

Roxanne Quimby: The Visionary Behind Burt's Bees and Her Legacy of Nature Conservation



Roxanne Quimby is a remarkable woman who has made significant contributions to the worlds of business, environmental conservation, and

philanthropy. As the co-founder of Burt's Bees, a leading natural personal care brand, Quimby has demonstrated a keen entrepreneurial spirit and a deep commitment to sustainability. However, it is her tireless advocacy for the creation of a new national park in Maine that has truly cemented her legacy as a visionary environmentalist.



Queen Bee: Roxanne Quimby, Burt's Bees, and Her Quest for a New National Park by David I. Durham

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From Burt's Bees to Nature Conservation

Quimby's entrepreneurial journey began in 1984 when she and her then-husband Burt Shavitz launched Burt's Bees. The company was founded on the simple idea of creating natural, chemical-free skincare products using beeswax as a key ingredient. Quimby's passion for natural remedies and her belief in the power of honeybees drove the company's early success.

As Burt's Bees grew in popularity, Quimby became increasingly aware of the environmental challenges facing her beloved state of Maine. She witnessed firsthand the impact of sprawl development, the decline of wildlife populations, and the degradation of water quality. Driven by a desire to protect the land and ecosystems that had sustained her and her family

for generations, Quimby began to explore ways to establish a new national park in Maine.

The Quest for Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park

In 1999, Quimby purchased a vast tract of undeveloped land in northern Maine known as Katahdin Woods and Waters. Spanning over 87,500 acres, the land encompassed a pristine wilderness of rugged mountains, sparkling lakes, and ancient forests. Quimby's vision was to donate the land to the National Park Service and create a new national park that would protect the area in perpetuity.



The breathtaking landscape of Katahdin Woods and Waters, the proposed site for a new national park.

The path to establishing the park was not without its challenges. Some local residents and stakeholders expressed concerns about the potential economic impact of a national park on the region. Others questioned the need for another national park in Maine, given the existence of Acadia National Park on the coast.

Undeterred, Quimby embarked on a tireless campaign to raise public awareness and build support for the park. She gave countless presentations, wrote op-eds, and met with policymakers and community leaders. She also created the Quimby Family Foundation, which provided funding for the park's planning and advocacy efforts.

The Power of Collaboration and Community Engagement

Quimby recognized the importance of partnering with other organizations and individuals who shared her vision. She forged alliances with conservation groups, local businesses, and the Penobscot Indian Nation, whose ancestral lands were within the proposed park boundaries. Together, they formed a coalition known as Friends of Katahdin Woods and Waters.

Community engagement was also a central pillar of Quimby's strategy. She organized workshops and public forums to gather input from local residents and address their concerns. She worked closely with the nearby town of Millinocket to develop a plan that would ensure the park's economic benefits would be shared equitably.

Overcoming Opposition and Securing Support

Despite the challenges, Quimby's persistence paid off. In 2006, the Maine Legislature passed a resolution supporting the establishment of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park. This paved the way for the National Park

Service to conduct a feasibility study, which ultimately concluded that the area met the criteria for national park designation.

However, the fight was not over. In 2009, Congress passed a budget bill that included a provision blocking the creation of the park. Quimby and her allies were devastated but refused to give up. They launched a renewed grassroots campaign, rallied supporters, and lobbied Congress to overturn the provision.



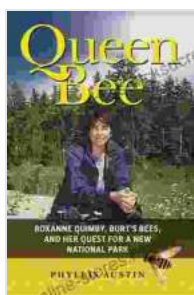
Finally, in 2016, Congress passed legislation establishing Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park, the first new national park in Maine in over 50 years. The park was formally dedicated in 2017, a testament to Quimby's extraordinary vision and tireless dedication.

Legacy and Impact

Roxanne Quimby's legacy extends far beyond Burt's Bees and Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park. As an environmental philanthropist, she has supported numerous conservation and education initiatives throughout Maine. She has also established the Quimby Center for the Arts, a vibrant hub for creativity and culture in the state.

Quimby's work has not only protected Maine's natural heritage but has also revitalized local economies and fostered a sense of community pride. Her unwavering commitment to conservation serves as an inspiration for all who strive to make a positive impact on the world.

Roxanne Quimby is a trailblazing entrepreneur, a passionate environmentalist, and a dedicated philanthropist. Her journey from Burt's Bees to the creation of Katahdin Woods and Waters National Park is a testament to her remarkable vision, resilience, and unwavering belief in the power of nature. Her legacy will continue to inspire generations to come, reminding us of the importance of protecting our natural heritage and working together to build a more sustainable future.



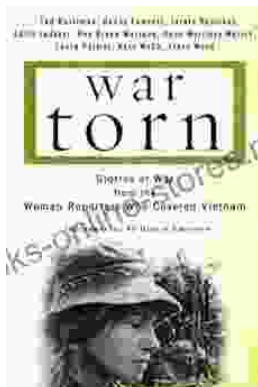
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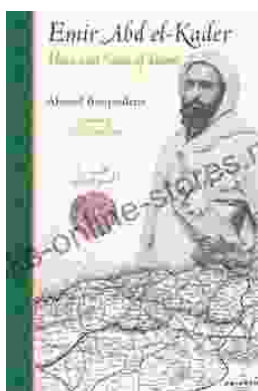
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