

Robbins Was an Ansel Adams for the East End

*Gallery Walking Tour Celebrates the Images by
Photographer Ken Robbins to Benefit Fighting Chance.*



Wild Surf

April 24 marked Sag Harbor's second consecutive spring day, and Duncan Darrow and Nancy Greenberg were thinking of Ken Robbins

They could easily imagine him setting out into the forest, or pacing the beach, or trekking through the wetlands — camera by his side — his dark, penetrating eyes seeking serenity and staggering beauty, as captured by his lens.

What Ansel Adams was to Yosemite National Park, Ken Robbins was to the East End, his friends explained. He had a presence, they said, the photographer standing just under 6 feet tall with a bushy beard.

After four decades of photographing the wildlife, landscape and people of the East End, Robbins died at home in Springs on March 9, 2017. He was 71 years old — and, despite publishing several books and showing in galleries and museums, he never had the retrospective he deserved, according to Darrow.

He's seeking to correct that, with the help of his organization, Fighting Chance — the oldest and largest free cancer-counseling center in the United States, providing psycho-oncology care to patients and their families — and the public.

In conjunction with this weekend's Cultural Heritage Festival, four Main Street galleries — Grenning Gallery, Tulla Booth Gallery, Keyes Gallery and Sara Nightingale Gallery — will anchor a walking tour and 75-photo retrospective of Robbins' work, joined by John Jermain Memorial Library and Fighting Chance in Sag Harbor, as well as Kathryn Markel Gallery in Bridgehampton.

"These images are so iconic," Greenberg said. "You look at every one and it's like you feel the time of day, you feel like you're there."

"The goal of our office is to create serenity for patients who are coming in traumatized, trying to find some peace of mind, as cancer swirls all around them," he said. "The décor and the atmosphere are important, and many of the pictures on our walls are Ken's work."

"People would leave our office after a counseling session, Darrow said, hopefully feeling more optimistic and they'd go right to the beach, or they'd go right to a bench somewhere, looking out on the incomparable scenery all around them. That was their way of connecting with a higher being -- namely, Mother Nature."

All proceeds from the sale of Robbins' will benefit Fighting Chance. For more information, call (631) 725-4646 or visit fightingchance.org.



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