

Betty Bruce

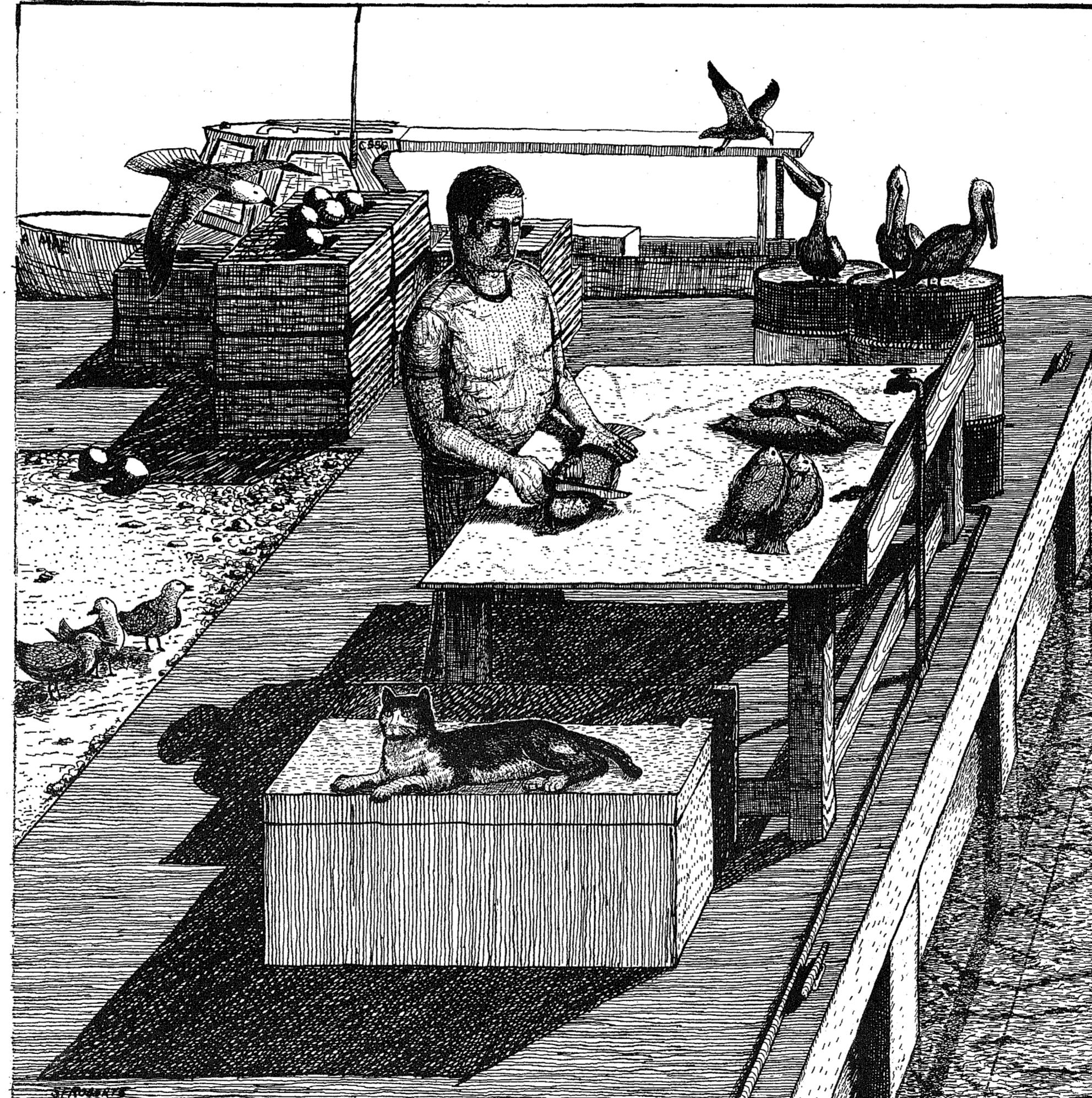
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Vol. 1, No. 20

Key West, Florida

August, 1976



## From the Editor



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Hats off to the City Commission on their excellent choice to fill Bill Gamble's seat. Mary Lee Graham is honorable, intelligent, hard-working and deeply interested in Key West. Many names popped up during the period of selection for this seat and quite honestly some of them didn't seem up to par. Mary Lee Graham is a fine choice and I wish her the best of luck in her new job.

It looks like the Administrative Appeal to the City of Key West on Rest Beach will finally be heard. City Attorney "Mannie" James told me it would be heard at the City Commission meeting on the night of August 16. Those who are interested in attending this meeting should be sure to attend. Better check to make sure that it is scheduled for that date however!

Congratulations are due the Key West Jaycees for their outstanding work raising money for the Muscular Dystrophy Foundation. I understand that our Key West chapter raised more money than any other city its size in Florida. Local Jaycee Tom Sawyer has the job of heading up the fundraising for the entire state Jaycee drive. Again, congratulations.

There will be a meeting August 10 to charter the Young Democrats Club of Monroe County. Manuel Lopez is chairman for the organization of this club. The purpose of the Young Democrats Club will be to educate its members and the young people of the community on local government and also to give them a voice in local government. They expect to establish a liaison committee to sit in on different boards and commissions and to then make reports

to these groups and to the public. They also will be supporting issues and referendums - at the August 10 meeting they hope to have speakers, pro and con, on these three referendums coming up for vote this November. Also they plan on publically endorsing some candidates. All of this very good.

Our cover artist, Steve Roberts, is also the artist who drew the beautiful bird on page 20.

Our next issue will include a guide to voting for the various candidates running for election in the primaries. I can't say yet for sure what form this will take but our purpose will be to help the voter make his selection.

There will not be an October issue of Solares Hill. We will resume publication for the November issue. This is a fairly quiet month and it seems good one to take off and give a vacation to the people involved in this paper.

The paper has been doing very nicely. Our ads have held up pretty well and we are paying our bills. For those who would like to help out a little as patrons and don't know quite how to do it - become a subscriber! The money that we get from subscribers helps out enormously.

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Solares Hill is a community newspaper published every month on the slopes of Solares Hill, Key West's highest point, by Solares Hill Company, 821 Duval Street, Key West, Florida 33040. Annual subscription rate (11 issues) is \$10.00.

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

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## GHOST STORY

written and illustrated  
by Malcolm Ross

Another deliberated answer: "Yes, as a matter of fact she did. It always looked as if she was wearing the same dress. It had a high collar with lace around the top and long sleeves with lace around the wrists." (Jan had never mentioned anything about lace.) "What color was the dress?" "Gray" was the answer. Not blue but gray! And Tony was very insistent that the dress was gray. (Jan was equally insistent that the dress worn by the ghost was blue!) The notion of a Victorian ghost was fading rapidly. The ghost might just be from this century.

My peculiar questions naturally cried out for an explanation and I explained that his description of the hospital director fitted that of a description of a ghost that had been seen in the former hospital. If Tony was amazed or shocked he didn't show it but went on to explain that he remembered her as an elderly woman (he was quite young at the time). She had run the hospital for a number of years and had died around the beginning of World War II. He asked me if I would like to see her grave in the Key West Cemetery. An uneasiness crept over me but I said "yes" and off we sped in Tony's car to the section that is known as the Catholic Cemetery. A white tombstone shaded by a large gumbo limbo tree bore the name Maria Valdez de Gutsens and the notation in Spanish that she had been born in Havana in 1862 and died in Key West in 1941. I stared blankly at the stone while a number of strange thoughts ran through my mind.

The history of the house on Virginia Street was completely unknown to Jan at the time of her brief stay. And my knowledge of it (I had lived there about a year at the time) was little better. My original attraction for the building had been primarily aesthetic. The magnificent rooms (most about 20 feet square) with their high ceilings (14 feet downstairs, 13 feet upstairs), the large double doors with their fanlight windows, the high windows with their arched tops and the galleried two-story courtyard (apparently the only one in Key West) had cast a spell upon me.

I still remember my first moments in the house -- it was Christmas Eve 1968 -- and the feeling was something akin to intoxication (the eggnog was delightful and its delicate lacings of various brandies made it the first that I had ever enjoyed enough for seconds!) but I was not drunk. It has been said that architecture should elevate the spirit (a fact that is often overlooked today) but now in retrospect I wonder if it was aesthetics that was responsible for my "high" -- or something else! This new tale of ghostly figures treading the galleries at night added to the fascination, but I had always felt

can't on page 8

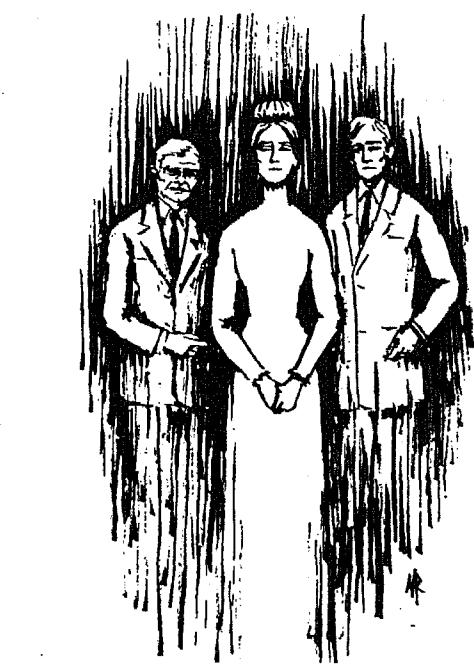
A friend once said to me: "When my husband and I moved to Key West in the late 1930's every house was weathered and gray and looked as if it had a ghost inside." This poetic description of the post-depression city may have been more than just an idle remark.

A controversial revelation came to my ears one day several years ago: "This house is haunted!" "What makes you say that?" was my incredulous reply. "Oh, a girl stayed overnight in one of the apartments a few nights ago and she said she saw ghosts." The prospect was interesting, but having had little contact with such matters it was quickly dismissed from my thoughts. The bell of coincidence jingled a few weeks later when the subject of "where I was living" came up via conversation with a friend. "Of course you know that place is haunted..." was Jan's quick reply. I remarked that I had once heard something to that effect, but it was truly to my amazement when she became quite animated and rapidly lapsed into a description of her experiences of one night spent in the house.

I had generally regarded such accounts of ectoplasmic entities as fascinating fictions designed for late night entertainments or discussions by the lunatic fringe and had never heard anyone sane recount any experience with visitors from the other side.

As I listened Jan related how she had been awakened twice during the night by the presence of three ghostly visitors -- a woman and two men who came to her bedside. The eternal skeptic, I asked for a description of these "spirits", as she called them. "What did they look like and what type of clothes were they wearing?" I mused that by their fashions I might at least be able to plot them historically. "The woman wore a long blue dress with long sleeves down to the wrists and a high collar...and, oh, yes, she had her hair done up in a large bun on top of her head." The style was unmistakable and I thought to myself: "How quaint! Victorian ghosts." and no doubt the original owners of the house. Her description of the men were less detailed: one man, the older one, wore a brown suit. Something which was baffling to Jan: the woman acted as if she was in charge of things.

"Are you sure you weren't dreaming?" I asked. "No, I could see objects in the room clearly" was her reply. I queried her a la Jack Webb ("Just want to get the facts ma'am!"). How was it that she was able to tune in to things like that? She explained that during early adolescence she started to become sensitive to many things that most people were not aware of. She knew things instinctively that other people did not know. She had



flashes of accidents and other calamities, but mostly things of a disturbing nature. The gift of "second sight" had weighed heavily on her and it was to her relief in a few years to find that the moments of clairvoyance became less frequent and easier to accept.

At any rate, a test of Jan's story several weeks later revealed no changes: The woman wore a blue dress -- she pointed to an object in the room, a bright blue -- with long sleeves, high collar and her hair in a bun on top of her head. She had been awakened twice and there had been two men in the woman's company. I was still a skeptic and determined to find out more before becoming a believer.

Jan left town to visit friends in Detroit and the matter of the ghosts was forgotten until one day on the beach I ran into a friend I hadn't seen for some time. "Are you still living in the old Mercedes Hospital?" "Yes", I said. "I can remember (Tony was in his fifties) when the place was run by that woman -- and he recited a long Spanish name, the only part of which I could pick out was her first name -- Maria. Very casually I said, "What did she look like?" "Oh, about like any Cuban woman" was his disappointing answer. "Well, did she wear her hair any particular way?" He looked at me a little strangely and gave me a slow answer: "Well, I don't know whether it was her own hair or a hairpiece but she always wore a large bun either pinned on top of her head or at the nape of the neck." Hiding my reaction I continued: "Did she dress any particular way?"

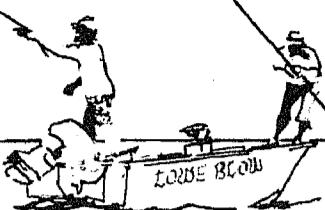
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# some remarks

There is a small and relatively unknown group of four men and one woman in Key West who've taken up a pretty gigantic cause in their lives -- the preservation of the oceans around us and how to educate coming generations in the vital necessity of their work. But it's not grinding, boring work -- it's fun and it is extremely interesting in all its aspects.

With approximately 72 per cent of this planet's surface covered by water and the very existence of that water being essential to all life on Earth, today their message has more meaning than ever before.

Nautilus Underwater Research Inc. (NUR) is an educational non-profit corporation organized in July, 1974, for tax-exempt purposes under state and federal laws.

The active and interested nucleus of NUR consists of C.W. Smith, president; Matt Clemons, vice president; L. George Elston, executive secretary; Vicki Impalomeni, treasurer; and Steve Dunn, the dive master.

They're all past or present students at Florida Keys Community College where they majored in environmental marine science in a series of courses handled by highly skilled and well-educated teachers at the small college which gave them the inspiration for their organization and its tasks.

While they're from different parts of the country, they were all drawn to FKCC "because it's a natural," said Clemons -- surrounded by water, with all the facilities and a high caliber staff for their education.

They scored a high mark for themselves this past March when three of their members decided to enter the international competitions for shell exhibits held yearly on Sanibel Island, off Ft. Myers.

Smith, Clemons and Dunn put together, after hundreds of hours of study and research primarily done as a college project, two major surveys they'd completed around Key West and in the waters and reefs around the Lower Keys.

The Sanibel Shell Fair competitions, recognized around the world for its authority and the excellence of the collectors and experts it attracts, draws upwards of 10,000 people to the famous island during the week's showing.

They were newcomers to this kind of high-ranking and somewhat sophisticated form of competition but they had what it takes in imagination and expertise to walk away with a first prize and a second in two rather esoteric fields in the collection of shells and underwater phenomena.



Marine research group in their "natural habitat", left to right: Steven Dunn, George Elston, C.W. Smith, Vicki Impalomeni, and Matt Clemons.

Their shell survey (a tongue twist for the layman) concerned "common gastro pods of the Lower Keys" -- how's that again?

It represented six months of back-breaking labor and eye-tiring research in which they had identified and classified 200 species of shells found in the sands and waters around the Lower Keys. It was entered in the presentation known as "Cowries of the World," and was awarded a red ribbon for second prize.

Then they entered the "anomalies division," staged for "sea life other than shells," with a handsomely prepared exhibit of 20 living specimens of anemones from the Lower Keys, sea fans, vivid living coral, and other beautiful examples of nature's incredible treasures to be found underwater.

For that, a blue ribbon first prize. "We couldn't believe it," Clemons said.

For the first-timers and students, at that, it was the kind of boost they needed for their own confidence and for their fledgling business venture.

The group works through the school system, giving illustrated lectures on the beauties of the ocean, what it contains, the amazing thoroughly worked-out design of the chain of life for all its billions of living organisms. Underwater films are taken and made into color slides for the lectures, portraying the breeding and feeding grounds for everything from plankton to grouper, tiny shrimp to tough shelled turtle. The key role played by the mangrove fringes around the islands in the Lower Keys is shown clearly, related to the eternal circle of life and death, food, growth, development.

Don't on page 2

One of the least appealing features of historical preservation is the need for laws to enforce this preservation. Sometimes a large enough community spirit will move a group of people to voluntarily adhere to a preservation code without the need for laws to back it up. Such a situation is decidedly rare. Generally you need laws to back up the building guidelines which a philosophy of preservation demands.

Why is there a philosophy of preservation for Old Key West?

Well, one reason and probably the most obvious one is that Key West is a very, very beautiful town. Visually, there are a great many treats for the appreciative eye and a great many treats even for the unappreciative eye. Whereas many towns may have a few fine homes or a block or two of exciting buildings Key West has almost a third of the island architecturally beautiful. This is a simple fact and there is no need to belabor the point. One of the foremost architectural historians and preservation authorities in the U.S., James Marston Fitch, Professor of Architecture at Columbia University, remarked while visiting in Key West with the Chairman of the O.I.R.C. "I'm amazed that there are so many houses in Old Key West of this beautiful, traditional design."

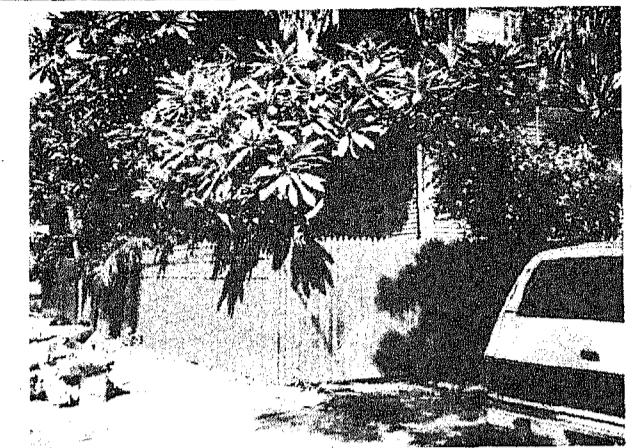
A second reason for the philosophy of preservation is economic. Tourism is the major money earner for this island. People come to Key West to enjoy the sun, the fishing, and the general ambiance of this tropical island. They also come to see a quaint old town that in most cases is totally different from the newer city or town areas in which they live. For those who would argue that Key Haven or any of the new areas contain architecture of equal appeal, I would argue back that the Conch Train would surely go bankrupt if it only offered service to the newer areas.

Badly put, beauty pays.

Another reason for preservation is historical. Some of the buildings in Key West are the equal of some of the finest examples of American architecture anywhere. The losses of some of these (the Convent of Mary Immaculate, for example) are unpardonable and must not be repeated.

History and beauty can make a citizen proud of his town. When that same beauty and history create the main source of income for it, then the welfare of the citizen would seem to be increasingly dependent on the preservation of the town.

The Old Island Restoration Commission was created to carry out the preservation and Restoration of Old Key West. Section 5 of the law that created the O.I.R.C. reads in part:



"Hereafter and for the public welfare and in order that the quaint and distinctive character of the Old Section of the City of Key West, Florida may not be injuriously affected, and in order that the value to the community of those buildings having architectural and historical worth may not be impaired, and in order that a reasonable degree of control may be exercised over the architecture of private and semi-public buildings erected on or abutting the public streets or alleys of said Old Section, before the commencement of any work in the erection of any building, or the repairing, repainting, alteration, remodeling or demolishing of any existing building, any part of which is to front on any public street or alley in the Old Section, application by the owner for a permit therefore must be made to the Old Island Restoration Commission,...."

Well, all this seems clear enough. What's the problem? If the preservation of Old Key West is economically desirable and esthetically desirable it certainly makes sense to have a commission whose function it is to guide the homeowner when he desires to make changes in his house in the Old Section. And likewise it makes sense to have a commission that has the power to see that the guidelines of preservation and restoration are properly followed.

Often complaints from homeowners about having to follow these guidelines disappear when they read and discover that the requirements of the O.I.R.C. are generally very sensible and reasonable. But still there are some howls of protest that accompany the decisions of this commission.

Why?

Most of the people upset with the O.I.R.C. are those who feel that it's nobody's business what color they paint their house or what material they use to repair a rotted porch. Being told what to do with one's house runs counter to the grain of the strong individuality that is in such evidence here in Key West. There is no easy answer to give those who feel this way. Much sentiment is on their side. My sentiment, too. But stronger than sentiment is the relentless logic behind the preservation and restoration of Old Key West. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the Old Town is one living architectural gem and alteration of any part of it adversely affects the whole. When an architect draws a set of plans that are accepted for a building, it is these plans that are followed. The builder doesn't decide to put a round window in where the architect has called for a square one. Similarly, in a general sense, much of Old Key West is the result of one general school of Conch architecture -- outstanding, beautiful, functional, economically rewarding -- and tampering with it alters its superior design. This does not mean that changes cannot be made -- it does mean that they should be true to the spirit of Old Key West.

Unfortunately there appears to be little or no support for the O.I.R.C. from the City Commission. When the work of the O.I.R.C. is brought up the public can expect one of the commissioners to exclaim that something's mighty wrong when a man is told what color to paint his house. That statement is like waving a red flag in front of a bull. All the Commissioners (Commissioner Graham excepted) react in a like manner and nothing would seem less important or more meddlesome than the work of the O.I.R.C.

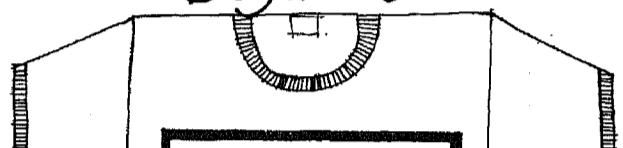
A matter before the City Commission right now illustrates this.

A few months ago, the people who have the beautiful old Kemp house across from the Post Office on Caroline Street applied to the O.I.R.C. for a permit to rebuild a picket fence around their house. This house is one of the most beautiful in Key West. Simple, elegant, dramatic, weathered -- this house has been a favorite for years.

In any event, these people applied to O.I.R.C. for permission to rebuild a fence. The application read that they were going to use two feet of block and four feet of picket. Fine. A traditional method. The application was approved.

Then, lo and behold, a different type of fence -- a six foot high stockade fence -- rose up in place of the fence that had been described on the application. The O.I.R.C. protested and the Key West Building Department protested. Not only were the guidelines of the O.I.R.C. being

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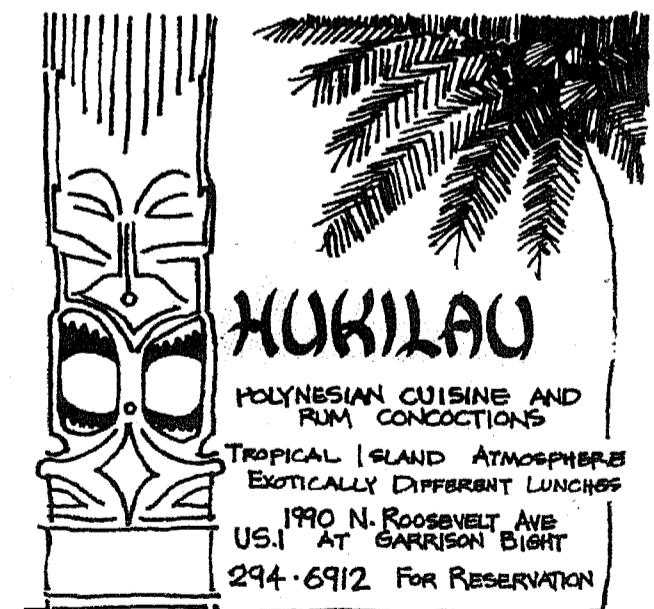


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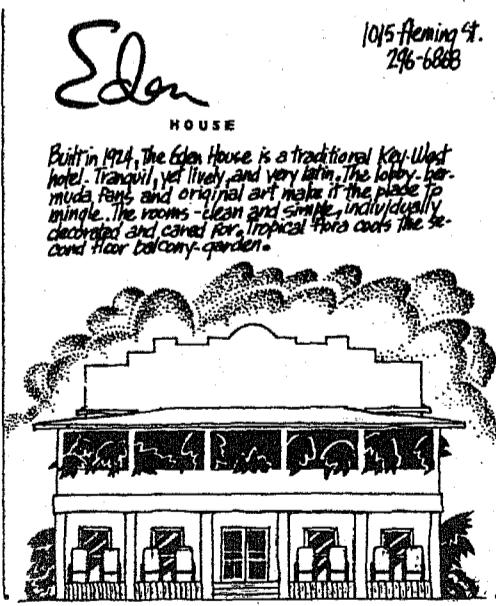
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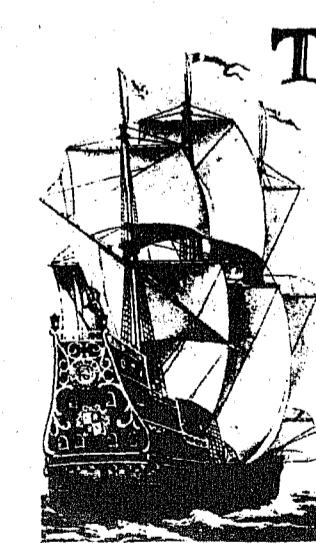


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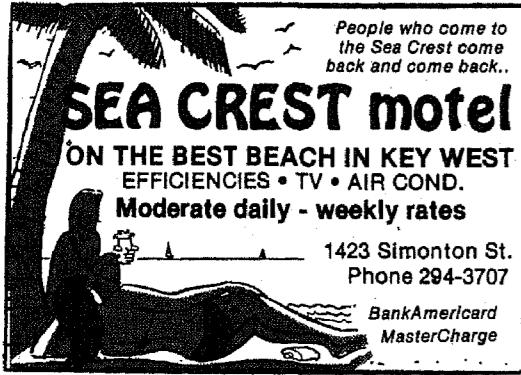
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# WATER: a crisis

by Art Weiner

**WATER** Part II

**[Summary]**

Last month, in our discussion of water, some of the basic attributes of this miraculous substance were pointed out: its high heat capacity, great thermal conductivity and other factors which enable the oceans to have such an important influence on our climate. The importance of water to life: its role in the origin and maintenance of life and its vital contribution to photosynthesis, respiration and digestion.

Our contemporary water crisis was discussed: the global distribution of fresh and salt water and our increasing dependence upon a limited reserve of groundwater. And finally, the water resources of South Florida: the Biscayne Aquifer and its watershed, and the man-made distribution system that brings water to southeastern Florida and the Florida Keys.]

In discussing water or any other natural resource or process, it must be pointed out that it is interrelated to the other non-living components of an ecosystem and to the multitude of plants, animals and microorganisms which are the functional units of the web of life. Thus manipulation of any natural system, such as a water cycle, has profound implications for a great number of creatures, both in the present and the future.

Utilization of food, energy or other natural resources therefore requires an awareness and empathy for the other life forms and processes which support them. If we are concerned about our fellow creatures, as well as ourselves, we will protect the natural systems of which we are all a part and which are necessary for our continued existence on the planet.

Efficient use of natural systems allows us to benefit from the free energies of Nature with the lowest possible cost/benefit ratios. If we allow natural processes to work for us, it frees us from the necessity of making and maintaining the costly artificial systems and conditions which oftentimes work against the natural flows. It is most often unwise to depend upon expensive technology for tasks, such as advanced waste treatment, which can be better performed by natural systems if the latter are not upset or over-extended.

It is most necessary to know when and how to use technology and not believe it to be an end in itself. Technology must be complementary to natural systems, and technicians must be willing to marry the best of the old with the best of the new. Technological advances do not determine what is necessarily desirable but only what is feasible at a given time. Our quality of life is not always improved through the development of greater technology.

Oftentimes our technology creates the illusion that our natural resources are unlimited, which leads to excessive consumption and waste. And unnecessary consumption costs us, even if the resource is free. In South Florida, where there is an abundant supply of fresh water, heavy use requires collection, purification, distribution, disposal and treatment. What is therefore necessary is to bring our consumption and our technology closer to our real needs and to Nature.

A relevant example of this philosophy is the "cistern". A cistern, according to Webster, is "a tank in which rainwater is collected for use". It really isn't very much more than that. Cisterns have been in use for thousands of years and are presently being used in many areas of the world, such as Bermuda, Gibraltar, North America and the Florida Keys. As a matter of fact, all new residential development in the Virgin Islands is required to have a self-sustaining water supply system such as a well or cistern.

One of the most important determining factors in cistern design is the yearly annual rainfall. Or, stated another way: do we get enough rain to meet our needs? For the Florida Keys the answer is yes. The average yearly rainfall, in Key West, for the period 1940-70 was 39.9 inches, most of which accumulated during the six month rainy season.

How do you collect the rainwater? The collection normally involves a roof that is guttered and a downspout connected to the cistern. The collection area must be large enough to store what is required by a household. For example, a roof area of approximately 1300 sq. ft. could collect about 32,000 gallons of water assuming a rainfall of 40 in.

Of course, 32,000 gallons of water is a lot of water requiring 4280 cubic feet of storage space. Thus before you build a cistern, you should determine your potable water requirements. According to national statistics, the "average American" uses between 75-100 gallons per day [this does not include the water used to produce food, consumer goods, energy, etc.]. Based on these figures, a family would require an enormous collection area and cistern.

But this does not hold true if you use this resource wisely. There is no need, and in the Florida Keys it is absurd, to waste 7 1/2 gallons of water every time you flush the toilet. There are many devices on the market today which substantially reduce this demand or eliminate it entirely. There are many other ways to reduce the level of household water consumption. These methods of water conservation should be practiced regardless of whether you are using cistern water or Aqueduct water.

Once you have determined your requirements, you can calculate the number of cubic feet of storage space required by dividing the gallonage by 7.48 [one cubic foot = 7.481 gallons]. Once you have obtained this figure, design the cistern. The Monroe County Building and Zoning Department has issued guidelines for cistern construction which should be consulted.

Consideration should be given to mechanisms and/or filters which will prevent pesticides and debris from getting into the drinking water. There are several simple and cheap devices readily available for accomplishing this end. If the cistern is light-tight and properly screened, neither mosquitos nor algae will ever create a problem.

The economics of cistern construction and usage support the wisdom of depending upon natural systems. The rain is free. The cost of constructing the cistern, the gutters, filter, pumps, etc. is easily outweighed by the cost of Aqueduct water projected over the lifetime of the house. And when one considers the effect of increasing costs of fossil fuels and technology on the price of Aqueduct water, cisterns look even better.

Moreover, utilization of cisterns or other self sustaining water supply systems, such as wells, relieves some of the burden from the Aqueduct system. This would make more water available to those users who cannot use self sustaining systems and lessen the need to purchase the expensive technology necessary to pipe water from the mainland or to make fresh water from seawater [desalination] or brackish water [reverse osmosis].

The other self sustaining water supply system that has been mentioned but which has limited application in the Keys is the fresh-water well. Because of the geology of the Lower Keys, many of the islands have, beneath their surface, isolated shallow pockets of fresh water. These pockets are known as "freshwater lenses" because of their characteristic concave shape. The largest of these in the Keys is found in the Big Pine - No Name Key area.

Lenses differ from aquifers in that they are not connected and are recharged only by the rainwater which seeps into the ground directly above them. Since 1940 however, some recharge has resulted from usage of Aqueduct system water. The lens literally floats, like an iceberg, on the denser salt water found directly beneath it. Thus when sinking a well into a lens one must not go too deeply into the rock.

During the dry season the volume of fresh water in a lens decreases because of lack of recharge and utilization of the water by plants and people and through evaporation. On many of the smaller keys, the lens water becomes brackish during this time of year because the "head" of fresh water is insufficient to prevent salt water intrusion into the lens.

In areas, such as Big Pine Key, lens water is of very good quality, but in areas of high human population density, such as Key West, there is considerable risk of contamination from septic tank effluent or leakage from sewage pipes. Lens water should be checked periodically to determine whether or not it is potable or should only be used to flush toilets or to water gardens or other vegetation.



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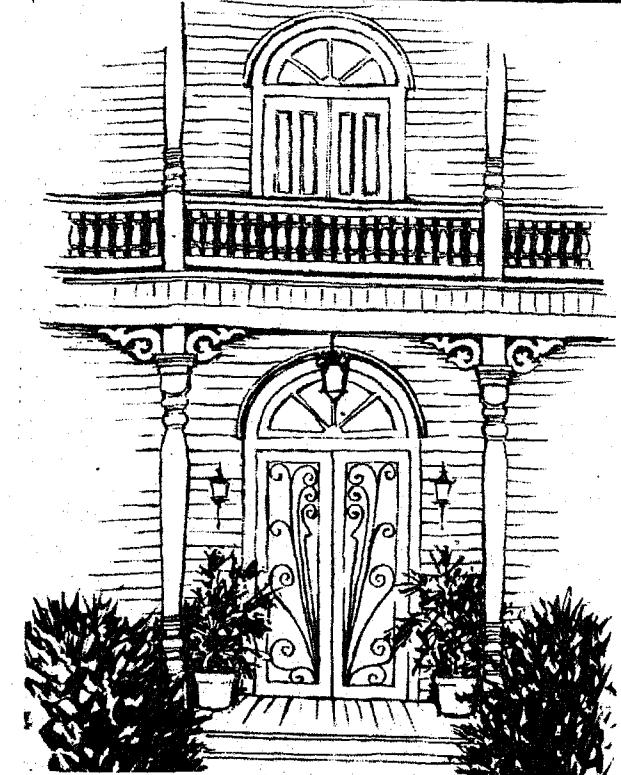
cont'd from page 3

comfortable in the house, and fear had never been one of my feelings. (Jan felt a great uneasiness while in the building.)

Naturally I became alerted to the possibility of ghostly forms in my apartment but the closest I could ever come, to sensing a presence was the feeling of a hand running through my hair one night as I sat reading. It was not convincing evidence of spirits as the "ghostly hand" could have easily been a draft or breeze from an open window. Another time the shower acted like a thing possessed but second-floor living in a Conch house with its vagaries of water pressure can cause many strange things to happen.

Over the months my curiosity turned up a number of interesting facts about the house. It had been built in the last century (the 1880's actually) by a millionaire cigar manufacturer, one Eduardo Gato during the great cigar-making era of Key West. Mr. Gato, Cuban born, owned several cigar factories in the city including one which is the present Navy Commissary. He was apparently the richest cigar manufacturer of the time, and the house stood in rural desolation with the Convent of Mary Immaculate among the mangroves and scrub trees in the area south of Division Street (later to be called Truman Avenue). The distance of the house from the heart of Key West and the menagerie of animals kept on the grounds caused the estate to be known as the "Gato Farm". Although the house was said to have hosted such notables as former Cuban dictator Machado the lack of society may have been the motivation for Mr. Gato to build another house closer to town. This edifice of almost equally magnificent proportions still stands on the corner of Duval and South streets.

The original house was turned over to the city of Key West for use as a hospital after the turn of the century. In October of 1911 it was dedicated as the Casa del Los Pobres (House of the Poor) to serve the indigent citizens of Key West. Funding was mainly by contributions (apparently some money even came from Cuba) and it was named the Mercedes Hospital in honor of Mr. Gato's wife. During the 1920's the large two-story building with its enormous rooms and courtyard and four porches (only one remains at present, the others having rotted away) was moved the distance of about two city blocks to its present location on Virginia Street. It remained a hospital until the 1940's when it was abandoned to cockfights and storage for bundles of scrap paper -- the fruits of wartime paper drives.



During the 40's it also came under private ownership and was converted into apartments and forms the winter residence of local restaurateur Richard Lischer. Mr. Lischer has owned the building about eight years.

Most pieces of the puzzle seemed to fit together but it seemed best at any rate to verify facts by consulting as many sources as possible. It is difficult and awkward to ask blunt questions of total strangers without arousing their suspicions or annoyance. The subject of ghosts generally causes uneasiness and often an unwillingness to cooperate. After some mistakes a smooth technique developed and some more interesting bits of information came to light. One elderly woman gave some valuable information in regard to the costume worn by the hospital director. (Jan had said that her dress was "long" but by present standards of skirt lengths anything approaching the knee would be considered "long".) The older woman remarked that she indeed had worn long dresses, gesturing with her hand down to her ankle! She referred to the lady as "old-fashioned" in her tastes -- apparently clinging to the styles of the last century. If the hospital director had indeed been the elderly lady that Tony remembered (she was 79 when she died) it would be almost certain that she would not be dressing in the latest fashion of the day -- particularly in her role as head of the hospital. Mrs. Gutsens would have been in her late thirties at about

the turn of the century and it seems reasonable that the style of clothing of this time would reflect a pleasant period in her life.

An elderly man recalled that he had frequently given her pastries and baked goods to help feed the patients in the hospital but was able to offer little information in regard to her physical description. He did remark that she was a fine, genteel woman "with a big heart" who had made a vow to take care of the hospital as long as she lived. After her death the enterprise failed -- apparently for lack of her guiding influence.

Most of the pieces of the puzzle were in place except for one -- the color of the woman's dress. A former owner of the house had mentioned seeing the ghost of an elderly lady in a long gray dress and a bun on top of her head descending one of the staircases. Another girl who stayed in the house for a short time said she also saw a woman with the same hairdo in a gray dress. Tony had said gray, but Jan had insisted repeatedly that the dress was blue. The last piece finally fell into place during a conversation with a woman who had lived for years in the vicinity of the house, particularly during the time when it was a hospital. Not only did Lucille remember the director and her trips from door to door soliciting quarters for the hospital but the material of the dress that she wore. It was almost as if it were a uniform as she was never seen without it -- a dress of a shiny gun-metal taffeta, which those who are familiar with the fabric will recall appears gray in some light and blue in others!

For years the children of Key West have been fascinated by the house on Virginia Street, referring to it as "the Haunted House" or "the Spook House" for reasons known only to them. One often hears bits and pieces of stories about everything from vampires to headless ghosts which are said to reside within its walls. If the building is indeed haunted it is haunted by benevolent spirits who have no wish to harm the living. Any being undertaking such selfless acts as caring for the ill and ailing could scarcely be considered a threat to society.

When Jan returned several months later to Key West and was confronted with the house's history and the bits of information that had been dredged up her eyes glowed with understanding. At last she knew what had happened that night when she had stayed in the house. The three spirits were simply making their nightly rounds as they had done for so many years when the house was a hospital and she had been awakened when a hand had touched her wrist to take her pulse.

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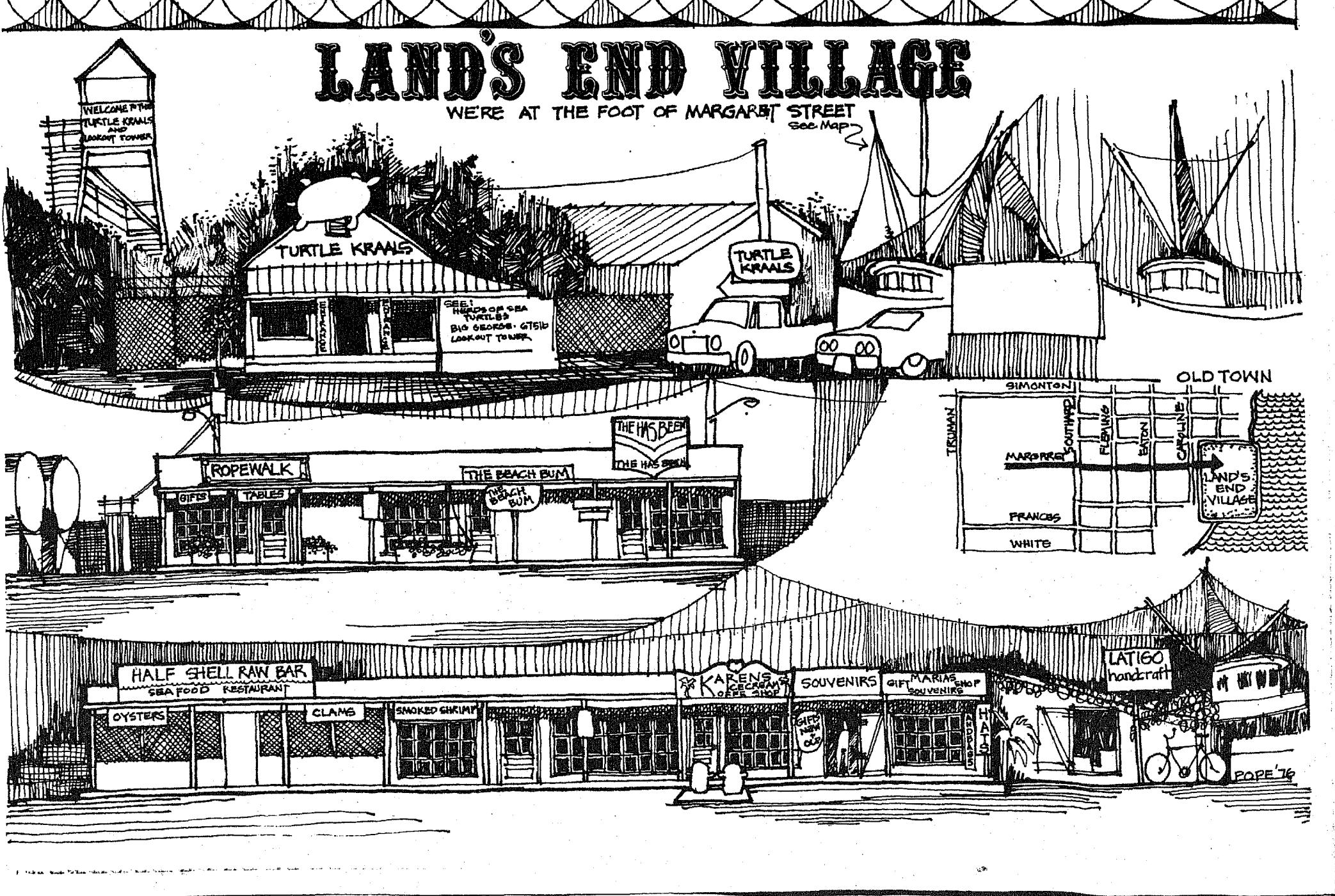
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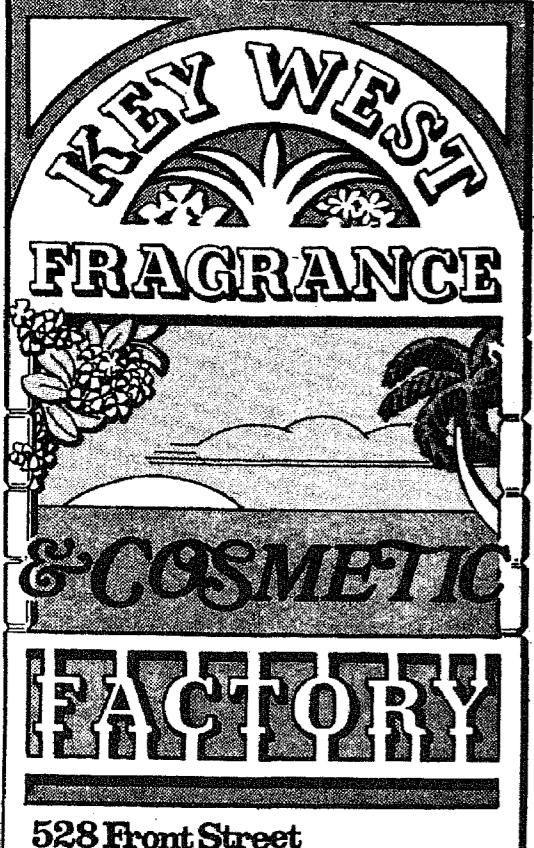
7/ Why do you teach in the open ocean? The reason for this is to work in the environment you will be diving in.

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## IZZY

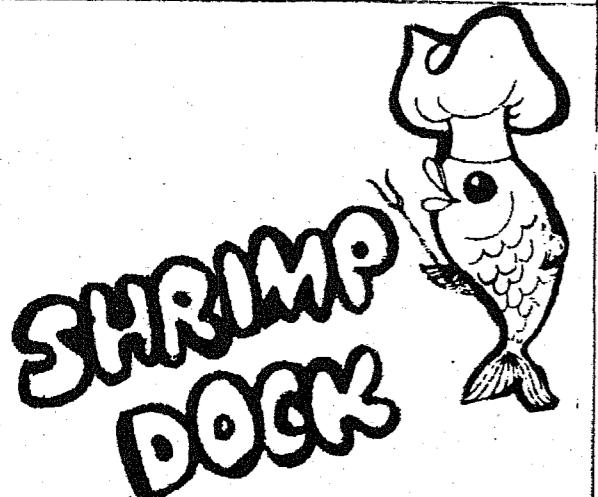
by Ernest Szetela

In Key West, "big brother" may not be watching you. But Key West has its own Mr. Big Brother, Izzy Weintraub, who for the past three years has headed and expanded the very successful local "Big Brother" program.

You have to know Izzy -- see and hear him in action -- to begin to appreciate him. He's a Conch version of a Jewish leprechaun who has not only kissed the Blarney Stone, but has also imbibed deeply of the fountain of youth. Perhaps it's working with young people that keeps Izzy thinking and feeling young. It's hard to believe that the following "obituary" was written about Izzy just a few years ago:

"In 1972 in Key West, Florida, Isadore L. Weintraub, a prominent business leader in the downtown section of the city for many years, and one of its most public-spirited and community-minded citizens, decided to retire to private life and enjoy the fruits of his labors over the years. "Izzy", as he was known to his friends and associates along Duval Street, had spent so many years getting things done for his city that his retirement from the active battle lists was a distinct loss to the whole community. It left a hole in the roster of private citizens who had the ability, energy, and determination to spark community-wide projects and carry them through to successful conclusions."

But Izzy's "retirement" didn't last very long. It proved to be a blessing in disguise. Izzy happened to be available at the time when the State of Florida's Division of Youth Services inaugurated its "volunteer friend", or "Big Brother" program throughout the state, including Monroe County. And his background and experience made him particularly suited to direct this program.



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could profit from tourism. The importance of Izzy's work on behalf of his city was soon recognized on the state level. He was elected state treasurer of the Jaycees, then was appointed to the National Awards Committee, which enabled him to serve as a travelling ambassador of good will for his fair city. On the local level, Izzy was one of those active in getting historical markers erected around town, heightening appreciation of the many sites of historical significance in this area.

His local interests and affiliations were truly broad ranging. In 1944 Izzy was elected Exalted Ruler of the Elks Club. And he took part in many of the community projects sponsored by the Masons, the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs, the Optimists, and other civic organizations.

He was an active member of the South Florida Council of the Boy Scouts of America for thirty years. His interest in the needs of young people was further evidenced by his unstinting labor on behalf of the Optimists' drive to provide a youth center in Key West. Consequently, when Florida's Division of Youth Services sought someone to direct its volunteer program in Monroe County, Izzy was a natural choice. Perhaps it would be best not to identify a state sponsored program with any one individual. But to the many volunteers who were screened and trained by Izzy, and the many parents and young men and women who have benefitted from this program, Izzy Weintraub is someone very special.

He has generated enthusiasm and a high level of competence among his volunteers in an exemplary manner. At present, more than sixty volunteers are actively working in this program. Since it began, more than 600 hours of work with boys and girls have been logged by volunteers here.

The "volunteer friend" program, better known as the "big brother" program, has, from its inception, required careful screening of volunteers, who must meet certain criteria before they qualify to work on a one-to-one basis with a young juvenile offender who has not yet become entangled with the courts. To be a volunteer, one must commit himself to the program for from six to nine months. He must see a young person twice a week, for at least four hours a week. He must attend three training/orientation sessions before being carefully matched with a young friend, and attend in-service training sessions at least once a month. Volunteers routinely have their police records checked as a precautionary measure. A volunteer must provide his young friend with a phone number where he can be reached, and agree to be on call.

It is difficult to measure the success of such an effort. But the continuing need for such a program in this area is quite obvious. At present, there is a shortage of young women to work with girls who need a "big sister".

The fact that about 60% of all volunteers have been military personnel or dependents brings to light one of the lesser known contributions of the military to the Key West community. Hopefully, should the number of military personnel and dependents be significantly reduced, a greater number of volunteers will emerge from the local community. And, hopefully, whatever funding is needed to keep this important program going will be provided by both the State of Florida and Monroe County. THERE IS A POSSIBILITY THAT ADEQUATE FUNDING TO KEEP THE PROGRAM VIABLE WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE.

Obviously, volunteers who provide a needed service not only save the taxpayer's money, but often provide aid or services which would not otherwise be available. The success of the "big brother - big sister" program here in Monroe County just might set an example which will trigger off other volunteer programs in problem areas. And there certainly are many serious needs in this area which are not being met. Well thought out and coordinated volunteers programs might provide a way of working at these needs without big tax increases. But volunteer programs, including Izzy's, can only succeed if there are responsible men and women in the community willing to give of themselves -- to give time and effort -- to making such volunteer programs work.

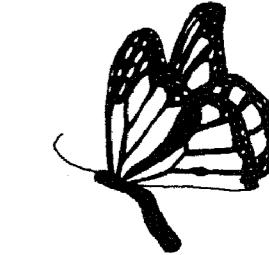
There is a philosophy behind the youth volunteer friend, or "big brother" movement. Izzy has dedicated himself to selling this philosophy -- that enough responsible competent men and women will come forth in our community to work for the common good, to help bring out what's best in all of us. Let us hope and pray that Izzy's unceasing efforts succeed.

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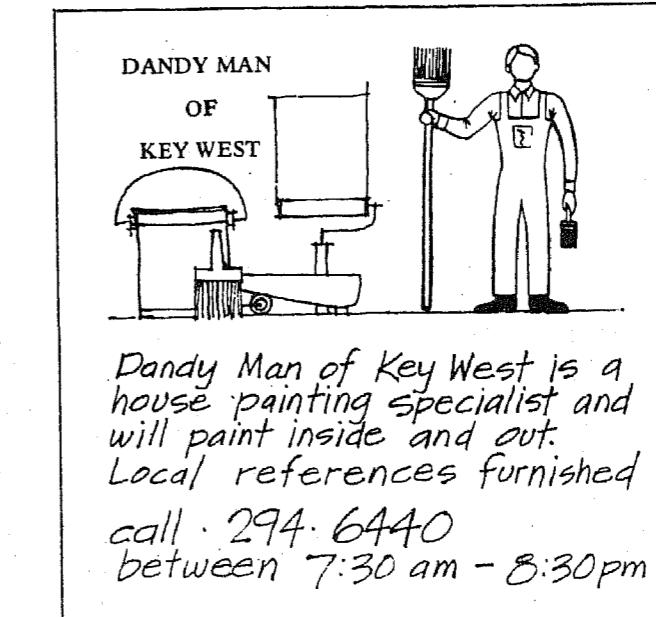
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# Death of a Pirate

by John James Audubon illustrated by Dink Bruce

(Many thanks are due to Kathryn Hall Proby for her permission to use material from her book AUDUBON IN FLORIDA. One of the reasons for using this selection was that it took place in the Florida Keys. Ed.)

In the calm of a fine moonlight night, as I was admiring the beauty of the clear heavens, and the broad glare of light that glanced from the trembling surface of the water around, the officer on watch came up and entered into conversation with me. He had been a turtler in other years, and a great hunter to boot, and although of humble birth and pretensions, energy and talent, aided by education, had raised him to a higher station. Such a man could not fail to be an agreeable companion, and we talked on various subjects, principally, you may be sure, birds and other natural productions. He told me he once had a disagreeable adventure, when looking out for game, in a certain cove on the shores of the Gulf of Mexico; and, on my expressing a desire to hear it, he willingly related to me the following particulars, which I give you, not perhaps precisely in his own words, but as nearly so as I can remember.

"Towards evening, one quiet summer day, I chanced to be paddling along a sandy shore, which I thought well fitted for my repose, being covered with tall grass, and as the sun was not many degrees above the horizon, I felt anxious to pitch my mosquito bar or net, and spend the night in this wilderness. The bellowing notes of thousands of bull-frogs in a neighboring swamp might lull me to rest, and I looked upon the flocks of black-birds that were assembling as sure companions in this secluded retreat.

I proceeded up a little stream, to insure the safety of my canoe from any sudden storm, when, as I gladly advanced, a beautiful yawl came unexpectedly in view. Surprised at such a sight in a part of the country then scarcely known, I felt a sudden check in the circulation of my blood. My paddle dropped from my hands, and fearfully indeed, as I picked it up, did I look towards the unknown boat. On reaching it, I saw its sides marked with stains of blood, and looking with anxiety over the gunwale, I perceived to my horror, two human bodies covered with gore. Pirates or hostile Indians I was persuaded had perpetrated the foul deed, and my alarm naturally increased; my heart fluttered, stopped, and heaved with unusual tremors, and I looked towards the setting sun in consternation and despair. How long my reveries lasted I cannot tell; I can only recollect that I was roused from



the wretched death that hovers over me; and I am thankful that one of my kind will alone witness my last gasps."

A fond but feeble hope that I might save his life, and perhaps assist in procuring his pardon, induced me to speak to him on the subject. "It is all in vain, friend - I have no objection to die - I am glad that the villains who wounded me were not my conquerors - I want no pardon from any one - Give me some water, and let me die alone.

With the hope that I might learn from his conversation something that might lead to the capture of his guilty associates, I returned from the creek with another capful of water, nearly the whole of which I managed to introduce into his parched mouth, and begged him, for the sake of his future peace, to disclose his history to me. "It is impossible," said he, "there will not be time; the beatings of my heart tell me so. Long before day, these sinewy limbs will be motionless. Nay, there will hardly be a drop of blood in my body; and that blood will only serve to make the grass grow. My wounds are mortal, and I must and will die without what you call confession."



them by the distant groans of one apparently in mortal agony. I felt as if refreshed by the cold perspiration that oozed from every pore, and I reflected that though alone, I was well armed, and might hope for the protection of the Almighty.

Humanity whispered to me that, if not surprised and disabled, I might render assistance to some sufferer, or even be the means of saving a useful life. Buoyed up by this thought, I urged my canoe on shore, and seizing it by the bow, pulled it at one spring high among the grass. The groans of the unfortunate person fell heavy on my ear, as I cocked and reprimed my gun, and I felt determined to shoot the first that should rise from the grass. As I cautiously proceeded, a hand was raised over the weeds, and waved in the air in the most supplicating manner. I levelled my gun about a foot below it, when the next moment, the head and breast of a man covered with blood were convulsively raised, and a faint hoarse voice asked me for mercy and help! A death-like silence followed his fall to the ground. I surveyed every object around with eyes intent, and ears impressible by the slightest sound, for my situation that moment I thought as critical as any I had ever been in. The croaking of the frogs, and the last blackbirds alighting on their roosts, were the only sounds or sights; and I now proceeded towards the object of my mingled alarm and commiseration.

My exertions were not in vain, for as I continued to bathe his temples, he revived, his pulse resumed some strength, and I began to hope that he might perhaps survive the deep wounds he had received. Darkness, deep darkness, now enveloped us. I spoke of making a fire. "Oh! for mercy's sake," he exclaimed, "don't." Knowing, however, that under existing circumstances it was expedient for me to do so, I left him, went to his boat, and brought the rudder, the benches, and the oars, which with my hatchet I soon splintered. I then struck a light, and presently stood in the glare of a blazing fire. The pirate seemed struggling between terror and gratitude for my assistance; he at length became more composed. I tried to staunch the blood that flowed from the deep gashes in his shoulders and side. I expressed my regret that I had no food about me, but when I spoke of eating he sullenly waved his head.

My situation was one of the most extraordinary that I have ever been placed in. I naturally turned my talk towards religious subjects, but, alas, the dying man hardly believed in the existence of God. "Friend," said he, "for friend you seem to be, I have never studied the ways of Him of whom you talk. I am an outlaw, perhaps you will say a wretch - I have been for many years a Pirate. The instructions of my parents were of no avail to me, for I have always believed that I was born to be a most cruel man. I now lie here, about to die in the weeds, because I long ago refused to listen to their many admonitions. Do not shudder when I tell you - these now useless hands murdered the mother whom they had embraced. I feel that I have deserved the pangs of

The moon rose in the east. The majesty of her placid beauty impressed me with reverence. I pointed towards her, and asked the Pirate if he could not recognise God's features there. "Friend, I see what you are driving at," was his answer, - "you, like the rest of our enemies, feel the desire of murdering us all. - Well - be it so - to die is after all nothing more than a jest; and were it not for the pain, no one, in my opinion, need care a jot about it. But, as you really have befriended me, I will tell you all that is proper."

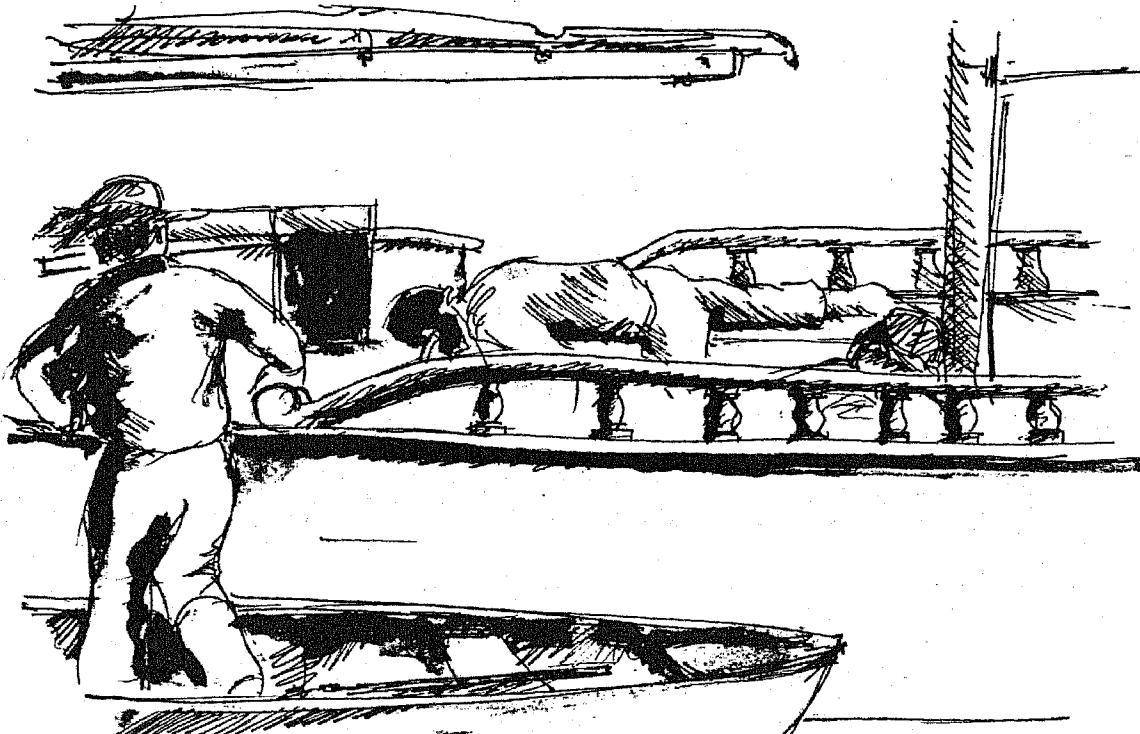
Hoping his mind might take a useful turn, I again bathed his temples and washed his lips with spirits. His sunk eyes seemed to dart fire at mine - a heavy and deep sigh swelled his chest and struggled through his blood-choked throat, and he asked me to raise him for a little. I did so, when he addressed me somewhat as follows, for, as I have told you, his speech was a mixture of Spanish, French and English, forming a jargon, the like of which I had never heard before, and which I am utterly unable to imitate. However I shall give you the substance of his declaration.



"First tell me, how many bodies you found in the boat, and what sort of dresses they had on." I mentioned their number, and described their apparel. "That's right,"

his voice failed, the cold hand of death was laid on his brow, feebly and hurriedly he muttered, "I am a dying man, farewell." Alas! It is painful to see death in any shape; in this it was horrible, for there was no hope. The rattling of his throat announced the moment of dissolution, and already did the body fall on my arms with a weight that was insupportable. I laid him on the ground. A mass of dark blood poured from his mouth; then came a frightful groan, the last breathing of that foul spirit; and what now lay at my feet in the wild desert? - a mangled mass of clay!

The remainder of that night was passed in no enviable mood; but my feelings cannot be described. At dawn I dug a hole with the paddle of my canoe, rolled the body into it, and covered it. On reaching the boat I found several buzzards feeding on the bodies, which I in vain attempted to drag to the shore. I therefore covered them with mud and weeds, and launching my canoe, paddled from the cove with a secret joy for my escape, overshadowed with the gloom of mingled dread and abhorrence."



## Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum

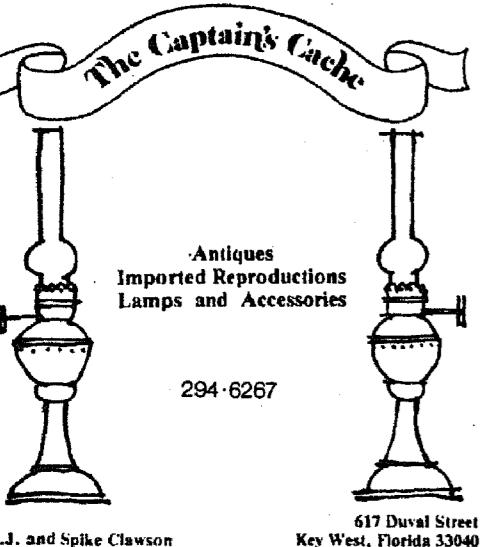
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A black and white photograph of the Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum. The house is a large, two-story structure with a prominent porch and several palm trees in the foreground. The property appears well-maintained.

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## Beef or Bull

by John Hellen

The "Final Environmental Statement", concerning the proposed cattle quarantine station on Fleming Key, should be read by all year-round residents of Key West. The "Statement" is available by writing the Department of Agriculture, or going to the Florida Shelf at the Monroe County Library. At the library, the presence of only one, non-borrowable copy serves as a symbolic keynote to the unheralded and generally hushed advancement of this project into the environs of Key West.

This "Statement" is a well emphasized rendition of a common theme found in many government reports and studies: accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative. The lack of objectivity in this report lies not in its rational arguments as to why Fleming Key is considered a desirable location for the facility, but in its overlooking of the most important consideration before recommending the present site. This consideration, which has been quietly ignored or obscured with trivia (such as "Key West has 41 churches" or the complete listing of elementary schools), is whether a majority of Key West residents care to have this potentially dangerous and odiferous installation less than two miles from their nostrils.

The conditions favorable to the proposed Animal Quarantine Center are evident: air, road, and water accessibility; a site generally out of public view; existing government ownership of the site; etc. But these very practical considerations have not been weighed against public opinion.

The "Statement" foresees certain environmental changes that would likely be brought about by this facility. One favorable change, states the report, would be the "upgrading (of the) site from (a) solid waste disposal (area) to a functional, landscaped facility". Functional for whom? The residents and visitors of Key West, or the Department of Agriculture and the National Breeders Association? Landscaped? As was pointed out, the site is out of view of the public; besides, the site is already landscaped with indigenous grasses, and mimosa trees, and Australian pines.

The construction of this facility would necessitate approximately 90,000 yards of fill in order to raise the present level of the site from two feet above sea level to the twelve feet prescribed by the architectural blueprint. 90,000 yards of fill at, say, 3 dollars per yard is a \$270,000 incentive for the two or three local contractors able to meet such an order. It is of little incentive to those of us who do not operate such companies. The fact that this fill would be

other impacts stated by the report would be "an increase in utility demand...and...increase in air pollution". The facility will desalt its own water, but will draw its power from City Electric. City Electric has sufficient supplies to handle the station. But could the same electricity be used to power a building of equivalent size that might provide, say, a hundred people with non-polluting jobs, rather than 34 menial jobs and berthing for 500 cows?

The "Statement" has a listing of ad-

verse environmental effects which cannot be avoided while operating such a facility. Such agents as Chloramine, Chlorine Gas, Phenols, Sludges, and Odors are discussed, and proposed safeguards against these contaminants have been reviewed by various state and federal agencies. Many agencies have made further recommendations to supplement the safeguards.

The "Statement" does not thoroughly consider the weather patterns that predominate in the Keys. No mention is made of the possible high water effects

of hurricane flooding. The year round tropical temperatures in the Keys are very conducive to bacterial propagation and growth. If the facility were inundated by floods, then harmful viruses present in dung and bedding could be washed into the open waters of the Gulf. The wet well, which would contain the drained effluent from the station floor, would be less than 200 feet from open sea water, and the contaminated contents of this well would be below sea level even during normal tide levels.

Another favorable impact, states the report, would be the "upgrading of breed-

ing stock on a nationwide basis". Can

an island of eight square miles (3620

people per square mile) afford to cede 16

acres of scarce land to a government

agency that regulates an industry that

has absolutely nothing to do with the

economic life of the Keys? The Keys have

nothing to do with cows! There are is-

lands off of Texas or mainland Florida,

nearer to cow country, which could serve

the purpose of quarantine quite as well

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Walter Carson, the scientific advisor to the Florida Keys Citizens Coalition, points out that hydrodynamic pressures could conceivably crack the walls of the wet well when its water level is below normal sea level. If the well were cracked, raw, toxic fluids would drain into the Gulf. Mr. Carson also points out that a foolproof method of dispersing minor amounts of Chlorine Gas into the atmosphere has not been formulated. Chlorine Gas, when breathed even in small amounts, causes lung tissue damage which could precipitate a condition of pneumonia in the breather.

Carson has also mentioned that a process of embryo transplant is being researched, and this advancement, much like artificial insemination, will predominate in the cattle industry in the near future. The report makes no mention of this breakthrough which will make the transporting of whole cattle between nations obsolete.

The "Statement" is thorough in analyzing the local economic impact of the Cattle Station. Careful breakdown of Key West's economic pie reveals that the silver known as "Federal Civilian" would be increased from 6% to 6.3% of total personal income. The report admits that the only long range benefits to Key West would be 34 jobs, plus the regular purchase of maintenance supplies for the facility.

In his column in the June "Solares Hill" Gil Ryder posed some very pertinent questions concerning the Cattle Station: "Are 34 jobs...more important to the area than maintaining and improving our aesthetic values...Will the (possible) odor from burning manure drive tourists away?...Would other, more affluent, coastal cities tolerate such a facility?". Gil's most important question, addressed to each Key Wester, Conch and former mainlander alike, "How will you benefit?". Key West could hardly be expected to add this "Cattle Barn" to its list of attractions. Imagine, "Step aboard, Ladies and Gents, our cruise will take us past historic Fort Taylor, The Coast Guard complex, and our new, functionally landscaped Animal Quarantine Center! Hold your noses, please, and no pictures!

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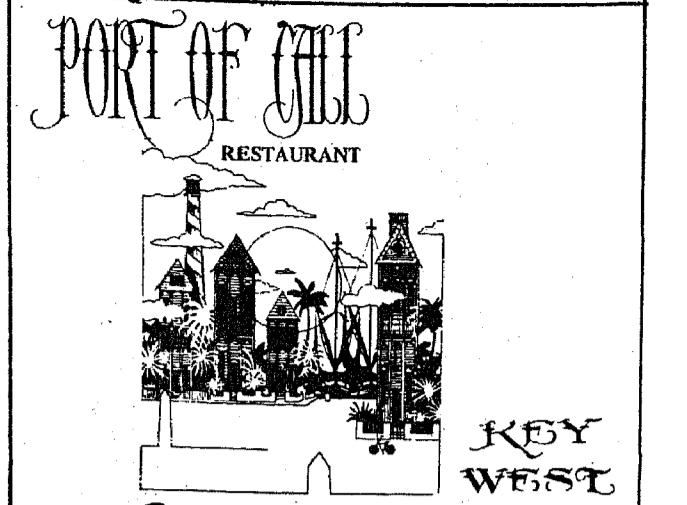
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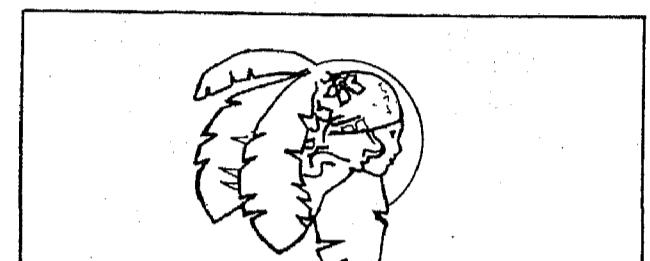
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tability of the project by realistically stating "American people like beef". True, but they are much less fond of Bull. Several letters from citizens of Clifton, N.J. where a similar quarantine station is located, state that the facility there causes no detectable odor. Lying within 20 miles due west of New York, Clifton is no stranger to odors. Can you discern a difference between burning dung and distilling crude oil, or natural gas burnoff? The residents of Clifton evidently can.

The lease agreement between the Navy and the Department of Agriculture is for 25 years. It is unlikely that once the installation is in place that it would be removed if only minor nuisance resulted from it. Like other hastily approved projects in Monroe County, once the first slab is poured there's no stopping it. Twenty-five years is a long sentence, and the penalty paid by a mute citizenry could be the muted groans of cattle in the distance, with a more palpable indication of their proximity surrounding every nose.

One minor point (perhaps only semantic) is that the "Statement" often refers to the proposed facility as an "Animal Import Center" as well as a "Cattle Station". Would the installation later accept other animals -- sheep (anthrax), parrots (psittacosis)?

Many questions come to mind while thumbing through the 100 page report. Each resident who values the clean air of our island paradise, and is concerned with the sensible and sane growth of our hometown should trouble himself to get some answers to these questions. Letters of protest (or approval) should be sent to the Department of Agriculture, state and federal legislatures, and our own local officials. If insufficient protest is made then it should be expected that the whims and fancies of a pragmatic but insensitive bureaucracy will continue to blight the Keys.

con't from page 5

ignored, but the City Ordinance requiring fifty percent open space in a fence after four feet of height was being ignored as well.

A stop-work order was placed on the fence by the Building Department. This order was not followed and work continued on the fence. More outrage, more stop-work orders, and the threat of a law suit by the city against these people accomplished nothing.

Then, in what appeared to be a partial compliance with the law, holes were drilled in the top two feet of the fence to make up some open space - about twenty percent. The fence was stained a dark shade and there the matter rested.

These people have recently filed for a variance asking the city to allow them to keep this fence - this fence that has been blatantly illegal from the beginning. Obviously ignorance of the law is not a reason to grant this variance - the application with the O.I.R.C. asked to build a picket type fence. Apparently the only reason for granting this variance would be that the fence is up.

This is not reason enough. If this variance is passed, then in theory anyone can build what he wants, ignore guidelines, defy stop-work orders, then ask for permission to keep what is built since it is already up. Isn't this like the famous story of the man who murdered his mother and father then asked for the courts mercy on the grounds that he was an orphan?

But what has happened? Incredibly, on the first reading of the request for a variance, the City Commissioners (Commissioner Graham was not yet participating) voted four to nothing to grant it! What's more, the owner was made to appear to be a champion of personal rights who had vanquished a big, intrusive bully named O.I.R.C.

Thankfully, on the second reading of this request for a variance, the question was tabled until the next meeting.

There is no reason to grant this variance.



Perhaps given more time to think about it, the City Commission will vote against it when it comes up again.

To continue with fences for a moment, a repressively ugly chainlink fence has recently been erected at South Beach. It stretches across the front of the beach and crosses the end of the street thereby fencing in the beach and the pier.

Apparently the group of businessmen who will be running the concession at the beach wanted the fence to give them protection at night from trespassers and thieves. This sounds reasonable enough. It is not unusual to want to protect an investment and this group had done a lot of work on the concession building there - indeed, it will be very nice for the people of Key West when this concession is open to the public.

However, the end of Duval Street for years and years has afforded an unchain-linked view of the ocean for visitor and resident alike. The beach and the pier are checked at night by the police for trespassers and the arbitrary blocking off of this view - along with a creepy, fenced-in feeling ("like a concentration camp," beach going regulars complain) - is strongly against the public interest.

I feel that the major blame for this fence rests with the city. The city is the landlord. The beach belongs to the people. A well-intentioned but misled businessman might not realize how offensive this fence would be to the people of Key West, but the city fathers should have known. They should have refused permission to build the fence in the first place.

There are other ways of protecting this property. Put a watchman on at night, put a guard dog inside the premises, increase the police patrol of the area, etc. It was even suggested that if the occupants are worried about their building being burglarized, then they should fence around the building!

But leave the people of Key West the open beach.

The fence should come down. It would be intelligent and public spirited action on the part of the City Commission to take that fence down. Mistakes happen. Let's undo this one.

## THE SANDWICH DECK

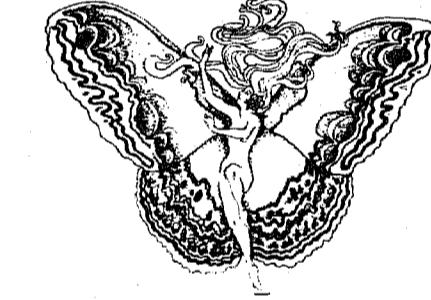


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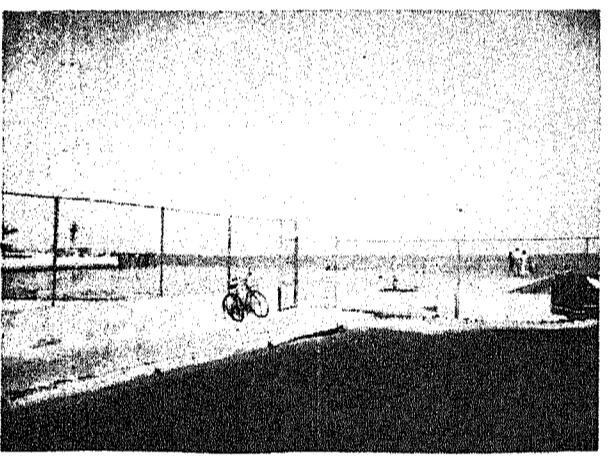
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## The Community Pool .....

Back in 1958 a large Community Center and swimming pool was built in old Conch town at Thomas and Catherine streets. It was intended primarily to serve the needs of the Black community who had been cut off from their traditional access to the Atlantic Ocean beachfront by the expansion of the U.S. Naval Station.

The swimming pool is a large above-ground structure with a capacity for approximately 300 persons. As designed it was an attractive and functional facility that served an urgent and continuing need. Integral to the facility is a large enclosed recreation room on the second floor pool deck, a third floor open-air patio area and two medium sized first floor club rooms.

The swimming pool operated for several years but then through a combination of mechanical design deficiencies, inadequate maintenance, and vandalism, it deteriorated until it had to be closed for safety and health reasons. It remained closed for almost ten years, although the recreation and clubroom facilities, as well as the adjacent outdoor basketball court, softball diamond and play areas continued to receive heavy use.

Late in 1970 a combined group of black and white community leaders began a concerted effort to improve the relations and facilities of the predominantly Black community. There was formed under the auspices of the Key West City Commission, a Human Relations Committee. Under that committee there was appointed a subcommittee called the Pool and Cultural Association or PACA. PACA was chaired by Willie Ward, a Black community recreation leader and included William Huckel, Marion Stevens a local art dealer, Virginia Irving, a teacher, and several others including volunteers from the U.S.S. Bushnell, a Key West submarine tender.

Under Ward's coordination, Marion Stevens conducted fund drives and benefits. Bill Huckel worked with Bushnell personnel to overhaul and repair the pool's mechanical equipment. The City Commission provided funds and contracted to repair the building structure. The work was difficult because the deterioration of the steel tanks, valves and piping was considerable, and because vandalism by a few thoughtless individuals continued even during the renovation. However perseverance prevailed and the day before Labor Day 1971 the pool was considered ready to be filled to meet a promised opening date of Labor Day.



Swimming instructor with pupils

Then there arose an unauthorized problem. The water supply fill pipe for the entire pool was one two-inch diameter iron pipe. As the relatively tiny stream came squirting out into the vast 180,000 gallon pool it became apparent to everyone that it would take days to fill the pool. In panic Bill Huckel began seeking a better solution. "Try the fire department", was one suggestion - former Fire Chief "Bum" Farto was contacted. "Could he and would he help".

"Of course", came the answer. "I'll tie a 1,000 gallon a minute fire engine pumper into a fire hydrant a block away and fill the pool in three hours", he asserted. "I'll start at 9 a.m. Labor Day morning and have the pool filled by noon".

He was as good as his word. At nine in the morning the pumper arrived and two large canvas hose lines were laid from the pool to Catherine and Whitehead Streets. The engine hooked up to a 6 inch hydrant. The two hoses fed a large pedestal mounted nozzle. In a few minutes the engine roared and the massive pump began to whirl. The water shot out in a thick stream for over a hundred feet. A curtain of water descended into the pool like a RED TIDE. The nozzle was quickly directed around into the adjacent playground and the crowd stared in awe at the RUST RED spectacle.

The problem. The cast iron water main accustomed to the nominal flow of domestic users, was not prepared for the enormous demand of the monster fill pump. The accumulated rust scale of many years was suddenly torn loose by the gushing water and came spewing forth in a crimson torrent.

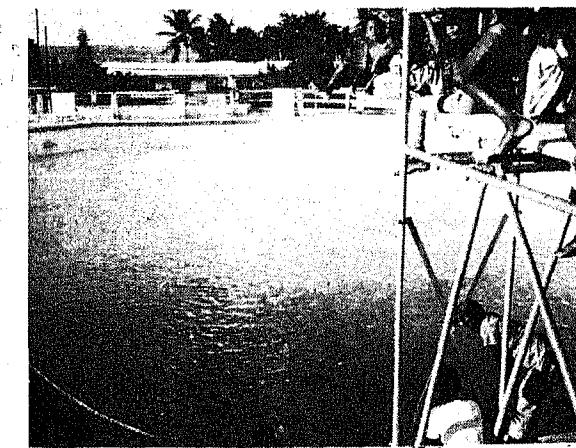
## The Day the Pool Ran Red

by Bill Westray

"We'll let it run for a while... it'll clear up", the engine captain exclaimed. They did. After an hour, the red stream gradually diminished to bright pink. An hour later, it was still pale pink. In desperation, the assembled leaders decided to give it a try. The nozzle was turned into the pool.

True to the Fire Chief's predictions the level rose rapidly but as the water depth deepened, so did the color. From light pink, to bright pink to red it turned. By 2 p.m. the pool was brimful and blood red.

"Is it safe, can we swim in it", shouted the kids. "Of course", said the PACA leaders and dived in with the kids following.



Watching the pool fill up from the diving board

"The filter system will clean out the rust," promised Bill Westray, "it'll just take a little time."

So a red swim was had by all on Labor Day 1971. By evening, the whites were pink. Whether from sun or from water no one could tell. The young Blacks laughed. On them you couldn't tell!

But the Black families didn't laugh. The next morning was washday. And the loosened rust in the neighborhood water mains which had not reached the pool suddenly poured forth from water spigots and faucets for blocks around. Even today, you see an occasional person with a rust colored dress or shirt or handkerchief that owes its hue to the wash water that it was laundered in on the day the pool ran red.

The problems were only beginning. The filter didn't remove the rust. They didn't even remove the dirt. The open filter tank leaked, the float control valve stuck continually causing the tank to either overflow or run dry. The water wouldn't pass through the diatomaceous

earth (D.E.) filter panels, the pump overheated from lack of enough water, the chlorination system wouldn't chlorinate, and the circulation system seemed to be designed to run backwards. Bushnell personnel worked valiantly trying to correct the problems, but basically the problem was poor design, the key deficiency in the shutdown ten years earlier.

After a week, the inevitable became reality. The pool was shut down, the main drain opened and the red water was sent out to sea. But efforts continued to solve the problems. New filter panels were ordered, a new chlorinator was installed, the leaks were welded shut. Once again, water flowed into the pool... this time from the slower supply pipe... this time clear water instead of red.

After a day enough water was accumulated to start the pump and commence filtration. Many problems had been solved, but not the main one of inadequate filtration. In spite of the large pump, the water simply would not flow fast enough through the filter bags to get clean. Health department rules called for complete recirculation every six hours. The system was running only fast enough to recirculate once every thirty hours. "I think the circulation system is designed to run backwards", Bill Westray declared after pondering over the problem for several days. Once again the pool was shut down.

This time help was sought from newly elected Key West Mayor Charles (Sonny) McCoy. McCoy, an architect, agreed to help and called upon a friend in the swimming pool business from Miami - a Charles Bromley.

"Where are the blueprints?" asked Bromley when he arrived to commence the inspection. No one knew. Bill Westray produced some rough sketches he had made of the pipes, valves and pumps. Bromley reviewed these and then made a physical inspection of the entire pool. When he finished he declared, "Your basic problems are that the circulation system runs backwards, and it has always been extremely difficult to use an open tank filter system when the filters are located below the level of the water in the pool."

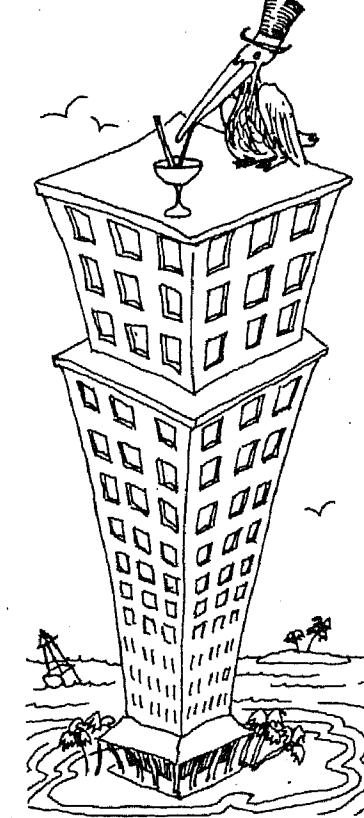
"What do we do about it?" Westray asked. "We need to redesign the circulation system, and replace the open tank filter system with a closed system... probably a cartridge system," Bromley replied.

Back to Mayor McCoy the group went. After lengthy discussion, arrangements were made to secure the service of a professional Miami swimming pool engineer to redesign the filter and circulation

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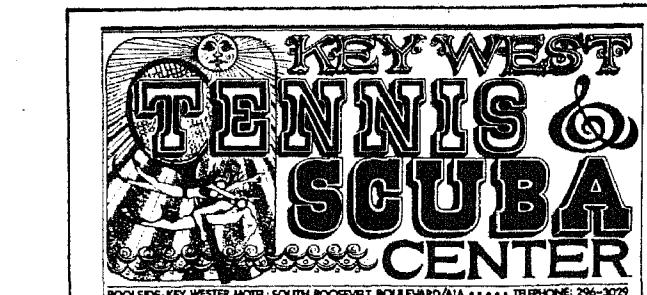
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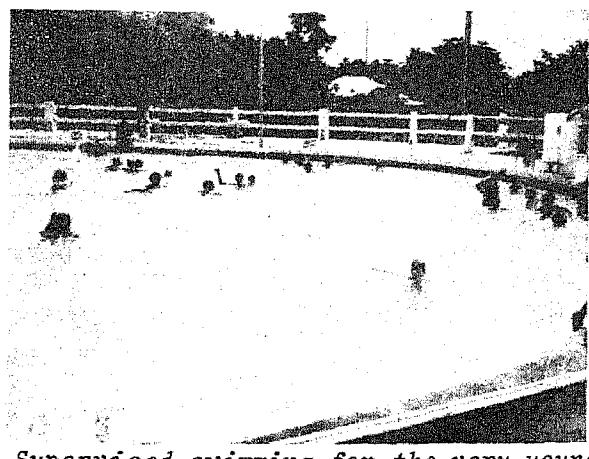
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system. A "shotgun" cost estimate of \$10,000 for redesign and renovation of the facility was suggested. The mayor was of the opinion that some matching funds might be secured from HUD (Housing and Urban Development) under their Open Space or Neighborhood Facilities grant-aid programs. It was early Spring 1972 by the time these decisions were made.



Supervised swimming for the very young

Nearwhile an ad hoc group headed by Capt. Louis A. Rotatowski, the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Bushnell, Mrs. Rotatowski, Huckel, Westray, Ward, Cecil Bain Jr., then County Commissioner Billy Freeman and others, had initiated efforts to secure a professional director for the Community Pool and Center. They had contacted Michael Prewitt, a consultant for VISTA, on the possibility of securing a VISTA project. Prewitt, an outgoing, enthusiastic person himself, was greatly impressed with the enthusiasm and sincerity of the group and promised full cooperation. A letter of intent was prepared and endorsed by the Key West City Commission. Early in 1972 a young married couple, Lonnie and Susan Mikul arrived on the scene. Their specialty was project writing. Their arrival coincided with the decision to proceed with the pool renovation and seek HUD federal aid. Lonnie and Sue were assigned the task of preparing a grant request from HUD. The effort commenced from scratch. Forms had to be procured, voluminous instructions deciphered, mountains of base data reviewed and extracted. The project was to take many weeks, but Lonnie and Sue were equal to the challenge and finally the paper work was ready for submission. A grant of \$16,000 was requested under a HUD program entitled "Open Space Land, Legacy of Parks." We received assurance from HUD that the project was in order and that we could expect full funding. Nonetheless it was nearly summer before the project went in. The plans and bids specifications were finally completed about the same time and after approval by the City Commission the project was advertised for bids.

The need for qualified life guards was recognized fairly early. Various possibilities were explored and discussed. Finally, County Commissioner Billy Freeman offered to propose a resolution to the County Commission to pay the wages of eight part-time guards. In June 1972 the County Commission approved a project for the eight guards and agreed to pay wages of \$12,000 for the forthcoming fiscal year.

Next, it became necessary to recruit capable swimmers and train them as Red Cross certified lifeguards. Ms. Irene Hannick, Red Cross Water Safety Instructor, agreed to teach the class. Six men from the immediate community signed up. This writer was one, along with James Curry, Joe Johnson, Al Batty, Claude and Louis Fisher and Herb Funnye. Permission was secured to use a Navy pool for the classes.

On September 11, 1972, bids were opened for the swimming pool renovation, and the City Commission awarded a contract to Greene Pool Service of Miami.



Supervised swimming for the very young

Nearwhile an ad hoc group headed by Capt. Louis A. Rotatowski, the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. Bushnell, Mrs. Rotatowski, Huckel, Westray, Ward, Cecil Bain Jr., then County Commissioner Billy Freeman and others, had initiated efforts to secure a professional director for the Community Pool and Center. They had contacted Michael Prewitt, a consultant for VISTA, on the possibility of securing a VISTA project. Prewitt, an outgoing, enthusiastic person himself, was greatly impressed with the enthusiasm and sincerity of the group and promised full cooperation. A letter of intent was prepared and endorsed by the Key West City Commission. Early in 1972 a young married couple, Lonnie and Susan Mikul arrived on the scene. Their specialty was project writing. Their arrival coincided with the decision to proceed with the pool renovation and seek HUD federal aid. Lonnie and Sue were assigned the task of preparing a grant request from HUD. The effort commenced from scratch. Forms had to be procured, voluminous instructions deciphered, mountains of base data reviewed and extracted. The project was to take many weeks, but Lonnie and Sue were equal to the challenge and finally the paper work was ready for submission. A grant of \$16,000 was requested under a HUD program entitled "Open Space Land, Legacy of Parks." We received assurance from HUD that the project was in order and that we could expect full funding. Nonetheless it was nearly summer before the project went in. The plans and bids specifications were finally completed about the same time and after approval by the City Commission the project was advertised for bids.

The need for qualified life guards was recognized fairly early. Various possibilities were explored and discussed. Finally, County Commissioner Billy Freeman offered to propose a resolution to the County Commission to pay the wages of eight part-time guards. In June 1972 the County Commission approved a project for the eight guards and agreed to pay wages of \$12,000 for the forthcoming fiscal year.

Next, it became necessary to recruit capable swimmers and train them as Red Cross certified lifeguards. Ms. Irene Hannick, Red Cross Water Safety Instructor, agreed to teach the class. Six men from the immediate community signed up. This writer was one, along with James Curry, Joe Johnson, Al Batty, Claude and Louis Fisher and Herb Funnye. Permission was secured to use a Navy pool for the classes.

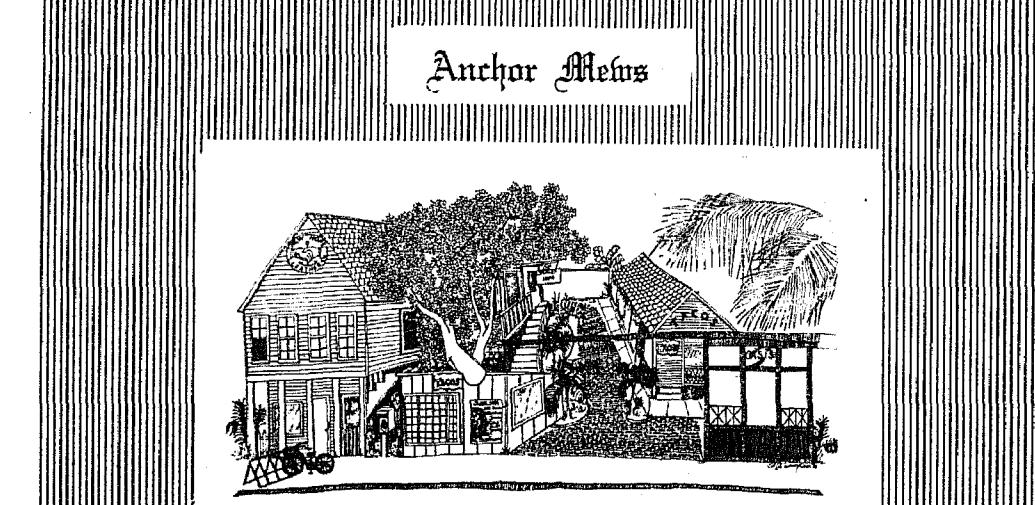
On September 11, 1972, bids were opened for the swimming pool renovation, and the City Commission awarded a contract to Greene Pool Service of Miami.

Greene Pool Company turned out to be a commendably fast-charging contractor. Within a week their materials were on site and work commenced with this writer maintaining close liaison. Two large new Harmac cartridge filters were installed. The recirculation system was redesigned so that the pool water was picked up from both the bottom and the top. New return lines sent the filtered water back into the pool through thirteen high velocity jets that kept the water constantly agitated. The expensive gas chlorination system was factory overhauled and reinstalled. It worked

perfectly. Another unneeded sub-system was adapted to make an automatic soda ash feeder.

At the same time the training of the lifeguards under Irene Hannick proceeded three evenings a week. Each of the men absorbed his training well. They worked with one another, alternating as victim and rescuer. In their spare time, that last month of October 1972, the new guards along with Bill Huckel and a few other volunteers, scrubbed the entire pool basin with acid, and then repainted it completely, a task that consumed nearly fifty gallons of special pool paint.

to be continued



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## COMMON SENSE

BY GIL RYDER

we must all pay our share.

The unfortunate people who simply do not have the money to pay for garbage removal must be in dire straits indeed

and must be helped. Twentieth Century America can no more allow filth than it can allow hunger, and the machinery exists (welfare under various aliases) to help the poverty stricken.

All of our County Commissioners must be aware of the conditions, and they should be equally aware that they cannot allow the conditions to be self-perpetuating and ever growing.

It is up to the Commissioners to decide whether the Florida Keys are to be a tropical paradise or a tropical slum - why do they find this such a hard decision to make?

can't from page 4

They plan this fall to use, with the permission of the private owners, the old aquarium that was once city-owned. It is presently undergoing refurbishing so they will be able to take classes of pre-school and younger school children through.

"We're trying to educate them and inform them, it is as interesting a way possible to the urgent need to save and preserve our oceans for the future -- that's what we're all about," Clemons noted.

They work closely on the preparation of 15-minute lectures for the children with Clemons doing the scripts for about 50 slides. One of the lectures will concentrate on the living coral barrier reef that stretches the length of the Keys in the Florida Straits, one of the natural wonders of the world. The reef, and its thousands of species of underwater life, form the protective wall against enormous storm waves that could totally flood the low-lying islands in the Keys.

What are they looking for in the future?

The Nautilus Underwater Research group (they can be reached at 294-5348) would like to get a handle on a vessel they can use for their research chores; they'd like to connect with a grant from one of the many national foundations to expand and continue their work (the bank balance seems always too near the zero mark); they'd like to form a collection of study and research materials for a library -- and most of all they'd like some "willing" volunteer helpers with a real interest in preservation and education."

One point they make:  
Donations to their organization are tax deductible.

So get out there and support your local ocean savers!

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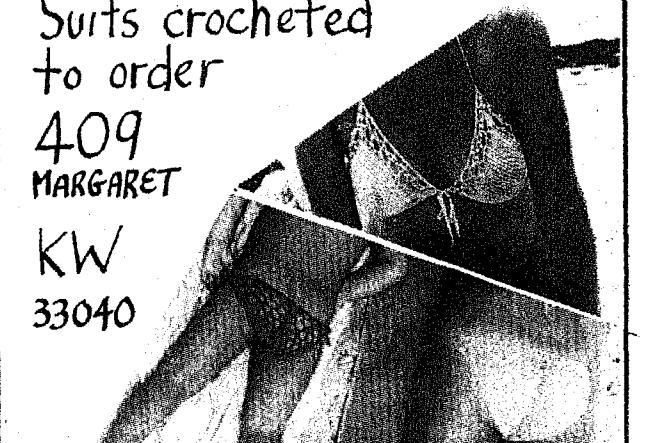
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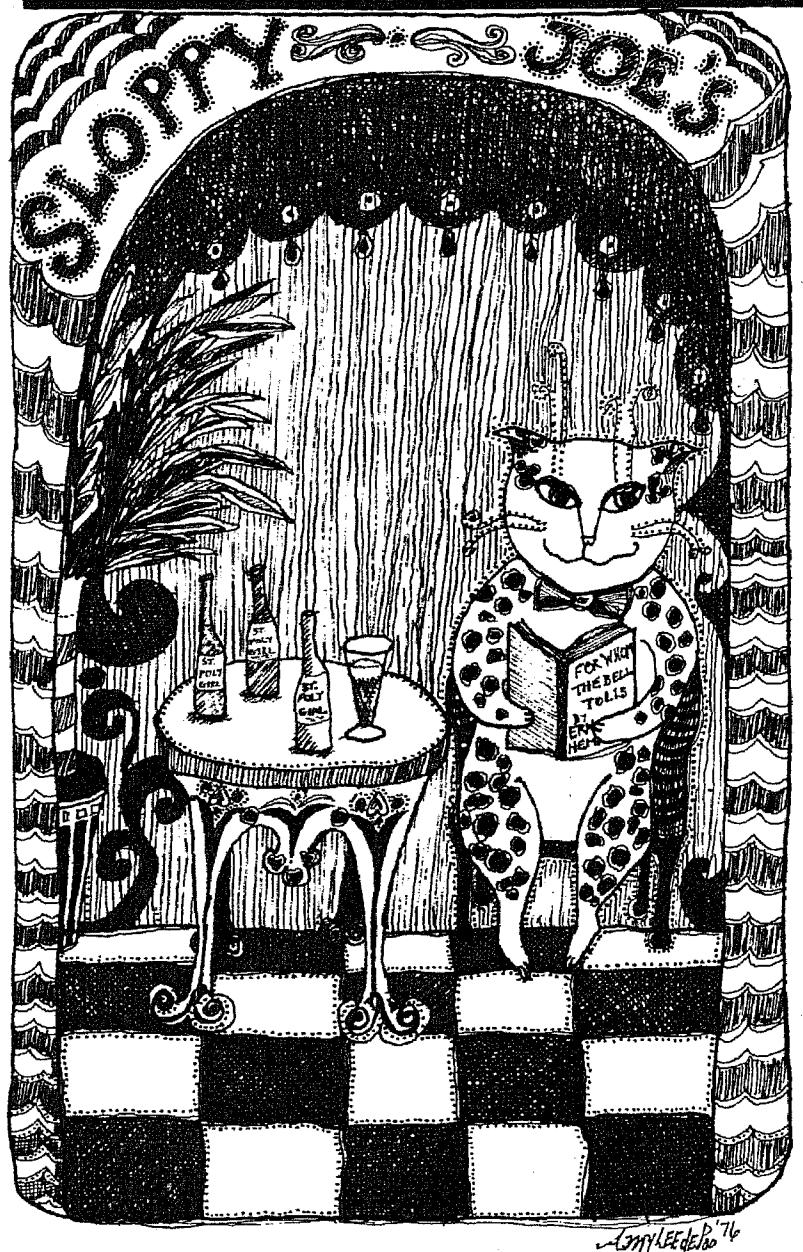
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NELL by Ray Daniels

I give you fair golden maid the keys to all the rooms in my castle, and you shall have all the horses in my stables, and all the grain in my storehouses, so you may eat cake every day, and you will never worry or care;

And yet, perhaps I will give you the key to one room in my castle, and you shall have one horse of your own to ride, and a room of grain, and you may eat cake twice a week, and you will never worry or care;

But, perhaps I will give you a bed to share with me in my room and you shall ride my horse once in a while, and have a few handfuls of grain, and once in a while you may eat cake, and you will never worry or care;

Still, perhaps I will lie with you on a mattress in a room, and you shall walk by my side, and you will have a few crumbs, and never eat cake, and I will embrace your spirit, and you will never worry or care.

'Clouds' by Che

Clouds roll by -

slowly  
tumbling, one over another,  
crumbling and recreating  
their airborne kingdoms,  
inspiring questions,  
which are answered  
as a bird glides by.

#### INTRODUCTION

I often wander far away  
To Amsterdam and Calais,  
To Sahara deserts barren of life,  
To Ulster streets full of strife,  
To Lapland's snowy tundra expanse  
To the Riviera of southern France,  
To Tahiti where the trade winds blow  
To the Black Forest where rivers flow.

Yes, I've been almost everywhere.  
I've seen it all, but I declare,  
The place that I love the best  
Is my backyard in Key West.

#### T T T

Those that travel throughout the world;  
That train, trolley, tram and trudge triumphantly  
From town to town trying to tame time,  
Test their tolerance toward tremendous trials.  
However, tenuous tranquility always manages to elude them.  
The trick is to touch-down totally in Key West.

#### I I I

Imagine! I interrogated every individual  
And, interestingly, while their inclination toward intrigue  
Indicated an irrepressibly investigative imagination;  
Inexplicably, none had any intuitive insight  
Into the idyllic, impassioned island of Key West.

These poems are taken from Key West by Len Marowitz

## poetry

#### WHERE?

by Suellen

There's always wine,  
always song,

But Lord, where's the love?

The wine flows

The music rings

But Lord, the love it hides.

The wine's three bucks a bottle

Songs three for a quarter,

But Lord, the price of love ain't marked.

The wine's smooth

The music gay

But Lord, the love, the love's nowhere.

To Key West for wine

To sunset for music

But Lord, where for love? Where for love?

Wine and song don't fill the empty,

Lord they just can't fill the empty.

For the depths of this emptiness are too great

for any wine or any song to fill.

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