

A meeting of the Board of Directors was held on Dec. 4, 1969 at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Powell. Members and guests present were: Mr. Stanley Lincoln, Mr. Will Osborn, Mr. and Mrs. Ridgeway, Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, Mr. and Mrs. Powell, Mr. and Mrs. Wecker, and Mesdames Curnen, Coyle, Forsythe, Anderson, Smith, Kinamon and Koste.

Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

In the absence of Mrs. Weiss, Mrs. Holmes gave the Treasurer's report: balance on hand as of Nov. 30, 1969 - \$2,904.41 and in the Sanctuary fund - \$5,573.94. Mrs. Holmes could not give a final report on the benefit program since all reports are not yet completed.

Mr. Lincoln gave several announcements of general interest:

1. Mrs. Ridgeway had offered to write a resolution to the Coggeshalls following the death of their son. This was read, along with a reply from Mrs. Coggeshall.
2. Concerning possible contributions of property to us, the Robeson family is proceeding to take action on a piece of their property adjoining Gedney Brook and may possibly donate it this year. Another family whose property borders Gedney is considering a gift of a small parcel. Also there has been an approach in an exploratory manner on the possible gift of some property of 100 acres or more by an un-named donor.
3. A letter from the Ditterlines disclosed that Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Ross (the former Eunice Ditterline) had written an article on bird banding.
4. Mr. Lincoln has asked Thelma Smith to assist him in the task of bringing some organization to the President's files.
5. As to the location of the Benedict property deed, Mrs. Holmes said it was in the safe deposit box, and Mr. Lincoln had failed to find it there, and wondered whether Mr. Brisson might have it. He also asked about the whereabouts of the correspondence on our initial tax exemption.
6. Mr. Youmans has asked us to take charge of the material he has been keeping as historian and this includes the minutes of past years.

The Christmas Bird Count was announced for Dec. 21 at 8:00 A.M. It was also decided to have a bird count of our sanctuaries on Jan. 11 at 9:00 A.M.

The Board was asked to bear in mind the possible revision of the by-laws and write in any suggestions they may have. The Committee has not been able to function under the chairmanship of Harold Bligh, who has, however, agreed to work on the committee.

Program: Mr. Wecker said the program for the Christmas Tea is all set. Regarding the January program, the minister of the Methodist Church has just passed away, but Mr. Wecker has been in touch with the chairman of the Building Committee and our pancake supper is cleared. A chairman will be appointed.

Motion was made by Mr. Ridgeway, seconded by Mrs. Curnen to hold our Annual Meeting on April 24 in the Roselle Avenue School.

Members' Participation Night in February will include Mrs. Kinamon on bird banding in the Southwest, Mr. Nettleton's summer trip and the Spindelow boys on their experiences at the Maine camp.

The President and several members of SMRAS Inc. had attended the National Audubon Dinner. Mrs. Forsythe reported on it, stating that Horace M. Albright was the recipient of the Audubon medal.

Mr. Lincoln had had correspondence from National Audubon that their Board has now approved student memberships at \$6.00 instead of \$10.00, this to be available to young people of high school and college age, with full voting privileges, to be arranged through the chapters. The \$6.00 will go the National 100%. Motion was made by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Mrs. Coyle that our chapter support this program.

Mr. Lincoln raised the subject of a letter from Mrs. Brinton and his reply to it, which was circulated to all the Board members. Mr. Lincoln said we have acknowledged the original concepts of Brinton Brook and that they are in place and we wish to honor her wishes. The Advisory Committee is well aware of what may be harmful to the sanctuary and Mr. Lincoln wanted to go on record to say that we will discourage the use of Brinton Brook for school groups.

In the absence of Miss Ferrara, Mrs. Brinton's niece, who was ill, Mary Forsythe presented Mrs. Brinton's views on what the sanctuary was originally intended for. She had gone to see Mrs. Brinton and had gone over the policy with her. Mrs. Brinton wanted this to be a wildlife sanctuary in memory of her husband, and although she approves of scientific efforts in education, such as that of Dr. Alexander at the pond and Farida Wiley's form of education, she does not want school groups brought in there just to look at the flowers. The sanctuary should be more carefully guarded than ever with more population drawing near. Management of the sanctuary had been gone over with a representative of the New York State Conservation Department, who said this was a perfect place to attract birds and animals. The trails must be kept open for a vehicle to go through in case of fire. The Boy Scouts have planted two circles of shrubs to provide low cover for small animals. Mrs. Brinton said visitors should have a permit and be given a sheet showing them exactly what the rules are and always have a member of the Advisory Board with them.

Mr. Lincoln mentioned that Tobay and Jamaica Bay sanctuaries require a permit, and as word gets around that a permit is necessary people will request one. He said the committee should have another meeting to consider the points Mrs. Brinton has brought up.

Mr. Ridgeway stated he would like to withdraw the six items he submitted at the last meeting. He would also like to add Item 4 to the policy on Brinton Brook: "No smoking beyond parking area, no hunting, no dogs including those on leash, no picnicking, no camp fires, no picking of flowers or plants." Mrs. Forsythe reminded the board that fishing permits are needed to fish in the pond, and only worms, no live bait, can be used.

^ Motion was made by Mr. Ridgeway, seconded by Mr. Holmes, to make these amendments to the green sheet on Brinton Brook.

Kaye Anderson said that although she has not found school groups disturbing, she would no longer take any to Brinton Brook and would encourage teaches to use other lands. Mrs. Forsythe reminded us that this is still Mrs. Brinton's home and her wishes should be respected.

Motion was made by Mrs. Curnen, seconded by Mrs. Holmes, that we reassure Mrs. Brinton that we have recognized her desires and will try to implement them and give further thought to any further considerations that we can do to help.

Mrs. Ridgeway had conveyed to Mr. Lincoln the fact that before Mrs. Brinton received Mr. Lincoln's reply to her letter, she had expressed a desire that we have a Board meeting at her home so we could take up the pertinent items and discuss them with her. If she still wants this after the correspondence, we will do so.

Mr. Wecker asked whether it would be in order to express appreciation to the Committee who over the years have brought the sanctuary to its present level of existence. Such motion was made by Thelma Smith, seconded by Mrs. Curnen, and carried.

Mr. Nettleton had submitted a report from the Warden that from their point of view there have been no problems and no untoward events at Brinton Brook.

Thelma Smith gave a report on the committee trying to improve membership and offered the following recommendations: (1) to make an announcement at the showing of the Audubon film at Stepinac on Dec. 16 and have a table in the lobby providing membership blanks and information; (2) use a story about our organization in newspapers Westchester Today or The Patent Trader in January prior to the Roger Tory Peterson film, and (3) work up something to run in our own bulletin to bring in new members and bring friends to our Pancake Supper, which can serve as a good channel for conversation.

Membership: Mr. Holmes announced a total of 478 members.

Mr. Osborn reported that Mrs. Coggeshall had spoken on our behalf as ^{wanting to} being opposed to the Hudson River Shore of Concrete. He mentioned that ^{to a} the Wilderness Society, National Parks, Sierra Club and a Rockland ^{school} organization had made contributions to the Citizens' Committee for the Hudson Valley and suggested that we do the same. Mr. Lincoln suggested we table this for a meeting when Mrs. Coggeshall can be present.

Mr. Lincoln announced they had had a brief meeting last month regarding the Fund Drive to support our naturalist and our programs. The committee of Mr. Messiah, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Curtis and Mr. Lincoln are considering having the fund drive in the Spring.

Mr. Lincoln said the procurement of a loud speaker for our meetings should be a future issue for the Board to consider. He also stated we have been asked by National to give thought to contacting stores and asking them not to sell DDT, and for members to become more active towards opposing practices such as the selling of leopard skins by Sears and promoting conservation practices by encouraging local T. V. and radio stations to have more programs towards this end.

With thanks to the Powells for their hospitality, meeting adjourned at 11:10.

Respectfully submitted, *Kay Koste*
Recording Secretary

Mr. Stanley R. Lincoln
President, Saw Mill River Audubon Society
33 Evergreen Row
Armonk, New York 10504

Dear Mr. Lincoln:

It has come to my attention that plans are afoot whereby the Brinton Brook Sanctuary will be used as an educational center for school groups and the like. I am terribly distressed about this since ^{memorial to} my purpose in creating the sanctuary was to keep it as a living to be

my late husband Willard C. Brinton. I intended the land a wildlife sanctuary, to remain inviolate, free from human intrusion. Visitors, of course, are always welcome, provided that they recognize that they are but guests on the land or, better, guests of the land, to quietly behold and enjoy its beauty.

Groups of children, no matter how well intentioned, will disturb the peace and tranquility of the sanctuary and, ~~won~~ inevitably, they will be followed by their parents and other adults who, I am sure of this, will turn the sanctuary into a recreation area, complete with vandalism and litter. You know as well as I do that you do not have the facilities to "police" the sanctuary, nor would policing, even if you had the manpower, be feasible. Once people have discovered Brinton Brook there is no way of keeping them out. I have been told that school teachers accompanying children's groups have been found picking wildflowers and that some people brought dogs with them and, although asked to do so, refused to leash their pets.

All this is a source of great concern and unhappiness to me. I do not want to see this beautiful sanctuary, which is so dear to me and which was so very dear to my late husband, despoiled and destroyed, and I therefore strongly urge you, Mr. Lincoln, to exercise all your influence and your power as President of our Saw Mill River Audubon Society to make sure that the land will continue to be used for the

purpose I gave it, as a wildlife sanctuary and as a wildlife sanctuary only. This was clearly the understanding with the then President of the National Audubon Society, Mr. John H. Baker, when he accepted the land from me, and this was also the understanding with the late Mr. William Fennell, who at that time was President of the Saw Mill River Audubon Society. I hope that these proposed changes have been

recommended only because the more recent members of the Society were not informed of this agreement.

I have never interfered with Saw Mill River Audubon Society's managing of Brinton Brook Sanctuary, you people have done a wonderful job and I am grateful to all of you for this. However, I am adamant that there be no change in the management policy hitherto followed, and I sincerely

Sincerely, *Laura M. Brinton*

hope that you and your Board of Directors will heed this, my earnest and, I believe, justified request. Laura M. Brinton

Saw Mill River Audubon Society

S.R. Lincoln

International Business Machines Corporation

Armonk, New York 10504
914/765-1900

November 19, 1969

Dear Mrs. Brinton,

I sincerely thank you for your letter. It warrants an immediate reply. I am calling a special meeting of the Brinton Brook Advisory Committee to reevaluate our present policies and practices in light of your letter. I will convey the results of that meeting in a future letter to you.

I am personally distressed to find that things we have done or said have led to the deep anguish I sense in your letter. On behalf of our Saw Mill River Audubon Society I apologize to you for this.

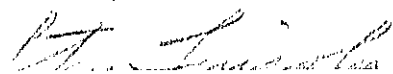
You asked me to exercise my influence to make sure the Brinton Brook Sanctuary will continue to be used for the purpose you gave it - namely, as a wildlife sanctuary. You have my assurance in this regard. However, I feel the need for my influence will be minimal. Your wishes and intent regarding the Sanctuary will always be foremost in the minds of the Society's Board members. I'm sure I speak for future Board members as well.

I'm sure it must have pained you to have to write your letter. However, its existence will help all Board members, present and future to better understand your intent.

To my knowledge there never has been any serious consideration given to using the Sanctuary as an education center. But perhaps we each place a different interpretation on the meaning of that phrase. Regardless, I sense that the school children issue is of major concern to you. (I therefore am directing that effective immediately such groups are to be discouraged in so far as we can control the use of the Sanctuary.) I will seek Board action on this at an early date.

In closing I would not be fair if I failed to mention that we all are concerned with the changing nature of the area surrounding and bordering the Sanctuary. We are bound to see increased development. The Sanctuary will be "discovered" by more and more people as the population grows. I hope you will agree with me that the Board of Directors has a responsibility to you to continually assess whether a given policy is best for the Sanctuary as these environmental pressures build.

None of us can guarantee that the explicit intent of your gift can remain inviolate for all time. The best we can do is give you our assurance that no changes in policy will ever be made without seeking the best advice available from National Audubon, nor without your desires having the highest priority.



Sincerely yours,