



**Local Treasures:
The Emily Dickinson House Museum
& Wistariahurst Mansion
Monday, March 13**

8:35 am - Arrive at the Museums' State Street parking lot located directly across the street from the Springfield City Library. Park in the lot and board the bus at the curbside. **Depart at 8:45 am sharp.**

9:45 am – **Estimated arrival at the Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst.** Enjoy a guided tour of the birthplace and homestead of poet Emily Dickinson (1830-1886), where she lived with her family during the 19th and 20th centuries. Her quiet life here was infused with a creative energy that produced almost 1,800 poems and a profusion of vibrant letters. Her increasing withdrawal from public life limited her audience during her lifetime to family and friends, and her work remained virtually unpublished until after her death on May 15, 1886.

Although the poet's reclusiveness kept her close to home, her intellectual curiosity and emotional intensity tied her deeply to the world around her. Among her most significant lifelong relationships were those with her brother Austin and sister-in-law Susan, who lived just next door in a fashionable Italianate house that they named The Evergreens (currently closed for renovations).

After Emily Dickinson's death her poems and life story were brought to the attention of the wider world through the competing efforts of family members and intimates. Her sister, Lavinia, and neighbor Mabel Loomis Todd saw to the initial publication of her poems. In the early twentieth century, the poet's niece, Martha Dickinson Bianchi, edited additional collections and memoirs and preserved The Evergreens as a memorial to her aunt and family. Largely because of these efforts, Dickinson's unique voice on the literary landscape has captured diverse audiences.

Following our visit, enjoy a group lunch at Johnny's Grille in South Hadley.

1:30 pm - **Explore the history of the Wistariahurst Mansion in Holyoke** on a guided tour of the home of the Skinner Family, owners of the Skinner & Sons silk mill in Holyoke, Massachusetts at the turn of the 20th Century.

Designed by William Fenno Pratt in 1868 in Haydenville Massachusetts, the Skinner home was constructed across the road from Skinner's Unquomok Silk Mill on the Mill River. In 1874, the Mill River reservoir dam burst, and the flood waters destroyed everything in their path, including William Skinner's mill. His home was spared but his business was gone. Much of the house as one sees it today reflects the style and taste of Belle Skinner, who implemented interior designs and renovations in the time she was in residence here. Wistariahurst spans 17,500 square feet of living and storage space across three floors and two basements. The Main House has 26 total rooms, with 15 bedrooms (5 of which were for live-in help), 9 bathrooms, 19 fireplaces, 25 closets, and 121 windows.

The buildings and grounds were owned continually by the Skinner family until 1959, when heirs of the family gave Wistariahurst to the City of Holyoke for cultural and educational purposes.

3:15 pm – Meet the bus and depart for Springfield, with an estimated return by 4 pm.

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