



NEWS RELEASE

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Emily
DICKINSON
Museum
THE HOMESTEAD &
THE EVERGREENS

Ceiling in Room of Emily Dickinson Museum Falls; Facility Closed Until Oct. 30

AMHERST, Mass.—On the afternoon of Oct. 25, the plaster ceiling in the front parlor of the Emily Dickinson Museum’s Homestead fell into the room. Although the building was open for tours, no one was in the room at the time of the incident; there were no injuries to any staff, visitors or any other individuals. In order to complete a thorough safety review of the facility and assess the extent of the damages, the Emily Dickinson Museum will be closed Oct. 26 to 30 and/or until the building undergoes a full inspection. An estimate of the value of the damages is forthcoming.

According to Jane Wald, executive director of the museum, the cause of the ceiling failure is being reviewed as part of the structural investigation. The plaster was not part of the original house fabric, but had been installed approximately fifty years ago. Several historic items were on display in the front parlor—including a Dickinson family sofa and chairs—she said, but clean-up of the space needs to be completed in order to assess damage to the artifacts. “We are hopeful that damage to the artifacts is limited,” she explained. “At the same time, it is a little too early to tell if it will be possible to present the room in exactly the same way after repairs to the building and artifacts are completed.”

Wald went on to say that the restoration/repair of the Homestead will begin as soon possible, as will limited tours of the museum. The most up-to-date information will be posted on the museum’s Web site, <http://www.emilydickinsonmuseum.org/index.html>, when it becomes available.

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