

A Mid 19th-Century Christmas in New York City

Exhibition: December 2, 2004, through January 10, 2005

The House will be in festive holiday dress – just as it would have been 150 years ago -- with boughs of holly, wreaths and topiaries, swags and garlands, spice pomanders and fruits, cornucopia, and mistletoe “kissing balls.” A traditional table-top tree will be decorated with candles and candies in the style of the period.

Using period recipes, culinary historian Cathy Kaufman will create a lavish table set with holiday confections. This special exhibition will showcase signature 19th-century Christmas foods, including Twelfth Night Cake, Plum Pudding, Christmas Goose Pie, and Spiced Christmas Cookies.

China, crystal, and silverware from the Museum's collection will highlight dining customs in the 19th century. Fancy dresses that belonged to the Tredwell women will also be on display, including an 1850s emerald green taffeta gown with black velvet trim that was recently conserved by Helen Kapodistrias. Our thanks to the Samuel H. Kress Foundation for its generous gift of \$30,000 for conservation of the Museum's extraordinary collection of 19th-century Tredwell garments.

Tuesday, December 14, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Annual 19th-Century Holiday Party

The halls will be decked, figured mahogany and crystal prisms will dance in the candlelight, and the Bond Street Euterpean Singing Society will sing carols throughout the house. Join us for a collation of holiday fare and a 'bowl of bishop', a libation frequently offered to 19th-century holiday callers. And for your shopping delight – a Silent Auction, Raffle & Gift bazaar. \$25, Members free. (If you're not already a member, now is the perfect time to join.)

Saturday, December 4, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Workshop:

Wreaths & Evergreen Decoration

Evergreens, pine cones, dried materials, and ribbons will be provided to decorate *ilex crenata* wreaths created by John Rommel, Head Gardener, from our own garden shrubs (*not* collection). Grape-wreath forms also available, or come with your own wreaths to decorate. Hot cider, tea, and cookies. Bring cloth gloves. \$25 donation benefits the Garden Fund.

Thursday, December 9, 6 p.m. Reception and Booksigning, 6:30 p.m. Lecture

For Want of Tradition: 19th-Century American Christmas Dinner

Illustrated slide lecture by Cathy Kaufman, culinary historian and chef instructor, Institute of Culinary Education, New York. Co-sponsored by Sotheby's Institute of Art.

Unlike the iconic turkey and trimmings for Thanksgiving, the contemporary American Christmas dinner lacks common culinary traditions. Drawing on literature, cookbooks and domestic manuals, Ms. Kaufman will trace the evolution of Christmas dinner in America. \$25. At Sotheby's, 1334 York Avenue, at 72nd Street. Reservations at 212-894-1111.

Call 212-777-1089 for reservations, or email nyc1832@merchantshouse.com



'Come Calling,'

New Year's Day 2005 Open House

In the 19th century, the gentlemen of New York City sallied forth on New Year's Day to make calls on friends, family, and acquaintances. The ladies stayed home to receive the guests and preside over a sumptuous buffet and a punch bowl liberally laced with alcohol. Needless to say, after the third or fourth visit, the January chill was usually vanquished.

We look forward to celebrating this New Year with friends by continuing this Old New York tradition of “calling.” We'll toast with champagne punch and feast on holiday cakes and confectionery. Guided tours of the House, informal talks on the etiquette of calling, and walking tours of the neighborhood throughout the afternoon. \$25. Members \$15.



Our New Year's Resolution: Conserving the Gas Chandeliers

In 1823, New York City granted a franchise to the New York Gas Light Company to begin manufacturing gas for lighting. Fixtures that have survived from this initial period of gas service in the city -- such as the Museum's gas chandeliers in the parlors -- are far fewer in number than the fashionable Rococo and Renaissance revival-style fixtures from the 1850s to 1870s, when the gas industry was firmly established and lamp companies were manufacturing numerous gas lighting devices.

The Museum's chandeliers are even rarer still. Not only have they survived *in situ*, they retain a significant amount of their original finish. Buried under decades of dust and grime, the fixtures retain a remarkable 80 percent of the original shellac varnish that was applied to protect the mixed burnished and matte finishes that contributed to the play of light in interiors.

We are now reviewing treatment proposals from lighting conservators and expect to make a decision before the new year dawns. Once a conservator has been selected, we will let you know what the work will entail, how much it will cost, and the schedule for its completion. There is a light at the end of the tunnel!

AN APPEAL AT YEAR'S END

YES, I want to preserve this unique landmark of 19th-century New York and aid in the conservation of the Museum's gas chandeliers with a tax-deductible year-end donation of:

\$ _____ \$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50

Please make checks payable to the Merchant's House Museum or charge your contribution to: Amex Visa Master Card

If you wish to donate appreciated securities (and maximize your tax savings), please call the Museum office at 212-777-1089.

Card No. _____ Exp. _____ Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

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MOHONK MOUNTAIN HOUSE

Old world charm with modern amenities. The perfect place for a wedding, romantic getaway, or family vacation!

Mohonk is a Full American Plan resort with meals prepared by award-winning chefs. Our overnight rates conveniently include all meals, afternoon tea and cookies, and most activities.

Mohonk Mountain House is a National Historic Landmark resort in New York's Hudson Valley.

Since 1869, this 251-room Victorian castle has hosted generations of guests drawn to our thousands of acres of unspoiled scenery, spectacular cliffs, enchanting architecture, and the peaceful waters of Lake Mohonk.

CALL (800) 772-6646 FOR OVERNIGHT RESERVATIONS.

Mohonk Mountain House 1000 Mountain Rest Road New Paltz, NY 12561 www.mohonk.com

HOLIDAY RAFFLE

A Two-Night Getaway for Two at the historic (since 1869!) and 19th-century-charming landmark

**Mohonk Mountain House
Lake Mohonk, New Paltz, New York**

"The Grand Traditions"

July 5-8, 2005

... Gala Garden Party ... Breakfast Cookout
... Garden and Nature Walks ...
Lake Swims ... Square Dancing ... a History
House Tour ... Tennis, Golf, Boating

Tickets are \$10 each.

Drawing will be at the Holiday Party,
Tuesday, December 14.

You do not need to be present to win.
All proceeds benefit the Museum.
Call for tickets 212-777-1089.

COMING IN 2005

**Celebrating Valentine's Day
in the 19th Century**

*February 3 through February 28
19th-Century Valentines*

An exhibition of ornate and extravagant lace cards, the humorous 'vinegar valentines', and the mass-produced 'penny valentines' that made the 19th century the Golden Age of Valentines.

Thursday, February 10, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Wine Tasting: Wines for Chocolate

In collaboration with Astor Wines and Spirits. \$35

And Parlor Music, too.

Romantic melodies of the 19th-century performed by candlelight in the Museum's double parlors.

Merchant's House Museum

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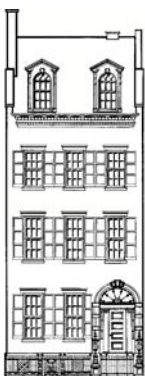
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