



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 4, 2008

Contact: Donna M. Abelli

Development & Marketing Manager

t. 413/542-5084

f. 413/542-2152

dmabelli@emilydickinsonmuseum.org

Emily Dickinson Museum and Amherst Cinema to Celebrate the Poet's Birthday During Annual Open House Dec. 13

AMHERST, Mass.—The Emily Dickinson Museum will host its annual Open House on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 1 to 4 p.m. in a free celebration of the anniversary of Emily Dickinson's birth (Dec. 10, 1830). A new addition to the day will be a special screening and "meet-the-filmmakers" discussion of the new film *The Poet in Her Bedroom* at noon at the Amherst Cinema Arts Center (ACAC) located at 28 Amity St., Amherst. ACAC members can attend the screening for free; it is \$3 for the general public.

The museum's annual "At Home" open house will begin at 1 p.m. and include self-guided tours of the Homestead and The Evergreens. Other activities will include parlor music at the Homestead by Steven Howland and Tim Van Egmond from 1:15 to 3:15 p.m. poetry readings at the Homestead parlors at 2 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. and at the Evergreens at 1:30 and 2:30 p.m., holiday ornament-making and other craft workshops. In addition, light refreshments will be served, and—continuing a beloved tradition—the first 178 guests to the museum will receive a rose, offered by an anonymous donor in honor of the poet.

Steven Howland has played the fiddle since the early 1980s, inspired by traditional New England-style music and dance. He is a regular caller of contra dances throughout the region. Tim Van Egmond is an accomplished player of the hammered dulcimer and a member of the contra dance band Swallowtail. He has appeared on National Public Radio's *A Prairie Home Companion* and at the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

The Amherst Cinema Arts Center was built in 1926, created out of an old stable in downtown Amherst, and was known for many decades as the Amherst Cinema. In November 2006, the renovated theater reopened as the three-screen ACAC, featuring both mainstream and independent films. In January 2008, the Pleasant Street Theater in Northampton, Mass., was assumed under the ACAC umbrella. The Dec. 13 screening and discussion is not the ACAC's first collaboration with the Emily Dickinson Museum: last fall, the two institutions presented a live rock-and-roll performance for elementary students about the poet's life, to rave reviews.

The Emily Dickinson Museum, comprising the Dickinson Homestead and The Evergreens, is devoted to the story and legacy of poet Emily Dickinson and her family. Both properties are owned by the Trustees of Amherst College, though the museum is overseen by a separate Board of Governors charged with raising its operating and capital funds. 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.

The Emily Dickinson Museum is located at 280 Main St. in Amherst, Mass. The official museum Web site is at www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m., and Sundays from 1-5 p.m. through Dec. 28; the museum is closed on major holidays.

###