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Tenement Museum to Expand Its Space and Programming in Nearby Building

By PATRICIA COHEN

Visitors who enter 97 Orchard Street on the Lower East Side walk into a different century.

The building, which was home for more than 7,000 immigrants between 1863 and 1935, is now the centerpiece of the Tenement Museum, which recreates the immigrant experience through guided tours with costumed actors.

Now the [Tenement Museum](#) plans to expand its immersion into the past with new permanent exhibitions that focus on Chinese immigrants, Jewish Holocaust survivors and Puerto Rican newcomers who came to America after World War II. On Tuesday, museum officials announced a project to house those exhibits in the upper floors of a building two doors down, at 103 Orchard Street, that it plans to renovate.

“While the Museum’s narrative currently ends in 1935 — the year that 97 Orchard Street closed to residents — the more recent history of 103 Orchard Street will enable the Museum to share the stories of post-World War II America,” the museum announced in a statement.

The museum’s small quarters has limited the number of visitors to 200,000 annually, officials said. The new tenement, acquired in 2007, will enable the museum to handle some of the thousands of people who have been turned away because of space constraints.

The museum has so far raised \$3 million of the estimated \$8 million needed for the project, which will include a visitor’s center and classrooms, said Kira Garcia, the museum’s director of communications. Construction is expected to begin in 2016.