



# Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Winter 2013 Newsletter

Volume 25 No. 1

## Questions, Questions, Questions



R. Hinchcliff

'J. P. Connell' rose (see Page 7), originated at the Farm by Felicitas Svejda

"I was at your beautiful gardens this week and fell in love with a flower that I saw there. I have attached a picture of it and I was wondering if you could provide me with the name of this flower/plant and where I might be able to acquire one like it."

This is typical of the many enquiries to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) staff at the Farm responsible for the Arboretum and Ornamental Gardens.

### What about my ash tree?

The emerald ash borer, a current concern, has provoked a flurry of questions. This insect is decimating the ash tree population in Ottawa and people want to know what they can do to protect their particular ash trees or what they should do about replacement trees.

Courteous, informative replies are provided to all such questions, with referrals where appropriate to agencies or other sources, and without recommending particular commercial establishments.

### What was that species?

Perhaps the most interesting interaction for the staff is with other arboreta, gardens, or professional arborists and horticulturists. In addition to exchanges with the Royal Botanical Gardens at Hamilton and the Montreal Botanical Garden, they have had recent questions, for example, from Kew Gardens in London, England, the Akureyri Botanic Garden in Iceland, and the Nanjing Forestry University, China.

A recent visitor to the Arboretum wondered whether a *Catalpa bungei* tree there was correctly identified. It wasn't, and the resulting conversation with a professor from the State University of Canton, New York, resulted in AAFC receiving seeds collected at the Arnold Arboretum in Boston from a tree of that *Catalpa* species.

### What was that contraption?

Outside researchers often seek permission to conduct experiments. In 2011, for example, visitors to the Arboretum may have noticed long, funnel-like traps hanging from trees.

These belonged to a Carleton University biology professor studying acoustics in insects. The special traps were to capture bark beetles to record their sounds and study their sensory organs.

Another recent trapping project that involved the Arboretum was conducted by Natural Resources Canada and sought to determine the population density in the Ottawa area of the European Oak Borer.

As long as there is no danger to the public or to the collections, AAFC staff are keen to cooperate in such studies.

### Will you make a home for my plant?

Many offers are received from kind people wanting to donate a special plant to what are known to be special places - the

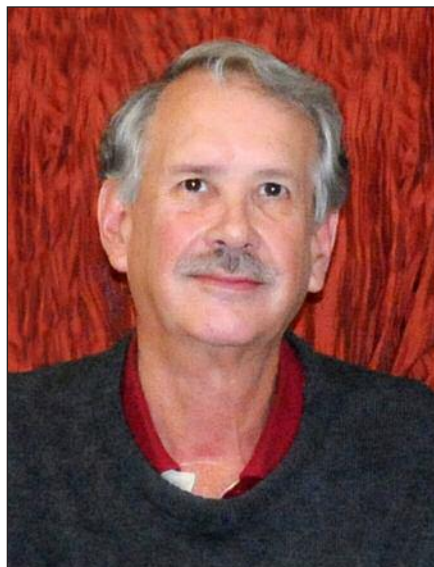
*Continued on Page 3*

## President's Message

This year marks the 25th anniversary of The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm. We look back with pride and satisfaction to many achievements and to the many hours so many volunteers have devoted to our projects and teams since 1988. We celebrate the support and contributions over the years of our many members and donors.

And, like thousands of visitors not necessarily involved with the Friends, we appreciate how much personal enjoyment comes from being at the Farm. As Friends, we help to improve the experience of visitors to the Farm by responding to their questions, engaging their interest in the collections, and advocating for the Farm.

We meet members of the public not only while we're gardening, but also at our many fundraising events during the year, when we take the opportunity to present our promotional material. We also make presentations to garden clubs and community associations. Members of the Board of Directors give interviews to local media and offer tours of the Ornamental Gardens and Arboretum. At every available opportunity we are out promoting the



Chuck Craddock

Farm, performing our role in helping Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada staff to promote, maintain and enhance this jewel and heritage site in the middle of the city.

The mission of the Friends of the Farm remains firm and we look forward to another 25 years of dedicated volunteer work on projects and activities in support of the Farm.

There will be changes: we must continually review our activities to remain relevant and successful. For example, we have re-examined our schedule of events in terms of attendance and, consequently, there will be a few changes in our events calendar in 2013. We are grateful to everyone who has provided ideas and suggestions as we plan ahead, and are always keen to receive input.

On behalf of all our current members and volunteers, I would like to recognize and sincerely thank all those who have contributed to making the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm so successful over the last 25 years.

And, as always, I would like to thank our current members for their ongoing support, our donors, and our many volunteers for their hard work and dedication. As I have often said, without your valued support we could not carry on. We need you to keep our organization strong and effective. Thank you!

## Mots du président

Cette année marque le 25<sup>e</sup> anniversaire des Amis de la ferme expérimentale centrale. Nous sommes fiers et satisfaits de ce que nous avons accompli et de toutes les heures que tant de bénévoles ont consacrées à nos projets et équipes depuis 1988. Nous célébrons le soutien et les contributions de nos nombreux membres et donateurs au fil des années.

Et comme des milliers de visiteurs qui ne font pas forcément partie des Amis de la ferme, nous apprécions tout le plaisir que nous procure le fait d'être à la ferme. En qualité d'amis de la ferme nous aidons à améliorer l'expérience des visiteurs en répondant à leurs questions, en les intéressant aux collections et leur parlant des avantages de la ferme.

Nous rencontrons le public non seulement lorsque nous jardinons, mais aussi lors de nos nombreuses activités de collecte de fonds durant l'année, qui sont aussi pour nous une occasion d'offrir du matériel promotionnel. Nous faisons également

des présentations devant des clubs de jardinage et des associations communautaires. Les membres du conseil d'administration donnent des entrevues aux médias locaux et guident des visites des jardins ornementaux et de l'arboretum.

Chaque fois que l'occasion se présente, nous faisons la promotion de la ferme, c'est-à-dire que nous remplissons notre rôle en aidant le personnel d'Agriculture et d'Agroalimentaire Canada à faire connaître, conserver et améliorer ce joyau et ce site patrimonial au cœur de la ville.

La mission des Amis de la ferme reste entière et nous espérons bien soutenir la ferme grâce au travail dévoué de nos bénévoles à nos projets et activités pendant 25 autres années.

Il y aura des changements, car nous devons sans cesse revoir nos activités pour en garantir l'utilité et le succès. Par exemple, nous avons examiné notre programme d'activités sous l'angle du nombre de personnes y participant et, par conséquent,

apporterons quelques modifications au programme de 2013. Nous sommes reconnaissants aux personnes qui ont contribué leurs idées et leurs suggestions à notre planification et nous accueillerons toujours avec joie un tel apport.

Au nom de nos membres et bénévoles, je tiens à exprimer ma reconnaissance et mes remerciements à toutes les personnes qui, par leur apport, ont fait des Amis de la ferme expérimentale centrale un tel succès au cours des 25 dernières années.

Et, comme toujours, je remercie nos membres pour leur soutien constant, ainsi que nos donateurs et nos nombreux bénévoles pour leur travail acharné et leur dévouement. Comme je l'ai déjà dit, sans votre précieux soutien nous ne pourrions poursuivre notre tâche. Nous avons besoin de vous pour que notre organisation demeure forte et utile.

Merci!

## Questions, Questions, Questions *(continued from Page 1)*

Arboretum and Ornamental Gardens. Sometimes these are gratefully accepted; other times there are good reasons to decline.

### What is in the collections?

Presentations are made or talks given to associations and clubs of horticulturists, arborists or gardeners. Another way that information is provided is through tours of the grounds. It may be a horticultural association, forestry group, garden club, or a visiting dignitary to AAFC. The tour may be of the entire Gardens or Arboretum, or interest may be limited to nut trees, lilacs, or some other collection.

The type of tour depends on the audience. For example, the tour arranged for delegates to a recent meeting in Ottawa of the International Plant Propagators Society's eastern region certainly differed from that given to the sons and daughters of AAFC staff on "Bring Your Kid to Work Day."

### What would you like to know about pruning?

In the fall of 2012, the Ontario and Quebec Chapters of the International Society of Arboriculture held a tree-pruning workshop at the Farm. This was an opportunity for AAFC staff to learn a lot

about the latest strategies and techniques for pruning, especially those designed to improve tree health and longevity. With so many trees in the Arboretum and around the Farm, and no time to prune for pruning's sake, staff gained knowledge of realistic rather than ideal pruning methods. This very successful event attracted arborists from across the two provinces.

Such sessions provide excellent opportunities for AAFC staff, not only to learn but also to generate further professional contacts and communications.

Richard Hinchcliff



Michel Falardeau, Director, Real Property and Building Operations, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, speaking at the Shelterbelt dedication ceremony on September 16. He thanked the 2012 donors and presented them with certificates of appreciation. Jenifer Craddock coordinated the event for the Friends.

R. Hinchcliff

## Master Gardeners Lecture Series

**S**ign up for individual lectures or the entire series. Lectures are held from 7 to 9 pm, Building 72, Arboretum, Central Experimental Farm. Individual lectures: \$12 FCEF members, \$15 others. Series: \$40 FCEF members, \$50 others.

**April 9** – Big, Bold and Beautiful Plants, size matters in the garden! by Nancy McDonald

No matter the size of your garden (and many of us find ourselves living on ever-shrinking city lots), this talk focuses on larger plants. Explore how perennials (mainly) and annuals of stature add visual interest and drama in your garden and may provide that needed design element.

**April 23** – Container Gardening-Design Made Simple by Catherine Disley Engler

Creating fabulous container combos is easy once you understand the basics. Catherine will discuss choosing

appropriate containers and growing medium, principles and elements of design, plant selection and seasonal options.

**May 14** – Savvy Choices for Spring 2013 by Edythe Falconer & Stephanie Sleeth

These two experienced master gardeners know you are anxious to get to garden centres and from there into your garden. They will present ideas to help you plan that garden and will provide a wide range of timely tips for savvy shopping and for getting the best out of your plants once you bring them home.

**September 10** – You Are Not Done Yet! Tasks to do Now to Improve Your Garden Next Year by Mary Reid

It's now September and there is still fun to be had in the garden! This talk will encourage you to keep on going as you enjoy the fall weather. Gardening and planning in the fall of 2013 will pay off in 2014.

## A Challenging Year

Reporting on a “challenging year” to the Friends of the Farm AGM in September 2012, President Chuck Craddock said, “The summer weather was unusual to say the least. Gardening was difficult in some ways given the drought that affected those parts of the Farm that don’t have irrigation.”

He reported about the same number of members and volunteers as in previous years – 550 members and 200 volunteers – and thanked everyone for their financial support and physical labours.

“The Ornamental Gardens, Shelterbelt and Arboretum teams were quite busy again this year,” he said. “Most had a good turnout of volunteers with quite a number of students helping out. Once again the Japanese beetles and dog strangling vine were with us and I guess we just have to get used to them.”

Chuck emphasized the very positive working relationship with AAFC. “With their guidance,” he continued, “we are able to assist them in maintaining and preserving the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Shelterbelt. I wish to thank them for their great support of the Friends of the Farm.”

## Treasurer’s Report

At the Friends’ AGM, John Gribbon made his final report to members after 10 years as treasurer. In his president’s report, Charles Craddock welcomed incoming Treasurer Jane Cornish.

As a result of large expenditures, on the Hosta Garden in particular, FCEF incurred a loss in 2011 of \$19,582. Total revenues were \$116,424 while total expenses were \$136,006. Funds were withdrawn from the Trust fund, so that total assets fell by \$14,900.

John thanked the Board and members for their assistance and understanding, and said it had been “a privilege to serve on the Board and a very rewarding experience these past 10 years.” Members applauded John for his outstanding contribution to the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm.

## Long-Serving Volunteers Recognized

Contributions of all Friends of the Farm volunteers are vital to the success of the organization and much appreciated. At the annual general meeting, volunteers who had reached significant milestones were presented certificates of appreciation for their long and valuable service.

Elizabeth (Betty) Wiles has been a Friends volunteer for 15 years. She is a regular at our events, helping wherever she can, and for many years was the leader of the Monday Green Thumb team.

Christine Banfill received a certificate of appreciation for 10 years service with the Friends. Christine leads the Tuesday perennial/annual team.

The following were recognized and thanked for five years of volunteer service – Fiona Cowell, Judy Dodds, Gretel Harmston, Peter Hecht, Tom Hillman, Stephen Joy, Catherine Pink, Jacqueline Shackleton, Josephine Stanic, and Barbara Wysocka.



Elza Feher and her winning hat at the Victorian Tea, August 12. During a window of sunshine, over 200 people enjoyed a classic tea party at the Arboretum

## Board of Directors, 2012-13

Charles Craddock – president  
Eric Jones – gardens/arboretum, vice president  
Jane Cornish – treasurer  
Judy Dodds – secretary  
Thomas Hillman – events  
Richard Hinchcliff – communications  
Denise Kennedy – membership  
Jeannine Lewis – at large  
Polly McColl – shelterbelt, past president  
Donna Pape – volunteers  
Bert Titcomb – fundraising

## Help Wanted

The Friends of the Farm requires coordinators for three fundraising events – Craft Sale, Rare and Unusual Plant Sale, and Art on the Farm – which take place at the Central Experimental Farm on selected weekends from April to August 2013.

The coordinators are responsible for planning and delivering each event. Duties include reviewing and selecting vendor applications, determining vendor table assignment, and scheduling volunteers to assist at each event.

The positions require excellent communication and organizational skills, and ability to work well in a group setting. Bilingualism and previous event planning experience would be assets. Police checks are required for each of these positions.

If you are interested, please send your resume to [volunteer@friendsofthefarm.ca](mailto:volunteer@friendsofthefarm.ca)

## Judith McBride – An Affinity for Science and the Outdoors

A scientist both by training and temperament, Judith McBride has also had a lifelong interest in plants and trees. Her professional training and personal interests are an excellent mix for her volunteer "job" with the Friends of the Farm.

On Wednesdays, Judith can be found in the Saunders Building at the Farm, inputting data on invasive plant species for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) National Collection of Vascular Plants, more popularly, and properly, known as a herbarium. The collection includes 1.5 million specimens housed in a climate-controlled environment. With the advent of computerization, "masses of old information needed recording," Judith explains. It is important to keep the herbarium current as it is used to respond to over 5,000 requests annually and also provides information for developing new crops and for ecological studies. Fresh from updating the lilac database for Joan Speirs, the Friends' lilac expert, Judith was a natural for the task.

It is exacting work and the rigorous attention to detail that she learned as a pharmacist has been put to excellent use. "It is very detailed work and you can't vary from the prescribed format," Judith adds. "Each family has so many species and the information is so detailed – we even have to indicate the latitude and longitude where the species was found. Some days I can only complete 10 records. It is time-consuming, repetitive work, but really fascinating. The herbarium represents a whole chunk of history. It is really amazing what is in there."

Born in Windsor, Ontario, Judith was a pioneer of sorts: she studied pharmacy when few women were choosing the profession as a career. When she married and moved to Smiths Falls, Judith worked as a hospital pharmacist. It was an excellent job for a mother of two young boys: she could work part time and be available when Richard and David returned home from school.

When the demands of her position grew and she and Henry were looking toward retirement, Judith decided it was time for a change. She applied for and accepted a position at the Civic Hospital in Ottawa in 1992. It was familiar territory – she spent the summer at the Civic between her third



R. Hinchliff

Judith McBride in front of the William Saunders Building, the home of the Herbarium, where she volunteers

and fourth year at university as part of her apprenticeship requirement.

Since moving to Ottawa, the McBrides have always lived within sight of the Farm. She and Henry like to "check on their crops" every day.

While Judith had no formal background as a gardener, she has always been drawn to plants and trees. "I have always had an affinity for the outdoors," she says, "and as a child forever wanted to go into the woods near our home." Judith's interest in creating her own garden began in the mid-1980s with the purchase of a winterized cottage near Edelweiss in Gatineau, Quebec. She started by planting daylilies dug from nearby ditches. She was dealing with some erosion on the property and thought that planting daylilies would help stabilize the soil. The plants quickly spread and created substantial gardens throughout the property.

In 2006, and long retired, Judith spotted an ad from the Friends of the Farm searching for someone to help with data entry. Considering her proximity to the Farm and her love of the outdoors, she was quick to sign up as a volunteer. Judith's first project for

the Friends was updating and enhancing the lilac database by incorporating information from Joan Speirs' thorough inventory.

Beyond her work with the herbarium, Judith has helped at the Friends' Book Sale, the Victorian Tea, the Craft and Bake Sale, and both Art on the Farm and For the Love of the Farm. Judith may have to stop helping at the art shows, however. She always seems to find something she can't resist and there's no more room for additional art in her home.

Volunteering is a natural part of Judith's life. "My parents were always helping out," she explains. "They were very active in our church and were very welcoming to newcomers so I simply followed their example." Volunteering, she adds, "always provided a welcome change from my regular work."

Over the years, Judith has served on the Smiths Falls Planning Board and the Scout Association. After retiring in 1996, she became involved with Volunteer Canada where she was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for her outstanding work.

Mary Ann Smythe

# A Truly International Lilac Convention



Jean-François Gonot

Joan Speirs examining a Lemoine hybrid, Nancy, France, May 2012

Tatiana Poliakova kindly gave me two of her published lilac books, with translated titles, *The Time of Lilacs* and *A History of Russian Lilacs: In Memory of Kolesnikov*. Her photographs are outstanding as, I am sure, is the text. She indicated that she is impressed by the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm's website and our work as volunteers. Unfortunately, there's no such volunteer effort in Russia, which badly needs labour to maintain the collections.

There were also speakers from Germany, the United States, and Belgium, but most were from France, and covered a wide variety of lilac topics, including establishing a business or a collection, hybridization research projects, effects of climate change, and multiple annual bloomings. Talks were given in English or French, with translation available.

A highlight was the visit to the newly established Lemoine lilacs now housed at the Nancy Botanical Garden. The Lemoine nursery in Nancy closed in 1968 and while the Lemoine house still stands, the nursery has been built on. All 214 lilac cultivars by Lemoine have been found, throughout the world, and returned to Nancy in honour of Victor Lemoine, probably the greatest hybridizer of all time.

In 2013, the ILS will convene at Madison, Wisconsin, and our hope is that some of our European members will join us there.

Joan Speirs, Friends' Lilac Team Coordinator

The International Lilac Society (ILS) is a group of people with a common interest in lilacs. Meeting with other lilac-lovers is invaluable for gaining information and contacts. The society was founded in 1971 and since then has held annual conventions within North America at bloom time. Ottawa has played host twice, in 1982 and again in 2009, both times at the Central Experimental Farm.

The convention from May 2-4, 2012, however, marked a departure from our usual gathering in North America. Held at the Nancy Botanical Garden (*Conservatoire et Jardins Botaniques de Nancy*), at Nancy, France, we were invited to see the restored Lemoine collection of French Hybrid lilacs under the care of Jean-François Gonot.

Finally, a truly international convention. Such anticipation – and, for me, several challenges to solve. How to speak with delegates from other European countries? How to get two knees in good working order and up to the task? French lessons compliments of granddaughter Robin (just graduated from teacher's college) were arranged. Two knee replacements were completed with ample time for recovery. And finally, my daughter Kathy and I were off on the much anticipated trip.

The convention was magical, with attendees from Russia, Germany, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Canada and the United States. There were nine impressive women delegates from Russia; Russian lilac hybridizers are much admired worldwide for their creations over the years. Tatiana Poliakova presented a lecture entitled *The best lilac cultivars of Russian breeders*. Her colleague, Ol'ga Aladina, provided an English accompaniment to the outstanding photographs.



*A History of Russian Lilacs: In Memory of Kolesnikov* was one of two books author Tatiana Poliakova presented to Joan Speirs.

L. A. Kolesnikov was a famous 20th century lilac breeder who created the "Russian lilac." Perhaps the worldwide favourite among his cultivars is

BEAUTY OF MOSCOW.



R. Hinchcliff

'Lilac Kayak' by Jean-Pascal Gratton (see Page 7)

## J. P. Connell and His Rose



**J**ames Peter Connell, former Deputy-Minister, Agriculture Canada, passed away in Perth, Ontario, on October 1, 2012, at the age of 86. During his time at Agriculture, from 1982 to 1986, Dr. Felicitas Svejda was

breeding her remarkable roses at the Central Experimental Farm.

J. P. Connell had a successful career in the federal public service, beginning at Transport Canada, then at Treasury Board, Revenue Canada and, finally, at Agriculture. A highlight was welcoming Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union to the Central Experimental Farm in 1983 (see photo on this page).

At his retirement, Mr. Connell was presented with a flagpole, Canadian flag and a 'J. P. Connell' rose. This rose, bred at the Farm by Dr. Svejda in 1973 and released in 1986, was the first yellow-coloured Explorer rose (see Page 1). It was the only Explorer rose released in Ottawa not named after a Canadian explorer.

Characteristics of the 'J. P. Connell'

rose were similar to those of the man, according to his obituary. The rose was described as "... mostly without thorns, capable of surviving the sometimes (politically) cold Ottawa winters, producing beautiful lemony flowers for all to enjoy."

The light yellow colour of this bush rose, wrote Dr. Svejda, came from its parentage of Floribunda 'Arthur Bell' and the hardy 'Von Scharnhorst'.

In his later years, Mr. Connell and his wife ran the Connell Rose Bed & Breakfast at their home outside Ottawa. "As visitors entered the drive, they were greeted with the Canadian flag flying proudly, a row of 'J. P. Connell' rosebushes, and J. P. himself." (*Ottawa Citizen*, October 2, 2012)

## Visit of Mikhail Gorbachev

**D**uring his visit to Canada in 1983, Mikhail Gorbachev, Secretary of Agriculture in the Soviet Union's Politburo, had a long, private discussion with the Soviet Ambassador to Canada, Aleksandr Yakovlev, that influenced the future of the Soviet Union. This is the theme of Christopher Shulgan's 2008 book *The Soviet Ambassador, The Making of the Radical Behind Perestroika*.

The meeting took place at the Windsor, Ontario home of Eugene Whelan, Minister of Agriculture. Whelan had been delayed in Ottawa and, in his absence, his wife suggested the two Soviets go for a stroll in the back garden. "This is the conversation that started the end of the Cold War," wrote Shulgan.

Deputy-Minister J. P. Connell (above) welcomed Gorbachev and Whelan to the Central Experimental Farm that year.



Library and Archives Canada & M. A. Vachon, 1B/DAP/15A-17

Mikhail Gorbachev and Eugene Whelan at the Central Experimental Farm, 1983

## Lilac Kayak

**A**ttracted by the purple colouring in the wood of a large, old lilac removed from the Farm's collection, Jean-Pascal Gratton, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, kept a piece for himself. Later, at home, he found it to be a hard wood that was excellent to carve and the result – a beautiful lilac kayak (see Page 6).

J-P also discovered that the lilac sawdust and shavings have a distinctive smell, not at all like the lilac flower, but a very pleasing fragrance. Another wood he enjoys working with is larch. "It's a dark wood, with a beautiful grain," J-P explains.

His grandfather was a wood carver and, when he passed away, the family agreed that his carving knife should go to J-P even though "I had never carved anything," he says.

His first carving was a loon, a present for his father who loved birds. J-P laughs when he recalls this first effort, which was not entirely successful. The loon's head was not round, "it looked like it had been bashed in on one side – a beginner's mistake." His father, however, saw past the flaw, and loved the loon.

Now a skilled carver, J-P has recently been carving masks that, once finished, have been snapped up by eager family members.

Richard Hinchcliff

## Surprises from the Nursery



Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*), Rock Garden

**H**ave you ever wondered where we get the young trees that are planted on the grounds of the Farm? You may be surprised to learn that the Arboretum has always had a nursery and many of our trees and shrubs come from there. That tradition continues today.

Part of our mandate is to preserve the living collection, and propagation is a big part of that role. A good example is the work that Joan Speirs and the Friends' Lilac Team have done to maintain the lilac collection through cuttings. This ensures that old and rare specimens are preserved. Over the last few years, Arboretum staff have joined in to assist in propagating some of the older *vulgaris* cultivars, some of which could not be replaced if lost to the collection. We also seek to collect and propagate material from any unique specimen in the living collection, and to collect new material for the collection as well.

The main nursery is divided into four main beds where the plants are laid out into rows. At the centre of the nursery, plants are arranged in tight blocks sunk into the ground. Here you'll find plants that are spending their first winter in our nursery. In the spring, survivors will be judged and the hardiest, most vigorous, will be grown on in the larger rows.

Recently, we added a large shade house where all seedlings from the greenhouse spend their first summer. The shade greatly improves the survival rate, dramatically reducing the water and heat stress on the young plants.

### From seed to hardy, attractive trees and shrubs

The Arboretum continues to be a testing ground for hardiness. Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*) was long thought not to be hardy in Ottawa. Jean-Pascal Gratton and former AAFC staff member Brian Douglas collected some seed from hardy mature plants growing in a Hull, Quebec park. The offspring are now thriving and producing seed themselves. We have another hardy seed strain that was planted out in 2012. Also, seed from two other hardy strains are on the way to the Farm from other northern donors.

Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) are another good example. Two mature trees on the Farm produced abundant seed in 2010 and we harvested and grew them on. Most survived the first winter outdoors. By selecting the strongest growers and selecting for appearance, we should have plenty of interesting Japanese maples on the Farm in a few years.

Another collection of great interest is the Magnolias. Many of our specimens are mature and producing seed. These are all hardy examples of what can grow here, but they hybridize freely and who knows what interesting plants will result? In the past few years, we have collected a lot of seed and look forward to finding out what they will become.

Last year, I was given seed of a Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*) shrub that has been growing happily without any serious dieback since the 1970s, I believe,

in a USDA Zone 4. This is the lovely shrub that many have purchased from supermarkets in the fall, in gorgeous full bloom, only to find a dead or almost dead shrub next spring. We will grow these on and see how they fare. The gentleman who donated the seed has brought us many other seeds that will be of great interest in the future. I have found our most valuable resource to be the interested person who shows up out of the blue with a special plant and the story behind it.

### Seed from other northern countries

Aside from the above examples of trees and shrubs that are growing out of their hardiness range and have been given to us by interested individuals, we have made great efforts to expand our contacts and relationships with other arboreta and botanical gardens. We have specifically sought out northern sources. For example, we exchange seeds with a couple of places in Finland. Also, the former Soviet Union is proving to be a great source for material. The Amur Region, for instance, closely mirrors our climatic conditions and makes a great seed source. In the past few years, we have acquired seeds of trees and shrubs that are completely new to us, but absolutely hardy. If we continue to develop relationships with northern institutions, in North America, Europe and Asia, you will see more unusual plants growing on the Farm.

Our nursery is full of surprises and will continue to grow, no pun intended. I look forward to seeing many more interesting trees and shrubs, new and old, planted out in years to come.

Robert Glendinning,  
Horticulturist/Propagator, AAFC



Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*),  
Arboretum

## Canada's Plant Emblems

Over 100 people attended a very successful launch of *Official Plant Emblems of Canada - A Biodiversity Treasure*, last September at the K. W. Neatby Building. Authors of the book, from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), are Ernest Small, Paul Catling and Brenda Brookes.

In a stimulating address to the audience, Dr. Ernie Small emphasized a key message of the book - Canadian plant biodiversity is valuable and should be appreciated and protected.

The beautifully illustrated book is aimed at the non-scientific community. Dr. Small was pleased to note that a review in the *Ottawa Citizen* stated that it was "Not just another dull biology textbook" and that it reveals "funny, intriguing, gross facts about Canada's emblematic plants."

Dr. Michèle Marcotte, Science Director, Eastern Cereal and Oilseed Research Centre, AAFC, hosted the event. Those attending came from AAFC, other federal departments, and external organizations, including the Friends of the Farm. "The event provided a valuable opportunity for networking between AAFC researchers and those from other organizations," said Dr. Marcotte. "Some of this interaction will likely lead to new collaboration."

Copies of the book can be purchased online in English at <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/393571/publication.html> or in French at <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/393572/publication.html>.



(Left to right) Paul Catling, Brenda Brookes, Ernest Small

Courtesy of Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada

## A Magnet for Butterflies

I read with interest Sharon Saunders' article about the Ornamental Gardens attracting many birds and butterflies. (Fall 2012 issue, Page 10)

There was excitement at the Gardens in late August through September, when a butterfly enthusiast who happened to be checking out the blossoms for butterflies found a number of fiery skippers. If someone was seen walking around and around the same few beds for (sometimes) hours, it would have been one of the small group of butterfly-watchers.

I was able to see and photograph the skipper on several occasions, and counted at least three of them, but others found as many as eight. This is an extremely rare species in the region, and interestingly, the first (and until this one, the only) record for the species dates from 1998, also from the Ornamental Gardens.

Another rare species, and possibly the first recorded for the region, also turned up in the Ornamental Gardens in September, a wild indigo duskywing. The Gardens certainly are a magnet for butterflies, as well as for a number of bees.

Christine Hanrahan



Fiery Skipper, male, on *Lantana*

Christine Hanrahan



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 in the Friends of the Farm costs \$25 per year for an individual and \$45 per year for a family, \$20 Seniors/Students. Membership fees support the many projects of the Friends of the Farm.

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## A Winning Garden

**C**ongratulations to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) Ornamental Gardens staff whose "Bird, Bee and Butterfly Buffet" garden was a winner last year!

The garden placed an impressive second in the 2012 landscape design contest for gardens that display All-America Selections (AAS) winning plants. (See this newsletter's summer and fall issues.)

Announcing the contest results in October, AAS complimented AAFC for "a creative way to incorporate many AAS Winners that attract urban wildlife. They specifically chose AAS Winners that were tough, resilient and an excellent food source for the wildlife."

Despite a very hot and dry summer, the "Buffet" garden performed very well and caught the attention of many visitors, who appreciated the



explanatory plaque and plant labels. And, as intended, many representatives of Ottawa's urban wildlife, attracted by nectar and seed-bearing plants, made use of the garden.

Approximately 1,200 plants were used in the garden, of which 900 were AAS winners. The garden was at the southern end of the Ornamental Gardens at the entrance to the Agriculture Museum's parking lot off Prince of Wales.

Competing in the category of gardens that have between 10,001 and 100,000 visitors per year, the "Buffet" garden came in second to a creation of the Horticultural Art Society of Colorado Springs, Colorado. Their demonstration garden, featuring AAS vegetable winners, was designed to educate visitors on the many ways to grow vegetables in a home garden. Third place went to the Toledo Botanical Garden, Toledo, Ohio.

### All-America Selections (AAS)

AAS winners are new plant varieties that have proven, after extensive trials, to be the best performers according to independent horticulture experts. AAS conducts anonymous tests of the best new varieties from the world's most prominent breeders, and then has them rated by independent horticulture experts. Only the best garden performers are declared AAS Winners.

The Ornamental Gardens at the Farm has been an AAS Display Garden for nearly 50 years. Visitors to the annual beds can see and judge for themselves the latest and the best varieties of flowers, plants and vegetables that are available at garden centres or online seed sources.

Richard Hinchcliff

#### NEW MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM

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

#### INTEREST IN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

YES ☐ NO ☐

#### TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

FAMILY ..... \$45/year  
 ADULT ..... \$25/year  
 SENIOR/STUDENT ..... \$20/year  
 BASIC CORPORATE ..... \$250/year  
 NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION ..... \$25/year  
 INDIVIDUAL LIFE ..... \$200  
 SENIOR COUPLE LIFE ..... \$250  
 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.

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**

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Website: [www.friendsofthefarm.ca](http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca)

## The Two Faces of January *(continued from Page 12)*

Before Janus switches to face 2013, here are hasty last thoughts from 2012 that apply every year as winter approaches:

- Drain barrels, hoses and outdoor taps before hard frost.
- Sink pots of bargain/surplus plants into the ground. They'll be waiting for you next spring.
- Bring in *Cyperus papyrus*, geraniums, etc. for overwintering indoors. This saves money and gets you bigger plants next year.
- Bag and compost leaves, or leave them on the ground and shred them with a mower. Feeds the lawn.
- Perennials left standing make interesting winterscapes that provide winter food and spring nesting materials for birds.
- Pile extra earth around roses to frost-proof crowns – especially in their first two winters.
- Save dried pole bean seeds. Four pole beans on a four-pole teepee can supply a family of four for several months – longer if the kids don't like them.

- Daffodils make a good substitute for tulips although squirrels might not agree.
- Discard overripe or damaged tomatoes in a special spot where you'd like tomato seedlings next year.
- Cut lavender and Siberian sage to twelve inches to discourage straggling.
- Cut old raspberry canes to the ground. Younger shoots will be more productive next year.
- Cover planters and outdoor pots to avoid losing soil nutrients during winter.

In the spring newsletter, Janus will share choice horticultural New Year's Resolutions – especially those that are frequently broken! Ambition knows no bounds for 2013. Will the fruit trees fruit? Will the squash vine borer be destroyed? Will the rabbits and squirrels emigrate? Will the gardener's knees buckle? Stay tuned!

Edythe Falconer, Master Gardener

## Volunteer Muscle



Volunteers erect a tent for the Shelterbelt ceremony, September 16, 2012.

From left to right: Roman Popadiouk, Kevin O'Connor, Roger Taguchi, Ben Pascolo-Neveu, Paul Dick, and Jenifer Craddock, event coordinator.

Each Friends' event requires some kind of physical set up. It means putting together and lugging our heavy pegboard screens to artists at Art on the Farm, setting up screens and tables at our craft and bake sales, arranging the tables (outside or indoors) for the Victorian Tea, erecting tents for the Shelterbelt ceremony, and so on.

And that's just the start. At the end of each event, the screens, tables, tents, signs, etc., must be dismantled and stored.

Fortunately, there are men and women who are keen and able to help. Their strong backs and good humour may be tested, but the work gets done, events take place and, afterwards, sites are restored to their normal state.

"I really appreciate the input of our set-up/take-down crew of volunteers," says Tom Hillman, director of events. "Without their assistance some events just would not happen in a timely fashion. On behalf of the Board of the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm, I would like to sincerely thank them for their commitment to our event activities."

Members of the muscle team in 2012 were Bob Barron, Al Beaulieu, Charles Craddock, Paul Dick, Wolfgang Eibich, Rose Marie Farley, Alan Frebrowski, Rebecca Gardner, Leslie Hill, Richard Hinchcliff, Al Jedel, Eric Jones, Percy Lewis, Martin Macleod, Carol MacLeod, Kevin O'Connor, Ben Pascolo-Neveu, Roman Popadiouk, Brendan Roy, Joseph Slobodian, Reed Smith, Josephine Stanic, Roger Taguchi, and Frank Taker.

## Two Faces of January

January can be a tough month for gardening themes, but wasn't there a god of January and didn't he have two faces. Wouldn't that provide a theme? I googled "two faces of January" and found a movie starring Viggo Mortenson and Kirsten Dunst. I then tapped in "two faces of Janus, god of January" and up came Janus, Roman god of new beginnings, transitions, gates and doors – oft portrayed with two faces or even two heads!

Hindsight, as experienced by many gardeners, both expert and otherwise, is usually a bittersweet concoction of regrets and celebrations. Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton are always ready with friendly commiseration, congratulations, and timely or untimely advice.

When Janus – aka "Hindsight" – looks back on 2012 he notes that fruit trees planted in 2011 survived the winter, protected from cute little Eastern Cottontails by fine plastic or wire mesh around lower trunks and coarser mesh around whole trees. It was worth the trouble. Rabbits can girdle young trees in no time flat and reach very high up when standing on back legs. "Smart girl," says Janus.

These same trees were carefully watered throughout 2012's triple droughts. Fertilizing trees in their second year is okay and was done using compost, manure and bone meal, with a third application in early October. Weeding between trees was minimized by planting cover crops of potatoes, sweet potatoes and tomatoes. "Good on you," says Janus.

However, ...

Spring pruning was way off. It should have been done in late February when trees were still completely dormant. Pruning later can cause excessive growth – and it did. Despite late frost there were a few blossoms, promising more in 2013. Occasional Japanese beetles were treated to a swim in a jar of soapy water. "Mixed review," says Janus.

Halfway through summer, sweet potato vines were devoured along with prospects for a good crop. Belatedly, vines were covered with chicken wire – a useful design feature in squirrely gardens. The recovery produced fine medium-sized tubers. September vine cuttings were



R. Hinchcliff

Bebb's Oak (*Quercus xbebbiana*), Arboretum, and the new barn at the Canada Agriculture Museum

rooted and now flourish in the sunroom for transplanting after May 31, 2013, not before. Sweet potatoes are cold sensitive. "Good comeback," says Janus.

Spring 2012 began with high hopes for the pumpkin family. During extreme heat, vines wilt during the day but with faithful watering usually rehydrate at night. When this didn't happen, a closer look revealed sizeable flaky lesions at the base of each vine. Here was a new pest – the squash vine borer. One little squash beat the attack and another grew on a rerooted branch of the mother vine. "Live and learn," says Janus.

2012 was an unlikely year for renovating part of the backyard. Using a professionally prepared plan, work began, sensibly, in the shady section. New plants were added while surplus plants were relocated to pots and holding beds. "Everyone" needed a lot of water, including the gardener. Work on the sunny section was suspended until mid-August because of extreme heat. Logistics became more complicated: 50% of existing plants would be retained but transplanted to new locations. The space was divided into sectors and worked one sector at a time. "Not too shabby," says Janus.

The toughest sector contained mature peonies – forces to be reckoned with. This chore was chunked into Dig,

Separate, Prune, and Replant. August is the best month for tackling peonies. They still have time to establish new roots before hard frost. The products of excavation were separated into piles of unsightly, mostly leafless, stems with 2-3 buds and a bit of root attached. Old, rotten, or over-sized roots were discarded. Holding bed space was still available and budded stems were planted three to a hole. By late September, rain came and buds activated. They shouldn't have been visible. Soil had settled and buds needed to be covered again to a depth of about an inch. "You remembered," says Janus.

Sector by sector the redesign was completed and temporary homes found for extras. Only one plant failed and its demise remains a mystery as it received plenty of TLC along with all the others. Persistent drought coupled with prolonged heat required generous watering. When barrels ran out hoses took over. The sunniest part of the lawn was consigned to dormancy and/or death. In late September, dead patches were optimistically top-dressed with mixtures of compost and clover seed. Clover stays green longer than grass during droughts, attracts pollinators, and fixes nitrogen in soil. "Aren't you smart," says Janus.

*Continued on Page 11*