



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Emily Dickinson Museum Launches Membership Program

AMHERST, Ma - The Emily Dickinson Museum announces the launch of a new membership program on September 25, 2010, amid a full day of exhibit-related programs and the museum's annual poetry marathon. The "Friends of the Emily Dickinson Museum" draws inspiration from a letter of Emily Dickinson to her mentor Thomas Wentworth Higginson in which she declared "My Friends are my 'Estate'".

The membership program offers such benefits as unlimited free admission to tours for up to two adults and two children under 18, subscription to the print newsletter "A Message from the Meadows" and a monthly electronic newsletter, discounts on fee-based Museum programs and shop purchases, invitations to special events, and complimentary guest passes. Those joining by June 30, 2011, will become "Charter Members." On September 25, Friends may join on at a rate of \$40, a deep discount from the full membership fee of \$65.

The Friends of the Emily Dickinson Museum will come to life on the same day as the Museum holds a variety of intriguing programs linked to the Museums10 collaborative theme "Table for Ten: the Art, History, and Science of Food." On Saturday September 25, the Emily Dickinson Museum will host sixteen hours of programming including a workshop, a marathon, and a baking contest. All the programs will take place at the Emily Dickinson Museum, 280 Main St. Amherst and are free.

"It seems especially fitting," said executive director Jane Wald, "that we initiate this program with its hope to make many new Friends for Emily Dickinson and the Museum on a day when we read each and every one of her 1,789 poems. We expect this new initiative will provide an appealing way for friends and neighbors of the Dickinson Museum and a worldwide community of Dickinson followers to celebrate the poet's life and work with an organization dedicated to the same purpose. The Friends program will support the Museum's careful stewardship of the Dickinson family homes and material legacy, curriculum materials and professional enrichment for teachers, an authoritative website, and inspiring experiences for thousands of visitors each year."

- Beginning at 7 a.m. and continuing until approximately 11 p.m.: Emily Dickinson lovers of all ages are invited to join the annual Emily Dickinson Poetry Marathon a daylong reading of her 1,789 poems.
- From 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.: Landscape historian and gardener Marta McDowell will lead "Put down the apple Adam": The Dickinsons' Apples and Figs, a workshop about the horticulture of these fruits and how they were eaten and preserved. The program will begin with a talk, followed by a tasting of heirloom apples, figs, and products made from Dickinson-era recipes.
- From 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Preview of the new exhibition, "Art has a 'Palate'": The Dickinsons and Dining, at The Evergreens. Drawing on family letters, inventories, and findings from recent architectural investigations, the museum will re-interpret the public and private areas of the house related to food preparation and service. The Homestead will be open for guided tours (regular admission fees apply).
- From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.: The Emily Dickinson Museum's first-ever Baking Contest. The Museum provides Dickinson's recipes for gingerbread, black cake, and coconut cake as well as a category for "Rye and Indian" Bread. There are separate categories for young people and adults. Those interested in entering should check the museum web site ([www.EmilyDickinsonMuseum.org](http://www.EmilyDickinsonMuseum.org)) for contest rules and recipes. The Intention to Enter Form must be submitted by Tuesday, September 21. Prizes will be awarded at 4 p.m. on the 25th.

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 home of the poet's brother and sister-in-law, Austin and Susan Dickinson. The official museum website is [www.EmilyDickinsonMuseum.org](http://www.EmilyDickinsonMuseum.org). Regular museum hours are Wednesday through Sunday 11 a.m. until 4 p.m., March 31 through December 31, 2010. The Emily Dickinson Museum is located at 280 Main Street in Amherst.

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