



for cryin'
out loud
Del Cryer

As much as we like fishing in the open woods, the people there had about as much allure.

It's never been to Wisconsin when we failed to meet somebody worth talking to, thinking about, and finally, going back to see.

One of our first stops in Manitowish was a couple of weeks ago was at a place called the Pea Patch, where there were peanut hills all over the place and a lot of posters on the walls.

"Hi, this guy's got to be an old fisherman, we reasoned, and sure enough, Charlie Fry had retired 10 years ago after a full 20 year hitch on the big carrier.

"No get to talking - Buck Wheeler said, 'Shiver my timbers' or something equally silly - and Charlie told us he had gone down when the old Lexington was sunk at the Battle of the Coral Sea.

"That was the first major naval engagement between ships that ever killed one another, and Charlie called it a bag one.

"We stopped a Jap task force heading to invade Australia," he said. "If we hadn't gotten 'em then, I don't know when the war would have ended.

The Lexington had had a narrow escape back on Dec. 7, 1941, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, for she had just steamed off for Wake Island a couple of days earlier.

"Otherwise, we'd have been right there at that pier," Charlie recalled. Instead, the Lexington was trying to deliver a squadron of Marine planes and personnel to Wake Island, but after the attack, they all returned to Pearl Harbor.

There wasn't much left out there but the Lexington and a handful of other ships," Charlie said.

The Lexington went down in the Battle of Coral Sea, and Charlie spent an hour and a half in the water before being picked up by a destroyer.

"Yank we took a swim early that day," he says simply.

Getting transferred from the destroyer to a cruiser was almost as bad as sinking, Charlie mused.

"They sent us across in a boat's chain," he says, "and every time the ships would roll toward one another, we'd be under the water again."

He served out the rest of the war on carriers, and when he got the 20 years in, he bought the Pea Patch, right across.

"Liked to starved the first year," he laughs, but the little business by the dam on West Lake grew over the years, and he has a few breakfasting cottages, too.

There used to be a fish nursery right below the dam, and its pilings are still visible in the muddling waters.

Walkers crowded the area, but it's off limits to fishermen, and Charlie has been known to shoo off people who try to violate the law.

"I just don't think they ought to be having to pay \$100 a day for what they catch in there," he chuckles.

Late in the week we went over to Little Bohemia, the place where Chicago staged its big gun battle, and had a fine feast on a specialty we can neither pronounce nor spell.

And we got to talking with a fellow puffing on a monstrously huge pipe.

He turned out to be Emil Wanasaka Jr., who runs the place, and he gets the pipes shipped in every so often from Milwaukee.

Emil gave us the dealer's address and brought out a couple of favorite pipes for our inspection, and we suspect we'll have to try one of those models one of these days. They look like a very fine smoke.

Wheeler turns communications expert in the evening and tries to pick up some of the stations we could get.

He was getting Minocqua pretty well with the help of a wire road hamper, especially when he sat just to the left of the radio and held a can of Lohmeyer's.

But it's best to like country music with an occasional polka because that's what they play up there.


Wheeler thought the sound was almost as good as the nectar of the north woods he was sipping.

The announcers are something special, too, but the best we've heard came a few years ago when one fellow was talking about the crapple fishing and mispronounced the "a" as in "nap."

He was more accurate than he realized because things were pretty slow at the time.

In any event, these broadcasters are a very long way from the big time, but they sure are fun to listen to.

SPORTS FANS:
I
BET
YOU
DIDN'T
KNOW



Brought To You
By Fred Schwesky

Here's an oddity about one of the greatest players in baseball history - **Len Gehrig**. Everything important that ever happened to Gehrig in his great baseball career - **used to be his** - **happened** in the month of June.

He was born June 18, 1893. He started his famous career of playing 2,130 consecutive games on June 1, 1925. His longest day at bat, when he had the all-time record by hitting four homers in one game, came on June 3, 1932. A crippling disease forced his retirement from baseball June 21, 1939.

And so it goes. To top it off, Gehrig died, at the age of only 38 on you guessed it - June 2, 1941.

Here's an oddity. Although the Philadelphia Phillies have been playing big league baseball every year since 1900, they have NEVER won a World Series! That seems hard to believe, but you can look it up and see that it's true.

How fast could you drive a car in the old days? Well, the first auto race in the United States was held in Chicago on Thursday, Aug. 186. It was a 50 mile race, and the winning car, driven by famous inventor Frank Duryea, traveled at the average speed of - believe it or not - 7 1/2 miles per hour!

I bet you didn't know that Crystal Lake Dodge has one of the best service departments in the area and a complete body shop.

CRYSTAL LAKE DODGE

Maple St. & 174
435-0111

Clipped By:

mwhistoricalsociety
Mon, Nov 15, 2021

Copyright © 2023 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.

POWERED BY
Newspapers.com