



Conservation of the Tredwell Dresses: Phase I Completed

Last fall, thanks to a generous leadership grant from the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, the Museum began a project to conserve its remarkable collection of 30 19th-century dresses documented to have belonged to the Tredwells. We are pleased to report that Phase I of the three-phase project has been completed. The condition of each dress, with its accompanying accessories such as petticoat, undersleeves, chemisette, and collar, has been carefully assessed. A research report, with detailed description, photographs, and recommended conservation treatment has been prepared by costume conservator Helen Kapodistrias, who conserved the Tredwell dress currently on exhibition.

Examination of the Tredwell costumes has only reiterated the significance of the Museum's collection. Treasures in the collection include two dresses with full *gigot* sleeves from the 1830s, both typical examples of high fashion as seen in the colored fashion plates of the period. Rarer still is a cream, empire-waist dress, circa 1815, embellished with chain-stitch embroidery. Lastly, the extraordinary lace and velvet trims found on numerous elegant evening gowns truly distinguish the Tredwells as belonging to the wealthy merchant class.

Many of the Tredwell dresses are in very good condition, but a number of gowns are in dire need of conservation and will remain in storage until they can be properly restored. We look forward to continuing with the next phase of the project in order to safely display them to the public.



Illustration of a Tredwell Dress from the American Index of Design, 1935. Cream silk faille with green taffeta trim, ca. 1856-1858.

"With This Ring": An 1872 Wedding at Home in New York

The Merchant's House Museum cordially invites you to attend a spring wedding, 1870s style. The Museum is very fortunate to have a comprehensive collection of original objects documenting an 1872 Tredwell wedding and this spring will present the exhibition "*With This Ring*": *An 1872 Wedding at Home in New York City*. On view in the front parlor will be the centerpiece of the exhibition -- a high-style peach cream silk faille bridal gown with a lavishly fringed bodice and a sweeping train.

The dress belonged to Sarah Ann Tredwell, who wore it at her marriage to Abram Howard in 1872 at her parents' home on Ninth Avenue. The bride was

the granddaughter of Captain John Tredwell, a cousin of Seabury Tredwell. Sarah's bridal gown is part of the Museum's collection of objects that belonged to collateral relatives of the Tredwells who lived at 29 East Fourth Street.

In addition to the wedding dress, the exhibition will feature the satin high button shoes, the petticoat, and the earrings worn by the bride, as well as the silk and wax orange blossoms she wore in her hair. All were donated to the Museum by a descendant of Captain Tredwell in the 1960s. More recently, Kathleen Howard, Sarah Ann's great-granddaughter, made a gift of Sarah Ann

and Abram's marriage certificate to the Museum. It is signed by The Rev. Dr. John R. Lundy, Rector of the Church of the Holy Apostles, who performed the Episcopalian ceremony.

The marriage certificate, along with an invitation to the wedding and reception, will be some of the additional items on view in the ground-floor display cases. Traditions such as creating a trousseau, giving the wedding breakfast, and taking the bridal tour will also be explained. We hope you will be able to attend this unique exhibition recreating a 19th-century wedding at home in New York City. No RSVPs necessary.

Merchant's House Museum

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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.



HISTORIC HOUSE TRUST
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March 10 through April 18 -- Exhibition **"We Bear Thee to an Honored Grave": New York Grieves for President Lincoln**

The Civil War had just ended and emotions were already running high on April 14, 1865, when Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. His tragic death plunged New York City and the nation into a period of unprecedented public mourning fueled by recent advances in communication via telegraph and print. A funeral journey across numerous states was planned by railroad. Stops included Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago.

New York City prepared a grand reception for Lincoln's remains when they arrived on April 24. Borne through the streets in an elaborate funeral procession, the president's body lay in state at City Hall for almost 24 hours. Thousands of New Yorkers waited patiently in line to pay their last respects. On April 25, a second procession carried the coffin to the Hudson River Railroad depot as the journey continued towards Albany.

Eliza Tredwell and her children were already in deep mourning when the president was shot. Only five weeks earlier Seabury Tredwell had died at the age of 85. For the Tredwells, and thousands of other New York families grieving privately for loved ones lost during the Civil War, Lincoln's funeral proceedings must have been especially poignant.

The Merchant's House acknowledges with gratitude the following contributors who were especially generous in their support during 2004:

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Sunday, April 10, Doors open at 5 p.m., Concert at 5:30 p.m.

Salon Music in the Parlors:

'Farewell Father, Friend & Guardian'

A musical tribute of songs and marches written in 1865 to commemorate Lincoln's death, with accompanying slide lecture. Presented by the Bond Street Euterpean Singing Society soloists and vocal quartet. A reception follows. *Seating is limited. \$15, \$12 members*

Sunday, May 1, 10 a.m. to Noon

Spring is Sprung -- 3rd Annual Plant Sale in the Garden

Plant divisions and seedlings from our historic Garden. Proceeds to benefit the Garden Fund. *Free admission.*

Wednesday, May 4, Reception 6 p.m., Lecture 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Illustrated Slide Lecture: Something Old, Something New --

The Origins of Wedding Rituals and Traditions

Alden O'Brien, Curator of Costume and Textiles, DAR Museum, Washington, DC., will explore the history of wedding customs through diaries, fashion plates, photographs and genre paintings from the Revolutionary period to the Jazz Age. In collaboration with Sotheby's Institute of Art. \$25. *At Sotheby's, 1334 York Avenue, at 72nd Street.*

Reservations: 212-894-1111

Tuesday, May 17, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Reading: Marriage Melville-Style

At first glance, marriage appears absent from much of Herman Melville's fiction. Readings by scholar and WBAI radio personality Simon Loekle will show that the author not only held a high opinion of marriage but stretched the notion well beyond the limits of his time. In our Greek Revival parlors. \$12, \$10 Members

Wednesday, May 25, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Wine Tasting: Argentine Garden Fiesta

Imagine the sun, the warmth, the wine, the flowers ... It will be a reality in May when we swing open the back door for a garden fiesta benefit for the Museum. Leo Comercio of Astor Wines, fresh from his trip to Argentina, will share some of his favorite wines of the Southern Hemisphere. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served. In collaboration with our Noho neighbor Astor Wines & Spirits.

\$35, fully tax deductible. Reservations must be paid for in advance; cancellations and full refunds accepted up to 48 hours prior.

On Exhibition

Through April 18

Elegance Restored: Conservation of an 1840s Tredwell Dress

Crumpled, torn -- and missing a sleeve -- an 1840s cotton voile dress has been restored to its original glory. The dress is on display, along with a photographic record of the restoration process.

Through April 18

'We Bear Thee to an Honored Grave': New York Grieves for President Lincoln

Period pictures, first-hand accounts, and memorabilia will be on display to present the tragedy of Abraham Lincoln's assassination as it appeared to New Yorkers such as the Tredwells in the 1860s.

April 21 through July 18

"With This Ring": An 1872 Wedding at Home in New York

Dressed in a high-style peach cream silk faille dress with a fringed bodice and a sweeping train, Sarah Ann Tredwell became the wife of Abram Furman Howard at the home of her parents in New York City on October 16, 1872. Now—133 years later, the Merchant's House features this New York wedding in all its 19th-century splendor.

Our thanks to the amazing volunteers who gave so freely of their time and wondrous talents in 2004.

Daniel Arnheim, Anthony Bello, Roberta Belulovich, Kerriane Biele, Betty Chaurize, Heide Cleary, Kevin Foley, Sarah Gordon, Cathy Hiller, Linda Kahwaty, Melissa Lindbeck, Eric Lindbeck, Kate McCoy, Linda McDonnell, Deborah McMillan, Allison Martin, Jean Mercier, Kiriki Metzko, Ann Mitchell, Karen Murphy, Pia Murphy, Colleen Nelson, Nicholas Nicholson, James Papp, Robert Psotto, Stan Ries, Dale Rejtmar, Catherine Roach, Joy Roller, Jennifer Sabella, Philip Scandura, Kay Seward, Eric Shrog, Susan Stanley, Emily Talbot, Julia Van Nutt, Robert Van Nutt, Dayle Vander Sande, Sandi Weisfeld, Gloria Withim, Margaret Zamos, Debra Zanoni, Sarah Zimmet

Yes! I (We) would like to join the Merchant's House Museum (Donations are tax-deductible.)

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Wednesday, April 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

TJ's (262nd) Birthday Celebration: Wines from Barboursville Vineyards, Virginia

Thomas Jefferson's inspiration for winegrowing in Virginia is as great as his love for the wines he imported from Europe. Jefferson made methodical plantings of European vines (*vitus vinifera*) at Monticello, near Barboursville. Join us for an evening of "good talk and good wine", to benefit the Museum. We'll taste wines

from the first *vinifera* winegrowers in the Monticello Viticultural Area since the man himself. And we'll sample some of the foods TJ liked best – including "garden stuffs", "mustard eggs", Les Pâtés et Terrines de France, Baked Virginia Ham, Double Gloucester Cheese – and his favorite, Coconut Cake.



\$50 donation fully tax deductible, members \$40. Reservations and prepayment required; cancellations with a full refund accepted up to 48 hours prior. All proceeds go directly to restoration of the Museum's 1832 Landmark building; conservation of its collections; and education programs for adults and schoolchildren.

A Collaboration with our NoHo Neighbor **Astor**

Merchant's House Museum

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Hours

Thursday through Monday
12 to 5 p.m.
(Closed Tuesday, Wednesday)

Admission

Members Free
Adults \$8
Students & Seniors \$5

Group Tours

Guided tours for schoolchildren and adult groups are offered seven days a week by appointment.

www.merchantshouse.com

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