WHAT do you do if your town is known as the “Chair Center of the World”? You build the world’s largest chair, of course. That’s just what Union City, Pa., did in 1950.

Twenty miles southeast of Erie on U.S. Route 6, Union City was surrounded by abundant timber and was once home to five chair companies. Two remain today — the Union City Chair Co., which was founded in 1881 and makes superb hardwood Victorian-era reproductions and traditional American designs sold across the country, and the Cherry Hill Division of Ethan Allen, founded in 1966.

The 12-foot-tall chair was first unveiled on a parade float, and was permanently settled on the Lions Club lot at North Main and West High streets. According to the Union City Times of September 7, 1950, the chair was made by a local fellow, Wilbur Comstock, who thought it would “answer a long-felt need for properly advertising the city’s chief industry.”

The chair was gone about 10 years later — no one’s really sure when, or where it went. A small boat then sat there to advertise a boat manufacturer, but it, too, is gone. Today, the site is part of a small industrial park.

— Text by Brian Butko, postcard from his collection.