

**Bar Hoppin' With Hops**  
The Second Century Tour  
Hops MacBarley's 2013  
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar #182:

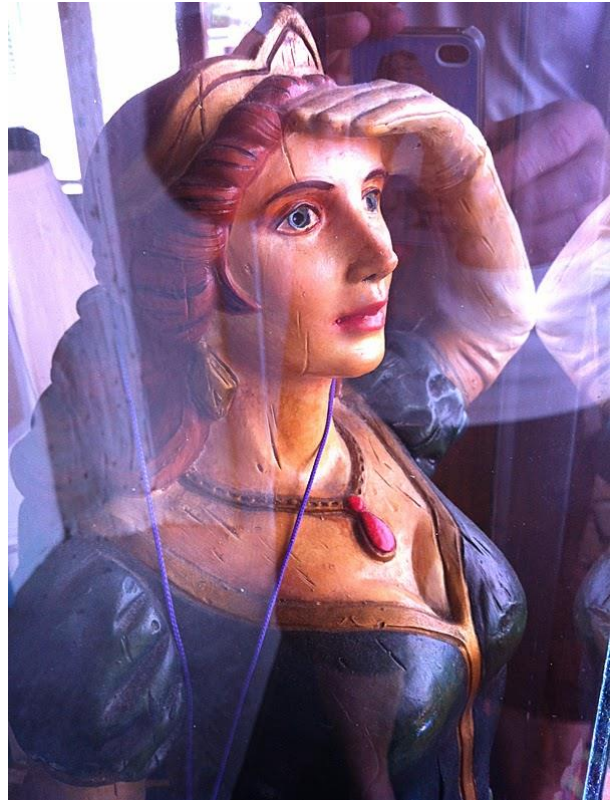
**Key West Yacht Club**  
2315 North Roosevelt Boulevard  
[www.keywestyachtclub.com/](http://www.keywestyachtclub.com/)  
Thursday, 22 August, 1:30 PM

*Yuengling (bottle) \$0.00*

More daytime hoppin'. Doin' what ya gotta do.

Why was this a daytime Hop? Cuz I was workin', that's why. You think a swank shack like the Yacht Club is gonna let my peasant ass in without some arrangement? Ha, if I were them, I sure wouldn't.

Here's the deal. And sometimes you just have to have a deal workin' for you. I mean, this might not be Judge Smails' Bushwood, but it's one of KW's finer-people places, and I, whatever you or I may think, am just not one of KW's finer people.



I do some work for KWYC. I engrave this and that for them. If you've seen the big and beautiful red wine glasses, then you've seen my work. The laser-engraved burgee that seems stupidly low on the glass -- but, yes, actually *is* the full-pour indicator -- is Hop-Etched. Slip me a few bucks and that little flag might be a half-inch higher on the next batch. ;)

Anyway, I was delivering a few cases of freshly-etched glasses, and chose to do so just after the lunch hour. I had struck an agreement

with the powers that be that my delivery would not be "free." Cash need not change hands, though; a cold and refreshing beer would consummate the exchange.

The party with whom this had been arranged was not handy at the moment, but I was not deterred. The barkeep was initially skeptical of this, but soon relented, realizing that it was very much in character for such a deal to be struck, and smilingly brought me my bottle o' Gling. It was -- as almost all free beers are -- deeeelicious.

Now, I did not overstep this deal. Rather than pulling up a chair in the dining room, swinging my feet up onto a table, and bellowing out,

"Bring me my free beer, wench!", I chose a barstool at the west end of the curvy bar, closest to the entrance -- or, more to the point of the members in attendance that day, closest to the *exit* -- with my back to the room.



It was a good slow-down from the heftics of the work day. As I savored my cold Yingle, I opened my ears to the room-filling discussion of the foursome that occupied the mid-bar. They were significant people, saying significant things, in significant tones of voice. That's not a sarcastic comment.



Significance is a rank that one achieves in life by hard work, by inheritance, by deception, or by bluster. The couple of familiar faces that I saw there would qualify for the first and most estimable group, those who worked for it.

If you got your fortune because dad or mom was a tiger, hey, bully for you. If you've taken it and doubled it, well then, hell yeah, woolly bully for you.

If you got it by deception, then I just hope it was not at my expense.

If you gained it by bluster, well, fork you and shut the fork up -- which is what all those sackless people should have said to your bullshit ass years ago. But, hey, it made you rich, so who I am to talk.

Whoever these men were, they talked of things that were of consequence to KW. The main discussion centered around the reef: what was good for it and what was harmful, specifically involving fishing and diving. They were in-the-know men, and this was in-the-know stuff. It was like a Town Hall meeting, except that I was here.

One man especially stood out. You know the premise of the talent show *The Voice*? Yeah, that you judge by the sound alone without any visual prejudices. Well, this dude would **rock** on *The Voice*. Not as a singer, but as an orator. I have no idea who he was. An over-the-shoulder glance told me that he was a fairly large man with a good head of white hair, but it was like in the old E.F. Hutton ads when everyone would bend an ear to hear what he had to say.



It wasn't his words or his wisdom, though -- I can't even tell you what he said -- it was his voice. Deep and slow and sage, with rich tone, his voice just took over each conversation that he joined. All other voices silenced themselves in deference. You can't interrupt a

guy like that. Can't be done. He speaks till he's finished speaking. I almost felt like doing a *WOOO* and applauding like I do after some dude cranks out a kickass guitar solo at the Parrot. That woulda been hilarious. Shoulda done it.

This was not my first time within these privileged walls. One of our company's upper echelon was a member here, and we came here for our Christmas Eve (or thereabouts) lunch. The overwhelming choice off the menu is the Antelope Burger.

I gotta admit I was a tad gun shy when I first heard of the Antelope Burger. A lifelong Burgerman I am, but there just seemed to be something weird about eating an animal that plays with deer on the range. I gave it a whirl about five years ago, though, and it's been my Christmas Eve meal ever since. Deeeelicious, very lean, and flavorful. If you ever get the

chance to eat an antelope, go for it. I'd recommend a dead one, unless you want to channel your inner wolf.

No burger this day, though. Alas, no more cool voices nor free beers neither. Back to work!

