



# Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Fall 2017 Newsletter

Volume 29 No. 4

## Around the Country Tree by Tree

By Eric Jones and Zoe Panchen



Ramin Izadpanah

Arboretum photo by award-winning photographer Ramin Izadpanah, who will be leading a tour of the Arboretum on October 15 (see page 9).

**W**e celebrated Canada's 150th anniversary in May by visiting an example of each provincial and territorial tree in the Arboretum. All our provincial/territorial trees, with one exception, are present at the Arboretum. Nine of the 13 are coniferous, suggestive of the snowy Canadian winters. Botanist Zoe Panchen led the tour with assistance from Eric Jones, pointing out the distinctive leaves as well as uses and other characteristics of each tree.

### Alberta

**Lodgepole Pine** (*Pinus contorta*)—Lodgepole pine grows tall and narrow in the forests of Alberta and BC but is rather stunted in Ottawa's urban and constrained conditions. It's a staple of the lumber industry and was used for the railway ties of the

trans-Canada railway line. Its numbers have been decimated over the last two decades by the aggressive mountain pine beetle. The needles are often twisted and in bundles of two.

### British Columbia

**Western Red Cedar** (*Thuja plicata*)—A magnificent and ancient tree in the coastal rainforest of BC, it struggles with the Ottawa climate. The leaves are scale-like, long and flattened. The tree is used extensively for outdoor lumber because of its resistance to decay.

### Manitoba

**White Spruce** (*Picea glauca*)—This is another spruce that blankets the country, like black spruce and balsam fir, and one of Canada's most important softwood species. Lumberjacks call it cat spruce for its acrid smelling sap. The needles are 4-sided, often with a whitish bloom, and the cones are large and cigar shaped. The White Spruce is a common landscape tree.

### New Brunswick

**Balsam Fir** (*Abies balsamea*)—This very symmetrical tree is a familiar sight across most of Canada, particularly at Christmas time. Its needles are flat with white dots (stomata) along the underside of the needles.

### Newfoundland and Labrador

**Black Spruce** (*Picea mariana*)—It could be argued that this tree is more representative of the country than maple, due to its huge range from coast to coast to coast, and its use in timber and paper mills. It tolerates challenging conditions like bogs and icy winters and is often called the bog spruce. Its needles are short and four-sided in cross section and the stems look like a bottle brush.

### Nova Scotia

**Red Spruce** (*Picea rubens*)—This tree is more common in the Maritimes than in the rest of the country. The needles resemble Black Spruce but have a soft greenish-yellow sheen. The Red Spruce is a very hardy tree and was chosen as the Nova Scotia

Continued on Page 3

## President's Message

As I write this, it hardly seems possible that summer is nearly over and our gardening teams are winding down. Many of the special Canada 150 events offered throughout the city are also finished or winding down—including ours. Even though these projects are largely ending, many will leave a lasting legacy—including ours.

Our largest Canada 150 project is Richard Hinchcliff's book *Blooms: An Illustrated History of the Ornamental Gardens at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm*. We are extremely proud of it and are confident it will be valued for many years. It continues to sell well and is enjoyed by all who see it.

Our second major project is a joint effort with the Ottawa Horticultural Society (OHS). This two stage project was initially conceived by the OHS as a joint celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary and the OHS's 125th anniversary. Once we began talking with the OHS, we agreed on a task that will enhance the Ornamental Gardens for years to come.

The first phase was completed early in the summer and unveiled at our June



Judy Dodds

Blooms event. Completion of the second phase is expected next year. OHS members did much of this work, with input from several Friends volunteers, who were led by Blaine Marchand. Both groups were generously supported by staff of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

In phase one of the project, information plaques were mounted in the Ornamental Gardens' small gazebo, which is itself an earlier OHS-Friends joint project. The plaques provide information about the important hybridization work done by researchers associated with the Farm. Through the use of a QR code, visitors are able to obtain additional information about the important contributions of Isabella Preston, A.P (Percy) Saunders, and Felicitas Svejda.

The second phase entails a renovation of part of the Macoun Memorial Garden with heritage perennials. For several years our Macoun Team has hoped for an opportunity to renovate a portion of the garden and this provided a wonderful impetus. Throughout this year, much research and planning has been spent identifying plants and working on a design. The actual planting of the garden will be done next year.

We appreciated working with the OHS on this project, which will benefit visitors to the Ornamental Gardens, and look forward to future OHS-Friends collaborations.



Canada 150 planting by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada at the Prince of Wales roundabout.

## Message de la présidente

Au moment de rédiger ce message, il m'est difficile de croire... L'été tire à sa fin et la charge de travail des équipes de jardinage diminue petit à petit. Bien des événements commémoratifs de Canada 150 qui ont eu lieu un peu partout dans la ville ont déjà pris fin ou sont sur le point de le faire, dont les nôtres. Bien qu'ils s'achèvent, bon nombre de ces projets laisseront un legs, et ainsi en sera-t-il des nôtres.

Dans le cadre de Canada 150, le plus grand projet que nous avons réalisé est sans contredit la publication du livre de Richard Hinchcliff : *Blooms: An Illustrated History of the Ornamental Gardens at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm*. Nous en dérivons une grande fierté et nous sommes confiants de sa valeur durable qui s'étendra sur un grand nombre d'années. Les ventes se font bien, et tous ceux qui ont eu l'occasion de le voir l'apprécient à sa juste valeur.

Un deuxième projet de grande importance pour nous a été réalisé en collaboration avec la Ottawa Horticultural Society (Société d'horticulture de la Ville d'Ottawa ou la

Société). C'est la Société qui a initié les deux étapes de ce projet afin de commémorer le 150<sup>e</sup> anniversaire du Canada et le 125<sup>e</sup> anniversaire de la Société. À l'issue de nos pourparlers avec celle-ci, nous avons convenu d'une activité qui rehausserait la valeur des jardins ornementaux pour bien des années à venir.

La première étape a été bouclée au début de l'été, et les résultats ont pu être observés lors de notre événement « Les fleurs de juin ». Nous nous attendons de conclure la deuxième étape l'an prochain. La Société a exécuté la majeure partie du travail, avec l'aide d'un grand nombre de bénévoles parmi les Amis, sous la direction de Blaine Marchand. Les deux groupes ont trouvé un appui solide auprès du personnel d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada.

À ce stade du projet, des plaques ont été installées dans l'abri ou le belvédère des jardins ornementaux, dans le cadre d'un projet plus récent auquel ont participé la Société et les Amis. Les plaques renferment de l'information sur l'important travail d'hybridation réalisé par les chercheurs

associés à la Ferme. En utilisant un code QR, les visiteurs peuvent obtenir de l'information supplémentaire sur l'importante contribution d'Isabella Preston, de A.P (Percy) Saunders et de Felicitas Svejda.

La deuxième étape du projet consiste en une rénovation d'une partie du jardin commémoratif de Macoun en y intégrant des plantes vivaces du patrimoine. Pour l'équipe Macoun, qui rêvait déjà d'entamer un tel travail, voilà que l'occasion se présente dans le cadre de ce projet! Au cours de l'année, de longues heures ont été consacrées à la recherche et à la planification afin de sélectionner les plantes et de créer un design. Toutefois, les plantes ne seront mises en terre que l'an prochain seulement.

Nous avons beaucoup apprécié notre expérience de travail dans le cours de ce projet avec la Société, et ce seront les visiteurs aux jardins ornementaux qui en bénéficieront. De plus, nous nous réjouissons à l'idée d'entreprendre d'autres entreprises de collaboration mettant en jeu la Société et les Amis à l'avenir.

## Around the Country Tree by Tree ... (continued from page 1)

provincial tree to represent the strength and resilience of Nova Scotians.

### Northwest Territories

**Tamarack** (*Larix laricina*)—This tree does best in the boreal forest, growing alongside Black Spruce in bogs and tolerating harsh conditions. The needles are clustered many to a bundle. It is one of the few conifers that sheds its needles in winter. The cones are almost spherical and resemble miniature roses in shape.

### Nunavut

Since this territory is mostly treeless owing to its harsh climate, no official territorial tree has been adopted. Undaunted, Zoe nominated a couple: a Dwarf Prostrate Willow (*Salix arctica*) that grows to the most northern reaches of Nunavut; and the Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostoboides*), a “fossil” species that grew in Nunavut in ages past when conditions were much warmer than today and whose remnants can still be found in the form of resin, coal and even tree stumps on Axel Heiberg and Ellesmere islands.

### Ontario

**Eastern White Pine** (*Pinus strobus*)—This tall, majestic tree is a common sight in Ottawa and once filled the Ottawa River in rafts headed to Quebec and beyond for use as timber. The beautiful needles are soft and flexible in bundles of five, and it is one of the last species on which new needles or leaves appear in spring. The Eastern White Pine can live for 300 years and hence can grow to an immense size.

### Prince Edward Island

**Red Oak** (*Quercus rubra*)—A wide-spreading and sturdy hardwood tree distributed through much of eastern Canada, it has beautiful form and colour in the fall. Because of its hard and figured wood, it is used widely in furniture and flooring. The leaves have pointed lobes and the acorns take two years to mature. The PEI provincial flag even features oak trees.

### Quebec

**Yellow Birch** (*Betula alleghaniensis*)—This tree grows in mature eastern Canada deciduous forests with maple, beech and hemlock. It has beautiful yellow-brown wood that is used extensively in cabinets and furniture, and supplies many plywood



The Duke of Connaught, former Governor-General of Canada, planted this Red Oak on the main lawn of the Farm on October 18, 1911. Red Oak is the official tree of Prince Edward Island, home of The Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

factories. The bark peels in thin yellow, translucent sheets. When crushed, the leaves smell of wintergreen.

### Saskatchewan

**White Birch** (*Betula papyrifera*)—A pioneer tree that is one of the first to grow on bare land after fire, it also enabled people to become pioneers and spread out across the country, using the canoe technology of Indigenous Peoples. The tree has distinctive white, papery bark and catkins that release pollen just before the tree leafs out in early spring.

### Yukon

**Subalpine Fir** (*Abies lasiocarpa*)—This tree is restricted to western Canada and usually at high altitudes. There was a specimen in the Arboretum but it seems to have disappeared (!!!). The needles are rich in vitamin C and make a lemony tasting tea traditionally used for cold remedies. Indigenous People also use the resinous sap for respiratory ailments.

*Eric Jones worked for the Canadian Wood Council and is Past President of the Friends of the Farm. Zoe Panchen is a horticulturist and botanist with a special interest in woody plants and the timing of leaf out and flowering.*

## Upcoming Events

For more information, visit [www.friendsofthefarm.ca](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca) or call 613-230-3276.

### Used Book Drop-off

- Saturday, October 21, 10 am to 3 pm.
- Donate your books for a great cause.
- Please note that we do not accept magazines, textbooks or encyclopaedias.
- Location: Building 72, Arboretum, CEF
- For more information, visit [www.friendsofthefarm.ca](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca) or call 613-230-3276.

### Fall Frenzy Online Silent Auction

- Nov. 16 at 9 am to Nov. 24 at 9 pm.

- Find our auction at [www.eflea.ca](http://www.eflea.ca) and visit often once the bidding has started.
- Our 9-day silent auction offers something for everyone, —thanks to many generous donors.
- If you would like to donate items, see our Wish List for details <http://friendsofthefarm.ca/donations/wish-list-for-fall-frenzy/>.
- Use PayPal online; cash or cheque in person.
- Winning bidders are automatically notified by email and can pick up items at Building 72 in the Arboretum.
- For more information visit our website [www.friendsofthefarm.ca](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca).

## “Best Book Sale in Town”

By Jeannine Lewis

Hundreds of Friends and fans came to the annual Friends of the Farm Book Sale on June 24 and 25, 2017. About 15,000 books were displayed—fiction alphabetized by author and 17 categories of non-fiction—which had been sorted by five teams of volunteers over the fall and winter months. Many customers had words of praise for the organization and presentation of this event: “the best book sale in Ottawa” and “the most courteous and helpful volunteers”.

A survey was conducted during the sale; about one-fourth of the customers learned about the sale through social media—Friends of the Farm website, Facebook, Twitter. More than half were return customers.

Special thanks to the many volunteers who sorted, set up and helped during the sale, and the First Nepean Venturers who efficiently carried the boxes up for display. Also our sincere appreciation to the donors of the books.

The annual Used Book Drop-off will be held on October 21, 2017, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Please help to continue the success of the June 2018 sale by donating books to the Farm, beginning the cycle again.

*Jeannine Lewis is a member of the Friends' Board of Directors and coordinates the book sale.*



Jeannine Lewis

## The Farm's Peonies Win Hearts

By Blaine Marchand

Thanks to the efforts of Bill Wegman, Lynne Zeitouni and Kathleen Hatherill, volunteers with the peony garden team, blooms from Ottawa won the hearts of judges at the joint annual peony show of the Canadian Peony Society and the Quebec Peony Society, held at Marie-Victorian Park in Kingsey Falls, Quebec, June 17 and 18. Lynne spearheaded the gathering of blooms from the Farm's collection while Kathleen did the same at Algonquin College. Lynne and her husband Sami transported the peonies to the show.

'Moonrise', a pale yellow peony developed by A.P Saunders in 1949, took first place among the single hybrid peonies and was chosen for a place of pride on the Court of Honour, which recognizes the best in show in different categories. An honour indeed as there were more than 1,000 peony blooms entered into the com-

petition.

In addition, the CEF blooms were awarded a good number of first, seconds and thirds by the judges. And the Peony Team Leader, Bill Wegman, was a first place winner in the category of Best Seedling for a cross he created using the peonies 'Fragans' and 'Golden Era'. Algonquin College also succeeded in being awarded several ribbons for entries in the judged show.

Over 1,100 visitors to the peony weekend marvelled at the variety of peonies in the competition. Lucie Pépin, President of the Quebec Peony Society, won both the Grand Champion and the Public's Choice with her entry, 'Haleigh's Hallelujah'.

It is fitting that a Saunders' peony from the CEF should be a show stopper. The Farm has the largest collection of A.P. Saunders peonies in Canada. He was, of course, the son of the first director of the



Sami Zeitouni

Lynne Zeitouni and Bill Wegman with the award-winning 'Moonrise' peony.

Farm, William Saunders. He perfected his hybridizing techniques at the site under the guidance of his father.

*Blaine Marchand is a member of the Friends' Board of Directors and a Past President of the Canadian Peony Society.*

# Naveen Patni: Environmental Research Scientist

By Richard Hinchcliff

**W**hat happens when you have around 800 to 1,000 dairy cows, 1,000 pigs, 3,000 sheep, and 55,000 chickens and geese? The answer is about eight million gallons of manure a year. And as a result when it rains, how many pollutants get into the ground water system?

This was the question that Dr. Naveen Patni, now a Friend of the Farm, was asked to study when he was hired in 1974 by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to work in Ottawa at the Animal Research Institute, which later became the Animal Research Centre (ARC). He had studied chemical engineering and worked on a project related to the environment in his post-doctoral studies at the University of Toronto.

## Animals at the Greenbelt Research Farm

The animals were moved in 1970 from the Central Experimental Farm to Agriculture Canada's Greenbelt Research Farm on Woodroffe Avenue. This farm comprised 2,800 acres (1,100 hectares), of which 500 acres (200 hectares) were used for buildings to house the animals, and for animal feed preparation and storage. The remainder was used for growing crops to feed the animals.

The liquid manure from the animal sheds was collected and spread around the fields to feed the crops. Naveen set up monitoring stations around the perimeter of the fields to test for pollutants in the run-off into Black Rapids Creek, which fed the Rideau River, and Baker Creek, which went into the Ottawa River. Overall, he found little pollution. In part, he says, this was because of the way the manure was spread around the fields. To avoid unpleasant odours wafting beyond the farm, the manure was dug into the soil immediately after it was spread.

To ensure he got all the data, Naveen was on call seven days a week. Whenever there was a heavy rain, he and his assistant would go out to collect the samples from his monitoring stations at key points in the drainage system. He always loved the work, even though, he laughs, there was a time he slipped on some spring ice and fell into the cold water of Baker Creek.

## Labs and offices at the Central Experimental Farm

The head office of the Animal Research Centre at that time was in the Heritage House on Birch Drive (building #60). Scientists at the ARC also had offices and labs in the Genetics (#34), Nutrition (#59) and Neatby buildings. *(For more on the Genetics Building, see page 12.)*

For most of his career, Naveen worked in the Nutrition Building, which is on the NCC Driveway close to the traffic roundabout. From the windows of his office and lab he looked directly across the Driveway to the Ornamental Gardens. He recalls seeing the Pope go past in a procession in the 1970s.

In 1992, the Animal Research Centre was combined with the Food Research Centre into the Centre for Food and Animal Research (CFAR). It was a big organization, says Naveen, with 300 employees engaged in research that was crucial for food and animal production in Canada. His work was no less important.



From his research into the environmental impacts of animal production, Naveen published several articles and reports on the critical issues of water quality, greenhouse gases, waste utilization, and animal waste management and treatment.

On the lighter side, Naveen recalls one colleague who played music for the piglets, testing its effects on their growth, and clearly remembers the flurry to find justification for the experiment in case a question was put to the Minister in Parliament.

Naveen moved to the Neatby Building in 1986, where he continued his environmental research until 1997, when CFAR was in the process of closing. Although the closure was announced in 1995, it took three years, he says, for the animals, machinery and equipment at the greenbelt farm to be sold.

For a few years until he retired in 2002, Naveen took a position at the Experimental Farm at Agassiz, British Columbia. With the youngest of his three children still at school, his family remained in Ottawa.

He was happy to get back home and enjoys his retirement. He has fond memories of friends and colleagues, a group of whom still get together every month for breakfast. He also has a deep affection for the Farm and is a steadfast member of the Friends of the Farm.

## Health Benefits of the Farm

Carleton University researchers have studied exposure to air pollution and noise to see how the Central Experimental Farm affects the health of Ottawa residents. The project was described in the Winter 2017 issue of this Newsletter by Keith Van Ryswyk and Paul Villeneuve.

The results of the study are presented in the diagram on the next page. The researchers report “there were lower concentrations of air pollutants on the Farm. In general, important air pollutants

such as nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), volatile organic compounds and black carbon were lower in areas closer to the Farm. In particular, PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations in the winter showed a 7.4% increase with each increase of 1 km distance from the Farm’s centre.”

“Similarly to other studies, air pollution levels were much higher in the winter, with levels of NO<sub>2</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> doubling during the winter season. Additionally, temperatures were generally cooler on the Farm than in surrounding areas.”

The study found that “noise levels were not substantially different between the Farm and surrounding neighbourhoods. Daily average noise levels varied substantially in our study area, ranging from 48.6 to 72.7 dBA. This means that noisier areas exceeded the 45-55 dBA limits established by the city.”

*Thanks to Professor David Miller for submitting the summary report on behalf of the research team.*



Bill Wegman

‘Moonrise’ peony from the Ornamental Gardens, an award winner at the Canadian Peony Society’s 2017 show (see page 4).

## Victorian Tea Sold Out

It was a perfect day on July 30, sunny and warm, for the Victorian Tea. As usual, it proved to be a very popular event, with the maximum 275 guests arriving within 45 minutes.

There were more guests dressed in costume this year than in the past, reported Polly McColl, the Friends’ coordinator for the event, and the high quality of the hats and costumes made judging difficult. Polly also reported there were a greater number of younger people attending.

Mr. and Mrs. Saunders (aka Martin MacLeod and Louise Moore) were a hit again, and this year Miss Isabella Preston (aka Maura Giuliani) and Mr. W.T. Macoun (aka Robert Glendinning) also mingled with the guests as Bruce Wilson and his trio performed “valley music.”

Thanks to Polly and her team of 80 volunteers, who were active in many ways before, during and after this event to make it so successful.

## Art in the Arboretum

It was a beautifully sunny and warm day in August for this year’s Art on the Farm, featuring 26 local artists, as well as a silent auction, used book sale and refreshment table.



Rick Haas



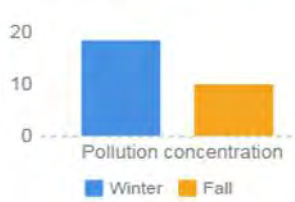
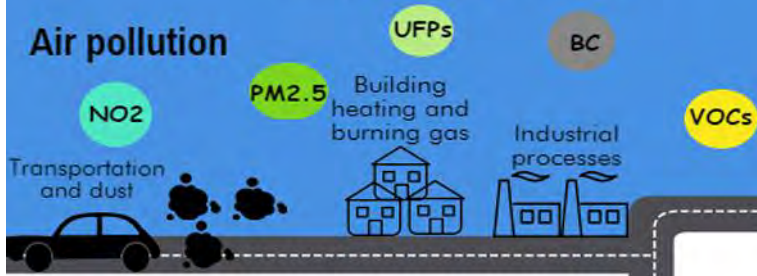
R. Hinchliff

Guests at Victorian tea.



### Does the farm help lower air pollution, temperature & noise?

#### Air pollution



Pollution levels were almost **TWO TIMES** higher in the winter than the fall

Areas closer to the farm had **LOWER** particulates (PM2.5, VOCs, UFPs & black carbon) and NO2

In particular, a 1 km increase in distance from the farm resulted in a **7.4%** increase in PM2.5 levels



### Why the CEF?

As Canada's 4th largest urban hub, Ottawa takes urban green space to a whole different level.

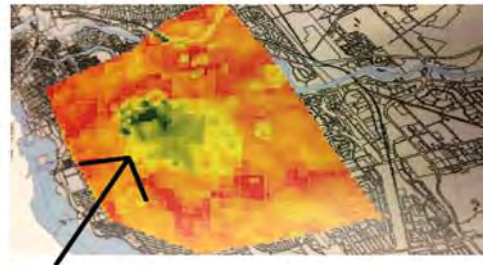
The Central Experimental Farm located in the centre of the city is one of its most unique features.

Green space has been associated with health benefits for example, through increased physical activity, but also by lowering air pollution, noise levels and heat in the city.

This made us wonder if the CEF had more to offer Ottawans than just a good bike path?

#### Urban heat

Heat reflected from surfaces such as pavement and parking lots, traffic and building heating



Temperature on the CEF was substantially lower than surrounding areas

#### Urban noise

Traffic and construction

- The farm did not influence noise levels
- Day/Night average on and around the farm was 62.3 dBA and 54.8 dBA respectively
- Comparable daily noise levels to other cities:

City	Noise Level (dBA)
Ottawa	48.6-72.7 dBA
Montreal	53.4-73.7 dBA

Ottawa Bylaw 45-55 dBA

**KNOWING OUR GREEN SPACES = KNOWING OUR HEALTH**

# Alacrity – The 101-Year-Old Tomato

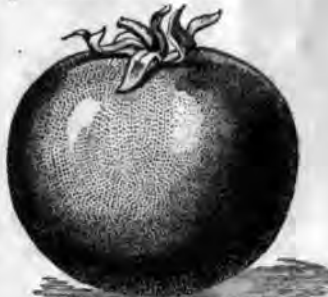
By Bob Wildfong

It was 100 years ago last year that a new tomato variety burst onto the pages of seed catalogues, and began a national love affair with Canadian gardeners. With hundreds of tomato varieties to choose from today, it is hard to imagine a time when tomatoes were scarce, but our favourite garden vegetable is actually a newcomer to Canada's gardens. Only five generations ago (that is recently, in garden history terms) most Canadians didn't know tomatoes well, didn't like their flavour, didn't know how to cook them, and some people even thought they were poisonous. By the year 1900, that perception had changed but few short-season varieties were available, so tomatoes were not yet a market crop for much of Canada.

Other shorter-season varieties were becoming available at about the same time, but none as ideal as 'Alacrity'. 'Earliana' had become widely popular by 1916, and some lesser known but intriguingly named varieties such as 'First of All' and 'Earliest and Best' were listed in seed catalogues of the early 1900s. What made 'Alacrity' important was that it was bred and introduced in Canada, by a Canadian plant

**NEW TOMATO**  
**"ALACRITY"**

Developed by experts at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.



**Earliest of all Red Tomatoes**

ALACRITY produces a closer compact vine, set quite as freely with fine smooth tomatoes, which are usually ready to market ten days earlier than any other strain.

The entire crop can be gathered generally in about three weeks from the time the first fruit ripens.

ALACRITY is undoubtedly the very best earliest scarlet fruited tomato.

**1916 FLOWER AND VEGETABLE SEED**  
Catalogue Free on Request

**Dupuy & Ferguson, Seedsmen,**  
38 Jacques Cartier Square,  
MONTREAL, - - QUEBEC

breeder. It was the first truly Canadian tomato variety, developed specifically for our growers.

According to Dan McMurray, who grew and compared many of our favourite Canadian tomatoes, 'Alacrity' are typically 4 to 8 ounces with round, red fruit that ripen in 60-70 days. Different growers have found variances in the days to maturity, possibly because of their growing conditions. But regardless, this would have been very early for a medium-sized tomato in 1916, at least a week earlier than comparable varieties.

Early ripening was a key priority at the Dominion Experimental Farm in Ottawa, where 'Alacrity' was developed. Later known as the Central Experimental Farm, the facility was created in 1886 to promote research into Canadian agriculture by the federal government. Much of the work done there, and at other government research stations, was to introduce varieties that would produce reliably in Canada's harsh growing conditions. In those early days, this was literally the key to opening up northern and western land for settlement.

William Saunders, the first director of the Dominion Experimental Farm, made history with important introductions such as 'Marquis' wheat. He assembled a team of scientists, plant and animal breeders, and horticulturists, and put them to work in a wide variety of projects. One of his early assistants, William T. Macoun, would become one of Canada's most famous horticulturists, and is the hero of this story.

Macoun's work is impossible to summarize in a short article. His name appears on countless publications, scientific papers, popular magazine articles and prizes in horticultural science. He worked mainly on apples, and many of his varieties such as 'Melba' and 'Lobo' are still known today, but he also worked on projects as diverse as the development of short-season sweet corn, and the control of potato blight and asparagus rust disease.

Around 1900, Macoun began a project to develop improved selections of tomatoes that would ripen early enough to be grown reliably in the short-season areas of Canada where 'Marquis' wheat had become a mainstay. Up to that time, the laws of genetics had not yet been widely understood, so early plant breeding was

**FULL-TOMATO PLANTS**  
**WATTERS "CRIMSON BELLE."**

The Tomato that Gave Best Results Last Season. Crimson Belle is the earliest smooth tomato in cultivation, and the best for either private or market garden. Produces heavy crops of delicious fruit. Last season Crimson Belle proved its hardiness by resisting wilt better than any other sort. Strong plants, packed and posted, 15 for 2/6, 50 for 5/-, 100 for 9/-.

**NEW CANADIAN TOMATO, "ALACRITY."**

This new variety, lately imported from Canada, is destined to become very popular here. It is extremely hardy, bears fruit in clusters, and is a very healthy grower. Last season it gave splendid results. Strong plants, 3/ doz., posted (stocks limited).

**WATTERS and SONS,**  
251 SWENSTON-STREET, MELBOURNE.

Clipping from *The Age* newspaper, Melbourne, Australia, September 18, 1920

done by intuition, trial and error, and a large amount of luck.

The American seedsman and breeder Alexander Livingston is often credited with making tomatoes popular in the late 1800s, and his progressive philosophies of plant breeding had created many varieties that are still well known today, including 'Livingston's Beauty', 'Golden Queen', and 'Acme'. Among his popular varieties was a reliable, round, red tomato called 'Stone', introduced in 1889.

'Stone' was fairly widely grown in the northeast U.S., and many selections were made from it, including an excellent, extra-early tomato discovered by a farmer named George Sparks. Sparks saved the seeds of his earliest-ripening 'Stone' tomatoes, and eventually sold his own variety, which he called 'Sparks' Earliana' (today often known simply as 'Earliana'). Since it ripened nearly a week earlier than 'Stone', 'Earliana' became very popular, but W.T. Macoun thought he could improve it further.

After a decade of selection, Macoun had an excellent candidate. By 1915 he had given it the name 'Alacrity'. It was offered directly to farmers at first, perhaps spurred by the urgency of the First World War, through Canada's fledgling network of agricultural experiment stations, and by 1916 it had appeared as a new commercial variety offered by the seed companies of the day.

Our first known commercial announcement of 'Alacrity' is an advertisement in *The Canadian Horticulturist* magazine of 1916. For the first time, Canada had a tomato variety that it could call its own!

*Continued on page 9*



## Upcoming Guided Tree Tour in the Arboretum



Danielle Labonté

Ramin Izadpanah

The following is the remaining 2017 guided tree tour in the Arboretum. Although it is free and open to the public, please register in advance at [info@friendsofthefarm.ca](mailto: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](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca) for more information.

### October 15—Photography on the Farm, by Ramin Izadpanah

In this workshop we will be exploring how light tells a story in photography of a landscape environment such as the Farm. The leader will help us discover the magic of colour at the peak of autumn in the Arboretum. Bring along your cameras. *Please note the starting time of 5 pm.*

Ramin is an award-winning photographer in Ottawa, specializing in landscape and nature pictures. Among other prizes, he has won the Canadian Geographic's 2015 Landscape Category prize and the 2016 Flora-and-Fauna Category prize. He also teaches photography at the Ottawa School of Art. View some of his photography here <http://yourshot.nationalgeographic.com/profile/173107/> and on his Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/photographybyramin/>. One of his photographs taken in the Arboretum is on page 1.

## Alacrity – The 101-Year-Old Tomato ... (continued from page 8)

### Seed Sources

Although it was very well known during the first half of the 20th century, 'Alacrity' is hard to find now. Hundreds more

Canadian introductions have followed in its footsteps, providing quality, flavour and early ripeness. But 'Alacrity' is still a good tomato. Give it a try, and celebrate a century of Canadian tomatoes in your

garden this year!

Sources we know of are Prairie Garden Seeds and Greta's Organic Gardens.

### References

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*Bob Wildfong is the Executive Director of Seeds of Diversity Canada. This article was originally printed in Seeds of Diversity magazine, the quarterly publication for members of Seeds of Diversity Canada. Find out more and subscribe at [www.seeds.ca/magazine](http://www.seeds.ca/magazine).*



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.

The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm publish the Newsletter (ISSN 1702 2762) four times a year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall). All members receive the newsletter and it is sent by regular mail or e-mail. Editor: Richard Hinchcliff. Assistant Editor: Barbara Woodward. Design & Printing: Nancy Poirier Printing. Contributors: Eric Jones, Jeannine Lewis, Blaine Marchand, David Miller, Zoe Panchen, Bob Wildfong. Translator: Lise Anne James.

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**[www.friendsofthefarm.ca](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca)**  
Charitable Number 118913565RR0001

# Crowing Their Hearts Out

By Richard Hinchcliff

It's hard to imagine what a dawn chorus of 5,000 roosters was like, but that's what people living near the Farm's poultry pen on the west side of Merivale Road had to put up with until the animals were moved to the Greenbelt Research Farm in 1970 (see page 5).

As well as the roosters, there were 600-800 geese, "all of whom were accomplished honkers," according to one of the Farm's poultry scientists at the time. The site on Merivale Road was later sold for development as the Central Park subdivision.

The 5,000 roosters and their 5,000 hens were "doing their noisy best to help improve the quality and quantity of egg and broiler production." Apparently nobody tried to invoke the city's anti-noise bylaw, probably "because of an understanding and appreciation that the value of the research exceeds the nuisance it creates."

In August 1960, Mrs. W.A. Armstrong of Grey Rock Crescent could laugh at the 5,000 roosters. "Let 'em crow their screaming hearts out," she smiled. "I'm up when they reach for that C-above-High C of theirs, up with little Stephen Michael." Stephen was just under three months old. "These roosters of ours are always in good voice," she reported, "at the top of their vocal form any and all day, even late into the evening. We're just new out here from Centre Town, and let me tell you, traffic was never anything like this for racket."



An interview with a "honker."

City of Ottawa Archives

**Reference**

*The Ottawa Journal*, "Rooster Reveille Raises Rumpus in West End," August 25, 1960.

## Great Gift Idea

The book *Blooms: An Illustrated History of the Ornamental Gardens at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm* is the Friends' gift to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary.

*The Ottawa Citizen* described *Blooms* as a "tour de force in both words and pictures." The *Canadian Field-Naturalist* journal described it as "first and foremost, gorgeous" and wrote, "at \$35.00, *Blooms* is a steal."

*Blooms* is a wonderful celebration of the Farm's achievements, a significant contribution to Canada's 150th anniversary, and a treat for anyone who loves gardens, flowers and Canadian history. Keep it in mind as a great gift idea!

It is available online from [www.friendsofthefarm.ca](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca) and from bookstores throughout Ottawa. Thanks to Lee Valley, it is selling well across the country.



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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 web-site.

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

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# Civic Hospital Plans: Protecting and Integrating the Farm’s Heritage Genetics Building ... *(continued from page 12)*

The Genetics Building and its predecessor at the same site served as the headquarters for poultry research during the first 100 years of the Central Experimental Farm.

The building is on Maple Drive, which marks the western border of the proposed hospital site. Across the road, within the hospital site, are the historic hedge collection and tennis courts.

The Genetics Building dates from 1920, when it replaced an earlier poultry research building. Enlarged in 1950, its appearance is typical of the smaller science and administration buildings built at the Farm in the 1920s, according to a 1996 Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office report.

“The red brick walls, painted wood trim, high concrete foundations, pitched roof dormers and asphalt shingle roof contribute to the building’s character and are in keeping with the overall architectural program for the Farm,” the report says.

The building is best viewed from Birch Drive across the green space beside the collection of hedges, some of which are 125 years old. An 1894 photo from a similar angle shows the original poultry house in the distance with two-year-old hedges in the foreground.

## Poultry research

Breeding of chickens began in 1888 with the goal of improving meat quality and egg production. Experiments began also to find the most suitable hen houses, the best incubators, the best feed, and so on, including tests later on the preservation and shipping of eggs. This research was critical to the poultry industry in Canada, and won international acclaim. Results were “of inestimable benefit to Canada and the world,” wrote Tom Anstey in his history of research at the Farm entitled *One Hundred Harvests*.

Chickens laying 200 eggs or more during a year in egg-laying contests, which began in 1919, were put on a register of the best performing animals. This encouraged Canadian poultry breeders to improve the quality and performance of their flocks. A World Poultry Congress held in Ottawa in 1927 with delegates from 28 countries brought stature and recognition to the work done at the Farm in Ottawa.



The original poultry division building, viewed here across the hedge collection in 1894, was one of the first to be built at the Farm.

William James Topley, Library & Archives Canada, PA-012267

During World War II, “Eggs for England” was the watchword in the Poultry Division, in response to a huge demand from Britain. For example, 360 million eggs were requested from Canada in 1941. Lessons to be learned from research at the Farm were urgently disseminated to producers across the country.

In 1958, the Poultry Division became part of the department’s Animal Research Institute, which in 1980 became the Animal Research Centre (ARC) and the Genetics Building became known as the ARC Biotech Building. Animal research at the Farm ended in 1995. Various staff members of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada have occupied the Genetics Building in recent years.

## Buildings Behind



Behind the Genetics Building is a delightful set of service buildings that could quite conceivably still house clutches of pedigreed White Leghorn, Barred Rock or Rhode Island Reds, just out of their incubators.

R. Hinchcliff

# Civic Hospital Plans: Protecting and Integrating the Farm's Heritage Genetics Building

By Richard Hinchcliff

There are heritage buildings on the Central Experimental Farm close to the site for the new Civic hospital. They were given heritage status not only for their architecture and the important research that was done inside them, but also for their setting at the Farm. Now that its boundaries have changed and the historic 19th century landscape will be lost in the northeast corner of the Farm, the heritage qualities of those buildings are at risk.

It may be a loss of place in the landscape, so that we no longer see a building that previously was a landmark, or if we do still see it, it is across a parking lot rather than in a historic green space. It may be a loss of accessibility, meaning and stature, as former Farm roads to these buildings become busy service roads for the new hospital.

We won't know the nature of the risk to these buildings until we see the site plan and building design for the 50 acres allocated to the hospital. And, in particular, we will be looking for the Cultural Heritage Impact Statement associated with the site plan.

## Protecting the National Historic Site landscape

It was encouraging to note that the National Capital Commission (NCC) has assumed a role in the early stages of the hospital project.

"The site design [for the new Civic campus] should enhance and protect nearby capital landscapes including ... Prince of Wales scenic entry and the Central Experimental Farm National Historic Site," wrote Mark Kristmanson, Chief Executive Officer of the NCC, in a letter to Judy Dodds, President of the Friends of the Farm.

Because the Farm land provided under long-term lease to the Ottawa Hospital is of "national interest," the hospital project will require approval from the NCC for the proposed use of the land and design of the buildings.

To guide the project, the NCC has developed a set of principles ("Capital Realm Design Principles"), one of which falls under "Heritage Conservation" and states that the NCC will approve the hospital project only if it will "protect and integrate with" heritage buildings on the Farm. The latter are important for their role in creating the cultural heritage landscape of this National Historic Site, as well as for the seminal research that was conducted within them.

Buildings of concern include those within the Dominion Observatory campus: the William Saunders Building, the Heritage House (#60), and the Genetics Building (#34), also known as the Animal Research Centre Biotech Building, which is the focus of this article.



Google satellite image

The boundary of the hospital site is immediately across Maple Drive from the Genetics Building. The hedge collection and tennis courts, part of the hospital site, can also be seen.

## Genetics Building

*"The building reinforces the picturesque character of its green space setting at the Farm and is a neighbourhood landmark."*

Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office



R. Hinchcliff

The Genetics Building viewed from the east with the historic hedge collection on the left, birch trees on Birch Drive on the right.

Continued on page 11