

EDIS Annual Business Meeting  
July 28, 2002  
Amherst Alumni House  
Amherst, Massachusetts

Approximately 45 present

EDIS President Jonnie Guerra convened the meeting at 11:05 a.m., welcoming all and introducing the members of the EDIS Board of Directors.

Guerra began her President's report with the announcement that Ellie Heginbotham and Gary Stonum will be stepping down from the Board as their terms have expired; however, Stonum will have a seat on the Board as editor of the *Emily Dickinson Journal*.

Guerra also announced that after 11 years of service, Georgiana Strickland will be stepping down as editor of the *Bulletin*. Guerra commended Strickland for her work as the first "official" editor of the *Bulletin*, particularly for the series articles and for the conference issues that were Strickland's original ideas. The membership acknowledged Strickland's work with a standing ovation.

Guerra introduced Michael Kearns, the new editor of the *Bulletin*. A named professor at the University of Texas of the Permian Basin, he is the new Chair of the Department of English at the University of Southern Indiana and expects to be a new father soon.

Guerra acknowledged the wonderful Amherst weekend program, a project that developed over three years and has been for the last year the central focus of its organizer, Georgiana Strickland. Guerra presented Strickland with a gift (a Dickinson-inspired paperweight bearing the inscription: "I dwell in possibility") as a token of appreciation. Strickland thanked the Board members and, naming the many individuals who helped her, she expressed appreciation for each person's particular contribution to the planning and running of the weekend activities.

Guerra announced the next three EDIS conferences:

- the 2003 Annual Meeting will take place June 27-29 in Philadelphia and have as its theme "Dickinson and Marianne Moore"
- the fifth International Conference is scheduled for July 30-August 1, 2004, in Hilo, Hawaii
- the 2005 Annual Meeting will be in Amherst

Reviewing the events of the year, Guerra said that the "Dickinson Alive" project had had some success. She described an elementary school project in Wayne, Maine, the details of which may be found in the next *Bulletin*, as well as the exact dates in mid-April for next year's "Dickinson Alive" Week. She announced that Glenda King's design for an EDIS trademark (the EDIS name in type resembling Dickinson's handwriting) had received a copyright January 24, 2002, and is now an officially registered trademark.

Concluding her remarks, Guerra announced that EDIS would give \$500 to the Jones Library in honor of Sylvia F. Rogosa, who funded in whole and in part the 2001 and 2002 Scholar in Amherst Awards; \$500 to the Homestead in honor of Suzanne Juhasz, the former editor of the *Journal*; and \$500 to the Evergreens in honor of Georgiana Strickland, who is stepping down after 11 years as the editor of the *Bulletin*.

Guerra asked for and received provisional approval of the minutes from the 2001 Annual Meeting in Trondheim, stating that Gary Stonum will post them on the EDIS website.

Treasurer Ellen Louise Hart reported a balance of \$16,172.86 as of July 17, 2002. She listed various normal expenses, stating that our income is mainly through membership dues, managed for us by Johns Hopkins University Press, publisher of the *Emily Dickinson Journal*.

In Membership Chair James Fraser's absence, Guerra gave an abbreviated report. Presently there are 351 members, though the membership peaks on a regular basis at approximately 400. Membership represents approximately 24 countries, and we are 10 memberships ahead of last year at this time.

Nominations Committee Chair Ellie Heginbotham expressed pleasure in serving with her fellow committee members. She reported that the committee had submitted the following nominees to the EDIS Board, and it had elected Jonnie Guerra, President; Suzanne Juhasz, Vice-president; Barbara Kelly, Secretary; Ellen Louise Hart, Treasurer; and James Fraser, Membership Chair. The Board elected two new members: Martha Ackmann and Marianne Noble; and re-elected Vivian Pollak and Martha Nell Smith, whose terms expire this year, for another three-year term as directors.

Updating the 2003 Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, Guerra said that the meeting will focus on "Dickinson and Marianne Moore" and will include workshops, several talks, and an exhibit of Dickinson and Moore material at the Rosenbach Museum and Library. Anyone interested in participating should let Guerra know.

Suzanne Juhasz reported on the panels that EDIS has sponsored at the Modern Language Association (MLA), the American Literature Association (ALA), and the Society for the Study of American Women Writers (SSAWW).

- The 2001 MLA featured two panels on Dickinson: "Mourning Dickinson" and "Remembering Dickinson." Panels scheduled for 2002 are "Seeing Dickinson, Sounding Dickinson" and "Dickinson as Historical Guide." Projected panels for 2003 are "Dickinson and Sexuality" and an open session. Juhasz announced that the MLA recertified EDIS for another seven years.
- The 2002 ALA featured two panels on Dickinson: "Dickinson and Politics" and "Dickinson as Precursor." Projected panels for 2003 are "Dickinson as Eco-Critic" and an open session. In Paul Crumbley's absence, Rob McClure Smith will organize the 2003 Dickinson panels.
- A conference topic for the 2003 SSAWW has not yet been announced.

Guerra added that the academic associations encourage the open sessions.

Reporting on the EDIS International Conference in Hawaii, scheduled for July 30-August 1, 2004, Guerra said that the program has not been entirely formed yet, but the committee is considering a thematic approach to the plenary sessions and panels, and “Realms of Amplitude” has been suggested. More information will be available in the *Bulletin*, including a call for papers in the spring of 2003.

Reporting on the Scholar in Amherst Award, Guerra said that the inaugural award had been given this year to Paraic Finnerty from Ireland. He was in Amherst April 9-30, 2002, researching Dickinson and Shakespeare, particularly Shakespeare’s acceptance in Dickinson’s Amherst. The Scholar in Amherst selection committee consists of Suzanne Juhasz, Vivian Pollak, Ellen Louise Hart, and (unofficially) Jonnie Guerra. Applications for the next Scholar in Amherst Award are due October 15, 2002.

*Emily Dickinson Journal* Editor Gary Stonum reported that the four-year terms of three members of the *Journal’s* Editorial Board – Jane Eberwein, Cristanne Miller, and Vivian Pollak – have expired, but all three have agreed to another four-year term. The two *Journal* issues this year were a regular issue and one that contained conference papers from Trondheim; one more issue will be devoted to conference papers from Trondheim. Stonum intends to focus on more book reviews in future issues.

EDIS *Bulletin* Editor Georgiana Strickland had no formal report other than to hand on to Michael Kearns the editorship and the gift of a feathered quill pen placed in a symbolic ink bottle. She also announced that the open mike session, scheduled for the afternoon at Alumni House, would not take place for lack of volunteer performers.

Curator of the Homestead, Cindy Dickinson, thanked the Board for its \$500 gift and expressed appreciation for its support, financial and otherwise. She announced that since her last report, the Homestead orientation center had been completed and that 8,000 visitors (an increase over last year) had been to the Homestead. The Homestead is currently having a new shingle roof installed, one that is in keeping with the Dickinson’s nineteenth-century roof. The Homestead and the Evergreens have produced a new joint brochure, and both houses are collaborating on increased public programs. An example was the concert given April 21, in honor of National Poetry Month and “Dickinson Alive” Week. The concert featured the new World Chamber Ensemble from Hartford, Connecticut, performing Gwyneth Walker’s *Letters to the World*. The piece included parts for readers of Dickinson’s poetry; Jonnie Guerra served as one of the readers. Cindy thanked the contributors who made this and other events possible.

Director of the Evergreens, Jane Wald, thanked the Board for past EDIS support and the present gift of \$500 in honor of Georgiana Strickland. She said that several events, as well as articles in newspapers, magazines, and journals during 2001, marked the opening of the Evergreens. In 2002, the Evergreens has been open three times as much,

parallel to the Homestead to some extent, and that 1,100 to 1,200 visitors have come through the house this year so far. Wald described a series of ongoing public events jointly sponsored by the Homestead and the Evergreens. Noting that the Evergreens has new wiring and refurbished light fixtures, she hopes to have the house open and more accessible to the public in the future.

Guerra acknowledged the recent deaths of Everett Emerson, Robert Lucas, and William Shurr. Before adjourning the meeting in time for the scheduled picnic lunch at 12:30 p.m., Guerra asked those attending the meeting to introduce themselves to the group. That being done, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Kelly  
EDIS Secretary