

That's the Latest July 2022 - The Silo

My son Caleb and I were watching a Boston Red Sox home baseball game on TV recently when I started regaling him in stories about how Harmon Killebrew would hit homeruns way over the green monster. For you non-baseball fans, the green monster is the wall out in left field of Fenway Park where the Red Sox have called home since 1912. It's the oldest major league stadium still in use being 2 years older than Chicago's Wrigley Field. It's on my bucket list to see a Twins game in Boston.



Fenway Park's Green Monster today

Back in the day, the 37 foot high green wall was topped by a 23 foot high chain link fence. They have since replaced the chain link fence with more seating for fans. I remember these



Fenway park picture from 1960

height statistics from my childhood because the old silo on our farm was 60 feet high and I would equate its height to the green monster and the fence on top of it. Now Killebrew, who played from the mid 50's to the mid 70's, would hit balls over the 37 foot green monster for a home run. Any ball that hit the screen on top of the wall was a home run. But the prolific Twins home run hitter would at times hit the ball so far that it went over the screen as well. There were very few players who could do this.

On the farm, I thought I would try to emulate the 'Killer' by trying to hit rocks with a wooden bat over the silo. I did not have a good measure of where the 37 foot line was on the silo but I figured if I got one up there somewhere it was a home run. Then I figured out that if I stood out on the west side of the barn that would be about 37 feet high to get it over the barn. I kind of had my own green monster then. The only thing is my green monster had windows and if I hit a line drive double off the wall it would sometimes go right through the wall meaning another pane of glass paid its price to be a part of my Fenway Park.



The silo before it was downed in 1966

I'm pretty sure these rocks would not do the shingles on the roof much good either. Every once and a while I would stand by the house and try to hit rocks over the grainery which had tin siding. I know there are several dents on the grainery that are probably still visible today.

I had the opportunity to go to bat day at the venerable Met Stadium in Bloomington in 1966 to see a Twins game and get a Twins wooden bat. My neighbors Bill Engvall and his dad Owen along with my classmate Steve Johnson went to the game and Bill, Steve and I each got a bat. I used this collector's item to hit the rocks over the various farm buildings. Very few if any of the rocks made it over the silo but it wasn't for lack of trying. It wasn't long and the barrel of that bat was nothing but splinters. Aluminum bats were not available yet but that wouldn't have helped me as it would have had more dents than the grainery. The bats and the buildings took a beating but my hand/eye coordination vastly improved.

Along with trying to hit rocks 60 feet high, I would practice pitching by throwing a rubber ball against the garage. Of course the garage had windows too. I did one time, and this has never been disclosed before now, (statute of limitations I hope are in effect here) that I got our German Shepard named King, blamed for one broken window by saying he got locked in the garage and he was, in his attempt to get out, the one who broke the window. I made the mistake of trying to blame our pug Benji once but then my dad figured that was physically impossible for a dog that stood 8 inches high to do that. He was death on rats but not windows.



The silo was knocked down in late summer 1966 so my real life-size green monster was no longer a target. Probably just as well, as the windows had taken quite a beating and I was tired of paying for and fixing them. I didn't want to buy any more wooden bats either because I knew they would just turn in to kindling. And the dogs would growl when I had a bat in my hand.