

## ***Enjoying the Country Life: Greenwich's Great Estates* Exhibition to Open at Greenwich Historical Society April 9**

Cos Cob, CT, March 13, 2014--On Christmas Day 1848, the very first train traveling from New Haven to New York City passed through Greenwich, Connecticut, then a rural community. By 1900 tycoons such as E.C. Benedict, H.O. Havemeyer, William Rockefeller and J. Kennedy Tod, had all taken advantage of the commanding views, safe harbors, clean air, rich soil--and its proximity to New York--to build estates of staggering proportions. Small armies of caretakers, builders, masons and gardeners followed in their wake and by 1921, Greenwich had the highest per capita income in the country. A new exhibition at the Greenwich Historical Society will examine the era between 1880 and 1920, a period marked by unbridled spending in Greenwich by America's elite, and explore the impact it had on the town's landscape, its culture and its place in history.

According to Karen Frederick, Curator of the Greenwich Historical Society's collections as well as this show, "The exhibition was inspired by a recent donation of objects from Greyledge, the estate of aviation pioneer Colonel Raynal Bolling. In these gifts, we saw an opportunity to draw on the organization's rich and diverse collections of clothing, photographs and objects from the era to place them against the backdrop of the Great Estates."

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Historical Society will feature a series of related programs beginning on April 24 (7:00 to 9:00 pm) with a Cribbage Game Night. The connection? A cribbage board made by President Grover Cleveland is featured in the exhibition. Beginners and pros alike will enjoy playing the favorite game of Cleveland and his pal E.C. "Commodore" Benedict, builder of the great estate "Indian Harbor," still a Greenwich landmark. The price of admission includes instruction, games, beer, wine and light refreshments. (Over 21; ID required).

Greenwich Historical Society's chairman Davidde Strackbein, will present *Greenwich's Great Estates: 1880-1930* on May 7 (7:00 to 8:00 pm). Strackbein's lecture, accompanied by images of interior and exterior views, gardens, family portraits and more, will focus on some of the extraordinary homes built during this period and the lifestyle that came to be associated with them.

On the roster for June 20 (7:00 to 8:00 pm) is a lecture by historian and author Jackson Lears entitled *Two Gild Ages: Is History Repeating Itself?* Dr. Lears will examine similarities between the first Gilded Age (1870s to 1910s) and what some term the "second Gilded Age" (1980s to 2010s), focusing on the surprisingly different reactions to corruption and the growth of inequality that characterized both periods.

*Enjoying the Country Life: Greenwich's Great Estates* runs from April 9 through August 31, 2014 at the Greenwich Historical Society's Storehouse Gallery, 39 Strickland Road, Cos Cob, CT. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 4:00 pm. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$8 for seniors and students. Admission is free to the public on the first Wednesday of each month and always free to Historical Society members. For information, directions or program reservations, visit [www.greenwichhistory.org](http://www.greenwichhistory.org).