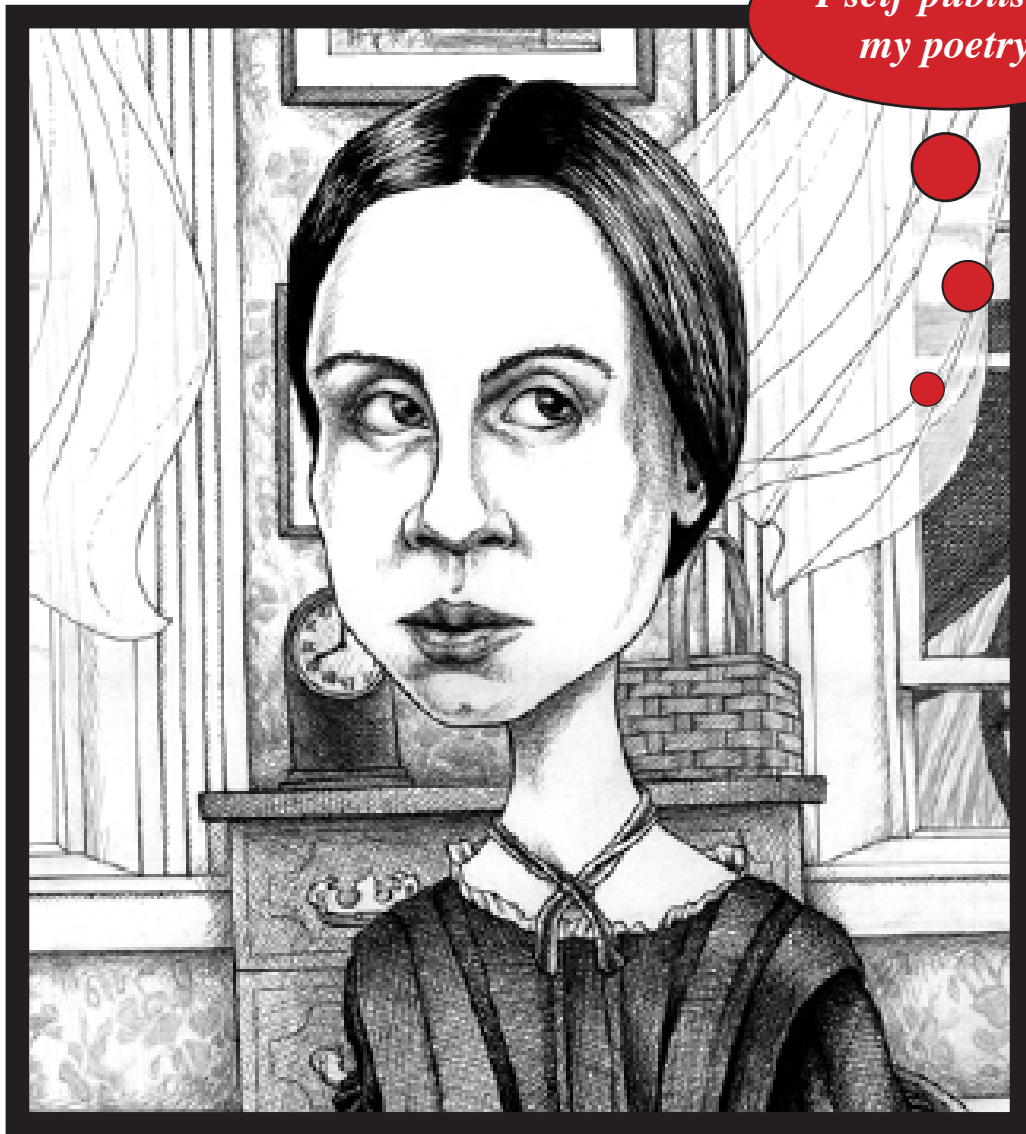


PWR Newsletter



*I self-published
my poetry!*



Emily Dickinson

(December 10, 1830 – May 15, 1886)



PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR



PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR



A Club to Celebrate and Support Aspiring and Published Authors



June 3, 2017

Volume VI, Issue 6

Board Members

President: Duke Robinson
Vice President: Patricia Keith-Spiegel
Secretary: Dorothy Pritchett
Treasurer: Nazli Monahan
Programs: Ron Wren
Publicity: Barbara Kirbach

Coordinators

Membership: Julie Blade
Channel 28: Joanna Kraus
Featured Authors: Barbara Kirbach
Room Setup: Bud Sisson
Archives: Sandy Foreman
Website: John Braggio
Author Events: Karl Livengood

Newsletter Editor: Paul Weisser

Board Member Backups

President: Patricia Keith-Spiegel
Vice President: The Board
Secretary: Barbara Kirbach
Treasurer: Frances Chin
Programs: Vacant
Publicity: Ron Wren

Coordinator Backups

Membership: Dorothy Pritchett
Channel 28: Frances Chin
Featured Authors: Diana Smith
Room Setup: Vacant
Archives: Vacant
Website: Vacant
Author Events: Judy Dillingham

Newsletter Backup Editor: Vacant

Coming up!
Our Fifth Birthday Party and Annual Meeting
This Saturday, June 3, 2017
From 9:45 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
In the Fairway Room at Creekside Clubhouse

Come early and enjoy complimentary coffee and cookies!

Members can renew their dues for the coming year (\$20) at the welcome table

Annual Meeting on June 3

BY BARBARA KIRBACH



Barbara Kirbach

PWR will celebrate its fifth anniversary of supporting 100-plus members in publishing and promoting their books on Saturday, June 3, from 9:45 A.M. to noon at Creekside. This special event will include coffee and cookies, along with a fun game and prizes. At this traditional Annual Meeting, we will also recognize charter members who are present, current board members, program coordinators, and their backups.

Vice President and Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, Tricia Spiegel, will also introduce nominees for the 2017–2018 Board of Directors, whose term will begin on July 1. An election will follow.

Of special note will be the appointment of Duke Robinson as President Emeritus. Duke is retiring after four years of serving as President of the club, and will continue to act in an advisory role.

A proposal granting a year of dispensation to review the size and structure of the board will also be considered.

Author members who have published a book in the last twelve months are asked to bring copies of their books to the meeting by 9:45 to display on a special table. Early in the meeting, they will have a couple of minutes to promote their book and say a word about how it was published. Then, during the break, these authors will have a chance to discuss their publishing and promoting experiences with other members.

Please e-mail Ron Wren at ronwren@aol.com to reserve a space and to receive further instructions regarding layout and timing. □

For more information on the program, contact ronwren@aol.com

For more information on PWR, visit www.rossmoor-writers.com



The President's Page

BY DUKE ROBINSON



Duke Robinson

At our June 3 meeting, we will celebrate five years as a club. See other articles in this issue as to exactly what we'll be doing.

Okay, on to some book-promotion business:

Bogged down in selling your book online? So am I. So, what do we do?

The online book-promotion experts have plenty of suggestions, but most of those are geared to authors between the ages of 20 and 50 who are interested in writing careers, and thus are irrelevant to us.

One common suggestion that's not beyond most of us is to create a personal website. No, I haven't done this, but I keep thinking I ought to. I estimate that we have ten or a dozen PWR members who have websites. I've seen claims that you can get a website up and running in twenty-four hours, for a couple of hundred dollars.

On your website you could tell about your book and post a link to where

visitors can buy it. You could also blog on it—that is, spout off, tell your story, or spread insights you think others might find interesting, important, or helpful.

Perhaps we should have a Saturday program with a panel of our website owners explaining to us how to create a website, manage it well, and use it to increase sales of our books. Those members might also teach the rest of us how to blog. I'm going to run this idea by the new board for its consideration.

Of course, as a PWR member and author, you can have your own author's page on our increasingly effective website, for just \$10 a year. On it you can place bio material, a photo of yourself, and information about your books, along with posting links to take visitors to where they can buy them. Then you can announce to family members and friends that you have your very own page on our PWR website (www.rossmoor-writers.com). If you haven't put ten bucks down to cover a year for your author's page, why not?

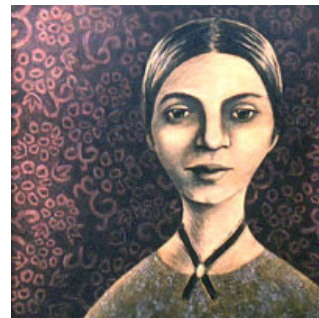
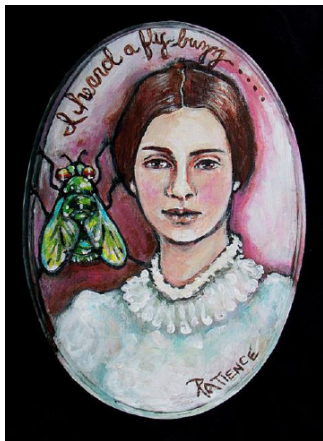
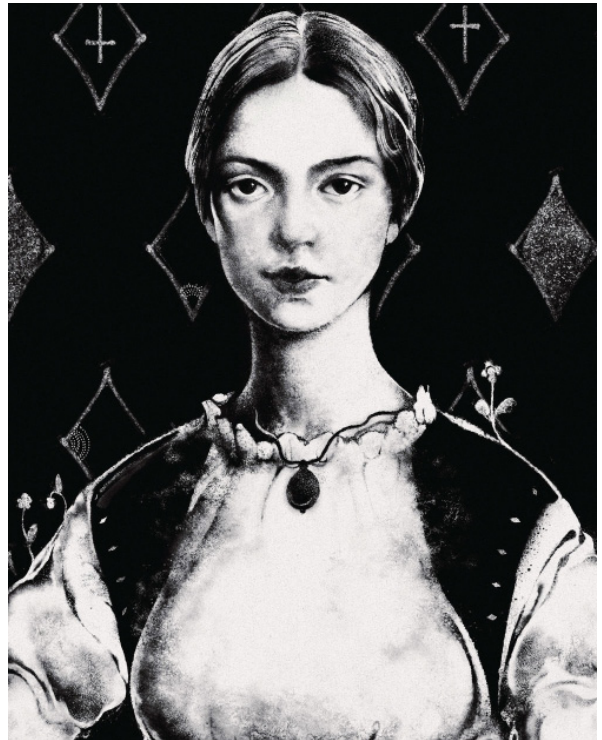
After we take advantage of our PWR programs that help us promote our books in Rossmoor, we have a lot to learn and do in the way of selling our books online.

I look forward to a good time Saturday and to learning a good bit in the new business year. □





Emily (left) with her siblings



Vegetarian Circle

By GENE GORDON



Gene Gordon

Vegetarian Writer of the Month: Jane Goodall

Writer Jane Goodall is the author of *My Friends the Wild Chimpanzees*, as well as other books such as *Hope for Animals and Their World: How Endangered Species Are Being Rescued from the Brink*. She is also the founder and president of the Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research, Education, and Conservation.

“In the early 1970s,” she writes, “I learned about the horrors of intensive animal production. This happened while reading Peter Singer’s *Animal Liberation*. I had never heard of a factory farm before, and as I turned the pages, I became increasingly horrified and angry. I can still remember how I felt when I closed Singer’s book. I thought about the delicious pork chops that I loved, the heavenly smell of frying bacon

in the morning. And all the roast chicken, casseroled chicken, fried chicken, and chicken soup that I had enjoyed during my life. But from that moment on, when I saw meat on my plate, I thought of pain, fear, and death. How horrible.” □



Jane Goodall and friend





PWR Featured Author of the Month: Peter Li

BY BARBARA KIRBACH



Peter Li

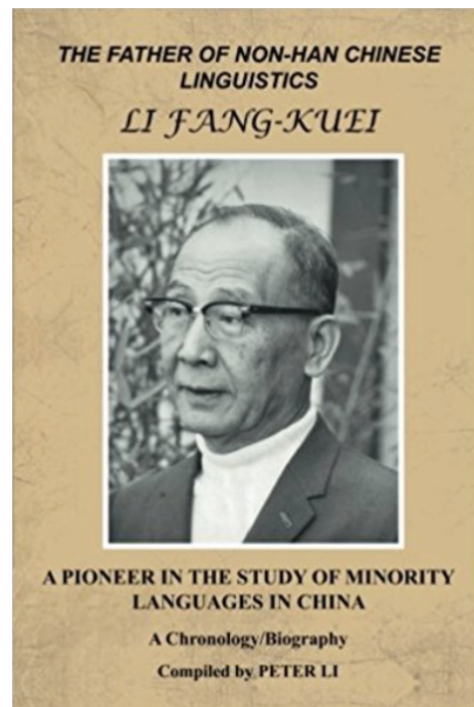
PWR has chosen Peter Li as its Featured Author for June for his chronology/biography of his father, Li Fang-Kuei, one of the foremost Chinese linguists in the world. The book, entitled *Li Fang-Kuei: A Pioneer in the Study of Minority Languages in China*, will be on display in the Library throughout June, along with other works by Peter.

The publication of the book will be celebrated with a launch party on Wednesday, June 14, from 1:00 to 3:00 P.M. in the Stanley Dollar Clubhouse lounge. Light refreshments will be served. All interested PWR members are urged to attend.

Peter Li, a Professor Emeritus of Rutgers University, was born in China but received his education in the United States. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1972 and

taught Asian Studies and Comparative Literature at Rutgers for thirty years before his retirement. He and his wife, Marjorie, moved to Rossmoor in 2016.

In *Li Fang-Kuei*, Peter describes the making of a practicing linguist whose career spanned some sixty years, from the 1920s to 1987, and crossed two continents, from China to America. Peter also relates how his father's research in American Indian languages took him into the wilderness of northern Canada, and how his study of minority languages in China took him to the border regions of Tibet, Thailand, and Vietnam.



Also detailed in the book are Li Fang-Kuei's career as a scholar, linguist, and adventurer, from his idyllic years of study in America through the war-torn years in China and peaceful retirement

(continued on page 9)

in Hawaii. “The book,” says Peter, “should be of interest to those who want to learn something about linguistics, modern Chinese history, and the life and career of an outstanding Chinese-American linguist.”

Peter Li’s writing career is impressive in its own right. He is the author, contributor, and editor of books and articles on Chinese literature, culture, and politics and Asian-American studies. He was the book review editor of the *Journal of Chinese Language Teachers Association*, and he and Marjorie edited and compiled a volume on *Understanding Asian-Americans: A Curriculum Resource Guide*.

Peter also focused his attention on the pro-democracy movement in his native country and edited the book *Culture and Politics in China: The Anatomy of Tiananmen Square* in 1991.

He is the recipient of the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation Fellowship for *The Life and Times of Lao She: Culture, Art, and Politics*.

Since 1997, Peter has been the editor-in-chief of *East Asia: An International Quarterly*.

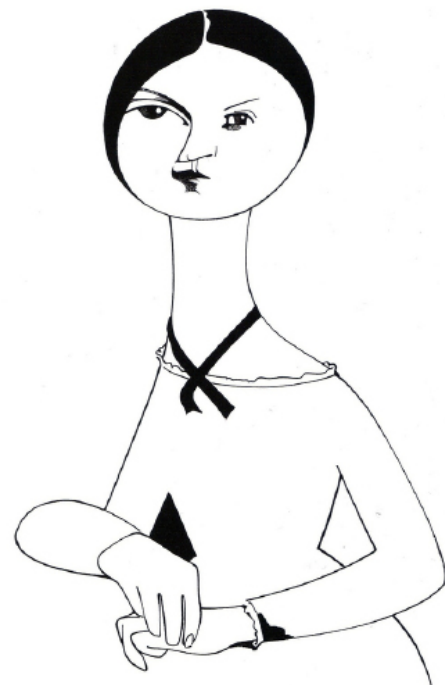
Some of his more recent works include *Japanese War Crimes: The Search for Justice*; *The Nanking Holocaust: Tragedy, Trauma, and Reconciliation*; *War and Modernity in Chinese Military Fiction*; and *Hirohito: The Unrepentant Emperor*.

Since retirement in 2003, Peter has been an active participant in seeking

redress for the victims of the Japanese atrocities during World War II. □

(*Li Fang-Kuei* is available on Amazon in hard copy or as an e-book. You can also obtain it directly from Peter. If you plan to attend the book launch party, please contact Peter before June 10 at (510) 882-1313 or peterli10@yahoo.com)

(For more information about PWR’s Featured Author Program, contact Barbara Kirbach at blkirbach@gmail.com or visit our website at www.Rossmoor-writers.com)



Board Members Election in June

BY PATRICIA KEITH-SPIEGEL



Tricia Spiegel

In accordance with our PWR Bylaws, President Duke Robinson appointed a Nominating Committee in April: Patricia Keith-Spiegel, Chairperson; Nazli Monahan and Barbara Kirbach from the board; and Bob Bone and Bud Sisson from the general membership.

At PWR's meeting on June 3, the Committee will nominate members to serve as PWR board members, beginning July 1.

This year, there are three open positions on the board and one continuing board member who will switch roles. Along with current members Patricia Keith-Spiegel (*Vice President*) and Nazli Monahan (*Treasurer*), the Nominating Committee will present for election the names of the following four PWR members to fill out the slate for 2017–2018:

President: Ron Wren (who will be vacating his designation as Program Chair and finishing his second year as a Director; for a one-year term)

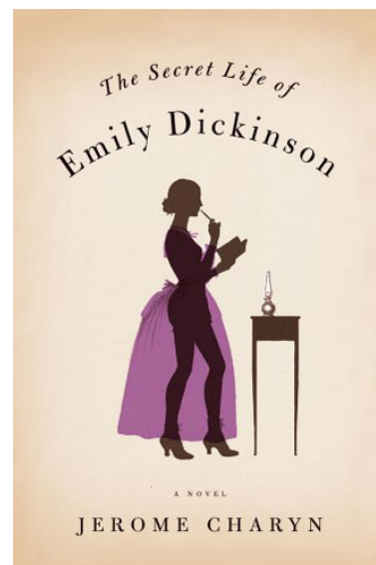
Secretary: Dorothy Pritchett (for a two-year term)

Publicity: Peter Li (for a two-year term)

Program: Polly Berenson (for a two-year term)

We believe these new board members will be outstanding additions to the PWR board, and we are pleased that they have expressed a willingness to serve.

Nominations for membership on the board will be accepted from the floor on June 3 only if the nominator has obtained the consent of the nominee. If you desire to make a nomination from the floor, please let Patricia Keith Spiegel know prior to the meeting (pkspiegel@comcast.net). □





An artist's conception of how Emily Dickinson might look today



Grab Bag

Check Out PWR's Website!

John Braggio and **Bob Bone** want to remind members about everything you can find on our website: It promotes members' published books; announces monthly meeting activities; includes photographs from our life as a Rossmoor club; provides other information about us; and contains space for feedback and questions for the board. Whenever you visit, you should find something new: <http://www.rossmoor-writers.com>

Spare Books

Tricia Spiegel wishes to remind PWR members once again that if you have books that you no longer need that might be helpful to other members and their writing projects, please put them on the designated table at our Saturday morning meeting for those who might like them.

All books are to be free, with the idea that you take only one before our meeting is adjourned. After that, take as many that are left as you think you will use.

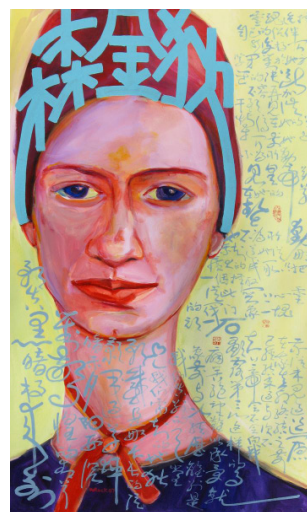
Membership in PWR

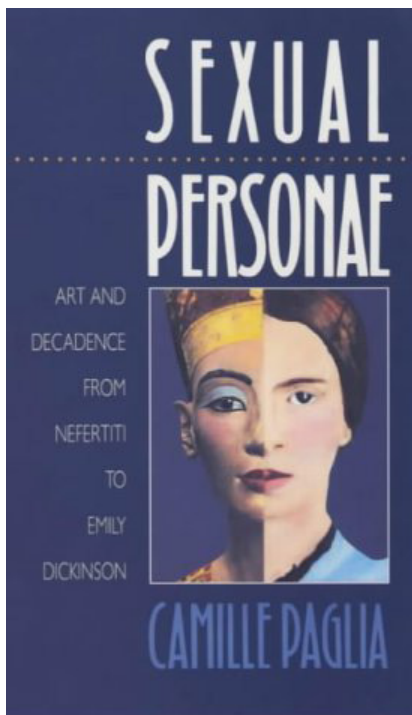
PWR exists to help those who have published or hope to publish. Our members are authors looking forward to publishing as well as those who already have been through the process. If you ever hear people say that to attend PWR meetings or to be a member one must

have published a book, please tactfully set them straight.

Concerns, Questions, & Suggestions

If you are a member or potential member of this club, the board members want you not only to be informed about club matters but also to have your voice heard. Whenever you have a question, concern, or suggestion about what we are or are not doing, please contact us by e-mail or the website template, or talk to us at one of our Saturday meetings. □





From the Editor



Paul Weisser

Emily Dickinson, Self-Publisher

Emily Elizabeth Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830, in Amherst, Massachusetts, the middle child between her older brother, William Austin, known as Austin (1829–1895), and her younger sister, Lavinia (1833–1899).

Emily's father, Edward Dickinson, was a prominent lawyer in Amherst and a well-respected trustee of Amherst College, which had been founded almost single-handedly by Edward's father, Samuel Dickinson. In addition to lawyering, Edward Dickinson served numerous terms as a State Legislator, and represented the Hampshire district in the United States Congress.

Emily's mother, Emily Norcross Dickinson, became bedridden with various chronic illnesses from the mid-1850s until her death in 1882. While Emily consistently described her father

in a warm manner, her correspondence suggests that her mother was regularly cold and aloof. In a letter to a confidante, Emily wrote that she “always ran Home to Awe [Austin] when a child, if anything befell me. He was an awful Mother, but I liked him better than none.”



Although Emily was part of a prominent (but not wealthy) family with strong ties to its community, she lived much of her life in reclusive isolation. After studying at the Amherst Academy for seven years in her youth, she briefly attended the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary (now Mount Holyoke College) before returning to her family's house in Amherst.



(continued on page 15)

Considered an eccentric by locals, she developed a noted penchant for white clothing and became known for her reluctance to greet guests or, later in life, to even leave her bedroom. Emily never married, and most friendships between her and others depended entirely upon correspondence. After she became a near-total recluse, she was known around Amherst as “the myth.” Some thought she was a mystic.



One recent biographer, Lyndall Gordon, argues that Emily was epileptic and feared suffering one of her seizures in public. Another theory is that she suffered from agoraphobia. In her own day, she was diagnosed by a physician as having “nervous prostration.”

Emily once stated that her only real companions were the hills, the sundown, and her dog, Carlo, who provided companionship for sixteen years.

When Emily’s father suffered a stroke and died on June 16, 1874, a simple funeral was held in the home’s entrance

hall, but Emily, who was 43, stayed in her room with the door cracked open, and did not attend the memorial service on June 28.



After her acquaintance and later editor, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, met her in 1870, he described her as “a little plain woman with two smooth bands of reddish hair..., in a very plain & exquisitely clean white piqué & a blue net worsted shawl.” He also noted that he never was “with any one who drained my nerve power so much. Without touching her, she drew from me. I am glad not to live near her.”



In the 1850 national census, prior to becoming a recluse, Emily had listed her occupation as “keeping house.” She also took up baking for her family and, most of all, gardening. In fact,

(continued on page 16)

in her own day, she was more widely known in town as a gardener than as a poet. She had studied botany from the age of nine, and during her lifetime assembled a collection of pressed plants in a 66-page leather-bound herbarium that contained 424 pressed flower specimens, which she classified and labeled, using the Linnaean system. She once wrote to a friend that she “could inhabit the Spice Isles merely by crossing the dining room to the conservatory, where the plants hang in baskets.”



One critic, Judith Farr, wrote that Emily’s “poems and letters almost wholly concern flowers,” and that allusions to gardens often refer to an “imaginative realm...wherein flowers [are] often emblems for actions and emotions,” with some flowers, like gentians and anemones, associated with youth and humility, while others are associated with prudence and insight.

Only ten of Emily’s poems were published in her lifetime, all

anonymously. Publication was, as she put it, as “foreign to my thought, as Firmament to Fin.” She much preferred to see her poems in her own eccentric handwriting, rather than in print. Not that she intended her poems to go unread—she often sent them in letters to friends, sometimes with other enclosures: dried flowers, a three-cent stamp, a dead cricket.



She also tried a form of self-publishing: from around 1858 until roughly 1864, she gathered some 800 poems into forty homemade books, known as “fascicles,” by folding single sheets of blank paper in half to form four consecutive pages, which she then wrote on and, later, bound, one folded sheet on another, with red-and-white thread strung through crudely punched holes.



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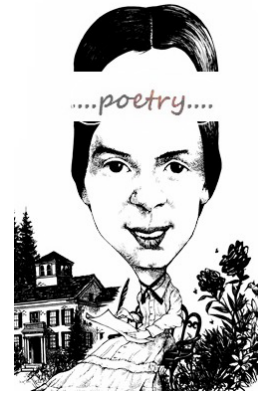
Emily's poems are unique for the era in which she wrote, containing short lines, typically lacking titles, and often using slant (imperfect) rhyme as well as unconventional capitalization and punctuation. Thus, the few poems that were published in her lifetime were usually altered significantly by the publishers to fit the conventional poetic rules of the time.

The house in which Emily spent so much of her life overlooked Amherst's burial ground, which was described by one local minister as treeless and "forbidding." This no doubt contributed to the fact that many of her poems deal with themes of death and immortality, two recurring topics in letters to her friends.

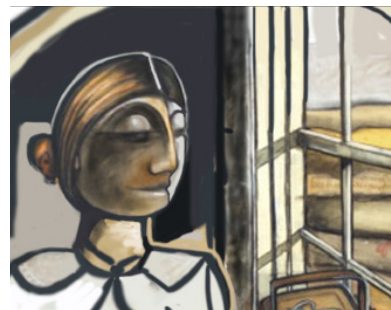


In fact, Emily was troubled from a young age by the "deepening menace"

of death, which was partly inspired by the early demise of several of her friends and relatives. Nevertheless, her poetry frequently uses humor, puns, irony and satire.



Although Emily's acquaintances were most likely aware of her writing, it was not until after her death, of kidney failure, on May 15, 1886, that the breadth of her work became apparent to the public — when Lavinia Dickinson discovered her sister's cache of nearly 1,800 poems gathered in a locked chest. Along with completed poems, there were scraps of one-liners that Emily wrote on scavenged paper: the flap of a manila envelope, the backs of letters, chocolate wrappers, even bits of newspaper.



The first collection of Emily's poetry was published in 1890 by Thomas

(continued on page 18)

Wentworth Higginson and Mabel Loomis Todd (Austin Dickinson's mistress), although both heavily edited the content. A complete, and mostly unaltered, collection of her poetry became available for the first time when scholar Thomas H. Johnson published *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* in 1955.

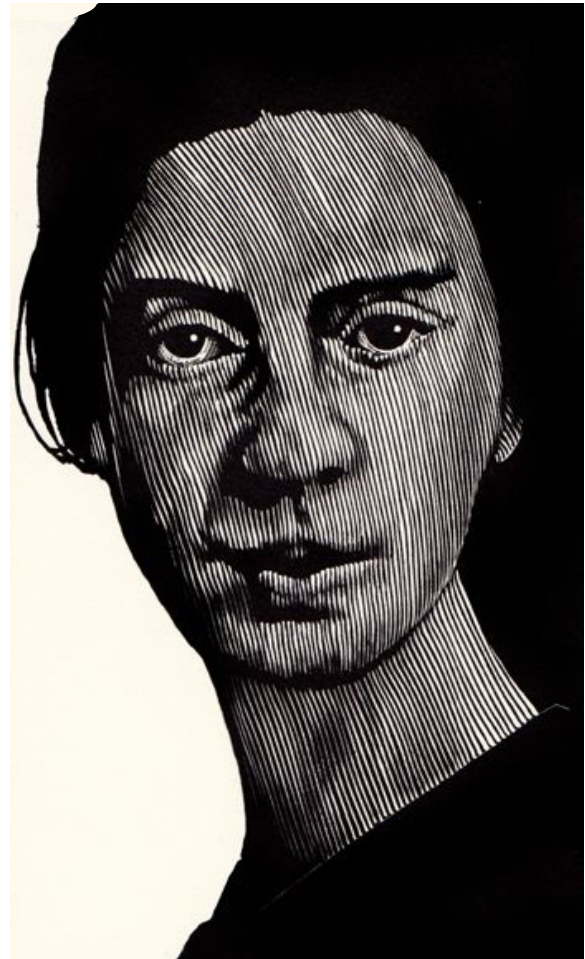


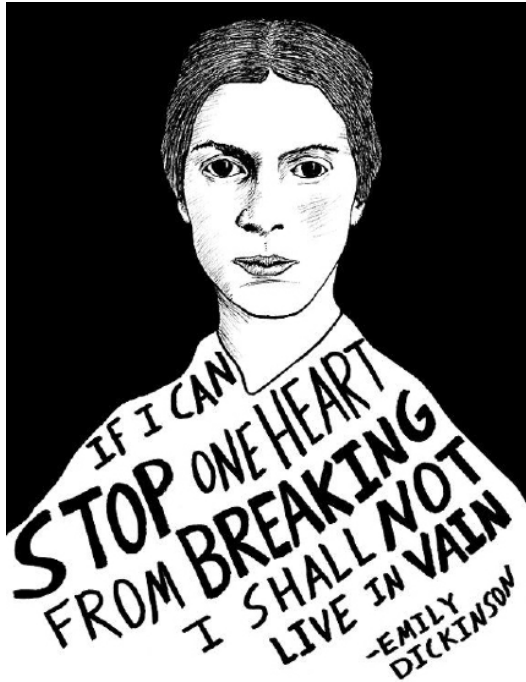
Despite some unfavorable reception and skepticism over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries regarding her literary prowess, Emily Dickinson is now almost universally considered to be one of the most significant of all American poets. With the possible exception of Walt Whitman, she is now regarded by most critics as the most important American poet of the nineteenth century. Some critics even consider her the greatest female poet in the English language.

A cinematic biography, *A Quiet Passion*, starring Cynthia Nixon as the poet, appeared in 2016.

During Emily's lifetime, neighborhood children sometimes boasted of catching a glimpse of her at an upstairs

window. Today, visitors to her home can rent her bedroom for an hour at a time and see precisely what she saw. □



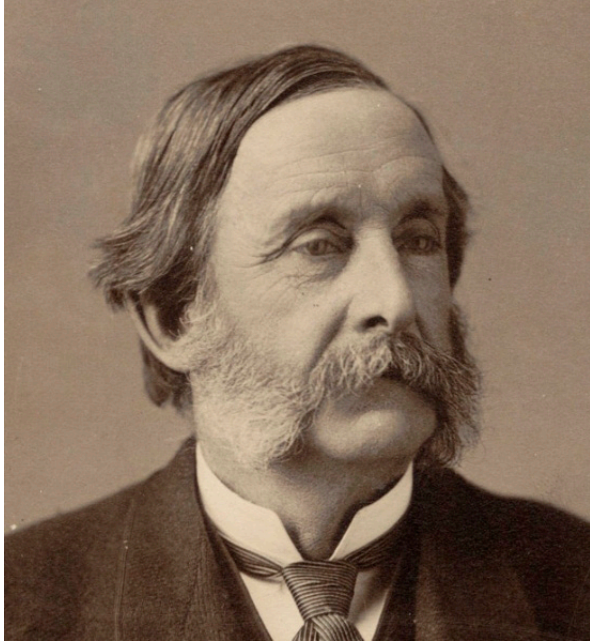


Thought for the Month

"I know nothing in the world that has as much power as a word. Sometimes I write one, and I look at it, until it begins to shine."

—Emily Dickinson

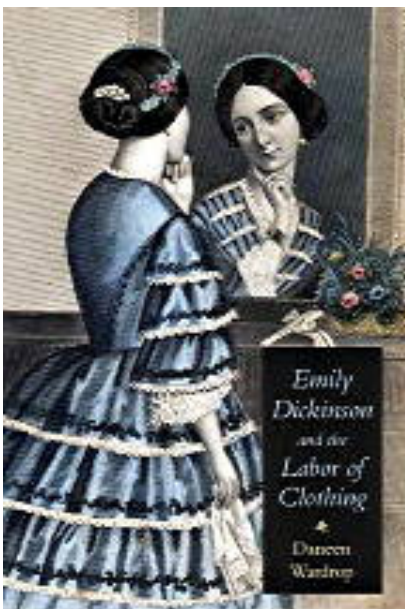




Thomas Wentworth Higginson



Mabel Loomis Todd





PWR Newsletter



*I self-published
my poetry!*



Emily Dickinson

(December 10, 1830 – May 15, 1886)



PUBLISHED WRITERS OF ROSSMOOR

