
Cuban Town That Inspired Hemingway Welcomes His Grandchildren

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On the 60th anniversary of their grandfather's Nobel Prize in Literature, John and Patrick Hemingway arrived Monday in Cojimar aboard a boat similar to the writer's yacht, the Pilar.

Eighty years have also passed since Ernest Hemingway bought that boat, with which he began his crossings from Key West to this village that he visited frequently during the 20 years he lived on and off in Havana.

"It's incredible to be here, in this place that my grandfather loved so much. Now I understand why, because the people are wonderful," grandson John, who is visiting Cuba for the first time, told Efe.

John's brother Patrick, who knows a lot about the island and is on his fifth visit here, said it was an honor to have come to Cojimar by sea like his grandpa did, and hoped that events like this might serve as a "bond between people like the Americans and the Cubans."

Both expressed their surprise and gratitude for the warm welcome extended them by the people of Cojimar, who presented them with flowers and Cuban flags to lay before the bust of Hemingway, installed on the 1st anniversary of his July 1961 suicide in Ketchum, Idaho.

The sculpture looks out to sea in tribute to the fishermen with whom Hemingway shared so many moments and who donated for his bust the bronze they salvaged from old abandoned fishing boats.

Gathered together there Monday were natives of Cojimar, fishermen – among whom there was one who knew the writer personally – and almost 100 children between ages 8-10 who, with just a vague idea of who Hemingway was and what he represented for their country, gladly welcomed the writer's grandsons.

"His yacht adorned our sea and he loved to come here to swap stories with the fishermen," Cojimar's historian, Gilda Isabel Rodriguez, recalled.

During their three-day visit to the island, John and Patrick Hemingway will tour all the iconic places associated with their grandfather's life on the island, such as his home, Finca Vigia, on the south side of Havana, now converted into a museum that houses a collection of some 22,000 of Hemingway's personal belongings.
