

The Forest Lyceum

Saturday, August 24, 2013 ...at the Bushnell-Sage Library

48 South Main Street, Sheffield, MA, 413.229.7004

Refreshments at 4:00 pm—Presentation at 4:30 pm

“A New Century of Conservation at Great Mountain Forest”

Paul K. Barten, Ph.D

Executive Director, Great Mountain Forest and Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst



The Great Mountain Forest (GMF)—in Norfolk and Canaan, Connecticut—was established in 1909 when Starling W. Childs and Senator Frederic C. Walcott purchased 3,000 acres of cut-over land from Hunts Lyman and Barnum Richardson Companies. For more than a century the forests of northwestern Connecticut produced charcoal to fuel blast furnaces at foundries that manufactured pig iron for a growing nation. In the late-1800s, competition from more efficient firms in Pennsylvania and Midwest led to gradual decline of Connecticut’s iron

industry. This coincided with Progressive Era movement to conserve and restore forests and wildlife habitat. A century later, it takes a knowing eye to recognize that more than 300,000 cords were cut from this now-verdant forest and frequent wildfires had reduced the landscape to brushy fields. The founder’s son, Edward C. (“Ted”) Childs, 1905-1996, graduated from the Yale Forest School in 1932, added another 3,300 acres to GMF, and hired dedicated foresters to help him realize his ambitious vision for the land. In 2003, Ted’s wife, Elisabeth Calder Childs, placed a conservation easement on GMF to permanently protect 6,300 acres.

In 2008, the Board of Trustees and professional staff initiated an innovative and integrated program of: (1) experiential learning, (2) ecological and historical research, (3) arts and humanities, and (4) community service to usher in our second century of forest conservation. Our goals are to foster strong ties to GMF as well as a heightened awareness of the global imperative for individual and community-centered forest conservation.



Free Admission — Open to the Public

For more information please contact the Bushnell-Sage Library
or Jean Bronson, Program Coordinator and Business Manager,
Great Mountain Forest, 860.824.8188

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