

A Museum Piece

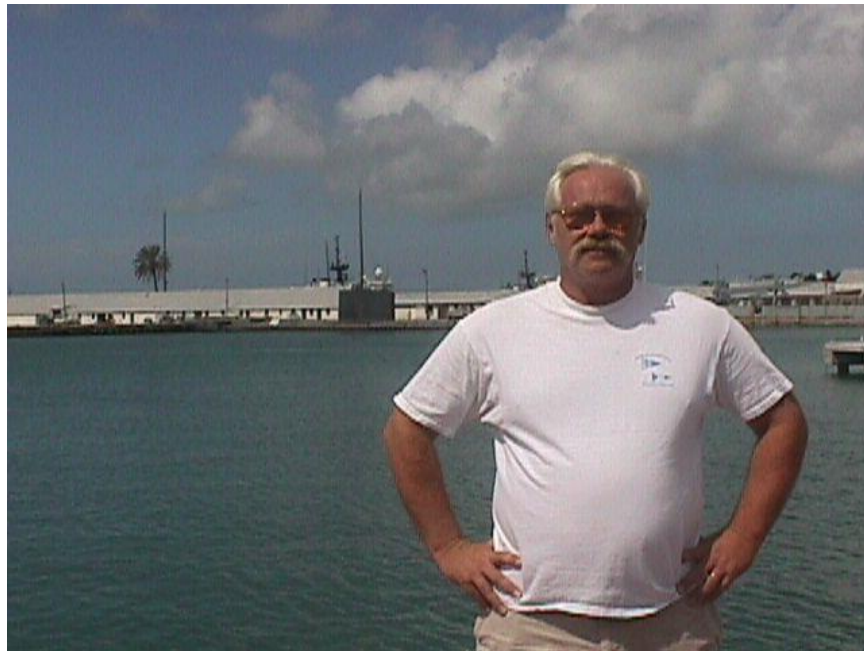
A long time ago, my wife took her Dad's offer to use one of his "time share" weeks. We made a combinational trip to Florida. She planned to spend a couple of days with her Dad (just before he passed away) and then the following week in Key West – for the "free week".

We really liked Key West and we did a lot of "touristing it" all around the down town area. We went to Hemingway's place and the light house and several other places; all the time we kept seeing these little "trains" going around giving people tours. I don't usually "fish in" for one of those things. They are usually way over priced and the tour guide is usually a stoner that has no clue about what he (or she) is giving a tour of. But this time we went for it. AND this time I sat right up in front, close to the "stoner".

As we left the "station" this kid, maybe 25 years old says, "I'm going to give you a tour of MY Key West. I have lived here all my life, and I'm going to show you everything – far more than any other driver with this company. Interesting, I thought, for a twenty-five year old. He went on and on about this and that and the other thing and everything he said was going in one ear and out the other, because this kid's idea of "History" and conventional wisdom were two different things. Anyway, he made this one turn and started to drive along the "inner" harbor area.

There she was across the bay from us. I was totally over whelmed. I apparently said a little too loudly, "I'll be damned!" The kid overheard me and stopped the "train" and turned around to look at me. He said, "Is there something wrong?" I replied, "No, there is nothing wrong, that's one of my old boats over there. I rode that boat, back in the early seventies." He said, "Yes, sir that's the USS Trout". I looked at him and said with a great deal of frustration, "OF course she is. They were building her the year I was born, and she is the first Diesel Boat I ever rode." To which he asked, "How many 'Boats' did you 'ride'?" To which I replied, "Nine boats, ten runs, I did Pintado twice."

He continued, "Well sir, we can't get over there, its government property, but I could stop here and take a picture of you with "her" over your shoulder." I willing to bet that was the best idea that kid had all year. I said you betcha, and handed him my camera. That picture is shown here.



After he took the picture and we started to walk back over to the "train" he said, "Sir you do realize that they are turning that into a museum, don't you?" I said, "Shut-up kid – just finish the tour."

There you have it – I'm as old as a museum piece in some people's opinion.