

Lost Arts

As a young boy, I can remember crossing highway 22, slipping through the barbed wire fence, and exploring everything such as small parachutes, machine gun clips, and shell casings over in Fort Chaffee. Soldiers that served on the base would come around to the area schools and explain the dangers of unexploded shells and mortars. Back then you just had to make sure that war games were not being played in your section and you could go and hike until your heart's content. Speaking of your heart, that brings me to our first lost art.

Quail hunting is almost a thing of the past, fading as fast as cells phones and internet now are taking over our lives. As I would scout over in Fort Chaffee for a place to deer hunt, sometimes a sound would scare the living day lights out of me. It was the sound of a covey of quail jumping up and flying to a place of safety. I was never much of a quail hunter, just if the opportunity presented itself. However, my dad had a pet shop and kennel when I was just a lad and we would have English and Irish Setters for bird hunting. Two of the dogs I remember most was a gun shy English Setter and a very intelligent Irish Setter that I would show around Arkansas at fairs like they do now at the Westminster Dog Show. A gentleman came and bought our Irish Setter and I cried for days. I came to learn not to get too attached to the dogs because they were all for sale. The gentleman later returned and informed me that a storm had come and a tree had fallen on the dog and killed her. She was one of the prettiest and smartest dogs I had ever owned.

I have had the privilege to coach and hunt with Coach Bill Frye of Mansfield. It was a pleasure to sit with him on the bench at basketball games and learn not only the game of basketball, but the wit that went with his masterful control of the game. However, this is not to mention his coaching career, but his love for the lost art of quail hunting. His dog, named after his mother Eula is a reminder of his love not only for his mother but for a sport that is long past its heyday. It must be the sound of the quail taking off and sounding like those machine guns over in Fort Chaffee when the soldiers are playing war. You have to control the fast beating of your heart to shoulder your gun and slow down enough to lead your first target. If you don't down that one hopefully there is enough time to hit a second or third bird. When you are in the field it seems that time stands still and reminds us of our youth.

Danny Dixon is another keeper of a lost art. He introduced Mr. Outdoors to the art of fly fishing. I met Danny after observing an advertisement on the truck he was driving offering his trout fishing guide services. So, as part of my business of course I called him. We struck up a deal and he came to my house and instructed me on how to throw the rod at ten and two o'clock to get the fly to its intended target on the water. The lessons provided useful as we travelled to the Little Red River near Heber Springs. Wow, what a thrill when even Mr. Outdoors can learn new tricks and landed his first trout on a fly rod! As an avid waterfowl hunter the thought of having Danny tie some trout flies out of duck feathers harvested in the outdoors was always a dream. Mr. Dixon made that dream come true when he tied some flies out of some duck feathers and even one from a pheasant harvested by Mr. Outdoors on a trip to Texas with Bill Frye. So just remember that it is our responsibility to introduce these things to the next generation so they are not a lost art from the not so distant past.

A new website has just been launched to offer a new avenue for our listeners, readers, and outdoor adventurers. There are a few bugs to work out so keep checking out www.jimreynoldsoutdoors.com for new additions as we morph to accommodate our fans. Thank you for all the support and encouragement to build something local that our community can be proud of.