



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Gayle Shupack

215-345-0210, ext. 131

gshupack@mercermuseum.org

**Nationally Touring Exhibition, *House & Home*
at the Mercer Museum**

DOYLESTOWN, PA: (January 15, 2015) – What makes a *house* a *home*? Throughout American history, people have lived in all sorts of places, from military barracks and two-story colonials to college dormitories and row houses. *House & Home*, a new exhibition opening Saturday, January 24 at the Mercer Museum, embarks on a tour of houses both familiar and surprising, through past and present, to explore the varied history, and many cultural meanings of the American home. This traveling exhibition is drawn from the flagship installation at The National Building Museum, in Washington, D.C., and will run at the Mercer until Sunday, March 15.

House & Home explores how our ideal of the perfect house and how our experience of what it means to “be at home” have changed over time. Home construction materials and models, “please touch” interactive components, video, photographs, and household and domestic artifacts (from utensils to telephones), immerse audiences in how transformations in architectural styles, living patterns, technology and consumer culture have impacted American domestic life.

Visitors will learn about issues of housing inequality, land distribution, and the role of the government, from the Colonial period through the Homestead Act and the creation of the Federal Housing Administration in the 1930s. The exhibition’s timeline also includes the explosive growth in the market for single-family homes to the subprime loan crisis.

Related sections of *House & Home* look beyond the bricks and mortar, to explore the

relationship of the individual house to the larger society, with a tour of contemporary community developments from futuristic dormitories to post-Katrina communities built on a shared interest in music

In conjunction with the House & Home exhibit, the Mercer Museum is displaying a selection of historical objects and images from its permanent collections that highlight Mercer Museum founder, Henry Mercer's interest in old houses in the Delaware Valley. The display includes study casts of the corners of log cabins, portions of his nail and architectural hardware collections and house-related images. Also on view; a selection of tall case clocks.

House & Home related programs will take place on weekends during the run of the exhibit. Programs include: "From Hearth to Cookstove," January 24, at 1 p.m., "How to Read an Old House," January 25, at 2 p.m., "Green Houses, Homes & Headquarters," January 31 at 1 p.m., "A Tale of Two Suburbs: The Battle for the Future of Suburbia in Bucks County's Levittown and Concord Park," February 22 at 2 p.m., "Youth Program: Lenape Home Life," on Saturday, February 28 from 12:30-2:30 p.m., and "Renovate, Re-mold, Re-construct: Local Home Makeovers," on March 14 at 1 p.m. For more information on these programs, visit mercermuseum.org.

House & Home was organized by The National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. and curated by Sarah Leavitt, Curator, The National Building Museum. *House & Home* has been made possible through NEH on the Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. It has been adapted and is being toured by Mid-America Arts Alliance. Founded in 1972, Mid-America Arts Alliance is the oldest regional nonprofit arts organization in the United States. For more information, visit www.maaa.org or www.nehontheroad.org.

House & Home at the Mercer Museum is sponsored locally by Drexel Metals Inc., Raphael Architects, AIA Bucks County-A Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Eiseman Construction – Roofing and Exterior Renovation Contractors, Happ Contractors, Inc., and Tom Thomas.

About the Mercer Museum

The Mercer Museum, one of Bucks County's premier tourist attractions, offers visitors a unique window into pre-Industrial America as seen through the implements used in everyday life. The Museum's collection includes more than 40,000 objects exhibiting the tools of more than 60 different crafts and trades, providing one of the world's most comprehensive portraits of material culture in America. The Mercer Museum is located at Pine & Ashland Streets in Doylestown and is open for self-guided exploration 7 days a week. For more information, call 215-345-0210, or visit: www.mercermuseum.org.

###