

OUR SQUAM HERITAGE

When visiting Squam for the first time, one is immediately taken aback by the natural beauty of the shoreline, and by the views of the Squam Range, the Rattlesnakes and Red Hill surrounding the lakes in their pristine state. Along with the visual experience comes an added sense of peace and spirituality; perhaps the only sound is the eerie call of a loon. Although change to some degree is inevitable, it is important to capture Squam's unique character and values by looking at its past, and therefore making every effort to ensure its future.

200 years ago settlers came to farm the rocky soil. Many of their farmhouses still stand, and most of the stone walls they built while clearing the fields now run through new-growth forest, reminding us to respect the hard life and challenges that they faced.

100 years ago families arrived from points further south, bought some of the old farms and also built modest summer camps along the shore, all hidden from sight. They embraced a minimalist life style, enjoying the natural surroundings. Generations later, the families still share a common love of community amongst themselves. There were no zoning laws. They created the ethic that we still respect and follow today.

In recent years Squam has become much more accessible and has brought more year-round inhabitants thanks to the Internet and highways. The pressure is intense to build and develop, to tear down the old and replace with the new. People come because they appreciate Squam's values, which respect all of its residents, fauna, and flora. Most people embrace the modest life style; they do not build "overwhelming" houses but remain in partnership with the beauty of the natural environment.



Who has not been captivated by the sight of a tiny loon chick, the silhouette of a great blue heron, a moose, or a mother bear with cubs? Who has not woken to the stillness of the early morning, and been awed by its serenity? We appreciate the stewardship of our many conservation organizations to protect the habitat and water quality that support the diverse species living within the Squam watershed. To date more than 22% of the watershed has been conserved in perpetuity. May that stewardship continue!

We would like to register this extraordinary place called Squam in the National Register of Historic Places, using the camps and homesteads as examples of what we cherish and respect.

