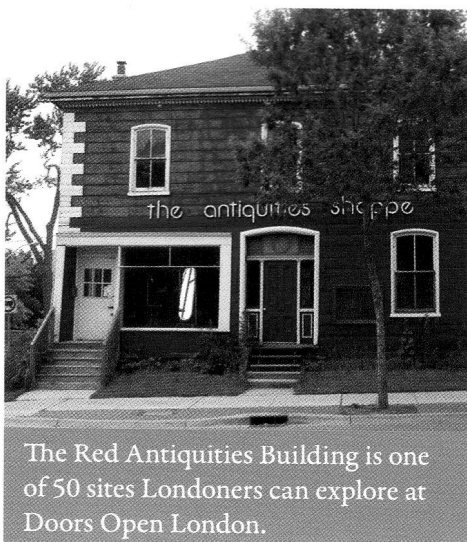


## Doors Open London 2010

By Alice Gibb



The Red Antiquities Building is one of 50 sites Londoners can explore at Doors Open London.

**This fall**, Doors Open London 2010 invites Londoners to explore 50 fascinating spaces – from the ruins of an 1856 mill in Meadowlilly Woods to scale model trains winding past London landmarks. The ninth annual event, offering more sites than ever before, will be held on the third weekend in September.

The theme of this year's Doors Open is Our Changing Landscape. "The event is intended to expose places and stories meaningful to London's past, present and future," explains event coordinator, Charity Miskelly. Visitors should customize their itinerary to what most intrigues them, she advises. Last year, participants made 22,000 site visits over the weekend.

Attractions include old stand-bys like Eldon House, plus eight entirely new sites, including Brainworks, the former home of cigar maker Joe Gaste in Wortley Village. Also new is the Ivey Spencer Leadership Centre on Windermere Road, a handsome Georgian mansion built for the Spencer family in 1932, and the City of London Planning Division's

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new offices at 205 Dundas Street. The Capitol Theatre and adjacent Bowes Building were restored to their former glory by Farhi Holding Corporation. Now the planning offices are a very visible part of the restored downtown Dundas streetscape.

Younger visitors will be intrigued by two other new attractions. The London Model Railroad Group Inc. will be displaying steam and diesel locomotives, a city trolley line and three circus trains on 5,000-feet of hand-built track. The model layout is so extensive that it requires eight engineers, conductors and brakemen, plus one dispatcher, to keep it running smoothly.

Another highlight for youngsters is the Dutch Canadian Society of London and District Club on Gore Road. As part of its 50th anniversary celebrations, visitors, old and young are invited to sample traditional foods, wooden shoe dancing and be photographed in traditional Dutch costumes.

One success story highlighted this year is the Red Antiquities Building at Wellington and Hill streets. This SoHo landmark, a former corner store and residence, was recently saved from demolition by dedicated heritage activists. Visitors will be invited to don hard hats to explore the 1872 frame structure as it undergoes its own transformation.

Doors Open London, which is entirely free, happens due to the efforts of over 500 volunteers. "Without them, we simply couldn't make it happen," notes Miskelly.

*Alice Gibb opened her door to the Forest City as her home over 30 years ago. She is captivated by the city's fascinating heritage.*

**What:** Doors Open London 2010  
**Where:** 50 sites in and around London  
**When:** September 18 & 19  
**Contact:** [www.doorsopenlondon.ca](http://www.doorsopenlondon.ca)