

Eldon House Celebrates 175 years

(September 17, 2009) Today, the City of London, Museum London and the 175th Anniversary Committee launched an exciting year-long celebration marking a major milestone for London's oldest home, Eldon House. Since Captain John and Amelia Harris first moved their family into this brand new home in September 1834, Eldon House has served as the hub of London's history - and it is now 175 years old.

Recognizing Eldon House as a heritage jewel, the anniversary celebration is designed to bring renewed focus to this historic home on Ridout Street, where generations of one of London's founding families lived until 1960, when the Harris family donated Eldon House to the City as a museum. As such, on hand for today's ceremony was Tony Little, the great great grandson of John and Amelia Harris, who still resides in London.

The special year begins this weekend in conjunction with *Doors Open*, as Londoners step back in time to visit many heritage sites. Special 175 events rolling out this fall and winter include an Anniversary Lecture Series featuring authors Nicholas and Elizabeth Clinch unveiling their new book about the adventurous travels of youngest daughter Teresa Harris in Central Asia, as well as an interactive Victorian Christmas Play, where rooms of Eldon House come to life with members of the Harris family preparing for the big day.

Throughout the year, a four-part costume exhibition entitled '*Hatpins and Hoop Skirts to Spats and Snoods*' will be on display in the Eldon House drawing room, and a revolving three-part exhibition highlighting Harris family photography and special artifacts will be presented on the second floor of the home.

Celebrations will continue through to next August, culminating with the 50th anniversary of the Harris family agreement with the City to operate Eldon House as a museum. Next spring and summer will be particularly busy with a Vintage Fashion Show, Summer and Special Event Teas, Military Re-enactments and Sunday Garden Walks hosted by the London Fanshawe Horticultural Society.

This special milestone provides a tremendous opportunity for London to celebrate its history and for Londoners to connect with their community's past and forge a strong legacy for Eldon House in the future.

To this end, the City is introducing a new website for London's oldest home, where details of the many anniversary events can be found. Check out www.eldonhouse.ca to see how you might join in the celebrations.

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