



Eldon House
Heritage Site and Gardens

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

ELDON HOUSE HERITAGE
SITE AND GARDENS

"A house is more than paint
and walls, ceilings and floors.
A house is a history of all the
people it has sheltered..."

-The Waltons

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

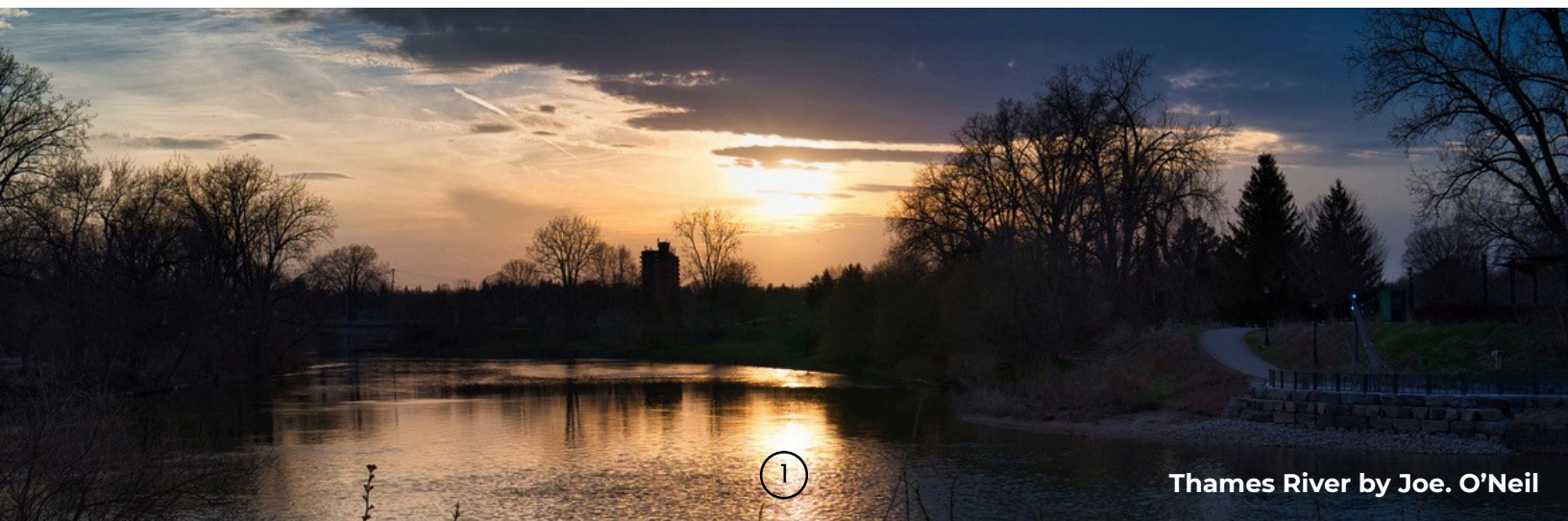
We acknowledge that Eldon House Heritage Site and Gardens stands on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Attawandaron .

We acknowledge all the treaties that are specific to this area: the Two Row Wampum Belt Treaty of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy/Silver Covenant Chain; the Beaver Hunting Grounds of the Haudenosaunee NANFAN Treaty of 1701; the McKee Treaty of 1790, the London Township Treaty of 1796, the Huron Tract Treaty of 1827, with the Anishinaabeg, and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum of the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee.

This land continues to be home to diverse Indigenous people (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) whom we recognize as contemporary stewards of the land and vital contributors to society. We hold all that is in the natural world in our highest esteem and give honour to the wonderment of all things within Creation. We bring our minds together as one to share good words, thoughts, feelings and sincerely send them out to each other and to all parts of creation. We are grateful for the natural gifts in our world, and we encourage everyone to be faithful to the natural laws of Creation.

The three Indigenous Nations that are neighbours to London are the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation; Oneida Nation of the Thames; and the Munsee-Delaware Nation who all continue to live as sovereign Nations with individual and unique languages, cultures and customs.

This Land Acknowledgement is a first step towards reconciliation. Awareness means nothing without action. It is important that everyone takes the necessary steps towards decolonizing practices. We encourage everyone to be informed about the traditional lands, Treaties, history, and cultures of the Indigenous people local to their region.



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.

STRATEGIC PLAN

MISSION

Knowing ourselves by experiencing our heritage.

VISION

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

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

PRINCIPLES WE BELIEVE IN

- Authentic visitor experiences
- Valuing our past
- Celebrating our diversity
- Honouring the Harris women
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Accountability

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

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

A MESSAGE FROM THE ELDON HOUSE BOARD CHAIR

JOSEPH O'NEIL



Joe O'Neil in the Drawing Room

Greetings and welcome not only to the annual report of Eldon House, but the 200th anniversary of the founding of the City of London, Ontario, (although in 1826, it was London, Upper Canada).

2025 brought about enjoyable changes at the Museum. The New Year's Levee kicked off an exciting time at the house with people enjoying the last of the Christmas décor. Staff created amazing programming opportunities throughout the year with children's events, tours, and fundraising markets

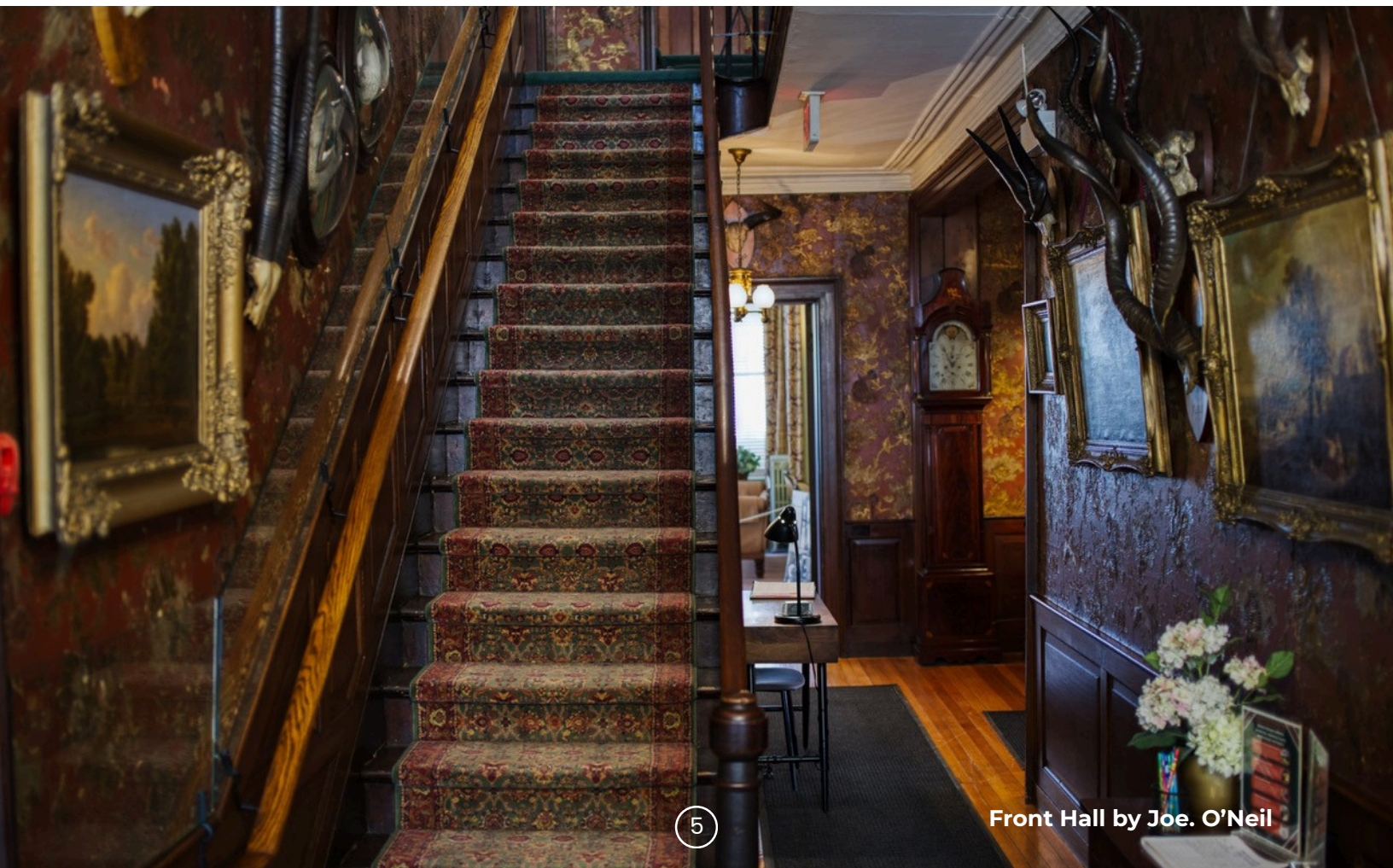
that attracted people to the site and kept them interested in our history. These great initiatives helped Eldon House achieve amazing visitor numbers and positive feedback from the community. New and exciting exhibits and research also showcased the remarkable history of the site and allowed staff to continue exploring the life and times of the Harris Family including the diaries of the Harris women and the photographic collections of Milly and Ronald Harris.

Physical improvements were made and planned for, including new plans to revitalize the house in 2026 with painting projects. The east garden received some attention, and a large section of invasive plants were removed thanks to sponsorship from TD Friends of the Environment. Efforts were made to transform the space with native plant species that speak to the Museum's ongoing efforts at reconciliation and cultural transparency. More work is expected to occur on the grounds, bringing the "and Gardens" portion of our name to the forefront.

The Museum achieved great things in 2025. Our commitment to the history of the house and the Harris Family permeates all that we do and our quest for national heritage designation is ongoing. Though the Museum is a small place, its history has made an impact in Canadian history and in our community and continues to do so both in its physical impact and online with digital initiatives promoting the history of London.

In closing, I want to first thank our staff, all of them, both full-time and part-time, because everyone here has put their heart into the place. Each and every person, is here because the Museum matters, and they love the work, the people, and the history. Thank you to our team of volunteers for spending your time with us and continuing to support our staff and heritage site, your dedication is inspiring. As for my fellow Board Members, though we are not physically here all the time, there's an element of devotion to Eldon House that I don't always see in other institutions. I think that's part of what makes this place special on top of everything else going on, thank you for your support.

Let us continue to work together to ensure that Eldon House stands for another 200 years and continues to remind people that the past matters as much as our future.



A MESSAGE FROM THE ELDON HOUSE CURATOR DIRECTOR

TARA WITTMANN

We are thrilled to present the Eldon House 2025 Annual Report.

This year, Eldon House burst with activity, ideas, and renewed energy as we brought nineteen decades of history to life in bold, engaging ways. From the stories of the Harris Family to the many voices that shaped the site over generations, we worked to make the past feel vibrant, relevant, and connected to our community today.

Throughout 2025, our team embraced innovation and momentum. We strengthened our operations, expanded our digital reach, and enhanced on site accessibility to ensure that Eldon House remains a place where every visitor feels welcome and inspired. The year was filled with dynamic exhibitions, immersive tours, creative programs, and lively events—each offering a fresh way for people to experience this remarkable historic home.

New ideas took flight, long standing partnerships deepened, and our community's enthusiasm was unmistakable. One of the year's most exciting milestones was surpassing pre-pandemic visitor numbers—a clear sign that Eldon House continues to resonate and thrive.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make 2025 exceptional. Our partners, visitors, educators, researchers, and program participants—whether joining us online or in person—bring meaning and momentum to our work every day. And to our volunteers and staff, whose passion and creativity drive Eldon House forward, we offer our deepest gratitude.



**Tara at the 2024 Annual General Meeting in
May 2025**

EXHIBITIONS

Presenting captivating exhibitions is one of the key ways Eldon House shares the history of the site and Harris Family with our visitors, while also exploring local, national, and international themes, stories and cultures. 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 four 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.

Several exhibits launched through 2025, exploring the theme of the “Year of the Child.” This theme featured in the programming, exhibitions and online content that Eldon House has explored, aiming to share some of the lesser-told narratives of the Harris Family and history in general. Concepts of “Victorian Childhood” featured in the spate of exhibits on display, delved into features such as child labour, health, etiquette, play and education, and were accompanied by artifacts and historic images (some which feature the Harris kids freshly discovered at the Western Archives).

SEEN... NOT HEARD, EXPLORING CHILDHOOD IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

Children in the Victorian Era lived by a strict set of rules that governed what they ate, their manners, and their education. This two-part exhibit looked at kids in the Victorian Era and their later counterparts in the Harris Family.

Lucy Harris ca. 1920. Image courtesy of Western Archives and Special Collections



MAMA! I WANT THAT! MARKETING TO KIDS IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

Advertisements starting in the Victorian Era featured kids as models. These ads were not necessarily targeted to children, but their images were used to sell a variety of products from food to medicine. This exhibition explored the nuances of images and marketing tools to attract the interest of children and their parents in a burgeoning retail-oriented era.



George ca. 1912. Image courtesy of Western University Archives and Special Collections

FROM TOTS TO TEENS: CHILDHOOD IN THE VICTORIAN ERA

This exhibit series explored elements of Victorian Childhood, from the pastimes enjoyed by youth to their dress, and their day-to-day activities. A selection of children’s items from the Eldon House Collection, illustrated some of the wonderful games, toys, books and garments enjoyed by generations of youth, as Eldon House explored the “Year of the Child” through 2025.

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

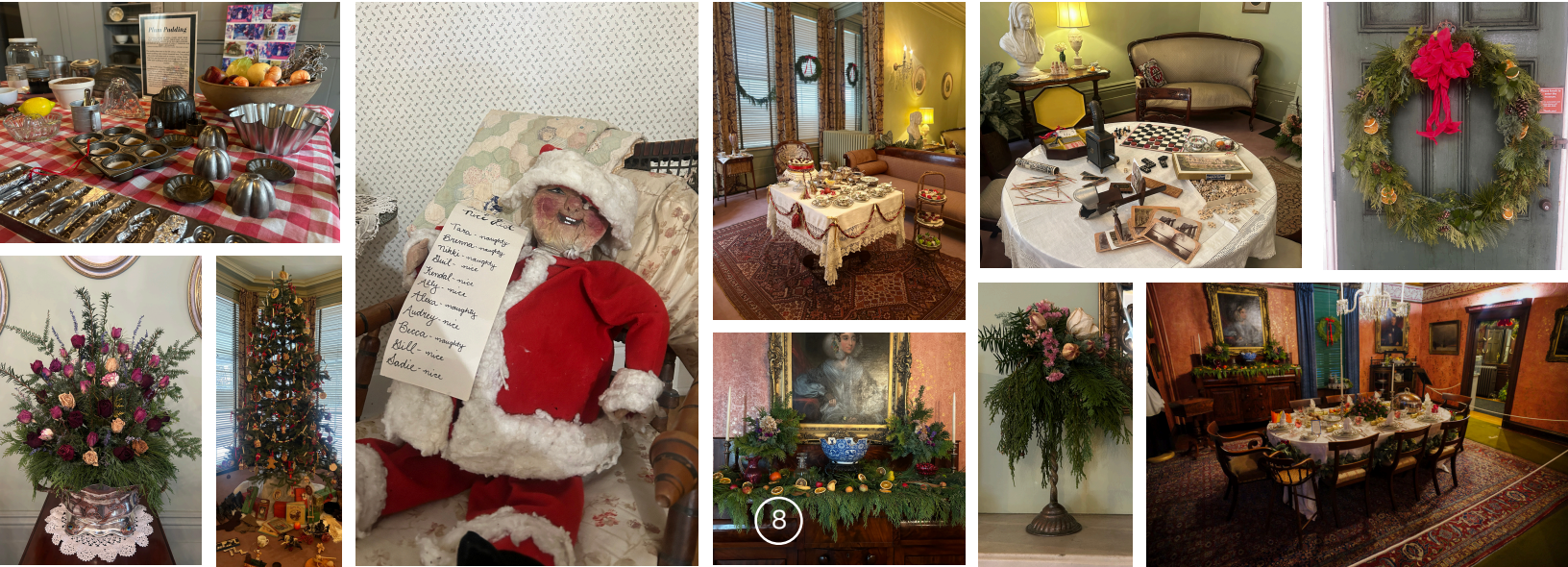
Through the month of December, Eldon House annually celebrates the season with a museum-wide exhibit on Victorian Christmas. This year, the wonderful arrangements that were featured throughout the Museum were made by Eldon House staff and volunteers.



Library. Image courtesy of J. O’Neil

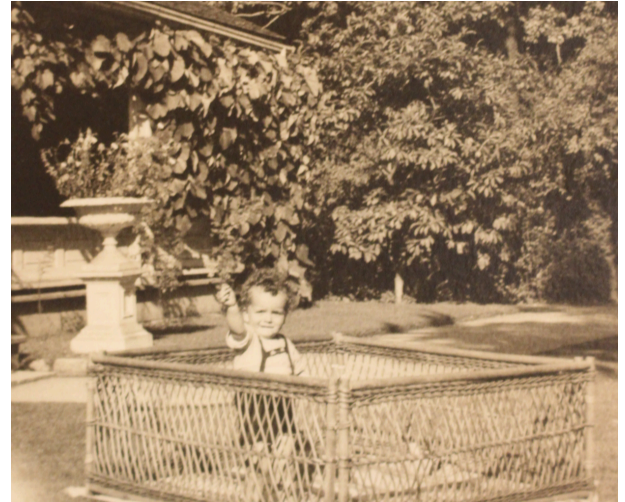
CHRISTMAS CURIOSITIES

Many of the Christmas celebrations we enjoy today can be linked to traditions started in the Victorian Era: from Christmas trees to giving presents. However, there was a darker side to Victorian Christmas, where ghosts and devils appeared to punish the undeserving. This exhibit illustrated some of the Christmas “curiosities” by reproducing graphic Victorian postcards.



RESEARCH, COLLECTIONS, AND CONSERVATION

At Eldon House, research and preservation are at the heart of everything we do. Our dedicated staff team, internship students, and Curator Director are continuously immersed in uncovering the vibrant stories that shape the “life and times” of the Harris Family. These narratives guide our programming, exhibitions, and publications, supported by a remarkable trove of primary sources—letters, diaries, photographs, and more—housed within the Harris Family Fonds at Western University Archives and Special Collections.



George ca. 1920. Image courtesy of Western University Archives and Special Collections

TRANSCRIPTION



Letter for Lucy Harris. Image courtesy of Western University Archives and Special Collections

Every member of the Eldon House team contributes to our ongoing transcription efforts, bringing new life to generations of documents preserved in the Harris Fonds. In 2025, special focus was given to prolific record keepers Amelia Harris (1798–1882) and her granddaughter Milly Harris (1862–1959), whose writings offer extraordinary insight into daily life across two centuries. Staff were able to conduct some additional transcription work and continue formatting transcriptions for future publications.

RESEARCH

Throughout 2025, our curatorial staff explored new research pathways to enrich the Museum’s interpretation and deepen our understanding of the Harris Family narrative. Preparing for the 2025 “Year of the Child,” we examined Victorian childhood from fresh angles, while also launching early research for our 2026 exhibitions celebrating London’s 200th Anniversary.

This year also sparked inspiring collaborations: Eldon House connected with researchers from across the globe—academics, curators, and heritage experts—who discovered our unique collections through digital platforms and published work. These exchanges have broadened our reach and strengthened our contribution to international museum conversations.



Eldon House Khayamiya panel

COLLECTIONS, CONSERVATION, AND CARE



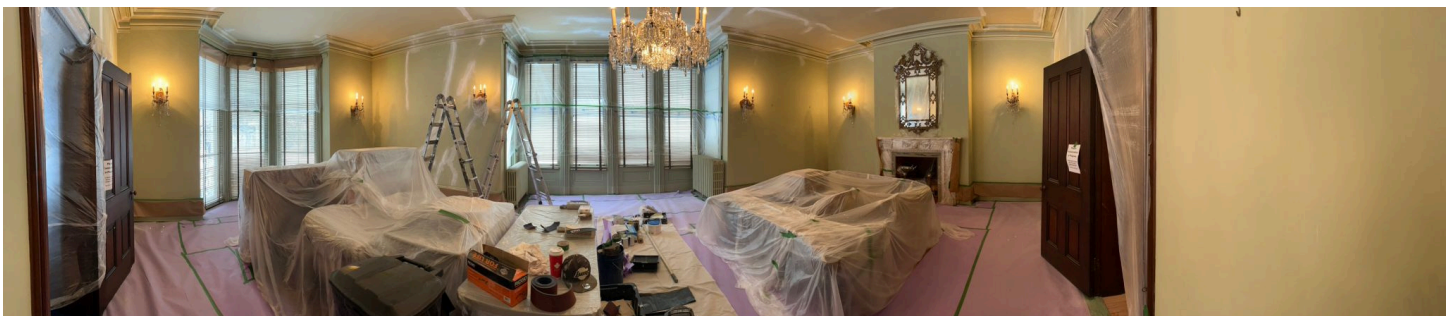
Eldon House silver spice rack before and after cleaning

Eldon House remains deeply committed to the highest standards of artifact care. Our active preventive conservation program ensures continual monitoring, treatment, and assessment of the collection. The Lucy Little Endowment Fund supports several specialized conservation projects each year, helping us preserve this treasured historic home for future generations.

In 2025 alone, 96 artifacts were catalogued, conditioned, and photographed as we updated records in the PastPerfect database—an essential step in maintaining the integrity of our collection.

The year's most significant conservation project transformed the Eldon House Drawing Room and historic second-floor Bathroom. Beginning with extensive plaster repairs led by conservator J. Doran of Acanthus Plastering, the project offered a rare behind-the-scenes learning opportunity for visitors and online audiences. After a careful three-week drying period, 519 Painters meticulously recreated the elegant 1930s colour palette original to the spaces.

Since reopening, the revitalized rooms have been met with overwhelming enthusiasm. Guests continually remark on the renewed beauty of the interiors—clear evidence of our unwavering commitment to preserving Eldon House's rich history. We extend heartfelt thanks to the Heritage Planning Division for funding and supporting this vital work.



Top to bottom: Eldon House Bathroom in repair, Drawing Room in repair, Drawing Room complete

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Running a historic house museum involves many hands, and Eldon House is fortunate to have a team that understands the intricacies of heritage management and tourism.

In 2025, Eldon House maintained three full-time staff that were responsible for the daily operations of the Museum, as well as research, exhibitions, programming, and education. The full-time team was assisted by part-time Historical Interpreters, who supported the execution of tours, house shifts, and special events, as well as two additional coordinators who oversee the physical elements of the site. Many of our Historical Interpreters have been with us for several years and have mastered a balance in museum management and customer service, which reflects well on Eldon House. In 2025 we were sad to say goodbye to one Historical Interpreter, E. Smith, who left at the end of the spring to pursue a degree in education. We were excited to welcome S. Bieman, a recent graduate of Western University to the team in late fall. The house was lovingly maintained by G. Neves, our Facilities and Maintenance Coordinator, and the grounds were kept in amazing form by Gardens and Grounds Coordinator, K. Davidson.

Eldon House was happy to welcome two students, who assisted with the Summer Tea Program in July and August. Funding for our summer positions is courtesy of the Canada Summer Jobs Grant, which allows the Museum to hire positions for set weeks during our busiest program. We were fortunate to hire D. Brown and E. Thompson, both Londoners, who worked as tea servers for nine weeks. These two were amazing contributors to the program, and their positive customer service made a great impact to guests.



Top to bottom: Eldon House staff training, E. Thompson and D. Brown, Staff training

FACILITIES AND GROUNDS

Heritage buildings like Eldon House require a fair amount of maintenance and oversight to keep them running and accessible to the public. In 2025, several restoration projects occurred, including emergency pipe replacement in the historic greenhouse after the pipes burst due to a polar vortex freeze, replacement of doors in the lower level of the Interpretive Centre, and conservation plaster and painting in the Eldon House Drawing Room and display Bathroom. Planning for future restoration of the greenhouse and painting of the exterior of the house took place in 2025.

Eldon House would like to thank several City departments for their assistance in preserving the Museum. Thank you to R. Armistead and the Culture Office for their support with several conservation projects. Thank you to K. Gonyou and the Heritage Planning Office for their assistance on the preservation of the historic greenhouse, interior conservation, and planning for large scale work. Thank you to the City Facilities department for their assistance on various projects throughout the year. Thank you to City Fire and City Security for monitoring the Museum and its safety.

Eldon House daily maintenance could not be completed without the dedication of Facilities and Maintenance Coordinator, G. Neves. G. Neves is responsible for maintaining all areas of public access and staff spaces. His dedication to his work is evident in the care of the site and we would like to thank him for his hard work.

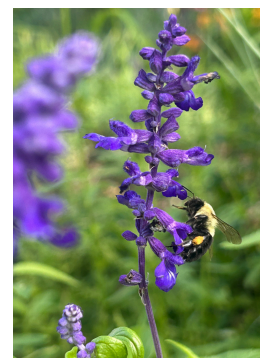




2025 was an excellent year for the grounds of the Museum with a supportive grant from TD Friends of the Environment Fund. This grant, assisted with a vision put forth by K. Davidson, the Gardens and Grounds Coordinator, to add more native plants to Eldon House and increase the biodiversity of the site. Funding for this project allowed K. Davidson to remove invasive species on the east side of Eldon House and reintroduce 19 native plants to the property, as well as add in didactics, and a bench feature for visitor enjoyment. As a final phase of the project, this garden was renamed the 1790s Garden to encompass a time when colonial horticultural practices were intermixing with Indigenous sovereignty. This project revitalized an underutilized space and built partnerships within the community through speaker series and presentation opportunities. Additionally, continued garden planning and site maintenance allowed the grounds to be a focal point for the Museum and were greatly enjoyed by many visitors, staff, and volunteers.



We would like to give special thanks to our garden's volunteers: L. Beaujot, M. Hoffmann Chase, B. Keenan, C. Lynch, and M. Pflieger who assisted K. Davidson. The gardens would not be as successful without their dedication.



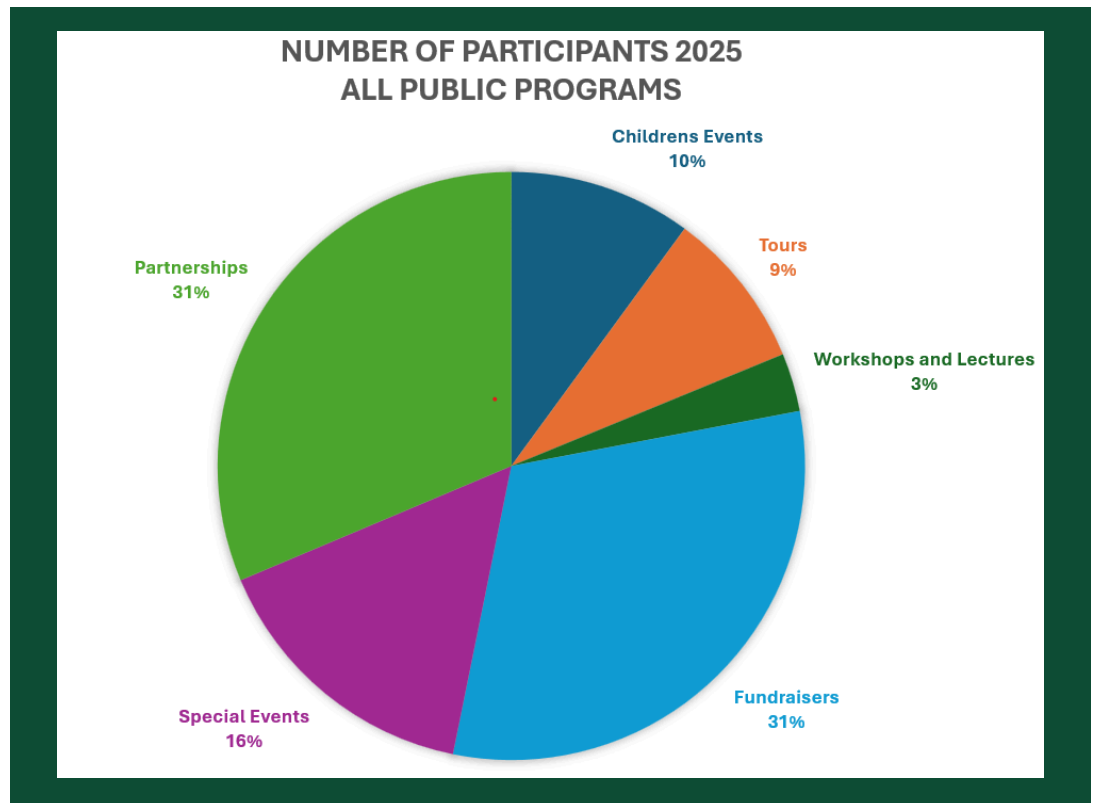
Top to bottom: Eldon House water lilies, volunteers L. Beaujot and B. Keenan, mangolia by Joe O'Neil, L. Beaujot and M. Hoffmann Chase working on the TD project, Tulips in the spring, bees on salvia.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

2025 was The Year of the Child! Eldon House incorporated the topic and history of children, and their impact and importance within the community both past and present. Public programming highlighted children's issues such as social concerns, education, socialization

within Victorian etiquette, toys, games, and overall, the coming-of-age story within our society. Workshops, tours, and special events aimed to draw attention to the theme of children and their role within our community, their impact, and wonderment!

Throughout 2025 Eldon House hosted 43 days of public programming, which amounted to 33 programs. This included 9 specialty tours, 7 workshops and lectures, 3 special events, 3 fundraisers, 7 children's programs, and 4 community partnerships.



Pie chart of programming types



Left to right: Summer Market, B. Ardiel and R. Fraser on Canada Day, Tea at the Village

TOURS

Eldon House hosted 9 specialty tours including the Behind the Ropes tour in January and September. A Valentine's Day event on February 14, Cupping and Cocaine: Women's Health and Wellness in the Victorian Era for women's history month in March, If Walls Could Talk tour exploring the architecture of the house in April, and Victorian Christmas Traditions tours in December. In October we hosted our spookiest programs; Curses, Crimes downtown walking tour, the 3 nights of the annual Morbid and Macabre tours, and a Woodland Cemetery tour. In total, 333 participants joined Eldon House Historical Interpreters and volunteers on museum tours and outdoor walking tours over 15 days throughout 2025. Tours have long been a staple for the Museum, and staff are happy to present topics that keep our audiences engaged and learning.



Top to bottom: B. Ladola on a Behind the Ropes tour, A. DiCecco and K. Kozell on a Cupping & Cocaine Tour

WORKSHOPS



Top to bottom: K. Davidson Greenery Workshop, G. LaBelle Cross-stitch Workshop, B. Ardiel and Miss Edie Violet

Eldon House hosted 7 workshops in 2025 totalling 122 participants. In March, Mark Richardson lectured on the Harris family's legendary 'frenemy' Richard Airey and his military and political career. In July, as part of London PRIDE, the Museum hosted local drag queen Miss. Edie Violet who instructed participants on the basics of hand sewing and embroidery. Three workshops took place in November in preparation for the holiday season; Program Coordinator, Brenna Ardiel, ran a Quilling Holiday card Workshop, Historical Interpreter Gillian LaBelle walked through guests on how to cross-stitch their very own holiday ornament, and Grounds and Gardens Coordinator Kendal Davidson hosted a greenery arrangement workshop on setting a holiday table. Our workshops and lectures were well received, with our visitors enjoying a diverse range of topics and artforms.

TD FRIEND OF THE ENVIRONMENT: BACK TO OUR ROOTS LECTURES

Eldon House was fortunate to have been accepted to receive funding from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. As part of the Back to our Roots project, Grounds and Gardens Coordinator Kendal Davidson hosted 2 lectures totalling 54 participants. These lectures, led by horticulture experts, were free to the public and were intended on furthering our commitment to education on biodiversity.



On May 23, cultivation activist, Lorraine Johnson, led guests on a talk discussing Building Biodiversity with Native Plants exploring the correlation between reconciliation and native plant gardening. In this presentation, Lorraine shared her knowledge on restorative land care, native plant species, and our relationship with plants, wildlife, and each other.

On September 13, Paul LaPorte, a nursery owner and garden consultant, had guests travel back in time to the very beginning of life on earth through his lecture on Tracing the Roots of Native Plants. LaPorte brought numerous plant fossils to examine the evolution of plants from the Cambrian Period to the present day. He emphasized the role of ancient plants played in the formation of fossil fuels today.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Eldon House took part in four community partnerships in 2025, including London Heritage Councils' Heritage Fair: Growing Together in the Forest City in February, London's Clean and Green city initiative in April, Fanshawe Pioneer Village's Victorian Day Celebrations in May, and in September the annual Doors Open London, facilitated by the London Heritage Council as part Doors Open Ontario. In total these experiences recorded 163 children and 1,031 adults, totalling 1,194 patrons. Eldon House is always excited to participate in community partnerships, renewing our commitment as a community institution. Thank you to our partners for including us and promoting us within their networks.



Left to right: Volunteers at London Clean and Green, A. McKenzie during Doors Open

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING



Seven children's events were hosted throughout 2025 including Kids First Day in May, Spooky Gourd Painting in October, and Victorian Crafting for Kids in December. There were also 4 Victorian Crafting for Kids workshops led by Historical Interpreters; paper quilling, making pysanky eggs with

acrylic paint, making silk and dried floral crowns, and cyanotype photography. In total, 175 children and 208 adults participated in said events, totalling 383 participants. The focus on children's events was complimentary to our exhibit theme, and all events focused on children's enjoyment with art and leisure rooted in historical practices. Eldon House looks forward to inspiring the next generation of museum patrons through activities and fun events.

SPECIAL EVENTS

In 2025 Eldon House hosted three special events. This included the New Years Levee on January 1st, Ameila Harris' 227th Birthday on February 16th, and Canada Day: Celebrating the Communities of Canada on July 1st. In total these events were attended by 61 children and 528 adults who enjoyed the festivities, including self-guided tours of the Museum, indoor scavenger hunts, Victorian crafting, and activities on the grounds. On Canada Day we hosted live musical performances from David Rayo, Sam Hornby, women's choir Shades of Harmony, along with Bollywood and Salsa dance performances from BRDRLESS Dance. Our special events are often staples for the Museum and are attended by new visitors and Eldonians. The Museum is happy to host amazing events that inspire engagement with our community.



David Rayo performing on July 1

FUNDRAISING

Eldon House hosted three market fundraisers, the proceeds from two of which are allocated to ongoing improvements to the Interpretive Centre kitchen. Twenty-one artists contributed to the Mother's Day Market, the Summer Market, and the Winter Holiday Market, which were well attended. The Mother's Day Botanical Market on May 11th, had its proceeds go towards the maintenance and growth of the Museum's grounds and gardens. Together all 3 markets saw 93 children and 1,095 adults, totalling 1,188 visitors, supported local artists, artisans, and entrepreneurs in purchasing local products along with the purchase of raffle tickets for a chance to win beautiful prizes generously donated by select market vendors.

Below is list of all vendors, artists, and entrepreneurs that participated in the 2025 market season:

All My Little People
Almanac Flowers Co.
Anda Marcu
Art with Panache
Belvedere Lavender
BiiVii Creative
Camp - Kee-Mo-kee
Gnolia Designs
Halington Art
Heat Wrap Love
Heavenly Beads
Heavy Petal
House of Fortune
Infinite Cosmos Flower Farm
Lazy Frog Co.
Lion + Lop
Moazzez Confectionary
Mystik Art
Occult Inks
Purple & Peridot
The Baker's Project



Vendors at various markets

SUMMER TEA AND SPECIALTY TEA PROGRAMS



Full tea menu

Eldon House's tradition of hosting tea has gone back to the times of the Harris Family. In 2025, the Eldon House tea program was catered by Scotian Isle Baked Goods located at 972 Hamilton Road. Scotian Isle has been serving Londoners for over 30 years and had previously worked with Eldon House prior to 2014. The delicious loose-leaf tea has been procured by The Tea Haus since 2017 and is located on the second floor of the Covent Garden Market.

Eldon House hosted three specialty themed teas including the annual Strawberry Tea in June, a Jane Austen Tea, in July and a Teddy Bear Tea in August. In total these themed teas hosted 128 tea growing enthusiasts!

Eldon House's annual Summer Tea Program took place throughout July and August and was enjoyed by over 1,000 tea goers! In total, there were approximately 83 children and 1007 adult attendees. Patrons continually describe the Summer Tea Program as a highlight to their summer and part of an annual tradition, sometimes continuing for several generations.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Eldon House's Educational Programming is designed for a variety of grades, both secondary and post-secondary! All school programs offered provide a comprehensive history of Eldon House, early London life, and the global context encompassing the life and times of the Harris Family through its artifacts, archival documentation, and interpretation!

The Museum's themed tours and specialized workshops are available for school groups and private institutions, all touching upon the current Ontario curriculum:

***HISTORIC TOUR – HARRIS ADVENTURE WALK
ALL GRADES***

***HISTORIC TOUR- RIVER ADVENTURE WALK
ALL GRADES***

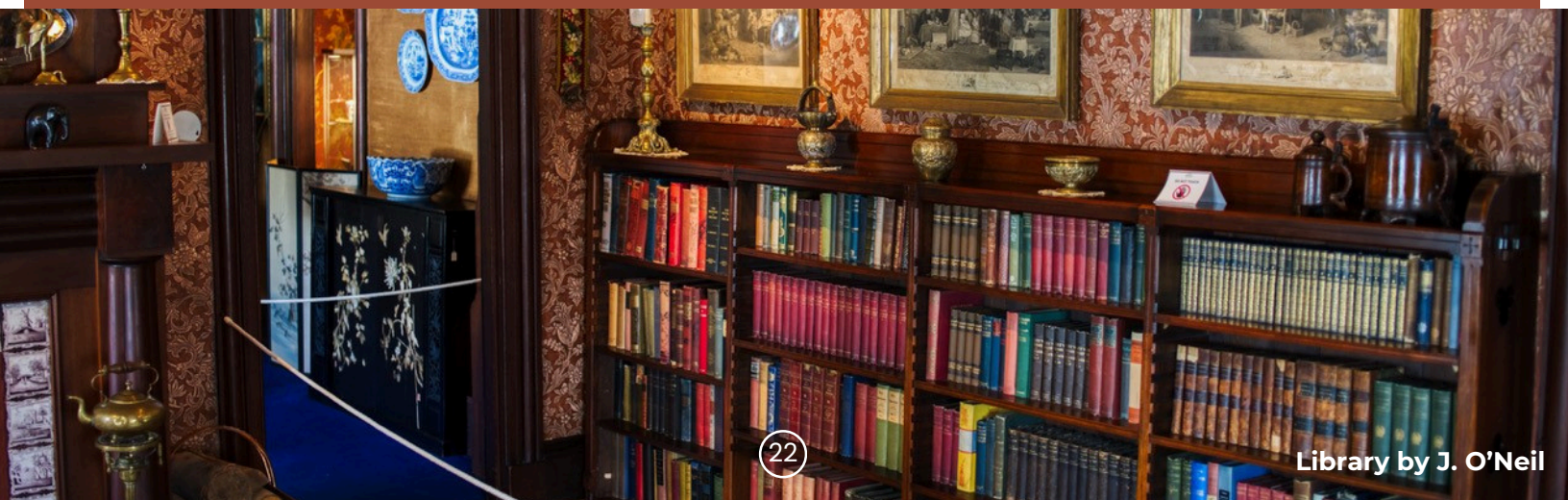
***HALF DAY PROGRAM – CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS
ALL GRADES***

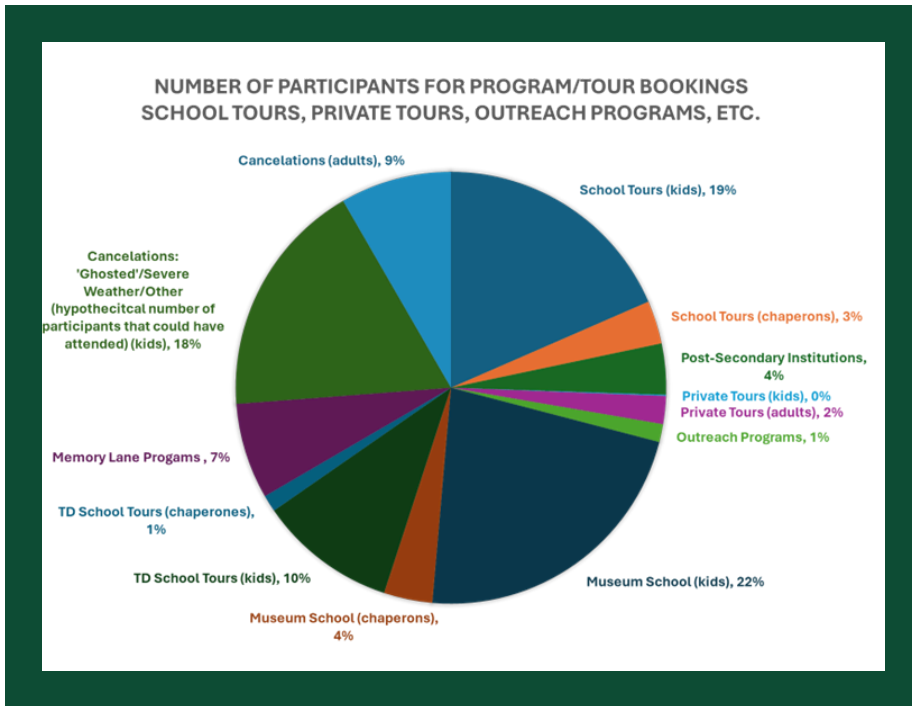
***HALF DAY PROGRAM – EARLY LONDON
GRADE 1, GRADE 2 AND GRADE 3***

***HALF DAY PROGRAM – TRAVELLING THE WORLD
GRADE 4, GRADE 5, AND GRADE 6***

***HALF DAY PROGRAM – REBELS AND REDCOATS
GRADE 7***

***HALF DAY PROGRAM – THE HOMEFRONT IN WWI
GRADE 10***





Pie chart of tour bookings and percentages

booking is made on a case-by-case basis. The chart above outlines the percentage booking and their categorization of tour/program type.

Tours can be tailored to meet a wide range of curriculum requirements including social studies, art, art history, geography, and political science. Additionally, adult tours which specialize in topics including art, Victorian horticulture, colonialism and colonization, Victorian etiquette and architecture are available. In all cases, Eldon House is always ready to meet the needs of our customers, and each

SCHOOL TOURS



A. McKenzie leading students on our Christmas Traditions tour

440 students plus 77 chaperons participated in onsite tours and workshops, including 91 post-secondary students. Eldon House was happy to receive students from both local major school boards throughout the year, as well as learners from private institutions. The largest concentration of students came from elementary schools, with many schools sending multiple classes for staple programs.

TD FRIEND OF THE ENVIRONMENT: EXPLORING OUR ROOTS

Eldon House was fortunate to receive funding from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. Throughout May to October 2025, the Museum hosted 246 students and 30 chaperons to participate in a specialty program titled Exploring Our Roots Program. This program was a 3-hour program which included a 1-hour guided tour of the Museum, 1-hour garden tour, and 1-hour botanical theme activity.



The museum tour highlighted the botanical themed artifacts and Harris Family narratives throughout the home, such as the botanical specimens created by Hugh Ronald and inherited by Lucy Harris, the unique anaglyptic wallpaper often depicting scenes of flora and fauna, and more.



Top to bottom: Students working on the botanical activity, G. LaBelle leading a garden tour

The program took place primarily outside, per the grant's stipulations. The outdoor components included a 1-hour garden tour and a 1-hour workshop where students planted their own marigolds and wildflowers to take home. In both cases Historical Interpreters discussed the historical changes of the Museum grounds and gardens, reflected on the lives of the caretakers such as William Barnett, and discussed the Museum's goal of removing 30% of the invasive species from the grounds to replace them with native species to encourage ecosystem growth and health!

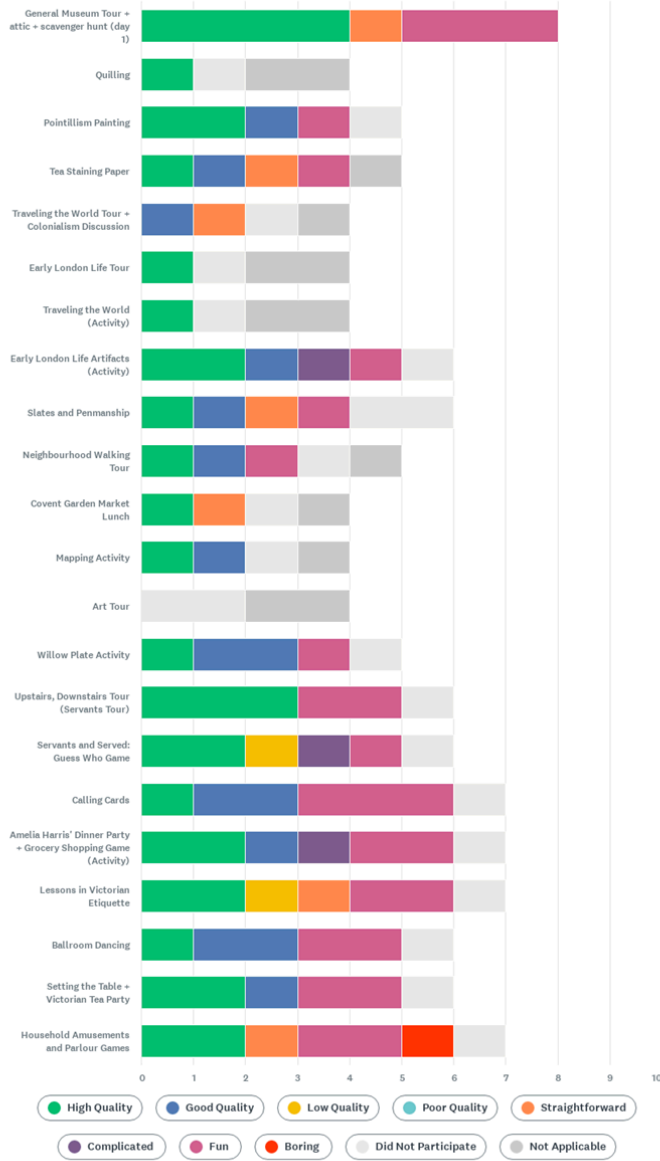
MUSEUM SCHOOL



B. Ladola leading a walking tour

Hundreds of teachers apply to take part in Museum School London each year. For the past 18 years, the London Heritage Council has facilitated and provided funding to both teachers and heritage sites to take part in this unique opportunity. "This innovative approach to education allows teachers to move their classrooms into a museum setting for a full week of curriculum-based experiential learning, making the arts, science, and Canadian history come to life."
-London Heritage Council, Museum School London.

Q8 Please use the descriptive words provides to describe the following activity/workshop/activity. You can select multiple answers for each activity/workshop/activity.



Above: Results from a Museum School survey
 Below: R. Ladola on a walking tour and students at the Covent Garden Market

The funding of Museum School is provided by the generous donations of many local businesses and organizations including both school board, the Kiwanis Club, and Canada Life. Their support assists sites like Eldon House in the ability to participate in this wonderful initiative.

Eldon House offers curriculum-based programming for grades 3 through 8 in which students explore the history of early London life and the life and times of the Harris Family. Through walking tours, workshops, artistic activities, and museum tours, students learned such topics on historical art, 1800s domestic servitude, Colonialism, settler life, the Victorian classroom, museum conservation, and so much more. In 2025, Eldon House hosted five weeks of Museum School, totalling 136 students across three different schools.



PRIVATE TOURS

Throughout 2025, Eldon House was a top London attraction and a unique gathering place for organizations and community groups, and with individual family/friend groups. In 2025 approximately 82 adults and 2 children (12 and under) participated in booked private tours and outreach programs. The most requested program was the standard 1-hour museum tour which delves into the life and times of the Harris Family through the artifact collection, family stories, and Historical Interpreter narratives. Other private tours included the Curses, Crimes, and Haunts downtown walking tour, our Morbid and Macabre October tour, and our specialty Victorian Christmas tour.



Artifacts from Morbid and Macabre

OUTREACH



E. Smith at McCormick Senior's Home

The Eldon House Memory Lane program is made possible with the New Horizons for Seniors Program (NHSP) grant that is designed to fund projects that make positive impacts on the lives of seniors. Eldon House concluded the 2024-2025 granting season, between January through March 2025 with eight outreach visits to local senior centers and long-term care homes.

Eldon House has developed outreach programs to engage seniors by exploring and exchanging conversations about local history, people, and artifacts through personable interactions. The target audience for the Memory Lane program are seniors with Alzheimer's, dementia, and lower cognitive function, to share memories and stories via artifacts and historical visuals provided by knowledgeable and enthusiastic Eldon House staff. Our goal is to provide Alzheimer's and dementia patients with intellectual and psychological stimulation.

BY THE NUMBERS

Number of Days Open to the Public and for Private Tours 287

Number of Days the Gates were open 254

Number of Operating Hours 1,435

Attendance Numbers

Number of General Attendance including grounds visitors 5,462

Number of Tours Participants 1,581

Number of Special Events Attendees 3,640

Number of Tea Visitors 1,090

Number of Outreach Attendees 464

Number of Rental Visitors 154

Total Number of Visitors 12,391

Total Number of Visitors 2024 13,229

Social Media Numbers

Facebook 2,907

Instagram 2,887

TikTok 1,149

Twitter 1,319

YouTube 43

Website Numbers

Active Users 35,190

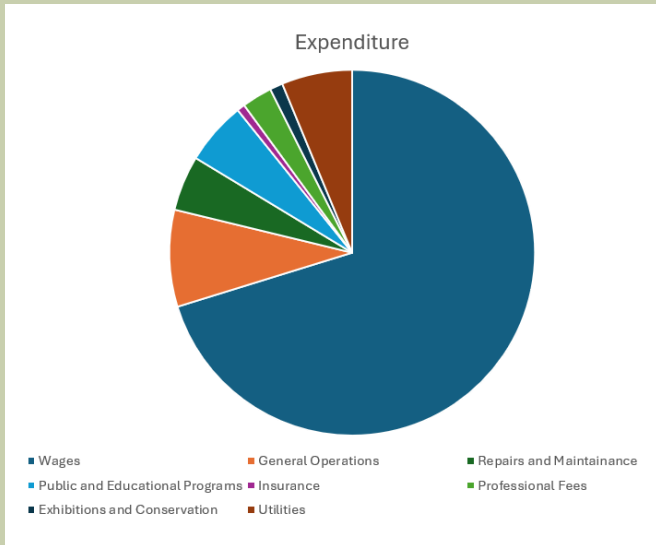
Engaged Users 25,777

Number of Volunteers 12

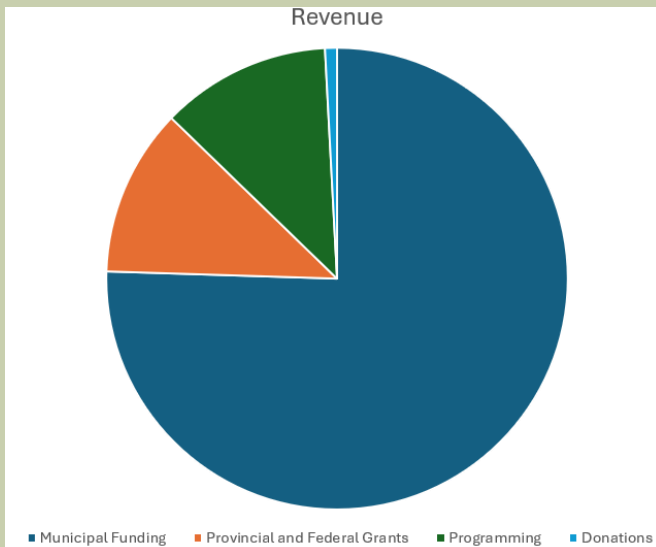
Number of Volunteer Hours 500



FINANCE REPORT



Eldon House posted a surplus of \$498 for the 2025 fiscal year and finished the year with a strong cash position with just under \$190,000 dollars in cash and GIC investments.

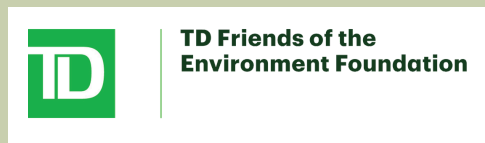


Last year, the Civic Administration and Board and Commissions (ABCs) were asked to reduce their budgets by 1.5% for the 2026 fiscal year. Eldon House has been running with lean budgets for years and with added expenses like the capital asset management expense and increased wages due to union negotiations; Eldon House ultimately was not required to reduce its budget.

The top chart marks the expenditures for 2025. The second chart breaks down revenue funding.

GRANTS AND FUNDING

- City of London
- Community Museum Operating Grant (CMOG)
- Celebrate Canada, Celebration and Commemorating Fund
- Canada Summer Jobs Program
- TD Friends of the Environment Fund



MARKETING REPORT

Eldon House focused attention on promoting the Museum and many of its specialty events in 2025, including our Summer Tea program, Markets, and our TD Friends of the Environment Lecture series. Marketing focused on electronic communication utilizing the power of social media for paid and free promotion. The Museum continued to partner with local heritage organizations including Tourism London and the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario for year-long marketing initiatives. Overall, marketing was successful in the promotion of Eldon House and its events, which we hope will continue in 2026.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE STATISTICS

In recent years digital methods have become staples for Eldon House and its communication with the public. Social media and our website are how we collate information including online exhibitions, marketing, public announcements, and how the public responds to the Museum.

The Eldon House website, managed through our partners at Kreadiv House, is instrumental in communicating with the public. Our website has pages for general history, online exhibits, and event listings. Visitors are encouraged to visit the website for details on the house as well as to register for our many events. In 2025, the website continued to draw attention to the Museum. Over 35,000 people visited the



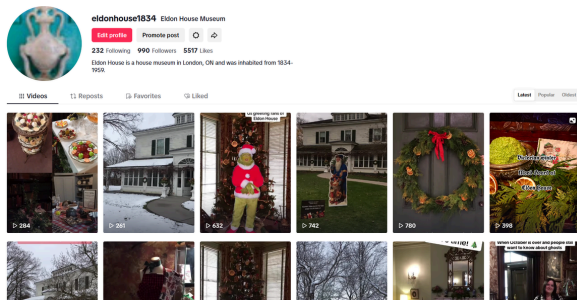
website, with the average engagement rate of 54.16%. This was a 2% decline from the previous year. Sales generated through the website amounted to \$31,580.55 including a 7% increase in ticket sales for the Summer Tea Program. Website visitors referred to the Eldon House site came from social media, including Facebook and Instagram, but also through Tourism London and Destination Ontario. Website visitors came largely from Canada and more specifically Ontario, which is average. International website visitors came from the United States, China, Singapore, Hong Kong and India. Though the website traction was slightly lower than in 2024, the quality of visits was great and added on to Eldon House's engagement with the public.

Top 10 Products Sold Online		
Item name	Items purchased	Item revenue
Total	1,307 100% of total	\$31,580.55 100% of total
Summer Tea Program 2025	802 (61.36%)	\$19,722.89 (62.45%)
Strawberry Tea at the Museum	44 (3.37%)	\$2,194.25 (6.95%)
Morbid and Macabre Tours	121 (9.26%)	\$1,923.12 (6.09%)
Teddy Bear Tea at the Museum	25 (1.91%)	\$850.82 (2.69%)
Jane Austen Tea at the Museum	17 (1.3%)	\$850.00 (2.69%)
Curse, Crimes, and Haunts	44 (3.37%)	\$785.79 (2.49%)
Woodland Cemetery Tours	39 (2.98%)	\$695.79 (2.2%)
Valentine's Day: Behind the Ropes	10 (0.77%)	\$600.00 (1.9%)
The Ghost of Christmas Past	37 (2.83%)	\$590.16 (1.87%)
Cross-Stitch Ornaments	14 (1.07%)	\$541.60 (1.71%)

Website sales

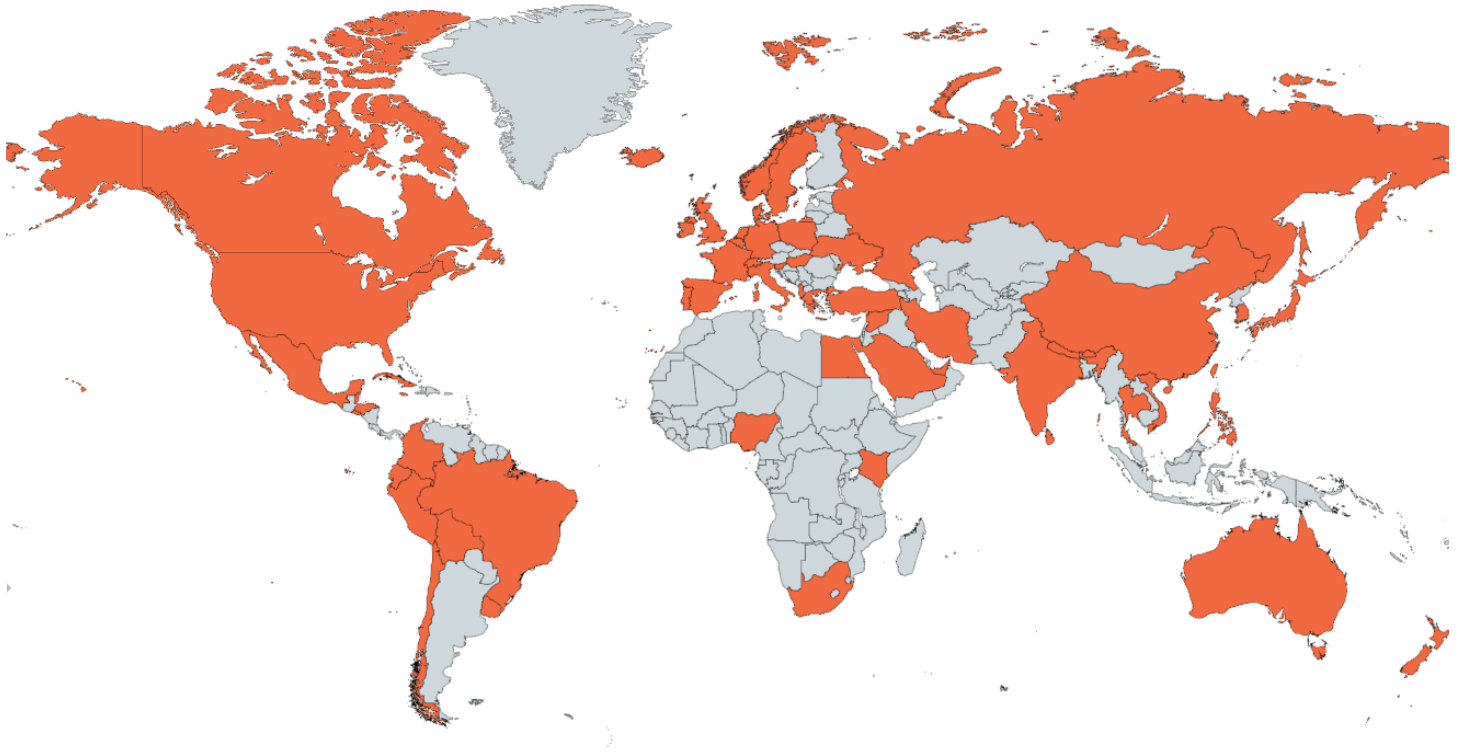


Eldon House primarily uses social media for promotional purposes and education. Platforms like Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) have been staples for the Museum for many years. In recent years, Instagram has surpassed both platforms for engagement, and our latest social media addition, TikTok, is also gaining traction quickly. In 2025 there was a 27.3% increase in Instagram followers and a 16.3% increase in TikTok followers. These spikes in numbers are partially due to partnerships with social media influencers including opportunities coordinated through Tourism London. In 2025, Eldon House received over 18,500 likes across all platforms, with a 32.6% increase in likes on Instagram. Our most phenomenal statistic comes from TikTok where there was an 95% increase in video views between 2024 and 2025! These numbers are a reflection of the staff's dedication to sharing information and making Eldon House accessible to the public in person and digitally.



Top to bottom: Events post, the Eldon House ghost, creating fake food, exhibit post, TikTok highlights

VISITOR STATISTICS



Map of visitor locations 2025

In 2025, Eldon House was excited to welcome 12,391 persons through the doors! Though this was a 6.39% decrease from 2024, it surpassed pre-COVID numbers and was a considerable boon in tourism. Of the over 12,000 persons who came to Eldon House, 79% of them indicated that they were new visitors, with many of them attending special events including tours and markets. Anecdotal data as well as recorded data from staff indicated a large percentage of return visitors came for multiple events, specifically large-scale programs like Canada Day or our Markets.

Canadians made up the largest number of visitors, which is expected, with majority coming from Ontario. There was an even split between those coming from London and outside of London, which was an unusual statistic, but one that demonstrated an eagerness from Londoners to visit their home attractions. Internationally, we received visits from 54 countries, which was the highest diversity on record! 31% of our international visitors came from Asia, 48% from Europe, 15% from South America, and 3% each from Africa and Oceania. The top three international countries included the United States (with visitors from 27 states), India, and Brazil.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



PREFORMERS AND PRESENTERS

Eldon House would like to thank all of the performers and presenters that shared their immense talent and passion in 2024.

Anchal Dahiya and the BRDRLESS Dance team
Sam Hornby
Dominic Montes
David Rayo
Mark Richardson
Shades of Harmony
Kyle Sherwin
St. Paul's Cathedral Choir



Queer History & Trailblazers with Nicki Nastasia and Miss Edie Violet



July 17
7:00-9:00
\$15.00



Top to bottom: Mark Richardson, Sam Hornby, David Rayo, Shades of Harmony, Kyle Sherwin and Dominic Montes, and St. Paul's Cathedral Choir

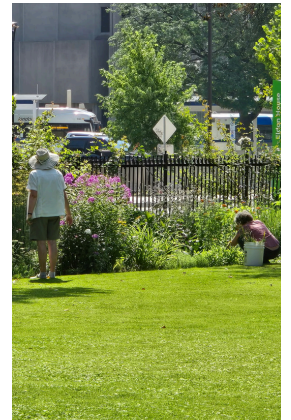
ELDON HOUSE HERITAGE SITE AND GARDENS TEAM

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

ELDON HOUSE VOLUNTEER TEAM

Eldon House is extremely thankful to the wonderful volunteers who continue to support us with their time, energy, and positive attitude. We thank them for their involvement.

Liz Beaujot
Ash Donachie
Penny Finneron
Rober Fraser
Merrilee Hoffmann Chase
Barbara Keenan
Bernice Kozell
Kathy Kozell
Cathy Lynch
Marianne Pflieger
Theresa Regnier
Betty Rutledge
Maureen Spencer Golovchenko
Andrea Tonkovic



Top to bottom: K. Kozell, R. Fraser, L. Beaujot, and M. Hoffmann Chase, M. Pflieger, L. Beaujot, B. Keenan, C. Lynch, and M. Pflieger on the south lawn, K. Kozell at the Village, B. Keenan, M. Pflieger, and L. Beaujot in the new garden, K. Davidson and London Clean and Green volunteers, K. Kozell and G. LaBelle, Kids First Day, R. Fraser at the Levee, L. Beaujot and C. Lynch in the herbaceous border.

ELDON HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Board members left to right: J. O'Neil, R. Fraser, L. Henderson, M. Halliday, and M. Southern

Mike Donachie, Director
Robert Fraser, Director
Megan Halliday, Secretary
Louanne Henderson, Vice Chair
Bryan McClure, Director
Joe O'Neil, Board Chair
Michelle Southern, Director

ELDON HOUSE STAFF TEAM

Tara Wittmann, Curator Director
Brenna Ardiel, Program Coordinator
Nicoletta Michienzi, Museum Coordinator
Bernie Keim, Finance Manager
Guilherme Neves Lopes, Facilities and Maintenance Coordinator
Kendal Davidson, Garden and Grounds Coordinator
Sadie-Lyn Bieman, Historical Interpreter
Alexa DiCecco, Historical Interpreter
Gillian LaBelle, Historical Interpreter
Rebecca Ladola, Historical Interpreter
Audrey McKenzie, Historical Interpreter
Emily Smith, Historical Interpreter
Ally Vouvalidis, Historical Interpreter

Left to right: A. McKenzie, R. Ladola, G. Neves Lopes, G. LaBelle and A. Vouvalidis, A. DiCecco, S. Bieman, K. Davidson and T. Wittmann, E. Smith, N. Michienzi and B. Ardiel





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