

# River & Sound

Old Lyme Historical Society  
"The history of Old Lyme – the people of Old Lyme"

Issue 16 • Autumn 2014

## Help us go over the top!

In December 2013, the Historical Society Board of Trustees realized that they were faced with their single most challenging task since the Society's founding in 2005. The remaining members of the Old Lyme Grange had decided to retire their charter. They were eager for the Society to purchase the iconic circa 1895 Grange property nestled in the heart of the Old Lyme village. The Society Board members thought long and hard, and as they say, "went for it."

It was not an opportune time to launch a Capital Campaign, as most prospective donors had likely made their charitable contributions for the year already, or they were focused on holiday shopping and family parties. The Society did not have a professional fund raiser to hold focus groups, take people to lunch, or compile big donor lists. Nevertheless, the Society forged ahead, set \$225,000 as a goal with which to purchase the building and make necessary modifications to create an office, construct an archive, provide handicap access, and turn the old lady into a 21<sup>st</sup> century model exhibition, lecture, and reception facility.

A committee made up of determined and resourceful volunteers wrote a brochure, began writing letters, calling on people, and broadcasting that we needed our friends and neighbors to dig

deep into their "slush funds", piggy banks, and checkbooks to help us. By golly, the checks began coming in. Some very generous friends and colleagues loaned us some money to actually purchase the property in February. By June we were able to pay those loans

back, and we have steadily been raising money ever since. With only about 15% of our original goal remaining, we are now confident that the Board made the right decision. This is a great example of "the little engine that could", and our gratitude knows no bounds to all contributors, from the \$10, \$25, or \$50 donors to those who have been able to add more zeros to those checks.

Now the Society has one last mountain to climb to reach the \$225,000 goal. Lacking sherpas, or mules, to help, the Capital Campaign Committee is approaching additional friends and colleagues to help take us up and over the top. We hope that when you hear from one of them, you will be

filled with the same kind of team spirit that has been infectious with others, and respond as generously as you are able. As the line from William Shakespeare's play Twelfth Night quoted in the brochure so ably puts it,

*"I can no other answer make but thanks,  
and thanks, and ever thanks."*



Photo: James Meehan

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First row left to right: Janet Littlefield, Dick Miller, Bob DiNapoli, Karen Winters, Susan Morrison, Leslie Markowicz, Mark Lander, Carol Winters, Ellis Jewett, Michaelle Pearson, Arthur Beebe, Kevin Cole, Roger Breunig, Kristin Magnussen. Second row left to right: Dyanne Rafal, Tim Griswold, Alison Mitchell, Ned Farman. Back row left to right: Dolores Green, Martha Hansen, Jane Cable, Jennifer Hillhouse, James Noyes. Not shown are Julia Griswold and Adela Wilmerding.



Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.

55 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut  
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 352, Old Lyme, CT 06371

[oldlymehistoricalsociety.org](http://oldlymehistoricalsociety.org)



*The mission of the  
Old Lyme Historical Society, Inc.,  
is to collect, preserve, and interpret  
the rich history  
of Old Lyme and its environs  
for the benefit of its residents and visitors.*

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## NEWSLETTER

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## Capital Campaign Gift From Noted Artist

Noted local artist and former Board member Catherine Christiano recently approached Tim Griswold, Chair of the Society's Capital Campaign Committee, to offer limited edition signed reproductions of her illustrations for *Poverty Island*, as Capital Campaign gifts. Donors making a gift of \$2500 may choose one of four illustrations as shown. This offer is also available to current Campaign donors who increase their giving level to at least the \$2,500 level.

Catherine Christiano's unlikely path to studio art began with a BE in engineering and an MBA in finance. After some years of paid work, combined with part-time study in drawing and painting at the National Academy of Design, School of Fine Arts in New York City, she moved to Connecticut with her growing family, where she was able to focus fully on her artwork, and take additional courses at the Lyme Academy College of Fine Art.

Catherine exhibits her work primarily in museums and galleries in the Northeast. In Connecticut her work has been on exhibit at Fairfield University, New Britain Museum of American Art and the Slater Memorial Museum. Locally, her work has been seen at the Cooley Gallery, and Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts. Currently, she has two back-to-back shows at the Essex Art Gallery.

These fine reproductions are from *Poverty Island*, the very first book published by the Historical Society. Written by Neri A. Clark, *Poverty Island* is a memoir of a young man's adventures and hard times during the Great Depression while living on a 500-acre island off Griswold Point at the mouth of the Connecticut River. It is now in its third printing. This book set the standard for the Society's future publications. More information on the Society's book program may be found on the web site at [oldlymehistoricalsociety.org](http://oldlymehistoricalsociety.org)





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and Ellen Noyes  
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# Perennial Plant Sale Fundraiser



Photos: James Meehan

To benefit the Old Lyme Historical Society building fund –  
proceeds will be used to refurbish the building  
and provide handicapped access.

Beautiful perennial plants donated by Matthew and Martin Griswold of Judge's Farm  
will be offered for sale, along with advice on Fall plantings.



**Saturday, October 4, 2014**

**10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Old Lyme Historical Society**

**55 Lyme Street, Old Lyme**