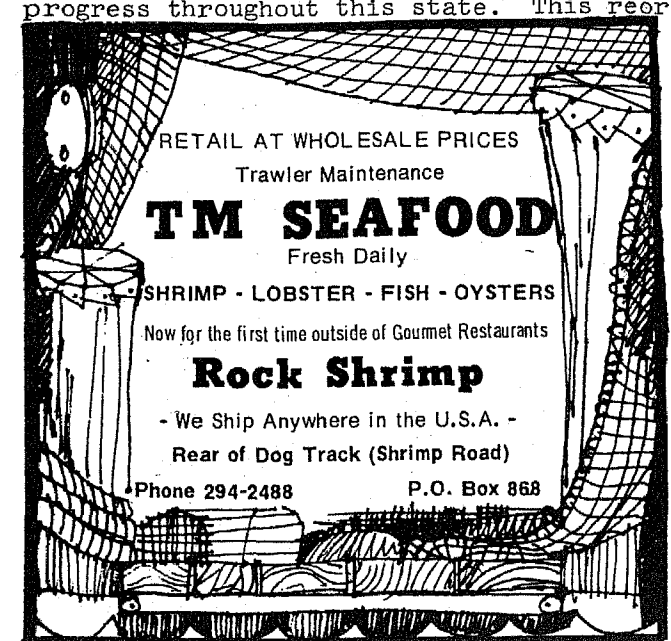
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Key West is a cast of characters awaiting an author to collect them into a plot which may already exist. This town provides a perfect setting for any kind of novel, and an author need only insert himself and his own inner conflicts into a sketch of daily life on the island to make a good story. Or a writer may play out a scene in his book against a Key West backdrop for exotic flavor. Few authors can resist the temptation to borrow from local life; the ingredients available, ripe for picking, can make an author look better than he is.

Interesting things happen in Key West, and interesting people are drawn here for that reason, and they in turn cause more interesting things to happen. The town and its people cry out to be written down, painted, and interpreted. Writers and painters have discovered Key West anew in different ways, and those who are not gifted in expressing their own reactions turn to the artist for words and pictures.

This is a selection, less than comprehensive, but more than random, of the uses that word-crafters have made of the raw material that is Key West. All of the books mentioned in this sampling are available at the Monroe County Library; many can be found only in the Florida Room; some have circulating copies.

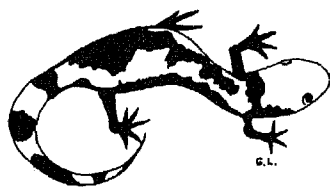
Two poems about Key West will endure because their authors are famous, but they also deserve at least local fame on their own merits. The first line of Hart Crane's "Key West" speaks volumes; it explains in a few words the mysterious catalytic effect Key West has on people: "Here has my salient faith annealed me." Crane wrote what he called his "Key West sheaf," which was not published until after his death, between 1926 and 1930. "Royal Palm," "O Carib Isle!" and "The Air Plant" are included in the grouping, which can be found in *The Complete Poems of Hart Crane*, Waldo Frank, ed.; Doubleday, NYC; 1958.

Wallace Stevens wintered regularly in Key West until it became "quite furiously literary" in 1940, due, no doubt, to the Hemingway crowd and the WPA writers and artists. There is a story (in James McLondon's PAPA) that Hemingway punched the shy, meek, frail Stevens because Stevens upset Hemingway's sister with disparaging remarks about Hemingway's talent. This story, however, is not unanimously credited.

Stevens' poem, "The Idea of Order at Key West," (*The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens*; Knopf, NYC; 1961) sums up the philosophy he had evolved during his Key West years. Having suspended his belief in God, he recognized in himself that primal human need to believe in something tangible that can be reached through the imagination, a fiction "recognized as

Explorers and Tourists or

a fiction, in which men could propose to themselves a fulfillment." The female figure in the poem has been said by one critic to be a human being, but it seems more likely that she is the spirit of Key West: "She sang beyond the genius of the sea ... what she sang was what she heard ... she was the maker of the song she sang ... She was the single artificer of the world/in which she sang ... there never was a world for her/Except the one she sang and, singing, made. This is a suggestion that in Key West dreams can come true.



The first use of Key West as a fictional setting is apparently James Fenimore Cooper's final melodramatic scene in the novel *Jack Tier, Or The Florida Reef* (D. Appleton, NYC; 1848). Cooper describes Key West as "a town yet in its chrysalis state, possessing the promise rather than the fruition of the prosperous days which are in reserve." The action takes place just before the hurricane of 1846, the most destructive in the town's history. "A very few weeks after the closing scenes of this tale, the town was, in a great measure, washed away!"

Captain Stephen Spike lies mortally injured in the Naval Hospital, the victim of shipwreck. He had abandoned his young wife, Molly Swash, and a seaman, Jack Tier, on an island so that he could pursue the lovely Rose Budd. Jack died, and Molly assumed his identity, following the life of a sailor for 20 years, twice shipping with Captain Spike, whom she still loves and forgives. She spills the beans on Spike's deathbed for pages and pages, not noticeably adding to the dying man's peace of mind, but she feels that it is important that he know that she forgives him. At least it makes her feel better, knowing that her beloved died shriven. Cooper probably did not come to Key West to gather material. There were ample descriptions available at that time.

An old bachelor reminisces about his boyhood adventures in *The Young Wrecker of the Florida Reef* or, *The Trials and Adventures of Fred Ransom*, by Richard Meade Bache (Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger; 1870), a boy's yarn about wrecking, turtling, the Indian Key Massacre, and saving a beautiful young girl from

Psyche-Seeing in Key West

by Richard Marsh

a burning ship. "The chief business of the town [Key West] consisted in fitting out and supplying the wreckers, and all the people were devoted to nothing else: if perhaps we except a few travellers, who came for health, and sometimes left their bones." "Whether a man is a native Bahamian, resident in Key West, or whether he is born in Key West, seems to make no difference: he is known as a Conch." Bache repeats the then current assertion that a Conch could dive 12 fathoms and crack and eat a conch underwater. He is not convinced of the truth of the story, but admits that "rules which apply to most men, do not apply to them," that is, the Conchs.

A double agent, drugged cigars, morphine mickys, filibustering, and plots and intrigues among Key West Cubans during the years of the Spanish oppression of Cuba just before the United States barged in to make it the Spanish-American War: *Don Balasco of Key West*, by Archibald Claverling (Gunter, Hurst & Co.; 1901), would make a better than average movie. Well-written, fast-paced, and cleverly plotted, this novel makes exciting reading. Turn-of-the-century Key West "is devoted to cigars, cigarettes, sponges, and Cuban patriotism." The real hero (you don't know who until the end) is suffused with "that love of freedom most American boys have, despite American statesmen," a radical statement for the time, but one wonders if the book might have been written before 1898 as part of the popular sentiment in favor of American intervention.

Ernest Hemingway wrote *To Have and Have Not* (Collier; 1934) while he was living in Depression Key West. The hero, Harry Morgan, is a charter boat skipper who learns, as Key West learned, that "One man alone ain't got." In spite of the book's disclaimer -- "...both the characters and their names are fictitious ..." -- local readers enthusiastically



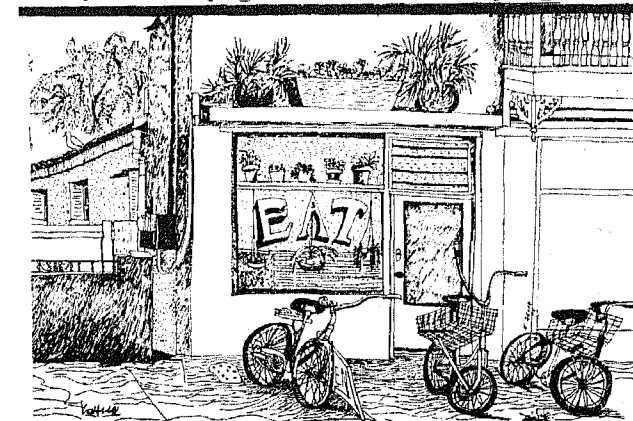
dissected the characters and applied their attributes to Hemingway's acquaintances, reversing the process that the author later admitted doing. Hemingway came to town in 1928 at the urging of John Dos Passos as a promising young, but not yet famous, author. By the time he left ten years later, he had become the "Papa" legend of his own making, giving substance to Stevens' words.

Thelma Strabel's *Reap the Wild Wind* (Triangle Books, NYC; 1940) is probably the best known novel about Key West. It takes place during the early wrecking days in the 1830s with the daughter of one of the founding fathers, a wrecker, as the heroine. The life of the times is charmingly recorded: the day to day activities, the thrill of shipwreck and hurricane, the town's social ties to Charleston, the fear of Indian attack. Many historical characters are referred to or make cameo appearances: "Major Dade, in charge of the small garrison, who went by on a prancing chestnut and swept off his hat to the two pretty girls in the landau." This is an entertaining, old-fashioned, romantic historical novel that places wrecking in a deserved favorable light: "All over the world the news has spread that an owner whose vessel is wrecked on these Keys can expect both bravery and justice from you who sail to the rescue." Cecil B. DeMille made a movie of the book.

Richard and Frances Lockridge set a Captain Helmrich mystery at the Coral Isles Hotel in Key West, which strongly resembles the Casa Marina (*Death by Association*; Lippincott, NYC; 1952). A renowned Commy-hunter is found stabbed from behind through the heart in the bushes by the tennis court before breakfast in February. Duval Street is touristily described.

Captain Helmrich had such a good time at the Coral Isles that Pam and Jerry North dropped by one February ten years later and found another couple of bodies (*Murder by the Book*; Lippincott; 1963). The Lockridges always did well with their sleuths-next-door, the Norths, and the light, urbane wit makes this an enjoyable yarn.

Richard Lockridge found in Key West the perfect stage on which to dramatize his heroine's inner turmoil in *Encounter in Key West* (Lippincott; 1966). Boats, the Navy, and the higher social strata are represented. Ambivalence is resolved by playing the human character against the island's atmosphere. This is a tragedy-comedy of manners, and the quirks and customs of the inner circle of local society are delineated as faithfully as possible without lapsing into burlesque. The plot involves a vulnerable girl who divorced her husband because he preferred boys. She comes to Key West to get away from it all and finds him here. Lockridge's treatment of the boys-with-boys/girls-with-girls scene is incredibly naive. It is February again, or still. Either the Lockridges frequented Key West during the height of the seasons, or they took lots of notes once. The characters are from New York, as usual, and the usual talk about the cold weather up north is heard. Every other page someone is buying or



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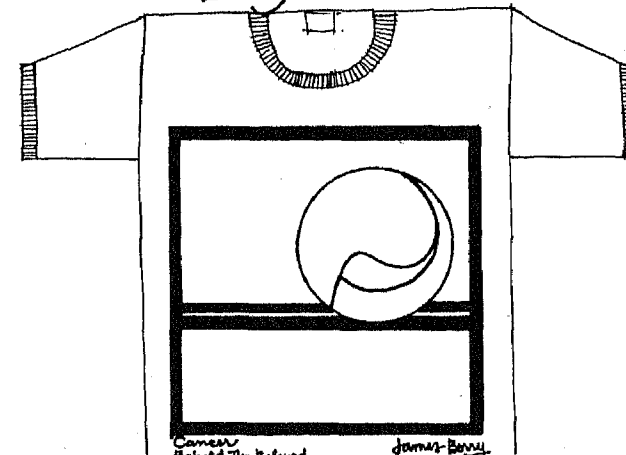
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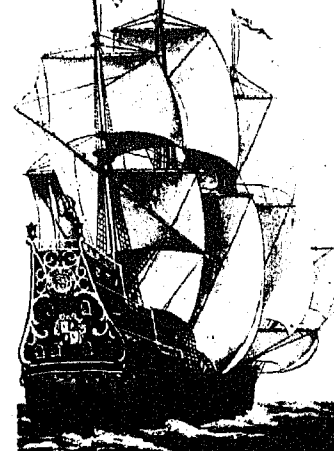
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Con't on p. 22

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WRECKERS WHARF
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ANYWHERE BUT HERE

by Stan Windhorn

EDITOR'S NOTE: Last October Stan Windhorn, former staff writer and columnist covering the Keys and Key West for The Miami Herald, and his wife, Jan, left their home here in quest of a mutually agreeable location where he could complete several writing projects. After more than two months and 12,000 miles of driving they settled (in a burst of insanity, Stan says) in Sarasota --- 350 miles from their former home.

Bright morning sun filters through three massive live oaks heavily burdened with Spanish moss and air plants and into the room where I write.

Last night one of the cats over-turned an uncapped bottle of rubber cement onto my desk and the cleanup was completed an hour ago. The lingering acrid odor of the gummy mess has finally disappeared and the more pleasing aroma of six blossoming citrus trees and two gardenia bushes perfumes my quarters.

When I look out of the window to my left I watch a flock of muscovy ducks, and one mallard, swimming in the stream which flows for 309 feet to mark our rear property line. They are competing with brim and bass for the last morsels of day-old bread habitually cast into the creek for them each morning.

Let some confused reader suspect this is a prelude to some saccharin account of idyllic existence let me give assurance that I would eagerly trade these moments for a stool at the counter of Dennis' Pharmacy where Audrey could be relied upon to keep the coffee cup filled, for a breakfast of cheese, grits, honest-to-God Cuban bread and some noisy conversation at El Cacique, for a convenient and leisurely bike ride to the post office and the knowledge that before attending Sunset at Mallory Docks

or Simonton Beach something interesting, unusual and uniquely Key Westish will happen to give value to life.

Hell, I'd rather be sitting in one of Dr. Bervaldi's dental chairs than here in this despoiled abomination on Florida's West Coast. As a fund-raising notion I have been toying with the thought of offering my right arm (won't miss it; I'm left-handed) or any other aging, but still serviceable organ in exchange for a modest Key West pad.

The trouble is that I fled here from Chicago 23 years ago and Sarasota was my Florida home for the first 12. When I came here population was in the neighborhood of 18,500, the 12-mile long island on which we bought a beachfront home harbored 200 year-round residents, one major shopping center was a 400-acre Snowcrop orange grove, another was a priceless palm hammock and a third was a 2,200 acre ranch stocked with Brahma cattle.

In summertime grass grew between the bricks of Main Street, as a newcomer you were accepted enthusiastically, every third beer was on the house and it was possible to cash a check in a retail store without submitting to every indig-

nity short of being hooked up to a "lie box." Along the now-eroding beaches I waited 10 years before seeing a "no trespassing" sign.

Then in the neighborhood of 1965 "outside" money, "outside" workers, "outside" speculators, and the super wealthy geriatric cases poured in. Well fields were exhausted and new ones were opened by county commissioners dedicated to "growth at any price and profit." The new well fields were to be adequate to supply all comers beyond the year 2000. Six years later they were dry and more fields opened with longevity again guaranteed beyond the year 2000. Here in 1976 a county commission finally --- and too late --- dedicated to "ungrowth" has hirelings combing the boondocks for enough water to last out the year.

Boughten lock, stock and barrel by officialdom was the developers' promise that all this growth which gobbled up the beaches and a once-magnificent bayfront would broaden the assessment base and create lower taxes for "the little fellow --- the average home owner."

Talked to one of those old-timer little fellow home owners the other day. He reports taxes on his modest property rose 320 percent in 10 years and forced him to sell. Beneficent officialdom has rented him and his wife a three-room apartment in a senior citizens' high rise.

Population is a pure guess but today a majority say Sarasota harbors 120,000 inhabitants. But that is beside the point. It is merely a link in one massive urban sprawl extending 100 miles from Tampa-St. Petersburg to Punta Gorda.

And, as in the Florida Keys, a single road (U.S. 41) is the sole link except for an unbelievably traffic-tangled U.S. 301 which by-passes Tampa and ends in Sarasota. "Never mind traffic," the

growth at any price and profit league was crying 10 years ago. "Interstate 75 will be extended down from Tampa in a year or two."

Today the first foot of I-75 remains to be built. Result is that a motorist could travel from North Miami to South Miami faster than one can from North Sarasota to South Sarasota.

To the immediate north lies Manatee County where a 4 to 1 commission majority still cries for growth (industrial) at any profit even if it kills an undetermined number of residents.

Four major companies are in line to gain approval to mine phosphate, one of the worst and most deadly of pollutants, in Manatee County. Chief of the Manatee Health Department has already been forced to resign and leave the area because a lung condition makes it impossible for him to live amid existing air pollution.

Every health, environmental and land planning agency in the county, the state and the nation has strongly recommended against further phosphate mining --- everyone except four of five Manatee County commissioners.

The majority holds adamantly to its position despite proof that even if strip mined phosphate land is reclaimed it will exude for the foreseeable future a cancer-inducing radioactivity which will make it totally unusable, uninhabitable. Now in trying to undo the wrongs of its predecessors, the compass has turned the full 360 degrees and commissioners of Sarasota County have taken to several courts the commissioners of Manatee County in a none-to-hopeful attempt to ban further phosphate mining just across the county line.

So there is another view from this mistakenly idyllic setting cited in this article's first three paragraphs. Approximately one day in every four existing air pollution from Tampa and Manatee seeps down here and sunset is colored a sickly yellow --- sort of like anodized aluminum. We watched one of those from beneath a spreading oak last night. We've seen the same sunset before --- from towering buildings of Manhattan as sunset comes over the chemical plants and refineries across on the New Jersey shore and from mountains overlooking Los Angeles.

Jan finds solace in Sarasota whenever we patronize one of the better restaurants. Here, with us in middle age, she will gaze around the room at the other diners who have emerged from their high rising pre-burial vaults which line and obscure the city's bayfront and beachfronts. "Well," she will then beam, "we are the youngest couple here. Doesn't that make you feel good?"

I take a different view of situation in replying, "No, it reminds me of a prevue of things to come."

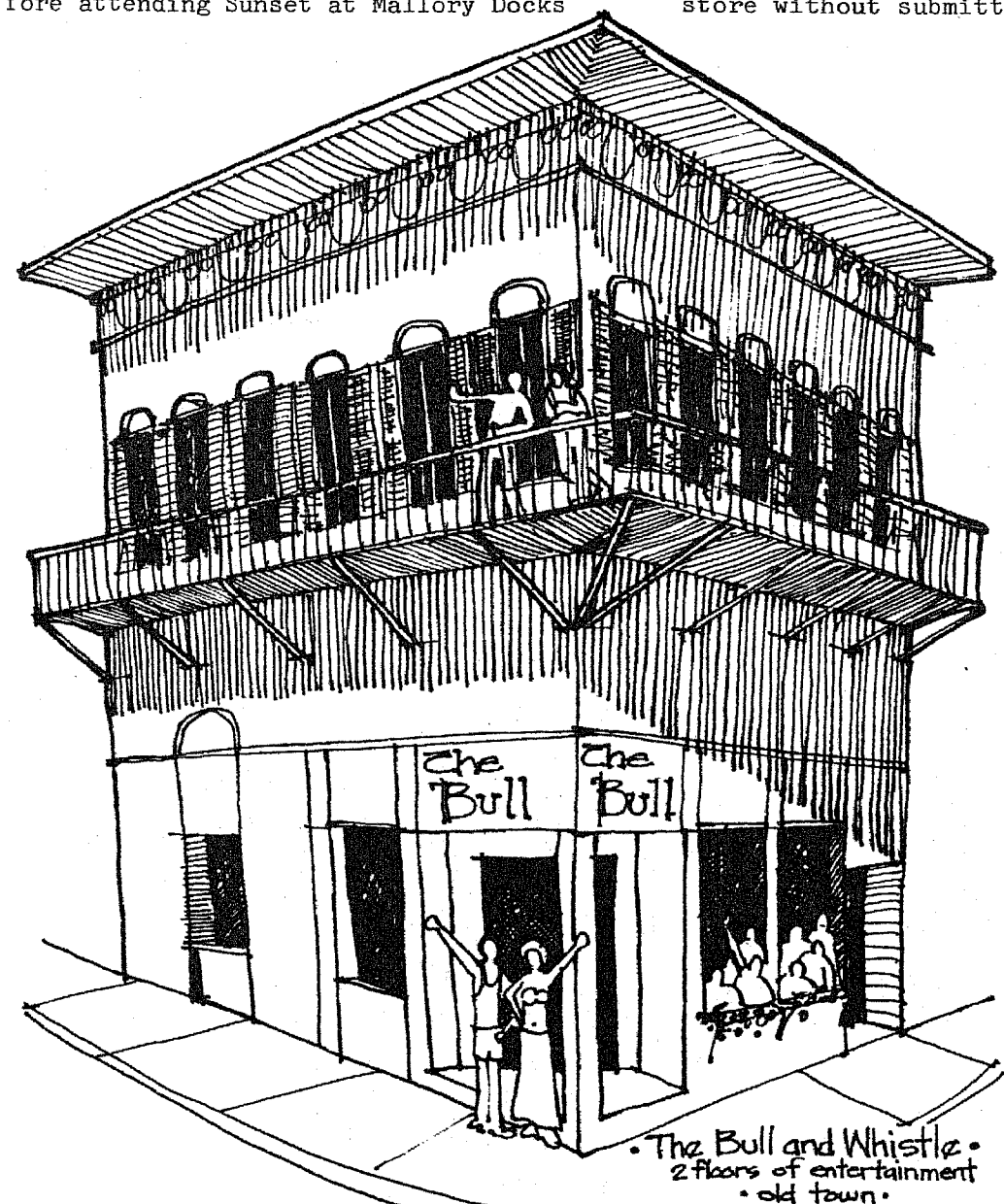
Con't from p. 17:

at the emergency room at one of our hospitals first."

On the local level, besides Navy Relief, there are private social service agencies here, such as those which benefit from the United Fund. Among these are the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and church-sponsored services such as the Catholic Service Bureau. These can often provide some emergency financial assistance for food, clothing, shelter, etc. to a limited extent. A recent addition to these is the Key West Community Involvement Council, a non-profit group chartered by the State of Florida, which seeks to inform and coordinate community involvement in areas of real need, and attempts to provide immediate financial assistance in cases of real need when no other assistance is immediately available. The Catholic Service Bureau can also provide emergency financial aid, among other services.

This survey of social services available in Monroe County, and particularly the Key West area, is sketchy and incomplete. It is also somewhat impersonal, not reflecting the deeply felt human tragedies and crises of the real people involved. Perhaps only personal experience, and direct contact with the persons concerned, can give an inkling of the dimensions of the problems that exist even here, at the end of the rainbow.

And perhaps the very nature of social service, or "welfare" agencies is changing --- from somewhat passive acceptance of the status quo to dynamic involvement by and with informed, concerned members of the whole community, attempting to utilize every human, physical, spiritual, moral, and financial resource available for the common good. It was concerned citizens in the Upper Keys who got what they felt they needed, when it wasn't going to be provided in their area --- an extension of the Senior Citizen's Nutrition Program into the Upper Keys. Perhaps an extension of home health care into the Lower Keys could result from similar action here. Steps taken by the County Commission to have the county assume the administration of the Senior Citizen's Nutrition Program, Homemaker Service, and other programs would seem to indicate greater sensitivity to community needs. And by seeking grants and matching funds for programs, services and facilities which seem most needed here, Monroe County can multiply the effectiveness of its resources. The setting up of a TV translator system seems virtually assured because of pressure by a concerned citizenry. Surely such basic needs as a primary health care facility and an in-patient psychiatric facility can also become realities here, once enough people see the need. For in seeking the common good, we seek what is best for ourselves.



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Tennessee Williams' play *The Gnadiges Fraulein* (included in *Dragon Country*; New Directions, NYC; 1970) might be called a dark comedy of manners or a tragic farce, except that it is risky to attempt to fasten down Williams' work with a label. The action takes place on Cocaloony Key, named after "the vicious, overgrown sea birds," degenerates, who live off throwaways from

Wreck Ashore, by Basil Heatten (Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, NYC; 1969), treats of "certain acts of piracy, shipwreck, and massacre which took place in the Straits of Florida" in the 1850s. The early Pinders, cock fighting, guava duff,

"The most recent fictional use of Key West that I could find was Shylah Boyd's apparent autobiography *American Made* (Farrar, Strauss & Giroux; 1975). It's about growing up partly in the Keys Lime Key south of Marathon, to be exact; growing up female in the 1950s and 60s; "her rites of passage into womanhood," the jacket blurb says; self-pitying loser feminist ramblings about bed-hopping and those awful men. Some of it appeared in VIVA. Eighth-grader Shylah and her buddies bundle into the car with Roman Cokes (rum and coke) for a Friday night in Key West "with its forbidden sailors and all those artists they talked about and honky-tonks." "We drove down Duval, the town's main drag, past what looked like a Hollywood set for a Jane Russell picture; ... stripshow bars ... frying fish ... craft shops ... sunburned artists ... the Hemingway house." All on Duval Street. "Southernmost City in the rum-blurry, end-of-the-world hodgepodge" helps explain Shylah's geography.

The secret of Key West is that it is a gateway to the most mysterious and least explored territory in Nature: the self hidden deep within our selves. Then Key West acts as a cauldron -- like the regenerating Cauldron of the Dagda that the Danaans brought to Ireland -- in which that innermost self is searingly healed, then reborn.

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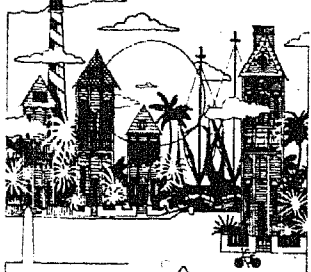
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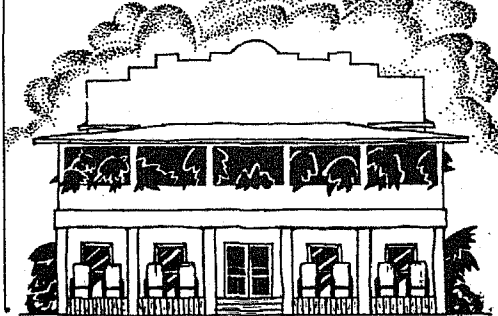
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MUNICIPAL AQUARIUM
July 1, 1976



THE PICTURE SHOW

A MOTION PICTURE ALTERNATIVE FOR KEY WEST

JULY

SUN		MON		TUE		WED		THUR		FRI		SAT	
1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)		THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)		THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)		THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)		THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)		THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)		THE LITTLE PRINCE (British)	
8		9		10		11		12		13		14	
CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)		CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)		CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)		CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)		CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)		CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)		CARNAL KNOWLEDGE Jack Nicholson Art Garfunkel (American)	
15		16		17		18		19		20		21	
THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)		THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)		THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)		THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)		THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)		THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)		THE CONFORMIST directed by Bertolucci (Italian)	
22		23		24		25		26		27		28	
FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)		FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)		FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)		FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)		FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)		FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)		FIVE EASY PIECES Jack Nicholson (American)	
29		30		31		32		33		34		35	
TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)		TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)		TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)		TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)		TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)		TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)		TREASURE OF THE SIERRA MADRE Humphrey Bogart (American, 1948)	

SHOW TIME 9:00 P.M. **PHONE 2943826**

CLOSED TUESDAYS **620 DUVAL** **ADMISSION \$2.50**

LAND'S END VILLAGE
WE'RE AT THE FOOT OF MARGARET STREET
See Map

WELCOME FROM TURTLE KRAALS AND BAKING TOWER

TURTLE KRAALS

SEA FOOD RESTAURANT

TURTLE KRAALS

THE HAS BEEN

ROPEWALK

THE BEACH BUM

THE HAS BEEN

HALF SHELL RAW BAR
SEA FOOD RESTAURANT

OYSTERS

CLAMS

SMOKED SHRIMP

KAREN'S KAFFEE SHOP

SOUVENIRS

GIFT MARIAS SHOP

LATIGO handicraft

MAP INSET:

TOWN	SIMONTON	SOUTHWEST	EAST	OCEAN
MARGARET STREET		FRANCIS	WHITE	LAND'S END VILLAGE

OLDTOWN

PEACE '78

