October 12-November 7
The Merchant’s House
Will Be Dressed in
19th-century Mourning

From October 12 to November 7, the Museum will present “A 19th-century House in Mourning.” The House will be dressed in mourning, and tours will focus on 19th-century social customs surrounding death and bereavement, with special reference to the Tredwell family. During the almost 100 years of their residence, eight family members died at home, and nine funerals took place in the parlors.

A rigid code of etiquette set forth complex and demanding expectations of dress and behavior for the bereaved. As a result, those living in the 19th century were obliged to conform to their own morality on a daily basis. As a Long Island diarist wrote, “Truly we live in a dying world.”

Today, those mourning customs have almost completely disappeared. “A 19th-century House in Mourning” offers visitors the opportunity to learn about 19th-century customs surrounding death in a setting where they were actually practiced.

Museum hours are 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday though Thursday. Docents will give guided tours on Sundays; a self-guided tour booklet will be available to those visiting during the week.

Next . . .
Restoration of Original 1832 Windows

An emergency Challenge Grant of $15,000 from the Landmarks Preservation Commission and contributions from individuals and foundations have brought us to within $2,500 of the $39,000 cost of restoring the Museum’s original 1832 windows.

It is vital that this work be completed before snow flies, as the windows are in an advanced state of deterioration.

The work will involve restoring the windows, replacing the panes with UV glass, and re-installing the original shutters (now stored in the attic). They will be freshly painted dark green, the original color.

But that’s just the beginning. Our architectural conservator has advised us that the south facade of the building is in a severe state of deterioration.

From the New York Herald
March 9, 1885

Death of Seabury Tredwell

Among the deaths noticed in our column today is that of one of our oldest and most respected merchants, Seabury Tredwell. He was a gentleman of the old school, dignified and accomplished in his manners and high-handed and honourable in all his transactions. He was born on Long Island in 1798—the son of Doctor Benjamin Tredwell, of New York. His mother was a sister of Bishop Seabury. He came to this city in 1798, and after serving as a clerk for three years, started the hardware business on his own account, which he continued with uninterrupted success till he retired, in 1835. He then purchased his city residence in Fourth Street, near Lafayette Place, between which place and his farm in Starbush, New Jersey, he spent the remainder of his days. He now goes out from us, one of the last of his generation, honored, respected and beloved by all.

Life in the Past Lane

Good Scary Fun
Halloween Showing of
A&E’s Production
“Haunted New York”

According to family legend, Gertrude Tredwell lost her only chance for happiness when her father forbade her to marry Louis Wallin, a young doctor whom she loved dearly. Unable to marry Louis, the story goes, she vowed never to marry at all, and died, an aged spinster, in the upstairs bedroom of the house where she was born.

Come decide for yourself whether the tale is true when we present continuous showings of a segment of the A&E television production, “Haunted New York,” on October 31 from 6:30 to 9 p.m. The show was filmed in the Merchant’s House, where some say Gertrude Tredwell’s lonely spirit still resides. Candlelight tours of the House will take place, and spirits, astral and otherwise, will be served.

“I’ve Eaten Oysters, but I’ve Never Had Enough”
Third Annual
NYC Oyster Festival

Gilbert and Sullivan may never have had enough oysters, but New Yorkers will be able to eat their fill at the Third Annual New York City Oyster Festival, sponsored by Guinness. The Festival will take place on Saturday, October 2, from noon until 9 p.m. The place: East Fourth Street between Lafayette and Bowery, where thousands will be drawn to this popular annual event.

In addition to prime Blue Point oysters, the Festival will feature perfect pints of Guinness, white wines, the New York City Oyster Shucking Championship, live bands throughout the day from the main stage, and other entertainments.

**Fall Exhibit**  
*October 12 - November 7, 1999*  
*A 19th-century House in Mourning*  
The House will be dressed in mourning, and the social customs surrounding death in the 19th century will be the subject of guided Sunday afternoon tours.

Sunday, September 12, 3 p.m., and Sunday, October 10, 3 p.m.  
**“Autumn in New York” Tea Time in the Garden**  
A wonderful season in the City and a great time to enjoy the garden. Join us for freshly brewed tea and traditional English tea-time fare. $17.50. Proceeds benefit the Garden Fund.  
Reservations (212) 777-1089.

**Halloween Sunday, October 31**  
6:30 to 9 p.m.  
**Good Scary Fun**  

**Saturday, November 13, 1 to 4 p.m.**  
**Holiday Table Decorations Workshop**  
Using materials provided, create a centerpiece for the holiday table. Refreshments. $17 donation benefits the Garden Fund.  
Reservations (212) 777-1089.

**Guinness Presents The Third Annual New York City Oyster Festival**  
East Fourth Street between Lafayette and Bowery will be closed for this popular free annual event. Oysters, Guinness, white wines, live bands, NYC Oyster Shucking Championship, and other entertainments.

**Wednesday, October 20, to Sunday, October 24**  
**Tour of the Old Dominion**  
Visit 18th-century plantations along the James River, a Palladian villa near Charlottesville, and a former plantation designed by Thomas Jefferson. Tour sponsored by Classical America and the Merchant’s House Museum. For information and brochure, call Thomas Hayes (413) 528-9992.

**Wednesday, October 27**  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
**A Bewitching Reading**  
Gregory St. John’s reading of Charles Dickens’s 19th-century stories “Sikes and Nancy” and “Captain Murderer.” Reception. $15, members $10.  
Reservations (212) 777-1089.

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**Great New York Writers In Great New York Places**  
A year-long series of readings celebrating the history of New York City in significant architectural and historical sites. Sponsored by the Merchant’s House Museum, the Historic House Trust of New York City, City of New York/Parks and Recreation, and The Library of America.  
Reservations (212) 360-1378.

**Tuesday, October 26, 6 to 8 p.m.**  
**Willa Cather**  
Salmaugndi Club, 47 Fifth Avenue, Greenwich Village. Reception follows. $25.

**Monday, November 15, and Tuesday, November 16**  
“Guys and Dolls:”  
**Damon Runyon, Joseph Mitchell, A.J. Liebling, and John McNulty**  
Chumley’s, 86 Bedford Street, Greenwich Village. Reception follows. $25.

To Help Restore The 1832 Windows  
also in urgent need of repairs to the marble, the brickwork, the wrought iron, and the wooden cornice and soffit, as well as installation of thermal and moisture protection, all to the tune of $104,000.

Preserving our building and maintaining its historical integrity is one of our highest priorities. Please help us with this important restoration project.

**To Help Restore The 1832 Windows**  
Make your check payable to the Merchant’s House Museum, mark it “Windows,” and mail to 29 East Fourth Street, New York, NY 10003. Your gift is tax-deductible.

1832 Windows (continued)

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**Merchants House Museum is the newsletter of the Museum.**  
Mary Knapp, editor  
Merchant’s House Museum  
29 East Fourth Street, New York, NY 10003-7005  
(212) 777-1089 Fax (212) 777-1104  
mvkn@nhm.org

City of New York  
Parks & Recreation  
Rudolph W. Giuliani, Mayor  
Henry J. Stern, Commissioner