

Hemingway enjoyed his life in the North

By TOM DAMMANN

LOOKING FROM THE north shore across Lake Charlevoix at the condominiums and yachts that have replaced much of the cedar swamp and sandy beach that had prevailed at Hemingway Point since the lake's formation, one wonders how Ernest Hemingway would react.

Hemingway Point was a site where the author of "A Farewell To Arms" reportedly camped as a teenager.

According to legend, while Hemingway Point was actually named for Ernest's uncle George, who owned the land, the young Hemingway not only camped there, but upon occasion used it as refuge when hiding from the "game wardens." The legend is unclear on why he had to go into hiding.

Hiding out legends about Hemingway abound. According to another, sometime after World War I Ernest and his Petoskey pal, Dutch Pailthorp, got drunk and shot out the lights of Boyne City streets. This time they made it for Cook's gambling establishment in Charlevoix.

Those episodes occurred sometime in the 1919-22 period when Hemingway came up here to recover from his World War I experiences and wounds.

It was then that he paid occasional visits to Dr. Guy Conkle in Boyne City to have bits of shrapnel removed from his body.

Between recuperation and parties, fishing and hunting, he began his serious writing, turning out some of his earlier short stories.

These stories had germinated since his youngest days, when he spent summers on Walloon Lake, sometimes traveling with his father, Dr. Clarence Hemingway, when he made house calls to local farms or Indian settlements.

One of Hemingway's biographers, Peter Griffin, quoted from a letter written in 1919, in his book "Along with Youth." In the letter to his friend, Jim Gamble, Hemingway wrote:

"This is a priceless place, Jim. Horton's Bay on Pine Lake (Lake Charlevoix) about 12 miles from Charlevoix, about three hundred miles north of



Ernest Hemingway grew up in Northern Michigan, and placed many of his early works here.

This sign at Horton Bay takes note of the region's author.



Ernest Hemingway in his later years.



Hemingway spent part of his time at this home, the old Potter boarding house, in Petoskey.

Hemingway lived on Walloon

HEMINGWAY

Continued from page 6

here. It is great northern air. Absolutely the best trout fishing in the country. No exaggeration. Fine country. Good color, good northern atmosphere. Absolute freedom, no summer resort stuff, and lots of paintable stuff. ... Bill has a Buick Six that we can run into Charlevoix when we long for the fleshpots. And it is equally good to run over to the Pine Barrens where it is absolutely wild and there are the Big and Little Sturgeon and the Minihaha and The Black trout Rivers."

Griffin speculates that it was a "three day blow," an October storm heralding the change of season, that spurred Hemingway to move from the Dilworth cottage "Pinehurst" in Horton Bay to Potter's Boarding House in Petoskey the winter of 1919. While living there, Hemingway became a regular at Braun's diner, hung out at McCarthy's barber shop, and "drank coffee laced with bootleg red plush" at the Perry Hotel.

That winter his best friend was 14-year-old Grace Quinlan, who lived across the street. According to biographer Griffin, Hemingway and Quinlan

would walk together to the Petoskey library where he would enthrall her with his stories and bore her with long explanations of Shelley and Keats.

But it was later, probably when he was in Paris in 1924, that he wrote what some devotees consider his most memorable short story, "Big Two Hearted River," and also the only really funny thing he ever wrote, the hilarious, disorganized novel about Petoskey entitled "The Torrents of Spring." (In an aside, he cast aspersions at the Petoskey public librarian, which may have accounted for the fact that for many years "The Torrents of Spring" was not available at the Petoskey Public Library).

It is said that veterans of any war in history can identify with "The Big Two Hearted River," Hemingway's tale of his return to the tranquility and peace of a sylvan river in the Upper Peninsula.

The story was based on a true camping-fishing expedition by the author. According to author John Voelker, Hemingway so treasured the stream he really fished he disguised it by calling the stream the Big Two Hearted River, when actually it was the Fox River through Seney some 25 miles west.

A former Michigan Supreme Court Justice and author of

"Anatomy of a Murder" and other novels and short stories, which he wrote under the name of Robert Traver, Judge Voelker used to come down from his home in Marquette to summer at the Sequonota Club not far from Hemingway Point on Lake Charlevoix.

He wrote the preface to "Ernie," a book of memories about Hemingway's youth, written by Hemingway's sister Madeline Hemingway Miller, who still summers at Walloon Lake in the family's cottage, Windemere.

But, in her mid-80s and "not feeling too well," she requests not to be intruded upon, stating that she is restricting callers to close and dear friends.

Her book is full of memories and anecdotes that show that it was during the summers of his youth around Walloon Lake and Horton Bay that her brother

See STORM, page 8

Storm moved Ernest to Petoskey

STORM

Continued from page 7

learned to love and live with nature.

As a teenager, he didn't live in the cottage with the rest of the family, but rather in a tent alongside with its own light enabling him to read much of the night.

Ernie introduced a game called truth, his sister recorded. Players were carefully chosen and sworn to secrecy before they could play. One was chosen to "be on the spot" (with his or her consent). He was then supposed to answer certain questions and if he refused to answer he might face some harsh penalties.

"One fellow refused to answer questions about his girl," Mrs. Miller wrote. "He was set afloat in a canoe without a paddle, at night, with an offshore wind. He managed to hand-paddle himself back to the group and was welcomed back and 'off the spot.'"

Another time, she recalled, they discovered a skunk, which "Ernie shot without hesitation." They carried the dead skunk across the lake and buried it behind some campers' tent who they felt had overstayed their visit. The campers departed bright and early the

next day.

Once he shot a blue heron, suggesting it would make a fine specimen for his father's collection of stuffed birds and animals. They stored it under a seat in the family launch and then went ashore for a picnic lunch. When they returned, the bird had disappeared.

Next day the game warden appeared while Ernest was across the lake, working at the family farm. He said he had come to arrest Ernest for shooting a blue heron (a protected species), but Mrs. Hemingway ordered him driven off with a gun.

Later she thought better of it, and sent Ernie to Horton Bay to consult Wesley Dilworth. The upshot was that he went before the judge in Boyne City, told his story, was fined a small sum, let go, and never shot a protected bird or animal again.

Ernest was big on nicknames, so everybody in the family had a nickname. His was "Oinbones" and his sister Sunny was called "Nun-bones."

There are not many people around today who remember the author.

Bill Ohle, who will celebrate his 80th birthday soon, was about 10 years old when Hemingway came up here after the first World War. He has collected his own memories and

bits of history and is rightfully keeping them to himself for his own use.

Robert Dilworth, of Temperance, brother of the late Jim Dilworth, grandson of the original Jim Dilworth, Horton Bay's famed blacksmith, and son of Forest Wesley Dilworth, proprietor of Boyne City's Hotel Dilworth, remembers that "Dad taught Hemingway to fish Horton Creek."

Dwight Sumner, the wood craftsman and furniture maker who lives on Sumner Road on the outskirts of Horton Bay, recalls that Dr. Hemingway "looked down my throat once. And young Hemingway used to come over in a boat and sell us vegetables from their garden."

"Then he used to come over in his car and get stuck in the sand and we'd have to pull him out with a team of horses."

In her book, Mrs. Miller recalls "Together, we really made what we thought was a fistful of money peddling the extra fresh vegetables that grew on our farm across the lake from the cottage."

Marian Hartwell remembers sitting on the steps of the Horton Bay store and watching the people go in and out of the church when Hemingway married his first wife, Hadley Richardson, on Sept. 3, 1921.

"I will never forget how beautiful she looked."



GRAPHIC file photos

The Horton Bay General Store was frequented by the young Ernest Hemingway.