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For Immediate Release

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Under the North Light: The Life and Work of Maud and Miska Petersham

Petersham House Tour Set for June 23

Woodstock, NY—May 16, 2013—On Sunday, June 23, at 3 p.m., the Golden Notebook is hosting a tour of the former Petersham house, now known as Storybook. (Ms.) Lawrence Webster, author of *Under the North Light: The Life and Work of Maud and Miska Petersham*, will be on hand to lead the tour, and she will sign copies of her book. Lou Teti, new owner of the house at 2380 Glasco Turnpike, is graciously making “Storybook” available for this special, one-time event. Lawrence’s presentation will provide insights into one of Woodstock’s most successful artistic collaborations—through the lens of the Petershams’ studio and living spaces. She will discuss views of their house (including the north light) and some of its handmade furnishings that appeared in several of their iconic children’s books.

In another development, Ms. Webster’s book about the Petershams is due to be honored with two indie press awards in New York City on May 29, the eve of Book Expo. *Under the North Light* has won a gold in the 2013 Independent Publisher Book Awards’ biography category, and it is a 2013 Benjamin Franklin Silver Award Finalist (also for biography) in the Independent Book Publishers Association’s annual competition.

Under the North Light has received widespread coverage in the *New York Times*, *Books and Collectors*, *Chronogram* and *Publishers Weekly*. It has also garnered rave reviews. Notably, *Books and Culture* writes, “loaded with ravishing illustrations, this is a labor of love, recounting the life and work of Maud and Miska Petersham. If you love children’s books, order a copy today.” *School Library Journal* says, “this biography looks at the lives of two of the most influential illustrators of children’s books in the 20th century and will be of interest to scholars, librarians, and art students.” *Green Door Magazine* adds, “this is truly beautiful book to look at, read and hold; it’s the reason books are still printed.”

On April 11 Ms. Webster was a featured presenter at the Fay B. Kaigler Children’s Book Festival in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. On Saturday, May 18, she will appear at the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst, Massachusetts as part of the museum’s celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Caldecott Medal. At summer’s end (Saturday, September 7) Ms. Webster will make a presentation on the Petershams at the main branch of the New York Public Library.

About the Petershams

Maud and Miska Petersham were pioneers in a golden age of children's book publishing in America. They were among a handful of people who set the direction for illustrated children's books as we know them today. The Petershams worked closely with such legendary printers as Charles Stringer and William Glaser—greatly advancing the art of illustrated children's book. Under their studio's north light they produced more than 100 books, as illustrators or as authors/illustrators, during a career that spanned five decades. Theirs was a deep collaboration of complementary backgrounds and temperaments, and a marriage that created a warm and welcoming household. Their books were immensely popular with children, but also admired by critics, librarians and tastemakers. In the time before the first Caldecott Medal, their contributions were recognized by the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA). Four of their books were selected to be shown at the highly competitive AIGA exhibitions in the late 1920s and early 1930s. During the 1940s the Petershams won a Caldecott Honor (in 1942 for *An American ABC*) and a Caldecott Medal (in 1946 for *The Rooster Crows*).

About Lawrence Webster

Lawrence Webster grew up in Woodstock, NY and was a neighbor to the Petersham family. She knew Miska and Maud Petersham, and was a close friend of their granddaughter, Mary. Webster has a Masters in library science from SUNY Albany and had short stints in radio and publishing. In the latter she worked at See-Saw Book Club for Scholastic in the late 60s. Two previous books are *Robber Raccoon*, using the pen name of Thomas Lawrence, for Grosset & Dunlap, 1971 and *Catch your Breath: A Book of Shivery Poems*. The latter was co-compiled with Lilian Moore and illustrated by Gahan Wilson for Garrard in 1973. Webster is a librarian and non-profit consultant, and she has written numerous library-related articles.

About WoodstockArts

WoodstockArts is a publishing and production company based in Woodstock, NY. As a publisher it specializes in books about the art and the artists of Woodstock. A recent title, *Woodstock History and Hearsay*, is an award-winning history of the town. In 2009 the firm published *Roots of the 1969 Woodstock Festival: The Backstory to "Woodstock,"* with a foreword by Bob Fass. Forthcoming titles include a memoir of Norman Studer, a co-founder of Camp Woodland (Phoenicia, NY). As producers the company's principals have worked on a number of local projects, including staging a guitar sculpture auction in conjunction with Sotheby's/eBay in 2002 for the town's Byrdcliffe Art Colony centennial celebration; a Roots of '69 Woodstock Festival Concert in 2009; and an Experience Woodstock Card cultural tourism program with the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce & Arts from 2010 through 2012.