

IN MEMORIAM WATSON B. HASTINGS

On March 20th, in his home town of Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., Watson Hastings passed away after a short illness. He had just retired, at the age of 65, in November 1967 after a long and successful career with the firm of Lord and Burnham.

The Scarsdale Audubon Society has suffered a most grievous loss. Watson was one of our most beloved and valued members. He joined soon after the society was founded in 1947, and was extremely active from the start. He served two outstanding terms as president, in 1953 and 1954, and since then has many times been a member of the Board of Directors.

After serving as president he assumed the full responsibilities of Field Trip Chairman. This was the capacity in which he most delighted to serve as he was first and foremost an outdoor man and an expert birder. His life list of birds was an imposing one, and in his constant pursuit of new areas and experiences he had visited and recorded bird life in every one of the National Parks in continental U.S.A. and Hawaii. He took great and justifiable pride in this singular accomplishment.

He led the Scarsdale Society on the annual spring trip to Cape May Point, N.J. which included Stone Harbor and Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge, and he took us to Hawk Mountain, Pa. On Long Island, among his favorite areas for water birds were the Roosevelt Sanctuary at Oyster Bay, Tobay Beach Sanctuary and Jones Beach. In New Jersey he programmed and led trips to Troy Meadows, Tuckerton and Hadfield Swamp. Closer by, there were exciting visits, always at the times best calculated to find interesting species. These trips included Old Greenwich Point, Croton Point and Westchester Playland.

In 1957 and 1958, together with John Cannon and Eliot Hirshberg he conducted an extensive course in Bird Identification at the Scarsdale Adult School.

For years Watson was an active member of the Federation of N.Y. State Bird Clubs. He was often our delegate, and in 1962 was elected recording secretary. In 1966 he became Vice-President and was elected President for 1968. He had already begun to bring his great organizing talent into this new responsibility and was looking forward with great zest and anticipation to this opportunity. His loss to the Federation is a most tragic and untimely one as it is to Scarsdale.

For the National Audubon Society, he organized and directed the Annual Christmas Bird Census in the area assigned to the Scarsdale Branch.

In April 1954, at the National Audubon Society Southeast Convention, Watson was honored with a Special Conservation Citation. He received this award for his efforts which resulted in a donation by the Lee Tide-

water Cypress Company of a parcel of land and a stand of virgin cypress which became an important addition to the famous Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary in southwest Florida.

Thus we must sorrowfully speak our farewells to Watson Hastings. We will miss him greatly... his warm greeting and ready smile, his expert knowledge and counsel in the field of nature, his always willing helpfulness, his supervision of our motion picture program with professional equipment and projection.

We extend to his wife, Myrtle Hastings, the profound and heartfelt sympathies of us all.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph A. Jordan, reprinted from The Scarsdale Audubon Society Bulletin, Vol. 22, No. 4, April 1968

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

I would like to thank all the officers and committee chairmen of the Federation for their support during the period following the untimely death of Watson Hastings.

I had originally intended not to write a presidential message in *The Kingbird* until later. However, two matters arising at the council meeting of the Federation call for comment.

(1). The question of whether or not to affiliate with the New York State Conservation Council was hotly debated. Persons whose opinions I value spoke on both sides of the issue. Finally the decision to affiliate was passed by a substantial majority. This step is not an irreversible one; should the minority prove to be correct it will be possible for the council to reverse its 1968 decision. However we have already begun discussing with the chairman of the Conservation Council ways of halting the slaughter of hawks on game farms. Had we been affiliated sooner we would have seen the proposed falconry bill (S. 4255) sooner and a member of our Federation and a national authority on hawks, Walter Spofford, could have worked on this bill at an early stage. In short I think that the affiliation is a good move that will aid our conservation efforts. Let's give it a fair trial.

(2). Almost hidden in the reports dealing with membership was the fact that we had a net loss of members last year. Ed Somers, chairman of the publicity committee, is spear-heading a drive for new members. It is also important that we work at recruiting among the members of the local clubs. I would like to have in each member club a person to act as the representative of the Federation. This person would report the activities of the Federation at the meetings of the member club. This could serve as a means of communication in both directions. Conservation issues of importance to the member club could be communicated by this representative to the conservation committee for advice and action. I would like volunteers or names of persons who might be persuaded to volunteer for this work for each member club.

David B. Peakall