

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Historic Saranac Lake to Host “Martha Reben Day,”

SARANAC LAKE, New York. On Saturday, July 10, Historic Saranac Lake will celebrate “Martha Reben Day,” commemorating the life and work of the acclaimed Adirondack author. A tent will be erected on Riverside Park, at the site of the Martha Reben historic marker. Historic Saranac Lake staff and volunteers will provide the public free information about Martha Reben. A local 8th grade English class has been studying the author, and some of the student work, including videos of dramatic monologues that they have written and performed will be presented. Martha Reben Day is occurring in conjunction with the Adirondack Rocking Festival and Runabout Rendezvous.

Martha Reben (born Rebentisch, 1911-1964) wrote *The Healing Woods* (1952), *The Way of the Wilderness* (1954), and *A Sharing of Joy* (1963) memoirs of her experiences camping on the shore of Weller Pond eight miles from Saranac Lake in 1931 in an attempt to cure herself of tuberculosis.

Reben grew up in New York City. She came to Saranac Lake for the cure in 1927. After curing for three and a half years, and after three operations failed to cure her, she decided to follow her own desires, and hired a guide to take her camping in the wilderness.

Martha spotted an ad for a different type of cure in the local newspaper. Local boat builder and guide Fred Rice placed an advertisement seeking a patient to help guide into the woods for the fresh air cure. Mr. Rice was a firm believer in the curative powers of the Adirondack woods air. He argued that TB patients who were spending their days in the village of Saranac Lake resting on cure porches would be better served by getting out in the woods.

Over the course of the next ten years, an enduring friendship with Mr. and Mrs. Rice would be forged. Fred and Martha returned to the woods during the warm season. They went back to Weller Pond, and they also camped on Hungry Bay on Middle Saranac and Pope Bay on Lower Saranac.

Martha found her home with the Rice family, wintering with Martha and Kate in their small house on the old State Road, leaving town towards Tupper Lake. Convinced of the health benefits of the outdoor life, Martha never returned to the city. Her disease slowly improved, and she lived to age 53.

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WILDERNESS LADY

MARTHA REBEN

1911 - 1964

HER LIFE HERE AND HER BOOKS

ABOUT THE ADIRONDACKS

INSPIRED MANY.

GEORGE E. PATAKI, GOVERNOR