

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

Bar #160:

The Strip Bar

1435 Simonton Street

www.stripousekeywest.com

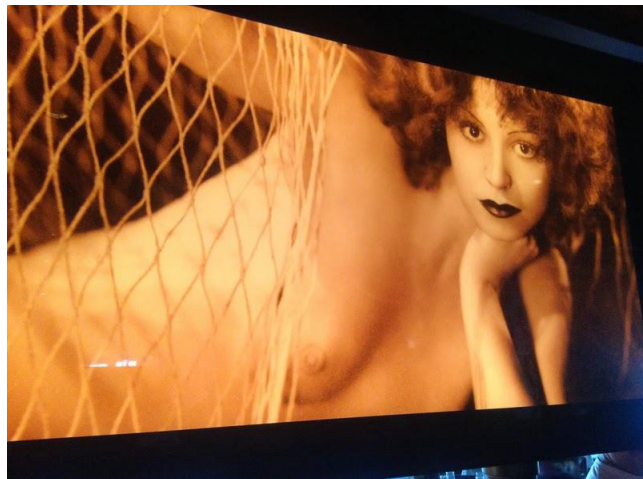
Saturday, 27 July, 5:00 PM

Sierra Nevada Pale Ale (bottle)
\$3.50

It was written into the very fiber of these tours that all kinds of bars just be hopped: sports bars, music bars, restaurant bars, gay bars, leather bars, beach bars, hotel bars, and, yes, strip bars. Hence (love that word), The Strip Bar, at the south end of Simonton Street was begging to be hopped.



Though there are supple female breasts to be seen, and who among thee -- be ye male or female, young or old, smart as a whip or thick as a brick,



sober as a judge or drunk as a skunk, happy or sad, cheerful or mad -- does not enjoy the sight of supple female breasts? It is a sight that soothes the savage beast (except for the enraged few, who should caged).

But the supple female breasts here do not rise and fall with each playful or passionate breath. They tease and taunt in still silence from the glossy sheen of sepia images, women caught in their prime of naked beauty, forever preserved as they most wanted to be: icons of the natural allure of their gender.

The bar room, and the Strip House dining room adjacent to it, tastefully display enlarged studio photographs of a few famous strippers of the roaring twenties and the depression era. It fits in so well with the dark



wood walls, bar, and ceiling, and the deep red cushions of the couches and carpet, that you don't even see them right away. When you do, 'tis a pleasant bonus.

The Strip Bar is the name of the hotel/restaurant bar at The Reach Hotel, the southernmost hotel on Simonton Street. For B&J, it was a long and hot walk from the north side of the island. For Big Dog, it depends on where he parked his

scooter. Was he making it convenient for the first stop, or planning ahead for the finale? We had yet another multi-hop night planned, a true bar-hopping evening.

My own commute was just one block, having walked easily, and with some regret, from the SoMo House. Perhaps you read about that. If not, you should. It was the best chapter since the one before it.

OK.

So, once convened, our stalwart foursome entered this posh hotel, chatted briefly with the front desk staff (whom B&J knew, of course), and wound our way through a few short hallways out to the seaside courtyard area. Mannnn, this place is nice. Green grass, taalllllll palms, and that so-cooooool wooden boardwalk and oceantop gazebo that David Wolkowsky designed and built for the Sands Beach Club about a half-century ago. It is still one of KW's coolest seaside structures.

The patio is wide and shaded. A large red-felted pool table sits awaiting players. Fans hang off the awning's ribs to keep the sweet summer air from degrading into swelter.



Then we got to the bar. We were thirsty and underdressed. Scott was, of course, sleeveless. Brian was in his typical t-shirt, shorts, and Patriots cap. I had a sleeveless T as well. Jan, as usual, looked just fiiiine. She was our Respectability; people would look at her and think, well those other dudes can't be all that bad. (We hoped.)



The bar was empty when we strolled in. After a short *yeah-this-place-is-nicer-than-we-are* moment, we bellied right up to get our drinks. As luck would have it, it was Happy Hour, and my Sierra was just tree-fitty. Tree-fitty for a Sierra in a posh bar. Oh ya. Planets align, this beer is fine.

Turns out, it was also the night of Donna & Montes' wedding -- whoever the heck they were -- and we were just one step ahead of the entire wedding party, who were trickling in one by one, all decked out in the finest beach-toned summer tuxes and gowns. They looked G-O-O-D. So, yeah, how did we look now? Ha, good thing we don't care all that much.

If some aliens happened to be spying on that locale in those moments, they would have concluded that the dark-skinned humans were classy, refined, and just plain cool as whales, while the white males were sloppy scumholes. White females, well, they be cool.

But we had to get a good laugh at ourselves. The evening we choose to come to this nice place -- "over-achieving" as it was, some would say -- we get even more over-our-headed by a few dozen very overdressed dudes and dudesses. Timing, they say, is everything in life. No argument here.

The wedding party eventually filed out to the gazebo for the ceremony, but it was just as we were deciding to shuffle off to the next Hop anyway. We did, however, take some time to peruse the backlit artwork that graced the walls of not just the bar, but the hallway and so-far empty dining room.

Good stuff -- especially if you like supple female breasts. And, as has been said, who doesn't? Anyone? Anyone?

