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PROPOSAL

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TEACHING ART
TO ADULTS

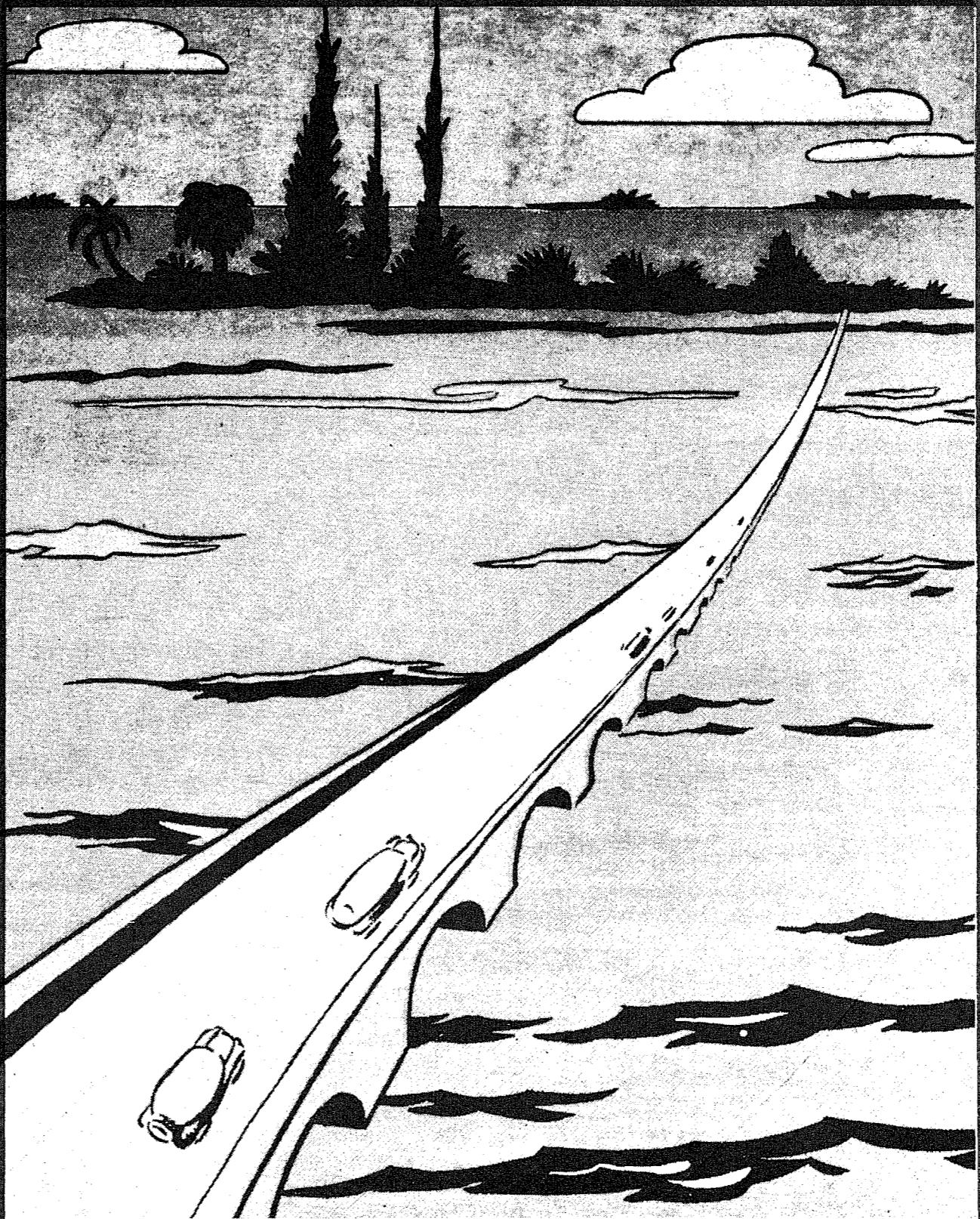
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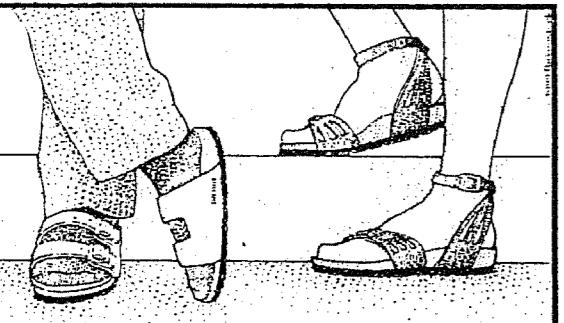
SLEEPING ON
WHITE STREET
PIER

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REMEMBRANCES OF KEY WEST

PHILIP BURTON • ELMER DAVIS • COLIN JAMESON • BUD JACOBSON
PAGES 16 THROUGH 27





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EDITORIAL

Though I personally don't think that the new mall proposed by a Virginia developer for the Key West Golf Course should not be rejected out of hand, there's very little doubt in my mind that the project doesn't make sense for Key West.

Despite what the developer has said, the new mall would have a damaging effect on the existing retail base of the area. There's no way it couldn't. More people would come into town from up the Keys, of course, and fewer Key West people would go to Miami. But these patterns will not support an \$80-million mall. Most of its business would come out of the hide of the existing retail sector.

Where would the labor force for the mall come from? Key West already has its share of low-paying service jobs. This mall would only aggravate that situation.

Most importantly, the proposed mall is out of character with the future of Key West. This city cannot be all things to all people. No matter how convenient it might be for those who love to shop, a mall of this magnitude at this location is a wasteful use of this crowded isle's most valuable land.

There's no question the golf course property is potentially one of the city's most valuable resources, eclipsing all other city-owned parcels in value. The developer has done the town a service by suggesting an imaginative change of use for it. Key West could do worse than to figure out what would make sense there.

It probably won't be a mall.

Editor Ann Boese is off on a well-deserved vacation this month. Her idea of a holiday is a writing workshop at the Eugene O'Neill Theater in Connecticut. She'll be back in about a week, and ready to return to her customary place at the editorial helm.

Christine Naughton, who has been doing most of the editorial work this month, has done a top-notch job. You'll find this issue of *Solares Hill* has a lot in it: a nostalgic special section on the history of Key West, a good look at the management of Garrison Bight, a story on what's available to adults in the way of art education, several pieces on the environment, a nice short story, etc.

People who endure the long hot summer in Key West deserve nothing but the best. Hope you enjoy the issue! 

Geddy Sveikauskas

August's cover is from the dust jacket of a guidebook of Key West published as part of the WPA Florida Writers Project in 1941. The artist is anonymous. "The whole town promenades Duval Street on Saturday night," the guidebook advises. "Everybody, dressed in his best, is out to see and to be seen. Townsfolk, visitors and fishermen do their weekly shopping between sundown and 10 p.m. and give Duval Street its only jam of the week."

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A Tremendous Desire to Go Shopping?

A huge new shopping mall on U.S. 1 which could bring 600 full-time jobs and three major department stores to Key West was announced July 21 by Petrie, Dierman & Partners of McLean, Virginia.

The project faces a number of obstacles. One of them is that the developer doesn't own the entrance and a substantial part of the Key West Golf Course, upon which the mall is planned. Another is that the existing lease on the city-owned property that virtually surrounds where the developer wants to build doesn't permit use as a shopping center.

Only forty hours prior to the developer's announcement, the Key West city commission had held a special meeting on possible disposition of 21 city-owned properties, among them the Key West Golf Course. At that meeting, the commission members had seemed ill-prepared on many details of city-owned leases. None of the commissioners had given any hint of a major move in the offing -- though the prospective developer had been making the rounds of political leaders and civic organizations all week.

At the Friday press conference, a spokesman for the developer said he had talked within the last month to each of the commissioners separately about the project. Several commissioners later confirmed that these conversations had taken place.

Dick Burke



A view from the 11th hole at the golf course. What will happen to it if the mall goes in?

The July 21 *Key West Citizen* broke the story, but its front-page account made no mention of the ownership situation. Neither did the *Miami Herald*, which played catch-up the next day.

The property containing the golf course is composed of two parcels. The course itself is leased for \$42,000 a year for 92 years, according to the city's special meeting agenda, by the Key West Resort

Golf Course Corporation, owned by New York City banking giant Citicorp. That parcel is about 120 acres in size.

The other part, an irregularly shaped parcel of about 41 acres in dry land plus an additional five acres of wetlands, is owned outright by Citicorp's Key West Resort Development Corporation. It is zoned R-2H, high-density residential. The developers of the potential mall say they

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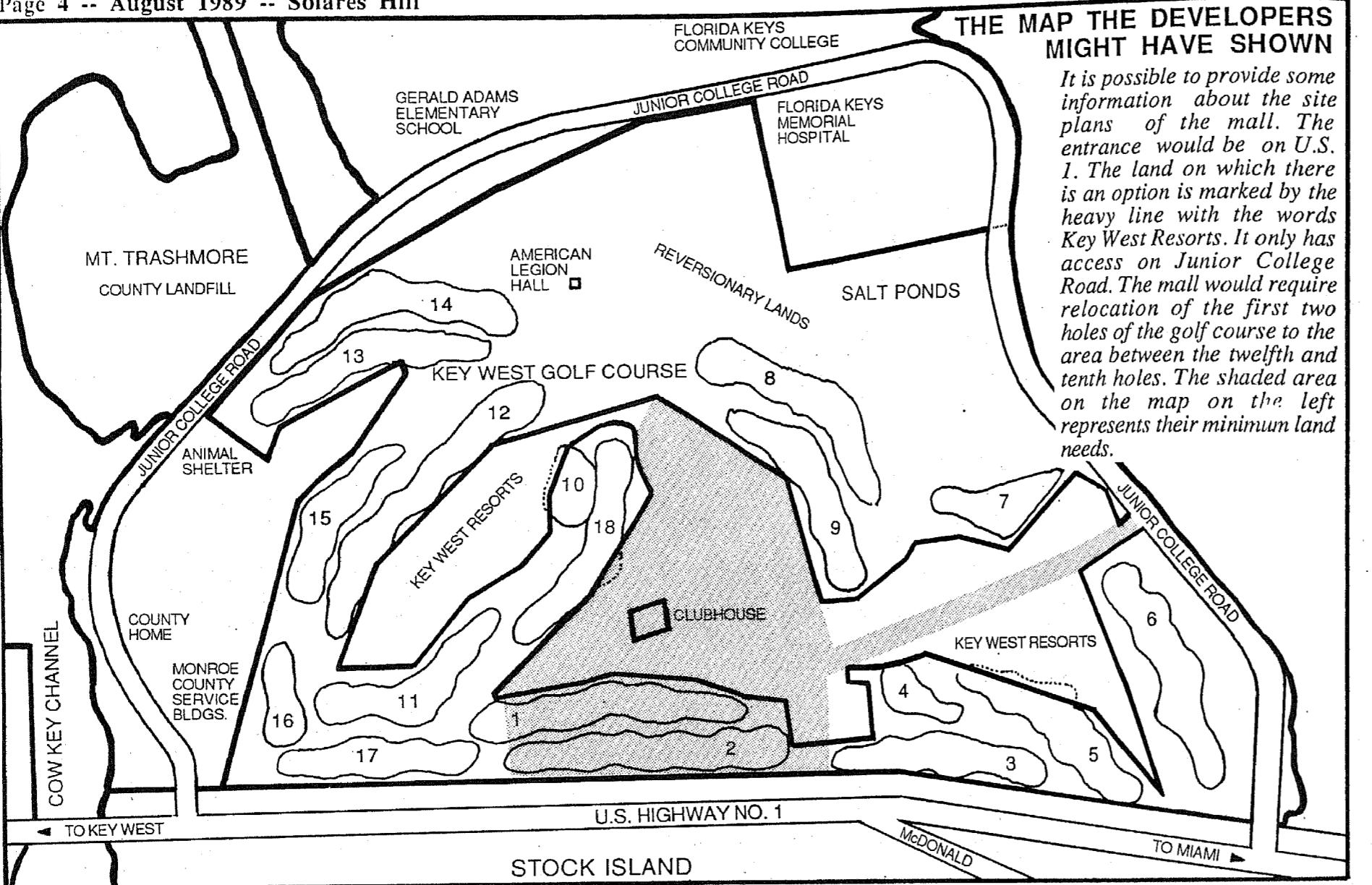
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have an option on this property. Phillip Ross, a vice-president of Petrie Dierman, said the option was for "millions of dollars" but declined to be more specific.

Ross indicated the developer would not exercise the option without a development agreement with the city. According to records in the county assessor's office, the 41-acre parcel is assessed at \$3.749 million. On November 30, 1988 Key West Resort paid \$75,121.07 in annual property taxes on the parcel.

It seems obvious a U.S. 1 access would add hundreds of thousands of dollars, perhaps millions, to the property's value. So the city, through its zoning power buttressed by its underlying ownership, is in an excellent potential bargaining position. The city is in control.

No provision for the payment of property taxes is included in the 92-year lease of the golf course. The omission of such an arrangement for city leases in general (and the length of the leasehold) came in for criticism at the July 19 special city commission meeting.

The lease of the golf course indicates as the permitted use a golf club open to the public "and all other uses related or incremental thereto." Another clause in the complex document says the lessee "shall not permit, commit or suffer waste or impairment of the Demised Premises or any improvements thereon ..." On their face, these phrases don't provide much encouragement for the mall.

Attendees at the special meeting noted the existence of a clause in the golf course lease

by which the Citicorp subsidiary promised to maintain the course "in championship condition." Several people in the audience of about ninety said the course was in poor condition. "Sue 'em for specific performance," advised Jack Spottswood to applause. "They can afford it." Spottswood seemed to think the city would have a good case in such a proceeding.

Several years ago the city had reached a new lease agreement with Citicorp, which had given an option to some Texas interests to build housing on some parts of the property. As part of the deal, Citicorp took responsibility for the golf course. But the Texans' project never got off the ground. Perhaps, Ross speculated, that was because people came to Key West for other things than to have a home on a golf course. "They

couldn't sell the houses," he said. "That's it."

"The long drive up the Keys to the other world a distant memory," said the release distributed at the press conference. "Whether it's shoes for the children, a fashion accessory for Mom or a new suit of clothes for Dad, Key West residents will be able to get it close in the environment they love."

Not surprisingly, The Courtyards is long on lush promises.

The two-level mall would be built on approximately 30 acres fronting U.S. 1, according to Ross. There would be 450,000 square feet of space. Although there had been expressions of interest "by a couple of conventional department stores," Ross said it was too early, given the three-or-four-year process of getting approvals and building the mall, to identify these anchor stores.

"The Courtyards is an intimate shopping experience," continues the release. "From



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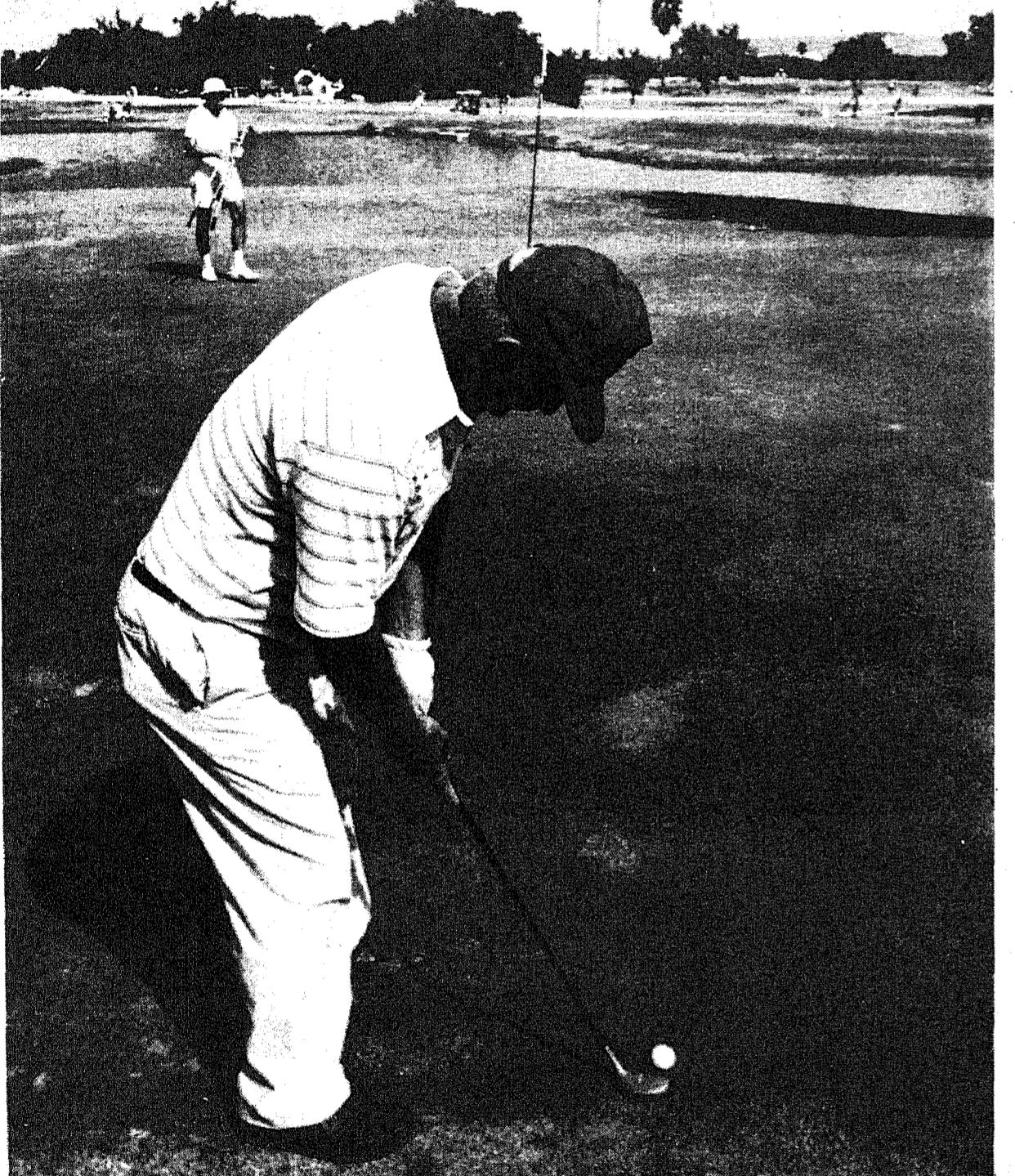
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Project consultant Peter Ilchuk disclosed that the project had "received some good input" at community meetings (schools, hospital, golfers, Rotary, Knights of Columbus, "average people"). He detected "a tremendous desire to go shopping" among Key West residents. Ross was emphatic that the stores would be for the residents, not the tourists.

When built, the release said, the project would pay about \$823,000 in property taxes each year. It would also generate annual sales tax revenues of about \$4.8 million. That would indicate sales of about \$80 million annually. The Courtyards would also pay water, sewer, solid waste and traffic impact fees, plan review and building permits and occupational licenses.

Ilchuk said the developer planned to discuss the project with the planning



Lenny Brandt, foreground, is against the mall. "Do you know what it'll do to that road out there?" he asks. Ted Foell, his playing partner, in rear, favors the mall. "As long as there's a golf course left," he says, "I'm all for it." Shawn Barrett, the other member of the threesome and not pictured above, is against the project, "but my wife and daughter disagree."

commission in August or September and then take it to the city commission.

Ross presented a range of possible community projects the developer might be willing to contribute to: a day-care center, a tourist-oriented "welcome center," improvements to the golf course, setting aside land for affordable housing, recycling of solid waste, improving the habitat of the endangered tree snail, additional access to the landscaped parking area, you enter The Courtyards through a skylit entranceway surrounded by palms and tropical foliage. The restful interior Courtyards, lit by the day's sun and climate controlled for comfort, are spaciously grand but humanly scaled. An orchid garden greets you with a splendor offered only by this special tropical plant. The main court is hosting three guitarists providing a melodic background



James Henderson, who started a job on the grounds in mid-July, says salt seepage is a constant problem.

to nature's own light and sound. Later in the day, a special party will take place in the Main Court to benefit one of our many local charities. That night a small concert ensemble will provide another form of entertainment.

One local reporter offered a shrewd question. "I notice this says climate controlled," she said. "Does that mean air conditioning?" She was assured it did.

Ross was asked why there was no layout of the property or sketches of the stores. "We didn't come in with a pretty picture out of a box," he responded. "We'll work with the community to decide what the pretty picture should be." Ross referred to his boss, Walter Petrie, as "the Michelangelo of regional retail centers."

Describing his great opus, surely Michelangelo would have been impatient with questions about the ownership of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

"Nestled in The Courtyards are clusters of shops and department stores providing the consumer goods in demand by Key West and Lower Keys shoppers," continued the release. "Stroll from The Courtyards to one of our major department stores and the variety of goods and quality service you expect will be at your fingertips. Walk to our small select shops to purchase that just-right Christmas or birthday gift that only a trip to Miami made possible before. Take a break with a special taste treat from the Food Park."

What the Lease Says

Article I, Section 1.01, Paragraph H
Permitted Use -- a golf club open to the public "and all other uses related to or incidental thereto."

Article X, Section 10.22
Maintenance of the golf course. Lessee shall during the term of this lease cause all fairways and greens of the golf course comprising a part of the Demised Premises to be maintained in a condition comparable to other eighteen hole championship golf courses in the State of Florida, provided that all necessary utilities required for such maintenance are available therefor. The unavailability of any utilities shall not, however, excuse Lessee from its obligations under this Section if such non-availability results directly from any acts or omissions of Lessee or its agents, servants or employees.

roads. He said the mall would have its own full-time security force.

At the press conference, Ross stayed around for questions. He acknowledged he was familiar with the discussion of the leasing of city-owned properties. Was he willing to consider negotiating with the city for a base rent plus a percentage of the gross receipts of the mall in exchange for a development agreement?

Well, he responded, his firm was

committed to paying real estate taxes and sales taxes.

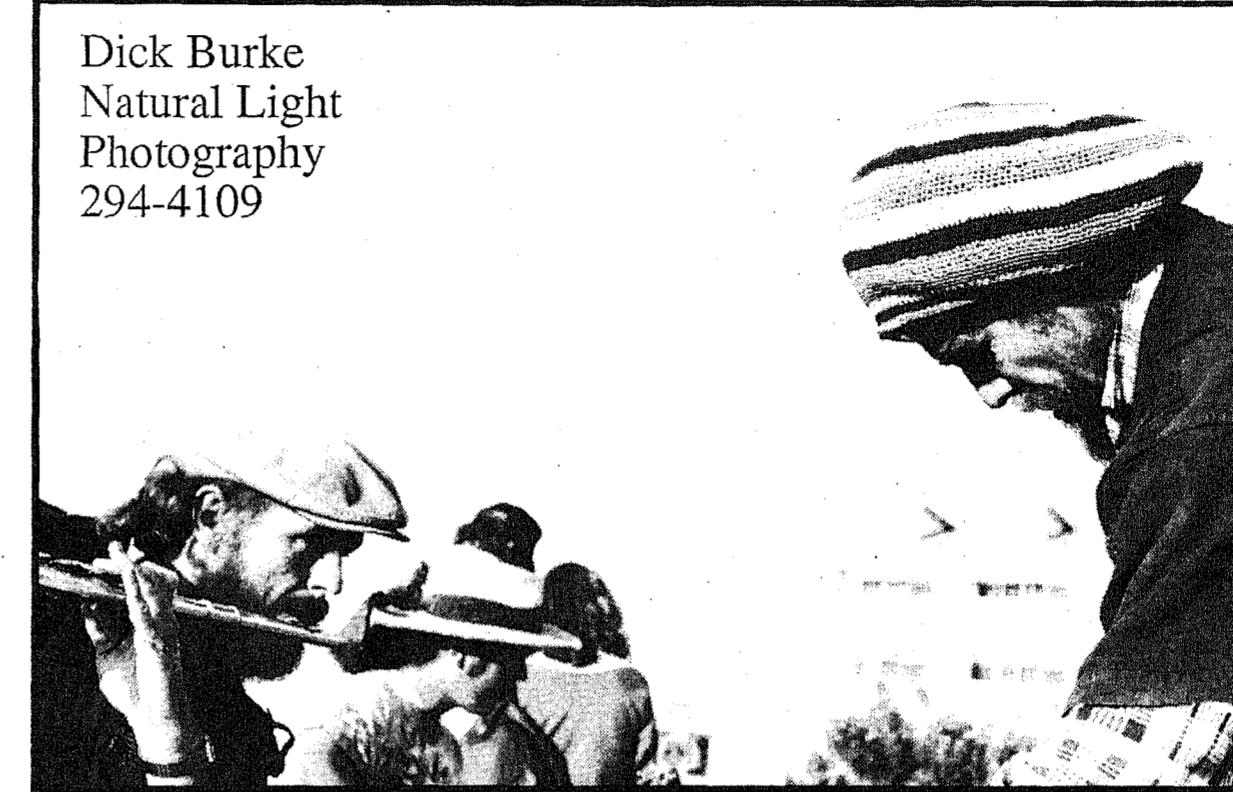
But the city would have to rezone the property and would own the underlying rights to his main access, wouldn't it?

Ross answered that he hadn't thought through all the possibilities.

"What it comes down to," he said, "is that the community has to decide. Do they want a conventional shopping center in Key West? If so, we're confident we can hammer out a development agreement with the city."



Dick Burke
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Taking One Step at a Time

by Jeanne McClow

The Keys are only a string of tiny islands peacefully adrift in the middle of the deep blue. No amount of money will make it possible to enlarge them. We can't just add on a parking lot over here or another landfill over there no matter how pressing the demand. That's the beauty of islands. And island people, like boating people, learn to live within a finite space. We must teach our visitors and newcomers to do the same.

Monroe County Environmental Story is a resource book that will consider every aspect of the Monroe County environment. Though its authors expect it will be an important tool for professionals and laymen alike, it is designed for use in the classroom by workshop-trained teachers. It will be up to them to adapt the material to the appropriate grade level.

Programs to educate the young must be long-range. We cannot repair our environment overnight. MCES is an important step.

The program is based on participation and hands-on experience. The goal is to teach our young people to be stewards of their environment. This is particularly important because the Keys economy is dependent upon one of the most unique and fragile ecosystems in the world.

I had attended the first day of the MCES workshop. I returned on the last day to catch up.

At the School Administration complex, I entered a conference room humming with energy and high spirits. Some of the writers -- Sharon Wells, Amy dePoo and Wendy Tucker -- were there, along with Tom Hambright from the Key West library without whom, according to Jeannette Gato, "the work couldn't have been done," and Jeannette's husband, Tom, a retired Dade County principal who is, as he says, "just a fifth-generation Conch come home."

Also present were Marion Maryzck, a retired social studies teacher and Jeannette's "liaison," and J. Fairbanks Leach, who had been working solo on activities incorporating music and drama.

MCES is divided into four sections.

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A Hundred Experts

Hundreds of Monroe County people are in the process of developing one of their most ambitious educational projects ever -- the Monroe County Environmental Story (MCES). (See Part I in June's issue of *Solares Hill*.) Here's a synopsis:

Initiated about a year and a half ago, MCES is being developed by a task force of 40 volunteers from several environmental groups, as well as concerned citizens. The Task Force is chaired by Deborah Holle, manager of the National Key Deer Wildlife Preserve. The project coordinator is Jeannette Gato.

For guidance, the group depended upon two published environmental stories from Albuquerque, New Mexico and Dade County, Florida. Both were some years old and neither was as ambitious as this one. Also, neither enjoyed the support this one is already experiencing.

More than a hundred experts volunteered to write the articles, including marine research scientists Eric Mueller and Brian La Pointe; Roland Fisch, director of the Middle

Keys Community College; Keys archeologists Robert Carr and Erving Eyster; former Senator Joe Allen; county planners Don Craig, George Garrett and Charles Pattison; DeeVon Quirolo, head of Reef Relief; marine biologists Ed Little and Duncan Mathewson; historians/preservationists Sharon Wells and Susan Olson; environmental activist Amy dePoo; and "the man, even the experts go to for answers," Ray Blazevic.

After the writers finished their work the document was turned over to a group of teachers from around the county who began to create the study activities suggested by the material. This occurred in June's eight-day Summer Environmental Institute.

The 10 teachers who took part are Laura Causey and Dee Williams from Marathon High School; Sandy Wickers from Key West High School; Jean Deming, Lou McDonald and Jackie McCorkle from Glynn Archer; Marilyn Douthett and Betty Davies from Poinciana; Connie Reeder from Sigsbee; and Donna Lange from Gerald Adams.

The first section, "The Natural Environment," includes our geologic history; meteorology; tidal/lunar interphase and currents; and our natural systems.

The second section details Monroe County's rich cultural heritage, taking in the archeological point of view as well as the anthropological, dating back from our first European contacts. Included are a history of our early settlers, our unique maritime history, our up-and-down industrial history, our mariculture, a history of our transportation system, all about the great hurricane of 1935, and bios of 12 people who shaped the Keys plus those of some of our many writers. Did you know that the Keys claim more Pulitzer Prize winners than anywhere else in the world?

The second part of this section discusses our "built" environments -- architecture, landscapes, utility systems, etc., with emphasis on what is appropriate to the Keys. Topics for discussion follow, such as "How well do you treat your environment?" and "How does your community serve you?"

Rounding out this section is "A Sense of Place." Here one is taken on verbal tours of the Keys, with A Day at the Wild Bird Center, A Day in the Life of a Key Deer, A Day in the Life of a Lobster Fisherman, and visits to Big Pine Key, Islamorada, Boca Chica, Cudjoe Key and the reefs around Tavernier.

The last section, "Monroe County Today and Tomorrow," is huge, and it is where the book gets down to the nitty-gritty, covering the matters perplexing today's adult population. Included are discussions on potable water resources, the benefits of cisterns, water quality, solid waste disposal

and sewage treatment, hazardous wastes, landfill leaching, ocean dumping, insecticides in storm-water drainage, oil drilling, growth management, land stewardship, land use and regulation, boating management, preservation of the reef, historic lands and marine archeology, energy conservation, preservation of endangered species and their habitats, tourism, pros and cons of commercial fishing and the "greenhouse" effect.

The closing section includes discussions of the importance of planning and the necessity for code enforcement. There is also an appendix, glossary, maps of environmental adventure sites, resources in and out of Monroe County, and an index.

To come are sections on Keys "etiquette," myths and misnomers, and how to speak "Conch-ese."

From this outline came an intriguing variety of activities. McCorkle and Deming had picked "The Natural Environment." From the "tons" of resource material they had collected, they came up with such ideas as experimenting

with various ground covers to see which best traps ground water, taking a "discovery" trip through a hardwood hammock, analyzing beach sand and even assembling an indoor mangrove display (mangrove fauna optional).

Davies and Wickers worked on "mini-environments." As they got into it, Wickers suddenly recalled how many swallowtail butterflies used to be here. "Until this moment," she said, "I haven't missed them, or, if I had, I probably chalked it up to just being too old to bother noticing. Come to find out they just sort of disappeared when I wasn't looking."

Everyone agreed that without such reminiscences, MCES would be one-dimensional. As dePoo interjected, "I never really thought of the quality of life around me until I noticed it deteriorating quickly."

Teachers saw unlimited creative writing opportunities. Deming, for instance, wanted the children to make up their own illustrated stories about what happened to the butterflies. Dee Williams suggested that students have pen pals from other parts of the Keys, since each Key tends to be an island unto itself. While the students were exchanging information, they could also be learning to write letters and making new friends.

To gather more ideas, the teachers made their own field trips, to the Botanical Gardens, where Causey climbed a tamarind tree to shake down some of its forbidden fruit, and to Fort Zachary Taylor, where ranger Amy Grimm, part of the task force, was their guide.

Though the teachers know that they've



Tom Gato and Marion Maryzck.

touched just the tip of the iceberg -- a project such as MCES can never be called *finished* -- they are confident that it will soon be in their classrooms. They feel that the most challenging task will be to introduce it to other teachers, who, because they are already swamped, may not want to hear about yet another "program." They were pleased to discover that MCES had not turned out to be a curriculum add-on, but that its materials were being designed to be used instead of, rather than in addition to the existing curriculum.

As dePoo put it, "We can just as easily teach our children to read *See Dick pick up the garbage* and *See Jane turn off the faucets* as we can *See Spot run*."

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Then Gato summarized, "In order to reach the children in this way, the teachers themselves must be sensitized to the issues. It is for this reason that the teachers will need some awareness-training first. There are too many teachers who have no concept of these issues at all."

Once the teachers "have it down," the children will "pick it up" in no time, and then they will take it home to their parents. It is important for parents to be encouraging. Let the kids prepare the trash for recycling. It will give them a sense of pride



Amy dePoo shows off her fine taste in pasta to Sharon Wells and Jeannette Gato.

"It's just like any other normal expense of doing business."

Don Cornett
Exxon's Alaska Coordinator

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in being involved with something worthwhile. Before you know it, all the kids on the block will be recycling and maybe even socializing at the dumpster rather than cruising Duval Street.

We all need to turn our thinking around 180 degrees, and that is the purpose of MCES. Only a short while ago the goal of parents was to give their children a better life than they had. Today, parents are going to have to work harder to ensure that their children will have any life worth living at all.

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William A. Freeman, Jr.
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the workshop was drawing to a close, Tom Gato spoke a bit more about MCES. "It is going to be unique because the Keys are unique, both physically and historically. Where else outside of New England are there such fine examples of early American architecture and do people speak of themselves in terms of what generation they are?" He went on to say, "The involvement and the spirit is unbelievable here -- far more so than was shown in either the Albuquerque or the Dade County projects."

some bureaucrat who'll be retiring next year. And don't be grateful. Demand the right to tell the children the truth."

For her closing words to the workshop, Jeannette read another of her favorite quotes, which went hand-in-hand with the one she'd read from Einstein in the first session: *We have attained such amazing insight into the mechanics of the earth and such control over its functioning that we have lost our ability to commune with the earth in an intimate manner.*

She then quietly held up the cardboard-backed photo of the earth taken from outer space she'd shown the first day. "Remember the trees," she said. "Don't get lost in the forest." 

The Point of No Return

Ideally, the MCES program would have been started when our environment began to show its first signs of serious wear and tear about a decade ago. It was at that time that the Keys -- particularly Key West -- began to attract visitors in numbers, many of them seeking the paradise Jimmy Buffett described so appealingly in his 1977 hit song "Margaritaville." Millions heard, many came and some assimilated. They opened restaurants and shops that breathed a new kind of life into the lazy, eccentric, salty old town that was Key West.

The stage was set. Many locals pinpoint 1977 to 1978 as the time when Key West became a tourist town. We had no industry left -- the shrimpers had already packed it in for pinker pastures -- and the shift to tourism was a foregone conclusion. The hospitality industry promised to be lucrative. Indeed, life along Highway A1A continued to cruise in the same old, laid-back way, fueled by endless supplies of sunshine, big fish and tequila.

San Francisco also points to 1977 as "the year tourism became the biggest business in the city." According to Robert A. Jones of the Los Angeles Times Service, as published in the *Miami Herald* on June 21, that was the year when San Francisco ...

turned prettiness into a profession. It was the point of no return. The city's old roles ceased to matter, and it began the sordid game of wooing outsiders to pay its keep. This city, once the ruler of all it surveyed, joined the ranks of Honolulu and Las Vegas."

Two or three years ago, the Keys began to be packaged and mass-marketed. But there was no plan for accommodating the inevitable onslaught of a million-plus annual visitors seeking the winter sun; some 40,000 "spring breakers" seeking to stay drunk for the duration; and countless hopeful transplants with cars, kids and dogs seeking affordable housing on the water in a good school district. Since we hadn't thought ahead, they fended for themselves in the process, taxed our resources to the limit.

Now, finally, many diverse people of the Keys have been able to agree that we must save our paradise. But that's going to take work, hard work.

Such things are just the first of the hidden costs for that "free lunch." The more people occupying a given space, the greater the need for regulations, the fewer the resources to pass around, and the more money it costs. 

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For her closing words to the workshop, Jeannette read another of her favorite quotes, which went hand-in-hand with the one she'd read from Einstein in the first session: *We have attained such amazing insight into the mechanics of the earth and such control over its functioning that we have lost our ability to commune with the earth in an intimate manner.*

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Going Overboard: A Dip in the Bight

by Elizabeth M. Smith

As in D.H. Lawrence's "The Rocking Horse Winner," an unspoken phrase reverberates throughout this city: "There must be more money."

By state law, the city cannot operate at a loss. Raising taxes, though an expedient measure, is not politically popular. In the spring of 1988, the powers that be began casting about for ways to decrease spending and increase revenues without upping *ad valorem* taxes. The lure of the sea soon beckoned.

A cursory glance at a small survey of privately-operated marinas within the immediate area seemed to indicate a potential gold mine. Garrison Bight is highly visible. It has considerable room for expansion. Bids have recently been returned for an expansion project which will create 139 new boat slips and 100 new offshore moorings.

The bight is surrounded by prime waterfront property, much of which, moreover, is owned by the city. Several of these -- Steadman's boat yard, the sailing club and Key West Yacht Club -- have been mentioned in Mayor Richard Heyman's proposal to sell off certain city properties. The business at Steadman's boat yard is presently for sale; its lease with the city for the property expires in July 1996.

According to city charter, a public referendum must be held on the sale of "excess lands." In a public meeting held July 19 on the sale of these city properties, the idea was dismissed due to overwhelming public resistance.

With the explosion of interest in boating in the past few years, the financially hard-pressed city is in the position of being able to generate considerable cash flow from Garrison Bight. With resourceful management, careful planning and a responsible and participative public process, Key West could have an unusual opportunity.

Recent experience, however, provides little optimism that the city can be relied upon to seize an opportunity while keeping its citizens' best interests in mind. The potential pot of gold is there, all right, but it's at the end of a Key West rainbow. Is it paranoid to envision a ring of condominiums around Garrison Bight?

Resolution 88-360

Despite only a few hours' notice, representatives for and from city marinas appeared at a budget meeting last year to present their case to the commission. They asked that, rather than city staff (in this case, the city manager and finance department), the commission itself should determine their rents based upon a survey of other public marinas within the state. This resolution of city commission empowered "the city manager to authorize city staff to conduct an analysis of dockage rates at comparable public marina facilities in South Florida."

The Good Old Days

Once upon a time, right here in Key West, there was a big, beautiful beach delineated by wetlands and large family homes to the south and the defunct East Coast Railroad to the west. A system of these wetlands and salt ponds allowed an ebb and flow of water across the island to the Atlantic. A drawbridge linked the two separate flanks that formed the entrance to the curved bay.

This lovely place was called Finnege Flats, so named for the blue crabs that would be stranded ashore, in back yards, come the spring tides. Neighbors swam and fished together on the serene and crescent-shaped beach. Grouper and snapper could be easily caught on a hand line. Fishing and sponging boats pulled right up onto the beach.

During the 1940s a luxury yacht owned by the Yates family was anchored off the beach. A precursor of things to come, it was used as the family's primary residence.

When the North Beach Inn on what is now Eisenhower Drive burned down, that part of the beach was filled in. Adjacent neighbors followed suit, filling in the bay bottom on their properties before the law made such measures illegal. Later, Roosevelt Boulevard was built, filling in the remainder of the beach and closing off the bay except for one culvert in the southeast corner.

In 1965, Garrison Bight was deeded by the State of Florida to the City of Key West, "in consideration of the sum of Five Hundred Dollars."

Charter fishing boats had begun tying up along the seawall, next to the highway, interfering with traffic flow along the boulevard. In 1974, following construction of the city docks in Garrison Bight, the charter-boat fishermen were moved from the highway to the other side of the newly-built causeway. The charter boat captains were unhappy because of their reduced visibility. As an inducement, they were offered assignable leases for their dockspaces.

The city docks were to be operated as an *enterprise fund*, meaning that it would be run independently as far as its revenues and

Finance Director David Fernandez, Mayor Heyman and Commissioner Virginia Panico wanted statistics on private marinas. Commissioner Lewis, the swing vote, aligned with Commissioners Harry Powell and Jimmy Weekley to adopt the more limited resolution.

First came the cancellation of a proposed PATA public hearing. Then came David Fernandez's memo of February 8, 1989, which declared itself to be "pursuant to City Commission Resolution" (88-360). This memo presented "an attached rate study and rate recommendations," based upon a statewide average which showed a single rate of

expenses were concerned. A 1973 city ordinance granted the Port and Transit Authority the "power to establish such reasonable mooring, dockage or wharfage rates or fees as it deems necessary and advisable for the use of facilities or the waters within the jurisdiction of the city."

According to PATA director Chuck Hamlin, rates have been based upon "the need to operate in a financially afloat manner." Rent increases, coming roughly at two-year intervals, have been between three and 15 percent. The last increase was a 15-percent hike two years ago.

Though a 1975 city ordinance designated "berths at the city-owned docks located at Garrison Bight" as a live-aboard area, it wasn't until 1982 that the first houseboats moved in. Mr. Hamlin says he "... felt the need for people to live aboard boats; they were allowed to jump the [waiting] list. We provided up to 30 slips for them." Currently 21 live-aboard vessels dock at Garrison Bight. Live-aboards pay a higher per-foot rate than do charter and pleasure boats. "Obviously, live-aboards increase revenues," Hamlin says.

In 1985, Tarpon Pier was condemned as unsafe; people were reportedly receiving electrical shocks through the dock. It was rebuilt at a cost of \$109,000. In the belief the renovated pier would provide metered electricity and free water, many live-aboard residents moved their boats to Tarpon. Though outlets for electrical meters were provided at the berths, no meters were forthcoming. Residents there are charged a pro-rated flat rate for electrical service, plus a monthly fee of \$11.36 for water. Boaters at the other piers contract for their own water service.

In June 1988, following some controversy over contract disputes with Gold Coast Cruiselines, PATA's status was altered by city ordinance from policy-making board to advisory board. It was charged with "the responsibility to collect and evaluate information ... and to submit findings and recommendations to the city manager or his designee."

\$254 for a 30-foot boat, three times the rate currently charged by the city. This "average" figure was based upon the results of a survey that included 26 city marinas and 42 private marinas.

This data was so far from the spirit of the original resolution that Joan Dwyer, at that time a PATA board member, was to refer to the action as "Resolution 88-180." It seemed a 180-degree turn had been taken from the original intention.

The rate of \$254 was for pleasure boats only. Our city marina has three distinct categories of boat: live-aboard, charter and pleasure. The rate given for the city of Key

West, \$73 for a 30-foot boat, didn't include electricity, garbage and tax, nor a minimum monthly charge of \$11.36 for water. Key Westers pay at least \$93.66 for a 30-foot pleasure boat.

Resolution 88-360 had distinctly requested a survey of *comparable, public* facilities. It seems that after the commission meeting of September 28 Commissioner Lewis had agreed that the survey should, after all, include private marinas. Commissioner Lewis explained, "We wanted as much information as possible. Maybe we went overboard and got too much."

The survey included figures from the Boca Raton Hotel and Club and Fort Lauderdale's Pier 66, which charge \$1485 and \$1013, respectively, for a 30-foot boat.

A new mantra began: "The taxpayers can no longer afford to subsidize the city marina." This opinion was voiced by a majority of the commissioners, by the finance director and even, during a radio interview, by Chuck Hamlin. Ignored were the tax payment included in marina rents, the property taxes levied against those houseboats registered as floating structures, the business taxes paid by charterboat operators, etc.

The inference was that residents of Key West who didn't live in the marina would be subsidizing those who did. Mayor Heyman's editorial in the *Key West Citizen* of April 9, 1989, rebutted this position. "PATA and the Building, Planning and Zoning Departments pay for themselves through the fees they charge," Heyman wrote. "No property tax or other revenues go over to these costs."

Last year the marina, which had been an enterprise fund, became instead a city department. Surpluses and deficits now are part of the general fund.

Should the marina operate as an enterprise fund and channel its surplus back into marina improvements? The boaters seem to think that Garrison Bight funds subsidize other PATA operations, particularly the transit system. They feel a percentage of their rent dollars should be kept available for upkeep and repairs of the dock.

Or should PATA, as a department of the city, transfer revenues from the marina to the general fund, and then borrow from the same fund for repairs such as the renovation of Tarpon Pier? In the case of Tarpon Pier, some money came from marina operations, and the rest, some of which is still outstanding, was borrowed from the city's general fund. Is the city marina "financially afloat," as Hamlin says, or is it monetarily in the hole, as other sources have suggested?

Bad Timing

It was unfortunate that the finance department chose the period between October 1988 and February 1989 to add a general administration charge to the marina accounts, and to make this charge retroactive for the past five years. Prior to this change, marina operations showed a surplus of up to \$64,316 for one year. After these charges were included, losses were shown in three of the past five years.

Was this figure-juggling in order to justify an otherwise unsupportable rate increase? Roger Wittenburg, assistant director of PATA, explained it thus: "These costs had not been allocated in prior disbursements; they were shown on separate balance sheets from the finance department. The disbursement was allocated to general administration. In the past, these costs were shown as one big figure; now it has been broken down into five small ones. They were a true cost which did not affect the bottom line for PATA's operations."

The city was saying that these expenses for city staff services were there all along, but had previously been on a different balance sheet. Now they were being subtracted directly from the surplus for the marina.

Said former PATA board member Joan Dwyer, "It's coincidental, I trust, that suddenly we're in the red."

More Figures

The second Finance Department survey, though more extensive than its predecessor,

was still based upon figures from the same 26 public and 42 private marinas. The updated "average" was now \$262 for a 30-foot boat.

Most of the comparable figures included utilities; the figures for the city marina did not. A variety of amenities, unavailable at Garrison Bight, were included in many of the surveyed marinas' fees.

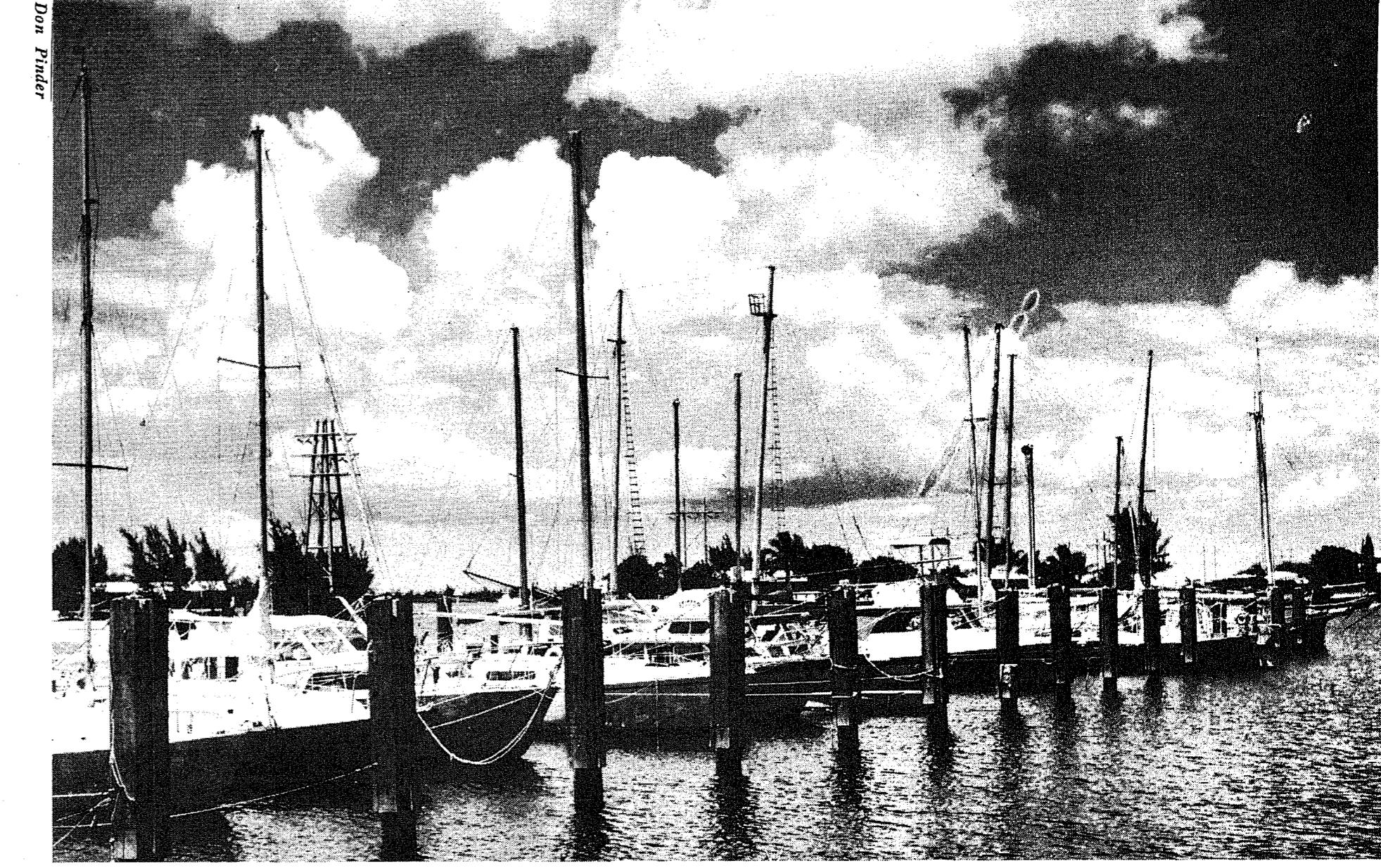
Responding to complaints, Mr. Fernandez suggested a standard statistical practice. He would omit the three highest and three lowest marina rates. That brought a revised figure of \$219 for a 30-foot boat. Requested to show separate rate structures for charters and live-aboards, the director of finance added a \$100 surcharge for charter boats. He said this was "easily justified by lease assignability, seawall/dock access and rights to operate a business from the marina."

Live-aboards, it was recommended, would pay "the pleasure boat rate plus an estimate of additional utility use -- approximately \$100 depending on vessel size."

The fixed-rate utility charge has long been a point of contention among live-aboard voters. The pro-rated electricity charge is about \$1.80 per foot per month. Boaters receive only 30 amps electricity. One resident whose fee for a 36-foot houseboat includes a \$65 monthly payment for electricity describes the situation: "You have to use just one thing at a time. A hot water heater alone draws 10 amps." Another live-aboard boater said: "We pay \$107 a month for electricity for a 60-foot boat. We have two lines supplying our boat. Our air conditioner draws four amps. If we have that running and turn on the convection oven, we blow a fuse."

The fees do not reflect usage. This situation encourages users to waste energy. Boaters are charged the same fee for running an air conditioner all day and all night as opposed to using it only a few hours each day.

One positive benefit from these months of negotiations is PATA's promise to study the feasibility of installing separate electric meters, a proposal sanctioned by the city



Garrison Bight, 1973.

commission.

City staff's new fee-raising scheme recommended introduction of the new rates over a six-year span. Annual increases over this period would add up to an increase of up to 476 percent over current rates.

Marina residents voiced concern as to what would happen to their bastion of affordable housing. They said city officials were discussing the great need for affordable housing while attempting to deny it to those who had taken the initiative to provide it for themselves, at their own expense.

"We are being treated like the enemy," said one resident. "I purchased my houseboat eight years ago. It was my answer to stabilizing my rent when I saw the direction Key West was heading. Now it looks like we are going to have the rug pulled out from under us. Do their mortgages go up 400 percent?"

By the time of this public meeting, charter boat captain Todd Bowen had compiled his own survey of comparable rates, using the same 26 city marinas as the Finance Department had. Captain Bowen calculated a state average for a 30-foot pleasure boat at \$123, a 30-foot live-aboard at \$228 and a 30-foot charter boat at \$191. He suggested subtracting \$25 from the charter-boat rate as a minimum utility charge, saying that all the other marinas in the survey included some type of utility in their fees. For a 30-foot charter boat he calculated a \$166 rent. Since the current rate for a 30-foot charter boat with no utility charges was \$150.18, Captain Bowen,

following the original directive of the city commission, was able to come up with a rate increase considerably less than the one "strongly recommended" by Mr. Fernandez.

During a special meeting held April 24, PATA unveiled its own rate increase proposal, based upon their own and Captain Bowen's surveys:

Charterboats: \$5.50 per foot
Live-aboards: \$5 per foot
Pleasure boats: \$3 per foot

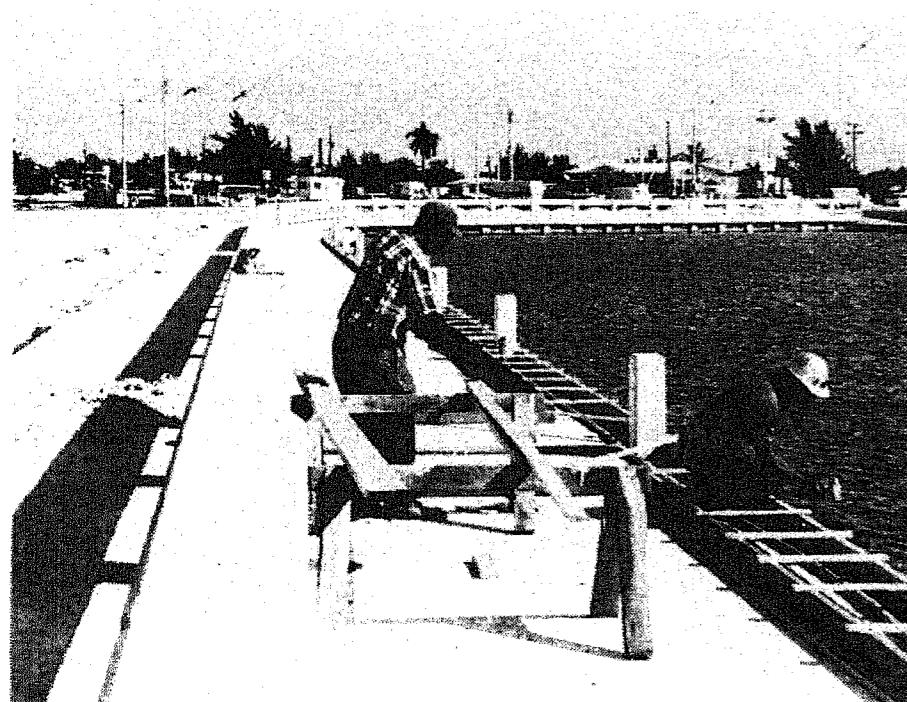
The bottom line meant increases of up to 36 percent. Since current fees are not pro-rated -- the larger the boat the less per foot charge -- percentage increments would be higher for the larger boats. Whereas a 30-foot live-aboard would pay 15 percent more, a 60-foot live-aboard would see a rent increase to \$451.60, a hike of approximately 30 percent.

PATA's proposal was accepted by the boaters.

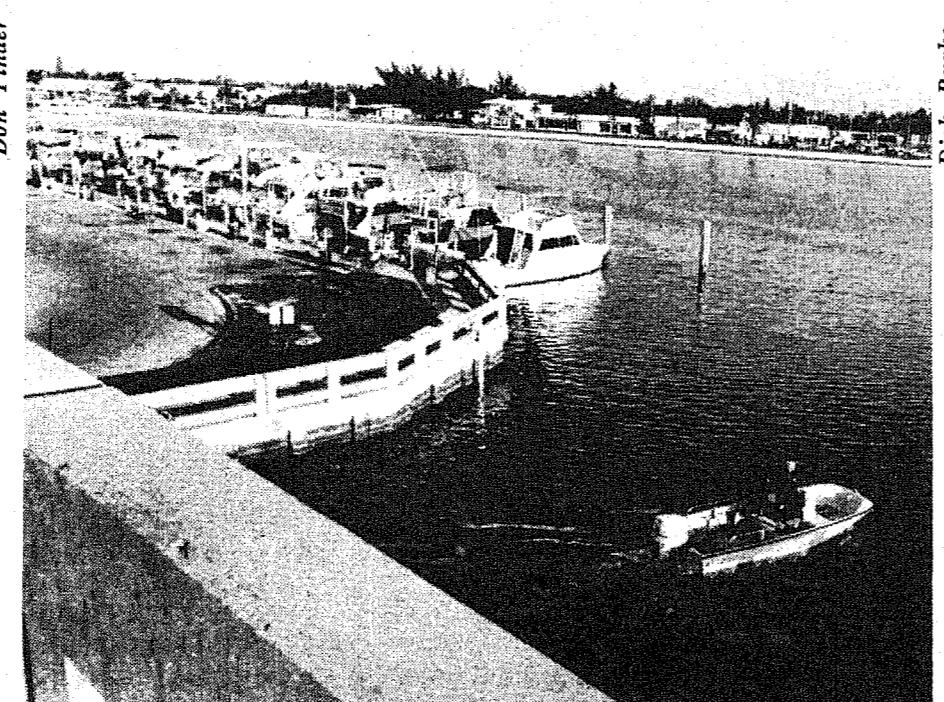
88-360 Comes Full Circle

PATA's proposal -- with a modified rate for pleasure boats of \$3.50 per foot -- was unanimously endorsed in the June 19 hearing by the city commission. As Mayor pro-tem Weekley noted, the new ordinance specifically stated that "City rates ... be more in line with rates charged by other public marinas." The word *public* was inserted by Commissioner Weekley. The ordinance was passed on its second and final hearing of July 10.

The new rates will go into effect October



Construction at the charter boat docks, 1973.



The same area at Garrison Bight today.

1. The increase for subsequent years (according to this new ordinance) shall be "the above rate plus the applicable year's percentage increase in the applicable Consumer Price Index-Urban." That's expected to be approximately 10 percent annually.

Future expansion plans call for an upgrading in amenities, although Jimmy Weekley warned this might mean further rate increases. Many boaters feel the word *marina* implies provision of amenities such as a pump-out station, laundry facilities, provisions, etc. PATA board member Bill Grosscup maintains, "We don't have a marina, we have a concrete dock."

Hopefully, these past nine months will have raised awareness of what is at stake here. There's always the hope that the city can improve on its performance and begin to develop a consensus that will allow the appropriate evolution of one of its most important resources.

For those who can't believe such a sunny outcome is likely, photographer Don Pinder, a Key West native who spent his childhood in the vicinity of Finnegans Flats, offers a gloomy worst-case scenario. He says that the proposed "park-and-ride" garage adjacent to Jose Marti Drive would effectively seal off that last culvert in the southeast corner. There will be no outflow in Garrison Bight, just stagnant water rising up and down with the tides. 

Flying Over the Bounding Main

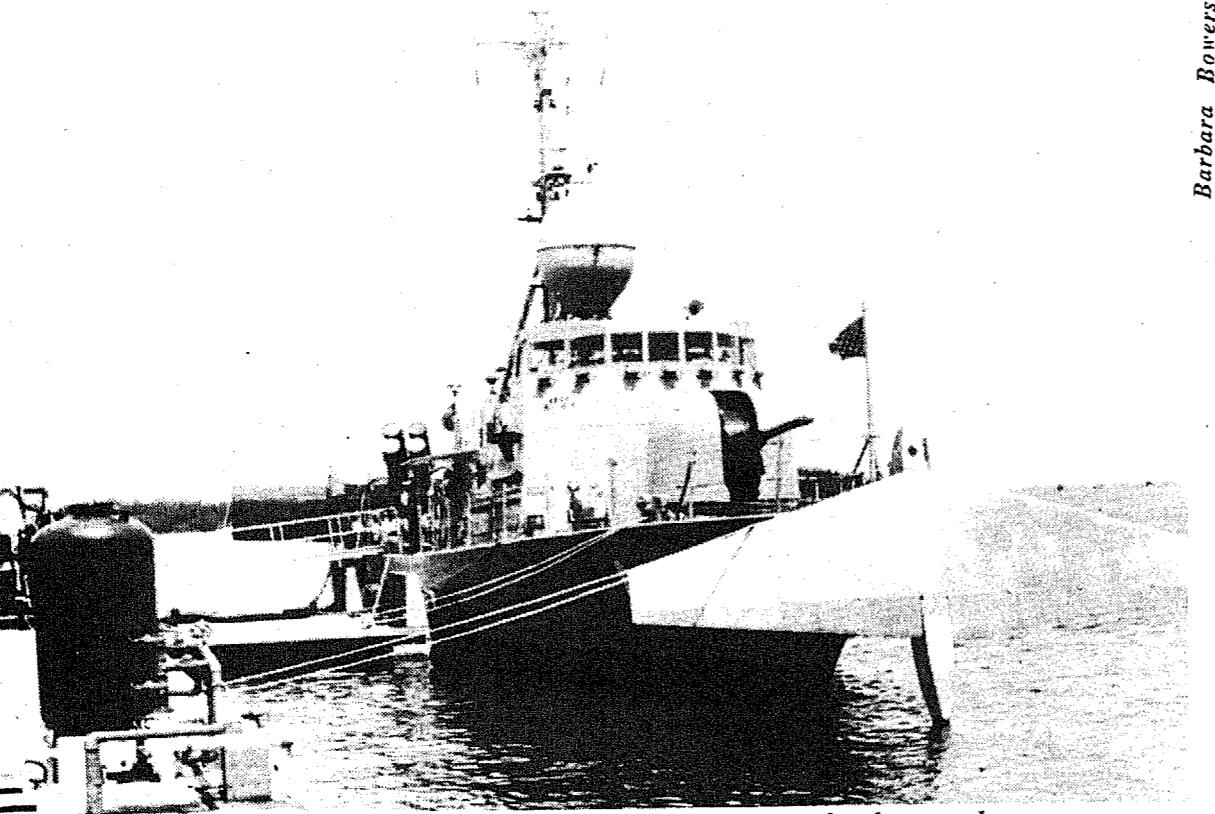
by Barbara Bowers

When hullborne, it's almost like other navy ships. When foilborne, it's not. The U.S.S. *Pegasus*, PHM-1 (Patrol Hydrofoil Mission-1) is a ship and an airplane hybrid. It is so hybrid that the pilot house can be easily mistaken for a cockpit. In fact, when this unusual marine machine is powered on water, or flying over it, it uses engines the same size as a Boeing 727.

There's even a mix of marine and aviation jargon used on board. Hydrofoils can anchor, tie up at dock, or come in for a landing. They can set sail or put down flaps. They are so unique that a two-hour "tour of duty" on the *Pegasus* netted this civilian sailor -- or flyer -- a certificate notifying all surface-bound beings and space travelers that she has left the primitive path of jet aircraft, space ships, wind-jammers, nuclear carriers, submarines and all such ancient craft ... and has flown above the tumult of the waves in the ultimate comfort of USS *Pegasus* PHM-1 ... and witnessed her ability to stand in harm's way.

In 1774, when John Paul Jones wished to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast for I intend to go in harm's way, he must have had visions of the *Pegasus*, or one of her five sister ships stationed in Key West. The navy's six hydrofoils are its fastest ships. Though their hullborne speed is 10 knots, hydrofoils travel in excess of 40 knots when foilborne. In fact, they have to be flying at 40 knots just to gain full maneuverability.

Experiencing the shift from regular ship's hull to foil -- a device that operates similarly to an airplane's wing -- is something akin to slalom water skiing. One second you're in the water, the next second power and water pressure against the ski put you on top of it. At 29 knots, 98,000 gallons of water are pulsating through the foil system creating enough pressure to pop a 131-foot ship, that displaces 231 tons of water, out of the water. With flaps down, hydrofoils are flying 2.2 meters above the



A hydrofoil with foils raised, showing the wing-like device at the front and rear.

operations in Caribbean waters, which includes cooperative work with the Coast Guard to detect drug activity. To this end, the *Pegasus* has a police blue light perched on its mast.

Their wartime mission is to apply their tactical advantage of speed, agility and rough water performance against the bad guys. And because the bad guys probably wouldn't pull over for a blue light, the *Pegasus* is fitted with more persuasive equipment. A Harpoon Missile System, for instance, gives her a long-range, surface-to-surface attack capability. The Mark-92 Gun Fire Control System is a radar tracking device for surface and air vehicles. The ship is also equipped with such other hi-tech radar instruments as the Hydrofoil Collision Avoidance and Tracking System that can track up to 40 contacts at one time.

The *Pegasus* was the first missile-equipped hydrofoil to join the U.S. Fleet when it was commissioned in 1977. She has since been joined by the U.S.S. *Gemini*, U.S.S. *Hercules*, U.S.S. *Aries*, U.S.S. *Aquila* and U.S.S. *Taurus*, all stationed in Key West. Their peacetime mission is to conduct surveillance, screening and special

It has guns like the Mark-75 76 millimeter lightweight gun, which is automatically controlled by the MK-92 system that makes the gun unmanned except for ammunition loaders below deck. As Quartermaster 1st Class Larry Sullivan pointed out, when this gun fires 80 rounds in 52 seconds, it offers no human targets for the enemy to fire back upon -- a feature with which enlisted men are particularly pleased.

Sullivan operates some of this equipment from the electrical jungle known as the Combat Control Center just below the pilot house. He further notes that the missile system is not nuclear.

With up to a month and a half at sea on two occasions in the past year, a crew of 25 can get pretty tight.

"We have a lot of mutual respect and support for each other," Captain Beck said. "And because of the size of the ship and our specialized nature, there's more responsibility and authority for crew

members and officers, with a lot of cross-over training."

Of course, you know what that means -- the *Pegasus* has a cook who can load bullets. And everyone else on board is tough enough to eat them. ■

Family Day on the *Pegasus*

by Marsha Gordon

It's one of those Key West lanes that you walk right by thinking it's a private driveway. To help preserve the tranquility, the neighbors have agreed not to bring their cars into the lane. It's just a few steps from the main street; not too far to carry groceries.

But it was evidently too far to carry crack. The quiet and seclusion was shattered when the house at the end of the lane became a crack house. Drivers of trucks, mopeds and vans realized 24-hour, drive-up service was available. Frenzied addicts ricocheted from house to house before finding their fix.

For months, the neighborhood was terrorized by guard dogs, vile language and the most extreme violation of a peaceful space.

Then the neighbors organized a Citizens' Crime Watch (CCW). The crack house is no longer in business.

"That's what it takes," says Kathy Woodman, Citizen Liaison for the City of Key West and Crime Watch Coordinator. "When citizens become concerned enough, they band together and organize a Crime Watch. And that's the best deterrent to neighborhood crime."

Marlene Chavez was Officer Dario Teicher's guest. Her two children, Lazaro and Jackie, had only seen the likes of the *Pegasus* on *Star Trek*. They figured Captain Beck's chair in the pilot house was the real-life equivalent of Captain Kirk's.

Because the length of stay for an officer on a PHM is about two years, almost everyone on board who wasn't crew was there for the first time. And almost everyone there was in awe of not just the ship's capabilities, but of the equipment, as well. Hi-tech and centuries-old equipment compatibly occupy space in the pilot house. Gyro compass. Longneck. Turn rate instrument. Sextant. According to retired Petty Chief Bill Gregory, some of its weapons and equipment can be found nowhere else.

It takes a well trained staff to use all this stuff. In fact, most of the men rank as senior petty officers before they receive their five-year assignment on a PHM.

And would you believe Lieutenant Commander Beck thinks "they're the best in the navy"? Of course, his men think he's pretty hot stuff, too, mostly because he ranks people right up front with his mission."

You get a glimpse of the special rapport that exists here when Captain Beck announces over the loud speaker that Lieutenant Mike Delagarza has recently won the Atlantic Fleet Junior Officer's Ships Handling Award for competency on a hydrofoil platform.

As Lt. Delagarza brings the *Pegasus* smoothly into dock, the party's over. The navy armor is back in place. But the 131-foot PHM no longer looks quite as intimidating as it did two hours earlier. ■

A Mobile Crime Watch has been formed.

Citizens Fight Back

by Marsha Gordon

Drivers with radios and telephones in their cars are on the alert for suspicious activities. Realtors, City Electric drivers and Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority drivers watch for problems as they drive around the city; they notify police of problems.

Key West Chief of Police Tom Webster and County Sheriff Allison DeFoer welcome and support Citizens' Crime Watch organizations. Webster has been involved with CCWs for more than 15 years. He calls the program a sound one.

"Criminals will not, in fact, cannot, operate successfully in an area populated by alert, motivated citizens," DeFoer said.

If you want to start a Citizens' Crime Watch and you live between Mile Markers 4 and 113, call Deputy Emil La Vache of the Sheriff's Department at 743-9066. If you live within the Key West city limits, call Kathy Woodman.

CRIME WATCH CLUES

- Do not reveal your name, phone number, address or other personal information to unknown callers. Don't tell a stranger that your neighbor is not home. Do not say you are alone. Instruct children to do the same when answering the phone.
- If someone comes to the door asking to use the phone for an emergency, offer to make the call for him/her, but don't let him/her into your home.
- Never leave notes that can inform a burglar that your house is unoccupied.
- Lock all doors, even if you're going out "for just a minute" to visit a neighbor.
- Lock the front door when working in the back yard and vice versa.
- If you come home and find you've been burglarized, do not enter your house or apartment. Find a phone and call the police; wait at a neighbor's home until they arrive.
- When reporting a crime, give the following information: identify yourself -- name, address, phone number; type of crime (burglary, assault, suspicious person or vehicle); crime "in progress" or "has occurred"; where? Be as specific as possible; description of suspect, whether armed, how many; description of vehicle and tag number; direction of travel. ■

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The Hounds of Spring: A View from 1926

by Elmer Davis

You can get what you want out of Florida, if you know where and how to get it ... Without context, that observation is doubtless as misleading as the gifted Miss Lipstick's observation that you get out of a night club whatever you put into it, a statement which she would have qualified if she had been used to paying the check. There are some hundreds of thousands of people, just now, who are wondering how they are going to meet the second payments on that Florida land which the agent assured them they could resell at an enormous profit long before the second payment was due. But they didn't know how and didn't know where, as those who did resell before the second payment will

gladly tell them.

You can get what you want out of Florida, I repeat -- but it is appalling what different and extraordinary things different people want out of Florida. Mr. Roulstone of the Parks and Playgrounds Association might profitably organize a branch Society to Prevent the Misuse of Florida. For when earth's last subdivision is subdivided and the youngest realtor has died, Florida will still have the sunshine and the Gulf Stream; and when the mention of resale at a profit brings the spontaneous laugh that is now provoked by mention of a prohibition agent's virtue, Florida will still have its steady customers -- the hounds of spring, the citizens who make the belated discovery, along about groundhog day, that the northern winter is unendurable, and resolve

to go south till they meet Persephone returning.

They can find her, if they will only go far enough; and their tragedy is that most of them stop too soon. They stop in Palm Beach, or Miami; excellent towns, with numerous merits, but not the place for the hounds of spring, whose desire is not to dine with Mrs. Stotesbury or see Flo Ziegfeld's bathing suit, nor yet to enrich themselves by a ticket on the hazardous running horse or the still more unpredictable racing greyhound. If you want spring, you must come to the Keys.

Three days out of four, you will find spring in Palm Beach and Miami; but Palm Beach and Miami (says the East Coast veteran of two years' standing) are not what they used to be. They are being ruined by the same thing that ruined the praiseworthy climate and admirable scenery of Southern California -- by the influx of the human race. Palm Beach was served both well and badly by last year's fire which got rid of two big wooden shops -- well, because it was time those eyesores were removed; ill, because the fire merely cleared land for a building boom already too feverish.

Only two years ago, Palm Beach was almost as peaceful as, say, Pride's Crossing, Massachusetts; your wheelchair or your bicycle was safe anywhere in town, even on Main Street. Now hotels, apartment houses, new villas, flourish everywhere; traffic jams half the streets, the populace swarms, gilded and otherwise, and quiet if forgotten. Already, at least two ambitious developments further down the coast are planning to siphon society off from the bubbling cask of Palm Beach and bottle it up under new trademarks -- rival developments, which play Mrs. Horace Dodge against Mrs. Gurnee Munn, and trump the King of Greece with Gilda Gray, while the astute Mrs. Stotesbury lets herself be claimed by both.

There is, of course, a Palm Beach that neither weeps with delight when Mrs. Stotesbury gives it a smile, nor trembles with fear at Paris Singer's frown, because it never has the chance. They are, in brief, the residents of the Royal Poinciana; concerning most of whom one may paraphrase the famous mot of Lady Muriel and observe that they shouldn't be allowed in Florida, it's much too good for them.

They sit around the lobby after dinner, en masse, the provincial noblesse of Grand Rapids and Kansas City, of Rochester and New Britain and East Liverpool; with glossy shirt fronts and smoldering Coronas, their women overdressed and underclad, displaying massive legs and acres of dinner rings; all centered, like the flower beds in a formal garden, around a piano of ivory paint and gilded scrollwork and Watteau-esque designs, a piano which, said a young woman endowed with insight, looks like any of the guests.

Here, in effect, is the true Upper Crust;

the Best People of the thousand cities that make up the real America, the continental United States to which New York, as much as London, is only a city on an island in the Atlantic. Here they are; they swim at the Casino and look at each other, they play golf and look at each other; after dinner they sit around the Poinciana lobby and look at each other until it is time to go up the street and buy roulette chips and look at each other some more. Let them look at each other, by all means; no constitutional amendment prohibits it. But one could wish that they and most of the other residents might be gently removed to some other spot where they could go on looking at each other, and restore Palm Beach to the ease and quiet which it could afford only two years ago.

Well, it isn't far to Miami. If It Has Been Made, Miami is America In The Making; the type of any boom town, San Francisco of the Fifties, Chicago after the fire, Mexia and Burk Burnett; even (olav he sholem) Shelby, Montana. There is more to it than a boom town, of course; yet you don't have to be a traveler from New Zealand to get some amusement out of studying the process by which these states have been made.

Miami, despite the slump of this winter, is still swollen and inflated with money; easy money, some of which is going as easily as it came. To the visitor from New York (provided he leads a quiet and blameless life at home) Miami offers much the same diversion as New York offers to the visitor from Miami. Miami, like New York, is full of people everybody knows; but in New York they are scattered over the five boroughs, in Miami you meet them all on Flagler Street, or (if your acquaintance happens to be ubiquitous and heterogeneous) at the North Beach, where the well dressed man will wear diamond rings with his bathing suit, if he has them.

You can go to the races, and sit in a Spanish stucco grandstand, and watch the horses gallop around a track ringed with coconut palms. When the horse races are over you can dine at a roadhouse if you've prospered or, if you haven't, at a hot-dog stand named, in pious memory, the Sawdust Trail. After dinner you can walk across the road and watch the racing dogs chase a fictitious rabbit; and, when the dogs stop running, toward midnight you can walk across another road and see the finish of the jai-alai games; and the same pari-mutual machine will let you register your judgment at all three diversions.

The fair Lipstick above referred to would be run ragged if she tried to cover Miami night life, for it spreads over fifty miles of country. You can get anything you want, from the relatively quiet opulence of the Embassy Club and the Lido down to the old-time Seventh Avenue roughneck merriment of Jimmie Hodges; as well as much that you don't want, such as ex-truck drivers who have made millions in real estate and want to spend them where the Best People (whoever they may be) are spending theirs.

In short, Miami offers an admirably

reminiscent holiday to the New Yorker who has got out of the habit of New York; but one which is in Florida only by accident. Miami has sprung but Miami has interludes (brief and infrequent, to be sure) which approach perilously near the frost line. And if you want rest, neither Palm Beach nor Miami is the place for you to seek it.

To find rest, to find spring, you must come on to Key West; come on to the jumping-off place -- but don't jump off. For if you jump off you will land in Havana, where, however springlike it may be, there will be the races and roulette and night clubs and everything else you have already battled through on the East Coast. Key West is the Promised Land for the hounds of spring; and they'd better enjoy it while they can, for presently it too is likely to be spoiled.

Here the sun shines and the restless breeze is balmy; here there is nothing to do and no social compulsion to do it. Here, among other things, is a hotel, as good as you will find in Florida, where a room with all meals costs about as much as tea for two in Palm Beach or Miami Beach. Even in Key West you strike a cool day now and then, but a cool day here is ten or twenty degrees warmer than a cool day on the East Coast.

Key West knows neither the Argentine who spendeth by night nor the Portuguese that wasteth at noonday. They pause, and look, and pass on. So does almost everybody. Three nights a week the evening train comes in; at dinner and breakfast the Casa Marina is full; then, after breakfast, the money-bees swarm to the Havana boat. And for thirty-six hours the Casa Marina is empty of all but a dozen or two of the hounds of spring, while waitresses write letters home on their empty tables all through the dinner hour.

What does one do in Key West? Let the news serve as enticement to the elect and warning to the general -- one does nothing in Key West. One swims -- exactly one, if you want to know how many; one -- returning to the general and indefinite -- plays golf if so inclined, or fishes on the opal sea under a tropic sun; but for the true hound of spring it is enough to lie shirtless on the sand, soaking in the ultra-violet rays, or lie motionless in a rocking chair on the porch, smoking a Key West cigar and waiting for sunset to turn up the Southern Cross, like a four-spot in a cut for deal. The

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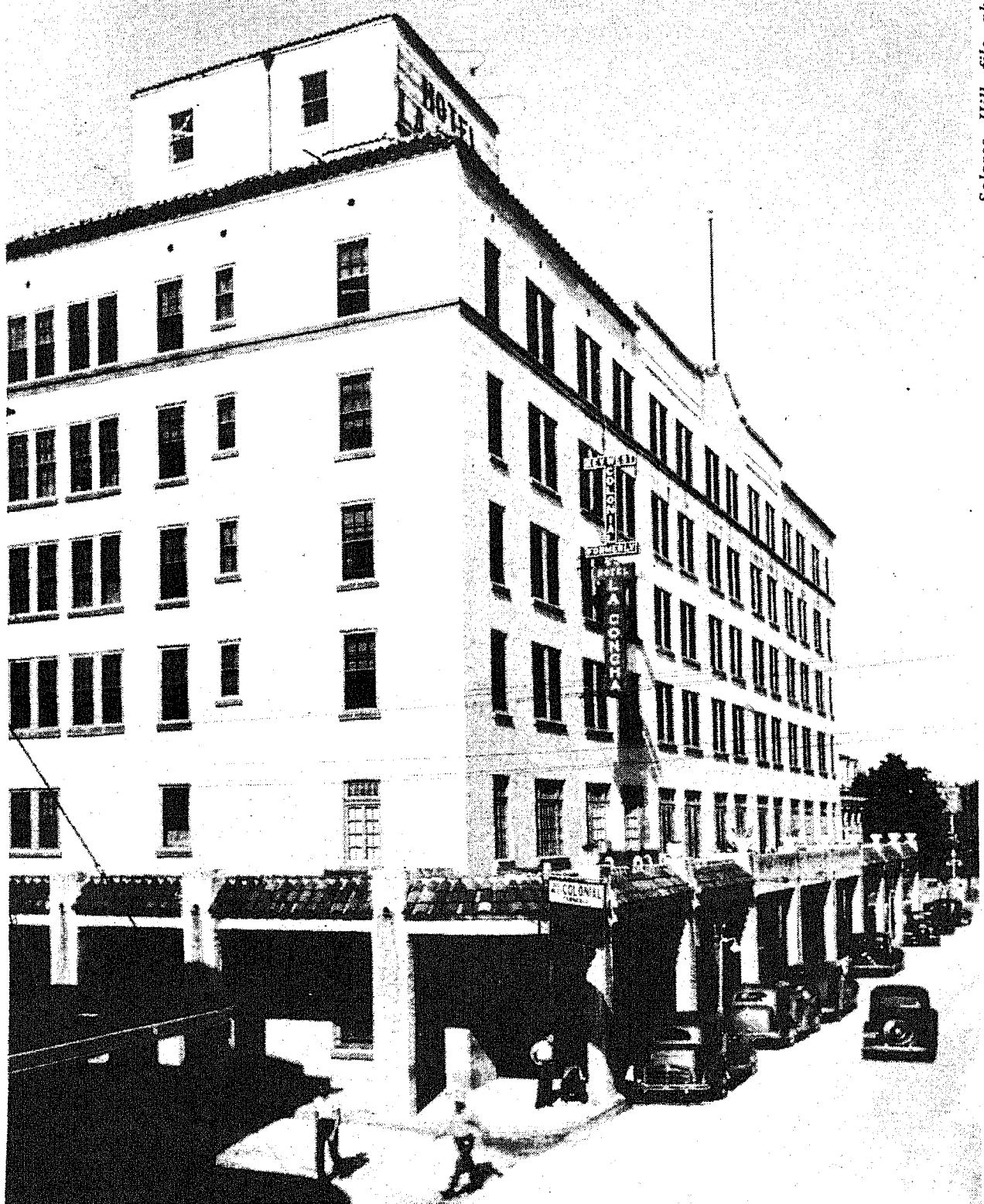
Southern Cross never does turn up, for celestial mechanics have decreed that it is not for Key West to see, but, night after night, the natives will tell you that only a fog bank excludes it.

After sunset a little music, a magazine, a stroll on the moonlit sands, and so to bed, with the ocean breeze blowing in the window. Here is none of the overdressed overanxiety of the Poinciana; the Casa Marina is in effect a country club, too quiet to be in favor with the earnest spenders and the serious drinkers and the younger set.

But, as always, the Golden Age is passing. A motor highway is building and it will annex the Keys to the Continent in more senses than one. When that road is opened then may the Key Wester say, the time of the singing of bird dogs has come, and the voice of the realtor is heard in our land. Then the Casa Marina will fill up, and the gay weather-worn wooden houses of Key West will give way to stucco imitations of the Alhambra in pink and green and blue. When that day comes the seeker for quiet will have to hire himself a diver's suit and go down in the deep (safe enough by that time, for the realty business will have absorbed all the sharks). But not even the crowds can kill the climate of the Keys. Here Persephone builds her winter home and here you can wait and go north with her.

For whatever crowds may come to the Keys there will, thank God, always be people who will want a house near Mrs. Stotesbury. Perhaps we spring hounds may some day be thankful that Florida can be all things to all men. 

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LaConcha Hotel in the 1930s, when it was the Key West Colonial, formerly Hotel LaConcha.

Solares Hill file photo

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The Class of 1970



Benjamin Curry 'Dink' Bruce.



Chris Robinson, Sonia Robinson and Phil Tenney.

by Bud Jacobson

In the years when it seemed the world was going to blow away in a political whirlwind, the late 1960s and early 1970s, Key West became the focal point in Florida for the escape of hundreds and hundreds of the youth of that era.

Vietnam was raging, there were protests and marches. Dope, long wavy hair, short-shorts and bralessness were the vogue. The flower kids, the speed freaks, dopers and smokers, acid heads, you name it, moved into the last town on US-1.

Why here? No reason but the weather. Dozing on the beach, an air of sleep all day and neon nights.

There were law-and-order spasms occasionally. The cops called them "crackdowns" or "roundups," like the sheriff's raid one winter's day on the

communes at Rockland Key where the dope trade was held in an open-air market. Bearded guys dressed like Indians stood around while their lightly-clad "old ladies" made sly remarks and the kids ran happily naked through the ranks of the troops.

Frenzied confusion at the crossroads of history.

Key West, at that time, was lolling around in a condition known as *economic stagnation*, when the Class of '70 burst on it like the electric energy in a lightning bolt.

The reaction from the establishment was fear and suspicion. The Old Guard warned darkly of the Communists arriving on the beach any minute. They locked the doors, barred the windows, shut the kids inside and hell and damnation was preached from the pulpit. The Class of '70 relished it and phoned their friends: Key West is the place to be, man; come on down!

Among the first of the establishment businessmen who recognized the wave of the future in the Class of '70 were the guys who ran The General Store in a big old red brick building at the corner of Front and Fitzpatrick, John Hopkins, Ted Axelrod and Tom Szuter, with some inspirational help from a friend named Varnum. Louis Knowles, a tall, studious-looking black man, with his lady friend, Aura Roberts, kind of wandered around checking to see not too much was pinched from the counters.

Down Front Street, David Wolkowsky, an enterprising visionary with a valid Conch background, had recently built that architectural concoction called the Pier House on the old Gulf Oil property which for years had been a perfectly scenic, weed-strewn lot filled with old boats, tin cans and beer bottles. Now it became the town's major social center.

Inside the Pier House, off on a quiet side of the lobby, David put the Chart Room. It was a move of genius. In a few short months the Chart Room turned into a political hotbed buzzing with local gossip that covered the spectrum. Reputations were

drawn and quartered. No one was safe.

Lawyers, politicians, bail bondsmen, fishermen, a smattering of shady but colorful figures on the local scene made the Chart Room the place.

Dominating one corner was a large round table and presiding over it was then-State Attorney J. Edward Worton -- Big Ed, to his friends. His gavel was an ice cold, desperately dry martini, straight up with olive. Circling the table would be a number of his cronies, many of them part of the political power base in the county and city -- then-Sheriff Bobby Brown, then-City Manager Ron Stack, the late cigar-chomping Fire Chief Joe (Bum) Farto, sometimes guys like Carl Rongo and Mel Fisher with a bevy of beautiful chicks in skimpy attire. The merriment lasted 'til the clock stopped.

Hustling booze behind the bar you might



Rick Lutz and friend.



Vic Latham.

find Phil Clark, or Tom Corcoran, or maybe Walter Perry, who showed up in those years, sometimes Victor Latham or Rick Lutz. After five, the Chart Room was the *in* place and having a bar tab there was considered *de rigueur* for the regulars. Bar tabs got so popular that David, the owner, kept the Maalox handy whenever he checked the tape at the end of the night.

One of the lovelies, who is said to have collected bar tabs like S&H green stamps, had a talented writer for a husband. The story was the writer (like most of them) was down on his luck and was painting houses to pay the rent when he talked David into letting him paint his home.

It took the writer tons of paint and hundreds of hours but he finally slapped the last brush on and, spattered with paint, needing a shave, his eyeglasses smeared with sweat, he went to David for his check.

The story is that David said a courteous thank-you and then tore up all those bar tabs from the lovely wife. Only one of the apocryphal stories trickling out of the Chart Room in its salad days.

When Tom McGuane was here, with his star-studded entourage in tow, the Chart Room buzzed with Hollywood tales from the likes of Warren Oates, Sylvia Miles and Burgess Meredith. Jerry Jeff Walker or Jimmy Buffet would jam a little in the early hours. Murphy, one of the leggy Chart

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Classmates at the Anchor Bar.

Room adorables, would slither through the smoky gloom with Chris and Sonia while Dink might be there trying to figure out a shooting schedule for the next day.

At the same time, down Duval Street, a couple bought the 208 Bar at the corner of Duval and Charles, and re-named it the Old Anchor Bar. If the Chart Room was the *in* spot for the Class of '70, the Anchor Bar was *far out*.

It quickly became the maddest, noisiest dive between here and Chicago's West

Madison Street. It was known to be the craziest pit on the main stem; anything and anyone was fair game. There was a 15-watt bulb over the bar and if you were 10 feet away from it, the world was smoky, dark and dingy. A gamy scent arose from all those bodies jammed together with the friendly fumes of a hundred joints mingled in. It had an air all its own.

The noise coming out of the Anchor Bar would have shamed a jet aircraft on takeoff. Around 4 a.m. the denizens were shoved out the door and left to decorate the

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sidewalk.

The city hall straights finally got weary of hearing horror stories about the Anchor Bar and decreed that a wooden fence be installed in front of the saloon, hoping to keep the inmates inside and away from hustling the mom-and-pop tourists with uppers, downers, poppers and other medicinal remedies.

Farther down Duval, where Antonia's is today, John Young and Hank Villate had opened Crazy Ophelia's, a casual coffee house and snack bar, catering to newspaper readers, chess players and the like. It was a smash overnight with its atmosphere of political activism, a hotbed for "the movement." Activist lawyers, at the time, like Shelley Rothman, John Quinn and others, would stop by for morning coffee and a chat.

Across the street, B.J. and Sunshine opened the Picture Show and for years it was the town's only movie house where you could enjoy foreign and art films. Today, it's history.

Nearby, Bill and Marilyn Huckel ran a music store and soon they were in business with Mike Pruitt publishing the first early issues of *Solares Hill*, the town's first alternative newspaper with a liberal slant, devoted to the environment and conservation. The newspaper talked and argued civil rights and was roundly damned by the Establishment as being run by "a scruffy bunch of long-hair hippies and communists."

But *Solares Hill*, in those days, had the

Class of '70 in its pocket. It was part of the catalyst for change.

Stores and shops began to reflect the change; brighter colors, new styles and fabrics in places like Liz Birmingham's Onyin Skins, Peaches, Foxy Lady and others. Leather crafting and jewelry-making and handmade sandals. Art galleries sprouted.

At the other end of town, the original Louie's Backyard, started at first by ex-barber Louie Signorelli as a small dining place seating 12, was sold to entrepreneurs with grand ideas and it blossomed into a spectacular restaurant. Dining there, then, was all outside with the ocean next to your table and the waiters running and leaping up and down three steps balancing loaded trays.

The bar at Louie's was the place for the social set and rivaled the Chart Room. It was an action scene all the time with bartenders like Chris Robinson (still there today, including his famed collection of local anecdotes and now fish tales because he's charterboating), Howard Paul, Conrad, Victor, Bob Cruse, Rick -- it was a floating scene for talent of all kinds.

But the friendly skies of the Class of '70 had a cloudy side, too.

It was even rumored (can you imagine!) that much of the local economy was being powered by cash from a bursting dope commerce. It was all over the place. One guy sold grass packaged smartly in matchboxes at \$5 a throw; another plied the Christmas trade peddling joints neatly tucked under slices of plum pudding. The heavy hand of law enforcement was still far away in the early '70s, so by the time of the early '80s, when the risks were climbing fast, most of the cash had been washed and hidden.

Some 20 years later, now, and many of the old grads are part of the Establishment whether they admit it or not. Play golf on the day off, go strolling with the stroller, sweat out high prices and high taxes.

John Hellen, Sidney Snelgrove and Victor opened the Full Moon Saloon; Sonia has a busy leather crafting shop; Paul Tenney and Pat, along with Proal Perry, run the Backyard; Rick Lutz is the chef and part-owner of a delightful restaurant at Cudjoe Key known as Cousin Joe's; Liz Birmingham has a new shop; and John Young joined the Establishment as one of Pritam Singh's valued advisers.

With its hyped-up image today as a flashy tourist mecca, Key West slipped into another disguise but the Class of '70 can see behind the mask -- even tarted up and dandified it's the same old island they came to 20 years ago. ☐

The Early Days of Key West

by Philip Burton

The story of Key West really begins with the first European discovery of Florida by Ponce de Leon in 1513. When he saw the land it was the Easter season and he immediately called it by the Spanish name for Easter, *Pascua Florida*. So the name of the state is forever associated with the great Christian festival.

It was by no means his first visit to the Caribbean -- he'd been governor of the territory of Puerto Rico; he'd been with Columbus on his second voyage. Legend says that on this particular expedition he was searching for a famous Fountain of Youth, in which case he went to the wrong place -- he should have come to Key West. Instead, he landed, probably, near St. Augustine. He made several visits to Florida and explored both the east and the west coasts, but he died believing it was an island. I suppose he'd explored the Caribbean so much that any piece of land he saw had to be an island.

He saw Key West more than once. Eight years after his first discovery of the land, he was exploring the west coast. He probably landed somewhere in Tampa Bay. And when Indians attacked him and his men he received an arrow wound from which he soon died.

He had declared this new discovery, like the others that were made in the Caribbean, to be Spanish. And so began 300 years of very troubled history, because Spain's claim was challenged, first by France, then by Britain, and finally by the new country next door, the United States.

People don't seem to realize that for 20 years in the 18th Century, from 1763 to 1783, this state was British territory, and several English settlers came over. During the War of Independence, many loyalists came from the north to join the English settlers in Florida. When the war was over and a new country had been born, many of those settlers fled to the Bahamas. And 50 years later, either they -- many of them -- or their descendants, returned to Key West.

These European countries had challenged Spain's claim for years -- at least three centuries. But somebody else was challenging the claim of any foreign country, and that was the Seminole Indians. And they never stopped. At that time they were settled in the fertile land of the north and the farmers of Georgia and South Carolina coveted their land. And they hated the Seminole Indians because they gave protection to escaped slaves.

A so-called "war" between the United States and the Seminole Indians took place from 1817 to 1819. The American forces were led by General Andrew Jackson, but he disobeyed his orders to prevent Seminole raids into American territory. Instead, he came into Spanish territory. He offended Spain by seizing the port of Pensacola, and he offended Britain by executing two British

subjects who were accused of inciting the Indians.

But in 1819, after years of negotiations, Florida was finally ceded to the new country, the United States, which paid \$5 million for it.

Now a word about money -- I shall be speaking a lot about money. I have calculated that to get a rough equivalent in modern currency you should multiply every figure I give by 20.

Five million dollars -- \$100 million in today's currency. Not one cent of that went to Spain. It all went to the pockets of the settlers as payment for claims they'd made against Spain.

Now it officially became a United States territory in 1821. And the first military governor was, of course, General Andrew Jackson. But he had his eyes on Washington. Three years later, in a three-sided election contest for president, he won the greatest number of popular votes, but he didn't become president. The House of Representatives (not the Electoral College) gave the presidency to John Quincy Adams. Jackson, of course, tried again four years later. He was the most popular president the country had up to that time. His popular vote, which had been the biggest in the previous election, was multiplied by four. That's remarkable for a backwoods boy, born on the border between North and South Carolina, who'd been left an orphan at the age of 14.

The last Spanish governor of Florida was Don Juan Estrada. I think Spain was glad to get rid of this place; it had been nothing but a pain in the neck for centuries. Estrada could see what was coming, and in 1815 he gave the island of Cayo Hueso, Key West, to a man who had served Spain well in Florida, Juan Pablo Salas. And so the real history of Key West begins.

He was not the least bit interested in Key West -- only in selling it as quickly as he could for as much as he could get -- and he sold it twice. He sold it in September, 1821, to a man named John B. Strong. I don't think any money passed hands. Apparently the sum mentioned was

\$5000. But immediately John B. Strong sold it twice -- to a man called George Murray, and to an ex-governor of South Carolina who becomes an important man in the story. His name was John Geddes. I've seen it said that he paid \$20,000 -- I don't believe it, for reasons that will become clear in a minute. That was in September, 1821.

In December, 1821, Salas was in the most important port in the Caribbean, Havana, and he met in the cafe an American called John Watson Simonton. John Watson Simonton bought the island (another sale) from Salas for \$2,000 -- that's why I don't believe the \$20,000 figure. They went ahead with the sale and the following month, on January 19, 1822, it was finalized legally.

John Simonton needed partners to develop his new purchase. He sold a quarter of it to John Whitehead, a quarter of it to John Fleming and another quarter jointly to two United States consular officials in Havana, John Warner and John Mountain. Listen to all those Johns! John Strong, John Simonton, John Whitehead, John Fleming, John Warner, John Mountain and the original Spanish Juans -- Juan Estrada and Juan Salas -- oh, and incidentally, Ponce de Leon's first name was Juan. With all that, why this church was not called St. John's, is hard to believe. I think the reason was that Paul was the man who carried the gospel to distant places, and believe me, at that time, Key West was a very distant place.

They all came here immediately, within a week of that final sale, and did a rough survey of the island, which had to be altered later, and started building some houses immediately. It was as quick as that. But John Simonton soon left. He was very influential in Washington, and did a great deal for Key West there, as you will see. He came back every winter, so I suppose we can call him the first of the snowbirds. John Whitehead settled here for about 10 years, but the best thing he ever did for this island was to bring his young brother here to help him in the business enterprise, John Ade Whitehead. I suppose that "Adee" was a family name. He was only a teenager when

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he got here, but he is my favorite character
from those early years, as you will find out.
He was an incredible young man.

John Fleming only made a brief stay in
1822, but he came back 10 years later
meaning to settle here. He wanted to
develop the salt ponds. But very shortly
after he arrived, he died.

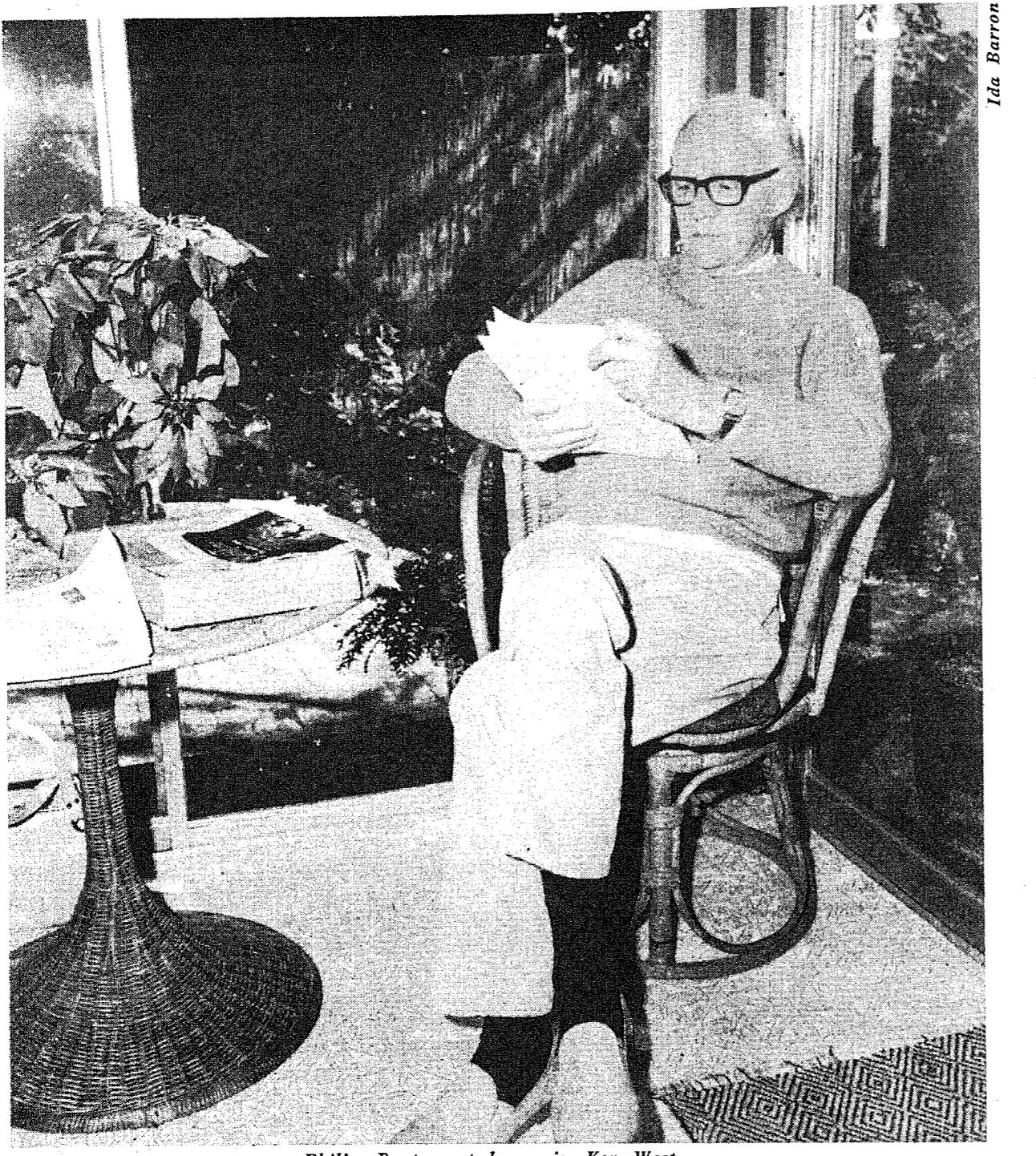
John Warner and John Mountain had
visited the island but they sold their part to a
first non-John, Pardon C. Green.

In April of that year -- remember, they
had started the settlement at the end of
January -- ex-governor Geddes, who
thought he had also bought the island, sent a
party to claim it. It was led by a Dr.
Montgomery and a George M. Geddes -- I
don't know whether he was a brother or a
son -- and they brought with them five
carpenters. And to their astonishment they
found that there were settlers already here
and houses built. They had the support of a
captain in the United States Navy -- Captain
Hammersley -- and it looked as if trouble
were going to take place, I mean physical
trouble. It didn't. But a long legal battle
ensued. It took six years. It went all the way
to the Congress of the United States, and
there it was adjudged that John Simonton
was the legal owner. But they gave some
other territory in compensation to Geddes.

Who were all these men? Not at
all like the pioneers who
settled the western territory. These were
very solid and successful business gentle-
men, with an emphasis on "gentlemen." Simonton and Whitehead were friends from
their youth -- they had both been born in
New Jersey -- and both of them were very
successful merchants. Both of them had
businesses, chiefly in Mobile, Alabama, in
several other southern cities, and in Havana.
Fleming was also a business friend with
business in Mobile, Alabama, and in other
places. Green was the captain of a merchant
vessel, and he was the one who was
interested first of all in the salt ponds.

So these were the first influential Key
West citizens. As proof that they were not at
all like rugged pioneers, they insisted every
Sunday on wearing frock coats and silk
hats. What that must have been like in the
summer I shudder to think. They were soon
joined on the island by settlers from St.
Augustine, from Virginia, South Carolina,
New York, and Connecticut, and some
from the Bahamas. And all these new
settlers were given land -- didn't have to pay
a penny -- on which to build homes and
businesses for themselves.

What did these people buy? An
uninhabited wilderness with only a few
hideaways for pirates. And even after it
became an established city, for many, many
years it remained largely what I call a
tangled wilderness. I am going to confine
myself largely to the first 20 years, from
1822 to about 1840. In the middle of that
period the extent of the city -- and it had
grown year by year -- was Angela Street on
the east, White Street on the north, and the
sea of the setting sun. That was all. The
total population in 1831 was 517, made up
like this: 368 whites; 83 free blacks; and 66
slaves. The total number of buildings was
81, and several of those were large



Philip Burton at home in Key West.

warehouses.

ships and killed 400 men. They did so
under the protection of Spain. They never
attacked a Spanish ship, and they sold all
their stolen goods in Havana.

Commodore David Porter soon stopped
that, and the story is a remarkable one.

I must say about him, first of all, that he
was hated by the settlers on Key West
because he had no respect for private
property. What the navy wanted the navy
took, whether it was land for buildings,
livestock for food, wood for fire, he just
took it. But what a job he did in getting rid
of the pirates!

The first use of Key West as an active
base of naval operations was in that first
year, 1822, when Commodore David Porter
commanded the squadron organized to
suppress the pirates of the West Indies
known as Brethren of the Coast. Prior to his
assuming command no satisfactory progress
had been made, the draught of the war
vessels being too great to follow the
buccaneers into the shallow bays, coves,
and rivers in which they sought refuge
when pursued. Operations were conducted
in this unsatisfactory manner for two years
when Commodore Porter, in command of
the West Indian squadron, inaugurated a
new plan of campaign.

First, he selected the island of Key West
as the base of operations and erected
storehouse, workshop, hospital and
quarters for the men, all without the leaves
of the owners. He then detached and sent
north the big, useless frigates and supplied
their places with eight small, light draught
schooners and five 20-oared barges. These
last were appropriately named *Mosquito*,
Midge, *Galley Nipper*, *Gnat* and *Sand Fly*.
Of the old squadron he retained the
Peacock, *John Adams*, *Hornet*, *Spark*,
Grampus and *Shark*. Thus was gathered in
Key West a fleet of 21 craft, eminently
suited for the work of driving from the sea
forever the dreaded Brethren of the Coast.

In order to make his barges available it
was necessary to tow them until he fell in
with the buccaneers, and when they
attempted to escape in shallow water, man
the barges and go in pursuit. For the
purpose of towing the barges he procured
an old, New York steel ferryboat, the
Seagull. Her use for naval purposes is the
first instance of a steam-propelled vessel
being used in the United States Navy.

In this way Captain Porter captured and
destroyed a number of the buccaneers'
vessels who had made their final
rendezvous at the Isle of Pines. Here, he
attacked, captured or destroyed almost all of
them. Some that escaped put into the port of
Viaro in Puerto Rico. Now they were under
Spanish protection. The buccaneers paid
tribute to the Spanish government, and left
the commerce of that nation unmolested, for
which they received its moral support.

Commodore Porter followed the
buccaneers into Viaro and upon the military
authorities refusing to give them up, sent a
punitive expedition ashore and taught the
Spanish authorities a needed lesson. Thus
was ended piracy in the Caribbean Sea.

But there was a sad consequence for
Commodore Porter. Spain complained of
his action at Viaro, and he was
court-martialed and sentenced to six months'

suspension, whereupon he immediately
resigned and entered the service of the
Mexican Navy. Later he was connected with
the Turkish Navy, and while holding this
position the United States, at last, in
atonement for the injustice they had done
to this gallant and efficient officer, appointed
him Consular Agent in Turkey, where he
died in 1843.

Now, even after he had been so badly
treated by Washington, he did a remarkable
report on Key West. He was asked to do
this, and the report is said to be sent from
Chester. I don't know which Chester it was;
my guess is it was Chester, Virginia. And
this was done in 1829. Although he was no
longer in the American Navy -- he had been
drummed out, really -- he never lost his
loyalty to America.

December 29, 1829. By this time, the
naval base had been moved from Key West
to Pensacola, and he thinks that was a very
bad move. One of the reasons given was
that Key West was a fever-ridden island. As
a matter of fact, at one point without asking
Washington at all, Commodore Porter had
taken his whole squadron away from Key
West because of the danger of fevers. But
he's going to defend that. Here are a few
extracts from the report:

*In consequence of your application to me
for my opinion of Thompson's Island, or
Key West, I have to state in reply that since
the year 1823 I have from time to time been
making myself acquainted with the Florida
coast and Keys -- part of the time in
command of the United States squadron, and
subsequently in command of the
Mexican force in that quarter. And perhaps
there's no man living better qualified than
myself to give an opinion on the subject, as
my information is derived from actual
observance and practical experience.*

This is the text he's going to amplify.
*The harbor of Key West is, in my opinion,
the best harbor within the limits of the
United States or its territories to the south of
Chesapeake. Then he goes and gives
reasons for this and says how marvelous it
is as a commercial port and as a naval base.*

And this is what he says about the
criticism that it was unhealthy to live here:
*Its salubrity of climate is equal in every
respect to that of New Providence or any of
the Bahamas. The malady with which the
naval forces under my command for the
suppression of piracy were afflicted had its
origin in the excessive severity of the duty
performed and the total absence of every
description of comfort. The disease was
contracted among the haunts of the pirates
along the coast of Cuba and not, as is
generally supposed, at Key West. It is since
proved that during the worst seasons the
inhabitants of Key West have enjoyed as
great a share of health as any other in the
same parallel and much more than those of
Pensacola, who have been seriously
afflicted with pestilence and compelled to
abandon the town while those of Key West
and the Mexican squadron there have been
entirely exempt from sickness. It is found
that the salubrity of Key West improves
yearly by the filling up of the ponds, the
clearing of the woods, and by adding to the
comfort of those who reside there. Listen to
this forecast: It will not be surprising if it*

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should, hereafter, become a place of resort
to the inhabitants of the southern section
during the prevalence of the sickly seasons.
It is to the Gulf of Mexico what Gibraltar is
to the Mediterranean.

Now he sums up at the end: *In making
this statement with respect to Key West I am
actuated by no other feeling than the desire
that my country should not by the
prejudices, partialities, interested views and
errors of others be induced to lose sight of
the great advantages it possesses, whether
looked at from a military or commercial
point of view. The naval rendezvous has
been removed from Key West to Pensacola.
Enormous amounts have been expended on
the navy yard of the latter and it is found
unsuited to the purpose for which it was
designed.*

Listen to this one: *An effort is now
making to form a naval establishment on the
insulated cluster of sand keys called the Dry
Tortugas, which may easily be surrounded by
a small enemy force exposed to its
cannon without entering the harbor, which
affords neither wood nor water nor scarcely
any type of vegetation, and have the
insuperable objection of not affording a
sufficient area of land on which to form a
naval establishment of even a very limited
extent. Nature appears to have formed it for
a place of deposit for the eggs of the turtle
and the sea birds and the art of man can
make very little more of it. Key West has
been tried and proved to possess all the
advantages which are desirable in a naval
point of rendezvous. It is proved that the
only objection in salubrity of climate has no
foundation in fact. Where then is the
necessity of making further disbursements
on useless experiments when one has
already been made in Key West and proved
satisfactory?*

So the original investors saw it as a
commercial port and as a naval base. Then
the next prospect was salvage.



*This is the first of three extracts from a
lecture given at St. Paul's Church on
December 2, 1882. The occasion was the
celebration of the 150th anniversary of the
beginning of the Episcopal Church in Key
West, where the first communion service
was held on Christmas Day, 1832, in the
old Court House.*

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Christmas Was the Only Day Off

by Colin G. Jameson

Some 30 years ago I woke one Sunday morning to find myself running an outboard dealership on Stock Island called the Boat House, Inc. Since I had been theretofore only a silent investor in this enterprise, I no more understood the business than a car buyer does the outfit that sold him his car.

We were located where Boog Powell's place is now. But in this earlier incarnation everything was in miniature -- the building, the number of boats and Johnson motors on display, the size of the pond outside, the width and depth of the access channel.

Our pond had a couple of dual-purpose piers jutting into it. Tied to them were boats waiting for the clouds to dump enough rain so I would have to drive out at night for emergency pumping.

The piers also served as a night depository. Many of our customers had little contact with real money. They were unable to pay for their second-hand motors in actual cash. But there was another popular method of payment.

When I closed up the Boat House at the end of the day, I would empty the cash register, never an arduous task, then pull out the drawer to pinpoint its dismal emptiness in the glare of our all-night spot. After locking up, I would stroll the docks, examining by hand certain pilings below the waterline. Often I would surface with a gunnysack laden with crawfish shorts or other delicacies as this week's payment on an ancient 25 hp. Whatever the offering, it was credited when the customer identified the piling at which he had parked his payment.

The Boat House, Inc. was open every day except Christmas, but the busiest times were Saturday and Sunday. Sunday in particular was when every red-blooded Key Wester wanted to get out on the water. To make it through Sunday or any other day I was partly lucky (I'll explain the "partly" later) to either inherit or hire exceptionally gifted mechanics. My favorite team was Ray Maloney and Roy Moroney. Ray, who was kin to Key West's famous mayor, Dr. W.C. Maloney, could hold the place together singlehandedly and often he had to.

One Sunday an irate customer charged into the showroom, almost upsetting the magnificent top-of-the-line 50-horse motor that had been the talk of the day. For reasons I can't recall this citizen was so mad that the whites of his eyes were wedged above the pupils. As he neared my desk, I meditated launching a first strike; I would turn over the desk on him and flee in the demonstrator tied to the dock outside.

At this juncture Ray Maloney wandered through the wide front doorway, idly swinging a trailer safety chain in one hand. Simultaneously Roy Moroney happened in from the shop, tapping a stainless steel drive shaft on the cement floor. Thus reinforced, I lit a cigarette. As ex-smokers will remember, the cigarette-lighting ceremony would

briefly halt almost any argument. The same psychology, if any, comes into play to produce a truce in a cat fight if one warrior decides to wash.

I offered a cigarette to the enemy. He turned off the whites of his eyes. We did business.

The similarity of Ray and Roy's names was a source of amusement to me, if not to them. Once when I was briefly out of town I sent them a joint postcard addressed to:

RAY MORONEY

They never mentioned it. Probably just as well.

Mike the One-Legged

The employee I was only partly lucky with was Mike, an A-1 mechanic and also an imaginative con man. Mike was minus a leg, but could hop faster on one pin than many people travel on two. His condition resulted from a dispute with a tractor-trailer during World War II. Those were no longer the horse-and-buggy days, yet the U.S. Army still did not wholly trust newfangled inventions like the telephone and radio. When a dispatch was sent from New York to Washington, a motorcycle courier delivered a copy by hand.

Dispatch-riding was how Mike bought it. He came out of the wreckage with one leg on sideways and some of his teeth down his throat.

Mike was a mechanical genius but began to take shortcuts. He did some minor wiring on our building, with the result that whenever it rained the walls would carry a charge of about 50 volts. He lit cigarettes in the vicinity of the wash-'em-up can of gasoline essential to every outboard shop, then cooled a glowing match by plunging it into the gas. Customers who observed this bravura conducted future transactions in the sunshine.

A lover of animals, Mike began to play the dogs. Since he was now a person for whom the truth was defined by the exigencies of the moment, he became a colorful storyteller. He concocted Oscar-worthy tearjerkers to siphon money off instant friends so he could lose it for them at the track. He did such a down-home job on a couple of lady schoolteachers that I had to garnish his salary to pay them back.

Once he went for a ride on a customer's scooter and deep-sixed it in a canal. He explained to us just how it must have been stolen, but we still had to buy a new one.

After Mike's exit from town with the sheriff threatening pursuit, perhaps to avenge the Mikes in his past, we learned that he had "converted" (a legal term for "stolen") a boat trailer belonging to someone who years later became chief of police.

While in the boat business, one of the

first things I had to do when I woke up was to set up a daily commute from "the City." For \$100 I bought a decrepit Buick Dynaflow Roadmaster, vintage 1950. I called her "Dynafluid." This monstrous vehicle, in her youth, would have breakfasted on Toyotas, if there had been any. The car was a loose, sclerotic gas guzzler that protested along the highway. When you issued instructions, Dynafluid did not at once obey. If you ordered a speedup or turn, there was a lag. It was this idiosyncrasy that finally moved me to sell her to the demolition derby operators.

So Long, Dynafluid

I was driving on what was then a two-lane US-1 opposite the Boca Chica Bar when a truck bore down on me from behind, the driver apparently sleeping off the trip from Miami. My car's responses were too ragged for me to outrun this juggernaut, so I steered toward the right shoulder. The message took so long to reach the wheels that the truck clipped my fender.

So long, Dynafluid. Believe it or not, she made it through several demolition assaults.

Since I was no mechanic, one job I could do for the Boat House was to tow boats and trailers to and from Miami. For this purpose I used my own car (a year younger than Dynafluid), but I soon found that in this area its youthful 80,000-mile capabilities were not fully adequate.

If you were towing a stack of four-boat trailers and came upon a red light on 27th Avenue, as I did early in the game, you might as well tramp on the gas, because your brakes would have no noticeable effect.

You also had to learn new things about old narrow bridges. If you were pulling a sizable boat, it acted as a sail. When you entered Miles Channel bridge with a crosswind from your left, the railing would intercept the wind, take the pressure off your "sail," and the whole rig would jump to the left. The proper drill was to aim at the right-hand railing, so that you wouldn't bounce into the path of an oncoming tourist.

Similarly, with the wind from the other side, you would aim a whisker to the left of the center line, thus terrifying the opposition into expecting instant collision. But presto! The wind would stop and you'd bounce back into the right lane.

There was one other thing I could do for the Boat House, Inc. That was to write a thrice-weekly boating column for the *Citizen*. This I did, under the auspices of the Key West Power Squadron. My hero was named Oliver Overboard. He was the stupidest boater who ever drowned himself trying to bail with a sieve.

My column tried to make people realize that just because a boat has a steering wheel doesn't mean it's a car, that the place to get drunk is under the bed at home, that life

jackets and other legal requirements were not ordered to amuse the Coast Guard.

Judging by the statistics, nobody pays much attention to boating columns.

Desperately Seeking Cary

Not only was Sunday a normally active day, but unusual occurrences were common. It was on Sunday when we lost Cary Grant. Or thought we had. The famous actor was in Key West to make a movie -- I think it was *Pink Submarine*. He wanted to take a boat ride and watch the sunset, famous even in the days before certain cultural types discovered its commercial value. Because we had sold our demonstrator, we borrowed a boat. It was scarcely *de luxe*, though relatively new. We also picked up a wicker armchair from the Key Wester, where Grant was staying. This piece of equipment -- suitable for a front porch in the Twenties -- we placed in the boat's open area aft where the great man sat bolt upright in considerable majesty.

Cary and friends stayed out so long that darkness fell. Back on Stock Island we began to worry. Publicity of any kind is supposed to be good for business. But we were running the kind of enterprise that didn't need Cary Grant to be missing.

I dispatched Mike the One-Legged in a skiff to round up the biggest name in Hollywood.

Grant's chief-of-staff later asked how much they owed for the boat. When I said "nothing," he nearly suffered a seizure. "But," he protested, "we always overpay." I didn't feel I should be rewarded for almost losing his boss. Besides, any profits would have accrued to the boat's owner.

There was another Sunday when we began to wonder if we had lost a closer friend. There was a man of about 60 who had wooed and wed a charming nymphet, to the hearty disgust of all the male hangers-on at the Boat House.

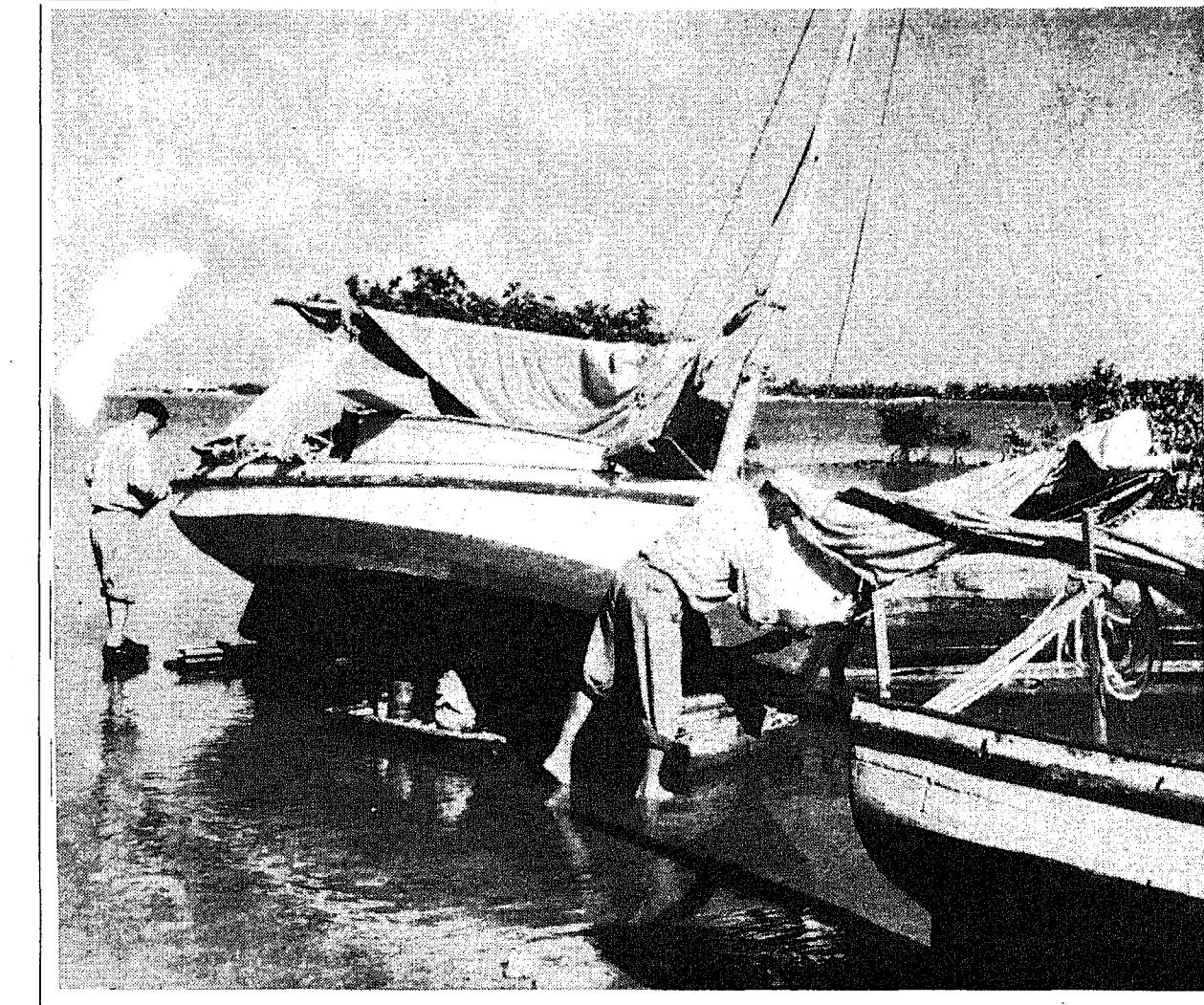
One Sunday afternoon Joe took his bride for a cruise. He was an experienced boatman, so he told us where he was going and when he expected to be back. He was not back by dark, and with the wind the way it was, if his motor had conked out he could have ended up in Cuba.

We were about to take steps when he proved to us that he was indeed a boatman. Partway home his 30-horse motor had frozen up from old age. On his starboard quarter the breeze was freshening; he began to drift south. He calmly considered his situation as he floated inexorably, it seemed, away from shore.

Joe's equipment consisted of two gas cans, assorted useless tools, two life jackets, one paddle, one raincoat, one anchor and plenty of line. With some difficulty he used paddle, raincoat and rope to rig himself a sail. Then he crawled home sideways, using the prop of the dead motor as a feeble rudder.

He Brought His Sergeant

One Sunday morning I was out at the Boat House, removing a former fish from beneath someone's floorboards so he could



A couple of old-time fishermen do some patching and painting on their sturdy built wooden fishing boat, looking ahead to a day's catch and a few bucks in the pocket, maybe a beer on Caroline Street to trade stories with old pals. This was a quiet day and a familiar scene long before speedboat races and million-dollar yachts. Many of Key West's one- and two-man boats were designed and built in Cuba. They were the best out on the water, shaped of hardwood, slim and easy to handle in any weather. No deadlines, no phone calls, no executive meetings. Just a pot of paint, some old brushes and caulking gear. The job was done right by men whose lives and families depended on the wealth of the sea now being inexorably over-fished.

by Bud Jacobson

ing disaffection became known and he ended in jail.

"Who turned you in?" I asked.

"He did," indicating his companion, who was trying to fall off the oil drum. "He was my sergeant. I had to bring him. They would have said he got me out of La Cabana."

"Did he?"

"No." End of statement.

After I phoned the sheriff, the former MP chief said he had friends in Miami and an uncle in Washington. He was going to head for Washington.

It was a real Sunday at the sheriff's department, if not at the Boat House. No one came to pick up my prisoners for two hours. Thinking back on it, I should not have told anyone. I should have driven the two men downtown and put them on the bus. At that time, 1960, there were still many ardent Castro sympathizers in Key West; anything with an anti-Castro flavor might be reported.

The Cubans were duly sent to Miami, but so far as I know nothing further was ever heard of them.

Political Whispers from the Birdcage

Sales Tax Vote on August 8

by Bud Jacobson

Get out of your rocking chair in air-conditioned comfort and vote in a county-wide referendum on August 8. The question is: Do you want to pay one penny *more* in sales tax, only to be applied to Monroe County residents and tourists?

What the county collects from this special one-cent sales tax will be set aside in a fund for county projects, like road repairs, etc., but most of all for the building of a new county jail at an estimated \$95 million. No one is too sure of that price tag.

Briefly, the sales tax for this county, then, will amount to seven percent while the rest of Florida pays the usual six percent. Welcome, again, to the most expensive county in which to live (if you can manage it).

Money seems to be the most fascinating subject of all, these days.

In the City of Key West, around city hall where the commission sits in all its wisdom, the nagging problem of how to pay off the city's bonded debt of \$10,050,000 on September 1 continues to wrinkle the brows of the elected officials and their hired experts, according to city hall watchers.

James W. Murphy, a citizen of this village since the early 1940s, has been, for the past several years, checking out this bond issue. It has to do with the still incomplete building of the sewer system. In the last month he asked one of the commissioners if they would meet the deadline.

"She looked surprised," Murphy said. "And then she said, 'oh, you know about that, too?'"

The \$10-million-plus bond issue payoff does not lend itself too well to "photo opportunities" for city officials, posing with the rich and famous who visit here. It is not addressed publicly by any of the hopeful candidates, or the commission.

Taxpayers and citizens alike in this financially hard-pressed small town sounded a call to action recently in a rally at Bayview Park, pleading for the county and city officials to keep their spending *down*, not *up*, so they wouldn't be driven to suicide. Many fine words and resounding phrases were heard.

Tony Tarracino is going to run for mayor, again. He said he would "be good" for the city. What does that mean?

He also mentioned, "we should get Proposition 13 here, like they have in California." That proposition, passed by the voters of California six years ago, strictly limits the amount of property assessment increase for every piece of property in the state to not more than 2.5 percent for each owner. When the owner sells, that piece of property can be re-assessed, but again there's a limit on that.

To get Proposition 13 through the State of Florida requires serious, long-range planning, a state organization and clout with



legislators. It is not just something we can wish to happen in Monroe County.

Tarracino has the right idea. Will he get meaningful support to help him move it forward? Cross your fingers.

A few of the courthouse observers are wondering out loud about the trial of 20 young men who were collared *two years ago* on cocaine smuggling and conspiracy charges in Tavernier. It appears to be the "longest delayed trial in the history of the county," one of the observers noted.

The bust was made by Florida Department of Law Enforcement and state attorney investigators, with some help from the sheriff's department. Lawyers involved, according to a source in the state attorney's office, have "made it a circus of pleas and counter-pleas."

Retired Circuit Judge Helio Gomez has been assigned as trial judge but he said he doesn't know when the date will be set by County Judge Regan Twomey, who works out of Plantation Key. Twomey is still hearing motions, pleas and what-have-you from the defending lawyers.

Apparently, no one's making a move toward a trial date.

Hometown Boy Makes Good: Pepito Fernandez, a leading light among the dopers, was serving 50 years in a federal slammer. He disappeared a couple weeks ago after conning federal drug hotshots into letting him have \$45,000 in cash (taxpayers' money), a custom Continental and lots of gold jewelry. He said if he was free he could round up bad guys and work a sting for the feds. Then he stung the feds.

Pepito showed up on White Street in his gorgeous car, with a gorgeous chick, and is now back on the wanted list. See you later, alligator.

Federal grand jury will be sworn into office in Key West within a month, according to whispers from the federal building on Simonton Street. Might be some action for elected officials, say the well-informed commentators who buzz around the courthouse.

The 1989 award for India Rubber Man of the Year goes, without one dissenting vote, to Ronald J. Stack. Stack has been in, out and around more "positions" in his

career than anyone in recent memory. He is now back in the first job he had with the county -- inspector with Charley Aguero's Municipal Service District. A little less in take-home pay, but Stack can bounce where others might sink under the waves.

Red faces on the city commission bench recently when they summoned a public hearing to check into selling city-owned property. They learned, among other things, that some of their tenants are no longer in existence; some are "way behind in rent; and they don't enforce terms of a major lease at the golf course.

The hearing was loaded with influential members of the "old establishment" in Key West, old names and old families, and none of them wanted the city to sell anything. Commissioners and their officials were burned by the citizens.

Attorney Jack Spottswood, who can be sarcastic at times, rapped them for not knowing what was in their leases at the golf course. Citing page and line, Spottswood told them the place was running to ruin for the very good reason that they don't enforce "strict performance" on Citicorp, the multi-billion-dollar corporation that holds the lease.

The lease demands thorough maintenance as a "championship" course. "It's not even near that," Spottswood growled. "I hear it's terrible."

Spottswood told them flat out to "go to court and demand specific performance; Citicorp can afford it."

When it came to the lease held by the Fraternal Order of Police on Stock Island, the commission found out they haven't gotten a dime from them in years and, besides that, the local chapter "went out of business years ago."

One woman who owns considerable property told them: Don't sell anything. Hang on; the price can only go up. She got a great big hand from the crowd.

Whisper from the courthouse halls is that Woodsy Niles and his legal helpers are cooking up a damage action against the intrepid sheriff and a few others for false arrest, and so on. Time will tell, as Charley Chan used to say in Chinese with English subtitles.

Niles had been arrested, with much fanfare, for keeping chickens on property owned by his son.

Owners of the huge marina on Stock Island who were almost going to pull the rug from under prospective buyers from Tampa, have relented and the deal is still "in the works," according to real estate pooh-bahs.

The week of August 14 is when the political types in Key West put up or shut up -- the qualifying days are then and all the candidates will be in the ring by noon on Friday, August 18.

May they talk seriously about how to solve bond issue problems in city hall; may they talk seriously about holding down city hall grabbers of tax dollars. May they get a police chief who can figure out how to post *One Way* street signs on Fleming between Simonton and Whitehead!

Watchword: Save your money.

Keeping the Flame Aloft

by Anne Carlisle

Susan Olsen's face lit up when she began to talk about genealogy and lighthouses. "Here's 'the lady of the lighthouse,'" she said, handing over a photo of Mary Bethel. "She was quite a pill."

In February of this year, "Team Lighthouse" passed a milestone with the successful completion of the lighthouse tower restoration on Whitehead Street -- an effort, said Olsen, who is director of the Key West Historical Society, which has "significantly increased our attendance figures. The esprit de corps of that team," she added, "is truly amazing." Next mission is nothing less than a 100-percent restoration of the lighthouse keepers' quarters as they were at the turn of the century.

"We are in there now tearing apart the building to see what the original materials were," Olsen said. "Fortunately the board of directors has given us permission to go in and do it right. We want to make sure a restoration will never have to be done again."

An estimated \$500,000 is needed for the project; the parking lot alone will cost \$50,000. Already more than \$249,000 has been raised, "primarily thanks to Ron Saunders," Olsen said. Cullen Chambers, director of the Lighthouse Museum, wrote the grants. In comparison, \$255,000 was spent on the tower. "This is a bigger project," Olsen said, "and much more complicated."

The clapboard quarters were built in 1887 and last occupied in 1962, when they were acquired by the county. Michael Mabry was the first keeper of the Key West Lighthouse. Over the next hundred years several families kept the lights, but the family which figures most prominently in the genealogical history is the Bethel family, including Mary Bethel, a stern-faced lady who replaced her husband as keeper in 1908 when he fell ill. "There are wonderful accounts from family members about the various jobs involved in keeping the lights. Each family member had his or her job. Lighthouse keepers had to keep extensive records, which give us a rich history to draw from," Olsen said. "Michael Whalton, by the way, is a direct descendant of the Bethels."

Given the transient nature of Key West life, particularly the military, artifacts and records for the planned exhibits are farflung. Luckily, however, Key Westers have a habit of keeping things, and the keepers' families and friends have been, according to Olsen, unusually generous and cooperative in sharing their materials with the Historical Society. The exhibits will focus on all the lights in the Keys, however, not just Key West.

"Stephen Whalton, who is in his late 80s -- and, unfortunately, just left Key West --



Lighthouse keeper Mary Bethel.

recalled for us how as a 13-year-old boy he was left in charge of the light while his uncle went on his honeymoon for the weekend. He still has his grandfather's spyglass," Olsen said.

And then there was the flamboyant Demeritt family. William Demeritt, who later became mayor of Key West, followed the Bethels as keeper of the Key West light as well as maintaining the other lights in the Keys. He had exotic birds in cages all over the property. "It was during that time, around 1915, the keepers' quarters began to change. Each wife who came along wanted to make it hers. As in any historic building, it's in those changes and additions that the damage occurs."

At present the property is in "rough shape," according to Olsen. Though the exterior is "very restorable," only 15 percent of the original interior remains. Original plans are not available, and paint expert Frank Welsh from

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Solares Hill -- August 1989 -- Page 27

Philadelphia is on the job, tracing back to the original materials.

"We know it was pine and varnish and that's what we'll go back to. Everything in the keepers' quarters will be restored to turn-of-the-century, museum quality. This will allow us to borrow from larger museums and also to preserve what we have," Olsen said. "The environment in the Keys is very hard on artifacts."

There are trees in the yard that have been documented back to 1893. "Our quarters were once identical to those of Fort Jefferson," Olsen said. "Not many people realize what we have here -- how unusual it is, for instance, to be able to go to the top of the light and look down. You can't do that in St. Augustine."

The official kickoff for the bicentennial of American lighthouses, a lasting symbol of our maritime heritage, is August 7. Preceding that historic date will be two fundraisers to benefit the restoration of the keepers' quarters. A cocktail gathering on August 5 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. will honor the Coast Guard for its 50 years of maintaining the lights in the Keys. The cost is \$10 per person. Sunset at the Lighthouse is free to the public, from 6 to 9 p.m. on August 6. Name plaques may also be purchased at \$500 apiece.

The bid submission date for the project is August 7. Bert Bender is the architect and Tom Pope is the restoration chairman. The quarters will be closed to the public from September 15 and will reopen March 15, when "everything old will be new again."

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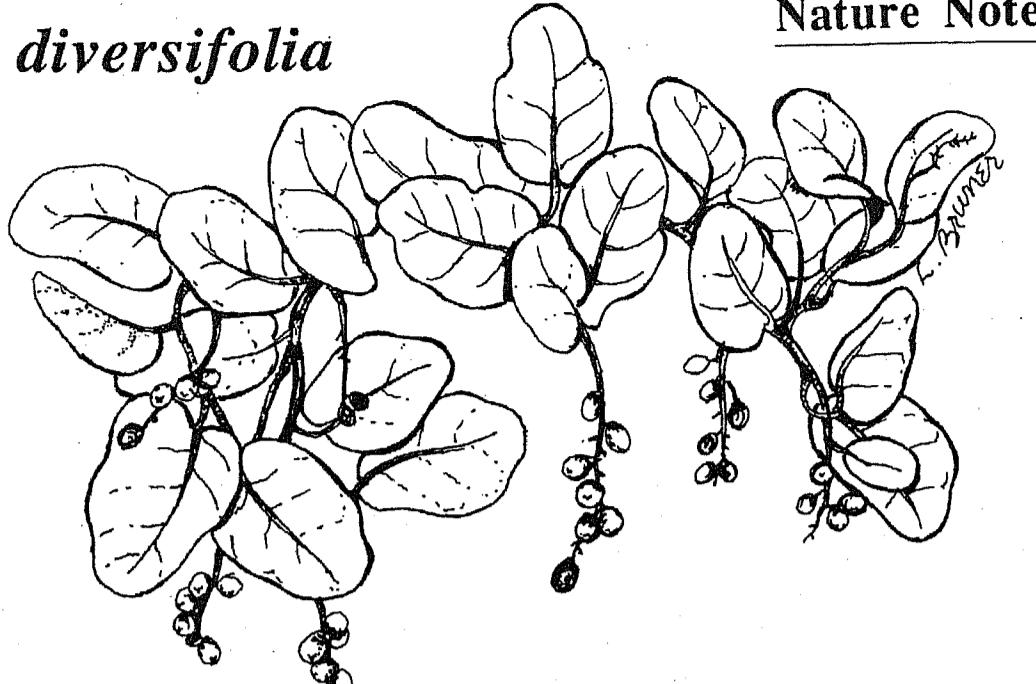
Pigeon Plum -- *Coccoloba diversifolia*

by Maureen Shaw

Native to South Florida, the Bahamas and the Greater Antilles, pigeon-plum is a common hammock species. It is in the same genus as seagrape or *coccoloba uvifera*. In Key West, the tree can be seen at the cemetery, Indigenous Park and the Botanical Gardens on Stock Island.

Pigeon-plum can grow to 30 feet tall with an upright, compact growth form. The bark is smooth and gray with blotchy brown. Female trees can be identified by the scratches on the trunk left by raccoons in pursuit of the fruit which appears in the summer. Male trees can occasionally bear fruit. Wildlife enjoy the fruit, but humans prefer the seagrape fruit. Pigeon-plum fruit is dark purple, half-inch, roundish and borne on three-inch spikes.

Leaves of the pigeon-plum, as the species' name implies, are diverse. They can vary in shape and size from two to six



Nature Notebook

inches. The leaves are dark green and leathery with a clasping petiole or leaf stalk. The clasping petiole is a sure way of recognizing this tree. The seagrape has the

same feature, but with a much rounder leaf.

The pigeon-plum can be used as a free-standing tree or in numbers for an excellent tall screen or noise break. [2]

taste. They are good climbers and swimmers. Their food includes almost anything edible, though they prefer animal over vegetable matter. They move about mostly at night.

Males can weigh up to 45 pounds, but the average is 15 pounds. Coon hunters say the meat of the raccoon is rich, red and excellent and their pelts are superb.

Studies show that all three sorts of raccoons in South Florida and the Keys are big-toothed, rather than many small-toothed species on the continent. They are the Florida raccoon, the Marine raccoon and the Keys raccoon. The Keys raccoon -- *Procyon lotor auspiscatus Nelson* -- is variable in size and pale in coloration, from grey to almost pinkish. Their coats are suffused with yellow, orange and pink tones. This subspecies' major point of distinction is the large, dark *areolus* of bare skin around the eye.

The Key raccoon tends to be solitary with litters averaging less than three young. If you want to further your knowledge on raccoons or other critters in the Keys, I highly recommend James D. Lazell, Jr.'s *Wildlife of the Florida Keys, A Natural History*. [2]



Their habits can vary according to locality, habitat and, it seems, individual

Raccoons in the Keys

by Alisha Sabul

From Key Largo to the Southernmost Point in Key West raccoons can be found, showing up at back doors for dinner scraps, rummaging around in garbage cans, scuttling across US-1.

Raccoons are in the family of carnivorous animals known as the *Procyonidae*, literally, *animals which come before the dog*. They are found from British Columbia east to Ontario and south throughout the continent and into Mexico.

The raccoon is one of the most versatile of animals. Easily tamed if caught young, they display the more appealing traits of cats, dogs, and the gentler monkeys. They can climb almost anything using their hand-like forepaws with great dexterity. If water is available they will wash their food before eating it, even with the same water in which they caught it.

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11:00	AQUA		AQUA		AQUA		L.I.A.
12:15	L.I.A.		INT		L.I.A.		
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Should auld acquaintance be forgot?

The short answer to this question probably is "yes." I learned to make this sad judgement when a good acquaintance from another time picked last winter to come back into my life.

She blew out to my cottage on Similar Sound in December. Hers is not a case of flint-iron friendship, just a good acquaintance.

She went to the Great Books session with me at the library 'way back there. She entered into the discussions with moderate intelligence. The only off-stream aspect I do recall is when we were invited to her place one night, she served with the coffee something that tasted like Ivory soap and capers.

And, let me see, someone said they ran into her in a little mall up in Highlands, N.C. and that she was pushing her pit bull dog in a wheelchair. He had been shot. He had taken a bite out of the mayor's cat.

So, in December the word comes to me that Good Acquaintance is now rolling up and down Duval Street in a Cherokee van accompanied by a big, black poodle wearing a bonnet. Basically, I disapprove of putting clothes on animals, though my step-sister and I, when second-graders, once put a doll's dress on a chicken.

This poodle going around with Good Acquaintance is reputed to be named Martha-Emily, though he is a large standard male weighing 114 pounds.

Good Acquaintance and Martha-Emily approach my door. I recognize a flaunting way she has of swing-along walking. Martha-Emily walks the same way. Suddenly, Good Acquaintance stands in the doorway in the bomb-throwing position. An armadillo pin encrusted with emeralds winks at me from her lapel.

We all know that there is one who kisses and one who leans the cheek to be kissed. Her lower lip has the slight scent of mint, her upper lip, coffee.

We sink immediately into the complexities of her private life. She has a congenital fear of postmen. A postman coming to her door will terrify her. She is returning to Key West, building a house on Washington Street, because she has managed to make an arrangement to pick up her mail at Louie's Backyard bar. She relates that she once was so stricken when a postman arrived at her door that she grabbed a Spanish scarf from the piano and crouched under it behind her wicker settee, hiding.

Martha-Emily attracts my attention by scratching his huge flank against my chair so that I rock back and forth. Martha-Emily steps over a remarkably long apple peeling on the floor where it fell off the table. He looks spitefully at me from under his bonnet rim. He lunges up onto the window seat and stretches out, groaning.

Good Acquaintance admits that she still gets perilous palpitations driving past the Key West Post Office. This is at the thought of seeing postmen. And she often stalls the Cherokee's engine or backs into someone there.

She never stops this monologue except to take a comb the size of a churn dash from her bag and touch up Martha-Emily's expensive hair. She goes on to narrate how she goes to a trendy Ft. Lauderdale restaurant where the waitresses wear the fake hair under their arms.

At one point during the visit her eyes take me in. "That frock you are wearing might do alright if you wore different earrings, shortened it, had the waist lifted and dyed it black."

I am wondering if Good Acquaintance is exactly right in her mind. I am certain that Martha-Emily is not, for he is pedalling his four legs in the air, having already cleared off one shelf of books, knocked to the floor.

All at once my cat, Sandra Day O'Connor, slips in as quiet as Cream of Wheat boiling. She spies Martha-Emily lolling in her own rightful spot, and her look says, "Take away that offending object." With a meteoric dart, Sandra Day O'Connor yanks off Martha-Emily's bonnet with her teeth and, like a shot, is out the front door with it.

Now we are standing beside Good Acquaintance's Cherokee van. Sandra Day O'Connor has left Martha-Emily's bonnet hanging rakishly atop the antenna, its bow half torn off. Sandra Day O'Connor retires a safe distance, innocently sipping dew from a yellow double hibiscus blossom.

As Good Acquaintance and Martha-Emily drive off, I raise my eyes. God help me not to hope that lightning strikes the builder of her house on Washington or the bank reneges on the loan. [2]

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What's Hot: A Review of Live Music in Key West Pat Burgess at the Pier House

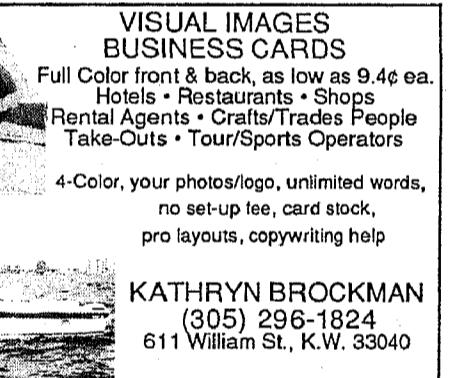
by Valerie Ridenour

There's a delightful oasis of class and culture at the Pier House tucked away under the Havana Docks. It's called the Wine Galley, a gracious little room reminiscent of a salon on an old yacht. The Samick grand piano in front of windows overlooks gentle waves that break with a tinkling tropical sound. There's a fruit and cheese tray with different delicacies every evening. Your host is Barry Smith, whose friendly smile used to greet you at La Te Da's Crystal Cafe.

The main attraction is a lovely lady named Pat Burgess. Pat plays very, very good piano. She accompanies herself with a flair you would expect from a professional accompanist while singing every show tune you ever fell in love with and some you haven't yet discovered. Pat's voice is full and lush. Her tonal quality leans toward the operatic without ever sounding overly dramatic.

Pat Burgess has kept the southern graciousness she acquired while growing up in Charleston, South Carolina. Pat was director of music for a touring theatrical company in the Big Apple. She moved into the club scene, starting in Greenwich Village and ending up at the Regent East on East 58th Street.

Oklahoma, *Evita*, *Phantom of the Opera* -- Pat leads an audience through such memorable songs as "If I Loved You," from *Carousel*, sung as sincerely as if she were on stage playing the part. I asked for a selection from my favorite dinosaur, *Kiss Me, Kate*, and was pleasantly surprised to hear "So In Love," "Always True to You



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Take a leisurely tour of the home and gardens of the late Nobel Prize winner, Ernest Hemingway. It was here that Mr. Hemingway wrote *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, *Green Hills of Africa*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *The Fifth Column*, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, and *The Macomber Affair*. Mr. Hemingway was the first important writer to discover and make Key West his home. He owned the home from 1931 to 1961. Covers One Acre including Pool & Guest House

"Darling in My Fashion," and "Another Opening, Another Show." Pat also does all the Gershwin-era tunes.

When you know how Pat feels about what she does, you'll know why she has such a following. "I have to have fun doing this, so my audience does, too," she says.

WHO'S NEWS: It was quite a party following the world premiere of *License to Kill*. Truman Annex was beautiful, with a tent over the end of Pier B covering goodie-laden tables. Curtis Phillips, Peter Ferko, Bob Pauly, Dave Hildebrand and yours truly played while the crowd munched and watched the parachutists land in the water.

But something was missing. Where were the stars? We knew Timothy Dalton, Wayne Newton and others were staying at the Casa Marina, where they mingled with a small, selective group. How nice for them. But what about the folks who bought tickets for \$50 apiece? Were they not entitled to catch at least a glimpse of the famous? Dalton had time to spend an afternoon scuba diving. Couldn't he have spared five minutes to wave at the people who were nice enough to support the effort?

Whoever arranged the affair and the press party carefully excluded our own fine journalists. I am glad I did not try to attend. I would have been on the phone organizing a boycott. Play fair or don't play on our island.

The Hemingway clan has come and gone. Hemingway Days was another well-planned, enjoyable summer memory for those who came to drink up the ambience of Ernest's island residence.

After a lot of negotiating, Denim and Diamonds is finally getting underway. The original country music show starring Jodyrae Geckler and Leanna Collins will take the stage at the Poinciana Lounge on Duck Avenue August 15 through 19, and 22 through 26. Mary Beth Graham will be replaced by Allison Traddup, who will also provide the choreography. Showtime is 8 p.m., with dancing afterward. This is a delightful and inexpensive way to enjoy a night on the town during the hot month of August. Tickets are \$5 in advance and \$7 at the door. See you there? Stay cool.

AUGUST ARTS CALENDAR

Art Collections Key West • National and international artists, plus work by Keys artists Lynn Voit and Richard Matson. Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; Sundays noon to 8 p.m. 600 Front Street, 296-5956.

Art Unlimited • Oldest private art gallery in Key West. First to carry Haitian art. "I go in after it." Daily, noon to 5 p.m. and by appointment. 217 Duval St., 296-5625.

Artist Warehouse • Summer show of Key West scenes featuring Karen Clemens with other artists. Sola's tapestries, including the 7- by 10-foot rendering of Key West. Currently, Sola is there autographing posters. Also, Costa Rican works. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 814 Duval St. 294-7141.

Banana Boat Batik • New ceramic work by Walt Hyla: animals, fish, lidded vessels, functional ware, flying fish (hanging fish sculptures). Weekdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; weekends, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. 419B Duval St., 296-2380.

Carole Gallery • Key West primitives by the owner. Daily, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. 1100 Whitehead St., 294-5496.

East Martello Museum & Gallery • New pieces from our permanent collection. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. 3501 S. Roosevelt Blvd. 296-3913.

Farrington Art Gallery • John Tindell watercolors and pencil drawings with local motifs; new pastels by Greg Biolchini; paintings by David Wright. Daily, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and evenings by appointment. 711 Duval St. 294-6911.

Florida Keys Community College Library • "Art and Archeology: Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society Artists," featuring Katherine Amundson, D. Larissa Dillin, Cheryl M. Clark, Anne Dorwin, Jerry Cash. Exhibition designed by Wendy Martin. Open Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Junior College Road, Stock Island, 296-9081, ext. 202.

Gingerbread Square Gallery • Hoppock, Clemons, Kiraly and all regulars. Summer hours: Thursday through Monday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 901 Duval St., 296-8900.

Gallerie Moderne • Abstract expressionism. Daily, 1 to 5 p.m. 516 Amelia St., 296-3156.

Great Southern Gallery • Sina Sutter will be at the gallery all day Saturday, August 12, with 15 original watercolors. New artist Charles Bradley, paper collages of Keys water scenes and fish. Also, our regular artists. New gallery space is open, construction is still underway on new studio for classes. Thursday through Monday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 910 Duval St., 294-6660.

Guild Hall Gallery • Photo magnets of underwater scenes by Chris Adair; "Philodendron Dream" baby quilt by Judi Bradford features sleeping baby soft sculpture. Arts and fine crafts by 16 Key West artists. Daily, 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. 614 Duval St., 296-6076.

Haitian Art Company • New oils by Jacques Enguerrand Gourgue. Daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 600 Frances St., 296-8932.

Harrison Gallery • Works by Helen Harrison, Matthew Lineberger, Cricket Barnes, Ann Lorraine, Nancy Bender and Sherry Read. Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5:30 p.m. 825 White St., 294-0609.

Kennedy Studios • Graphics and limited edition prints. Daily, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. 133 Duval St., 294-5850; daily, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. 716 Duval St., 296-7251; daily, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 501B South St., 296-7163.

Key West Art Center • Watercolors and

collage by Connie Hauk through August 12. Edna Damron watercolors and acrylics, August 12 to 26. Vivian Lange, August 26 to September 2. Daily, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. 301 Front St., 294-1241.

Lane Gallery • All new works from Bastille Day Show: Biondi, Mark Cafferty, Doris Christie, Fiona, Gibson, Gindel, Gros, Pascale Maguez, John Morrell, John Owens, D. Pole, Terry. New Polish artist Tomasz Holuj. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday 1 to 4 p.m. 1000 Duval St., 294-0067.

Lucky Street Gallery • Sculptural ceramic work by Mark Chatterly; raku pieces by Annette McCormick; 20 vibrant new gouache paintings

of Key West and Upper Keys scenes by Tom Colbert. Daily, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. 919 Duval St., 294-3973.

Rose Lane Antiquities • Pre-Columbian art. Daily, noon to 5 p.m. and by appointment. 524 Rose Lane, 294-2270.

Solares Hill Design Group • Masks from Mexico and Guatemala. Weekdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. 901 Fleming St., upstairs. 296-3080.

Whitehead Street Pottery • Stoneware, porcelain and Raku vessels. Wednesday to Monday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. 1011 Whitehead St., 294-5067.



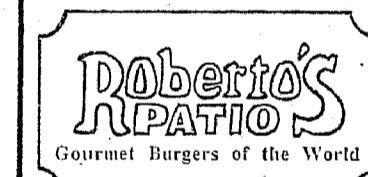
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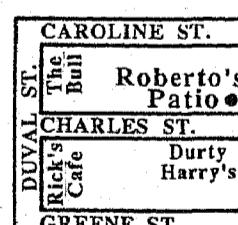


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In The Heart of Old
Town on Charles St.

Art Circle

by Judi Bradford

Who Teaches Art to Adults?

Last month in this space we discussed art lessons for kids. Now it is time for art lessons for adults.

The visual training of art enhances a person's sensitivity to harmony, balance and scale. With our eyes tuned to balanced compositions perhaps there would be fewer garish storefronts, a more compatible mixture of building styles or at least more anguish over what looks bad.

Group Classes

• Monroe County Public Schools Adult Education -- This offers one course, "Art: Basic Drawing and Painting," each public school term. The terms begin in September, January and April. The instructor is Linda Fatora, a six-year Key West resident who has a background in art education. She describes the course as an easygoing class with lots of individual attention and discussion. It covers the elements of art, basic design principles and color theory. Because classes are small, she is able to teach students with varying levels of skill.

Tempera, pastels and watercolors are used; oils and acrylics are not available because of cost. A field trip to a gallery opening is included in each class if possible.



FKCC art department: Malcolm Ross, Jerry Cash, FKCC President William A. Seeger and Gloria Shaw.

so students can become familiar with art exhibition as well as production. "Everything around us is designed," Linda points out. "Everything manufactured is created by an artist."

The classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7 to 10 p.m. There are no classes in the summer. The fee is \$13 plus a materials fee of \$5. The class can be taken for credit toward high school or GED diplomas. Call Fred Shaw at 296-6523 for more information.

• The Florida Keys Community College Art Department -- Led by Malcolm Ross, this is the second-largest department at the college. He and three other instructors provide two- and three-dimensional arts and photography instruction.

William Eldredge, Malcolm's supervisor, aspires to develop the Fine Arts Center as a cultural focal point in the community -- not just theater but visual arts, writing and music, as well. In line with these plans, they will be providing workshop courses next year. Art history, a valuable part of art education, unfortunately is not currently available. The department is searching for qualified instructors.

Drawing, painting, printmaking, jewelry and calligraphy at the college are taught by Malcolm.

Lawson Little, well known in the

community for his camera and darkroom skills, teaches photography.

Jerry Cash teaches Ceramics I and II, a course in Raku and one in Majolica. He describes the latter as a "lowfire technique with color possibilities that will appeal to watercolorists." Jerry worked as an archeological artist for Mel Fisher's Treasure Salvors for many years.

Gloria Shaw has a lively feel for solid forms and she teaches sculpture at the college. "Creativity is not just for artists," she says. "It is for city managers, executives and everyone. It loosens the tie to logic and reason."

Next fall and spring, courses in three-dimensional design will be offered by Roberta Marks, whose professional work is exhibited locally and afar.

Courses offered in the summer are beginning drawing and jewelry-making, both taught by Malcolm.

Courses at the college are \$22 per credit. Most courses are three credits. There is a \$10 firing fee for ceramics. Schedules vary according to the semester. Call the college registrar at 296-9081, ext. 201, for information.

• Budde's Art Supply, in Key Plaza, offers a variety of classes in fine arts and crafts at very reasonable rates. They have a studio in the back of the store for small groups of students.

Tole and decorative painting are taught there by Ann Smart. Work is usually done on wood, but training for work on canvas, tin and fabric is also included. Surface preparation, painting and finishing are covered. Call Ann at 1-872-4340. The fee is \$10 for a three-hour class.

Cecile Bick teaches basket weaving at Budde's, "from 10 a.m. 'til we finish. This way you're one step ahead when they commit you," she quips. Classes are \$10 per basket. Call her at 294-0840.

Marilyn Bushman is very enthusiastic about the classes at Budde's. "Students who take classes here get a tremendous amount of technique. We paint with you. We work with each student. We don't need beginners' classes because we work with everyone on his or her own level." She teaches painting techniques in watercolor, acrylics and oils. In addition, she offers classes in color theory and design. The fee is \$10 for three hours; materials are extra. She has a practical and direct approach. "Don't get scared," she says. "It's just lights and darks and manipulating the paint." Her number is 296-4734.

Workshops in special techniques are scheduled intermittently. The curriculum varies according to the season. To find out what's available and when, call Stella at Budde's, 296-2560.

• Great Southern Gallery, as we reported last month, is building a painting studio in preparation for classes to start this fall. They are currently recruiting teachers for classes for kids and adults in all media, two and three dimensions, day or night, indoors or

outdoors. They are thoroughly flexible and committed to art education. The details are yet to be determined, but you can keep track of progress by talking to Kathleen at the gallery, 294-6660.

Private Lessons

Private art instruction is hard to come by, but if you have a favorite artist in town, it never hurts to inquire if he or she would consider enlightening you to the secrets of their particular artistic charms. Some teachers mentioned above also offer lessons privately.

- Ann Smart from Budde's teaches tole and decorative painting in her home for \$7 per hour.

- Malcolm Ross teaches two-dimensional media and jewelry-making privately for \$15 per hour.

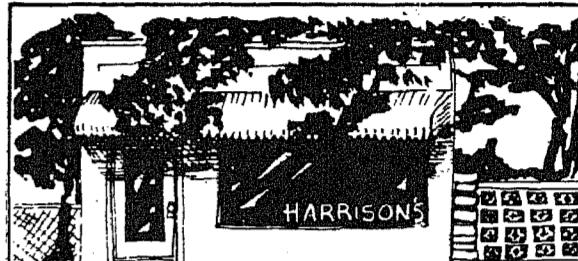
- Loys Locklear offers handbuilding instructions in ceramics at her home studio. Loys is a professional clay artist with six years of private teaching experience. She requires a minimum commitment of five classes. The first three cover handbuilding techniques (pinch, coil and slab construction). The final two classes demonstrate glazing and firing. She charges \$25 per hour for adults. Reach her by leaving a message at Guild Hall Gallery, 296-6076.

- Once a year Tony van Hasselt and Judy Wagner bring their watercolor workshop to town. They travel all over the hemisphere teaching outdoor painting skills, and they are truly an inspiration. Reach them for information at their answering service: 1-800-222-6286.

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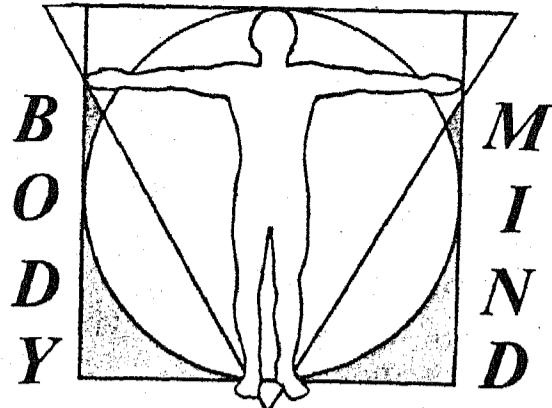
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SPiRiT

People are our greatest source of ideas. Through books, tapes, workshops and healing circles we are able to face the "dark night of the soul" with support from other people. Though they can share with us the solitary journey, we must initiate it ourselves. Through our own acceptance and willingness to change, we can act out of love and healing wisdom.

This is all fed by our inner work. Visualizations, affirmations and rebirthings are all activities to change the patterns and "clean" our energy.

Recently, I have met many courageous people who are willing to change. Much is available for our healing. Many of us are clearing ourselves of loss, fear and co-dependence. It takes a definite willingness to communicate with the self and others.

Randy McGinn, of the Healing Circle at Island Wellness, has brought much joy to us. Through his processes of brain and body integration, he is able to release old patterns. This month he contributes some thoughts on the Mind/Body Connection.

It is time to speak out for our freedom. The Monroe County Coalition for a Woman's Right to Choose meets every Thursday. They are currently seeking a larger meeting space. The number to call for meeting time and location is 296-4140. Get involved. This is what democracy is all about.

Finally, Sioux Rose is presented this

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month in rich form by Valerie Ridenour. Let's think thoughts that bring us abundance, health and well-being.

Love and laughter,
Renate

Body/Mind Connection

by Randy H. McGinn

How important are our thoughts? Can emotion cause disease and illness? Is it really possible to use the mind to heal the body?

Many people are asking these questions today, as we learn about the connection of our thoughts and emotions to our physical bodies and our health.

Dr. Ernest Lawrence Rossi, Ph.D., shows us the link between mind and body in his book *The Psychobiology of Mind-Body Healing*.

For many years we separated the mind from the body, thinking they were independent and had no effect on each other. Today we view them as one intricate system.

Think of the power of positive thinking. What a difference we can feel in our physical self when we are in a good frame of mind! We know of people who have survived cancer, of long-term survivors of AIDS, and of many others with life-threatening diseases who have used the power of visualization and positive thoughts and energy to help them heal. We see people clearing up old resentments and hatreds and becoming healthy and whole as they let go of deep-seated negative emotions.

Why does someone's physical health improve when they can forgive a person, place or thing in their past? How can a change in thinking change physical well-being? Scientists and doctors around the world are now answering some of these questions.

The mental energy of negative thoughts and feelings can show up in our bodies as symptoms, telling us we need to look at what is wrong in our lives. Ignoring these symptoms may result in health problems.

We can help ourselves by changing our thoughts. If we look at what our mind and body are telling us, we can catch many illnesses before they take over our bodies. If we keep a positive outlook and avoid letting the negative affect our actions and reactions, our minds and bodies will reward us with better health.

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Science has come a long way. It now admits that different approaches for facilitating healing can be effective.

For our parts, we can use our minds to facilitate our healing and empower the medicines prescribed to us. Visualization, positive thinking, healing energy and inner work to release resentment can change how we choose to see life. We can become agents in the process of our own health and well-being.

How about it? Can we keep an open mind and allow ourselves our birthright -- the power of our own healing energy?

Sioux Rose: A Most Extraordinary Astrologer

by Valerie Ridenour

Extremely intelligent, sensuously attractive and endlessly energetic, Sioux Rose is a living encyclopedia of astrological knowledge. If you've watched her show *Astrology and the Divine Order* on TCI (channel five), you are already aware that Sioux offers information of a very sophisticated nature before she has even opened her worn Ephemeris. So much of its knowledge is in her head that one could easily believe she has the book memorized.

Sioux Rose was a student at the State University of New York when her interest in astrology was awakened. After graduate school Sioux held a teaching position in an affluent private school in San Juan, Puerto



Rico, for three and a half years. Sioux and her two daughters now call Key West home.

Her psychic nature is a great asset for Sioux in interpreting individual astrological charts.

She is an active member of Unity Church, where she began the Sunday School program. Since her arrival in Key West in November 1986, she has been associated with the Russell House, where she is available for charts and private readings. She offers charts at \$60 and half-hour Tarot card readings for locals at \$30. Natal charts include a recorded,

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Sioux Rose's columns have appeared regularly in such nationally distributed publications as *Lear's Magazine*, the *Psychic Journal*, *Imacen*, several airline magazines and the *Mighty Natural Directory*. She has also written several children's books and plays, and plans new ventures working with youngsters.

On her television show, Sioux has introduced us to many famous New-Age personalities including British medium Peter Close (of Scotland Yard fame), Cheryl Williams and Pamela White, Micki Dahne, Charlie Dickenson and Barbara Norcross.

A loving, generous lady, Sioux Rose is always happy to offer an introduction to our community to visitors in the psychic field.

New Helpline Numbers

Helpline, Inc. has found it necessary to eliminate their toll-free 800 number. Local phone numbers have been provided instead, for the residents of the Middle and Upper Keys, which will automatically be call-forwarded free of charge to the Key West office. The numbers are 289-1700 in the Middle Keys and 852-1700 in the Upper Keys.

Addictions Conference

Florida Keys Memorial Hospital and Delphos will present the First Annual Southernmost Conference on Addictions at Marriott's Casa Marina from August 23 to 27.

This is the first program of its kind in the Keys. Presentations will cover the topics of Recovery and Relapse; Cocaine Strategies; Co-Dependency; Adult Children -- Secrets of Dysfunctional Families; Adolescent Addiction Assessment, Intervention, Prevention and Treatment; and Effective Parenting.

In addition to professionals, the community is encouraged to attend the conference. The topics have been selected to meet the public's growing demand for information on addiction.

The conference will provide 24 hours of education (CMEs for physicians, CEUs and contact hours available) in addition to a reception, Caribbean luau and Sunday brunch. The full registration fee is \$275 for early registration until August 7; \$325 after that date.

For more information or to register for the conference, call Delphos at 294-5531, ext. 3505.

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Sleeping on the White Street Pier

by Mitch Grabois

One day I was on the back ward of the state mental hospital, peering out the day-room window at the Georgia border; and the next, domestic circumstances, themselves unworthy of report, transported me to a tropical island, where I now reside.

With stores of untouched energy, I chunk the gears and pick up speed, drifting along the curve of the Atlantic, returning from my job. In the evening I listen to the neighborhood children. Their cries, along with winged termites, fly in and out my open windows. At home I watch the termites drag themselves across my blotter without concern. There are holes eaten in the wall where my bike helmet hangs, cherry-red and inviolate. Below sits a statue of the Buddha, detached and empty. I don't own the house; and I don't really care.

In this incarnation I'm the front desk clerk of a resort hotel. Once again I'm the gatekeeper. But this time my role is to usher in eager tourists, capturing memories like prisoners-of-war, rather than to guard the exits so that those with no futures cannot escape.

Tiffany, altruistically, was glad I was leaving; she told me I'd be happier away. She feared I'd been gradually becoming like the rest of them, that eventually I'd fire state cigarettes from a plug in the wall and suck the smoke greedily, pacing jangled down the corridors of captivity. Now I could go back to being just good old Max. Tiffany and I'd had different agendas. For her, I'd been simply a friend and ally in a world of rappers, murderers, ward staff shits, who did what he could, though without success, to get her out of the hospital. For me, it was somewhat more complex. I was a professional with ethics, countless rules to follow, and a boss to please.

Now my function is simpler. People call me on the phone and I say, "Yes." In our reception area, they're happy to see me. I am Mr. Welcome. I speak and they understand me. I am a warm spirit in an air-conditioned womb ushering them into holiday luxury. My persona is quiet, friendly, and innocuous. They do not scream at me, "I'm going to kill you, you son of a bitch!" They do not resist me at all; why should they? I am not their jailor. I am in no way impugning the fiber of their selfhood. We are not locked in a struggle to the death. I am not trying to alter their brain chemistry. In the evening, when I sit at my old pitted table, looking out at the darkening palms and the darkening street, it is not their sadness which seeps from the planet. The universe is a beast, breathing in and out, and many people are dying of diseases, fashionable and unfashionable.

Time moves slowly, without the intensity of the madhouse. I

went to the laundromat and it was a shabby place. I sat outside on a bench with slats badly eaten by termites. A woman drove up in a battered Chevy. The door clanked when she opened it and clanked again when she closed it. She was pale, with a bruise on one cheek. I looked at her but could not catch her eye. She walked into the laundromat lugging a basket of laundry. A front hung over the island all day. It was a holiday, but people were doing their laundry instead.

Someone on the White Street Pier had caught a nurse shark and had left it there on the concrete with its belly slit open and its guts hanging out. A homeless man who'd been sleeping on the sidewalk at the end of the pier rolled his bedroll up and stuck it on the back of his rusty bike, then with his back to the Atlantic, rode off.

The man slowed as he approached the nurse shark. He wondered if the nurse shark was something he could eat. Then he thought, It's a dead thing lying on the pier. Who knows how long it's been there, though I didn't see it last night when I came this way to my spacious room. It is a dead thing, and I am alive with my guts securely inside of me, so I'll be on my way and let it rest in what peace it can find in shark heaven or shark hell.

I had all the books by Fritz Perls. A girl borrowed them, then moved to New York City, but I don't need them. I've moved to the tropics and melted. I am hardly aware of pain. My life with Tiffany and her cohorts is fading. I need to write her a letter, but have not yet been able to find the time. I think of her, but then the moment is gone. I'm in the hammock, popping a beer. I spoke with an insurance agent the other day. Evil spirits entered Tiffany's head through its crown, she used to tell me.

After work I was lounging at the pool, half asleep. A new employee, not knowing me, demanded to know if I were a guest. I said, "No, I am one of the transient homeless." Then I tried to belch, but couldn't. At that moment lightning struck out in the ocean, and the employee, a slim, sturdy young man, turned and looked in its direction. Then he walked off, apparently having forgotten me, having varied his expression not a whit.

Halfway down the White Street Pier an old man was throwing a weighted net into the sea, pulling it back again and again with nothing ever in it. His rusty bike was parked nearby. A thin young woman sat on the wall, looking blankly out to sea, haggard and weary. I noticed that her legs needed shaving as she turned and fixed me with a look of contempt, as if she knew I'd been a whore of the state.

Two of my children, Jefferson and Bob, are lying on the floor, studying a lizard Bob had made a grab for. Alarmed, the lizard had shed its tail. The

lizard is furtively crawling away while its tail wiggles like a worm. Never having seen this before, I'm astounded. Jefferson knows he knows more than I. "Survival skill," he says offhand-edly. Later I'm looking out the window at the palms and I think about writing a letter to Tiffany telling her about the lizard, wondering how I'd frame it. Still later I see the tailless lizard, dead, on the white linoleum, the cocker spaniel still eyeing it.

At the end of the White Street Pier the southernmost bums are sleeping out on the concrete. I see them when I walk out there at dawn with my cocker spaniel. There's a snowy egret that stands among their sleeping forms, perhaps mistaking them for sleeping fishermen, perhaps feeling sorry for them, wanting to stand among them as a witness, or, as a representative of humankind, an apologist. The egret is snow white, but among the sleeping homeless seems greyed, like dingy wash. The spaniel, a hunter, streaks toward it. The egret watches, shows no alarm, and at the last moment lifts without a trace of effort.

The spaniel puts its paws up on the low wall and watches, appreciatively, the egret glide inches above the surface of the sea. The spaniel has a sense of humor; she thinks, I wish I could do that. She trots over to a sleeping transient and sniffs him, assessing his aliveness. The man startles awake and slurs, "Get outta here." The spaniel, only slightly offended, goes off to sniff something else.

The transient rises to a sitting position, stretches, shudders, gets to his feet. He folds the raggedy yellow blanket which essentially is his home. I idly wonder whether he has a fondness for his blanket, the way a small child does. He walks off, not with a sense of purpose, but not without one either.

As I was leaving the hotel today I passed a maintenance man, a Cuban with a salt-and-pepper moustache. He was singing "Strangers in the Night" while shaking a blue-and-yellow can of window cleaner. On the top step of his stepladder were two more cans, perched like parrots. I drove home, pulled a pair of dirty shorts off the floor, put them on, and walked into the front yard. My landlady came out from behind the house and said, "It's hot," before climbing onto an Italian motorscooter and buzzing off. My son Jefferson was sitting on his chrome BMX bike in the middle of the street looking up into a palm tree. The landlady grinned at him, but he didn't notice her.

Because Bob wanted something to eat which was "very very crispy," we went to Kentucky Fried. I ordered from a Eurasian girl whose flesh looked tired. She had a moustache of large beads of sweat, and a name tag which read: Vince. The big red sign high above the parking lot was broken, with jagged plastic edges. It read: Kent Fr Ch. Jefferson was doing magic tricks, pretending to pull dimes from behind my ear, until I grew irritated. I looked out the window while Bob chewed slowly on greasy batter and Jefferson made a dime walk over his knuckles.

"You know my club?" he asked, "the Purple Nightmares? Well now we have a song. You wanna hear it?

...30,000 screaming kids, tentacles like slimy squids eating out all your Ids, The Nightmares!"

In the day room Tiffany was watching TV. When I walked in she fixed me with a look that was unabashedly hostile. "Do you hear what they're saying over the television?" she insisted. I listened. They were at the point in the movie where the townspeople were trying to contain the monster. I said, "The sheriff's giving instructions. He says he's going to go down the old highway, and that he'll be in touch over the radio."

Tiffany listened intently for a few moments. Then she said, "They're telling me that I must contain my fury." Without speaking further she stalked out of the room. I listened, but all I heard were screams as the monster moved through a first line of defense.

Independence Night, Rotarians shot

fireworks off the White Street Pier. The next morning the pier was littered with burnt pyrotechnic trash. No homeless were sleeping along the wall. The white egret was nowhere in sight. Save for my dog, I was alone. She sniffed carefully at the burnt paper. The sky was full of ominous dark clouds. The air had an unsettled dampness to it.

I scanned the ocean for a waterspout; if I saw one I would run like hell. I knew that my life was meaningless and that I would die in anonymity, but I didn't think I wanted it to come in a swirling funnel of dark green water, my last glimpse a fat fish, its eyes wide in alarm. Out at sea lightning flashed, and the air was suddenly still and heavy. I felt I could hardly move, an oppressive weight on my shoulders. I looked around for the dog but didn't see her. I thought, if there's a God and He wants to talk to me, this might be the time.

This island Sunday is dark, with intermittent rain. The lamps are off, the light

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dim, and the house has the feel of an abandoned museum. Their toys strewn around them, the children are playing on the gritty floor of their room with unusual quiet intensity. The leaves outside stir nervously. Even with water beaded on their surfaces, they look dry and wilting, an advertisement for vulnerability. The TV picture is as bright as a movie theater screen. Baseball players in a distant city move in desultory patterns against bright green. I have not been in their cities for so long, even the names sound fictional. I slouch in an elegant armchair turned ratty, and the ball game takes on the character of a succession of baseball cards flipped one by one onto the floor by a child with vacant eyes. Life has slowed to a molecular level, as grainy as a newsprint photo.

I return to the White Street Pier. Since Independence Day, the homeless have abandoned it. I suppose they have found better accommodations, but I miss their supine forms. [J]

SOLARES HILL RESTAURANT DIRECTORY

Antonia's Restaurant, 615 Duval Street. Excellent Northern Italian cuisine in friendly, elegant atmosphere. Dinner served from 7 to 11 p.m. nightly. Visa, Mastercard. Phone 294-6565.

Bubba's Beijing, at The Reach, Simonton Street on the Ocean. Open for dinner Wednesday through Sunday, 6 to 11 p.m. This menu combines Nouvelle Chinois with Thai and Korean fare built around a firm foundation of Chinese dishes. Try Bubba's Buffet, \$15.95. Phone 296-5000.

Cafe Exile, 700 Duval at Angela Street. Open 24 hours. A European streetside cafe known for its eggs, burgers and alfresco ambience. Experience fine dining in the Jazz Garden, enjoy libations in Streetside from 4 to 9 p.m., Disco in Backstreet -- The Dance Alternative. Phone 296-0991.

Dim Sum, 613 1/2 Duval Street in Key Lime Square. Open 6 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., closed Tuesdays. A gour-

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El Loro Verde, 404 Southard Street, is more than a Mexican restaurant. El Loro Verde presents innovative yet authentic variations of both Mexican and Caribbean dishes. Popular for its cafe atmosphere, El Loro Verde now features a full liquor bar in its new dining room. Phone 296-7298.

Emma's Seafare, at The Reach, Simonton Street on the Ocean. Open 7 days a week for breakfast, lunch and dinner. This is a room that radiates the sun and sea. Dine indoors or on a terrace that overlooks the Atlantic. The menu features fish and more fish, prepared 105 different ways. Phone 296-5000.

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Half Shell Raw Bar, Land's End Village, foot of Margaret Street, serving lunch and dinner 'til 7. Freshest shrimp, fish and lobster direct from their own fish market at the shrimp docks. Cash only.

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Shorty's Bar and Grill, 215 Duval Street. Open 11 a.m. to 4 a.m. daily, noon to 4 a.m. Sunday. Open air with Conch specialties and "Gator Bites." 294-5725.

Turtle Kraals, Land's End Village, foot of Margaret Street. Harbor view dining for lunch and dinner. Great hamburgers, seafood and check out the music. Visa, Mastercard okay. Phone 296-4008.

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