



Annual Report 2018



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Statement of Purpose

Eldon House is a community museum dedicated to the preservation, presentation and interpretation of London, Ontario's "oldest home," through the lens of four generations of the Harris Family. Eldon House has a commitment to acquiring, conserving, researching, interpreting, promoting and exhibiting material culture that best illustrates the history of Eldon House and London, the Harris family, and the people who worked in the house, from the period of 1834–1959. The unique Harris collection and accompanying archival material provide an authentic link to Canada's past, representing an irreplaceable legacy. The heritage resources of Eldon House are held in the public trust and aim to provide meaningful and enriching engagement, serving a diverse audience of visitors. As well as education and research, the Museum interprets and promotes local, regional, and national history.



Eldon House in summer. Collection: Harris Family Fonds, Western Archives, Western University.

A Note from the Chair of the Board of Directors, Mark Tovey

I would like to express warm appreciation to our board members during 2018, Jennifer Jolliffe, Ben Kent, Ron Koudys, Allison Martin, Joe O'Neil, Marvin Recker, Theresa Regnier, and Maureen Spencer-Golovchenko. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to incoming board members Rebecca Griesmayer, Louanne Henderson, and Manosij Majumdar, and returning member Mike Donachie.

We owe a great debt of thanks to Curator Director Tara Wittmann for cheerfully embodying her sometimes playful but often serious motto, "anything for Eldon House". Tara has been Eldon House's rock and its inspiration.

Likewise, much gratitude for their contribution is owed to Danielle Costello, Bernie Keim, Rick Cornelissen, Andrew Kitt, and Nikki Michienzi, and to the Eldon House historical interpreters, Kim Baker, Susan Butlin, Sarah Cowling, Emily Larsen, Cathy Luke, Andrew Moore, as well as to our many volunteers.

We have been significantly aided in our journey by Robin Armistead, Manager of the Culture Office at the City of London, and by City of London Heritage Planner Krista Gowan, and her fellow Heritage Planners Kyle Gonyou and Laura Dent.

Maureen Spencer-Golovchenko compared her tenure as Chair to "raising a child", and predicted that Jennifer Jolliffe's time as Chair would be similar to "raising a teenager". Let's explore what adulthood means for Eldon House as an independent museum, as we share in the journey of steering Eldon House towards a period of stability, maturity, and discovery.

Message from the Curator Director, Tara Wittmann

Through 2018, Eldon House has continued to evolve as a museum and organization, seeing expansion and improvements to our technologies and structure, while discovering more about our site's history through new research and exhibitions. The year started freshly, with the completion of a 19 month-long capital restoration project, after which we were able to reclaim and unpack our collection and storage spaces. Digitization and conservation projects that had been put on hold were approached with enthusiasm several of which were happily completed by the end of the year.



Eldon House with it's new signage

While employed at Eldon House in a variety of roles since 2004, my own position changed in 2018, from Curator to Curator-Director. Our Board of Directors looked closely at our staffing model and created a brand new position – that of Museum Coordinator - while also formalizing a new Governance Policy. We also enjoyed new partnerships with community organizations, hosted several summer students and interns as well as met key targets in the second year of our Strategic Plan. In many ways, 2018 was a year of growth for the museum, enduringly positive with change and challenge. My reflections of the year,

as ever, are coloured with sincere gratitude to the Staff and Board teams, Volunteers and Stakeholders who have all contributed to the accomplishments, vitality and growth that we have enjoyed this year at Eldon House!

Message from the Program Coordinator Danielle Costello



Votes for Women photo featured in The Londoner

volunteers who help make these programs possible.

In 2017 we celebrated an important anniversary – the 150th anniversary of Canada as one nation. In 2018 we continued that commemorative spirit in celebration of another important anniversary – the 100th anniversary of the vote for women in Canada. This theme was carried through much of our programming through the year and created many partnerships and collaborations along the way. As always, it is very pleasing in my experience to offer ways for the public to truly experience the history of Eldon House through exciting themes, interesting topics and interpretive activities for all to enjoy. Thanks to the Eldon House staff and

A Message from the Museum Coordinator, Nicoletta Michienzi

I was very excited to be introduced to the team in an administrative capacity this year, as 2018 was an exciting year of the museum. Eldon House received record number of visitors in 2018 due to our wide variety of programs and outreach. Data showed that many visitors came to Eldon House from all over Canada and internationally, and the attention that we have received in the press and on social media in 2018 was extremely positive. I would like to say thank you to the staff and volunteers for making 2018 such a great year, hopefully we can carry this momentum forward into 2019.

Strategic Plan

In March 2017, the Eldon House Board of Directors undertook a strategic planning process with an objective facilitator, and in consultation with the Eldon House staff team, volunteers and community stakeholders. Through this comprehensive process, a four-year strategic plan (2017-2020) was developed with the following key components, which form the foundation for all future planning and programming undertaken by the Board and staff. Through 2018 the Board and Staff teams worked toward implementing new strategies to further the vision of the strategic plan: our programing and outreach offerings were expanded in diverse ways, as was our staff team.



Eldon House on Canada Day

Vision: Knowing ourselves by experiencing our heritage

Mission: We are a distinctive community heritage destination, committed to empowering our visitors and participants to:

- a) Explore and preserve our local and Canadian history through the life and time of the Harris Family
- b) Escape to a unique oasis in downtown London
- c) Engage in learning, fun and lived experiences

Principles: We believe in:

- a) Authentic visitor experiences
- b) Valuing our past
- c) Celebrating our diversity
- d) Honouring the Harris women
- e) Collaboration
- f) Innovation
- g) Accountability

Strategic Directions:

- a) Preserving our valued heritage resources
- b) Achieving visitor growth through diverse experiences
- c) Creating a year-round downtown oasis
- d) Building our capabilities to deliver



From left to right: Visitors playing with the Victorian games on Doors Open, Our Historical Interpreter Susan talking to audiences on Canada Day, ladies playing with the maypole at the Lemon-Yellow Party

Public Programming

As always, we launched our programming year at Eldon House with the annual tradition of our *New Year's Levee*. Delightful vocalists from St. Paul's Cathedral Choir entertained us in the Drawing Room of Eldon House, proving a very sensible partnership given the Harris' family's historical connection with the church. Many familiar patrons and new visitors entered our gates and enjoyed hot cider in our Interpretive Centre.

Tours:

We began regular programming in January with our tri-annual *Behind the Ropes Tour* which continues to be a real hit with familiar and unseasoned guests. We also offered regular garden and walking tours from June to September which allowed visitors to learn about the history of our grounds and the surrounding neighbourhood. Ending the year with regular Christmas Tours, we offered a little something for the mature audience by exploring some of the darker aspects of Victorian Christmas, such as ghost stories and sinister assistants to old St. Nick.

Workshops:



S.N.I.P.E.R. Paranormal with their equipment

Our Occult Workshop Series enticed many visitors interested in the Victorian fascination with the supernatural, fortune telling and much more. Individual workshops included: *Spiritualism and Psychical Research*; *Victorian Ghost Stories and the Eldon House Ghost*; *Tea and Tasseomancy: An Exploration in Fortune-telling in the 19th Century*; *From Fair to Foul: The Twisted Transitions of Magic and Magicians in the 19th Century*; and finally *Walking with Shadows: A Paranormal Investigator's*

Journey into the "Unknown". These workshops were well attended and due to popularity we have continued the occult theme into our 2019 programming year.

Our general workshop series was complete at the end of the year with a time honoured favourite - our *Christmas Wreath Workshop* taught by a pair of our most dedicated volunteers, Liz Beaujot and Evelyn Hayman.

Special Events:



Phil Arnold and his puppet Punch

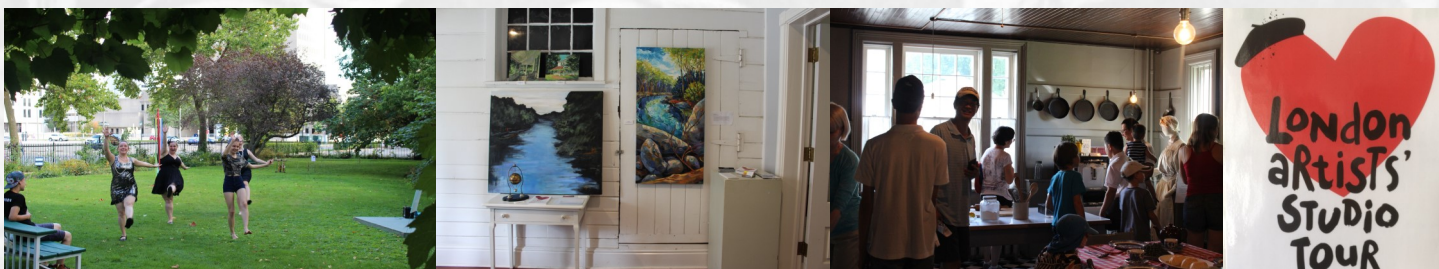
Eldon House was invited to join Fanshawe Pioneer Village once again at their annual Victoria Day event. Our team served up tea and biscuits in the tea garden to the many guests that attended in celebration of Queen Victoria's birthday. Following Victoria Day, we hosted another birthday at Eldon House – the birth of our nation, with a *Canada Day Carnival* on July 1. Festivities included old fashioned carnival games, puppet shows by Phil Arnold, a carnival magic show by The Amazing Corbin and acrobatics on the grounds by the London Dance Festival. It was a truly authentic old fashioned experience.

We were excited to host our first annual Lemon-Yellow Party fundraiser on June 23. This Harris family theme party tradition was resurrected from the 1920's and everything was lemon-yellow including drinks, food and costume! Guests sipped authentic 1920's cocktails, tasted hors d'oeuvres, perused our silent auction items and danced to jazz and ragtime music on the beautiful lawns of Eldon House. This event brought the roaring 20's back to life at our historical venue.



Tara Wittmann and Chip Costello at the Lemon-Yellow Party

September included the London-wide initiative *Doors Open* event. The theme for Doors Open in 2018 was “history comes alive”! This unique two-day heritage event opens spaces throughout London, free of charge, for local residents and visitors. Eldon House brought history to life through historical dance during a Garden Party on the grounds. The London Dance Festival offered lessons in 19th and 20th century dance styles including waltzes, quadrilles and also brought in the roaring 20’s with the Charleston. We offered garden tours, and self-guided tours of Eldon House.



From left to right: Members of the London Dance Festival teach visitors the Charleston, paintings from the various artists in the Interpretive Center, visitors in the museum kitchen, and the London Artists' Studio Tour poster

In October we launched our *Great Eldon House Ghost Hunt* tours, with a different spin this year. Through a partnership with Brick House Productions, we were able to add audio effects to our tours including story-telling clips and sounds that teased the senses as we told our popular ghost stories of Eldon House. The tours also included a visual presentation crafted by our very own student interns and featured one of our favourite ghost stories told by the witness himself!



A spooky image of the kitchen taken by Joe O'Neil

Tea Programs:

Our tea programs include annual special tea events as well as our *Summer Tea Program* through the summer season. We began with our *Mother's Day Tea* in May which as always, was very well attended. The annual *Strawberry Tea* went off without a hitch and then launched our Summer Tea season. In 2018 we secured a wonderful catering partner with Petit Paris Creperie and Patisserie and for the first time, we offered a full tea menu including finger sandwiches, scones, desserts and fresh fruit. It was a successful tea season that as a result prescribed an ongoing partnership with our caterer for future teas. We were also pleased to forge a partnership with the London Arts Council and through their London Arts Live program, we were able to offer live music on the grounds on Sunday afternoons to accompany our Summer Teas. All musical acts were performed by female musicians in the spirit of celebrating the 100th year anniversary of the federal vote for women.



An image of the tea serving from a visitor

We ended the year with our final tea event – the *Christmas Tea*. This seasonal offering is always a favourite among our patrons and a great way to enjoy the holidays during our Victorian Christmas exhibit displayed throughout Eldon House.

Children's Programming:

Eldon House offers several events at a low cost for families with children. Each year we encourage families to come and join us for *Family Day at Eldon House* during which we offer house tours and activities for children. In June, we participated for the sixth year in a row in *Kids First Day* – a collaborative community event coordinated by Investing in Children



Teddy Bear Picnic promotional photo

and designed for local families. With good weather in June, we were able to entertain the children with historical outdoor games, and bubble blowing in the gardens. Likewise in August, we hosted activities outdoors for our *Teddy Bear Picnic*. Entertainment included a puppet show and a magic show by The Amazing Corbin. Lemonade and cookies were served and children were invited into Eldon House to participate in our Teddy Bear Hunt! In

December, children and their families had the opportunity to *Meet Father Christmas* in the Drawing Room of Eldon House where a photos were taken under the beautiful backdrop of our Victorian Christmas Tree. Activities, crafts and a sing-a-long allowed children to celebrate the season in true Victorian fashion.

Women's Series:

In commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Vote for Women in Canada, Eldon House hosted a series of events from January to May of 2018. This theme celebrating “*A Century for Women: Votes, Voices and Choices*” informed much of our programming throughout the year, however a very special series was launched in collaboration with The Women's History Project, London Public Library, Museum London, London Heritage Council, Fanshawe Pioneer Village and many others. While many special speakers, presentations, theatrics, and exhibitions took place at various sites, Eldon House hosted a speaker series that included the following themes: *Violence, Guarded Bodies, and the British Suffragettes (1903-1914); Emmeline Pankhurst, Constance Lytton, and Gertrude Harding; Getting the Vote: The Struggles and Accomplishments of Canadian Women 1840-1930; Indigenous Women's Stories and Experiences in Canada; Breaking Barriers in Medicine: Doctors Emily Stowe, Jenny Trout, Augusta Stowe, and Elizabeth Bagshaw; and finally The Famous Five:*

Canadian Women Who Fought for Seats in Parliament and the Senate.

Eldon House also displayed an exhibit called *Milly: Victorian Girl to Modern Woman* and hosted the culminating event - *Votes for Women!*, a re-enacted Women's March lead by "suffragettes" around downtown London, beginning at the London Normal School in Wortley Village, to the Covent Garden Market Square and returning to Eldon House for performances, speeches and music to celebrate an important milestone in women's history.



The Famous Five at Eldon House

Educational Programming

In 2018 we maintained steady education tour bookings and a consistent attendance of over 1500 students from elementary, secondary, post-secondary and adult education. Our curriculum based programs included programs for grades 1 through 10 as well as custom tours relating to the arts, interior design, changes in technology and much more.

Eldon House is one of many sites participating in *Museum School London* coordinated by the London Heritage Council. In 2018 we were pleased to host 4 weeks of museum school with Glen Cairn P.S., Sacred Heart C.S., Chippewa P.S. and Wortley P.S. as our guests. Museum school programs are immersive, exciting and provide experiential learning for students over the course of a week here at Eldon House. The students dabbled in subjects such as Victorian etiquette, silhouette drawing, local history, historical amusements and games in addition to our curriculum based programming. We also participated in the *London Artists in Residence Program* for the last year due to changes in funding. This

program through the London Arts Council allowed us to arrange for a talented on site artist who lead art lessons with the students.

Outreach:



Volunteer Marie Rooks assisting seniors with our Memory Lane program

In 2018 we continued our *Memory Lane Program* for the second consecutive year which was made possible through funding granted federally by New Horizons for Seniors. This reminiscence and artifact therapy program has continued to be enjoyed and well-liked by our client groups struggling with the challenges of Alzheimer's and dementia. Groups included various Long Term Care Homes in London, Dorchester, Strathroy and Delaware as well as the Memory Café program in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society. Memory Lane programs consist of a visual presentation and brief history of Eldon House and a hands on exploration of

artifacts related to a specific theme. Our themes include: "Photography: People and Places", "Life and Leisure", "In the Kitchen", "School Days" and "A Victorian Christmas". New themes implemented in 2018 were called "In the Garden" and "Women's Work". This program continues to spark conversation and bring up memories for the seniors who participate. Reminiscing together has benefited many participants by bringing them out of isolation and allowing them to enjoy social time with others who share the same challenges. Our staff and volunteers have also enjoyed the many benefits of the program.

Exhibitions

As a Historic House Museum, Eldon House inhabits over 8000 square feet of permanent exhibition space, which is regularly refreshed and conserved. In addition to the historic home itself, there are five permanently mounted cases which display curated exhibitions that expand thematically on the “life and times” of the Harris Family as outlined in the museum’s mandate. The arc of exhibitions occurring at Eldon House in 2018 followed the themes of the Centenary of World War One, the Evolution of Women’s experiences through Suffrage and finally, expansion on discoveries in the Harris Family Archive and Collections.

Trench Art

February through August 2018, Eldon House Interpretive Centre

During leisure hours at the front, skilled soldiers created “trench art” from the remnants of war such as discarded bullets and shell casings. Soldiers, such as Teddy Harris of Eldon House, viewed trench art as mementoes of service, and brought many pieces back to Canada after peace was declared, where they remained in family homes for decades. This exhibition showcased the art, drawing from the Eldon House collection and that of private collector S. Hurrell, while exploring the traditions and skills behind its production.



Trench art marked 1915

Milly: Victorian Girl to Modern Woman

March through September 2018, Eldon House Second Floor

During the lifetime of Amelia (“Milly”) Archange Harris (1868-1959) almost all aspects of social and technological life had altered from the previous generation. As an avid diarist, Milly’s



Milly Harris. Collection:
Harris Family Fonds,
Western Archives,
Western University.

varied experiences were regularly recorded and are able to illustrate her powers of observation – and judgement – from the time of leg-of-mutton-sleeves to the launch of Sputnik. This exhibition aimed to track the transformation of a Victorian to a Modern Canadian, through the written and photographic reflections of an independent thinker.

Family Photos: The Harris' at Play
Through 2018, Eldon House Second Floor

What did Victorian Londoners do for pleasure? The answer to this question can be found in the archive photographs of the Harris Family of Eldon House. Historic images of outdoor and community pursuits were exhibited in this display, focusing on sports and leisure.

1918

September through December 2018, Eldon House Interpretive Centre

One hundred years ago, the Western world experienced a massive upheaval. The devastating battles of the Somme and Amiens, Armistice and the end of World War I all occurred while at the same time the "Spanish" flu pandemic infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide. This exhibition aimed to give its viewers a detailed glimpse into the year 1918 both locally and internationally as well as exploring how that momentous year has effected life 100 years later.



A Man of Botany

October 2018 through March 2019, Eldon House Second Floor

In the 1880s the fortunes of the Harris Family of Eldon House improved with a substantial inheritance from the Ronalds Estate, when Lucy Harris became the sole heiress of her English family's fortune. The wealth that the Ronalds accrued over several generations is linked to the botanical trade and the nineteenth century's exploration of exotic and medical plants. Hugh Ronalds, Lucy's great-grandfather was considered a "Man of Botany" and immersed himself in the world of plants. Part of the inheritance that made its way to London, Ontario was a large cabinet housing 12 volumes of pressed and identified botanical specimens attributed to Hugh Ronalds. This exhibit explored the story behind the specimen volumes, how and where they were collected and why they are significant today.

Victorian Christmas

December 2018

The launch of the month long transformation of the house is the work of many hands and a great deal of effort. 2018 Victorian Christmas "by the numbers" are as follows:

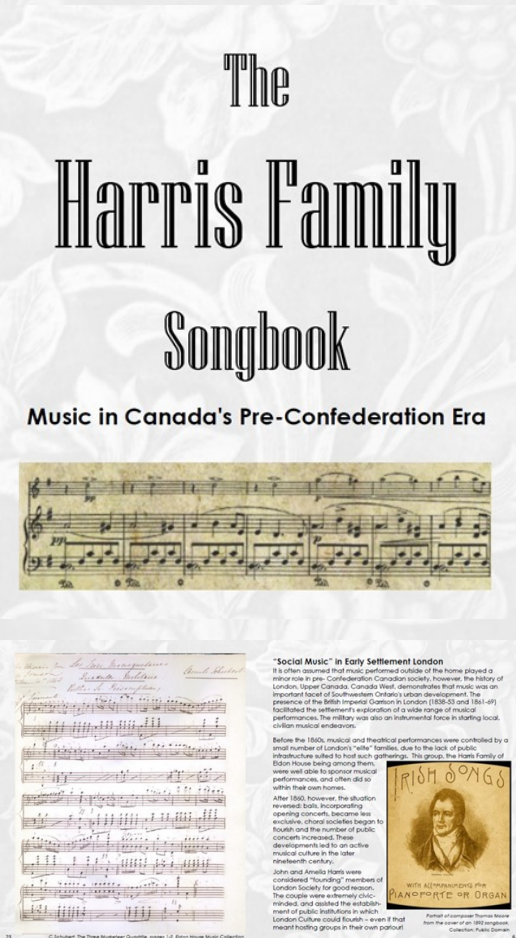
8 trips to Springbank Park to harvest greens
255 feet of handmade garland
23 wreaths
33 seasonal arrangements
5 Eldon House Staff + Volunteers to create greenery
4 Eldon House Staff to set up interpretive material
24 Garden Club members
198 hours of work
=Victorian Christmas



*The front hallway decorated for
Victorian Christmas*

Research, Digitization, Publications

The Harris Family Songbook



Front cover and inside page of the publication

In 2018, Eldon House launched a commemorative publication featuring music from a pre-confederate period transcribed by Charlotte Harris among others from the Harris family. The songbook will include images and research as well as sheet music for all to enjoy. Collaboration with community and heritage experts, made for a publication rooted in London's past and current values and created strong partnerships in the research and development of this compilation.

The research into the "Social Music" of Canada's past assisted the framing of the sheet music collection and a sense of the enjoyment felt by early Canadians and Londoners was expressed. Specific types of music were also explored, including Gallops, Waltzes, Quadrilles and Folk music. Visual examples of early written music accompanied the text alongside vintage illustrations. The publication was intended to create a legacy piece related to the celebrations surrounding Confederation, by illustrating the unique development of a Canadian musical identity – first with colonial influences, then followed by a "Made in Canada" distinction.

Digitization Projects:

Eldon House possesses a rare twelve-volume botanical specimen collection dated between 1817-1821. The folios are filled with hand pressed flowers from the United Kingdom and Europe with hand-written inscriptions identifying each plant variety. The collection originated in Brentford, England and was sent to Eldon House in the late 1880s as part of a large inheritance from the Ronalds family, a relation by marriage. They arrived with an accompanying cabinet, built to house the volumes, where the collection is stored today. Due to the nature of the fragile plant specimens themselves and the evocative and educational value of the collection, digitization of the collection was initiated in 2015 and was completed 2018.



***A page from one of the
Ronalds' books***

Research:

The Eldon House Staff Team, Internship students and the Curator are committed to and engaged in various historical research. As part of the Museum's mission, the "life and times" of the Harris Family is the source of historical reference point for the myriad of happenings on the site, our public programming, educational and interpretational programming as well as our exhibitions and publications. With generations of family archive material including letters, diaries and photographs available for research at Western Archives at Western University, the Harris Family Fonds is an invaluable collection of primary source documents.

In 2018 new research was undertaken into the Harris Family archives illuminating life in London, Ontario in the early twentieth Century. Milly Harris' "World Tour" diaries continue to be transcribed by the Eldon House Team. Milly compiled five journals during the period of the travels (1897-98) and it is the third and fourth volumes that are currently being deciphered, covering the treks to Burma, Singapore, India, Egypt, Palestine and Greece.

An additional travel diary of Milly Harris was completed this year from the year 1909, when she and her father George, travelled to New Orleans, Mexico and California. Milly expresses minute observations of the places and people she encounters, frankly assessing what she experiences. She also comments on the means of travel between countries and the “on deck” pastimes the tourists engage in (ie. endless card games, memory and trivia games and charades).

Collections, Conservation and Care

Eldon House is committed to the highest standards of collection management of its artifacts and facility. An active “preventive conservation” program is continually in rotation through the site, ensuring regular treatment and assessment of artifacts. In addition to this, a number of professional conservation projects are undertaken each year, funded by the “Lucy Little Endowment Fund.”

Some of the more intensive conservation projects in 2018 include: several textile restorations, permanent exhibition re-freshening and artifact wood repair. An ongoing artifact storage re-organization project continued into 2018, formalizing the storage spaces of the museum.

Heritage Tree:

In November 2018 one of the oldest trees on the Eldon House property was given a plaque from Forests Ontario. Forests Ontario is a provincially sponsored program that helps with environmental efforts and encourages Ontarians to recognize natural history.

The application made by a former volunteer was successful, and we were contacted by members of Forests Ontario to officially “launch” the newly designated heritage sycamore tree in the late fall.

Internships

Eldon House is delighted to attract students from Western University in the pursuit and completion of their studies. Eldon House continues to partner with Western's Public History Department. While hosting research assistantships and internships, students gain firsthand experience working with collections, interpretation and the public in a museum setting, while completing specific research projects.

Though 2018, Eldon House hosted the following four students:



Heather and Hetty hard at work

D. Leitch, Masters candidate in Public History, who has worked with energy and enthusiasm on her projects of:



E. Larsen and D. Leitch digitizing the botanical books

- formatting and composing a "period furniture" booklet for print/interpretation,
- formatting several transcribed diaries,
- an online "Harris Family Pets" exhibit,
- Memory Lane program delivery,
- launch of Victorian Christmas exhibition,
- assisting with the conservation program, artifact relocation and inventory,
- digitization of Botanical Specimens, and
- contribution to the Music History Publication.

E. Larsen, Masters candidate in Public History, who has been diligently working on many projects at Eldon House since September 2017, including:

- reformatting the Harris "family tree" for print and promotion,
- researching elements of the life of Milly Harris at Western Archives
- launch of Victorian Christmas exhibition,
- assisting with the conservation program, artifact relocation and
- inventory,
- digitization of Botanical Specimens, and
- contribution to the Music History Publication

H. Wilson, and H. Roi, joined the Eldon House team in the fall of 2018 and together worked on several new initiatives including:

- Digitization of an historic, hand-written cookbook,
- Transcription of a 1909 travel journal of Milly Harris',
- launch of Victorian Christmas exhibition,
- assisting with the conservation program, artifact relocation and inventory,
- contribution to the Music History Publication.

Summer Students



Our tea servers, Emily and Danielle

Eldon House annually applies for funding to be able to offer summer employment for students who are looking to gain experience in heritage or horticulture. In 2018, the Canada Summer Jobs Program generously funded two summer positions to assist with our popular Summer Tea Program and to maintain the historic gardens. E. Qin and D. Renaud were valued and enthusiastic additions to the staff team from June through August.

Facilities and Grounds Maintenance



Petunias in the greenhouse

2018 was a great year for the gardens and site at Eldon House. Rick Cornelissen continued in the Grounds and Maintenance Coordinator position, and was focused on the grounds and use of the greenhouse. Rick and some of the core gardens volunteers were responsible for growing a variety of plants in the greenhouse, many of which were sold during the Annual Plant Sale. Rick relocated for a position with the City of Toronto in May.



Pond area of Eldon House

Andrew Kitt started as Grounds and Maintenance Coordinator in June 2018 and quickly began focusing on a plan for an improved garden and grounds experience. Much focus was put into repairing the lawn as it was in distress in a few areas of the yard. General improvements included but were not limited to; new beds were created on the street side of the property to help attract more visitors.

The rock garden saw maintenance to its path ways. A 'viewing area' was cut through the trees on the terrace so visitors can now see down to a bench area in Harris Park from Eldon House in an effort of recreating a familiar view the Harris Family would enjoy. The grey fence received a fresh coat of paint thanks to Western University volunteers in September.

Julia Hunter Memorial Fund

In March 2018, Eldon House staff were approached by Murray Hunter on behalf of the Julia Hunter Memorial Fund to discuss a possible partnership between our two organizations. We were delighted at the opportunity to work with the Fund to enhance our heritage gardens as well as engage with the community in a new way. The partnership was approved by our Board and we began with a series of meetings that resulted in a plan for our south lawn garden and a garden party event that took place on June 3.

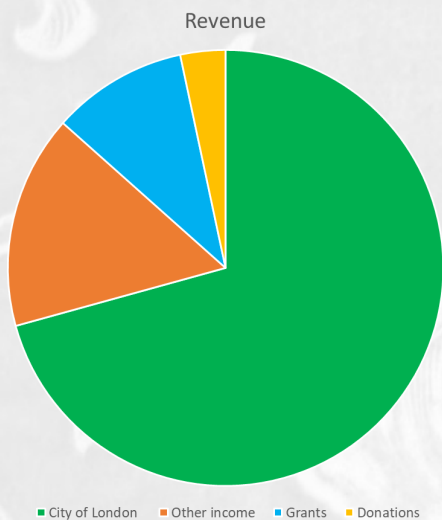
The Fund worked with Eldon House to help transform the south lawn garden by adding historically accurate plants and panels. By adding text it would serve to connect the museum to the exterior and engage visitors. The didactics include information about the plants and references to the Harris diaries. The additions to the garden would also serve to get community members involved through the Julia Hunter Fund, and hopefully increase the aesthetic and pollination of the garden. The Fund gave \$1000 to Eldon House to be used for the event, the plants, and signage.

The Garden Party took place on June 3 and was very well attended. Attendees were able to walk through the gardens (once the rain let up) and view historic Eldon House. Participants also donated to a silent auction with prizes from Heemans, Forked River, the Grand Theatre, Aeolian Hall and more. The proceeds from this auction went back into the Fund to help with future projects across the community.

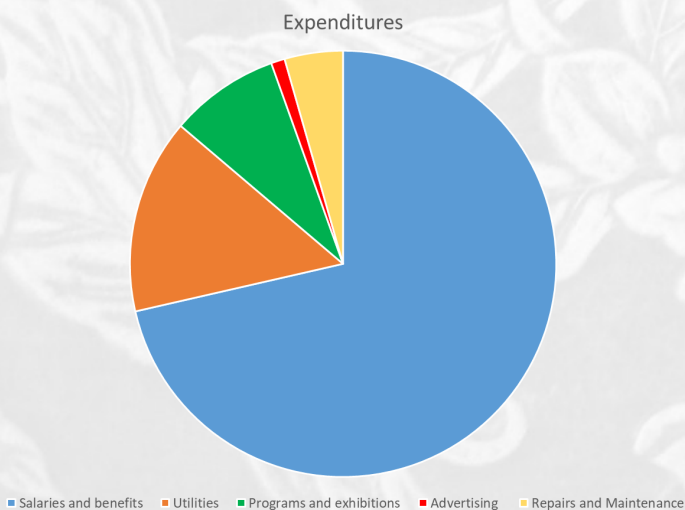


Garden panels

Finance Report



The financial position of Eldon House Corporation continues to be healthy. We ran a small surplus in 2018 with revenues increasing by more than \$20,000 over fiscal 2017. In 2017 the Summer Tea Program was managed by an external party; in 2018 the tea program was once again managed by Eldon House staff which contributed higher revenues and contributed to the surplus in 2018. As in 2017, a robust set of fall programming also contributed to higher revenues.



The staff at Eldon House continue to explore additional revenue streams for 2019. In 2019, we are entering the four-year budgeting process with the City of London. While we have been told that budget increases will be held to a minimum, we are asking the city for additional funding to address ongoing site security concerns and a fire suppression system.

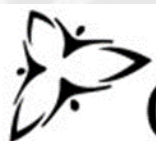
Grants

Community Museum Operating Grant (CMOG)
Celebrate Canada, Celebration and Commemorating Fund
New Horizons for Seniors Grant
Canada Summer Jobs Program



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien



Ontario

Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport



New
Horizons
for Seniors
Program

Service
Canada

Community Partnerships

Garden Club of London Partnership:



2018 saw another successful year in the 56 year long partnership between Eldon House and the Garden Club of London. Over a two day period, Eldon House hosted 26 Garden club members who created seasonal arrangements that were installed within the museum. A tour of the museum followed by refreshments took place on December 14 as a gesture of thanks to those involved in the decorating. Cross promotion between the two partner's events was ongoing during the Christmas Season.

City of London
 Garden Club of London Partnership
 Fanshawe Pioneer Village
 Julia Hunter Fund
 Investing in Children
 London Arts Council
 London Arts Live
 London Heritage Council
 Petit Paris Creperie and Patisserie
 The Tea Haus
 Western University



Website and Social Media Report

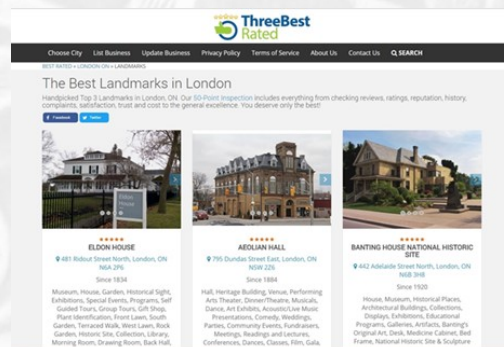


Danielle featured in the news

2018 was a great year for Eldon House's public image. The museum was featured heavily in the media and gained a lot of attraction across its social media profiles.

We attracted attention for our unique programming, including the Women's March and the Ghost Hunt. Both events were featured in the *Londoner* and the *London Free Press*.

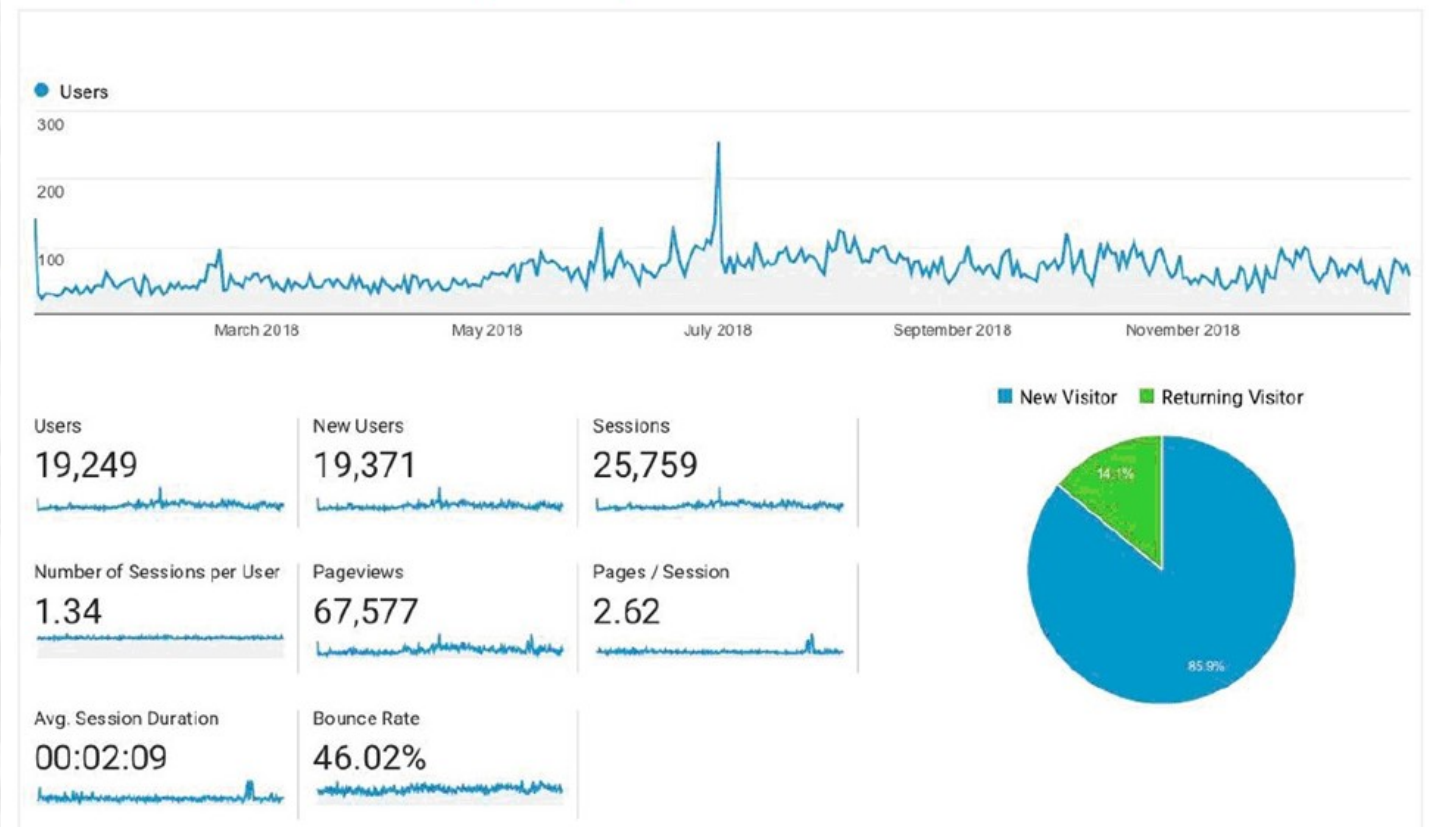
In addition to recognition in print, the museum was also featured online by "Three Best Rated" at the beginning of August. Three Best Rated is a company that analyses different restaurants, museums, attractions, etc. in cities across North America. Their selection is based on 50 criteria including opening hours, webpage, customer service, social media, complaints, reviews, reputation and more. We were chosen as one of London's top three landmarks alongside Aeolian Hall and Banting House.



Three Best rated article

Our website was run by Kyō Group Inc., with a transfer to Kreadiv made in late 2018. We had 67,577 page views in 2018 with 19,371 new users. Majority of our users were from Canada, followed by users in the United States, France, United Kingdom, and South Korea. Further data collected showed that majority of our visitors were female and that there was a spike in website visits from those between the ages of 25-34.

Audience Overview (2018)



Data from our website to showing the number of visits

Social media continued to grow this year, with Eldon House staff posting engaging content related to the museum and the London community. Eldon House now has three platforms on social media, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram which was added in 2017.

Facebook has continued to be one of our most engaging online platforms. We ended 2018 with a total of 800 followers, compared to the 612 visitors in December 2017. We also had a reach of 112,780.

On Twitter our followers increased from 920 in 2017 to 1,048 at the end of December 2018. Our engagement was especially high from May-September, and in November-December. Popular tweets included those about our events, like Summer Tea.

Instagram is the newest social media platform. It was added to help the museum engage with younger demographics, and has become a fun way to showcase images of the museum. In 2018 we had a total of 145 posts, most of them related to the House and our events. By the end of the year we had a total of 4,547 engagements and 975 followers.



From left to right: Trunks in the attic, wreaths for the Christmas season, exterior of Eldon House in the spring, advertisement for the Lemon-Yellow Party, shoes on the step for the Ghost Hunt

By the Numbers

Number of Days Open to the Public and for Private Tours	283
Number of Operating Hours	1420
Number of General Attendance	5159
Number of Tours Participants	1550
Number of Special Events Attendees	3401
Number of Tea Visitors	726
Number of Outreach Attendees	979
Number of Rental Visitors	271
Total Number of Visitors	<u>12086</u>
Total Number of Visitors 2017	11066
Number of Volunteers	24
Number of Volunteer Hours	940



From left to right: Volunteer Wendy Magrath and staff Kim Baker serving cake on Canada Day, the upstairs Christmas display case, volunteers from Western University taking a break, a wedding photo-shoot that took place on the grounds

Eldon House Volunteer Team

Eldon House is extremely thankful to all of our wonderful volunteers who continue to support us with their time, energy and positive attitude.

Jackie Anger
Elizabeth Beaujot
Mariread Bourke
Brenda Britton
Andrea Cox
Jennifer Dowker
Ardath Finbogasson-Hill
Al Green

Stephen Harrott
Evelyn Hayman
Louanne Henderson
Merrilee Hoffman Chase
Lindsay James
Jason Jordan
Delaney Leitch
Wendy Magrath

Jennifer McLean
Malcolm McLean
Lisa Michienzi
Diane Picard
Emily Qin
Marie Rooks
Andrea Tonkovic
Lyn Tremblay



From left to right: Kim Baker, Wendy Magrath and Brenda Britton at Fanshawe Pioneer Village, Merrilee Hoffman Chase and Liz Beaujot in the greenhouse, Petit Paris staff and Diane Picard at the Lemon-Yellow Party, the Garden Club volunteers in the greenhouse

Eldon House Team

Eldon House could not exist without the many dedicated contributors to its success, from the Board of Directors to its Staff and Volunteers.

2018 Board of Directors

Jennifer Jolliffe, Board Chair (January-June)

Mark Tovey, Vice Chair/ Board Chair (June-December)

Theresa Regnier, Secretary

Joe O'Neil, Treasurer

Ben Kent, Director

Ron Koudys, Director

Allison Martin, Director

Marvin Recker, Director

Maureen Spencer Golovchenko, Director (Board Chair 2013-2016)



Top left to right: Ron Koudys, Mark Tovey, Joe O'Neil, Marvin Recker

Bottom left to right: Allison Martin, Jennifer Jolliffe, Maureen Spencer-Golovchenko, Theresa Regnier

Absent: Ben Kent

Staff Team

Tara Wittmann, Curator Director
Danielle Costello, Program Coordinator
Nicoletta Michienzi, Museum Coordinator
Rick Cornelissen, Grounds and Facilities Maintenance Coordinator
Andrew Kitt, Grounds and Facilities Maintenance Coordinator
Bernie Keim, Finance Manager
Kim Baker, Historical Interpreter
Susan Butlin, Historical Interpreter
Sarah Cowling, Historical Interpreter
Emily Larsen, Historical Interpreter
Cathy Luke, Historical Interpreter
Andrew Moore, Historical Interpreter



From top left to bottom right: Cathy being interviewed by students, Tara being interviewed for a filming project, Nikki experimenting with paper crafts, Sarah and Andrew at the Ghost Hunt, Danielle and Susan posing for a photo for the London Free Press, Kim doing outreach at Fanshawe Pioneer Village



The Harris Family on the west lawn of Eldon House ca. 1870. Collection: Harris Family Fonds, Western Archives, Western University.