Help Us Meet The Dollar-for-Dollar Gerry Challenge!

We are thrilled to report that last month the Merchant’s House received a $25,000 dollar-for-dollar Challenge Grant from The Gerry Charitable Trust in New York. If we succeed in meeting this challenge (deadline: September 1), the Museum will have the initial funding — $50,000 — to launch a multi-year, house-wide, and much-needed interior restoration project.

The last full restoration of the House took place almost 40 years ago, in the 1970s. Understandably, four decades of New York City soot and tens of thousands of visitors trampling on our reproduction carpets have taken their toll.

In addition, research has shed new light on the interiors of New York City rowhouses of the mid-nineteenth century. As we have described in previous Newsletters, two years ago we began working closely with a decorative arts consultant on the Museum’s first-ever, and now just-completed, Historic Furnishings Plan. The Plan outlines top-to-bottom treatment recommendations for all our period rooms, including walls, floors, window coverings, lighting, and upholstery, as they would have appeared in the mid-nineteenth century.

As you know, almost all of the furniture on exhibit is original to the House, and the front parlor draperies and carpet are exact reproductions. A paint and finish analysis has revealed what color the walls were painted in the mid-nineteenth century. Examination of the nail holes in the floors has shown what floor coverings would be appropriate for the hall (not what’s there now) and the bedrooms.

When implemented, the recommendations of the Furnishings Plan will result in an historic New York City domestic interior unmatched for its authenticity.

In light of this tremendous opportunity for the Museum, we hope you will consider a gift to help us meet the Gerry Trust Challenge. Thank you.

Students at PS 150 Take the Fundraising Cake

A group of students from Sunnyside Community Services’ After School Program at PS 150 in Queens have formed the very first Help The Merchant’s House Bake Sale Committee. Their initial sale raised a whopping $150. We are planning a formal check-presentation ceremony of course, with members of the Museum’s board in attendance.

The students — who visited the Museum with Sunnyside’s Curriculum Coordinator, Sybil White — are already planning a follow-up sale. One of the committee members believes strongly that “with better organization, we can raise even more money!”

Won’t you join us in saluting the students of PS 150 — and join the students in supporting the Merchant’s House?

The Merchant’s House is grateful to the following for their especially generous support in 2008. Without their continuing confidence, the work we do would not be possible.


Yes, I (We) Will Help the Merchant’s House Meet the $25,000 Gerry Challenge!

|  | Gerry Challenge $_________ (Thank You) |
|  | ____________________________ |

Or, become a member of the Merchant’s House Museum (or renew your current membership) and we’ll apply your 2009 dues to the Gerry Challenge:

|  | Good Neighbor  $60  | Family/Household  $80  | Senior/Student  $30  | Protector  $125  | Cultural Hero  $250  | Paragon of Virtue  $500

Please make checks payable to the Merchant’s House Museum or charge your contribution to:  | American Express  | Visa  | Master Card

Card No. ______________________  Exp. ________  Signature ______________________________

Name/Company ____________________________________________________________

Address ___________________________________________________________________ City/State/Zip ____________________________________

Telephone _____________________________  Email (please!) ______________________________
MERCHANT’S HOUSE MUSEUM

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Sincerest thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and talents in 2008.
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Reservations and prepayment are required unless otherwise noted. Call 212-777-1089.

Sunday, May 3, 9 a.m. to Noon
Annual Garden Plant Sale
Plant divisions and seedlings from our historic Garden; astilbes, epimediums, hostas, ferns, ivies, herbs, and much more. Free admission. Reservations not required.

Sunday, May 10, Seatings at 1 & 3 p.m.
Mother’s Day Tea in the Garden
Enjoy dainty sandwiches, scones with clotted cream, and tempting sweets, amid the flowers and foliage. Followed by a tour of the Museum. $40, $30 MHM members.

Friday, May 8, 2 p.m.
Astor Place Walking Tour, with the East Village History Project
Meet at the East Village Visitor Center, 308 Bowery. Colonnade Row was once one of the most elegant addresses in the country. Today, Astor Place is still home to some of New York’s most prestigious 19th-century Landmarks. $15 suggested donation. For information call 917-215-2575.

Monday, May 11, 7 p.m.
Reading: Simon Lockle Remembers the 1849 Astor Place Riots
Literary historian and WBAI radio personality Simon Lockle will examine the whys and wherefores of the historic Astor Place Riots. He’ll also deliver some of the Shakespearean passages implicated in the affair. $15, $10 MHM Members.

Tuesday, May 12, 2 p.m.
Riots & Revolution Walking Tour, with the East Village History Project
Meet at the Merchant’s House Museum
This walking tour will explore the layers of rebellious and revolutionary history of the East Village that helped define counterculture in America. $15 suggested donation. For information call 917-215-2575.

Tredwell Fashions on Display
Thursday, May 7, to Monday, June 29
Sarah Ann Tredwell’s 1872 Wedding Dress
A complete bridal ensemble, including wax orange-blossoms and other accessories. The invitation and marriage certificate will also be on exhibit.

Thursday, July 9, to Monday, September 14
Mid-19th Century Underwear
Take a peek at rarely seen ‘unmentionables’ of the 1850s and 60s, including a lady’s chemise, corset, drawers, stockings, and cage crinoline.

Merchant’s House Museum
The Merchant’s House Museum is New York City’s only family home preserved intact — inside and out — from the 19th century. A National Historic and New York City Landmark, the House was built in 1832 and was home to a prosperous merchant family for 100 years.

Visitors Center
308 Bowery
212-777-1089

www.merchantshouse.org