



# NEWS RELEASE

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## 19th-Century Plumbing at Emily Dickinson Museum Sept. 25

AMHERST, Mass.—Household plumbing, electric wiring and heating units are just a few of the comforts that we take for granted in the modern home. For houses built in earlier eras, such emerging technologies were tests for builders and homeowners. At 2 p.m. on Sunday, September 25, the Emily Dickinson Museum will explore those challenges when author and historian Maureen Ogle presents “Plumbing the Past: A Lecture and Special Tour of the Infrastructure of the Evergreens and the Homestead,” an exploration of the fascinating world of 19th-century household technology.

The lecture and a question and answer session will take place at the Amherst Women’s Club, 35 Triangle Street. An open house of both Dickinson houses will follow to highlight the household technologies-or lack thereof-discussed in Ogle’s talk. Advance registration is required; the registration fee is \$10 for adults; \$8 for seniors and students. For more information and to register, please contact Tricia Gilrein, the program coordinator, at 413/542-8161, 413/542-2034 or [pagilrein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org](mailto:pagilrein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org).

The Evergreens and Homestead retain ample evidence of the household technologies used by the Dickinson family and their 19th -century neighbors. “Visitors are intrigued by how people in earlier times lived on a practical, ordinary level,” noted Jane Wald, director of resources and collections at the Museum. “How did the Dickinsons heat their water, take baths, stay warm, cook their food and clean their houses without the mechanical systems and appliances we all take for granted? And, above all, where were the bathrooms?”

The author of *All the Modern Conveniences: American Household Plumbing, 1840-1890*, the first book on the history of plumbing in America, Maureen Ogle received her Ph.D. from the History of Technology and Science program at Iowa State University, and left academia in 1999 to write popular history for a general audience. She has also published a history of Key West, Fla., and has just completed a forthcoming history of beer: *Ambitious Brew: The Story of Immigrants and Entrepreneurs Who Invented American Beer*, which will appear in late 2006.

The Emily Dickinson Museum, comprising the Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens, two historic houses in Amherst, is devoted to the story and legacy of poet Emily Dickinson and her family. The Dickinson Homestead was the birthplace and residence of the poet (1830-1886). The Evergreens was the 1856 home of the poet’s brother and sister-in-law, Austin and Susan Dickinson. Merged into a single museum in 2003, both properties are owned by the Trustees of Amherst College. For more information on the Emily Dickinson Museum, visit [www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org](http://www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org).

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