



NEWS RELEASE

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Emily Dickinson Museum Brings a Nineteenth-Century Children's Circus to Amherst

AMHERST Mass. - On Saturday July 10, 2010, the Emily Dickinson Museum will present its annual "Creatures of Bliss and Mystery: A 19th-Century Circus," from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on the Emily Dickinson Museum lawn. Especially appropriate for children ages 3 to 10 (accompanied by adults), this event is free and open to the public. The day also features a "community day" at the Emily Dickinson Museum for Amherst residents who are invited to visit the Homestead and The Evergreens without charge from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. In case of rain, all activities will take place on Sunday, July 11.

Henry the Juggler will perform at 2:00 and 2:45 p.m. and will also offer an informal juggling workshop during the afternoon. Folksinger and storyteller Tim Van Egmond will present a lively program of tales and folksongs at 1:15 and 3:15 p.m. Other participatory activities include tightrope walking, a ring-toss, and kid-friendly crafts. Children can make fancy hats, festive flags, and masks to sport during the Parade Around the Grounds, which begins at 2:30 p.m.

New to the Museum's circus fun this year, Henry the Juggler will demonstrate the apparatus of his trade--balls, clubs, rings, and torches. He has been seen by tens of thousands up and down the East coast, appearing at theaters, schools, libraries, festivals and business districts. Henry has been performing and teaching juggling for more than 25 years. He is an active member of the International Jugglers Association and the Hats Off Performers Guild.

Folksinger and storyteller Tim Van Egmond has been delighting audiences all over the country, weaving together tales and tunes. He performs on a variety of traditional instruments, including the hammered dulcimer, conga drum, guitar and limberjack (a dancing wooden rhythm puppet). His dynamic style makes stories come alive, and his gift for encouraging participation makes for high-spirited programs. "Tim is a triple treat. He can sing, play a variety of instruments and tell whopping good tales!" says Uncle Emily author Jane Yolen.

The title of the Museum's annual event, "Creatures of Bliss and Mystery," comes from recollections of a home-grown circus produced by Emily Dickinson's niece and nephews: "It never occurred to us that we were not creatures of bliss and mystery--that the Ringmaster was really Ned with trousers tucked into rubber boots, cracking his whip and making jokes with the clown, Will Mather in private life, stuffed out with a pillow, red spots painted on his face, --or that the performance was a bit less dazzling than the one we had seen the day before, --especially if Ned sang his circus song picked up from the real ring."

For more information about the circus, 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., with extended summer hours, June through August, Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.

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