

Hemingway left indelible mark on Ketchum



Ernest Hemingway's Royal typewriter in Ketchum, Idaho. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

KETCHUM, Idaho – *"There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed."* – Ernest Hemingway

Oh, the stories that old Royal typewriter in the glass case could tell. The blood – perhaps literal and figurative – that fell onto those keys. The legendary prose that spilled forth onto once blank pieces of paper with every peck.

This typewriter at the museum in Ketchum is said to belong to Ernest Hemingway.

Hemingway earned the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954, and was nominated for the same award in 1950 and 1947. He was awarded the Pulitzer for fiction writing for "The Old Man and the Sea" and was nominated for the Pulitzer for "For Whom the Bell Tolls."



This is the perspective Ernest Hemingway had from his seat at the Casino in Ketchum. Photo/Pamala Ward

His presence in this small outpost in Idaho (population 3,319 – Sun Valley is 1,476) can still be felt to this day.

Bars that he would frequent still exist, though most have evolved in the last 55 years. At the Casino, locals said, he would sit at the end of the bar near the door. A few old pictures with Hemingway in them hang on the walls.

Hemingway is said to have been a regular at the Sawtooth Club, Whiskey Jacques, and the Pioneer, too. His last dinner out was at the Christiana.

While the Sun Valley Lodge touts how Hemingway finished “For Whom the Bell Tolls” while staying in a second floor room, no marker on the outside indicates this fact.



This is one of the bars Ernest Hemingway enjoyed. Photo/Pamala Ward

Hemingway first came to the resort – specifically the lodge – in 1939. Averell Harriman, who founded the ski area, had enough marketing savvy to know if he brought celebrities to the area, the common person would follow. It worked – and still does.

The renowned novelist fell in love with the area; especially the fishing and hunting. Establishments throughout town have photos of Hemingway hunting. It was a love of his since growing up in Illinois.

He lived in Ketchum multiple times. Hemingway set up residence in 1946 with one wife, and came back in 1958 with a different wife.

Ketchum is where he took his life in July 1961. He's buried in the cemetery in town. In January, there was too much snow to go looking for his headstone. The stories are that people who visit leave smoked cigars and whiskey bottles as a token of appreciation.



The Sun Valley Museum of History has a section devoted to Ernest Hemingway. Photo/Pamala Ward

Hemingway left behind a treasure of works that to this day are must reads: "The Sun Also Rises," "A Farewell to Arms," "The Old Man and the Sea," "For Whom the Bell Tolls," and "To Have and Have Not."

The library in Ketchum has an entire section devoted to him. Books by and about the author are on display. Photos of him are on the wall. For the past dozen years, the library has put on the Ernest Hemingway Festival in the fall.

An entire section of the museum in town is also devoted to Hemingway.