

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

Bar #154:

**Abbey Road Snack Shack**  
Hyatt Windward Pointe  
3675 South Roosevelt Boulevard  
Sunday, 21 July, 3:00 PM

*Yeungling (draft) \$4.75, incl. tip*

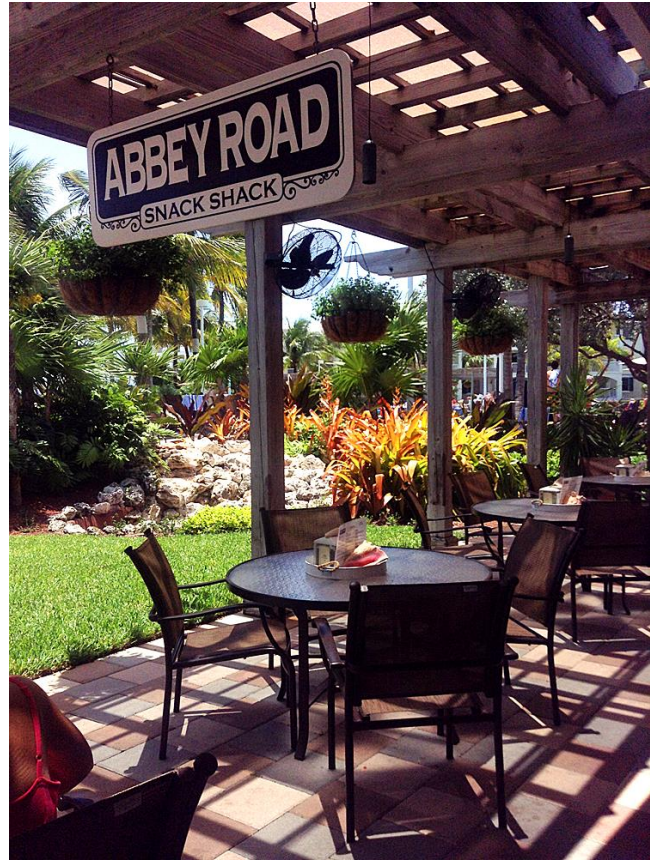
Hot. Hot, hot summer afternoon. Had to be almost 300 degrees. Good day to visit the poolside bar at Hyatt Windward Pointe (HWP), out by the airport. The vast majority of the 153 previous bars lie to the West. Only a few can be found here in the Far East.

HWP is a damn swanky time-share condo kinda place. These suites are sweet. I stayed here one night, when Jacko came done for his first visit to KW. He came as an interviewee for a sales position here and they put him up in a two-bedroom suite for a night. I invited myself to be his suitemate.

We tanked it up with zeal on Duval for a good while, then returned here for zzz-time. Jacko passed out on his huge master bedroom bed, but I had a little gas in the tank, so I filled up the marble bathtub and sank in for some quality jacuzzin'. I'm pretty sure I did some snoozin' with my jacuzzin' but, wtf, you wouldn't?

I remember there was a telescope on a tripod on the balcony. With K-Dub's notoriously humid air, there's not much high-end stargazing to be had, so I guess they were there to spy on the other condos across the big grassy courtyard. That didn't yield anything interesting either. I thought about pantomiming a murder or something, just in case someone was snooping on us. Mighta been fun, until the police would show up.

Anyway, this Hop would involve none of those swanky suites; it was all about that poolside snack shack *and* bar. HWP is private all the way, but Abbey Road is open to the public. I've even heard them talked up on Pirate



Radio (96.7 FM). Kind of an odd mix. I felt like I was sneaking in, being all sly and such, because there was no public *Come On In* entrance that I could see. Of course, I didn't exactly walk right through the main lobby, as I probably should have. I'll bet you just walk in, say *Goin' ta Abbey Road, ya bastid*, and stride on through. But where's the satisfaction in that? Where's the misguided sense of victory?

So, I whisked my way through some walkways and gates and arrived at the courtyard, pool, and games area. The pool was the popular place to be on this day. Kids and adults in about equal numbers. I had to walk around it to get to Abbey Road. Man, that water looked inviting. But, for now, the *bar* had more pull on me.



The Beatles were here. Not *today*, but more than half-a-century ago. And what is *here* now was not *here* then, so it's a little bit of a stretch, but it is definitely true enough to keep alive.

"Here" was the Best Western Key Wester in those halcyon days of 1964, when most of the world was still in grayscale. The Fab Four, with entourage, was on their way to Miami to do a show when Hurricane Ringo or something forced them to ditch Plan A and seek refuge in the Conch Republic. They didn't play here; all they did was stay here. But that's cool enough, yes?

There are framed photos on the wall inside showing a young Paul, John, George, and Ringo just standing outside their motel room doing nothing.



So, when HWP came along, they decided to preserve the memory of the occasion by naming their snack shack *and bar* after the famous Beatles album, which, of course, was named after the Abbey Road Studios where they recorded it, which, of course, was named after the street it was on, which, presumably was named thus because it once led to an abbey. The album was cut in 1968. The studios and street are still there. In fact, the



famous crosswalk across which the quartet strode for the album cover photo can be observed at any hour, day or night, on live webcam: <http://www.abbeyroad.com/Crossing>.

The bar is outdoors, even though the snack shack has an inside area for buying sundries and such. A half-dozen high seats with low backs cozy up to two large serving windows. A row of tables and chairs are right over there, and we're all under some trellis-like beams with translucent sheeting that gives a sunny-but-shady feel to the area. A photo would really help out that description.

I took the seat at the far end, as I often do. A prettyish, not-quite-young-anymore-ish woman waited on me. She was friendly but not bubbly.

Nothing unfriendly, but not giving out hugs either. She brought me my Yingle (listed on the sign at \$4) and said, "\$4.74, please." Now, 7.5% sales tax can be awkward to calculate in your head, but I knew it should be more like \$4.30. I commented with a slight smile, handing over a \$20 bill, "That's an unusual number."

She maintained her spiteless-loveless demeanor as she took my money away and replied, "It includes your tip." Only then did I notice on the menu board that "18% will be added for your convenience."

Well, I'll be dipped. For my convenience. How considerate of them. I thought that maybe 15% might be even more convenient, but what the hey. When the tallies are all tallied, that \$4 must include tax, meaning that the beer was really like \$3.72, but the tip is figured on the total, which includes the government's share. Fact is, though, that I would have tipped a buck for my beer, not \$0.74.

When not-unhappy-but-not-happy woman returned with my change, I commented, "My convenience is screwing you out of \$0.26." She shrugged, as if resigned to it from countless previous screwings.



"Although..." I added, with a look of mock severity. She adopted a wry smile, anticipating what was coming. "I'll bet you don't *tell* many people about what it says on the sign." She gave another shrewd shrug, which came across like a wink. I added, "If they can't read..." And mouthed the word *fukkem*. She gave kind a la-de-da tilt of the head and went to serve the next customers who had just arrived.

I dropped a buck on the bar anyway, just cuz. But how many patrons do that, thinking that their buck is the only tip, not an extra 20-something per cent on top of the stated-but-not-emphasized 18 percent? If she makes a buck, plus 74-90 cents off each \$4-\$5 beer, that's in the 40% range. Sweet. You better believe that *I* would not be pointing out that sign to my customers.

Maison de Pepe (Hop #47) included tip also, but they only tagged you for 15%. Only two places out of 154 do auto-grat. Every other bar relies on the kindness of the general public. Yeessh. Scary thought.

So, with beer acquired and the Hop officially consummated, it was time to sit back, relax, and enjoy these posh digs. If I were ever going to drop a few grand on a week's stay at a condo complex ... nahhhhh, never mind. Ain't happenin'. Besides, no beach, no golf course, wrong end of the island, *bar closes at six*. Ya, s-i-x. That's nuts. Nice telescopes, though.

But, hey, if you were cool with all the negatoids above, then this is a nice property. Pool is dandy -- at least, it looked dandy. There's a really nice looking sand volleyball court beyond the pool. No one was playing. Some



shuffleboards courts -- are they called courts? -- were behind the shack. They were empty.

A ping-pong table -- or maybe it was a table tennis table -- was on the edge of the covered patio. Two young girls, like 9 and 7, tried to give it a go but it lasted maybe three minutes. Neither one could hit the ball. No future Olympians here, at least not in a hand-eye coordinated racket sport.

Still, despite all my cynical observations, this was a very comfortable place to hang. The plants were great. Colorful, tropical, and hanging or growing all around. If I thought about it long enough, I'm sure I could find a way to be cynical about the plants too, but I'll spare ya that.

I finished my beer and headed out. No reason to be stealthy on the way out of a place, so, of course, I was. I almost wanted someone to intercept me and tell me to leave, just so I could happily comply and piss them off.

As I was departing, though, I couldn't shake an odd thought: the Beatles stayed at a *Best Western*??

