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'Papa' Hemingway wrote his best in Key West

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Photouring Florida

By HAMPTON DUNN



'PAPA' HEMINGWAY WROTE HIS BEST IN KEY WEST

By HAMPTON DUNN

KEY WEST --- In a Spanish Colonial mansion which met his requirements -- "big, comfortable and cool" -- Ernest Hemingway produced some of his best novels as a resident of this isolated community, the southernmost in the United States.

The Hemingway House, at 907 Whitehead St., across the street from the historic Key West Lighthouse, now is a museum and shrine to the famed writer who owned it from 1931 until his death in 1961. Mr. and Mrs. Jack Daniel bought it for \$80,000, tried living there for a couple of years, were overrun by Hemingway fans, then finally gave up and turned the home into a museum.

Among the works "Papa" completed in this tropical setting were "For Whom the Bells Toll," "A Farewell to Arms," "Green Hills of Africa," "To Have and To Have Not" (with its background of Key West), "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," "The Fifth Column" and "The Macomber Affair."

The structure dates back to 1851, built by Asa Tift, a Key West businessman. Hemingway turned the Carriage House into a Pool House and studio where he wrote. The Nobel prize winner had the first swimming pool built in Key West. It was so costly, he tossed a one-cent coin into the wet cement and remarked that the pool had taken his last penny.

The mansion contains furniture, rugs and mementos collected by Hemingway from various parts of the world, especially Spain. Exotic trees and plants flourish on the grounds. Hemingway used to drive up the Florida Keys and dig many of the plants now thriving at the house.

