

Matheson Meadows Sanctuary



“In memory of William John Matheson, man of vision, scientist, humanist, conservationist, these Matheson Meadows have been dedicated as a Nature Conservancy Sanctuary, by his daughter Anna Matheson Wood.”

November 16, 1968



John Taylor



Dr. Wesley Lanyon



John Ricks

DEDICATION CEREMONY

NOVEMBER 8, 1969, 10 A.M.

SPEAKERS:

- Mr. John T. Ricks,
Chairman, L. I. Chapter, the Nature Conservancy
- Hon. George Barclay,
Mayor, Lloyd Harbor Village
- Dr. and Mrs. Robert Cushman Murphy,
L. I. Chapter's first chairman; Pres., Conservationists United
- Dr. Wesley Lanyon,
Dir., Kalbfleish Research Center; chairman, bobolink program
- Dr. Reese Alsop,
"The Last Mowing," by Robert Frost
- Mr. John Taylor,
Project Management chairman
- Mr. and Mrs. William Preston

MATHESON MEADOWS PROJECT COMMITTEE

Mrs. J. Hamilton Coulter, Chairman

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Hon. George Barclay | Mrs. Ann Milton |
| Mrs. R. Page Burr | Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Preston |
| Mrs. William Carl | Mr. Charles Root |
| Mr. John Dayton | Mr. and Mrs. C. G. Ruppert |
| Mr. Philip Hull | Mr. John Taylor |
| Dr. Wesley Lanyon | Mrs. George Wheeler |
| Mrs. Howard Mason | Mr. Henry Wingate |
| Mrs. William McAneny | Mr. Samuel Yeaton |

MATHESON MEADOWS



In November of 1968, Mrs. Anna Matheson Wood, a founder and honorary member of the **Three Harbors Garden Club**, conveyed title of an open tract of forty acres of meadowland within her property to the Long Island Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. A bronze plaque, affixed to a boulder, informs the passerby that the gift was made by Mrs. Wood in memory of her father, the late William John Matheson, a scientist and conservationist, who acquired the estate in 1900.

Here, only forty-five miles from one of the largest and most complex cities in the world, is the visible and tangible assurance that meadows may be allowed to exist, filled with tall and tawny grasses, horizoned with oak and elm, and patterned with ancient apple trees. Beauty is not only in the eye of the beholder; this landscape is a rare and lovely sight, but it is also a meaningful expression of a woman's wise and generous wish to let Nature take its course. It is a permanent sanctuary where birds may come and go and return in confidence of safety and sustenance, where trees may endure for their own allotted time, and where small creatures of the woods and fields may work out their unmolested destinies. Ecologists and ornithologists will have opportunities to study a natural area, untouched by the aggressions of bulldozer and builder.

There is no hour of the day that does not bring Matheson Meadows a constantly changing range of light and shadow, nor is there any season of the year that does not color it, from fire-bright autumn to all of spring's pastels, from winter's sharp whites and misty grays to summer's hot and variable shades of green and buff. Sometimes a ground fog veils the meadowland and there is a sharp scent of the salt tide. Gentle gray gulls soar and circle overhead, hawks arc and wheel above the fields, and their small anticipated prey, like those in "The Wind in the Willows," whisper and chuckle in the long concealing grass. Majestic pheasants lead their hurrying broods in single file, unstalked; and the rocketing meadowlarks are seldom grounded. Bobolinks, now becoming extinct in this area for lack of satisfying habitat, may discover these fields to their liking and make their summer homes here.

I write of this landscape with infinite familiarity, for I live on the edge of Matheson Meadows and it has become my borrowed realm. If I should ever live elsewhere in the world, a sprig of timothy would mark my book, and the remembered scent of clover would bring me back this way again.

by Mrs. J. Hamilton Coulter

THE LAST MOWING

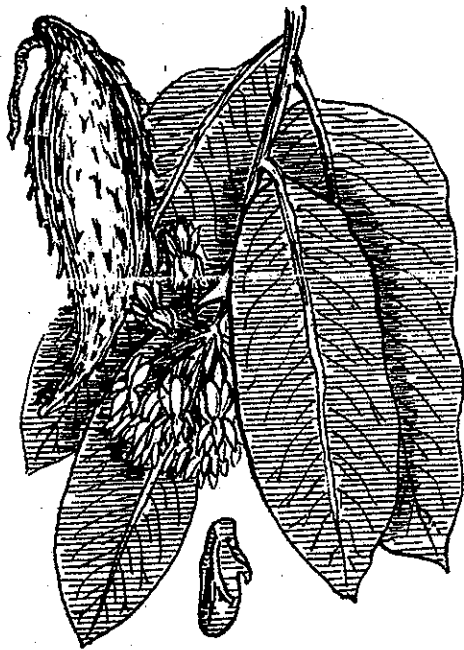
There's a place called far away meadow
We never shall mow in again,
Or such is the talk at the farmhouse;
The meadow is finished with man,
Then now is the chance for the flowers
That can't stand mowers and plowers.
It must be now, though, in season
Before the not mowing brings treason,
Before trees, seeing the opening,
March into a shadowy claim.
The trees are all I'm afraid of,
That flowers can't bloom in the shade of;
It's no more men I'm afraid of;
The meadow is done with the tame.
The place for the moment is ours
For you, oh tumultuous flowers,
To go to waste and go wild in,
All shapes and colors of flowers,
I needn't call you by name.

Robert Frost



Dr. Reese Alsop

photos by
Mrs. Robert Olney



F. Alvin Zimmerli

MATHESON MEADOWS SANCTUARY

Lloyd Neck
Suffolk County

40 Acres Meadowland

Of Interest This sanctuary consists of two large meadows separated by a private road. Despite periodic mowing the meadows have become overgrown to a considerable extent, with bit-tersweet, burdock, poison ivy, honeysuckle, and milkweed. There is a good variety of sun-loving flowering plants, many of them in the daisy family. Around the two meadows are mixed hardwoods including oaks, locusts, hickory, as well as some faster growing trees such as white mulberry and allanhus. For the most part, the borders of the preserve are within the meadow areas and do not include these woodland strips.

Bird life is abundant, particularly those species that prefer open spaces or woodlands adjacent to open areas. At the right time of day and season, woodcocks may be seen in their mating flights, and also bobolinks, which as far as is known, are not a

nesting bird on Long Island. Because of the relative abundance of small mammals, such as meadow voles and Norway rats, great horned owls and red-tailed hawks may be observed from time to time.

History This area was used for hay and the production of other agricultural crops until the 1950's. Cows, horses and sheep roamed the meadows until the late 1930's and horses until the 1970's. The area was acquired by William John Matheson, a scientist and conservationist, in 1900 and donated to the Conservancy in 1968 in his memory by Mrs. Anna Matheson Wood.

Admission to Preserve Like other preserves, this area is open to individuals and groups who obtain prior permission from the Conservancy and who abide by the Conservancy's policies on preserve use.

Directions Take Route 25A to Huntington and turn north at West Neck Road. Continue on West Neck Road all the way to Lloyd Neck, which is just across the causeway. Once across the causeway, take the first left onto a private road called Fort Hill Lane. If you stay on Fort Hill Lane, it will bring you right on to Fort Hill Drive, the dividing road between the two meadows. Park on the fringe of this drive.



Matheson Meadows

