

March 2024



Friends of the  
London Public Library

*Community Support For Your Library*

# Among Friends

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Friends' Executive, we hope you are well and looking forward to Spring as much as we are. These past few months we have been busy with the Annual General Meeting, the A Book for Every Child program, Book Store activities, and Friends Volunteer Appreciation Day activities.

The Annual General Meeting was held on January 10, 2024. Meeting highlights were: the election of the Friends Executive, Deb Lowry awarding the Friend of the Year to Cindy Dierickx, and the presentation of the 2023 Annual Report that documents the work and activities of the Friends' Executive Board.

Due to the hard work of the volunteers and the Friends' Executive Board, the Friends were able to present \$79,500 to the Library Board at their meeting on January 18, 2024. The funding will go to a variety of value-added programs and services recommended by the Library. Examples are listed in the newsletter.

The Friends could not operate without the valuable work of our volunteers. Read more about the work they do, asking for nothing in return except to know that their shared commitment helps to support the excellent services provided by the Library.

We thank you for your past membership and look forward to your continued support. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us.

Voicemail: 519-661-2448

Email: [friends@lpl.ca](mailto:friends@lpl.ca)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carmen Sprovieri".

Carmen Sprovieri, President



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## FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2023

The Annual General Meeting for 2023 was held on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 in the Stevenson Hunt Room at the Central Library. Michael Ciccone, CEO, was unavailable to attend. On behalf of the Library, Nancy Collister, Director of Customer Service and Branch Operations, brought greetings and thanked the Friends for their support and financial contributions to the Library.

The President's report reviewed highlights of the past year, indicated a direction for the future, and thanked the Friends Executive for their dedication and commitment and Library staff for their support. The President also indicated that the Friends could not operate without the work of their volunteers, and thanked Scott Curoe and Deb Lowry for organizing the Volunteer Appreciation Program on International Volunteer Day to thank our volunteers for their valuable contribution.

Deb Lowry, on behalf of the Nominating Committee, presented the following slate of Friends officers for 2024:

President: Carmen Sprovieri

Vice-President: Cindy Dierickx

Secretary: Carol Davies

Treasurer: Bob Hahn

The Friend of the Year Award for 2023 was presented to Cindy Dierickx for her work beyond the call of duty. To quote her nominators "Since her involvement with the Friends, she has raised the profile not just of the Friends, but of the Library as well."

Following the meeting, at the Jazz for the People concert, a program sponsored in part by the Friends, the Friends were given the opportunity to speak to the audience about the Friends and the work we do. At the intermission, the Friends held a reception for those in attendance, and many took the opportunity to join the Friends or renew their membership.

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## FRIEND OF THE YEAR AWARD

Cindy Dierickx, the recipient of our Friend of the Year award, was nominated by Don Menard, Scott Curoe and Deb Lowry. Cindy is our Bookkeeper and Vice President. As the Bookkeeper, she maintains good control of the funds received and she prepares an insightful analysis of the funds raised in the Friends Book Store. As Vice President, she presides over Executive meetings when the President is unavailable.

During the pandemic, Cindy organized a drive-through Pop Up book sale that targeted daycare operators looking for children's books, a very successful sale during a time when we were unable to reach our customer base. Cindy also coordinated with a young Girl Guide who held a garage sale and donated all of the funds she raised to the Friends of the Library.

After the pandemic, Cindy has arranged a series of Pop Up book sales held at Covent Garden Market and in the Central Library Passageway. The proceeds from the Pop Up sales make an important contribution to the funds raised by the Friends.

Cindy manages the task of responding to offers of book donations from the public, arranging for volunteers (and herself) to pick up the donated books and materials and deliver them to our sorting rooms at the Library. During the annual Friends Giant Book Sale, Cindy provides the float and performs various other duties. As a Friend, Cindy has raised the profile of not only the Friends, but of the Library as well. She participates regularly at the Friends' Executive Board meetings, always sharing good ideas. For these reasons, Cindy is our Friend of the Year. Deb Lowry presented the award.



*Friend of the Year Cindy Dierickx (left) and Liz Scott at a Pop Up book sale at Covent Garden Market.*

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## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY DONATE \$79,500 TO LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Friends of the London Public Library presented a donation of \$79,500 to the Library Board at their meeting on January 18, 2024. The gift will be in support of value-added programs and services for 2024. The funding will go to a variety of programs and services which the Library has recommended.



## LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES SUPPORTED BY THE FRIENDS

**Jazz for the People** is a free concert series supported by The Friends and the London Musicians' Association that features local and regional Jazz musicians. It is a well received program that is appreciated by a large attendance.

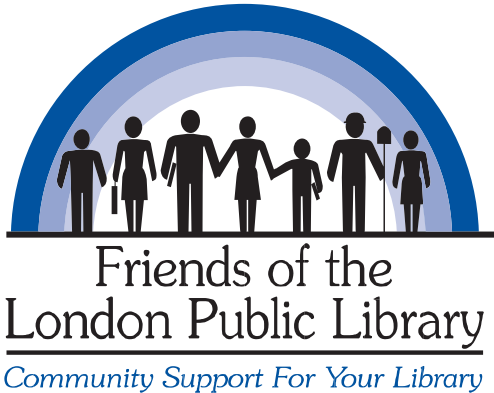
**After School Club with Healthy Snacks** is a program available at select libraries that continues to grow. Facilitators meet with children and youth to provide homework assistance and information. Healthy snacks were added to the program when facilitators found that many children arrived in need of a snack after their school day. In 2023, more than 3,800 children and youth were helped by this after school homework program.

**TD Summer Reading Club and the Summer R.E.A.D. Program** are designed to help children and youth with reading and to foster a love of reading. The Summer R.E.A.D. program offers reading help in English and French with weekly in person or online sessions for children in July and August. The program is offered at Central Library and most library branches. TD Summer Reading Club is a fun, interactive program where children report what they have read, and in 2023, a total of 3,917 children were enrolled and read over 30,000 books.

The Library is most grateful for this support, as are the participants.



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## APPRECIATION FOR FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS

The Friends of the London Public Library rely entirely on the dedication of volunteers whose efforts over the years have resulted in donations of well over \$2,000,000 in support of the Library. This support is raised primarily through the operation of the Friends Book Store at Central Library and the Annual Giant Book Sale held each year in October, supported behind the scenes by those who serve on the Friends' Executive Board.

Our volunteers faithfully contribute over 12,000 volunteer hours each year, asking for nothing in return except to know that their shared commitment helps to support the excellent services provided by the Library.

Another thing our volunteers share in common is a love of reading. Twice a year, the Friends of the Library recognizes the hard work of our volunteers by providing them with a gift certificate they can use at the Friends Book Store. This token of appreciation is provided in conjunction with National Volunteer Week in April, and International Volunteer Day on December 5 of each year.



*Good cheer at the December 2023 Volunteer Appreciation event to recognize the commitment of Friends of the Library volunteers.*

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## THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY BOOK STORE

The Friends Book Store now has a digital record of its inventory, with over 10,000 items listed. This includes over 1,100 DVD movies and over 500 music CDs, with new materials being added every week.

Jigsaw puzzles are another very popular item that we carry in the store. Our collection includes many of the best brands such as Cobble Hill, Ravensburger, Eurographics, and Springbok. The Book Store has a growing number of puzzle enthusiasts as regular clientele who generously recycle by donating back the puzzles they have completed.

In addition to these popular sellers, we have lots of children's books, cookbooks, health & wellness, and history, including sections for Indigenous and Black history. We also have a Gift Quality section where you can find recently published books in excellent condition.



*Find Gift Quality books in the  
Friends of the Library Book  
Store at Central Library.*



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## 32 YEARS OF THE A BOOK FOR EVERY CHILD PROGRAM!

That's how long the London Public Library's **A Book for Every Child** program has been running. In 2023, Library staff promoted the program, and collected and purchased books that were then distributed to children in London via 17 agencies and 35 schools, with 7,334 books given to children who might otherwise not have a new book of their own. Community members (both individuals and groups) donated books or the money to purchase books, with a total of almost \$34,000 being donated to the Library for this program. This includes \$1000 donated by the Friends of the Library and \$330 collected through the donation box in the Friends of the Library Book Store.

Friends of the Library volunteers helped with the program by facilitating the participation of 5 London bookstores during the targeted campaign from November 1 to December 16, 2023. The bookstores involved were The Book Store at Western University, Chapters - South London, Coles - Masonville Place, Indigo - North London, and Oxford Book Shop. The total number of books donated via the bookstores was 395. Oxford Book Shop had more books donated this year than they have since 2016. The Book Store at Western University donated the same number of books as they did last year.

Donations for the 2024 A Book for Every Child program may be made online or at any Library location all year round. They may also be made in memory of someone or as a gift to celebrate a special occasion.

London Public Library

## A Book for Every Child

Nov. 1 – Dec. 16



**DONATE TODAY!**

[www.lpl.ca/bfec](http://www.lpl.ca/bfec)

519-661-5100 x. 5460





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## HILARY BATES NEARY WINS ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY CREIGHTON AWARD FOR BOOK ON BLACK HISTORY

Hilary Bates Neary, a London-based historian and writer and former Board Member of the Friends of the London Public Library, has been awarded the 2022-2023 Donald Grant Creighton Award by the Ontario Historical Society (OHS) for her book, *A Black American Missionary in Canada: The Life and Letters of Lewis Champion Chambers*, published by McGill-Queen's University Press.

The Donald Grant Creighton Award honours the best book of biography or autobiography highlighting life in Ontario, past or present, published in the past three years. Neary's book is the first comprehensive biography of Lewis Champion Chambers, a former slave from Maryland who became a missionary in Canada West (now Ontario) in the mid-nineteenth century.

"I am deeply honoured that my book about Lewis Chambers has been given the Donald Grant Creighton Award by the Ontario Historical Society," Neary said in a statement. "My purpose in writing the book was to make Chambers better known to students in Ontario, Canada, and the United States, especially those wishing to learn more about the complex lives of African-Americans and African-Canadians in the nineteenth century. This award will happily further that purpose."

The OHS Creighton Award was established in 1976 in honour of Donald Grant Creighton, one of Canada's most renowned historians and biographers. The award is presented annually at the OHS Honours and Awards Ceremony which will take place online on June 12, 2024. Visit [www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca) for more information about the award and the ceremony.

