

## **JERRY LANPHEAR DESERVED TITLE OF 'MR. ADIRONDACKS'**

**5/20/97**

If one person could be called the quintessential Adirondacker, it would have to be my subject for this week. "Mr. Adirondacks" was the term used by Dr. Stephen Culver to describe Jerry Lanphear and I wholeheartedly agree.

Dr. Culver was the physician who did his best to tend Jerry throughout the terminal illness that took his life on March 5, 1996.

A true native, Jerry was born and raised in Raquette Lake, the son of the late Orriu and Hazel Lanphear. In 1940, he married another native Adirondacker, Mary Bird. Mary died in 1990.

Their only child, Marcia Roblee, still lives in Raquette Lake. Marcia's son Jamie and her grandson live in Blue Mountain Lake. Jamie's son, Jerry Wesley Roblee, is named after his great-grandfather. Jerry got to greet his namesake shortly before he passed on.

Jerry worked at all the usual things that natives do for a living. As a youngster he did chores at the local seasonal resorts and homes. When he was not guiding or fishing for whitefish to sell at Dillon's store, he caddied at the Antlers golf course.

A veteran of World War 11, he returned home to make his living as a caretaker. Most of his working years were spent at North Point and Bluff Point on Raquette Lake.

Jerry's skills as a guide and outdoorsman provided his benefactors with a bonus in addition to his expert caretaking duties. One in particular, Herb Birrell, owner of North Point, carried that dimension one step further. He had Jerry accompany him and participate in big game hunts in British Columbia and Africa.

They hunted Dall sheep and many of the other big game animals indigenous to the Canadian Rockies. Jerry was, for the most part, at home in the Rockies with his western counterparts.

Africa was a whole new experience with both the quarry and the terrain. Jerry was particularly impressed with the lion and its great strength. He recounted witnessing a large male pulling a kudo that was hanging from a tree for bait into two pieces.

My imagination was fired by his tale of watching a herd of 250 elephants lumbering across their path. His biggest surprise was the lack of skill evident in the native guides in traversing the vast landscape.

My best friend, Morg Roderick of North Point, was fortunate in sharing many days afield with Jerry. Hunting and fishing on many occasions, the two men shared a beaver trap line annually. Sharing as much time as he did with Jerry, Rod was impressed with his woodsmanship and indefatigable sense of humor.

Much of Jerry's enjoyment of the chase was culminated at the table. He thoroughly enjoyed the fruits of his labor. On a typical trapping sojourn, a frozen hindquarter of elk furnished their main fare. The day's portion was lopped off with an axe.

Jerry's wish for a "little tenderloin," when he was unable to fulfill it himself in his last hunting season, was happily filled by friend Rod and grandson Jamie.

*(To be continued)*