

Foreword:

Not Just For Older Ladies

I mean no disrespect to Sue Ellen Cooper or the Red Hat Society that she founded. Though I am over 50, I cannot join her society as I am not female. I would not want her, or her organization to change in any way. This is not a lament on exclusion, nor a lampoon of her society.

For nearly 30 years I have been hiking, hunting, and canoeing in various forests and wilderness lands in upstate New York. Through most of those years I have owned, and worn, a series of red felt hats. They have become a part of my persona and my friends would think something was wrong if I showed up for an outing without my hat - although I must admit that during colder seasons, I will wear a different red hat - one that covers my ears.

When friends meet and speak of our excursions into the wild, we will often relate the humorous mishaps that have befallen our comrades, or the silly situations we have found ourselves in. Not cruelly, or with criticism, but with the fondness of remembering a good time together.

On occasion I have arranged objects like boots, hiking staff, and hat in a still life to photograph during an expedition. Lately I have started to place just my hat in poses where it represents the unseen human in the midst of one of those funny mishaps. Sometimes I have included myself in the hat. These photos may be construed to be in a vein similar to one of the themes of the above mentioned Red Hat Society - namely that, with age, many of us can feel free of embarrassment from silly situations and actions. It is this feeling of freedom that I mean to express when I say, "Red Hats Aren't Just for Older Ladies."

I hope you enjoy these images in the same light hearted spirit of adventure that fostered their creation.