



PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, in 1969, MEL FISHER became a full-time resident of Key West in pursuit of the Spanish galleon Nuestra Senora de Atocha, which sank off the shores of Key West on September 6, 1622; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, MEL FISHER caused the Atocha to be arrested and placed in his custody by the U.S. Southern District of Florida, and in 1982, after seven years in debate, MEL FISHER was awarded 100% ownership of the Atocha in the United States Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, in 1982, MEL and DOLORES FISHER founded the Mel Fisher Maritime Heritage Society, a non-profit organization to support a collection of artifacts from the Nuestra Senora de Atocha and its sister ship, the Santa Margarita in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, on July 20, 1985, MEL FISHER located the primary cultural deposit of more than 40 tons of gold, silver and copper artifacts proven to be from the Nuestra Senora de Atocha, and made worldwide headline news; and

WHEREAS, in 1997, 'Mel Fisher Days' was established as an annual celebration in Key West, to memorialize MEL FISHER and his perseverance in the successful search and recovery of the Nuestra Senora de Atocha and the Santa Margarita; and

WHEREAS, September 6, 2022 marks the 400th Anniversary of the sinking of the Nuestra Senora de Atocha, the Santa Margarita and other ships of the 1622 Flotilla; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Commission of the City of Key West, do hereby proclaim and recognize September 6 in honor of

**the NUESTRA SENORA DE ATOCHA,
the SANTA MARGARITA and
the perseverance of MEL FISHER**

in the "Southernmost City of the Continental United States". And urge all citizens, residents, and visitors of our Southernmost City to participate fittingly in recognizing their importance to Key West and the Florida Keys.

WITNESS our hand and seal of the City of Key West, Florida, this 16th Day of August, 2022.

Teri Johnston, Mayor

Jimmy Weekley, Commissioner