

Media Release
March 30, 2015



See the stars through period and modern telescopes!
“World Space Party” comes to Eldon House

To celebrate **Yuri's Night**, Eldon House has organized an **evening of period stargazing** on **April 12th, 2015, from 8:00PM to 10:30PM**, as part of a series of events commemorating the 180th Anniversary of Eldon House.

On April 12th, 1961, Yuri Gagarin was the first human in space. Yuri's Night, also called the “World Space Party”, has become a global celebration of space and spaceflight, commemorating the anniversary of both Gagarin's first orbital flight, as well as the first Space Shuttle launch, which also took place on April 12th, exactly twenty years later, in 1981.

Eldon House, at 481 Ridout Street, is London's oldest residence, built for John and Amelia Harris and their family in 1834. Harris, in his work as a hydrographer, helped to map the Great Lakes after the War of 1812. At that time, telescopes were one of the tools in the hydrographer's toolkit. Pinpointing when Jupiter's moons passed behind Jupiter helped to establish longitude. John Harris's telescope has recently been located, and will be on display for the first time on April 12th. As far as is known, Harris was the first person in Upper Canada to make a request to the government in Toronto for a permanent astronomical observatory to be built in Upper Canada.

An opening presentation at 8:00PM will make history come alive, led by historian and actor, **Mark Tovey**. As it becomes dark, Jupiter will be high in the sky, in a good position to view. Visitors will have an **opportunity to look through three period telescopes**, including a working replica of Galileo's telescope, a replica of a spyglass similar to John Harris's, and a late 19th/early 20th Century brass refractor. There will also be **high-quality modern telescopes available for observation**. Members of the London Centre of **The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada** (RASC), astronomers from Western University's **Department of Physics and Astronomy**, and planetary scientists from Western University's **Centre for Planetary Science and Exploration** (CPSX), will be on hand to assist and answer questions.

“Visitors will be able to see how our view of the universe has changed, telescopically, over the course of time, from the narrow field of view that Galileo's telescope provided, to the high magnifications available using modern instruments.” — Mark Tovey, Yuri's Night event organizer.

Engaging indoor activities in the event of cloud. Meteorites will be available to examine and touch. Space music will lend atmosphere. Hot chocolate will be served. It is suggested that visitors dress warmly. Period or space-themed attire is encouraged, and a prize will be offered for the best costume.

Tickets are **\$15 (HST incl.)**. Registration is required. Attendance is limited.
For tickets call: **519-661-5169**

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