

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE

CENTRE FOR THE ARTS



JANUARY 2026

ISSUE 1

WELCOME TO THE LAWRENCE HOUSE



ABOVE: WILLIAM FREDERICK LAWRENCE, IN FRONT OF THE LAWRENCE HOUSE

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Hello and welcome to our January 2026 newsletter! Publishing monthly in 2026, this is a space for members of The Lawrence House to learn about the artists, musicians, writers and events at the house throughout the 2026 season.

The Lawrence House is a hub of creativity, offering art classes, concerts, open mic evenings, rental space, and volunteering opportunities. In season we move out onto the lawn for evenings of music and artist booths. The Lawrence House has a solid place in the history of Sarnia with its striking architecture and prominent location downtown. As Spring approaches, a reminder that The Lawrence House will be closed from January 19th thru January 29th for a paint refresh in the Main Gallery & Turret Room.

Happy reading!

Leann Cotton

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2026

Leonard Segall	Board Chair
Pierre Houle	Vice Chair
John Williams	Art Committee
Ryan Gibbs	Literary Rep
Rhonda Melanson	Literary Rep
Anne Stoesser	Performing Arts
John Pilat	Performing Arts
Andrew Bovell	Treasurer
Peg Kivi	Gift Shop Committee
Claudio Montanaro	City of Sarnia Rep
Deborah Scragg	Volunteer Coordinator

MISSION STATEMENT

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE CENTRE FOR THE ARTS IS A COMMUNITY BASED, INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT, CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION COMMITTED TO ENCOURAGING THE CREATION AND APPRECIATION OF THE VISUAL, PERFORMING AND LITERARY ARTS IN SARNIA LAMBTON.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2026, this would be a great time.

The memberships run from December to December.

You may renew it in person at the House Wednesday to Sunday 11:00-4:00 or you may renew online at the link below.

The Lawrence House is an all volunteer run Art Centre. Membership fees help with the cost of running the House, covering office supplies, computers, security, First Friday Events, concerts and so much more.

The benefits of being a Member are many regardless of which Membership level you purchase.

As a friend Member you are included in our mailing list which keeps you up to date on our House Concerts, First Friday events and our Exhibitions. You are able to rent a room at the House if you are having a special event and you have access to our online library.

The Bronze Membership is for artists who wish to show and sell their art at the Lawrence House either in the Gift Shop or in one of our five Member Shows through the year. Bronze members also may apply to have a solo exhibition. All the benefits of being a Friend Member also applies to the Bronze Members.

The Silver Membership is for artists or anyone who wishes to volunteer their time at the House. It is a great way to meet other artists and art lovers and to keep in touch with local art events. If we didn't have Volunteers, the Lawrence House would not be able to stay open.

There are many different ways to volunteer; the day to day running of the gift shop, special events, hanging exhibitions, computer work, Shopify updating, greeting customers and giving them information on the House, the Library and more. The only requirement for the Silver is that you commit to 3 shifts a month especially if you are in the Gift Shop so that you are comfortable with sales and the Shopify system.

Karen Schaw

**WE ARE LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR, PLEASE CONTACT THE
LAWRENCE HOUSE ATTN: KAREN SCHAW FOR DETAILS!**

VISIT OUR MEMBERSHIP PAGE FOR ALL THE DETAILS



RENEW OR JOIN FOR 2026

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE

JANUARY 2026



GALLERY SCHEDULE 2026

GALLERY STANDARDS FOR THE LAWRENCE HOUSE CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE CENTRE FOR THE ARTS



January

Gift Shop Sale
ends January 18th

February

Floyd Gibson Annual
Members Juried Exhibition
Intake January 31

March

Main Gallery - Fibre Art
Turret Room - Members Show
Intake February 28 - March 1

April

Lambton College Arts Collective
Photography & Pottery Show
Intake March 28 - March 29

May

High School Art Show

June

Three Fires by the Water
Intake May 30 - May 31

July

Main Gallery - Rabia Rizvi
Turret Room - Sydney McKichan

August

"The Art Life" Texture & Colour
Members Show
Intake August 1 - August 2

September

The Lawrence House
Volunteers Show
Intake August 29 - August 30

October

Main Gallery - Sarnia Artists Workshop
Turret Room - Peg Kivi
Intake September 25 - September 26

November

"Wrap it Up & Put a Bow on It"
Members Extended Gift Shop
Intake October 31 - November 1

December

"Wrap it Up & Put a Bow on It"
Members Extended Gift Shop
Intake October 31 - November 1



Get Ready

The Annual Floyd Gibson Show

February
6th-27th
2026



ART INTAKE IS SATURDAY,
JANUARY 31ST

PRE-REGISTER BY THURSDAY,
JANUARY 29TH



Wed - Sun 11 AM to 04 PM
127 Christina St S, Sarnia, ON N7T 2M8



[CLICK FOR MORE DETAILS & ENTRY FORM HERE](#)

Members of the Lawrence House Centre for the Arts are invited to participate in this awards show. To register or for more information go to www.lawrencehouse.ca



THE LENDING LIBRARY


WELCOME TO THE LAWRENCE HOUSE LENDING LIBRARY

With a wide range of topics available, books can be enjoyed in The Heritage Room. All current Lawrence House members have generous sign-out privileges. This library has been developed with the generous donations of pre-loved books on art, technique, and many more relevant subjects. Of note, we are also growing our local interest/history section in order to offer these specialized books to people looking for Sarnia-Lambton historical information. Book donations are always welcome, thank you to all who've donated books over the years.

- Canadian Art History
- Art History
- Artist-specific books
- Art Techniques
- Local Interest
- Wide range of art-centric topics



“*Inspiration is intention obeyed.*” ~ Emily Carr

VISIT OUR ONLINE LIBRARY 



uproar

uproar
literary blog



NOUN

1. A loud and impassioned noise or disturbance.
'the room was in an uproar'
 - 1.1 A public expression of protest or outrage.
'it caused an uproar in the press'
- (Lexico Dictionary)



Jouri's Art: 9 Years Old From A Refugee Camp

This is Jouri. Shared with permission.

[READ MORE »](#)



War

Waking up one day not knowing if I'll
see another Praying to God so he can
protect my father and mother We
haven't had enough food to eat since
July I wanted to act grown and so I try
not to cry I ask myself why this was
always happening They say they are
killing



Child Through War

Child through war What do you see?
Pomegranates, figs, and an olive tree
Child through war What do you see?
Smoke, steel, and concrete on me Child
through war What do you see? Family
and friends weeping, crying for me
Child through war What do you see?
Dark clouds looming, above brown trees
Child through

UPROAR IN THE NEWS!



Interview with Khaled Nigim

Dr. Khaled Nigim, along with his family, has made Sarnia-Lambton home since 2008. Khaled's professional background is as an academic and electrical engineer, specializing in renewable energy. Before arriving in Canada almost 25 years ago, Khaled managed the planning and implementation of many infrastructural projects for the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR).

[READ MORE »](#)



The Earth Bleeds

The earth has a heartbeat that bleeds
tears In time with a little child's fear.
The holies dare not rest complacent in
the belief That humankind will love their
neighbors as themselves. The wars and
rumours have split open the doors And



Look Around! But Utter No Sound!

NEVER AGAIN! AND YET AGAIN?
(for the Holocaust being committed in
Palestine by Israel!) Remember you said
never again! But here it is again.
Remember you said 'We will never

 visit uproar





THE ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Open to all artists & musicians @ The Lawrence House

A great way to share your artistic journey, The Artist Spotlight showcases members of The Lawrence House Centre for the Arts.

Here's how to participate:

1. Email Leann Cotton at: leanncottonphotography@gmail.com
2. Include photos and website links you'd like included.
3. I'll send you five questions for your spotlight page
(see our Five Question profiles in this issue for examples)

We will be publishing monthly and will feature our artists & musicians each month, based on member participation.

Once completed, I'll send you a proof for approval.

Then, watch for your spotlight in an upcoming issue!

**COME AND ENJOY ALL THE EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES!
EACH NEWSLETTER WILL FEATURE UPCOMING EVENTS
AND THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY OF
THE LAWRENCE HOUSE.**

<https://lawrencehouse.ca/artist-bio-submission-for-shopify/>



5 QUESTIONS WITH...

PIERRE HOULE

PHOTOGRAPHER



Did you receive formal education or are you self-taught?

I have taken some photography night courses over the years but mostly self taught.

Have you ever felt uninspired or stuck creatively?

Yes, all the time. I am inspired by other photographers, teaching photography, buying new equipment(dangerous) and of course, nature.

What's one mistake you made that taught you a valuable lesson?

I make mistakes all the time. I have learned to overcome my mistakes by thinking things through.

What emotions or messages do you aim to convey in your art?

I try to convey my wonder of the natural and non natural world. There are images to capture everywhere!

Do you see your art as a form of storytelling?

Definitely! It's an expression of my view of the world.

[CHECK OUT PIERRE'S PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE GIFT SHOP](#)



5 QUESTIONS WITH...

BILL WALTERS

PAINTER



DO YOU KEEP A SKETCHBOOK OR INSPIRATION JOURNAL?

I USE BOTH. AS A FORMER TEACHER, I BELIEVE STRONGLY IN EXPRESSIVE WRITING. PERSONALLY I HAVE WRITTEN A DAILY JOURNAL FOR OVER FORTY YEARS. I COULD BE MORE DILLIGENT WHEN IT COMES TO KEEPING SKETCHBOOKS ON A REGULAR BASIS. I KNOW IT WOULD HELP MY DRAWING WHICH ISN'T MY STRONGEST POINT.

HOW CAN ARTISTS CONTRIBUTE TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING IN SOCIETY?

DOING ART GIVES PEOPLE FOCUS, AND MANY PEOPLE THAT I MEET, WHO EITHER PAINT, OR VIEW ART ARE GENERALLY HAPPY, HOWEVER I CAN ONLY SPEAK FOR MY OWN MENTAL HEALTH. PAINTING GIVES ME PURPOSE, AND ALLOWS ME TO KNOW WHO I AM. IT KEEPS ME HUMBLE, AND SINCE PLEIN AIR PAINTING IN NATURE IS A SPIRITUAL ACT, IT MAKES ME FEEL BLESSED TO BE A PAINTER.

DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION IN OTHER ART FORMS LIKE MUSIC OR LITERATURE?

MUSIC I BELIEVE INSPIRES EVERYONE. BESIDES PAINTING, I DO A LOT OF WRITING AS I MENTIONED, SO I THINK THE ARTS NEED TO BE FOSTERED. SADLY WHEN BUDGET CUTS NEED TO BE MADE IN EDUCATION, THEY LOOK AT THE ARTS. THIS SHOULD NEVER BE THE CASE!

HOW DO YOU MANAGE MISTAKES OR UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES IN YOUR WORK?

HAPPY MISTAKES IN YOUR WORK CAN BE A BLESSING! KNOW WHEN TO LEAVE THEM ALONE! WITH PAINTING, ESPECIALLY DOING PLEIN AIR WORK, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO NAIL A GOOD PAINTING EVERY TIME YOU GO OUT. I EXPECT MISTAKES, AND I EXPECT TO DO MEDIOCRE PAINTINGS. WE LEARN FROM EVERY PAINTING THAT WE DO. IT IS ALL PART OF THE PROCESS. OUR NEXT PAINTING IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE OUR BEST SO WE KEEP MOVING FORWARD. AS MY MENTOR, J. ALLISON ROBICHAUD USE TO SAY, "THEY ARE NOT ALL MASTERPIECES, BILLY!"

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO SOMEONE DOUBTING THEIR TALENT?

NEVER GIVE UP ON ANYTHING IF IT IS SOMETHING YOU REALLY WANT. WE ARE ALL OUR OWN WORST CRITICS. WE ALL HAVE VOICES IN OUR HEADS THAT TELL US, "THIS ISN'T VERY GOOD," OR, "I CAN'T DO THIS." NEGATIVE THOUGHTS NEED TO BE PUSHED ASIDE, AND WE NEED TO CHALLENGE OURSELVES. GREAT MASTERS HAD TALENT. TALENT ONLY COMES FROM EDUCATION, DOING THE CRAFT, PUTTING IN THE TIME OR BEING DEDICATED, AND EXPERIMENTING. FOR A PAINTER IT REQUIRES MILES AND MILES OF CANVAS. FOR ANYONE JUST STARTING TO PAINT, DON'T SET THE BAR TOO HIGH ESPECIALLY IF PAINTING ON SITE. SET A REALISTIC GOAL FOR YOURSELF TO DO SO MANY PAINTINGS IN A TIME FRAME. MY GOAL EACH YEAR IS ONE HUNDRED PAINTINGS, AND I KNOW THEY WILL NOT ALL BE GOOD! EDUCATE YOURSELF TO KNOW A MEDIOCRE PAINTING FROM A GEM!



[VIEW BILL'S WORK AT
THE LAWRENCE HOUSE](#)



Oh Me Nerves
— PHOTOGRAPHY —

SUNDAY YOGA

Hi, my name is Monica Gillis. My yoga journey began over 20 years ago when I first came to the mat to manage arthritis and support recovery from running injuries. What started as a physical practice quickly became a passion. During a life transition, I was inspired to deepen my practice and completed my 200-hour teacher training in 2020, becoming a Registered Yoga Teacher.

A lifelong student, I continue to expand my knowledge through specialized training in yoga for seniors, yoga for athletes, and I am currently working toward meditation teacher certification.

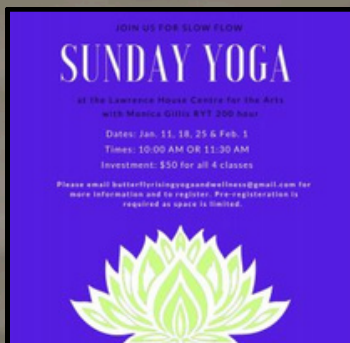
I aim to create a fun, welcoming space to move, relax and reconnect with your body using music to set the mood.

The classes are primarily floor-based for all yoga levels. They offer a contemporary approach that blends gentle movement with traditional yoga principles designed to counteract the effects of modern life: long hours of sitting, hunching over devices, and repetitive movement patterns. We focus on the hips, back, and shoulders, supporting flexibility and functional movement so you can continue enjoying the activities you love.

It is very rewarding sharing yoga with others and supporting them in maintaining an active life. I am grateful to the Lawrence House for providing the beautiful space to practice.

Outside of yoga, I am a full-time civil servant. I enjoy being active, spending time in nature, live music, theatre, volunteering, and learning watercolour painting.

We would love you to join us Sunday mornings. If you have any questions or want more information, please reach out to butterflyrisingyogaandwellness@gmail.com





The Sarnia Photographic Club at the Lawrence House

The Sarnia Photographic Club is a non-profit organization dedicated to excellence in photography. We come together to share our work, listen to speakers, and go on outings, all with the goal of making impactful images. Come Join Us! Visitors are welcome to attend two meetings to find out more about the club and its activities before joining.

Main Meeting

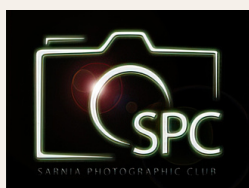
We meet in the Turret Room of the Lawrence House on the first Tuesday of each month, September through June at 7:00 PM Note: Some meetings are on Zoom only.

Mid-Month Meeting

A second meeting is held on the third Tuesday of each month. These meetings are less formal and more interactive in nature. Content of the meetings is decided as the year progresses based on members' interests and suggestions. Mid-month meetings may consist of technique demonstrations, photo show-and-tell, narrated audiovisual shows, and more.

Competitions

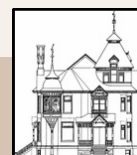
Competitions are an integral part of the Sarnia Photographic Club each month. Competitions not only give an incentive for members to shoot new pictures, but also allow members to learn from one another's photos, by discussing the strengths and opportunities for improvement of each entry. Come Learn With Us!



sarnia.photographic.club@gmail.com

www.sarniaphotoclub.com

SPC is proud to support the Lambton College Photography Program





Toastmasters at the Lawrence House

Did you know that the Lawrence House is home to the Riverspeak Toastmasters Club?
We meet every Thursday evening, 7 PM in the Turret Room.

What is Toastmasters?

Since 1924, Toastmasters International has transformed nearly eight million lives through a simple, yet powerful, mission: empowering individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.

What sets Toastmasters apart isn't just what you learn—it's how you learn it. Every meeting is a safe opportunity to:

- Practice both planned speeches and unplanned responses
- Give and receive meaningful feedback
- Step into leadership opportunities

Upcoming events:

Club International Speech Contest

Club Table Topics Contest

Guest are welcome to see what Toastmasters is all about.

For contact information, visit the club webpage:

[RIVERSPEAK \(SARNIA\) TOASTMASTERS](#)



RENTALS

EVENT & WORKSHOP SPACES

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE AMENITIES INCLUDE;

- ACCESSIBLE ACCESS WITH ELEVATOR
- KITCHENETTE
- SPECIAL EVENT PERMITS
- WIFI/AV EQUIPMENT



\$25.00 (three hour block)



\$25.00 (three hour block)



Room Rental
After Hours



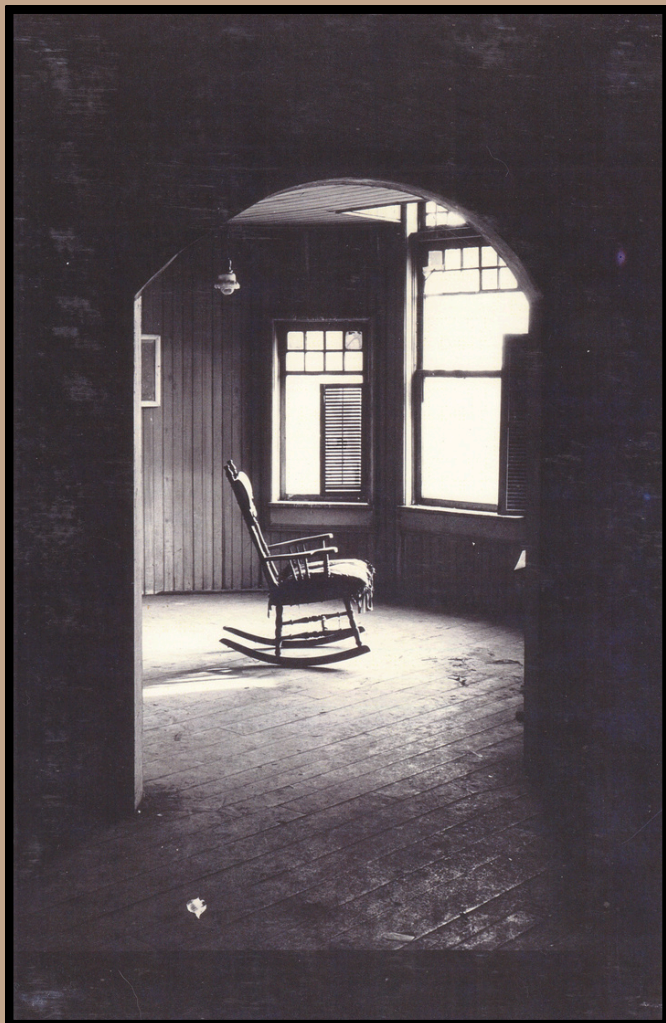
Room Rental
Entire House

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE
HAS A WIDE RANGE OF
OPTIONS FOR EVENT
RENTAL.

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR
ALL THE DETAILS!



PHOTOGRAPHER: DOUGLAS BOOTH, SEAWAY PHOTOS
CAMERA: TRIPOD MOUNTED LEICAFLEX SL2 LENS: 19MM FISH-EYE
FILM: VARICOLOR 2 PROFESSIONAL APERTURE: F8 TO F11
FLASH: METZ 402 WITH DIFFUSER HEAD



A LOOK BACK-VIEW THE ALBUM AT THE LAWRENCE HOUSE

ARCHIVIST: DONNA POWERS-GARNER

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE

JANUARY 2026



OVER THE YEARS, THE LAWRENCE HOUSE HAS
COMPILED A FANTASTIC COLLECTION OF ARTICLES &
PHOTOGRAPHS.

DONNA POWERS-GARNER IS OUR ARCHIVIST, WORKING ON DIGITIZING THIS TREASURE TROVE. HERE ARE A FEW CLIPPINGS. EACH NEWSLETTER WILL FEATURE A LOOK BACK IN TIME.

PHOTOGRAPHER DOUGLAS BOOTH operates "Seaway Photos" as a sideline and is a Stationary Engineer who lives on Mayfair Drive, Sarnia. His speciality is lake boats, marine shots and anything to do with navigation, but, moved by the public attraction to Lawrence House, he took time to do this pictorial essay with special camera equipment.



SEVERAL THOUSAND VISITORS paraded through the Lawrence House at Wellington-Christina in Sarnia and, in so doing donated several thousand dollars towards the clean-up and restoration of the home by the Sarnia Museum Board., agents for City Council. This room is typical of the "as is" situation. An inventory was taken in meticulous detail by City Property Manager Bob Marks with city hall and Museum Board staff.



A NOTABLE FEATURE IN THE DESIGN of the Lawrence House is its abundance of ornate woodwork. The bed and fireplace are both carved to solid oak as is much of the furniture. Here, John Kowalshyn examines one of the four large bedrooms in the house.

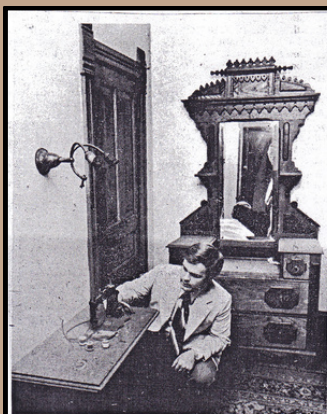
Donated to the City of Sarnia in 1977



LAWRENCE HOUSE OPENED

LAWRENCE HOUSE OPENED

representatives of Coda
Trust.



JIM LAMPKIN, A REAL ESTATE AGENT who is handling the transfer of the Lawrence House to the City, examines an antique sewing machine with the thread still in place more than 30 years after the owner of the house died. The 85 year old building has been in the Lawrence family for three generations.



LAWRENCE HOUSE TOUR

SEVEN CONTESTANTS for the Canada Day Heritage Day title have been busy cleaning and preparing the Lawrence House for public tours which will be held Saturday and Sunday. The tours will be conducted by the seven contestants from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Proceeds from the tours will help pay for the advertising by the city to search for developers for the property and to finance events in Sarnia. Linda Iacobelli, 16, of 134 Knaptham an antique baby carriage. Thursday in preparation. Linda is the daughter of Letizia and Berardine Iacobelli.



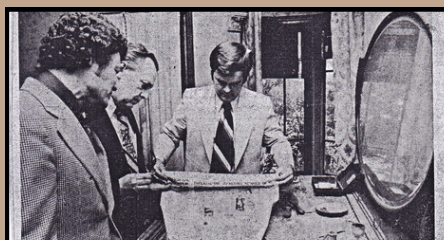
LAURIE ROUSSEAU left, of Detroit, and her mother Mrs. R. Kepper of Sarnia inspect a dresser in the master bedroom of the Lawrence House on Christina Street. Tours were held for the public Saturday and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pro-

Lawrence House tours attract many visitors

The house now has projects in the city of Seattle, and the province of British Columbia, and in the United States, says Don Lawrence, executive director of the foundation. "We had quite a few people in the house, including the mayor of Seattle, and the governor of British Columbia," he says. "We had a lot of people in the house, including the mayor of Seattle, and the governor of British Columbia."



SARNIA ALDERMEN JOHN KOWALYSHYN and FRANK ALLISON were taken on tour of the old Lawrence House by Real Estate agent Jim Lampkin. Here, the men examine some antique cooking utensils used more than 30 years ago by the home's former occupants.



JIM LAMPKIN SHOWS ALDERMEN FRANK ALLISON and JOHN KOWALYSHYN the top story of 30 years ago as reported by the Sarnia Canadian Observer. The time-worn newspaper was among articles found undisturbed in the Lawrence house when the group was given a tour. Among other items discovered was a cast iron Fiske Fountain which once adorned the lawn of the stately mansion at the corner of Christina and Wellington Streets. The fountain is supported by a trio of cast iron egrets.

About 3,000 Take Tour Of Old Lawrence House

About \$5,386 was raised this weekend for the restoration of Lawrence House, the 85-year-old structure, now owned by the museum board, are working together to raise sufficient funds to cover the necessary restorations of the Lawrence

Staff of Canada Trust Real Estate conducted guided tours of the home Friday, Saturday and Sunday in an effort to raise the necessary funds for the House.

About 3,000 people attended the weekend tours. Organizer Jim Lampkin, says Canada Trust Real Estate plans to open the home again next weekend to conduct more guided tours.

The house was donated to the city by the last of the Lawrences Carrol Lawrence, grandson of the builder, whose only condition of the donation is the city

place Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fourteen guides, all from Canada Real Estate, are volunteering their time and services to conduct the

Mr. Lampkin says he is very pleased with public support received to date. All advertising and other expenses for the tours have been donated with the result that money raised has been "100 per cent profit," he says.

June 1980



More than 1,000 curious residents of Sarina toured the Lawrence House on Christina Street over the weekend, to get a glimpse of the past. The house, which was given to the City was built more than 88 years ago. Seen here with guide Anita Hobbs, is Tracey Eysh, and Lynn Butler.

ARCHIVIST: DONNA POWERS-GARNER

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE

JANUARY 2026

