Adirondack Gold

BY KEN RIMANY

Flowed Lands, High Peaks Wilderness Area

Ever since I bought my first camera at age 15, I have been taking pictures. Through my association with Paul Schaefer, my friend and mentor, my photography became focused on photo journalism and historical documentation of people and places, particularly in the Adirondacks. Paul inspired in me a heightened appreciation and respect for the human fabric and wondrous landscapes and wildlife of the Adirondacks.

Paul once said to me, "You think you understand, but you don't. But you will."
I have always appreciated the beauty and uniqueness of the Adirondacks: its mountains, forests, lakes, and rivers. It wasn't until after Paul's death, July 14, 1996, that I realized Paul all along had been introducing me to one of the greatest treasures of the Adirondacks, "Adirondack Gold" — passionate people who love the Adirondacks. They come from all walks of life with an array of diverse backgrounds and viewpoint. In their own special way, using their unique gifts and talents, they inspire others in untold ways. Their message is simple: treasure this priceless heritage, the Adirondacks; take care of it and pass it on "to the youth of distant tomorrows."

Along with illustrations by my good friend David Kiphuth, I would like to share with you in the photo essay that follows some very special individuals I have come to know, people who personify "Adirondack Gold."

Photos by Ken Rimany: photographer and director of development and outreach, The Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks.
Illustrations by David Kiphuth: artist and feature illustrator, the Daily Gazette, Schenectady, New York.
Layout by Gael Fischer: graphic designer, director of publications, SUNY Empire State College.
Paul Schaefer —
Visionary Conservationist/ Home Builder

In 1998 Audubon recognized Paul as one of our nation’s top 100 Champions of Conservation during the past century whose passions, beliefs, and actions “changed how human beings think, feel and live on earth.” For over 65 years Paul dedicated his life to the preservation and protection of wilderness in the Adirondacks.

Paul’s last written words recorded in the Beaver House journal, July 6, 1996: “Just great to be here.”

The Beaver House

Inside Paul’s Adirondack cabin, the Beaver House
Jack Leadley, Sr. — Outdoorsman/Craftsman

Jack's reverence and respect for the Adirondacks can be felt and seen in every aspect of his life. Jack is a person who takes the time to share with others his vast knowledge of the forests and wildlife of the Adirondacks. He is a gifted craftsman and artist as well. Jack's handmade rustic furniture, baskets, snowshoes and pictures are sought by individuals and collectors from around the world.
Nellie Staves —
Outdoorswoman/Conservationist

Nellie's passion for nature and the outdoors can be summed up in one word, "fierce." Her wisdom and down-to-earth sensibilities, combined with her experiences growing up in Vermont and living in the Adirondacks, have enabled Nellie to become one of New York State's leading conservationists. Since her childhood days, Nellie continues her artwork of inscribing magnificent images of wildlife and nature on bracket fungi, her natural canvases.
Gary Randorf —
Photographer

Gary is one of today’s premier Adirondack photographers whose photography depicts the very essence and spirit of the Adirondacks. I first met Gary at the Association for the Protection of the Adirondacks’ 1994 fall conference celebrating the centennial of Article XIV, the “Forever Wild” covenant of the New York State Constitution. This has led to a special friendship which shares both our love for photography and the Adirondacks.
Michael Wilson — Educator/Historian

Michael's passion and enthusiasm for teaching and interpreting the natural and cultural heritage of the Adirondacks is remarkable. He inspires students as a Professor at SUNY Potsdam teaching Drama and English, and as Associate Director of the Great Camp Sagamore he directs Sagamore's internship program. Michael is a licensed New York State Guide and currently is the President of the Adirondack Research Consortium.
Peggy Eyres —
Singer/Songwriter

Peggy's talent as an Adirondack singer/songwriter is extraordinary. Through her lyrical songs she entertains and educates students and audiences of all ages about the lore, tales and people of the Adirondacks. Recognized in 1996 as Woman of the Year by the Adirondack Business and Professional Women's Association, Peggy was also named 1998 Woman of Distinction by the Adirondack Girl Scout Council.