

**MIRA SPINNING'S ROOTS FIRM IN WOODHULL LAKE  
TERRITORY  
9/02/97**

I confess I have been guilty of not featuring very many women in, to quote one "his walks down memory lane." There are two reasons. The first is that I know more male characters and it's easier to write about them without their taking umbrage with your literary license. I am not afraid to tread in most spheres but when it comes to the gentler sex, I have learned to draw the line.

All that said, I will proceed with a lady whose roots and heart are firmly entrenched in the local area.

Ms. Mira Spinning first came to Woodhull Lake in 1913, when she was six months old. Her father, Harry, was a local contractor and guide whose work kept him for extended periods in the Woodhull area.

In 1895, Harry built the first cottage, a log cabin on Woodhull, for a client. In the 1920s he bought it and it has remained in the family since. Mira recalled her father giving brother Lee and herself a choice of a camp or a car. They could not afford both.

There were three Spinning children: Lee, Mira and Fred, in that order. The camp was passed on down to Mira, the sole survivor. To say that it means a great deal to her would be an understatement. Access is by boat a mile and a half from the landing at the auto road terminus. A journey, coupled with the trip up from Utica, precludes her spending as much time there as she would like.

A well-educated young woman, she earned a degree in premedical science from Elmira College and a degree in library or information science from Syracuse University. Two summer sessions at Columbia and one each at the University of Michigan and the University of Illinois further augmented her education.

The family spent months at Woodhull when the children were young and while their father pursued his work. He tended two gardens to provide fresh produce that would not otherwise be available. One garden had to be covered and protected from animals and the weather. He even hybridized a red potato that matured early to take advantage of the short Adirondack growing season.

Early bearing apple trees, which he grafted himself, still give up their bounty to visiting bear. The family patch of rhubarb still provides Woodhull neighbors with an annual spring tonic or rhubarb pie.

A lot of water has gone over the old dam on Woodhull since Mira was a youngster and the lake is not as she first recalls. There were plenty of small-mouth bass in those days and she caught three-pound brook trout from the dock.

The bass and brook trout have been eliminated by the acid rain, but lake trout and stunted perch remain. It is still a beautiful lake, remote and relatively free from man's intrusion.

Mira's age and health do not allow her to enjoy that special place as she once did, but it's evident from talking with her that her memories and spirit have not been dimmed. There is much more in Mira's recollections of Woodhull and her family's history, which I hope to share with you in the future.