



Women's Canadian Club London

Since 1910

Newsletter - September 2026

President's Message: Barb Dmitrienko

Hello everyone!

Well, my eyes have been opened! I naively thought that once the June Board meeting finished, Women's Canadian Club London "Stuff" would quiet down a bit for the summer! I was incorrect in my thinking! June just invigorated many Chairs of committees to get moving on finalizing our plans for the 2026-2027 Speaker Series. For many board members, this summer has included several meetings and zoom calls. I have been impressed by the attention to detail and the diligence these women have displayed. We have energetic board directors who continue to amaze me with their ever expanding ideas.

- Community Service - Betty Dietrich, Chair - A Book for Every Child Campaign starting in September. Our club is in partnership with the London Library - 200 books in celebration of London's Bicentennial.
- Membership - Eleanor Leatham, Chair and Pat Skelton, Assistant Chair - collect the membership applications throughout the summer and input the data into our files.
- Publicity - Sharon Miller, Chair - flyers, publicity cards, Facebook updates, emails about upcoming events.
- Silent Auction - Wendy Valhoff, Chair - Wendy and her committee are always on the lookout for new items for the Silent Auction
- Speakers - Sharon Miller, Chair, Marie Peden Volunteer Assistant - coordinating all details with guest speaker Emma Donoghue, meeting planning for 2027-2028 Speaker Series.
- Sponsorship - Judy Farrell, Chair, Sharon Miller, a Committee Member, were instrumental in obtaining our Exclusive Event Sponsor for September 10.
- Technology - Pat Skelton, Chair, Helena Steinmetz, Assistant Chair, updated the Home Page, Community Service, Speaker Series, and Sponsorship pages on the website
- Youth Focus - Cathy Leeming, Chair - contacted guest students over the summer
- Social/Welcome - Antoinette Dona, Chair, Lorraine Jardine volunteer. Both are planning a special welcome for our new members; come and see them at the Welcome table on September 10th.

Kudos to Cathy Cave - a most beloved member of our board! Cathy (long time member & past president) is part of our Publicity committee. Cathy has been doing and continues to do FYI London Recording Segments to advertise our meetings on Rogers Cable TV. Cathy writes all the drafts herself and has to keep each segment to 50 seconds (very difficult). Cathy will be recording all 8 segments at the CTV station on Aug. 19. She is amazing.

A big thank you to all the volunteers and other committee members. Your help is invaluable. Special thanks to Sharon and Bob Miller for their help and expertise in putting out this newsletter. Looking forward to seeing familiar faces and welcoming new ones in September.
Barbara

In Memory of Claire Fidler

Women's Canadian Club London Past President and well known long time member, Claire Fidler passed away on August 3rd, 2026 at age 88. Claire was President of WCCL from 1989 - 1991. The membership during that time was numbered at an amazing 1600 members.

After Claire's term as President, she joined the Advisory Committee for the Association of Canadian Clubs and became Chair of that committee in 1993. During her tenure, Claire was able to travel and visit many Canadian Clubs from coast to coast.



Claire returned to London and the Women's Canadian Club which she loved and supported until her health deteriorated. Claire was able to continue coming to monthly meetings and special lunches with her daughter Tara. Tara accompanied Claire to meetings for several years until her health issues made that impossible to continue. Tara herself has become a member and represented her mother at Past President socials etc.

To many people that knew her, Claire was a lovely person, had a wonderful smile for everyone and was always up for a good laugh!

Our deepest condolences to Tara and the rest of Claire's family. Claire is remembered by us in the form of a donation. We have ordered 3 trees planted in Claire's memory. She will be missed!

September Keynote Speaker: Emma Donoghue

September 10, 2026 2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

We gratefully acknowledge our Exclusive Event Sponsor,
Kelland Portfolio Management Group – Scotia Wealth Management,
for their generous support of this event.

Kelland Portfolio Management Group

ScotiaMcLeod®, a division of Scotia Capital Inc.

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Emma Donoghue:

"Shaping Stories for Stage, Page and Screen"

Emma Donoghue is a novelist, screenwriter and playwright. Her novel *Room* has sold almost three million copies, won the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize and was shortlisted for the Man Booker and Orange Prizes. Emma scripted the film adaptation, which was nominated for four Academy Awards, including Best Picture.

The Wonder was shortlisted for the Giller Prize, and she co-wrote the screen adaptation of the Netflix film which starred Florence Pugh. *The Pull of the Stars* was nominated for the Trillium Book Award and Giller Prize.

In 2025 she wrote the #1 National Bestseller *The Paris Express*, a historical thriller. Emma's fiction ranges from the contemporary to the historical and includes two books for young readers.

Emma Donoghue turned a set of 19th-century immigrant love letters into a folk musical, *The Wind Coming Over the Sea*, at Blyth Festival in the summer of 2025 and she is the screenwriter for the film *H is for Hawk* in 2026.

Emma won the Forest City Film Festival IMPACT award in 2026.



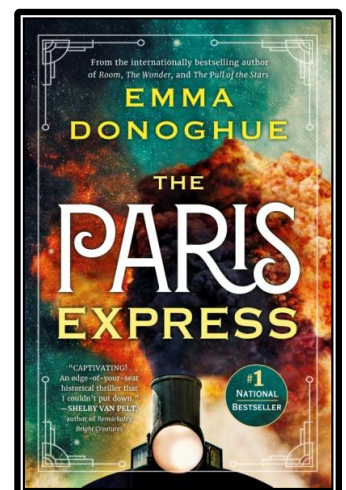
 **HarperCollins**Canada

HarperCollins Canada Ltd.

Emma Donoghue Book Sale in the Atrium

1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., and 3:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Emma will sign her books from 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.



Youth Focus Speaker: Inaaya Zia

We look forward to hearing our first YOUTH FOCUS speaker in 2026-2027!

Inaaya is a student at London Central Secondary School with a strong interest in science, volunteering, and reading. She is a two-time Canada Wide Science Fair finalist, earning gold and bronze medals for her projects. In her free time, she plays basketball and badminton, enjoys volunteering, and serves as a Legislation Minister on the Ontario Youth Parliament. She is also involved in public speaking, HOSA (Future Health Professionals), and DECA (a Club to prepare emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management).



Complimentary Reception:



There will be a Complimentary Dessert Reception in the Atrium and Crystal Ballroom from 3:30p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Community Service:

It is hard to believe that summer is winding down and we will soon start a new season of Women's Club meetings. Your Community Service Committee has been busy planning for our upcoming year.

We will launch our new year by having a Back to School campaign for the London Food Bank. In addition, we are starting a three month campaign in September in which we are asking members to bring a new children's book to the Community Service table for A Book For Every Child Campaign operated through the London Public Library.



Why collect back to school food for the Foodbank?

Healthy, nutritious back to school snacks and cereals have been identified by the Food Bank as an area of shortfall they experience at this time of year. See the list below as to what they most need.

Why collect children's books for the Public Library?

The library receives requests for children's books throughout the year. These requests are received from teachers and various agencies dealing with children. Around 7,300 books were requested from 29 schools and 18 agencies last year. This program promotes awareness of the importance of books in a child's life as well as supports family literacy. Often this may be the only book a child actually owns.

What is our goal as a Club?

We hope to celebrate London's 200th anniversary by collecting books or funds equivalent to 200 books during this campaign. The campaign will run at our September, October and November meetings. Funds collected are used for books addressing very specific needs, multilingual books etc.



Does the library identify any areas of shortfall?

Yes, the library has told us they consistently run short of books for the age group of 10 to 16. These books are easy to find - most book stores have well marked preteen and teen sections.

So in summary, here's what we will be accepting at our Community Service table at the September meeting:

- High nutrition back to school snacks - fruit cups, applesauce, granola bars
- Crackers
- Breakfast cereals
- New books for children, preteens and teens
- Monetary funds for either the London Food Bank or *A Book for Every Child Campaign*
- Aluminum pop tabs

We look forward to working with all Club members in the upcoming year.

Thank you so much for your support.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER

Pop Tabs:

We are still collecting for Logan Pennings. He is our 65th recipient.

Please drop off your Pop Tabs at the Community Service Table on September 10th.

Logan Pennings is an 11 year old St. Thomas boy with Spinal Muscular Atrophy(SMA). He attends grade 6 at St. Thomas Christian School. He has an older brother and sister who attend the same school. His favourite school subject is math. He wants to play Para Ice Hockey in the future. Logan has an incredible sense of humour and loves a good joke! He also likes his I-Pad, board games, video games and TV. In the summer he also enjoys swimming. Because boys at this age are known to have growth spurts, Logan needs a larger manual wheel chair. So, please save your pop tabs to help us reach this goal.



Membership:

Annual memberships may be purchased or renewed at the Membership Table on Thursday, September 10 from 11:30 am to 1:45 pm, or online before the meeting.

Details on how to complete your registration can be found on the Membership page on our website. Please type – womenscanadianclublondon.com/membership

Single event tickets are \$30 and are available:

- through Eventbrite until September 9 at 5:00 pm – purchase here, don't wait until day of meeting as there may be none available
- [Eventbrite - Emma Donoghue](#)
- at the Membership Table (if available) from 11:30 am – 1:45 pm on Sept. 10

Note: credit and debit card purchases are subject to a processing fee.

Sponsorship:

Women's Canadian Club Annual Sponsorship

Women's Canadian Club London wishes to thank our 2025-2026 Annual Sponsors: TD, Western, VENVI: Windermere on the Mount and Royalcliffe Retirement Living, Levante: Horizon Place and Grandwood Park Retirement Residences and NEUPHYSIO for all of their support over the past year(s).

We look forward to working with each one of you again, in the future.

Looking ahead to our 2026-2027 season, we appreciate the continuing support provided to Women's Canadian Club London by **TD, Western, VENVI Windermere on the Mount Retirement Living and NEUPHYSIO**. We also look forward to working with our newest Annual Sponsor, **Chartwell**, who joins us as an Annual Platinum Sponsor for the upcoming 2026-2027 season.

Thank you; your support is very much appreciated.



Platinum Sponsor



Platinum Sponsor



Gold Sponsor



Silver Sponsor



Silver Sponsor

London Symphonia:



London Symphonia has graciously decided to continue to donate two concert tickets to each of Women's Canadian Club London events. We are very pleased as the Symphonia concerts are extremely popular. Our members and single ticket purchasers are very happy to participate in a draw for these tickets.

London Symphonia's first concert will be performed on October 17, 2026 at Metropolitan United Church, 468 Wellington St. London. It is called "Opening Night: Breathtaking Mahler and Good".

Program: Scott Good, Yinyang, Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

World Premiere: Mahler Symphony #1 "The Titan"

Celebrating 200 Years: London's Bicentennial

getinvolved.london.ca

Forest City Facts (200) is an initiative created in partnership by the City of London, the London and Middlesex Historical Society, and Western University Public History.

The Women's Canadian Club London is proud to participate in London's Bicentennial celebrations and the Forest City Facts.

Here are two examples of Forest City Facts.

1. Poet, playwright James Crerar Reaney; poet Colleen Thibadeau
2. Two stone pillars donated by Women's Canadian Club London, 1926.

Forest City Facts

Literary royalty leave huge legacy

Poet and playwright James Crerar (Jamie) Reaney (*The Donnelly's*) and poet Colleen Thibadeau (*Lozenges*) arrived in London in 1960 with their children James Stewart, John (1954-1966) and Susan. While firmly established at 276 Huron St. in Broughdale for 50 years, their influence spread far and wide. Jamie, a professor of English at Western University, founded Listeners Workshop, a drama group for young people, and published a literary magazine *Alphabet*. He won the Governor General's Award for Poetry or Poetry and Drama three times. Colleen, poet and short-story writer, published numerous individual works and eight books and was called a "secret national treasure."

Contributed by Susan Reaney, for more information visit colleenthibadeau.com and jamesreaney.com Image by Shieky Brownstone Photography Visit www.London.ca for all things City of London





Learn more about London's Bicentennial at getinvolved.london.ca/london200



Forest City Facts



Lest We Forget

In 1926, two stone pillars were erected at a northern entrance to the city at the intersection of Richmond and Huron streets. The massive "gates" were inscribed as follows:



To the men of London who fought & lived throughout the Great War in gratitude.

In remembrance of the men and women who fought in WWII, Korea & Peace Keeping Missions.

Donated by the London Women's Canadian Club

As traffic increased on Richmond Street, widening became necessary. In 1964, the pillars were moved to the eastern entrance to Springbank Park.



London and Middlesex
Historical Society



London
CANADA

Contributed by Catherine McEwen
visit London.ca for all things City of London

Learn more about London's Bicentennial at
getinvolved.london.ca/london200

