



Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Summer 2016 Newsletter

Volume 28 No. 3

Roses That Have Stood the Test of Time

By Caroline Dabrus



R. Hinchcliff

Explorer rose 'Frontenac'

I love walking through garden centres and nurseries. I can never get enough of looking at the different varieties of plants and cultivars. Like many of us, I have a soft spot for roses and always make a point of checking out what cultivars are on offer each gardening season.

Every year, rose breeding programs worldwide develop and release dozens of new varieties. They often have improved tolerance to various environmental challenges but their aim is also to introduce new plants to satisfy ever-changing consumer preferences. With so many new roses introduced each year, is there still demand for those initially developed by Dr. Felicitas Svejda at the Central Experimental Farm under a rose breeding program begun in 1961? The answer is a resounding yes.

Without fail I always find a number of varieties from the Explorer Rose program at local nurseries and across Canada. Recently, I came across the following roses at a garden centre:

'John Cabot', 'Frontenac', 'Champlain', and 'Alexander Mackenzie'.

Canadian Explorer Roses for Canadian Gardens

The continuing popularity of Explorer roses is directly linked to Dr. Svejda's work. Her goal was to develop plants that not only produced large, repeat blooms but also were "Canadian-winter"-hardy and disease resistant. With her recent passing, it seems particularly appropriate that we take the time to recognize her achievement in breeding roses, which, more than five decades later, remain popular with consumers both in Canada and around the world. In honour of Dr. Svejda, here is a brief description of the wonderful plants I came across during my recent visit to a garden centre.

'John Cabot', released in 1978, is a spectacular pillar-type rose. It bears masses of fuchsia-pink, double blossoms with bright yellow stamens throughout

June and July, with a modest re-bloom in August and September. Disease-resistant, it grows to 8-9 feet tall (2.4-2.8 m), making it a good climber or tall arching shrub.

'Frontenac', introduced in 1992, is extremely floriferous. It is almost completely covered with blooms at its peak in June and continues to flower until the end of September. An excellent plant for shrub borders, its deep pink blooms are delightful as cut flowers.

'Champlain', one of my favourites, produces brilliant red double blooms with dark edges from June to September. Flowering is quite free and continuous with little encouragement needed. The orange hips, which form in fall, add garden interest.

'Alexander Mackenzie' has medium to deep red blooms, which have a classic look. Borne in large clusters, the double blooms resemble those of grandiflora and hybrid tea roses. The shrub grows vigorously, tall and upright.

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President's Message

Most of us know that for a gardener, the summer is the busiest time of the year. It's also the busiest time of the year for the Friends' volunteers. In the summertime, it seems like there is always something to do in the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Shelterbelt—from planting to weeding to trimming. There are volunteer gardening teams working every morning from Monday through Friday, and most days more than one. Each of the teams is led by people who care for these gardens as if they were their own. The overall leader of the garden teams for the past couple of years has been Caroline Dabrus. Sadly for us, Caroline will be moving to Victoria this summer. She has been a wonderful leader of our garden teams and we will miss her. We wish her well.

One wonderful thing about this time of year is that even though we are hard at work in the various gardens, we are also enjoying the amazing beauty that results from our work. And, if we are honest with ourselves, we love to dig in the soil and we often find pulling out weeds very



Judy Dodds

satisfying. Another thing that is always a pleasure for our volunteer gardeners is when someone stops to comment on how lovely the beds are and how much they appreciate the work we do. We certainly garden for ourselves because we love being around the beautiful plants, but we also do it for the pleasure of those who visit the gardens.

This brings me to the other area where our organization gets busier in the summertime: our events that welcome people to the Farm. Throughout the spring and summer we provide a huge variety of events. We have almost as many volunteers helping with our events as we have working in the gardens. Some of these are opportunities for us to raise funds to support our gardening activities, but others just welcome people to the gardens. The events are designed to offer people the opportunity to enjoy spending time in the public areas of the Farm. For example, we offer free tours of selected plant collections in the Ornamental Gardens and trees in the Arboretum. We have a Victorian Tea that allows people to enjoy an old-fashioned formal tea in the beautiful setting of the Arboretum. Come to "Art on the Farm" and you can shop for wonderful original art while walking around the lawns that border the Arboretum. All of these events are possible because of the efforts of our volunteers and they invite all of you to come and bring your friends.

Message du président

L'été est la période de l'année la plus occupée pour un jardinier, comme bon nombre d'entre nous en sommes bien conscients. Il en est de même pour les bénévoles des Amis de la Ferme (les Amis). Au cours de la saison estivale, semble-t-il que le travail à accomplir n'ait de cesse dans les endroits où se situent les Jardins ornementaux, l'Arboretum et le brise-vent, qu'il s'agisse de mettre des plants en terre, d'arracher de mauvaises herbes ou de débrancher des arbres. Du lundi au vendredi, des équipes de jardinage bénévoles travaillent dans les jardins, et bien souvent, plus d'une équipe est à l'œuvre. Des passionnés du jardinage dirigent des équipes et s'occupent des jardins comme si ceux-ci étaient les leurs. C'est Caroline Dabrus qui a assumé la responsabilité de toutes ces équipes, et elle effectue ce travail depuis les deux dernières années. Triste nouvelle pour nous, Caroline ira s'établir à Victoria cet été. Elle a été une chef de file sans pareil pour nos équipes, et elle nous manquera énormément. Nous lui offrons nos meilleurs souhaits

Ce temps de l'année est tout à fait merveilleux, et même si nous sommes laborieusement concentrés sur notre travail dans les divers jardins, nous nous réjouissons de la beauté incomparable qui couronne nos efforts. De plus, nous devons avouer en toute franchise que le fait d'enfouir nos mains (gantées) dans le sol pour y extirper de mauvaises herbes nous procure une bien vive satisfaction. Et si quelqu'un s'approche, fait une remarque sur la beauté des massifs de fleurs et sur le travail que nous accomplissons, nous en dérivons toujours beaucoup de plaisir. Nous jardinons absolument pour nous-mêmes parce que nous aimons être entourés de magnifiques plantes, et nous le faisons également pour le plus grand plaisir de ceux qui visitent les jardins.

Cela m'amène à vous parler d'une autre raison pour laquelle notre organisation déborde d'activité au cours de la saison estivale : nos événements qui attirent des visiteurs à la Ferme. Au printemps et à l'été, de nombreuses activités s'y déroulent. Un aussi grand

nombre de bénévoles s'affairent aux activités que ceux qui exécutent des travaux de jardinage. Ces événements nous donnent l'occasion de recueillir des fonds qui permettront de financer des projets de jardinage, alors que certaines activités consistent tout simplement à accueillir des visiteurs dans les jardins ou espaces publics de la Ferme, là où ils ont le loisir de se promener. Par exemple, nous offrons des excursions gratuites pour y présenter les fleurs et les arbres de certaines collections des Jardins ornementaux et de l'Arboretum. Un thé victorien invite les visiteurs à prendre le thé traditionnel à la mode d'antan dans l'environnement spectaculaire qu'est l'Arboretum. « L'art à la ferme » regorge d'une sélection d'œuvres d'art originales que l'on peut admirer ou acquérir tout en déambulant sur les pelouses en bordure de l'Arboretum. Si ces événements se produisent, c'est grâce aux efforts de nos bénévoles! Ils vous lancent cette invitation et vous prient d'y venir en grand nombre avec vos amis.

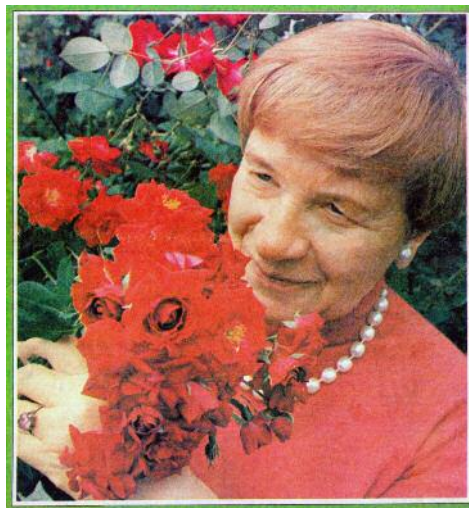
Judy Dodds

Roses That Have Stood the Test of Time

(continued from Page 1)

There are many other varieties of Explorer roses and most are still widely available at garden centres. However, the Explorer rose garden at the Farm is an excellent place to see the varieties. What better way to pay tribute to Dr. Svejda's work than to stroll through the collection at the Farm and admire the blooms.

Caroline Dabrus has been director of gardens on the Friends' board, leader of the rock garden volunteer team, a valued contributor to this newsletter, and will be missed when she moves to Victoria this summer.



Ottawa Citizen, May 5, 1983

Felicitas Svejda and Explorer rose 'Champlain'

Guided Tree Tours in the Arboretum

The following are the remaining 2016 guided tree tours in the Arboretum. Although the tours are free and open to the public, please register in advance at info@friendsofthefarm.ca or call 613-230-3276. Donations to the Friends of the Farm will be kindly accepted during the tour. See www.friendsofthefarm.ca for more information.

July 17 – Oaks and Conifers, Universally Fascinating, by Owen Clarkin and Eric Jones

Among the wide spectrum of trees, two general groups are particularly fascinating: Oaks (Quercus) and Conifers (Coniferae). We will explore the Dominion Arboretum's extensive collection from majestic wide-spreading old Oaks to towering Ponderosa Pines. And then there are the interesting and unusual examples: e.g. a deciduous conifer from the U.S. South (Bald Cypress), or an oak with leaves that don't look like an oak (Shingle Oak). The event will focus on helping you get to know these trees better, and explaining their special relationships with people.

August 21 – Selecting Trees for Different Sites and Purposes, by Eric Jones and Roman Popadiouk

September 21 – National Tree Day, by Jacob Sheppard and Robert Glendinning

What you need to know about planting and caring for trees (including a tree-planting ceremony on the Farm).

October 16 – From Trees to Us, by Jacob Sheppard and Mike Rosen
What trees offer, historically and in modern times. (Note: Tree Canada is a co-sponsor.)

November 20 – Tree Forms and Shapes, Selection and Identification, by Roman Popadiouk and Owen Clarkin
Tour of trees and hedges on the Farm grounds.

(More information on these tours will be posted to the Friends' website.)

May Arboretum Tours

About 60 people came out on a beautiful day in May for a "Birds and the Urban Forest" tour in the Arboretum. Guides Owen Clarkin and Arthur Goldsmith led the walk during the busy spring birding season for people to learn more about Ottawa's birds, trees, and their relationships with each other. Participants in an earlier tour on "Flowering Trees" were not as lucky with the weather, but braved the rain with tour guides Robert Glendinning and Eric Jones.



Eric Jones

Upcoming Events

For more information, visit www.friendsofthefarm.ca or call 613-230-3276.

Victorian Tea

- Sunday, August 7, from 2 to 4 pm.
(Will be cancelled in event of rain.)
- Classic tea served under the trees of the Arboretum.
- Enter the best hat and best costume (male and female) contests.
- Bring a patio chair and listen to live music.
- Location: near Building 72, CEF Arboretum, east of the Prince of Wales roundabout.
- Free parking; tickets for formal tea \$10.



Art on the Farm

- Saturday, August 13, from 10 to 4 pm.
(Rain date: August 14.)
- Artists working in various mediums will display and sell their original works under the trees of the Arboretum.
- Location: Arboretum, around Building 72, east of the Prince of Wales roundabout.
- Free admission, free parking



Annual General Meeting

- Wednesday, September 21, at 7 pm.
- Speaker: Renate Sander-Regier (see below).
- Location: K. W. Neatby Building, Salons A & B, Carling & Maple Drive.
- All are welcome. You do not have to be a member to attend.
- To register for this free event call (613) 230-3276 or e-mail us at info@friendsofthefarm.ca.

Used Book Drop-off

- Saturday, October 22, 10 am to 3 pm.
- Save your books and re-gift them for a great cause.
- Note that we do not accept magazines, textbooks or encyclopaedias.
- Location: Building 72, Arboretum
- Take the east exit off the Prince of Wales roundabout.



Workshops on Protecting Wild Bees



- Thursday July 7 and 14 and Tuesday July 19 from 12:00 – 1:00pm.
- Learn about wild bees and what you can do to help protect them.
- Includes a showing of a new documentary film (*A Ghost in the Making: Searching for the Rusty-patched Bumblebee*) and a tutorial on how to participate in the Great Canadian Bumblebee Count.
- Location: Friends of the Earth Office, 251 Bank Street 2nd floor, Blue Room.
- Register for an event at foecanada.org.

Renate Sander-Regier to Speak at Friends' Annual General Meeting

The Friends of the Farm are delighted to welcome Renate Sander-Regier, a keen naturalist, gardener, walker, paddler and recent graduate of the University of Ottawa's PhD program in Geography, as guest speaker at the AGM on September 21 (details above).

Her interests, passions and concerns revolve around understanding the relationships between people and nature, and in creating places that foster both human and ecological wellbeing. One such place is Ottawa's Fletcher Wildlife Garden, where she has explored how urban green space volunteers interact with the natural environment.

Renate has experience working on public and private wildlife habitat projects, developing programs with regional naturalist clubs and facilities, and teaching environmental studies and geography (classroom and field courses) at university.

Can You Help?

We are seeking help in reading some Mac files from the 1990s (possibly in Quark). Please contact us at info@friendsofthefarm.ca.

Volunteer Opportunities at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden is looking for volunteers who enjoy working outside in the summer. We need people for a wide variety of jobs ranging from weeding in our backyard garden, to planting trees and shrubs where we lost all of our ash trees, to helping out with our invasive plant problems.

Enthusiasm is the only skill required. All levels of physical ability accommodated. For more information contact Ted Farnworth (tedfarnworth@yahoo.com) or visit the Fletcher Wildlife Garden website at www.ofnc.ca/fletcher.



Kitty Langill: Born With a Gardening Gene

By Mary Ann Smythe

If there is such a thing as a gardening gene, Kitty Langill was definitely born with it. How else to explain why she spends so much time digging in the dirt? Born and raised in Ottawa, she was introduced to gardening by her mother. Kitty remembers watching her mother working in the family's vegetable and flower garden when she was a child. Those memories remained strong as Kitty grew to adulthood, and when she and Willy Langill married, many of the same plants found their way into the couple's Hintonburg yard.

Kitty also has many fond memories of childhood excursions to the Central Experimental Farm. "My mother would take me to the Ornamental Gardens and the cattle barns. She was a British War Bride and dairy maid so the Farm kept her close to the things that she loved and missed in England."

Those early visits set the stage for what is now four generations of memory-making at the Farm. The Macoun Garden was the backdrop for Kitty and Willy's wedding photos and, as the couple's three children arrived, there were family outings to the Farm. And now their grandchildren occasionally join Kitty for a picnic after one of her shifts as a Friends' garden volunteer.

Kitty joined the Friends in 2009, a year after her retirement from the National Advertising Department at the *Ottawa Citizen*. What started as a three-evening-a-week stint in Classifieds in 1977 with a "group of other stay-at-home moms," lasted three decades during which Kitty moved into Front Counter Classifieds, Employment and Career display ads and, finally, into National Advertising. She fondly recalls the friendships she made—many of which still thrive today—and the heyday of newspaper advertising. Kitty was "excited" by the "big challenges" it presented. "I enjoyed liaising with the different departments—layout, graphics—and I especially enjoyed working with the clients."

When the high-tech bubble burst, the face of the advertising clients changed, but the work remained the same until such time as Kitty was offered a buyout opportunity in December 2008. It came at an opportune time. Diagnosed with a serious illness in 2004, Willy had formally retired in 2007. The couple's priorities had changed. They began retirement with a trip to Barbados in the winter of 2008 to what has now become their second home. "It's now 9 for 9," Kitty laughs. "Over the past nine years, we've worked our way from a three-week stay up to this year's nine-week holiday. We stay at the same place, where most guests return for the same length of time, if not longer. It's very welcoming, the weather is always good, it's like coming home."

Considering her long attachment to the Farm, returning to the Ornamental Gardens each spring is also like coming home. Kitty originally signed up for the Explorer Rose team to work in the garden that claims a special place in her heart. Last year, she co-led the team with Cyril Benson, under whose supervision and guidance she has gained "invaluable knowledge about their upkeep." This year she returns as team leader. She will also celebrate her fourth year on the Rockery Team. Kitty and her hardworking team-mates have restored "one of her favourite



Mary Ann Smythe

spots whose nooks and crannies" she "loved exploring as a child" to its former glory.

And then there's raised-bed vegetable gardening that she started in her townhouse condo community. She continues to coordinate the project and tend her own three beds. Kitty is a member of the Kanata-March Horticultural Society and for the past two years led the team of volunteers that have revamped and now maintain the Molly Wilson Memorial Garden at Kanata's Old Town Hall. She also spent two summers at a local Loblaws Garden Centre as the weekend horticultural expert, dispensing sage gardening advice. Most recently, Kitty was asked by the Horticultural Society to provide guidance in restoring the rock garden at the Earl of March High School in Kanata.

It's clear that Kitty loves gardening and being outdoors. As she began the gardening season at the Farm this year, her golden Barbados tan was very much in evidence as was her enthusiasm for another year of "working with a group of dedicated people who enjoy what they do. It's not like work at all. I have learned so much by volunteering at the Farm. It's all about learning and discovering. The Farm is so informative for us as volunteers. And there's the added benefit of working alongside such a wonderful group of dedicated volunteers."

In addition to her profiles for the newsletter, Mary Ann Smythe writes profiles of "spotlight" volunteers for the Friends of the Farm website at www.friendsofthefarm.ca.

Bumblebee Count

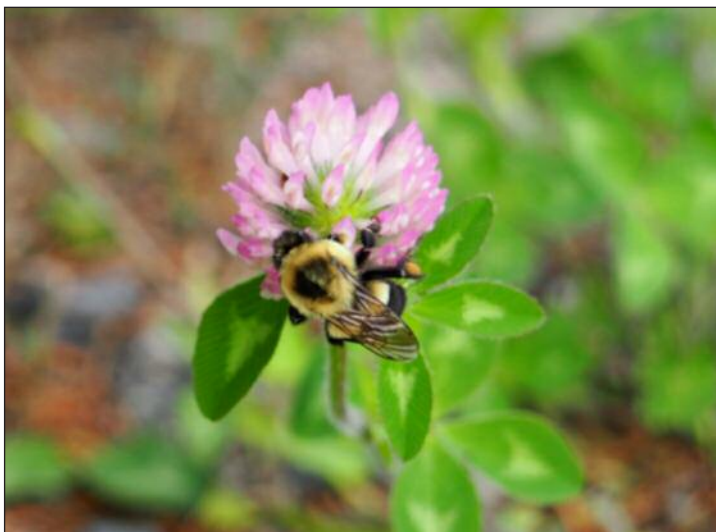
By David Van Olst

It's easy to take for granted the services that wild, native bees and other pollinating insects provide that improve our everyday life—from helping put food on our table to flowers in our gardens. Nature has designed distinct roles for wild bee species to play, and so it is important to protect their diversity from threats such as habitat loss, pesticides, disease and climate change.

The Rusty-patched Bumblebee, once abundant in Southern Ontario is now almost extinct and officially designated as endangered. Six more native bees are critically at risk, with scientists advising the federal Minister of Environment to take steps to protect them. The good news is that there are easy and enjoyable ways for you to do your part to protect them.

Friends of the Earth has launched a citizen science project, "The Great Canadian Bumblebee Count." We are calling upon Canadians to take photos of bumblebees and submit them to bumblebeewatch.org. These submissions are verified by experts and used to help researchers determine the status and conservation needs of particular species, and to help locate rare or endangered populations.

To make a difference around your home, we encourage you to join our "Let It Bee" campaign, and create a bee-friendly space—a Bee & Bee—for pollinators by providing food, water and accommodation. By offering a seasonal menu (different flowers blooming through spring, summer and fall), safe access to water and natural ground covers for nesting, such as logs, rock piles and leaf litter, you can attract pollinators to share your property.



Mireille Gauthier

Common Eastern Bumblebee

Efforts are being made to encourage the government to act to protect species at risk. We invite you to join the growing network of Canadians who are doing their part to protect wild bee species. For more information on our campaigns and how to get involved visit foecanada.org.

David is a research assistant and public education officer at Friends of the Earth Canada. He puts his education in Biology and his passion for the environment to use by motivating and educating groups in Canada to protect wild bee species.

Successful Plant Sale Despite the Weather

"If only the temperature had been less frigid," said Denise Kennedy, about this year's Rare and Unusual Plant Sale in May. Denise, who was coordinator for the event, estimated there was half the number of buyers from last year.

Despite the weather, almost \$5,000 was raised for the Friends, including about \$850 from the sale of plants donated by members and volunteers, and more than \$200 from the sale of baking donated by our volunteers. "Let's not forget our friends at Bridgehead," reports Denise, "who donated coffee and cups! And the Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton came in full force to help novice gardeners."

This was Denise's last stint as coordinator. It is a very demanding task and her efforts over the last three years have been much appreciated. "It has been fun developing this event from 17 vendors to 32, and finding new ones every year," she says. "It is an exciting event, the vendors are great and very appreciative of the opportunity to be there. They came from as far as Belleville, Perth, Almonte and Blackburn Hamlet."

She thanked all the volunteers who have helped and especially those who this year had to brave the bitter cold.



Volunteers keep their spirits up during the deep freeze. From left to right: Yvonne Ackerman, Sherry Eliot, Kate Harrigan, Jeannine Lewis, Janet Smith, Norma Benoit Howe.

Doors Open Central Experimental Farm 2016

The doors were open at the Central Experimental Farm on the damp Sunday of Doors Open Ottawa weekend. Planned outdoor demonstrations of field crops, soil profiles, insect traps and draft-horse ploughing had to be abandoned because of heavy rain, but inside the greenhouses there was much to see and learn from enthusiastic researchers. There were tours of the greenhouses, descriptions of research experiments and insect exhibits. At the Saunders building, staff offered information on research underway in

botany and mycology, and guided tours of the Vascular Plant Collection. Many visitors also enjoyed the exotic plants in the Tropical House that reopened last year.

Thanks to all the volunteers who provided maps and information at a general welcome centre, greeted visitors at a Friends of the Farm display and tended the bake table. And thanks also to the members and volunteers who baked!



Denise Kennedy and Yvonne Ackerman greet visitors to the research greenhouse.

Blooms in the Fall

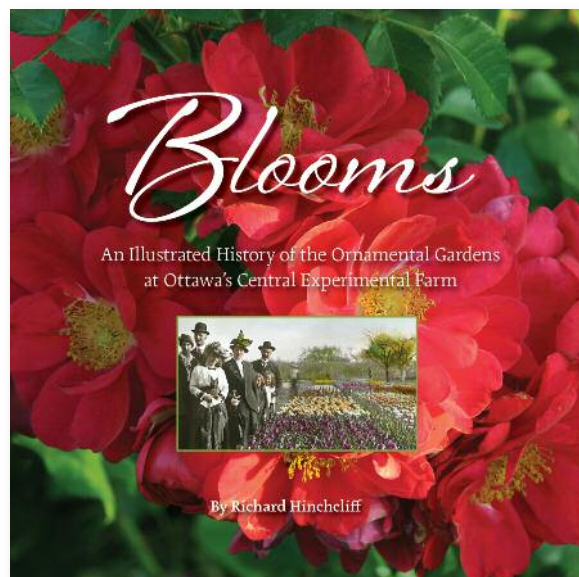
A new book is coming in October from the Friends of the Farm. **Blooms** is about the Ornamental Gardens at the Farm and how they came to be the beautiful and historic place we enjoy today.

Blooms is about the people and events that have influenced the way the gardens have grown from 1886 to the present day, and it introduces the spectacular past and present floral collections, such as roses, peonies, lilies, lilacs, irises, crabapples and chrysanthemums.

It is illustrated with many fascinating historic photos of the gardens and the unique flowers that were bred here at the Farm, along with stunning photos that capture the splendour of the present-day gardens and plants.

In **Blooms**, author Richard Hinchcliff pays tribute to both the successes of ornamental horticulture at the Farm and the beauty of the gardens within this National Historic Site.

The creative designer is Alison Hall, who designed the best-selling **For the Love of Trees** book about the Arboretum. Her cover for **Blooms** features a striking red modern Explorer rose with a hand-painted historic photo inserted in the middle of the bloom.



Felicitas Svejda, Artist

We know her as the "mother of the Explorer roses."

Thanks to Nancy Millson, a friend of Felicitas Svejda, who kindly donated this painting to the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm on behalf of the Svejda estate, we can now see her prowess as a painter. The watercolour, painted in 1992, six years after her retirement, hangs at Building 72.

Propagating Plants by Softwood Cuttings

By Robert Glendinning

June is the time of year you can propagate some of your favourite trees and shrubs from cuttings. Using this method you will get a clone of the plant you are trying to reproduce. The process is easy, but there are a few things you need to think about to get positive results.

First some plants are easily rooted, some are impossible, and some are just a little trickier. So you have to do a bit of research. I can tell you that oaks will not root, but willows and hydrangeas will root close to 100% of the time.

Taking cuttings

Softwood cuttings are always taken from the current year's growth. A good way to tell that it is time to take cuttings is by checking to see if the stems are firm, but not woody. You can test the stem by bending it. If it is green and very soft, it is not ready.

Once you feel the plant is ready, it is best to take your cuttings in the morning or on a cool cloudy day. Lower temperatures reduce the stress on the cuttings. Remember you have removed its food and water supply.

What part of the plant will you take the cutting from? You should take it from healthy growth on the upper part of the plant. When I am doing this I also want to think about the form of the shrub and I do not want to ruin the appearance of the donor plant. My goal is to make it look as though no one has taken any cuttings.



Robert begins with some hydrangea cuttings

The cutting should be between 4 to 6 inches long and have four to six leaves on it. This will vary from plant to plant. The cut should be just above a node on the branch to leave the plant looking tidy. Later you will trim the cutting to its lowest node. When taking these cuts you should only be using a bypass pruner as this makes a nice clean cut. Your pruner should be clean and I recommend cleaning it with rubbing alcohol before the first cut and then each time you go to a new plant. In the Arboretum we find a using a spray bottle filled with alcohol very effective.

Immediately after you take the cuttings you should put the cut end in a moist cloth or paper towels, and ideally seal the entire cutting in a plastic bag. Again this reduces stress on the cuttings. Some people will use a little cooler to store them in until they can "stick" the cutting.

At this stage labelling the cuttings is vital if you are taking from more than one plant. If you are doing this often or are dealing with more challenging plants, taking notes is also vital. You will learn from both success and failure that way.



He removes the lower leaves

Preparing the cuttings

Now you are ready to "stick" the cutting. It is at this point you should make a new cut right below the bottom node. Traditionally this is to be done with a sharp knife for a nice clean cut. I usually just use my pruners and this seems to work well. Also you should remove the leaves on the lower part of the cutting, again with a knife or pruners. If the remaining leaves are large I like to reduce them by half to limit stress on the cutting. Some species will root better if



He dips the cutting ends in 'Roots' or 'Stim-Root'

you lightly wound the area near the bottom of the cutting. For example, magnolias root better when this is done. Gently run your knife along the stem just scratching the outer bark slightly.

After the cutting is prepared the next step is to apply rooting hormone. To keep it simple there are two options commonly available out there—gel and powder. The gel brand you will most likely find is called Roots. If you are only taking a small amount of cuttings this is a good bet. The powder form out there is Stim-Root and Stim-Root #2 is what you would use for these cuttings. Stim-Root also comes in a #1 format, which is used for easily rooted herbaceous material, and #3, which is used for winter hardwood cuttings. With the powder root hormone people often dip the end of cuttings in water and then dip them in the hormone. There are also some root-encouraging fertilizers out there that suggest you soak the cuttings in a diluted fertilizer for a period of time. This will not hurt and I often do that just before I apply the hormone.

Getting roots

Your cuttings now need to be placed in a rooting medium. It needs to be a clean, sterile, medium that allows the future roots to breathe. There are many suggested mixes out there. I will often use a 1 to 1 blend of Turface to potting mix and that seems to work fine. A commercially available cactus/succulent soil mix would do the trick too.

Also the tops of your cuttings need a high level of humidity around them to keep them happy until roots form. We have a nice mist bed that is on a timer and mists the cuttings to maintain the humidity. There are



Cuttings are planted in the misting bed



Misting bed

Photos by R. Hinchcliff

nice small propagators that look like tabletop greenhouses with little vents that would work as well, but putting the pot in a zip lock bag also works well and is a great idea for a small quantity. The leaves should not be constantly touching the moist plastic. You can open and close the bag to control the humidity as too much can be bad too. The

cuttings need light but not full sun. A west-facing window would work.

Most shrubs will root in 3-6 weeks. If you gently pull on the cutting and feel resistance, it has rooted. At this point carefully loosen the rooting medium and pot up into normal potting soil. In the beginning you should place the cuttings in part shade

until they get established. A good fertilization routine is ideal and next season you will have a nice shrub that can be planted.

Robert Glendinning, groundskeeper/propagator with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, was one of the guides for a June tour of the Arboretum entitled "How Trees Get Started."



Robert Glendinning on a tour of the Arboretum explaining how trees get started.

Eric Jones



The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm is a volunteer organization committed to the maintenance and protection of the Ornamental Gardens and the Arboretum of the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Membership for the Friends of the Farm costs \$30 per year for an individual, \$50 per year for a family, \$25 for seniors/students. Payment by PayPal available on website. Membership fees support the many projects of the Friends of the Farm.

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Peter Ryan, City Builder

By Richard Hinchcliff

Peter Ryan, a Friend of the Farm, received a Mayor's City Builder Award last December, recognizing his many years of generous volunteering in Ottawa. The award goes to an individual, group or organization for outstanding volunteerism or for action that makes the city a better place.

Peter was a firefighter with the City of Ottawa from 1957 to 1996, when he retired with the rank of district chief. In the 20 years since his retirement, he has been preserving, and telling residents about, the history of the city's fire services and the ways that fire and firefighters have shaped the community.

Peter has also been an active volunteer with the Friends of the Farm. As Mary Ann Smythe wrote in a recent "Spotlight" profile for the Friends' website, "when Peter joined the Friends of the Farm in 2003, he was also volunteering in a retraining program, teaching basic woodworking skills. So when the Friends needed a new storage shed beside Building 72, Peter and his crew built the shed offsite and then assembled and painted it at the Farm."

Peter remembers what brought him to the Farm, wrote Mary Ann. "It's a familiar story in many households—wife (long-time Friends' volunteer Diana Dakers) asks husband (Peter) to lend a helping hand. Husband obliges, another task follows, application is completed, and Peter is signed up as a volunteer."

Peter was one of the Friends' "go to" volunteers. "If you needed something done, Peter was usually available—setting up before and taking down after fundraising events, sharpening and cleaning the garden tools in the fall, and doing anything else to help out."

He is also president of the Bytown Fire Brigade, a non-profit



Peter Ryan

Photo by Polly McColl (Inset photo by R. Hinchcliff)

historical society and serves on the board of the Ottawa Fire Fighters Memorial. He has raised thousands of dollars for the Brigade and the Memorial by auctioning seven-course gourmet dinners for up to 10 people, which he cooks and serves in his home. He also makes unique items from recycled, sustainable and exotic species of wood for fundraising events.

He drives antique fire apparatus and vehicles to area parades, community events and car shows. Last year, he worked with city archives staff to help mount the *Ashes: A City Shaped By Fire* exhibit, which ran for six months at the James Bartleman Centre.

NEW MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ POSTAL CODE: _____
 PROVINCE: _____
 TELEPHONE #: _____
 FAX #: _____
 E-MAIL: _____

INTEREST IN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

YES ☐

NO ☐

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

FAMILY \$50/year
 ADULT \$30/year
 SENIOR/STUDENT \$25/year
 BASIC CORPORATE \$250/year
 NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION \$25/year
 INDIVIDUAL LIFE \$600
 SENIOR COUPLE LIFE \$650
 DONATION \$_____

TOTAL \$_____

Please make cheque or money order payable to: "Friends of the Farm." A receipt for income tax purposes will be issued for all donations of \$10 or more. Payment by PayPal is available on website.

We are located at Building 72 in the Arboretum. You can visit us or mail this part of the form with your payment to:

FRIENDS OF THE CENTRAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM
Building 72, Central Experimental Farm
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C6

Telephone: 613-230-3276

Fax: 613-230-1238

Email: info@friendsofthefarm.ca

Website: www.friendsofthefarm.ca

Charitable Number 118913565RR0001

Propagation of Lilacs ... *(continued from Page 12)*

of choice for many years by nurseries. Disadvantages are many and include dominance and suckering by the host, with the desired plant dying. What is needed is a host that will die shortly after root establishment of the desired plant. Our preference is for lilacs on their own roots.

Tissue culture

For mass production, tissue culture is desirable and is practiced by some propagators, but has not been attempted by us.

Joan Speirs led the Friends of the Farm team on a millennium project with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to restore the Farm's lilac collection and was coordinator of the Friends' lilac team until this year. Her contribution to the lilac collection was immeasurable and her love for lilacs an inspiration.



Scan by Joan Speirs

'Königin Luise'

Remembering Joan Speirs (1929-2016)

By Robert Glendinning

Joan will be remembered by all of us on the Agriculture Canada Grounds Team for her kindly, gentle demeanour. She had a way of achieving her goals and getting her point across that was always respectful. Her determination and work ethic was inspiring to us all. If something needed to be done she would just do it whether it was weeding, watering, record keeping, taking cuttings ... the list is too long. I considered her a colleague and friend. The person and her work will be dearly missed by her family here at the Central Experimental Farm.

Restoration Work at the Macoun Memorial Garden and Main Barn

By the time you read this, there may be a new wall around the sunken garden at the Macoun Memorial Garden. The whole area was fenced off in June for the work to be done. Also to be fixed was the lining for the pond, which had been leaking.

Earlier, work was completed on the exterior of the Main Barn (Building 88). It was restored with "original vintage" cedar cladding. Built 102 years ago as a replica of the previous barn that was destroyed by fire in 1913, this unique structure carries the highest level of heritage designation. It is now used by the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum.



The Main Barn with new exterior cladding, May 2016



Photos by R. Hinchcliff

Work on the wall at the Macoun Memorial Garden,
June 2014

Propagation of Lilacs

By Joan Speirs

(In this, her last contribution to the newsletter, Joan wrote about her experience in breeding lilacs from parent stock. On page 8, Robert Glendinning describes the use of cuttings for the propagation of plants in general.)



'Grace', a hyacinthiflora lilac by Isabella Preston.

[Looking only for accurate colour rendition, Joan used a scanner for this image and others. With her reluctant approval, several were posted in the Photo Gallery on the Friends' website. One artist wrote to thank her for the inspiration - Editor.]

Suckers

Digging out a sucker is a long-practiced approach to starting a new plant and is done spring or fall. But not all lilacs produce suckers, including those in the Villosae Group, which includes Preston lilacs. Many of the French hybrids, which are varieties of *S. vulgaris* (Common Lilac) and *S. ×hyacinthiflora*, are multi-stemmed and suckers may be found; but some of these lilacs have few stems and don't sucker.

It should be noted that seeds, if produced, will likely not be a replicate of the parent due to cross-fertilization with other lilacs near and far.

Softwood cuttings

Villosae Group lilacs are relatively easy to propagate from softwood cuttings. A procedure was described in the 2005 spring edition of the Friends' newsletter. Although the procedure seems laborious, our success rate is good, at about 67%.

In brief, the procedure is as follows:

- **Preparation of pots:** A clear plastic resealable bag (about 27 x 27 cm) is placed in a 10 cm pot and this bag is filled with at least 10 cm of moist PRO-MIX potting mix.



- **Cutting preparation:** Softwood cuttings (from the ends of the present year's growth) are taken as blooms fade. Ideally, the cut is made just above the fifth set of leaves. For the top two sets of leaves, one half of each leaf is cut away. Lower leaves are removed and the bottom of the stalk is recut on a sharp angle just below the final node. The cut surface is treated with Stim-Root #3 (Nu-Gro IP Inc).

- **Placing in pot:** Poke a hole in the potting soil with a pencil and insert the cutting to just below the leaves. Firm the soil and add water if needed to ensure the soil is moist. Seal the bags and store them in indirect light, indoors or outdoors. Sufficient moisture is indicated by the appearance of water droplets on the inside of the plastic. Roots appear in five to eight weeks and are observed by lifting the bags. Rooted cuttings are placed in larger pots of potting mix and given a feed of transplant fertilizer.

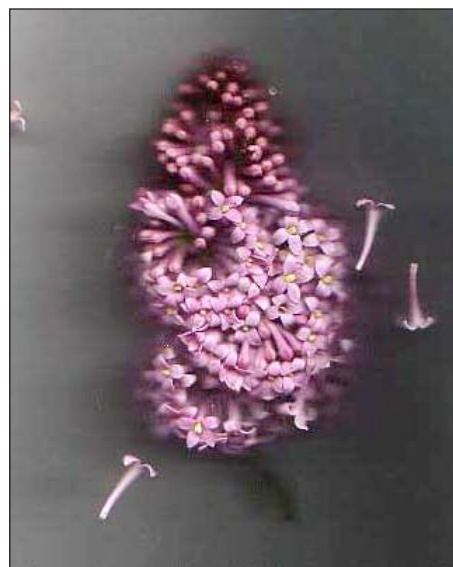


- **Using a misting bed:** The above procedure has been largely unsuccessful for rooting French hybrid lilacs. A misting bed helps. The one we use is at bench level and has a 1.5 sq. m wood base containing a 12 cm bed of Turface and curtained with plastic. An electric cable supplies heat to enhance rooting and a sprinkler above provides regulated sprays of water.

As with the previous method, roots appear between five and eight weeks, and are indicated when the cutting resists pulling from the medium. Rooting is clearly enhanced over the method described above but results vary with the cultivar and vigour of the shrub. Current-year growth of old struggling French hybrids is reluctant to root and of course in most need of propagation. If room allows we do many replicates of these in hopes of getting one success. Certain cultivars, in spite of youth and vigour, are reluctant to root for reasons we don't as yet understand.

Grafting

Some propagators prefer to graft onto a root stock and this was the method



'Hiawatha'

Scans by Joan Speirs

Continued on Page 11