

The highest point in Key West

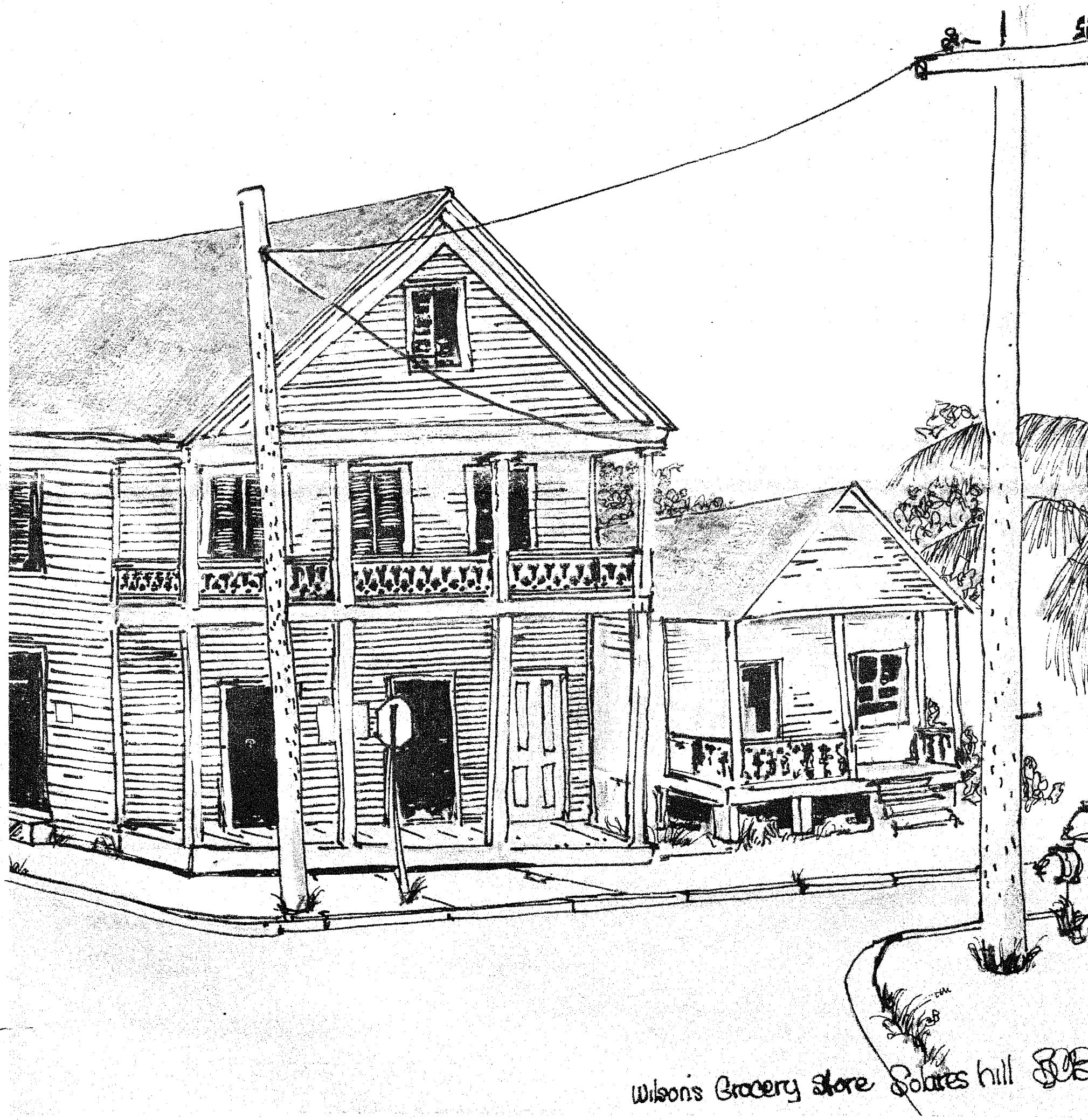
solares hill

FREE

VOL. 1, NO. 13

Key West, Florida

Summer, 1972





It is difficult to get out a newspaper. It seems to be particularly difficult to get out Solares Hill. We are a monthly paper but we haven't appeared since March.

Why?

I think that there was something about our collective inefficiencies (Michael Prewitt, Jerry Miller, Dink Bruce, Janet Wood and myself) that made the last few days of the paper before deadline totally unbearable. Late, late nights (always the night before the paper was due we were up to 5 A.M.), missing articles, money shortages, last minute ads to be drawn up, and a host of other unfortunate et ceteras that we seemed to fall into repeatedly.

After our last issue (The Fist and the Finger, remember?), we entered a period of group dismay. It had been a particularly tiring issue to assemble. And, then, we began to disassemble ourselves.

Mike had to return to Pittsburgh for awhile, Jerry got transferred (Navy) to Maine, Janet was away and, to be honest, I didn't want to think about putting together the paper without these people.

However, a few weeks ago, while driving past Lower Matecumbe, I was hit with a burst of energy and decided that it was time to get the paper out again.

Thankfully, my energy was complimented and increased by the enormous assistance I received from friends.

First, financially, this issue is made possible by the timely and thoughtful contribution to it by Walter Starke. Thank you, Walter. The full page ad we got from Theron didn't hurt, either.

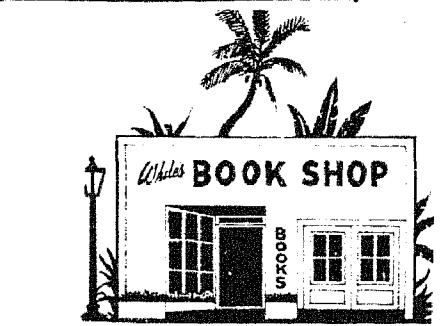
"Dink" Bruce took one look at my layout - which had taken me hours of agony to assemble - and said it was no good and that it had to go. Then I recovered from my rage, "Dink" had laid out the paper his way and I resented him no longer. I really learned how important an art editor is to a paper during this issue.

Cusie Vallet typed almost the whole issue herself. This is a lot of work and, when you realize that all our work is volunteer, it becomes doubly groovy to have someone as nice as Susan has been to this paper.

Kashkin took the photos and Hal Moore came to our rescue with some last minute layout and Nora drew Thurlow's bird and Theron drew "The Hen". Thanks again to all.

We shall return in the Fall.

W. "Dancing Bill" Huckel



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EDITORIAL MICHAEL PREWITT
EDITORIAL "DANCING BILL" HUCKEL
DUTY TROUBLESHOOTER BENJAMIN CURRY "DINK" BRUCE
COPY EDITOR JANET WOOD
With a little help from our friends...

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Congratulations to Fredrick Wenckebach on receiving the key to the city in recognition of his many services to Key West.



girls slow pitch softball

by Bill Huckel

Photos by Kashkin

The league works like this.

The local teams put their best players on an All-Star Team (last year members of this team were chosen by Willie Ward, Garfield Ashe, and Lloyd Price). This All-Star Team first travels to sub-district playoffs; then to state; and then, finally, to the national championships.

The girls from Key West got as far as the district playoffs in Ft. Lauderdale in 1969.

Last year, due to insufficient money to go to the league playoffs, the Key West team accepted an invitation to play in a special invitational series in Vero Beach.

The girls won and were the champs! Ward remembers Donna Walker and Beverly (Green) Tynes were stand-outs.

In the past as many as six local teams have been fielded with as many as 76 games played in a four month season. Due to racial tensions, there are fewer girls playing now than then and the outlook is for around 35-40 games this year. When the town gets groovy again, Ward expects that young white girls will again play ball with these teams.

It is not uncommon to see over one hundred spectators, mostly young, though some older ones come out, watching a game.

Coach Ward had his mind blown last year by the dedication of the girls to the games. At a time when Ward was playing the girls particularly hard (getting them in shape for the All-Star selections), one of the girls, who had been playing regularly, showed up for practice with a recently born baby hers!

But even more amazing than this was when, a couple of weeks later, a second girl, also one who had been playing regularly, showed up with her new-born baby! Ward hadn't even known that the girls were pregnant.

Coach Willie Ward must be the Jake Gaither of the Girls Slow Pitch Soft Ball League to inspire such dedication from his players.

Well, for those who still feel this way, dig this: go down some evening to the ball field at the Community Pool and watch the girls in the Slow Pitch Softball League in action. They are really good and the sport is great for spectators.

The pool ballfield had been used by the young blacks for Pony League ball until integration at which time they moved over to Pedro Aguilar Field.

Then the idea for girls ball teams came up and about six years ago, Key West, at an annual fee of fifty dollars membership, joined the national American Softball Association.



(Coaches Henry Green and Garfield Ashe stand with team members)

SWIFT'S
Camera and Stereo

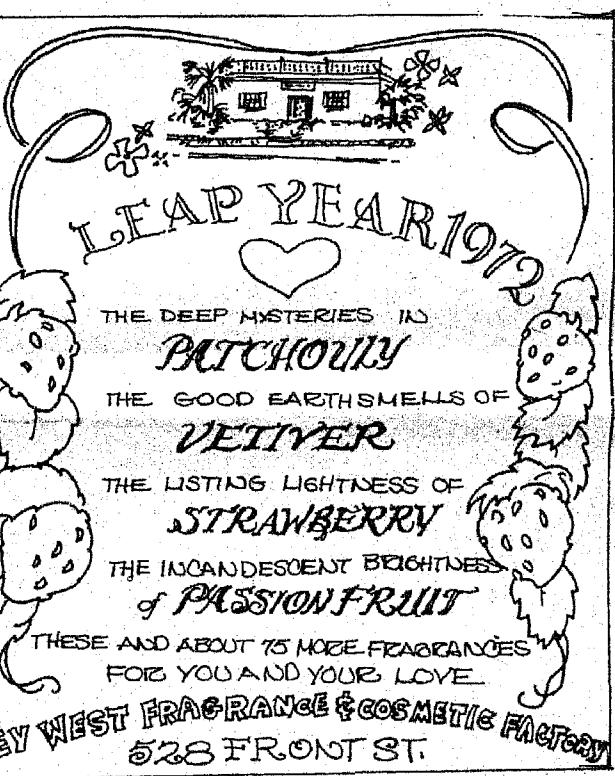
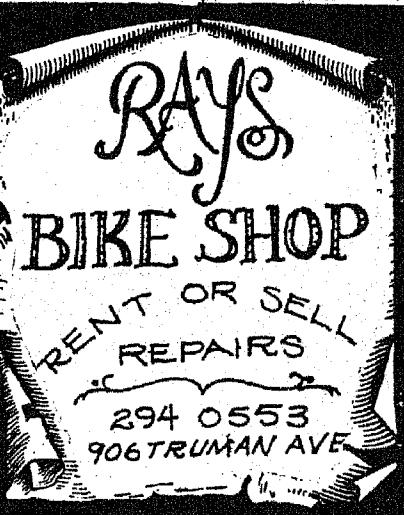


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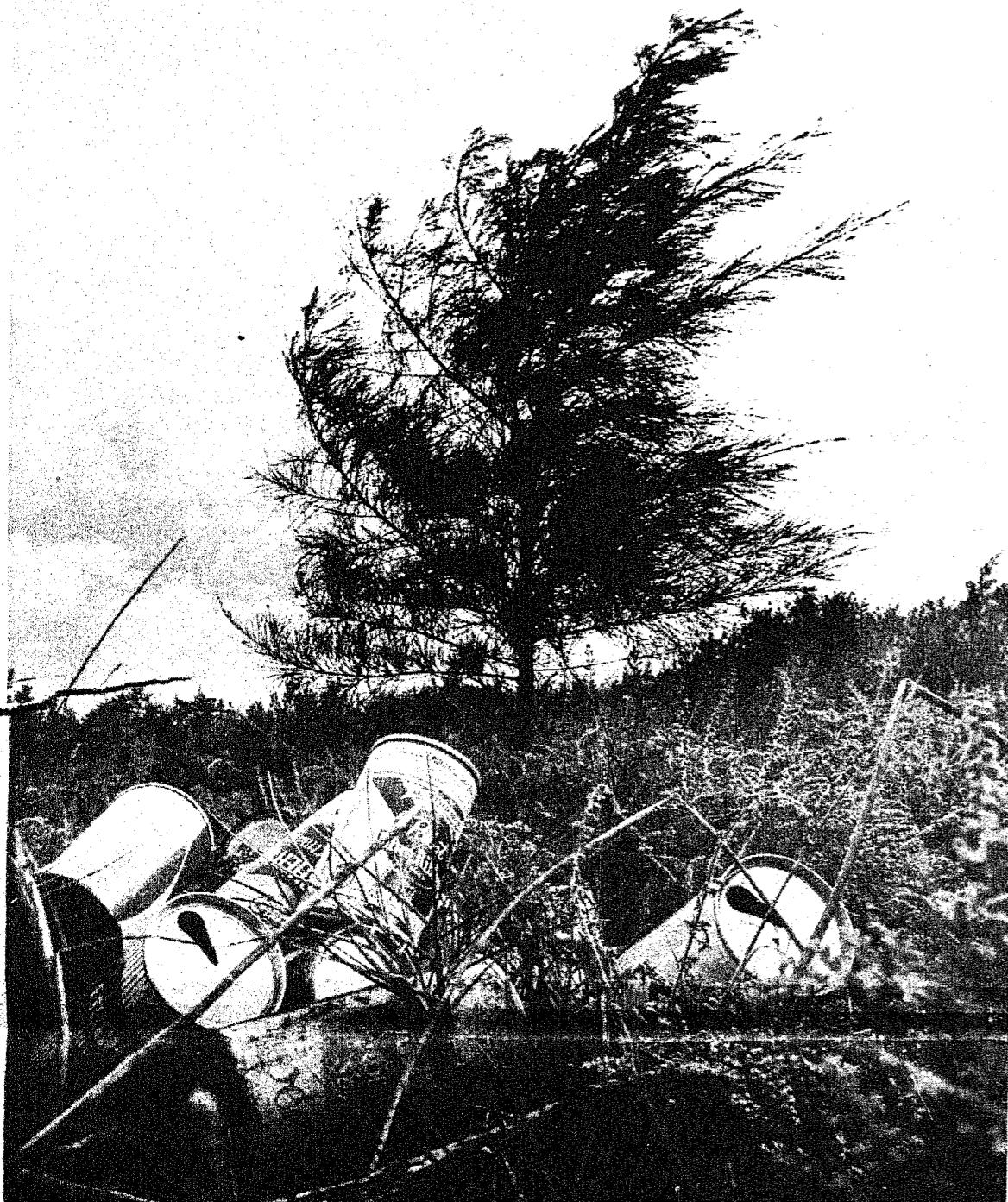
As the sun shines down giving life to the clouds that are sitting in soft blue summer skies with subtle silken winds blowing upon a sandy beach which stretches for miles along the changing coastline conveying warmth to the gently lapping ocean, the joys of love are ever increasing and becoming universal.

For you.

Bill Phillips

REST BEACH

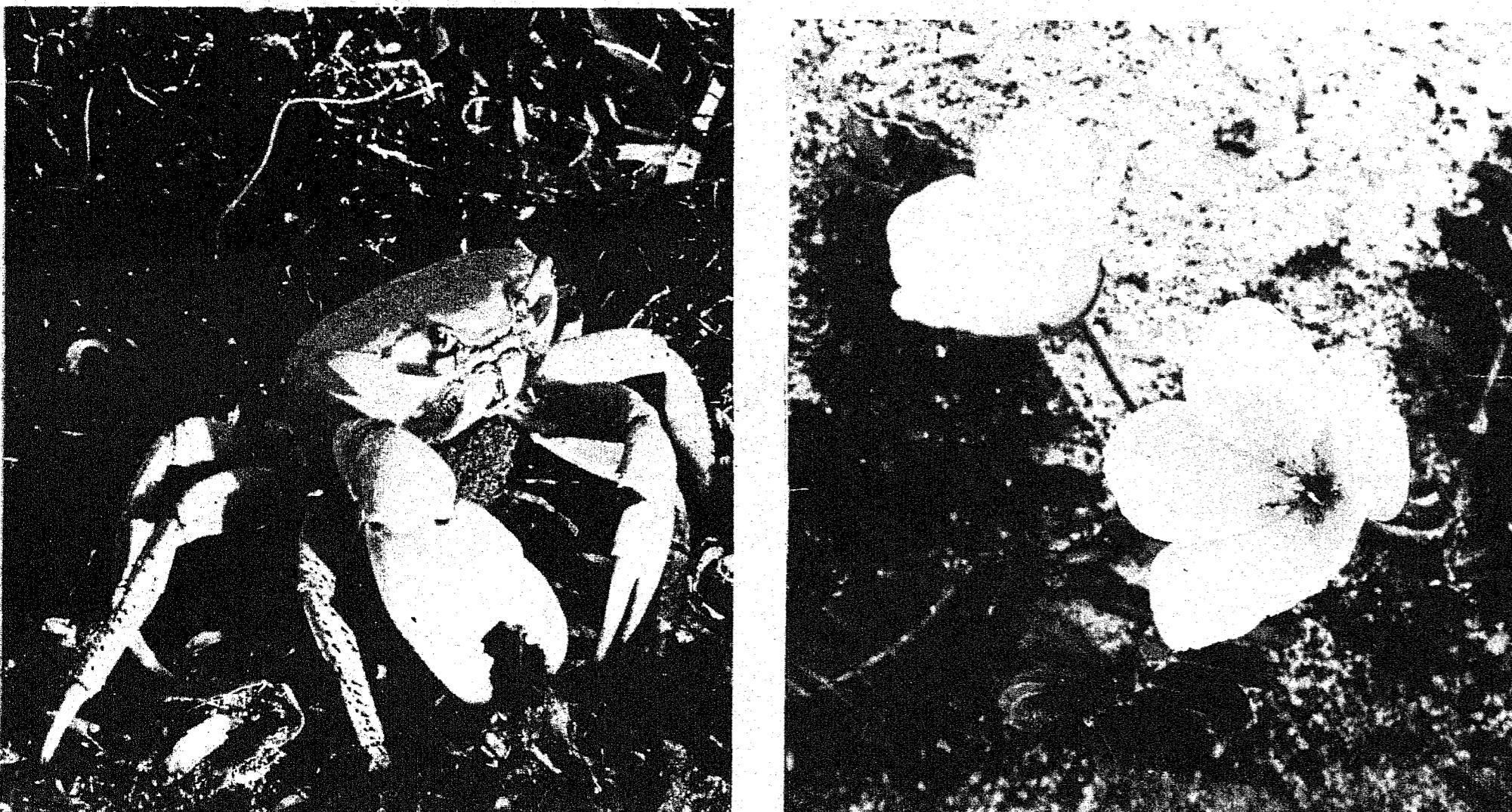
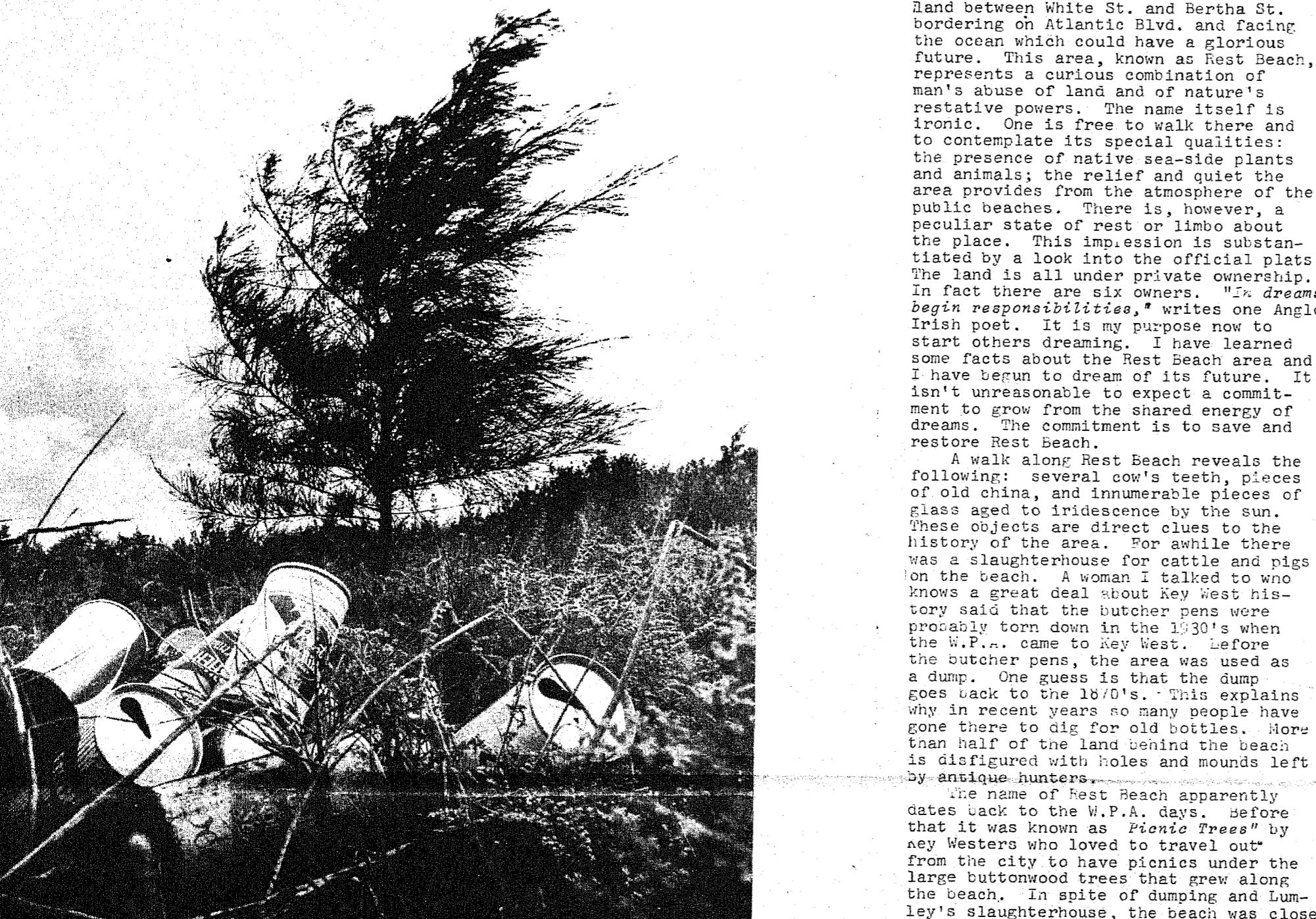
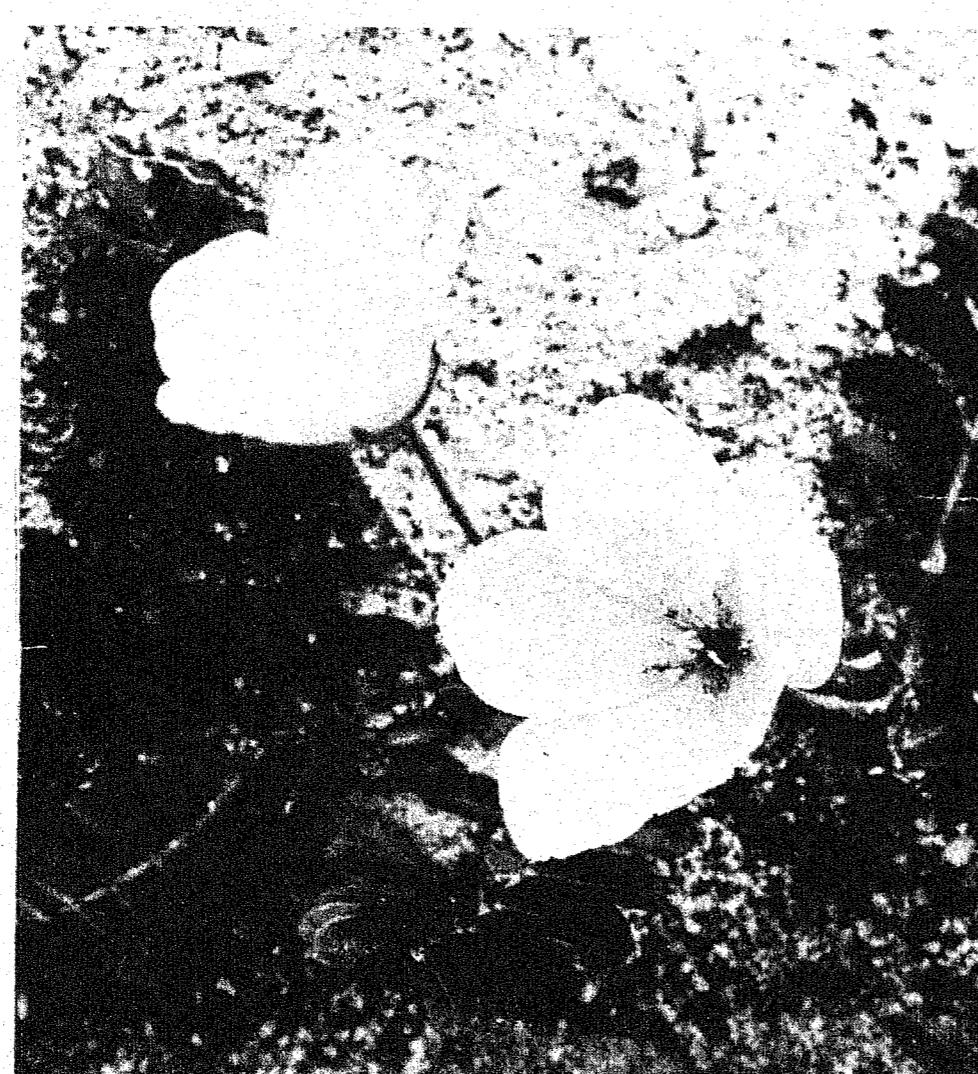
by Di Di Quigley
Photos by Kashkin



There is a wedge shaped piece of land between White St. and Bertha St. bordering on Atlantic Blvd. and facing the ocean which could have a glorious future. This area, known as Rest Beach, represents a curious combination of man's abuse of land and of nature's restorative powers. The name itself is ironic. One is free to walk there and to contemplate its special qualities: the presence of native sea-side plants and animals; the relief and quiet the area provides from the atmosphere of the public beaches. There is, however, a peculiar state of rest or limbo about the place. This impression is substantiated by a look into the official plats. The land is all under private ownership. In fact there are six owners. "A dream begins responsibilities," writes one Anglo-Irish poet. It is my purpose now to start others dreaming. I have learned some facts about the Rest Beach area and I have begun to dream of its future. It isn't unreasonable to expect a commitment to grow from the shared energy of dreams. The commitment is to save and restore Rest Beach.

A walk along Rest Beach reveals the following: several cow's teeth, pieces of old china, and innumerable pieces of glass aged to iridescence by the sun. These objects are direct clues to the history of the area. For awhile there was a slaughterhouse for cattle and pigs on the beach. A woman I talked to who knows a great deal about Key West history said that the butcher pens were probably torn down in the 1930's when the W.P.A. came to Key West. Before the butcher pens, the area was used as a dump. One guess is that the dump goes back to the 1870's. This explains why in recent years so many people have gone there to dig for old bottles. More than half of the land behind the beach is disfigured with holes and mounds left by antique hunters.

The name of Rest Beach apparently dates back to the W.P.A. days, before that it was known as "Picnic Trees" by Key Westers who loved to travel out from the city to have picnics under the large buttonwood trees that grew along the beach. In spite of dumping and Lumley's slaughterhouse, the beach was close to its natural and wild state. A photograph taken in 1933 shows an adult American Crocodile sunning himself on the Key West beach. He could very well have been sitting on Rest Beach but this would be hard to determine. A W.P.A. map from 1934-35 shows an unbroken waterfront between the East Martello and the West Martello Towers and labels it simply as "beach".



The tourist literature of the W.P.A. omits mention of crocodilians. However, it is quick to point out the natural beauty of Key West. There is an odd effusiveness in its descriptions of nature's abundance. Certainly there was great natural wealth then - more unspoiled land and marine life than we have today and yet one detects an uncertainty in the propagandizing of this wealth - as if it weren't really reason enough to bring people to Key West. It is easy to see that Key West's fate in 1934-35 depended on a dream. For the first time the natural beauty and the unique history of the island were held forth as the substance of its future. Restoration and beautification became practical. They are all the more so today. The undeveloped and wild areas of Key West have almost vanished. A disheartening example is the recent purchase of 52 acres of mangrove marsh land off South Roosevelt Blvd. According to the Key West Citizen, "the site will be developed over a three year period into nearly 1,000 condominium units." The paper calls it, "One of the few large tracts of privately owned land on the island." Conspicuously lacking in these plans is an aesthetic sense of the land: an understanding of its potential.

If Rest Beach became a park, it could be planted with native sea-side plants. A piece of shore front that has remained in its natural condition is beautifully described in the book *Seaside Plants of the World* by Edwin A. Menninger:

"The first thing we notice is that nature starts with very low material and builds it up, step by step, until she attains the desired height. In the front line she puts a lot of ground covers, such as sea purslane (*Sesuvium portulacastrum*), saltwort (*Salsola maritima*), samphire (*Salicornia*), *Philonoxerus vermicularis*, etc., interspersed with clumps and cushions of *Eineadia littoralis*, sea oats (*Unicula paniculata*), *Iva imbricata*, blue dune grass, spider lilies (*Nymphealis keyensis*), etc., interlaced with rampant goat's foot morning glory (*Ipomoea pes-caprae*). Behind this low breast-work we find colonies of a century plant (*Agave decipiens*), clumps of Spanish bayonet (*Yucca aloifolia*) - never single canes, as we usually see them planted; masses of three species of sea marigold (*Suriana maritima*), straggling bushes of bay cedar (*Suriana maritima*), clumps of *Seavola pluieri*, and great blue-grey mound beach heliotrope (*Tournefortia gnaphalodes*), interwoven with milk peavines (*Galactia spiciformis*), and bay beans

(*Canavalia lineata*). One step farther back we find thatch palms (*Thrinax*), sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*), buttonwood, white mangrove, seven-year apple (*Casasia clusiifolia*), great tangles of *Dalbergia ecastaphyllum*, and numbers of blackhead (*Pithecellobium guadalupense*), festooned with moonvines (*Calonyction tuba*), Sarawak beans, and purple morning glories. We find White and Spanish stopper, *Eugenia axillaris* and *Eugenia buxifolia*, side by side, *Capparis jamaicensis*, darling plum (*Reynosia septentrionalis*), joewood (*Jacquinia keyensis*) and blolly (*Tornubia longifolia*), with tangles of *Schites*, and finally we are among good sized trees: *Sapodilla*, *mastic*, *Bucida*, Geiger trees (*Cordia sebestena*), and a mahoe (*Hibiscus tiliaceus*) that covers one sixteenth of an acre. The Virginia creeper covers both ground and tree trunks, and wherever there is an open spot the sand is carpeted with beach verbena (*Verbena maritima*) and beach sunflower (*Helianthus debilis*). A fine example of this kind of beach is the Bahia Honda State Park on the ocean side. The dream of restoring Rest Beach with native vegetation is not impractical. Quite a few of the plants mentioned in the previous passage are already there. Sea marigolds, ambrosia hispids, sea purslane, *Philoxerus vermicularis*, *Portulaca oleracea*, *Samphire* and various grasses are among the ground covers. Among the trees are buttonwood, mangrove and Seaside Mahoe (*Theespesia populnea*). With the cooperation of the city plus the help of local groups such as: the Key West Garden Club; the Go-Green Club of the Key West High School (recently responsible for fixing up the old botanical gardens on Stock Island); the newly formed Scope (Society for the Correlation of Progress and Environment); ecology or botany clubs from the Florida Keys Community College - Rest Beach could be lovingly administered. The land could be cleared of its most conspicuous trash. Instead of taking the rice leaves and plant cuttings residents constantly put out on the street to the Stock Island dump, they could be used along with seaweed to build up and level the uneven ground behind the beach. Native palms (*Cocotrinax argentea*, *Thrinax floridana*, and *Serenia repens*) could be planted in this enriched area. Further up the Keys along bulldozer cuts and on burnt-over land these palms can be had for the taking; owners of such property are often glad to see them go. Due to adversity these palms are especially hardy and easy to transplant. If planted during the rainy season, they

would be sure to take hold on Rest Beach. Good sized sea grapes could also be gotten in this manner. Beach sunflower and verbena could be spread from seeds. How beautiful it would be if beach oats and spider lilies established themselves. People could enjoy the land as they once did when it was popularly known as "Picnic Trees". Picnic tables could be shaded by trellises covered with morning glory vines or *Canavalia lineata*. There would be many beautiful and hardy beach vines to choose from. Rest Beach is fully deserving of the effort this project proposes. There already is a great deal of life there to preserve and to protect.

At low tide one day a friend and I saw: Willets, Semi-palmated Plovers, Laughing Gulls, Ruddy Turnstones, a Louisiana Heron, both mature and immature Yellow Crowned Night Herons, a Green Heron, a Little Blue Heron, a Reddish Egret, a Least Tern, several Pelicans, and a Double-crested Cormorant sitting on a rock. With the receding tide came the sound of snapping shrimp. Further back along the seaweed line, beach fleas hopped. Higher up ghost crabs stayed in their burrows. Small sulphur butterflies darted among railroad vines. Red-winged Black Birds and dragonflies settled and unsettled in the low brush. There was the sound of wind blowing through the Australian Pines and over us flew an Osprey holding a fresh silver mullet. Close to Atlantic Blvd., we noticed racoon tracts and the tracts of a Clapper Rail. On other walks we have detected the presence of: hermit, fiddler, and wharf crabs; narrow mouthed toads and Cuban tree frogs; Race Runner lizards and Key West anoles; Killi fish, Snowy egrets, beauty and wonder. On one walk we found a Florida Box Turtle swimming a few feet out in the salt water. How this land turtle got there is a mystery.

Rest Beach is an "object" teeming with life.

Objects

They live along side us, we do not know them, they do not know us. But sometimes they speak with us.

If we take the meaning of these words by Octavio Paz to heart, we will realize that things must not be taken for granted. Too much of the land in Key West has been treated as a mute object. We must not run such a risk with Rest Beach. If it goes we will be completely choked out in Key West. The need to save and restore Rest Beach is essential.



Key West is Probably Valid

by Thurlow Weed

drawing by Jerry Miller

There is Key West and Mallory Dock at sunset, and the Pelican Path, and the Midget.

But then there is Marrakech and the Place Djemaa El Fna, which means "Concourse of Sinners", with snake charmers and storytellers and water-sellers. And barbers who use nothing but razors.

There is Tangier with its polyglot con-men, various leather shops, and then the specialty shops in the Medina with various grades, spare bowls, and goatskin bags.

There is Casablanca with the Canary Island banana boats and the besworded Arab robbers in the night.

Above most everything else there is Rome with Piazza Navona, with the medieval houses and cobbled streets of Rione Ponte, and with more delights and reality than any city morally should have.

And then there is Granada with the gypsy caves and flowered streets in hanging baskets and Moorish footprints in arches.

There's Amsterdam with head-back fresh herring and Frans Brüggen in his walk-up apartment with his flutes and cat.

London with the Elephant and Castle Line on the subway, with the Baker Street Stop.

And Hull with a street called The Land Of Green Ginger, and Dublin with Gogarty's Tower, now named for Joyce.

And there are a lot of other places, such as Regensburg with the asymmetrical Gothic cathedral and inside a statue of the Devil and another one of his Grandmother.

Such as Naples with Brownian motion instead of traffic, and New York with MacDougal Street and The Fat Black Pussy Cat Cafe (which also crops up in Tangier), and Vienna and Stamford and Edinburgh and Mintlaw and York and Paris and Cagnes and Vallauris and St. Cyr and lots of other places.

And there is still Key West with... well, Key West is more than has.

What is Key West?

Key West is Bill Cain doing the morning weather summary before he goes home after working all night. Bill Cain has not yet

been impressed with the fact that he's supposed to sound like a computer print-out. The other day he disagreed with what they gave him to read and told the truth instead. Pity Bill Cain, for he will be flattened out. We will all be the poorer, and uninteresting weather will be much less fun.

Key West is bullfight music trying to get out of the neighbor's radio.

Key West is the parrot coming over each sunset. There are some who say that it squawks, but we all know that his wings need oiling.

Key West is the gingerbread vanishing before the ruins cool after a big fire.

Key West is discovering that DePoo hospital is the best restaurant in town.

Key West is using a spray can of anti-rip-off instant rust on your bicycle when it's new.

Key West is standing helplessly by while plans are made to convert grand architecture into parking lots, and sometimes not having it happen after all.

Key West is millions of worms inching frantically down the Poinciana at dawn, with migrating warblers getting there first.

Key West is trying to decide which Cuban restaurant makes the best picadillo, and then trying each one again, and again, and again, and...

Key West is a one-man show. Here everything is individual except those things that matter.

Key West is seeing FOR SALE signs littering the only pond with several species of rare birds on it within many islands and for miles around, and knowing full well that there is nothing to do to stop it, short of buying the pond, which you can't do because you are lean in purse.

Key West is sitting beside that pond and seeing Roseate Spoonbills feeding in the shallows along with the Reddish Egrets and the Great White Herons, seeing Smooth-billed Anis in the mangroves around, hearing the Black-whiskered Vireo somewhere near, and knowing that people often drive thousands of miles to see these rare birds which are Key West standards, along with the rare White Crowned Pigeon and the Inca Dove.

Key West is the back room at the bodega where one type of game is played, and the room back of that, where it's a different one entirely.

Key West is dog-packs in the early morning streets, and discovering that they are friendly.

Key West is Cayo Hueso Transit chuckling through the streets. Bus passengers used to look grim; now they smile.

Key West is hearing the leapfrog effect of crowing chickens, how it starts near the graveyard and travels gradually to Whitehead Street and beyond.

Key West is wondering what Miss Watkin's flower will be in the post office tomorrow morning.

Key West is where if something can possibly go wrong, it won't; but sure things usually have a wheel come off somewhere.

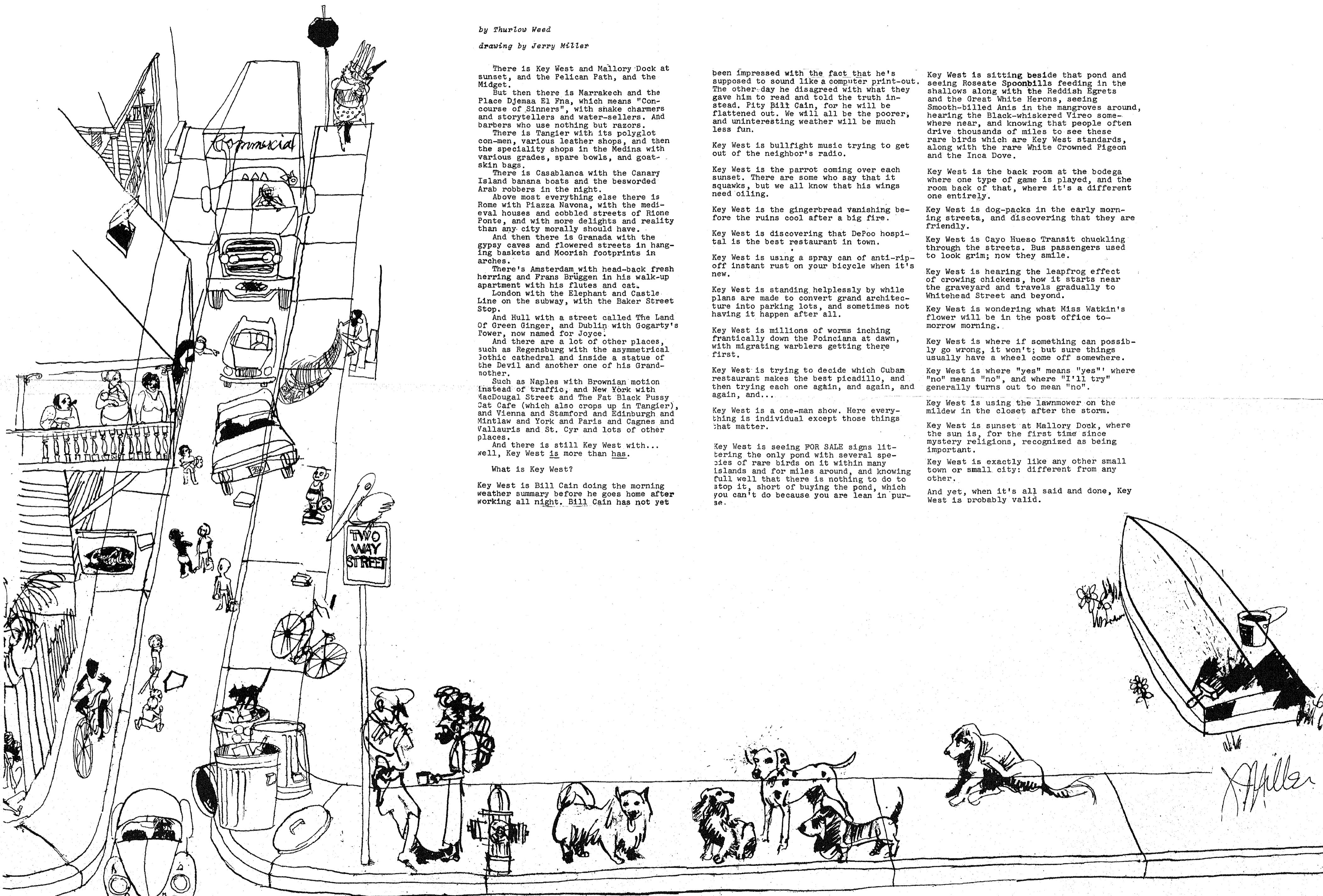
Key West is where "yes" means "yes", where "no" means "no", and where "I'll try" generally turns out to mean "no".

Key West is using the lawnmower on the mildew in the closet after the storm.

Key West is sunset at Mallory Dock, where the sun is, for the first time since mystery religions, recognized as being important.

Key West is exactly like any other small town or small city: different from any other.

And yet, when it's all said and done, Key West is probably valid.



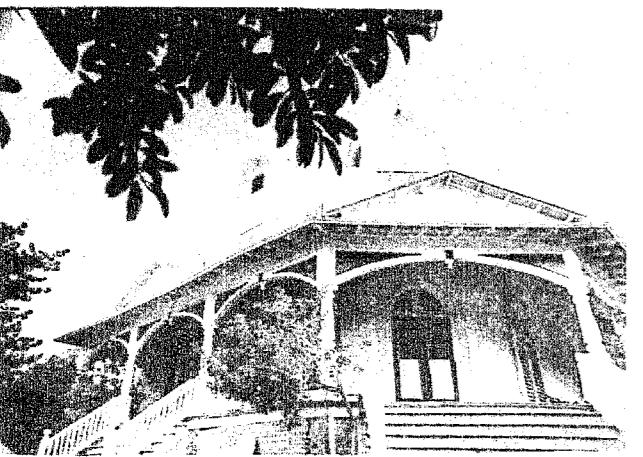
current and groovy

by Bill Huckle

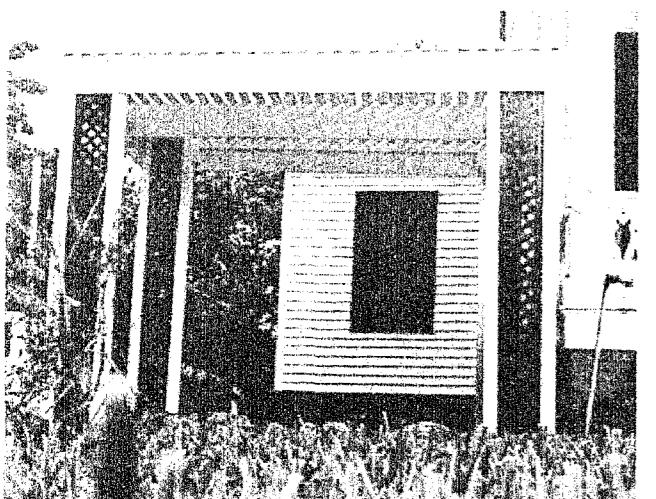
Photos by Kashkin



John Randolph Stone or "Stoney" as he known to many, many Key Westers, took himself a bride (the lovely Denise) in a ceremony at Mallory Square recently. With pleased friends looking on, "Stoney" delivers the kiss.



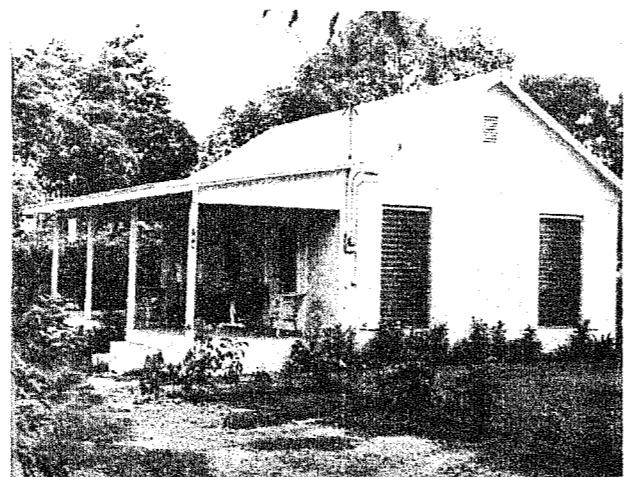
Pendleton House on Eisenhower Street is looking handsome and stately after being fixed up.



County Commissioner "Billy" Freeman picked up a hammer for the first time and built this handsome arbor on the side of his Eaton Street residence. "Billy" designed, built, and painted it.



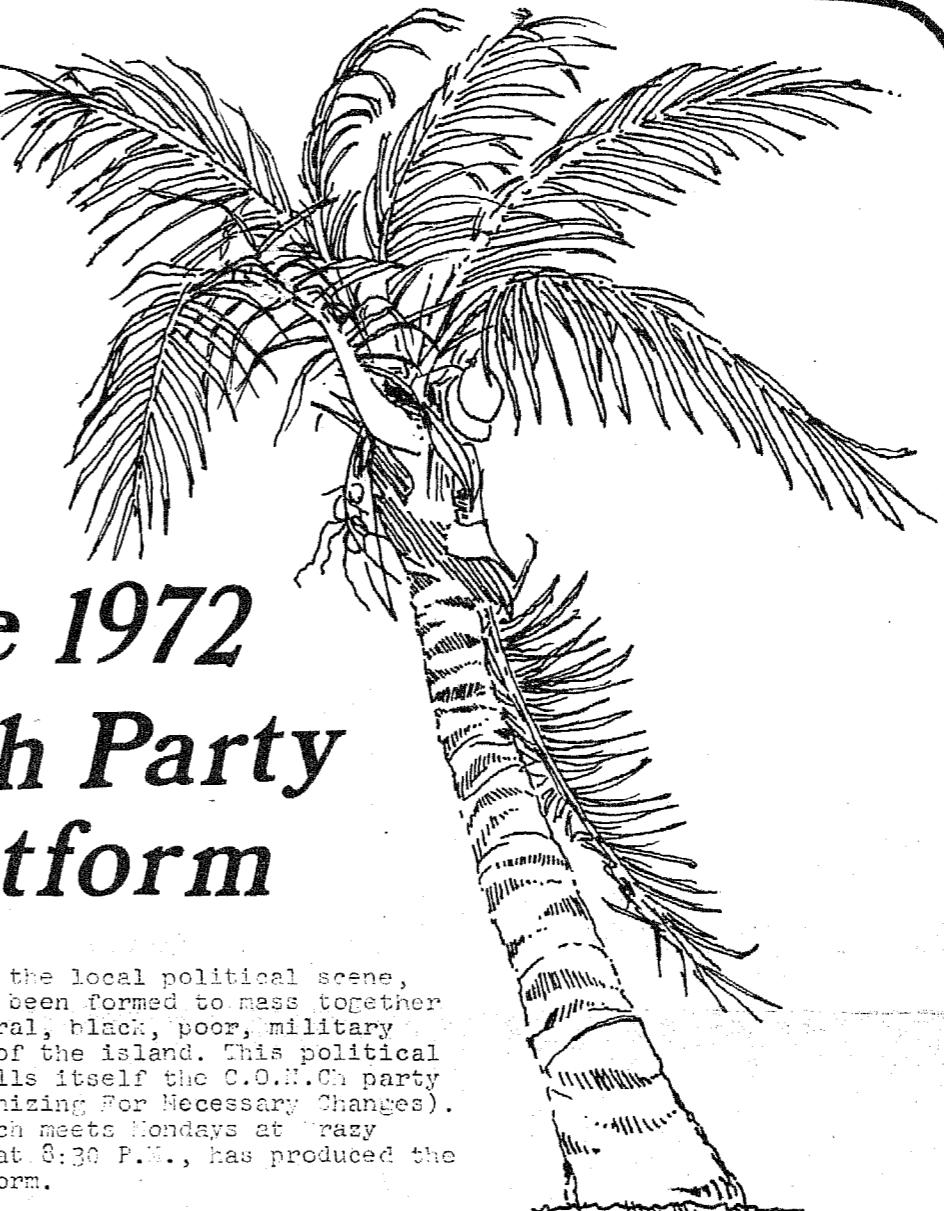
What a pleasure to see Joe Whym's newly painted house on Olivia Street near the graveyard. It shows what a little paint and imagination can do for a Conch cottage.



Formerly called "The Black Hole of Calcutta" by Sheriff Brown, the county jail has finally been air conditioned, painted, and adequately lighted. It is one hell of a lot nicer than it used to be. The Sheriff (pictured above), who worked hard to get the jail fixed up, now refers to it as "Brown's Motel".

Yes, it is possible to design and build a house in Old Key West without it being an architectural disaster. This charming little house was designed by Danny Stirrup for Mrs. Fell on Baker's Lane.

Crazy Ophelia's Bag



The 1972 Conch Party Platform

Jumping into the local political scene, a coalition has been formed to mass together the young, liberal, black, poor, military and ecologists of the island. This political organization calls itself the C.O.N.C. party (Coalition Organizing For Necessary Changes). This group, which meets Mondays at "Crazy Ophelia's" Cafe at 8:30 P.M., has produced the following platform.

Ecology

- I. INVESTIGATE AND ATTACK THE MAJOR POLLUTERS IN THE AREA: CITY ELECTRIC, THE NAVY DUMP ON FLEMING KEY (THE INCINERATION OR OPEN BURNING IS ILLEGAL IN THIS COUNTY), KEY WEST CITY DUMP, THE RECYCLING OF LANDFILL, COAST GUARD POLLUTING WATERS WITH OIL WASTE, TREATMENT OF RAW SEWAGE, ENFORCEMENT OF LANDFILL DREDGING LAWS, IMPROVEMENT OF BEACHES TO INCLUDE MAINTENANCE AND BEAUTIFICATION, THE MOSQUITO CONTROL BOARD SPRAYINGS.
- II. FOSTER A PLAN TO PLANT MORE TREES.
- III. INSIST THE NAVY BEAUTIFY ITS STORAGE TANK ISLAND.
- IV. TIGHTEN UP ENFORCEMENT OF LAWS GOVERNING THE USE OF HOUSEBOATS.
- V. INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE THERMAL POLLUTION FROM THE DE-SALINATION PLANT.
- VI. PUSH FOR A GREATER PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL CONCERN WITH THE PROBLEM OF LITTERING.

School System

- I. INCREASE THE STUDENT VOICE IN THE SYSTEM.
- II. LEARN JUST WHAT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS ACTUALLY DO AND WHAT THEY ACCOMPLISH.
- III. MOVE FOR A MORE ENLIGHTENED PUBLIC TO PREVENT A RE-CURRENCE OF LAST YEAR'S RIOT.
- IV. STRIVE TO UPGRADE THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AS A WHOLE.
- V. DEMAND A CLOSER WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

Young People

- I. DRIVE FOR A GREATER ACCEPTANCE OF THE NEW LIFESTYLE OF THE YOUNG, INCLUDING THE TRANSIENTS AND DROP-OUTS.
- II. SEEK HOUSING OR CAMPGROUNDS FOR YOUNG VISITORS.
- III. PUSH FOR GREATER EMPLOYMENT OF YOUTH.
- IV. INCREASE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE YOUNG.
- V. ASK FOR MORE COMMUNITY RECREATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.
- VI. DEVELOP A COMMUNICATION CENTER FOR THEM.

Law Enforcement and the Judicial System

- I. DEVELOP POSITION FOR BONDING PROCEDURES, PUBLIC DEFENDER'S SYSTEM, ARREST PROCEDURE (WITH ATTENTION TO EARLY BOND HEARINGS), PROPRIETY OF EXISTING LAWS AND ORDINANCES.
- II. LOOK INTO JUDICIAL QUALIFICATIONS.
- III. QUESTION THE POLICE FIREARMS PROCEDURES.
- IV. INVESTIGATE PAROLE OFFICER POLICY.
- V. INVESTIGATE JUVENILE LAW PROCEDURES.

Black and Poor People

- I. HELP THE POOR ORGANIZE TO FIND OUT THE PROBLEMS AND PRESENT THE PROBLEMS TO THE CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENTS WITH A DEFINITE PLAN OF ACTION.
- II. INSIST UPON GOVERNMENT'S GREATER INTEREST AND ACTIVITY WITH HEALTH, WELFARE, RECREATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING.
- III. INQUIRE INTO HOUSING PATTERNS.

"Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be." Ophelia blurted that out in Act IV of Shakespeare's "Hamlet". That was before the demented, old girl opened a coffeehouse on Duval Street.

The organization is eight months old now. We know what we are. Very simply, we're part of The Movement. No jive. It's a grueling push uphill: grunting, laughing, spitting, cursing, sweating but always moving uphill to what we want to think is a cleaner, saner place to live, work, and play.

We have no idea what we may be, but we know what we are. We're struggling to erase the polarization and paranoia, the misunderstanding that compounds the hate. How? I'm not sure.

I have an idea, though. Ophelia's is becoming an active force in this island community. We proved to be an active force last winter - a genuine social force, actually.

We got the kids to play ball with the cops. (Softball. And the Mayor pitched a hell of a game!) We answered a lot of problems: by giving young people an alternative to drugs with entertainment and a dose of culture, or simply a place to go to get off the streets; by initiating a free mini-health clinic to take care of everything from athlete's foot to venereal disease; by instituting a forum for discussion of any topic - and I mean any topic; by preparing a menu of food and drink appealing to the new lifestyle; by finding employment for them or a place to crash.

Hold on now! Let's pause a sec to dispel some unfortunate rumors. More than half of our "clients" this winter were locals. Young people who have lived here on the island for a long time, many born and raised on the rock.

And we don't encourage "longhairs" to visit Key West. Quite the contrary. We do all we can to keep them moving on. Many of these hip visitors are down and out when they get here. They're at rock bottom or they wouldn't stay. Our employment referral service (dealing primarily with odd jobs) gets them a few bucks to restore their heads and their gear to push on. The medical attention lifts their physical and mental spirit to "keep truckin'". Our cafe gets them off the street; hence, out of trouble with the law. Our bulletin board listed 25 separate rides out of town in the month of March.

Please believe me when I say practically every sunny community on the tourist trail (or is it a trial?) is confronted with this seemingly immense problem. Until Key West has a solution, a legal solution, a sane solution to this problem, Ophelia's will be the stop gap action - the wedge between the sane approach and total conflict.

Next season we'll be an even stronger social force, you wait and see. Now, it's summer though. Whew! We can spend more time with the anxious, restless high school crowd.

But more important, we're into a voters' registration drive that just may shock some of the old-timers. (For the "Panama Desh" movie concert alone we garnered 61 new registrants within a week.) The high school "activists" are participating in a telephone canvas beginning in July to hit every home with a call inquiring about new registrants - young and old.

We're breaking down into precincts soon to blanket every home in the city with a newsletter - five or six of them at intervals. It depends on how many issues we want to get into, how much information the general public needs to know about their rights to vote, the ecological situation, the political "order of battle", and just what candidates coming up for election in September, October, and November are "up to date". The telephone teams will be in action throughout this period as well, asking questions and answering them, too.

We have a task force of blacks, liberals, servicemen, young people, and older ones (sensing a need of change). Certainly we need more help, lots of it! After all, the more ideas, the more issues; the more workers, the better informed the public will be.

The Movement is upon us! It's swinging in the direction of more honest candidates, clearer thinkers, better understanding of the changing times. It means giving of yourself a little bit to take the strain off of living together.

We do need help though... You see, we know what we are and if you want to know, too, give us a call or stop by Ophelia's for a coffee and give us a chance to explain your role in all this.

We don't know what we may be - that will be up to you and you and you and you...

THE 10

by Lonnie Mikul

Art by Arnett Hayes

This Spring there were numerous incidents of racial unrest at Key West High School. For a while it looked like there could be no possible resolution of the problems the black students felt they faced at Key West High School. Happily, however, an extraordinary series of meetings took place with selected black and white students and members of the administration.

The following is an account of how ten young black students helped change the bleak outlook for better black/white relations at the high school to one of hopeful promise.

On the morning of April 26, we attended a meeting of the Human Resources Development Study Committee at the Monroe County Hospital. Youngman and Travis of the Department of Community Affairs Division of Economic Opportunity had come down from Tallahassee to organize this committee to study the needs of the people of Monroe County. Among those present were various local officials, agency representatives from Key West, and private citizens. There was, however, an unexpected group at the meeting. Approximately forty black high school students were there.

Their spokesman, Mrs. Marvyn Washington, announced that the students were holding a meeting that afternoon at Douglas School and invited the men from Tallahassee to attend.

We went to the meeting that afternoon, at which time the students explained that there had been a walkout by 200 black students at Key West High School that morning. They went on to tell about the events at the high school leading up to the walkout and about the students' inability to communicate with the administration. After hearing the students' grievances, Mr. Youngman offered to mediate negotiations between the students and Mr. Henriquez, Superintendent of Schools. If the students agreed to return to classes the following day.

The students agreed to do this and chose ten representatives to participate in the negotiations. Once the ten were chosen, it was announced, "Everyone who is not a student please leave!!" We knew that included us, (my wife and I were sitting in on the meeting) but we wanted to stay and help the ten get organized for the negotiations.

We went to Mrs. Washington, who led the meeting, and told her we wanted to help. She agreed to let us stay, perhaps since it was easier than throwing us out.

The group of students, only two or three of whom we had met previously, decided to meet later that evening to prepare their list of demands.

That evening, the entire atmosphere had changed. They had been angry, outspoken and confident in the afternoon meeting. They had legitimate gripes and were addressing them to someone who might help--the group from Tallahassee. Now, within the few hours that had passed, they had second thoughts. They had copies of the eternal list of demands--a list which had been presented to the school board, the school administration, and the faculty for almost three years now. It had been presented by students, young adults, and respected members of the community. All with no consequence. And now here they were--the same students with the same demands, preparing a presentation for the same people.

One of the black students walked slowly up to the blackboard and wrote: "BLACK POWER IS A GUN THAT HAS YET TO BE FIRED". He wandered back to his chair and stared at the floor. Apparently, he had no ammunition.

Mrs. Washington started the meeting, telling the students that they needed to get their demands down smooth and be prepared to present them to Mr. Henriquez. The students replied with, "We've been rapping with him for three years on these demands, he's not going to listen now" and "We're tired of talking--we want action!"

They argued back and forth for a couple of hours. Susan and I had nothing to say. It wasn't our place to tell them what to do. However, the three black adults, Mrs. Washington, Mrs. Molton, and Mr. Ward argued in favor of the negotia-

tions. The discussion seemed endless until Mrs. Molton stood up and said: (as best as I remember) "You guys are the biggest talkers and the loudest complainers in the school. Now you've got a chance to do something and you won't take it! I know that these discussions have never worked before, and they may not work this time, but you've got to try! If you don't negotiate, what are you going to do? Go ahead! Refuse to negotiate! That's what they want you to do! If you refuse this time, you'll never get another chance. Then the school administration can say, 'We tried, but the students wouldn't talk.' This may be the last chance you'll have, so take it!"

The following night Mr. Youngman came to speak to the students to explain how the negotiations would proceed. He had one message to give them: "When you negotiate, don't demand anything. Present the issue that you are concerned with and your proposal for the solution of that issue."

"DEMAND!" "PROPOSAL!" These two words threw the entire group into turmoil once again. "We're tired of begging! We're not proposing anything--we're demanding the things we want!" one student said. "The word 'proposal' won't even fit into my mouth," said another. Again Mrs. Molton and Mrs. Washington chastized the students: "Are you going to blow this chance over one stupid word?" After about an hour of arguing the students agreed to use the word proposal instead of demand. Even though they had agreed, the students were still not in the proper frame of mind. One student summed up the feeling of the group when he said, "Alright, I'll say proposal, but I mean demand!"



Seated l. to r., Keith Finner, Detra Saunders, Gail Winters. Standing l. to r., Arnett Hayes, David Mack, Clarice Portier, Clayton Lopez, Eldridge Ingraham, Debbie Casamayor, and Osborne Williams.

Finally, the big day arrived. We drove some of the students to the Florida Keys Memorial Hospital where the negotiations were to take place. Up until that time, Susan and I did not realize that we would not be able to attend the negotiations, as they would be closed meetings. We left the students, the "Ten Kids" as we had begun to call them--confident that they could handle themselves.

The negotiations began at the hospital, and the intense preparation the black students had been through really paid off. Each student had a copy of the list of proposals and each was armed with what he was going to say. It seemed that Mr. Henriquez was visibly impressed with the students. He had met with these same students many times before and had been greeted with hot tempers, fiery rhetoric and non-negotiable demands.

This time it was remarkably different. Everyone was cool and confident. The students were well prepared and ready to negotiate.

The negotiations lasted over a week with over forty hours of actual meetings. There was no arguing and no hot tempers. Many of the black students' proposals, such as the black counselor and emphasis of black studies, were fully supported by the white students.

Not only did the students get everything they asked for, but their efforts may have a state-wide impact. There is talk that Mr. Henriquez, as a result of the successful negotiations, may suggest this process as a state-wide policy for settlement of issues between students and administrations of high schools.

All of the agreements reached in the negotiations were ratified--a vast majority of the high school students. The

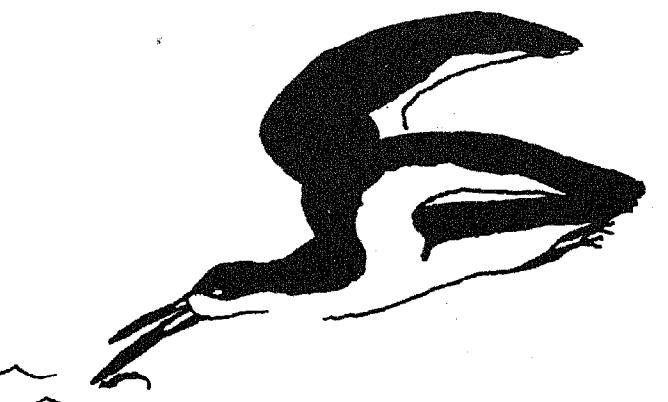


summer, 1972



BLACK SKIMMER

Thurlow Weed
Key West Naturalists' Society



The Black Skimmer - *Rynchops nigra* - is a water bird of tropical and temperate America, breeding along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts of the United States. It spends the winter from the Gulf coast down into Central America.

It is 16 to 20 inches long - about the size of the biggest of the terns, to which it is related. As the name suggests, there is a lot of black on it, mostly on top and at the tip of the amazing bill.

Skimmers make no nest. They turn around in the sand a few times to rub a shallow depression, and lay the eggs directly into this hollow without further preparation, as the Least Tern does. Nesting is done on exposed sandbars or shorelines. When the new bird hatches, its bill is not so amazing.

As the bird grows, so does the bill. But the lower mandible grows more than the upper one, with the result that the male Skimmer's bill has a lower jaw an inch or so longer than the upper jaw. No other bird has such a structure on its face. The translation of the scientific name is "black beak-faced".

There is more. Both mandibles are thin and knife-like, like deep V's. They come together edgewise (as opposed to flat, as a duck's bill) with one V inverted upon the other.

What does the Skimmer do with such a bill? It skims.

The bird flies just above the water's surface with its mouth open and the lower actually immersed. When it strikes something edible (a small fish), it snaps its beak shut and its head down, swallows instantly, and goes on skimming with no break in the rhythm.

While skimming, the bird flies at a good 20 miles per hour, which in still water leaves a long and exceedingly narrow wake of almost parallel lines.

Sometimes they plow a furrow, wheel up and around, settle back, and re-plow the same furrow from the other direction. This leads to the theory that the idea is to skim off minnows attracted by the disturbance of the first pass. But more often they seem to draw their long straight lines at random.

On a calm morning, the hiss of the bill cutting the water is clearly audible, punctuated by the occasional clapping shut of the mandibles.

Skimmers often skim unbelievably shallow water (an inch or two deep) and perilously near the shore - sometimes within three inches of dry sand. But their control is so complete, even at 20 miles per hour, that it is passing rare to see one collide with the bottom.

Colloquial names for the Skimmer are: Cutwater, Scissorbill, and Shearwater.

They are just as good at flying as their relatives, the Terns, but with a different style. Although they are not powerful birds, their movements are calm and graceful - even appearing reasoned and deliberate - when compared with the Terns, which give the appearance of restless, busy activity.

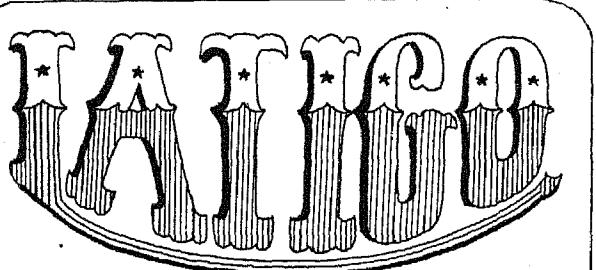
But for all their grace and control in the air, on land the Skimmers seem clumsy and awkward. The long wings fold together across the back like mal-adjusted scissors. The legs are extremely short and the feet are tiny, the entire toe span being about the size of a dime. This means that when they attempt to walk the result is a lurching waddle.

They are gregarious birds, and where one is, many others are too. When at rest they bunch up in patches on sandbars and exposed mudflats, all facing into the wind.

To see Skimmers skimming - or just sitting bunched up - go to the abandoned salt ponds near the airport. They can also be seen late at night from Mallory Dock, skimming the channel.

Key West you are a bitch
A lady of the night.
I shut you out when I came
But each day you come to me
Showing me some previous facet of my life
That you, too, possess.
You are a composite of everywhere I
have been
And you don't let me forget
You are winding your way into
My heart and life
And - in spite of myself - I am
Beginning to flirt with you.
Who knows? Perhaps I'll be your
Lover yet.

Nancy S. Thomas



would be honored to extend
a discount of twenty percent to you
now thru september 1st

or
just what key west needs:
another leather shop
at
the foot of margaret street
near the turtle kraals &
around the corner from
the treasure ship

SPANISH LIMES

July and August are Spanish Lime months. During these months, the Spanish Lime trees bear an abundance of this delicious fruit. There are other trees bearing fruit during this time, but the Spanish Lime falls to the province of the kids. Remember your first Spanish Lime? - it was sort of sour and yet sweet, too. Those guys too impatient to wait for the fruit to fully ripen would eat the light yellow and the small ones; remember the pucker your face made when you first tried to eat the early Spanish Limes? Imagine eating a Key Lime laced with bitters and baking soda and you might come close to the taste of the early Spanish Lime.

It was important to know when each tree near your house would produce ripe fruit and also to know that different trees produced different tasting fruit. I will attempt to analyse the methods used by the kids to select, pick, eat and sell the fruit and the best ways of obtaining them.

The very best way to start was to see which trees your gang could secure picking rights to, and then determine when the tree would ripen. While waiting for a chosen tree you would check the community trees for limes.

In our neighborhood, the community trees ripened earlier than the secured or chosen ones. This gave our neighborhood group of kids an edge. We could raid the community trees for limes to sell and eat off the chosen trees at our convenience.

I was a fat kid who weighed half a ton so nobody would stand under the tree when I climbed. They were afraid that I would fall and squash them.

Now I come to the meat of the problem about cleaning a tree.

One or two guys stay on the ground and two go up high into the branches. One of the tree climbers is small and light - his job is to shinny out on the skinny limbs and pick the fruit there (somehow I never qualified for that job).

The guys in the tree eat and pick at the same time, one for me, one for you, two for me, one for you, etc. The guys on the ground were catching and eating, the same way the guys in the tree were. About half the picked limes wound up in the selling baskets.

The guys on the ground had an important job of catching falling branches of limes because any that fell and hit the ground would usually split open and be no good for sale. The other jobs of the ground crew were spotting prime branches for the climbers, harrassing them to hurry up and throw down the limes - the more talk, the less eating the profits - and finally the job of a general clean-up of the area when done.

Another job was to help break the fall of anyone who fell from the high tree

branches - you can see why no one wanted me to climb!

In every good group of tree climbers you need one climber who is also a taster. It is well known that not only do different trees have different tastes, but certain areas of the tree taste better than other areas of the same tree. These spots seem to vary year to year in the same tree. I presume that the rainfall has something to do with this fact but I know the pickers get the juiciest and the sweetest and the customers get the rest.

There is one magic word in Conch language and that is "doubles". Doubles are twin Spanish Limes formed around one seed, sort of a Siamese twin of the lime world. But these seldom heard words are covered over by the screams of "triples", again the same strange formation, only this time in triplicate.

"Doubles" are supposed to be the sweetest, most heavenly fruit you can eat.

"Triples" are unnameable delights.

I'll tell you of the year of the "doubles" and how every friend I had became an enemy.

Extremely heavy rains caused first the community trees to erupt in "doubles", then our chosen trees did the same. First our pickers discovered this bonanza, and not only wouldn't share it, but they wouldn't let us up into the tree until all the "doubles" were picked, and, then, to my sorrow, they took ALL of them home to their refrigerators. Of course the pickers gave us the regular Spanish Limes, but who could eat just plain old limes when "doubles" were to be had.

Soon our select or chosen trees were due to be picked when my friend discovered "doubles" there. After cleaning the tree of the "doubles" my friend, my dear friend who would not share one "double" from his tree - let us have the rest. Again what poor fare is a single lime when the tree ambrosia of "doubles" was within reach.

Finally the last tree was due and my neighbor said that I could pick the tree for myself. I was captain of my fate - my own tree to clean of "doubles", perhaps "triples"!

Well, it was a sad day when I climbed that tree. There were so very few "doubles" oh, maybe a dozen, but certainly not like those other trees.

I figure that this was indeed an ironic and cruel fate but perhaps it could teach us all a lesson - namely, if you have a Spanish Lime tree with "doubles" don't tell anyone, just eat them all yourself. (Unless you need help, then find some fat kid who doesn't climb trees very well and make his summer by sharing your "doubles".)

by Ray Daniels