



NEWS RELEASE

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Celebrate Emily Dickinson's Birthday on Dec. 12 at the Annual Open House and Film Showing

Amherst, Mass.—On Saturday, December 12, the Emily Dickinson Museum will host its annual open house in honor of the poet's 179th birthday. The event, which is free and open to the public, will begin at 11 am and end at 4 pm. The Museum, in conjunction with Amherst Cinema, will also offer a special showing of "The Poet in Her Bedroom" at 11 a.m. at Amherst Cinema. Admission for the public is \$3, and free to Amherst Cinema and Pleasant Street Theater Members.

Because most of the Homestead is temporarily closed due to a ceiling collapse, this year's birthday open house will take place primarily at The Evergreens, the home next door of her brother Austin's family. Visitors can celebrate with self-guided tours and a scavenger hunt (everyone's a winner!) of the breathtaking time capsule of 19th-century life. Museum staff, including some guides in period costume, will be happy to answer questions. Poems will be featured in each room, and visitors can help to decorate the Christmas tree in The Evergreens' parlor.

In keeping with tradition, the first 179 visitors will receive a long-stemmed rose, courtesy of an anonymous donor. The roses, along with hot cider and birthday refreshments, will be available at the Museum's Tour Center, located in the rear addition of the Homestead. The museum's gift shop stands ready to help with holiday shopping needs.

Also featured on December 12 is a special screening of the film "The Poet in Her Bedroom" at the Amherst Cinema, located at 28 Amity St., Amherst. The program begins at 11 a.m. As an introduction to the film, Jane Wald, the Museum's executive director, will share the remarkable story of the parlor ceiling collapse. Wald notes, "Since the poet's bedroom is currently off view, the film showing is an ideal way to honor Emily Dickinson and the space we most associate with her." Filmmaker Ernest Urvater will also be on hand to discuss his work. Refreshments will be served.

Emily Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830. The Museum dedicated to her legacy is located at 280 Main Street in Amherst. Parking is available on Main Street, on nearby side streets, and in the Town of Amherst parking garage. For more information, contact Nan Fischlein, program coordinator, at nfischlein@emilydickinsonmuseum.org or 413-542-2034.

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 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 official museum website is www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org. Regular season hours are Wednesday through Sunday 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. March through December 20; from December 23 through December 31, the Museum will be open Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. The Museum will be closed on December 24 and 25. Although the Homestead is temporarily closed, the Museum has developed an intriguing tour of The Evergreens as the first Emily Dickinson museum; this tour is available during open hours.

Amherst Cinema was built in 1926, created out of an old stable in downtown Amherst. In November 2006, the renovated theater reopened as an independent, nonprofit theater, featuring first-run independent film and world cinema. In January 2008, the legendary Pleasant Street Theater in Northampton, Mass., was re-opened by the organization and is operated under the same nonprofit umbrella as the Amherst Cinema.

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