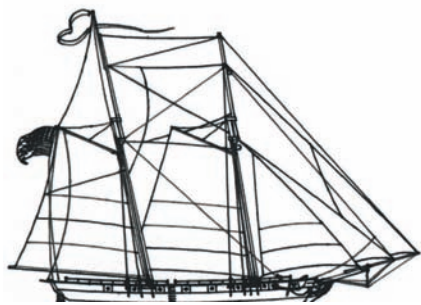


Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal

VOL. 20 NO. 1

FALL 2009



USS SHARK

OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY
FOR THE FLORIDA KEYS**
NEWSLETTER-JOURNAL

VOL. 1, NO. 1 FALL 1990
EDITOR: JOHN VIELE PRODUCTION: TOM HAMBRIGHT
COMMITTEE: ED LITTLE, BILL MUTR, TOM HAMBRIGHT, AND JOHN VIELE

• A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT
by Carole Heinlein

My interest in maritime history of the Florida Keys developed seriously seven years ago. It all stems from an article I wanted to write about the Stephen E. Mallory, the only clipper ship ever built in Key West.

At the time, I worked for the owners of the property where Messrs. Bowne and Carry constructed and launched the Stephen E. Mallory. I figured that all I had to do was walk the few blocks to the Monroe County Library and pick up a photograph or artist's rendering of her along with her entire story from the day she set sail. Since that day back in 1983, I've learned historical research just isn't that easy, but it is always worthwhile.

It takes years of digging through files, corresponding with other libraries, museums, and historical societies and, if you're lucky, other individuals who may be a step or two ahead of you. It may seem like a solitary (a)ocation, but in fact, historical research takes a group effort.

• INTRODUCTION TO FIRST ISSUE

The KWMHS plans to publish this combined newsletter and journal quarterly. It will contain news of the Society and its members, articles on Florida Keys maritime history, and provide a forum for comments by members.

Members are invited to submit articles for publication. Because of the limited funds available for publishing, the should be limited to 500 words. Please submit typed double-spaced copy directly to the Editor, KWMHS, P.O. Box 695, Key West, FL 33041.

Volunteers are needed to assist with assembling and mailing the newsletter journal. If you can spare a couple of hours four times a year to help out, please call Tom Hambricht at 294-9722.

We need a name for our publication. The following names have been proposed. Call the KWMHS (292-7903) or write and state your choice or propose your own name. The Board of Directors will vote to select the winning name. If you wish to receive your will win a free trip for two on the

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SINKING OF U.S.S. STURTEVANT

S.S. Sturtevant DD248. The destroyer sank in a minefield northwest of Key West during WWII. Photo courtesy U.S. Naval Institute.

WORLD WAR II & KEY WEST

As we approach the 50th Anniversary of the United States' involvement in World War II, the Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal will focus on incidents that occurred in and around Key West and the great depression of the 1930's with people working on government programs for a dollar a day, the loss of our city charter due to bankruptcy, the population declined. Now the island was nothing short of a boom town with the population quickly doubling due to increased military activity. Along

used as little light as possible at night or pulled down the shades. Stores or businesses would board up their windows or close early and vehicle headlights were painted black except for a small portion at the bottom of the lens.

Later that evening, activity at the

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Sister M. Louis Gabriel's Prayer

RUBY LOPEZ CA

**Florida Keys
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**From Slavery To Freedom And Success
Sandy Cornish and Lillah Cornish
(circa 1793-1869) - (circa 1813-1870's)**

By Lewis G. Schmidt
Copyright 1998

Trapped in the institution of slavery in the first half of the 19th Century, Sandy and Lillah Cornish migrated from the area of Cambridge, Maryland to Florida, through their labor freeing themselves from the bonds of slavery, and eventually settling in Key West where they achieved success and respect and lived out the remainder of their lives.

The Cornish name is well known to Black history and relatively common in the area of eastern Maryland and Delaware. Samuel Cornish, who was born free in Delaware in 1795, was the first black man to undergo the normal exorcising training and testing procedures required of Presbyterian ordination. After being licensed to preach, Cornish spent six months as a missionary to slaves on the eastern shore of Maryland. He later founded the first Black Presbyterian Church in New York City, and was the first African-American journalist a Joshua Cornish, born about 1790,

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The Last Trip of Valbanera

The Spanish Steamship Valbanera. Photo credit: Fernando Garcia.

By Fernando J. Garcia Eckegoman
Copyright 1995

The following article is a translation

... in brackets are the editor's and are intended for clarification.)

... which would be the main character in incidents that they would read about in the press.

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The 1622 Tierra Firme Flota Salvage and the Florida Keys Natives

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Sea Heritage Journal**
VOL. 13, NO. 1 FALL 2002
OFFICIAL QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE KEY WEST MARITIME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Evidence for the African Cemetery at Higgs Beach, Key West, Florida

By Corey Malcom
Director of Archaeology
Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society, Inc. Key West, Florida
Lawrence B. Conyers, Ph.D.
Geophysical Investigations, Inc.
University of Denver
Denver, Colorado
Copyright 2002

Abstract

For a period of nearly three months during the spring and summer of 1860, Key West, Florida served as the home for some 1432 African refugees. These people had been brought to the island on three slave ships bound for Cuba, but captured by the US Navy in its effort to eradicate the illegal slave trade. Of these people many were sick and weakened by the harsh

**Florida Keys
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Heros of World War One

The following is an updated article from The Key West Citizen.

True the name of their great order the Patriotic Order Sons of America held a solemn memorial service yesterday afternoon at the Harris school building sacred to the memory of two Key West boys who have met death fearlessly on the battlefields of France. This was indeed one of the most impressive services ever held in this city and the building was filled with friends of the heroes fell in a glorious cause before the heroes of the Hays, and all joined in the solemnity of the occasion.

The exercises were opened by a fervent prayer by the Rev. Mr.

20th Year

SOCIETY NEWS AND NOTES

by Tom Hambright

When the Key West Maritime Historical Society was reactive in the 1990s one of our missions was to start a historical journal. We hoped to tell some of the great history of the Florida Keys, find the grain of truth in the myths and lies that was being taken as history, record some current history before the memory fades and uncover some of the forgotten stories of our past.

In the summer of 1990 a committee of John Viele, Ed Little Bill Muir, Carole Heinlein and myself was formed to work out the details of the new publication. After several meeting it was decide to publish the first edition and work out the problems from there. In the fall of 1990 volume one hit the street. It had six pages .

Some my favorite articles in the last nineteen years are:

The Fall 1991 issue Carston R. Heinlein told the tragic story of the loss of the USS Sturtevant (DD 240) during World War II. He was able to interview some of the survivors during their reunion and with official accounts told the story of the loss of the ship. This is the only article from the Journal that has been reprinted in its entirety when the Tin Can Sailor republished the article in its newsletter.

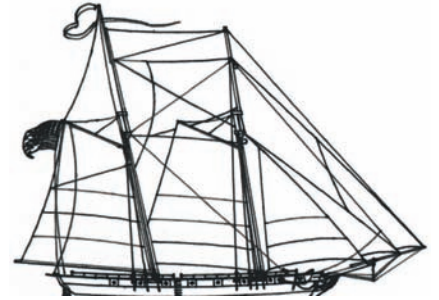
The Winter 1993 issue Lynda Hambright told the remarkable story of Sister M. Louis Gabriel who served the religious and educational needs of the community for over 50 years. She also left a prayer that protects the island from the ravages of a major hurricane. This helped Sister Louis being one

the 36 influential people installed in the Key West Historic Memorial Sculpture Garden.

Lewis G. Schmidt uncovered the true story of Sandy Cornish the remarkable leader of the African American community in Key West before and during the Civil War. Sandy never appeared in official records but Lewis found his story in the letters and diaries of the Union soldiers stationed here during the war. Besides improving race relation he was also the founder of the first A.M.E. Zion Church in the State of Florida. From the article in the Spring 1994 issue Sandy was also included in the 37 individuals installed in the sculpture garden.

In the same issue we told the forgotten story of Clarence K. Till, the first Key West police officer killed in the line of duty. This resulted in publication of his story in the press and his name being added to the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, DC.

A maritime tragedy that had never been fully told and as a results a number of legends and myths had grown up about the sinking of the Spanish steamer **Valbanera** and the loss of over 500 passengers and crewmen and the Commandant of the Naval Station's investigation. In the Summer 1996 Journal we printed the translation Fernando J. Garcia Eckegogan's true account of the loss of the **Valbanera** in the Hurrricane of 1919. Fernando and I had both searched the National Archives for Commandant Benton C. Decker's report on the Navy Communication Station action to contact the **Valbanera** during



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Editor: Lynda Hambright
Production: Tom Hambright

Letters and articles are welcome. Please write to: Editor, Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journal, KWMHS, P.O. Box 695, Key West, FL 33041.

Key West Maritime Historical Society Board of Directors

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New Member

Davis F. Yates, Big Pine Key.

and after the storm. After all the searching I found the report in Key West in the Wilhelmina Harvey's papers and published it in the Spring 2005 Journal.

In the Spring 2000 we reprinted a paper given at the Florida Keys Maritime Conference about the Marquesas Island and the search for the Spanish Galleon Atocha by Dr. Eugene Lyon. We published this wonderful paper for a larger audience and recorded it for future readers and researchers.

Corey Malcom, Director of Archaeology for the Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society and secretary of the KWMHS, for years been studying, researching and writing about the 1,432 African brought to Key West in 1860 where 295 died and were buried on Higgs Beach. Corey led the effort to have a memorial installed on the burial site and now efforts are underway to have the site marked as a World Heritage Site. We were happy to have played a small part by publishing two of Corey's articles in Fall 2002 and Winter 2008/2009 issues.

One of our missions with the Journal was to record current stories before the memory faded. In the story of the two young Key Westers killed in World War One and how some youngsters planted a tree in the memory of one of these. We able to record this story in Fall 2007 issue.

This is just a few of the many stories we have published in the last nineteen years. If you missed any of these stores we have a number of the Journals on our web-site keywestmaritime.org and we have complete set at the Monroe County Library Key West.

In the index that follows I included the major subjects in the articles. I left Hackley's Diary out of the index because we had parts

of it in some many issues the list would be very long. If you find Mr. Hackley's life as interesting as I do we the complete diary at the Library.

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William Hackley's Diary

William Hackley practiced law in Key West from 1829 to 1857. He kept a diary for part of the time he was in Key West. Here is the diary for parts of November and December 1856.

Sunday, November 9. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Ponds and seeing several ducks flying crossed by the ponds but there was nothing in them. The walking was bad in consequence of a rain which fell about 2 a.m. and there were several light showers while I was out. At 8:20 a.m. barometer 29.51, thermometer 82, wind east southeast 1, clouds 6. Wrote to Mother, to the sewing machine men and Putnam magazine. Dan was quite sick again gave Rhus. 7 China and toward the night he got into a perspiration which continued all night and the fever left him. Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's after tea.

Monday, November 10. Rose at 5 and walked about half way up to the Salt Pond drizzling most of the time, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.47, thermometer 81, wind northeast 2, clouds 5. Dan is petty well this morning, free from fever but weak. Bought a package of post office envelopes for \$.80, sent \$5.00 to the sewing machine men to pay bill of needles and thread. Drew up a bill for the session of land covered with water to the Riparian owners and gave it to James Filor. Approved of a bond in the amount of \$25,000.00, Felix Senac, Principal as Pursuer in the Navy, W.H. Wall and William Pinckney Sureties. Wrote to H. Talcott. The steamer **Texas** from Greytown with about 500 passengers came in about 8 a.m. coaled and left about 6 p.m. The steamer **Isabel** came in at her usual time.

Tuesday, November 11. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 79, wind northeast 3, clouds 1, very pleasant. The sloop **Plume** came up from the ship **Lady Arbella** ashore at the Tortugas from France with a full cargo. The wreckers took out two loads and got her off. The brig **Sampson** came in from New York with nothing for this place. James Filor and Philip Fontane went to St. Marks in her. I saw General Harney yesterday and spoke with him, he leaves as soon as the wind allows for Ft. Myers in the **Sea Drift**.

Wednesday, November 12. Rose at 5 and walked to the Barracks where the tide had covered the road turned back walked down by the Fort by Porter's well, home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.53, thermometer 77, wind northeast 3, clouds 3. Philip Fontane came in and brought John Parks and told me that Parks had consented to employ me to libel the ship **Lady Arbella**. Read papers.

Thursday, November 13. Rose at 5 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 barometer 29.48, thermometer 77.5, wind northeast 2, clouds 2. The ship **Lady Arbella** came in last night consigned to Wall and Company. Read papers and drew up a memorial from Lucy Boston to allow her children and grandchild to come from Nassau. Philip Fontane will try to get a law passed to that effect. Read papers.

Friday, November 14. Rose at 5 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.42, thermometer 79.5, wind north by east 3, clouds 5. Drew up a bond from Captain James Brown to Wall and Company

to give Bottomry bond on the cargo of the bark **Emigrant** when an amount is arrived at. Read papers.

Saturday, November 15. Rose at 5 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.46, thermometer 72, wind north northeast 3, clouds 1. Drew up stipulation for the cotton of the bark **Emigrant** so that the ship **Stephen Mallory** can sail for Charleston. It was executed by Wall and Company to make Bottomry Bond, both being the same date.

Sunday, November 16. Rose at 5 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.56, thermometer 76, wind south east 3, clouds 10 with light mist. The **Gamble** sailed for St. Marks today James Filor and family and Philip Fontane to Tallahassee to attend the Legislature. Fontane was at my house last night till near 10 did not see him this morning, saw Filor. Read papers. Clouds and light rain all day.

Monday, November 17. Rose at 5:15 and walked on the beach, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.51, thermometer 74, wind east 3, clouds 1. The brig **Huntress** got in yesterday four days from Charleston and brings news that Buchanan was elected he had 170 votes, 149 being necessary to a choice. Drew up the libel in the case of the ship **Lady Arbella**. Bought a gold ring from Ferguson he took of a Californian for \$5.00. A quantity of heavy clouds rose in the northwest and passed over by 2 p.m. leaving a clear dry sky and pleasant breeze from the north northwest. Gave J.P. Baldwin a root of the Chinese yam retaining a few tubers and a number of seed. Gave Captain Brown a certificate that I
(Continued on page 8)

(Hackley from page 7)

had recommended the detention of his mate to be a witness on the trial but that after reading the libels I found that I could do with out him and recommended his discharge.

Tuesday, November 18. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 9 a.m. barometer 29.57.5, thermometer 72, wind northeast 3, clouds 4. Drew up a claim for duties in the ship **Lady Arbella** and bark **Octavia**. Read papers. Matilda made me a pair of Cassimere pants in about four hours.

Wednesday, November 19. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bath. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.53, thermometer 75, wind northeast 3, clouds 4. Filed the libel against the ship **Lady Arbella** and most of the morning I was aboard the brig **Darien** looking at the getting out of the **Prima Donna** a yacht of about 20 tons Asa Tift sent out. She is a very pretty boat and must sail fast. P.M. Read papers. After tea Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's.

Thursday, November 20. Rose at 5:20 and walked by the Fort and home by Porter's Spring, returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.55, thermometer 75, clouds 9. Lucia cried a great deal last night but we could not discover anything the matter. Wrote a letter to Mr. Balmavin, Consul of Hesse Darmstadt and attorney in fact of the father of J.G. Lerraz. Sent him back the power of attorney in the suit to F. Filor authenticated before a Commission of this State. Read Harper's magazine. About dusk down town with Matilda and Mrs. Tift. The yacht **Prima Donna** was out and sails beautifully.

Friday, November 21. Rose at 5: 15 and walked above the Barracks,

returned home and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.58, thermometer 79, wind southeast 3, clouds 4. Bought several books of Robert P. Campbell and looking over them. Matilda and I went to Alexander Patterson's and called by Felix Senac's for Hatty and Charlotte who had spent the evening there.

Saturday, November 22. Rose about 6 and went to the Post Office, got letters from P. Williams and papers. The steamer **Isabel** got in about 5. Judge William Marvin and William Folker and several others came in her. Read Boy Hunter by Captain Reid. After tea went to Alexander Patterson's and saw William Folker who has come to marry Susan Patterson. John Porter is dead and Louisa writes Bev Browne that she has no home now she can take him to. That Porter's Brothers will help her and her children so I will have to take care of him. He is now with Alexander Patterson who will take care of him till I can go west. I will do the best I can for he poor blind boy.

Sunday, November 23. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:25 a.m. barometer 29.68, thermometer 80, wind east southeast 3, clouds 3. Father E.O. Herrick slept last night in Benners house which he has rented. We sent over and asked them to tea but Mrs. Herrick was too tired so we sent her some tea. I sold them my extension table for \$16.00 the same I gave for it at Julius Tift's sale. Gave Matilda \$8.00 to send for a bonnet by Susan Patterson. Matilda came from church with a headache which I could not cure.

Monday, November 24. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8: 20 a.m. barometer 29.62, clouds 3. A propeller with workmen for the Fort came in early as did William

Wall's **Belle of the Cape**. Court was opened and the case of R.D. Roberts vs. The brig **Bingham** and cargo was tried. Filed a claim for duties. Brig ordered to be sold.

Tuesday, November 25. Rose at 5:45 and bathed. At 8:45 a.m. barometer 29.59, thermometer 79, wind northeast 3, clouds 5. Tried the case of E.A. Coste and others vs. ship **Don Juan** of Havana. I was for libelants and also filed a claim for duties. Susan R. Patterson and William G. Folker were married at 11 a.m. by Father E.O. Herrick. I was not present, being in court but went up soon after noon and remained and went down on board the steamer **Isabel** with them Alletta Patterson goes to spend the winter in Savannah with them. Called with Matilda on Father Herrick who has now moved to his house.

Wednesday, November 26. Rose at 5 and walked as far as the Barracks where it commenced to rain and by the time I got home I was pretty damp. At 8:25 a.m. barometer 29.60, thermometer 79.5, wind east southeast 3, clouds 4. Captain Shaw came up and got his land warrants and gave me \$5.00 to pay P. Williams, I do not charge him anything. Tried the case of the Joseph Hale. Afternoon read papers. Mr. Jardelle spent the evening.

Thursday, November 27. Rose before 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.58, thermometer 79.5, wind southeast 1, clouds 3. The ship **Neptune** of Boston came in yesterday morning to make some alteration in her cargo which is badly stored and she is very crank. The **Arkwright** of Portsmouth, with U.S. Troops on board came in about 8 a.m. Tried the case of George Alderslade et al vs. cargo of the ship **Isaac Allerton** which occupied us till half-past two.

Charles Tift came in and sat till 9.

Friday, November 28. Rose at 5:50 and bathed. At 8 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 79.5, wind east southeast 3, clouds 7. Gave Charles Johnson \$45.00 to have a mini sight put on my English rifle and a pair of mimi molds made and to buy me a shot belt. He is going today to New York so that the Lighthouse Board Schooner **Florida** can have the yellow fever poison taken out of her and bring back another schooner. The Judge read his decree in the case of the **Joseph Hale** giving \$3,000 to Joshua Skinner and \$800 to the four men from the sloop **Dolphin**. Tried the case of the bark **Emigrant**. The U.S. Steamer **Walker** came in about 4 p.m. Drew up a petition for John Sawyer for saving wet sugar out of the bark **Octavia**.

Saturday, November 29. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 79.5, wind south by west 2, clouds 3. Annie had considerable fever last night from a cold she has taken, gave Aconite and her mother made her a flannel jacket and put it on next to her skin. The Judge read the decree in the case of the bark **Emigrant** giving \$13,863.26. There was no other case ready and court adjourned. Latter part of the day was calm and hot.

Sunday, November 30. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:20 a.m. barometer 29.57, thermometer 80, wind calm, cloudy 1 with haze. There was a heavy dew last night. Read papers. The steamer **Jasper** came in about 1 p.m. with General Harney on his way to Miami. Judge King came in her and brings the news of Judge Lancaster death with pneumonia. Went on board to see Smith and went to Charles Tift's in the evening. Alexander Patterson

and all the family in after tea and sat till near 9.

Monday, December 1. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:20 a.m. thermometer 79.5, wind east southeast 1, clouds 5. The ship **Arkwright** with troops and the ship **Don Juan** got under way about 7 a.m. Tried the case of George Pearce vs. cargo of bark **Aurora**. I filed a claim for duties and some petitions for salvage. The Circuit Court was also session but I could not get up to it. Election for mayor and alderman, Alexander Patterson elected mayor.

Tuesday, December 2. Rose at 4 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:45 a.m. barometer 29.48, wind southeast 3, clouds 5. Captain Brown got off about 8 in the propeller **H.H. Beach** for Savannah. The bark **Joseph Hale** got off yesterday and Mr. Legarden went in her. Gave John P. Smith his land warrant and he paid me \$10.00. The crank pin of the steamer **Jasper** was mended and she got away by 11 p.m. General Harney was fretting a great deal about the detention. John Smith gave me two letters from his wife without date of year, one was written July 20, 1855, the other September 26, 1856, womanlike she has omitted the year. Went up to the State Court where a motion was made to adjourn and that the members of the bar wear crepe for 30 days for Judge Joseph B. Lancaster.

Wednesday, December 3. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.47, thermometer 81, wind south by west 2, clouds 6. Annie has been free of fever since 10 a.m. yesterday. Read papers.

Thursday, December 4 Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 9

a.m. barometer 29.55, thermometer 81, wind east southeast 1, clouds 7. Mr. Charles Wells bought me \$504.86 which with \$40.00 for the barometer makes \$544.86 for my fee in the bark **Emigrant**. Went up to the Court House and there being but little business the jury was dismissed and court adjourned. In the afternoon went to the Barracks with Mrs. Tift and Matilda and called on Colonel John H. Winder and Dr. Richard F. Simpson's Family.

Friday, December 5. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. thermometer 79.5, wind southeast 2, clouds 3. Stephen Mallory and his family arrived from Pensacola in the schooner **Wm. R. King** yesterday about 1 p.m. The steamer **Jasper** got in about midnight. Went up to the Court House with John P. Smith and had him swear to the new bill for divorce and affirmed that the defendant is residing out of the state. In the afternoon with Mrs. Tift and Matilda called on Mrs. Charles Howe, Mrs. Briggs and on Mrs. Stephen Mallory. After tea at Alexander Patterson's where we met General William Harney and Captain Pleasanton, his aid. The schooner **Storm Cloud** came in.

Saturday, December 6. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.55, thermometer 81, wind south by west 2, clouds 5. Gave General William S. Harney my Spanish Sabre, a Toledo blade of the Cardenas Expedition. The General left about noon. The weather very warm and wind south southwest.

Sunday, December 7. Rose at 6 and bathed. Went to the Post Office and got letters and papers. Got the pulley wheel and needles for the sewing machine. At 8:30 a.m.

(Continued on page 9)

(Hackley from page 9)

barometer 29.53, thermometer 79.5, wind 0, clouds 5. A heavy dew fell last night. The steamer **Isabel** got in at half past 10 p.m. and the weather being calm the noise of her paddles woke me before she got to the point buoy. Mother is in Cincinnati. Called on Stephen Mallory on my way up home and saw a number of Japanese curiosities. After dinner on my way up called on Major John Sanders, Engineers, who arrived by the steamer **Isabel**. I had a long talk with him about old times and places. After tea went to Alexander Patterson's. About 6 p.m. wind fresh from the north northwest and clouds. Wesley Benner took tea with us.

Monday, December 8. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 72, wind north 3, clouds 10. The Baby had considerable fever last night and gave her several doses of Aconite which reduced the fever but her eyes are inflamed for which she will take Bell. Went into court about 11 and in settling some questions about the divisions in the ship **Don Juan** case wrote up the exceptions in the appraisement on the ship **Isaac Allerton** which the Judge sustained and said that he will order the salvage to be paid in kind on the goods in store. We then took up the case of the ship **Lady Arbella** and were occupied until candlelight except for a recess of about one hour for dinner. Paid Hiram Benner \$314.04 being the balance due him on account. Paid William H. Wall and Company \$150.00 loaned me at different times and \$25.00 for a bill of exchange sent by William Welsh, Lizzie's father. It was sent from New York. Weather cool all with a north wind. Lucia better.

Tuesday, December 9. Rose

at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.58, thermometer 70, wind northeast 3, clouds 5. I wore a coat and perspired profusely, when I awoke had a rheumatic pain in the right shoulder from the cold courtroom yesterday. Took Aconite at 7. Lucia better but her eyes look bad, she has the same fever that Annie had direct Arsenicum every two hours. She was awake a good deal of last night. Read papers. Wind hauled gradually to the east northeast and blew fresh.

Wednesday, December 10. Rose at 4:30 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.60, thermometer 73, wind east southeast 5, clouds 3. The steamer **Tennessee** from Greytown came in last night and has been coaling ever since. It is said that Walker is in a bad fix. Wrote to Mrs. L. Porter, to Mother and to Fowler and Wells and enclosed a quarter Eagle to buy two dozen Brooke Cotton and American Almanac for 1858 and mailed them by 10 a.m. Lola Montez in on board the **Tennessee** and there has been a good deal of sickness said to be Cholera on board. Read papers. Judge William Marvin read his decree in the ship **Lady Arbella** case giving \$5,000 making the wreckers pay for nineteen boxes and one cask of wine which the second mate swore was put on board the boats but which the Judge said he did not believe the wreckers unloaded. Stephen Mallory went on the steamer **Isabel** and also Porter's two girls.

Thursday, December 11. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.61, thermometer 78, wind south southeast 3, clouds 5. Lucia was free of fever last night but this morning Charlotte has the same fever and commenced with Aconite every two hours 12 globules

in ½ glass of water alternate with the same preparation of Bell for the headache and pain in the eyes attendant on this disease. Read papers.

Friday, December 12. Rose at 5:40 having been kept awake by Lucia until after 10. She cried for an hour and as soon the body was enveloped in a wet bandage she became quiet and slept all night, better than usual. Bathed. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.65, thermometer 80, wind east northeast 2, clouds 4. Received of J.B. Browne fee in the case of the ship **Don Juan** amounting to \$210.00 and proctor's fee \$20.00, total \$230.00. And paid L.M. Shafer his bill of \$106.39. On the way home stopped at the Engineer Office to see Major John Sanders and walked with him up to the Garrison and called in to see Colonel John H. Winder. One of the men died last night and one is now dying, they are old drunkards but Dr. Richard F. Simpson says that they have the yellow fever.

Saturday, December 13. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond and on my return there was two Mallards in the small hole by the road, I suppose they were there when I went up but did not fly. I could have shot them easily. Went into Linn's Pond but there is scarcely any water in it. At 8:30 a.m. barometer 29.66, thermometer 78, wind east 2, clouds 5. At intervals heavy banks of clouds passed over and a few rains fell for a minute or two. Read papers. Major John Sanders called.

Sunday, December 14. Rose at 5 and walked to the Salt Pond, returned home and bathed. At 8:15 a.m. barometer 29.52, thermometer 78, wind southeast 2, clouds 2. Read papers. Mr. Jardela return yesterday from his work with Mr. Huff, his assistant, with yellow fever.

The Key West to Havana Submarine Telephone Cables

By Greg Griffin
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Background

The late 1800's were a busy period in the history of American voice communications. On March 7, 1876 the United States Government granted Alexander Graham Bell patent number 174,465 for the invention of the telephone. On July 9, 1877, he established the first telephone enterprise, the Bell Telephone Company, in Boston, Massachusetts. On December 20, 1879, the principals of Bell Telephone created Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph in Atlanta, Georgia covering Kentucky, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama. The race was on to blanket the United States with telephone cable usually on poles erected adjoining railroad tracks. The first transcontinental telephone service began in 1915 from New York to San Francisco. The Bell system first came to Key West around 1901. Later, on April 5, 1917 Southern Bell purchased the Automatic Telephone Company to narrow the competitive environment in Key West, Florida. Southern Bell's first office on the island was co-located with the International Ocean Telegraph Company (IOTC), a subsidiary of Western Union Telegraph Company, at 416 Green Street. It was in this building that John W. Atkins made the first scratchy international telephone call over telegraph cable owned and operated by IOTC on December 25, 1900. The Bell Telephone Company was to become American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) in 1899.

The First Three Cables



The cable hut at the end of Whitehead Street by the Southernmost Point. Photo credit: the Author.

The three initial Key West, Florida to Havana, Cuba submarine telephone cables were laid in February 1921. Messrs. Martin, Anderegg, and Kendall presented a full description of this project before a session of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers in New York City in February of 1922. The center copper conductor was insulated with gutta percha, a natural inelastic latex produced from the sap of the tree of the same name native to Southeast Asia. Outside the gutta percha was a heavy copper tape which in turn is surrounded by a covering of steel armor wires for mechanical protection. The central conductor was wrapped continuously with fine iron wire to increase inductance. This loaded inner copper wire is one conductor and the return path consisted of the

outer copper tape, armor wires and the sea water.

The Bell South forces constructed concrete cable huts on the seashore at both Key West and Havana. An example of a cable hut remains today just left of the Southernmost Point monument on Southard Street; however, this structure may have been used for telegraph cable as well. Special land cables with certain shielding of the pairs were provided between the cable hut and Central Office at each end - 1.08 miles long in Key West and 1.13 miles long in Havana. The Key West engineers and workmen constructed a concrete submarine cable storage tanks on Mallory Dock at the foot of Whitehead Street. These tanks

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The telephone/cable staff in front of the office on Greene Street. Photo credit: Monroe County Public Library.

(Cable from page 11)

were filled with water and the spare repair cable submerged to cool the gutta-percha insulation surrounding the conductors to prevent melting in the humid atmosphere. Bell South personnel stored several types of marine cable in the tanks including Shore End-Type A-2 (Two nautical miles), Shore End Type A (Four nautical miles), Intermediate Type B (Six nautical miles), and Deep Sea Type D (twenty-seven nautical miles).

Legal Matters for the Fourth Cable

President Hoover signed a permit to lay cable in the territorial waters of the United States on June 17, 1930. The Cuban-American

Telephone and Telegraph Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Bell Telephone Company, accepted responsibility for the work under this permit and filed it with the State Department in Washington D.C. The Division Attorney applied for a War Department Permit on August 9, 1930. The application included nautical charts and drawings showing the route to be followed in laying the cable. The War Department issued its permit Number 2845 on September 8, 1930. Thereafter, United States Customs advised that inspections of the cable tank buildings, additional permits and the payment of duties were required in addition to a warehouse bond for the importation and storage of surplus cable. The contract

between the Cuban-American Telephone Company and the Norddeutsche Seekablewerke A. G., a German manufacturer, provided for the payment of \$258,100 for fabricating the cable, and \$21,050 for transporting and laying it.

The Fourth Cable Deployment

The cable ship **Neptun** transported the submarine cable from a factory at Nordenham, Germany to Key West, Florida. Norddeutsche Seekablewerke A.G. owned the **Neptun**, which was rated at 6293 gross tons with a length 434.4 feet and a width of 57.3 feet. She drew 32 feet. Its master was C. Cornelius. This cable ship was fully equipped for the transporting and laying cable. While not regularly employed laying ocean cables, the



The cable storage tanks on Mallory Docks. Photo credit: Monroe County Public Library.

Neptun was used to transport oil from the Gulf Coast to Germany. The **Neptun** arrived six miles off shore from Key West at 6 p.m. on Saturday, December 13, 1930, and took various Cuban-American Telephone and Telegraph Company personnel and Bell Telephone engineers and cable splicers aboard for observing the work of laying submarine cable. The **Neptun**'s crew paid out the new para-gutta insulated, non-loaded, cable from December 14, 1930 to January 10, 1931. In places, the sea water reached a depth of 1,000 feet in the Straights of Florida. Mr. J.J. Gilbert, an engineer, provided a synopsis of the work accomplished including the loss and the grappling hook recovery of the cable. Major George E. Brown of the U.S. Engineering sub-office at Miami, Florida was present onboard during the laying of the cable in territorial waters and checked the course of

the ship during laying operations. The Cuban-American Telephone Company accepted the submarine cables from the manufacturer on January 12, 1931. Channel 3 was placed into service on January 22, 1931. Channels 1 and 2 were placed into service on February 26, 1931. All four submarine cables were modified over the years to carry telephonic and telegraph broadband communications.

Bell South placed and activated telephone Cables Five and Six between Key West and Havana in 1950. They were non-loaded and had three submarine repeaters in each to generate a stronger signal. These cables employed polyethylene insulation.

Cable Faults

Between 1922 and 1940 various accidents and incidents caused faults in the cables which were repaired with lengthy splices. In

October of 1922, a heavily laden boat went aground on Cable Number Two approximately 2,240 feet from the Havana Cable Hut. Again on Cable Number Two, but in 1923, an anchor pulled the cable against an abrasive object 1,600 feet from the Havana Hut requiring two splices in Type A-2 cable. In October of 1934, the cable ship, **Guardian**, inadvertently cut Cable Number Four in connection with locating and repairing a fault in Western Union cable Number Two, thirty five nautical miles from Key West. (The International Ocean Telegraph Company, which was later acquired by The Western Union Telegraph Company, laid telegraph cable from Key West to Havana in 1867.) Approximately 2.86 nautical miles of Type D deep sea cable were

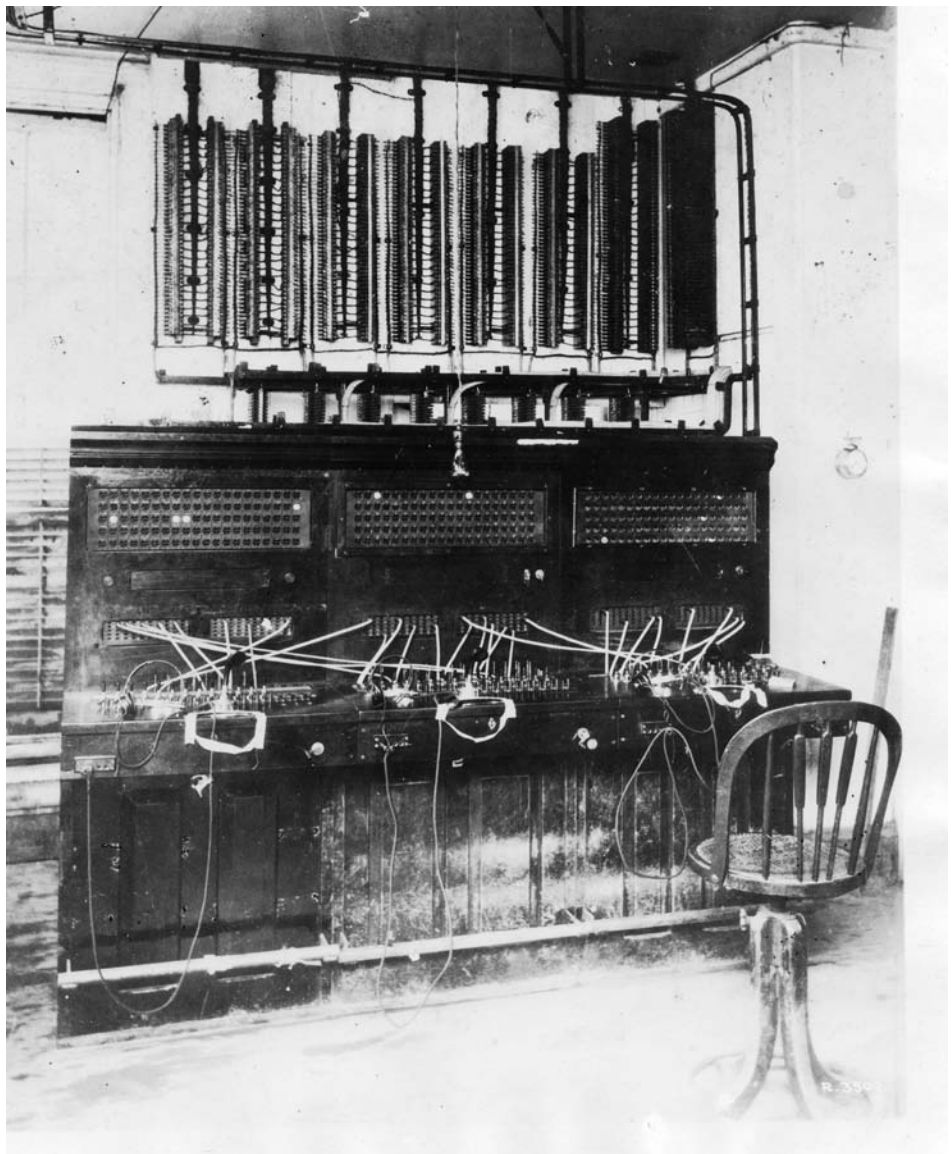
(Continued on page 14)

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added. In April 1936, the Italian SS **Maddalena Odero** went aground on cable Number Four, 5.82 nautical miles from the Key West Cable Hut. The cable ship **John W. Atkins** made the repairs with 215 feet of Type A shore end cable. In 1936, on cable Number Four, a fault resulting from a combination of physical and chemical damage in Havana Harbor required replacement of 600 feet of Type A cable. In June of 1939, theft of a section of type A-3 cable along the sea wall in Havana Harbor caused a fault. Three hundred feet of new cable was added by splice. During September of 1939, the British freighter, **Coulmore**, went aground on cable Number One between Channel buoy #4 and La Punta, Havana Harbor. Depth of the sea water at the fault was about thirty feet. In November of 1939 continual pounding of heavy seas caused large pieces of concrete to break and fall upon cable Number Four, which had been washed ashore to the base of the Havana Harbor sea wall which was broken for a distance of 160 feet. During January of 1940, extensive armor deterioration on the cable Number Two caused a fault to occur about 1,000 feet from the Havana Cable Hut. Splicers completed the repair using three hundred feet of Type A-2 cable from the Key West cable tank.

Politics and Economics

Bell South utilized all six cables well in the late 1950's despite a widening political rift between the pro-Castro Cuban government and the United States. In 1959 the Castro regime quickly expropriated the assets of the Cuban-American Telephone Company on the Havana side of the cable run. Bell South continued open telephone communication with Cuba for



Telephone operator's station from the Greene Street Office. Photo credit: Monroe County Public Library.

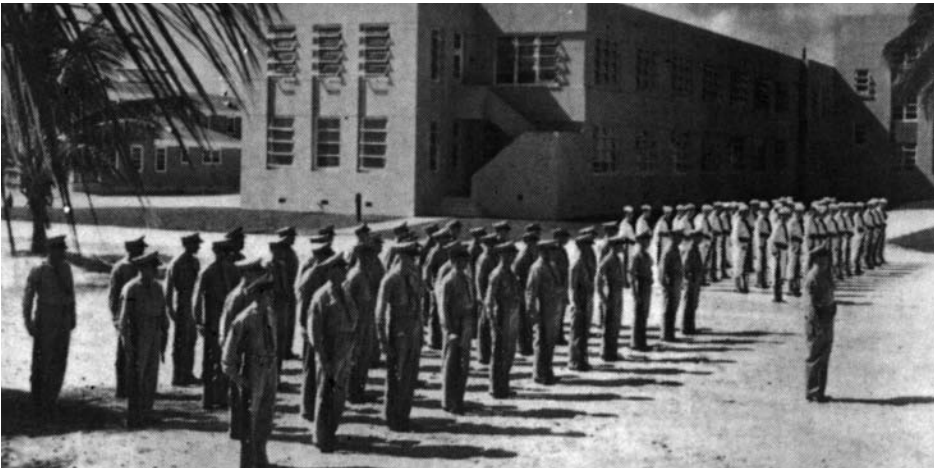
about ten years without being paid for the service from the Cuban end. Eventually, Bell South's management gave the order to shut down the trunk lines to Havana. Later that same day, the parties negotiated a financial settlement wherein all calls originating within Cuba had to be placed on a collect basis. That is, all calls had to be paid for in dollars inside the United States before a connection was established. Bell South finally received some return on its investment. All submarine cables from Key West to Havana ceased functioning by 1987 due to the effects of the harsh marine environment.

J. Gregory Griffin before coming to Key West in 1996 practiced law in Cambridge, MA.

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Carston Ralph Heinlein
April 22, 1920 – September 7, 2009



*The Marine Honor Guard at the commissioning of the Naval Hospital Key West.
Photo credit: Monroe County Public Library.*

The Society lost a good friend with the death of Carston R. Heinlein on September 7, 2009. He came to Key West at the beginning World War II in the Marine Corps. During the war he served with the Corp in the Pacific, taking part in some of the bloodiest campaigns. After the war he returned to Key West married raised a family and work for Navy Civil Service for over thirty years. After his retirement from the Navy he worked with famed Keys salvager Chet Alexander.

He contributed a number of articles to the Journal of which he was able to add a unique point of view. He was a recognized expert on the history of the search for a reliable source of fresh water for the Keys. His three articles in the Florida Keys Sea Heritage Journals of Winter 1998/1999, Fall 2000 and Spring 2006 is the only place that all the information about the search and means of supplying fresh water for the Keys has been gather in one source.

The account of the loss of the USS **Sturtevant** (DD-240) was in part special because he was able to interview the survivors that returned to Key West for a reunion. He also

knew some of the Key West people that been involved with the shipyard work on the **Sturtevant**. This with the official records resulted in what is considered the best account of the tragic loss of life and a Navy ship. It is only Journal article that has been reprinted in another publication when the Tin Can Sailor reprinted the article. See Society News on page 2.

In writing the history of the Naval Hospital he was able to interview his friends that had been part of building and operating the Hospital. In this story he had a more personnel part as a young Marine assigned to the Marine Barrack Key West he was part of the Honor Guard at the commissioning of the Naval Hospital Key West.

The loss of Carston brings home the fact we are fast losing the members of “The Greatest Generation” the generation that grew up during the Great Depression and preserved our freedom by winning World War Two. For the last few years every time I talked with him he would say he had an idea for another article but time ran out before this could happen. We are fortunate in his busy life he was able to give us the great articles we now have.

TH

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The Southernmost Point on Whitehead Street on November 21, 1941. The cable hut can be seen in the lower right. Photo credit: Monroe County Public Library.

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