



NEWS RELEASE

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Emily Dickinson Museum to Wrap Up Big Read Events with Poetry Picnic June 13

AMHERST, MASS.— To celebrate its spring Big Read programs, the Emily Dickinson Museum will host a Poetry Picnic on the Homestead lawn Saturday, June 13, from noon to 2 p.m. (Rain date: Sunday, June 14.) Picnic-goers are encouraged to bring a lunch along with a blanket or chair and listen to readings of visitors' favorite poems by members of the community. In addition, students from local schools will present new compositions inspired by their study of Dickinson. A craft activity suitable for all ages will be offered, and beverages are available at a nominal charge.

The activity will also feature readings of 25 of the most popular Emily Dickinson poems (as voted by members of the community) by local residents. The museum is receiving nominations of such poems until June 4. To nominate your favorite Dickinson poem, e-mail info@emilydickinsonmuseum.org with "Favorite Poem" in the subject line, stop by the museum during open hours or send a submission via snail mail to 280 Main Street, Amherst, MA 01002.

The spring programs at the Emily Dickinson Museum were organized as part of The Big Read, an initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts designed to restore reading to the center of the American culture and to encourage community involvement. From the opening lecture featuring Poetry Foundation President John Barr speaking on the future of poetry, to composer and philanthropist Gordon Getty's musical composition, *The White Election*, to *Emily of Amherst*, an original creation of Amherst Ballet, to Emily Dickinson's *Poetry 101*, each program showcased the continuing influence of Dickinson and her relevance to new generations of writers, artists and composers. "Savoring Emily Dickinson's words—along with a fine picnic—on the lawn of her own home celebrates her continuing influence as one of the greatest poetic voices the world has heard," said Jane H. Wald, executive director of the Emily Dickinson Museum.

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. The museum is overseen by a separate Board of Governors charged with raising its operating and capital funds. The Dickinson Homestead was the birthplace 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 www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.; extended hours June through August, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.; the museum is closed on major holidays. The Big Read: The Poetry of Emily Dickinson is part of a pilot initiative created by the National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the Poetry Foundation to celebrate great American poets and the nation's historic poetry locales.

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