

Bar Hoppin' With Hops

The Keep On Hoppin' Tour
Hops MacBarley's Ongoing
Key West Bar Boondoggle

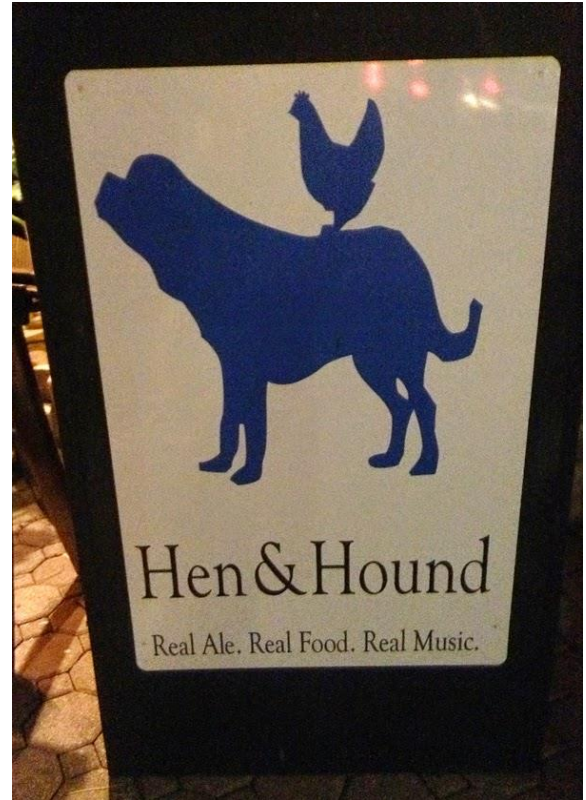
Bar 229:

Hen & Hound

618 Duval (Angela Street entrance)
Saturday, October 11, 8:30 PM

Sierra Nevada Flipside Red IPA (draft)
\$6.00

I am not gonna give this new permutation of this location any more verbs and nouns and adjectives than it deserves. Especially adjectives. As far as layout goes, see Seadog Tavern (Hop #206). As far as menu goes, see Seadog Tavern (Hop #206).



Seadog had gone the way of Levity Lounge (#193), Fat City Monroe Parish (#127), Salsa Loca (#165), and Awful Arthur's: that is, down the tubes. This location is just too obscure. If you don't have a serious hook -- like the kind where people will hunt you out to experience you -- you are doomed here.



Don't people realize that? Bar after bar failed here, so let's open another bar! WTF?

Anyway, that was my mindset as I strolled the half-mile or so here from Truman Waterfront. I love that about Key West. I walk places just to enjoy the walk. In Rochester or Boston, just about the only reason I would ever walk that far is that I could not find a closer parking space.

Some Boston walks were pretty cool when the occasion called for them: the walk to Fenway for a Sox game when you parked more than a mile away to avoid the \$50+ rate; the walk

along Commonwealth Ave to/from the Common and Public Gardens; a stroll along the Esplanade or Memorial Drive along the Chahhhles; and just about any walk that involves Faneuil Hall and Quincy Mahhket. Most others are just matters of inconvenience.

As for Rochester, fuggedaboutit. Every walk was a pain in the butt.

So, uhhhh, right. Hen & Hound. Catchy name, yes? The "hen" part I get, since they brag about serving "the best wings on the island." But what part of the "hound" do they serve? Kinda makes ya wonder. Or it hot dogs? KW hasn't had a good hot dog bar since Maddy's (#61) bit the dust.



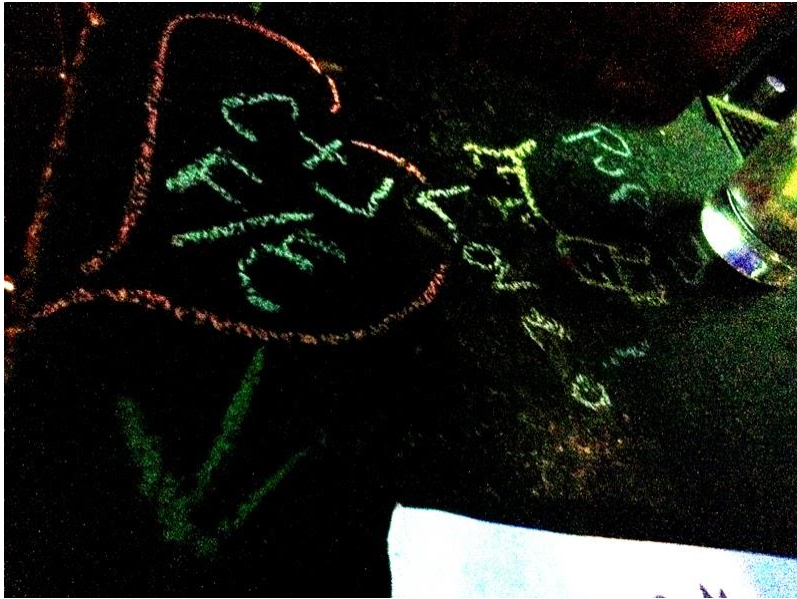
I neared my destination and heard guitar music. Live music, methinks: cool. I get two steps into the alley and the Rasta musician stops, says thanks and ends his gig. Good timing, Hopsy.

The place looked the same, of course. Minor changes here and there. There was a glowing red rocks display that I never noticed before. The lighting under the awning might have been a little different. It was the same bar, except for one new innovation that

I noticed too late. Since it was dark now, and the lighting was on the dim side, and since I was looking around the establishment when I placed my canvas bag down on the bar, I did not notice that there were a few small drink glasses that contained pieces of pastel-colored chalk. Hmmm. Soooo, the patrons were free to jot whatever they wanted on the black surface of the bar. I sure wish I had known that before placing my bag and my arms on the extensive chalky-dusty doodlings of my predecessors. What a dumbass idea. Freaking pink and yellow chalk all over everything.

So I ordered my Flipside, which I was legitimately excited about, and the skinny bar dude brought me a menu too, with a recommendation that I have the wings, of course. Best or not, a buck-a-wing doesn't seem like a deal. I don't usually look at the menu, but I did this time. Dead straight copy of Seadog. Basic burger was \$9, other versions were in the \$13-15 range. Not gonna draw a casual dinner crowd with numbers like that. *Definitely* not gonna draw locals either.

Makes sense that the menu was unchanged, I guess. The word that I had heard was that one part of the ownership ditched out and the remaining part



was giving it another go. One of them was probably the woman on the ladder trying to fix one of the lights. Probably so we could see the chalk better before we sit down.

The second entertainer was beginning his set-up. He was an older guy, and he had a guitar and an eight-inch amp. No lie. The size of a six-pack. Gonna rock out. I paid up, poured my Flipside

into a plastic cup and headed out to more excited things half a block away on Duval. Duty done here once again. Can't wait for the next one.

Addendum: December 2015

CLOSED. Againnnnn. Yeesh.