

TRAVELING MEMORY LANE WITH DUDLEY SCHNEIDER

October 15, 2002

The Adirondacks are a unique and special place. They present divergent views to residents and visitors alike. Everyone looks at the area from his or her own individual perspective. The differences may be subtle and not immediately perceptible, which is the case in a new acquaintance I came to know through this column.

He is Dudley Schneider, an annual visitor to the area since 1966. Dudley, wife Beth and their children have spent vacations at the Willis Lodge exploring and assimilating the area's sights and sounds.

The sights and sounds so impressed him that he began a file in 1970 to document the things he has seen and heard over the 34 years they have vacationed in the Adirondacks.

Interestingly enough, we both became enamored with the area with the same first-time experience. It was the call of the loon. Mine was years earlier in 1939 or 1940 on a still-water of the Red River, and Dudley's was on Seventh Lake.

Dudley divided "The Sights and sounds of the Adirondacks" into three parts:

The Past – those sights and sounds may be "lost" but for sure not forgotten. The Present. The Future.

The past file is replete with those things that all those who count their years in the Adirondacks at 30+ can relate to.

- The sign in the barbershop in Old Forge that read "Gone Fishing" and no hint was proffered as to how long the barber would be gone.
- The signs of timbering and log trucks. Who remembers the loose logs laying on the highway in the vicinity of the Thendara railroad underpass? Logs on the railroad gondola cars from the regions above Big Moose? Logging camps and logging horses?
- Bald Mountain fire tower and as Dudley remembers it, "Ranger Rick" – Dick Wormwood, perhaps?
- Arrowhead Hotel in Inlet along with Hotel Neodack and the Osprey tour to Sand Beach at the end of Seventh Lake.
- Chief Dennis and the earliest visits to the Enchanted Forest?
- Northern Lights in Inlet.
- Keith's Diner in Inlet and Kate's Diner in Old Forge

Dudley remembers Keith's special "2 by 2 by 2" – two eggs, two pieces of bacon, two pancakes for \$2.

- Bears at the town dumps. Now the dumps are closed. Dudley and many of us remember people asking, "What's there to do" and being told to go see the bears at the dump.
- Toboggan run over Route 28 in Inlet and Maple Ridge ski hill in Old Forge
- Trains in early days.
- Bus Bird's old yellow seaplane

These are but a few of the things Dudley, and I as well, miss.

In the Present, Dudley lists some things we can still experience: loons, fog, trains, ice cream socials, wooden boat engines, bears, deer and float planes.

One thing in the Past that stood out with Dudley was an experience his mother related to him that occurred on the steps of Kalil's General Store where Mr. Kalil himself, a colorful pioneer, told her of his early boyhood and move to America.

I particularly can relate to her story since a great many of my recollections involve similar conversations with old loggers, merchants and residents of the area. They will always remain to me the fondest of all the priceless memories and sights and sounds of the Adirondacks. It makes me sad to think they can never be duplicated.

Thanks, Dudley, for reminding me of them.