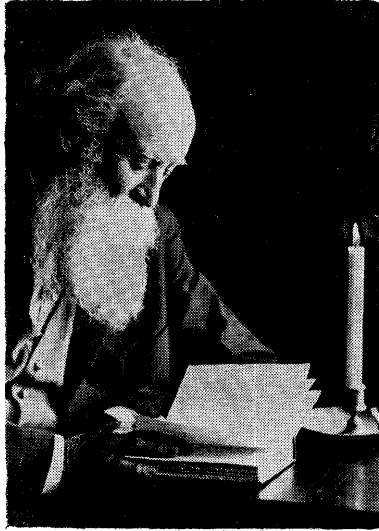


A NEW HISTORIC LANDMARK
LILLIAN C. STONER



John Burroughs — The Naturalist

A new historic landmark is of interest to all of us in the State of New York because it honors the memory of one of our well-known naturalists: namely, John Burroughs.

While we have two clubs in the Federation which include the name Burroughs in their name, perhaps other members of the Federation have neither known about nor read any of the 27 books which were written by this famous naturalist who lived for 84 years from April 3, 1837 to March 29, 1921.

Woodchuck Lodge is the name of the farm house where John Burroughs was born and died. It is located two miles from Roxbury, New York in Delaware County and some 45 miles west and south of the town of Catskill.

The Roxbury Club, that has over 60 members and which as yet is not one of our member clubs, issued invitations for a one-thirty afternoon meeting on Saturday, September 28, 1963. The purpose of this meeting was the formal presenting ceremony in which Woodchuck Lodge was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

Some 200 of us, from widely scattered areas, who attended this eventful and historic outdoor meeting, either stood about or sat on the few chairs in the yard facing the house. Here, we could hear, by means of a loud speaker the program which was presented from the little front porch of Woodchuck Lodge.

The presiding officer Herbert Van Valkenburgh, President of Roxbury Burroughs Club, first called on Elizabeth Burroughs Kelley, an author, who gave reminiscent stories about her Grandfather. She also spoke of some of

the difficulties he had in driving the Ford car which Henry Ford had given him. While he had no bad accidents, he blamed the car when it wandered to the side of the road toward the ditch as he paid more attention to the natural history of the surrounding area than to his driving.

Biographers tell more of his other famous friends: namely, Thomas Edison, Harvey Firestone, John Muir, and Theodore Roosevelt.

The next speaker, the late Dr. Albert B. Corey, State Historian from Albany, called attention to the Bronze Plaque that had been placed at the entrance to Woodchuck Lodge.

Dr. Sydney Bradford, National Public Service Representative from Washington, D. C. presented the certificate signed by Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall and C. L. Worth, Director of National Park Service.

Both Plaque and certificate have similar wording: —

"WOODCHUCK LODGE
HAS BEEN DESIGNATED A
REGISTERED NATIONAL
HISTORIC LANDMARK
UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE
HISTORIC SITES ACT OF AUGUST 21, 1935
THIS SITE POSSESSES EXCEPTIONAL VALUE
IN COMMEMORATING AND ILLUSTRATING
THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1963"

E. Wilson Burroughs, John Burrough's grandnephew and the present owner of Woodchuck Lodge, accepted the plaque and the certificate.

Among the people introduced from the audience was William G. Fennell, President of John Burroughs Memorial Association. This organization with headquarters in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City received the property known as the John Burroughs Memorial Field, on July 28, 1947 from Clara Ford, the widow of Henry Ford. They had maintained this 3.45 acres, that includes the Naturalists' grave, which is in a walled-in area near the big rock called John Burroughs' Boyhood Rock, but does not include Woodchuck Lodge.

After the program guests walked up the hill for a brief service at John Burroughs' burial plot. The tree covered Catskill hills and hollows as seen from either the hilltop or Woodchuck Lodge was an especially colorful sight in the fall season.

A 1964 bill about the transfer of ownership of the John Burroughs Memorial Field in the New York State Legislation, had a favorable reception in The Senate, The House and the Committee on Finance and with the official signature of Governor Rockefeller, it was released on April 23, 1964. This means that the Memorial Field of 3.45 acres is to become the property of the State of New York for historical and educational purposes. It is a gift from the above named John Burroughs Memorial Association and it is to be

administered by the Historic Sites Division of the State Education Department.

Much credit for completion of many years of work on this project goes to Mrs. T. Howard Smith, one of our Federation members who was the first president of the Roxbury Burroughs Club and now is their Corresponding Secretary.

Visitors who have registered in recent years numbered over 1000 for each year and have come from many states and some foreign countries.

Perhaps some of our members would be interested in attending the meeting this fall on September 26 at Woodchuck Lodge. Other visiting dates can be arranged with Mrs. Blanche Burroughs, Prattsville, N. Y. They then could see the tables and rocking chair made by the naturalist as well as the woodchuck rug on the floor and the many clippings and pictures on the walls. The following brief directions may help in locating the place. The town Grand Gorge at the junction of routes 23 and 30 is 38 miles west of the town of Catskill and six miles north of a side road which takes you 2½ miles west to Woodchuck Lodge and John Burroughs Memorial Field.

So we see that this eventful meeting of September 28, 1963 and the new 1964 signed bill has resulted in the new historic landmark at the summer home of John Burroughs and for permanent protection for his last resting place.

It seems worthy to note to have a Naturalist's home and burial place receive State and National recognition. I believe this is the first or at least one of the first to be so recognized in our state. We, Federation of New York State Bird Club members, can be proud that one of our outstanding Naturalists in New York State has been so honored, and that Woodchuck Lodge as noted on the plaque, "possesses exceptional value in commemorating and illustrating the history of the United States."

399 State Street, Albany

MINUTES OF THE 17th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

The 17th annual meeting of the Council of the Federation, held at the Poughkeepsie Inn at Poughkeepsie, N. Y., was called to order at 9 A.M. on May 23, 1964 by the President, Mr. Robert Arbib. 36 delegates representing 27 clubs answered the roll call.

A welcome to Poughkeepsie by Mrs. Homer Germond, President of the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, was heard.

Minutes of the 1963 Council meeting were approved as read. The report of the Treasurer, Mr. Kenneth D. Niven, was approved. The President read the report of Mr. Jerome Kerner and Mr. Edward R. McBride, Auditors; it was approved. The Treasurer's interim report to date was read.

Mrs. Lillian C. Stoner, Corresponding Secretary, reported that the annual letter announcing the Federation meeting had been sent to members in accordance with the by-laws.

Mrs. Alice E. Ulrich, *Kingbird* Editor, said that she had no report, that she would let the *Kingbird* speak for itself. She asked for more reports from areas in the State where there are no clubs. Also she requested receipt of