



...presents (12-4, Sat. & Sun., through October 10)

## GREAT MOUNTAIN FOREST: A CENTURY OF CONSERVATION

In 1909, two friends, Starling W. Childs and Frederic C. Walcott, purchased 3,000 acres of cutover charcoal land from the Barnum-Richardson and Hunts Lyman Companies. The Childs-Walcott Game Preserve (later renamed Great Mountain Forest) quickly became a Progressive Era experiment in the restoration and conservation of natural resources and a welcome respite from city life and too much modernity. The young trees and the young families grew, extending deep roots into the rocky soil of the Litchfield Hills. One young boy, Edward C. “Ted” Childs (1905-1996) tramped the hills, studied the birds, and reveled in the volatility of the weather. He went on to graduate from the Yale Forest School in 1932 and with the help of a succession of dedicated foresters (George Kiefer, Darrell Russ, Sam Hawley, Joel Bronson, and Starling W. Childs II) developed a unique approach to sustainable forest management that includes traditional uses, scientific and historical research, education and experiential learning, and community service. Ted’s beloved wife, Elisabeth Calder Childs, secured this forest legacy for future generations by permanently protecting 6,000 acres in 2003.



This exhibit includes a wide

array of photographs and artifacts (e.g., surveying and forest mensuration equipment) which represent the key activities during our first century: purchasing the land, mapping, fire control, reforestation, forest inventory, silviculture, weather observations, wildlife management, and maple syrup production. A narrated slide presentation briefly reviews the historical context for the

establishment of the forest, summarizes our history, and concludes with an example of an integrated project (wildlife ecology research, sustainable forest management, local production and use of wood, *and* education) that illustrates our heritage, mission, and approach at the beginning of a new century.

The Board of Trustees and Staff of the Great Mountain Forest are very grateful to Barry Webber, Ann Havemeyer, and the Docents of the Norfolk Historical Museum for hosting this exhibit.



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