

CAPTURING THE ADIRONDACKS

State Museum Exhibits Seneca Ray Stoddard's Photography

Text and photos provided by the New York State Museum



Prospect House Piazza, Blue Mountain Lake

Seneca Ray Stoddard (1844-1917) was one of the first artists to capture the majesty of the Adirondack landscape through photography. Early on, he sought to preserve the beauty of the landscape with his talent for painting. This artistic background and an Adirondack vision attracted him to photography's unique ability to capture the environment. Stoddard mastered the then recently introduced wet-plate process of photography. Though extremely cumbersome by today's standards, the technique was the first practical way to record distant scenes.



Carry at Buttermilk Falls



An Adirondack Home



Prospect House, Blue Mountain Lake

Through his photography, Stoddard captured the changing Adirondack landscape. As railroads were introduced, the area became an increasingly important destination for tourists from the burgeoning middle-class as well as the newly wealthy in the “Gilded Age.”



Bog River Falls, Adirondacks



Willsborough Tunnel, N.Y. & C.R.R.

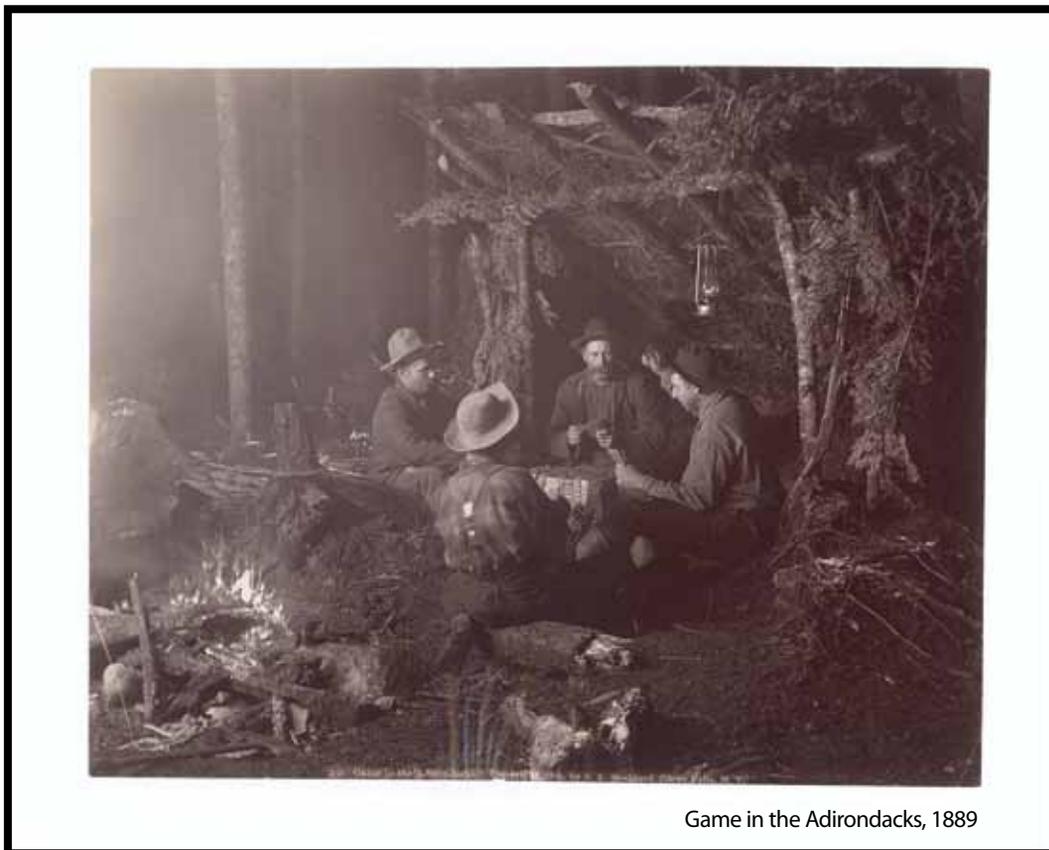


Loggers in the Adirondacks

Fort William Henry Hotel, Lake George, NY



In 1972, New York State Museum curators learned of Maitland DeSormo of Saranac Lake, NY, and his dedication to the work of the then relatively unknown Seneca Ray Stoddard. DeSormo had rescued much of Stoddard's material legacy—his photographs, paintings and writings. The State Museum acquired more than five hundred historic Stoddard prints from DeSormo.



Game in the Adirondacks, 1889



Lake George - At Black Mountain Point, showing the Steambot Minne-Ha-Ha prior to its conversion to a hotel.

Seneca Ray Stoddard: Capturing the Adirondacks is on display now through February 24, 2013 in Crossroads Gallery in the New York State Museum. Visitors are treated to viewing more than 100 of Stoddard's photographs, an Adirondack guide boat, freight boat, camera, copies of Stoddard's books, and several of his paintings. There are also several Stoddard photos of the Statue of Liberty and Liberty Island. Guided tours of the exhibition will be held on December 8 and February 29 from 1-2 p.m., and a film will be shown about Stoddard on December 29.

An online version of the exhibition is available at www.nysm.nysed.gov/virtual/exhibits/SRS/ on the State Museum website.

For further reading, see the August 2005 *Conservationist*.



Gateway to Adirondack Mountain Reserve, 1891



Located on Madison Avenue in Albany, the Museum is open Tuesday through Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day, when it is closed. Call (518) 474-5877 or visit the Museum website at www.nysm.nysed.gov for more information.

