

Finding True North: A History of One Small Corner of the Adirondacks

Fran Yardley

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Fran Yardley's inspiring memoir *Finding True North* recalls a marriage and partnership amid a reflection on the vast natural beauty of New York's Adirondack region and the legacy of a mountain resort. Told in a companionable yet compelling tone, Yardley's narrative broadens "one small corner" of the Bartlett Carry Club into a heartfelt landmark.

While many young couples of the 1960s were focused on liberation from the past, newlyweds Fran and Jay Yardley took on the mission of restoring the large, abandoned, century-old Bartlett Carry Club mountain lodge that Jay had inherited. In its heyday, the Club had attracted crowds of visitors keen on enjoying the area's fishing, canoeing, and hiking amid a dazzlingly pristine wilderness.

Hardly a honeymoon, Fran and Jay's ambitious project involved cleaning, hauling, rebuilding, and other seemingly endless tasks, all done without electricity or heat in their earliest years of ownership. After the renovations were finished and guests began to arrive for the summer season, the Yardleys assumed new duties of caretaking and hosting—in addition to raising two children.

Fran's spirit of adventure, paired with a willingness to work hard, made her an ideal companion for Jay, but it was her growing fascination with the original founders of the Club and the history of the region that soon turned their efforts into a joint labor of love. Alternating between details of exhaustive rehabbing and recollections of Bartlett's earliest years through to its initial closing, *Finding True North* brings the Club to life.

With a flow of lovely language and imagery of lush pines, full moons, and clear Adirondack lakes and skies, *Finding True North* is a testament to the unique spirit of preservation, regeneration, and place.

MEG NOLA (University Press 2018)

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