



Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Winter 2014 Newsletter

Volume 26 No. 1



Arboretum from the southern lookout. Photograph by Raymond Roy

Changing the Scale of Urban Landscapes

By Roman Popadiouk

Any time I visit friends or relatives living high up in Ottawa's high rises I am amazed by the trees that almost completely cover old residential areas. Maples, basswoods, ash, oaks, poplars, black walnuts and many more magnificent forest giants keep their massive limbs well above the rooves of houses. It took decades for these trees to get that tall and, in relation to a human lifetime, there are no limits to the healthy lifespan of these trees.

The same number of decades does the opposite to houses. They become structurally weak, and "too small" for young and ambitious generations of Ottawa citizens. New houses bring a new look to quiet green streets, but huge foundations "eat" both

back and front yards. Often all the trees are removed from the lot, leaving just little patches of grass or small flower beds.

Grass and flowers fit the remaining "green areas", but many of us still want trees to decorate our yards. What choices do we have to refill vacant spots next to or between "monstrous houses"? We could replant maples or pines, but they will take up all the garden space left in one decade or less. We may look for low shrubs, but they will stay close to the ground or spread suckers everywhere, destroying driveways or fences. To coexist with big houses there is one more choice: small trees that reach maturity quickly and never grow large.

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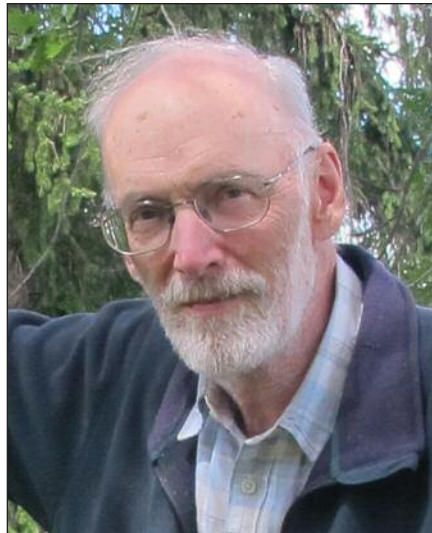
President's message: What volunteers can do

The Friends of the Farm was set up to maintain and enhance the Ornamental Gardens and Arboretum under the direction of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada staff.

The Friends can contribute to the workforce as well as to selected features of the public areas of the Farm. Our volunteers take on projects such as the Shelterbelt on Merivale Road and the Hosta Garden to help bolster those areas. Volunteers also come up with creative ways to fund our organization, through events and tours, adding to visitors' enjoyment.

What we can't and don't do is run the place or do the heavy lifting; that is clearly the AAFC's job. But we shouldn't underestimate what volunteers can do. Other related groups provide some recent examples of the scope of volunteering:

- Ecology Ottawa launched a Tree Ottawa initiative aimed at planting one million trees in Ottawa by 2017. This community-based initiative will engage residents, companies and public groups in protecting, planting and promoting trees in neighbourhoods across the city.
- Some Ottawa community associations are undertaking tree inventories in their neighbourhood parks; e.g. in Stonebridge,



Windsor and Brewer parks. This data will be used to guide future park design.

- A recent "citizen science" effort by a (now-disbanded) advisory committee of the City of Ottawa mapped tree cover across the urban part of the City. The result helped identify areas that are relatively poor in tree cover and provided a benchmark for future comparisons: e.g., after the effects of the emerald ash borer.

- Project BudBurst (budburst.org) in the US is using volunteers to help scientists learn how plants respond to climate change locally, regionally and nationally. The public is engaged in collecting data on the timing of leafing, flowering and fruiting of plants. In the same vein, a Friends team is collecting data on bloom time for species in the Arboretum, and this data could also become part of a bigger scheme.
- Leafsnap (leafsnap.com) in the US uses volunteers to help develop a database of tree species. Leafsnap allows users to identify tree species using an iPhone or iPad and then share images and geo-coded stamps of species locations. The resulting data will also enable scientists to map and monitor tree changes.

There are many other examples of innovative volunteer initiatives in Ottawa and elsewhere.

The Friends of the Farm is developing new projects for our 2017 program that will need volunteers for many different activities. If you would like to know more about the 2017 program and to participate in one or more project, please contact volunteer@friendsofthefarm.ca.

Eric Jones

Mot du président : les bénévoles et leurs responsabilités

Le groupe Les Amis de la Ferme a été créé afin de veiller à l'entretien et à la mise en valeur des Jardins ornementaux et de l'Arboretum, sous la direction du personnel d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada (AAC).

Les Amis peuvent contribuer à la main-d'œuvre et au travail dans certains secteurs des lieux publics de la Ferme. Nos bénévoles prennent en charge certains projets, tels le brise-vent Merivale et le jardin d'hostas, pour leur fournir le soutien nécessaire. En outre, ces personnes dévouées débordent d'idées créatrices au sujet du financement de l'organisation. Elles sont donc aptes à suggérer des activités et des excursions, pour le plus grand plaisir de nos visiteurs.

Par contre, nous ne pouvons pas exécuter certaines tâches, et nous ne le faisons pas, en particulier s'il s'agit de gérer la Ferme ou de lever des poids lourds; ces fonctions relèvent sans contredit d'AAC. Cependant, nous ne devrions pas sous-estimer la capacité de travail des bénévoles. Parmi d'autres groupes connexes, on découvre de récents exemples de l'ampleur du bénévolat :

- Écologie Ottawa a lancé un projet de plantation d'arbres nommé « Tree Ottawa », avec l'objectif de planter un million d'arbres à Ottawa d'ici 2017. Dans le cadre de cette initiative communautaire, on invitera les résidents, ainsi que des sociétés et des

groupes publics, à planter des arbres, et à en assurer la protection et la promotion dans les voisinages de la ville.

- Certaines associations communautaires d'Ottawa ont entrepris de faire un inventaire des arbres de leur voisinage, en particulier ceux des parcs Stonebridge, Windsor et Brewer. Ces données aideront à orienter la conception de parcs à l'avenir.
- Récemment, des membres d'un comité consultatif de la Ville d'Ottawa (maintenant dissolu) ont dressé une carte des arbres qui couvraient la région urbaine de la Ville, tout en se basant sur « la science citoyenne » ou « les connaissances civiques ou des citoyens ». Les résultats ont permis de déterminer des endroits qui sont relativement privés d'arbres; ils serviront de repère à des comparaisons à l'avenir, c'est-à-dire, une fois que seront connus les effets de l'agrite du frêne.
- Dans le cadre du projet BudBurst (budburst.org) aux États-Unis, des bénévoles prêtent leur aide à des scientifiques pour découvrir comment les changements climatiques affectent les plantes sur le plan local, régional et national. Ce sont les membres du public qui font la collecte des données en suivant le cycle des plantes, de la feuille à la fleur et au fruit. Parallèlement, une équipe des Amis recueille ainsi des données

sur le temps de floraison des espèces que contient l'Arboretum. Ces données pourraient notamment faire partie d'un projet de plus grande envergure.

- Aux États-Unis également, le programme Leafsnap (leafsnap.com) met à contribution des bénévoles qui aident à développer une banque de données des espèces d'arbres. Leafsnap permet aux utilisateurs de repérer une espèce d'arbre au moyen d'applications présentes sur les téléphones intelligents ou les tablettes. Des images sont transférées, ainsi que des messages codés qui indiquent l'emplacement géographique de ces espèces. La base de données résultante permettra aux scientifiques de cartographier et d'observer les changements qui s'opèrent dans les arbres.

Actuellement, on pourrait citer bien d'autres exemples d'initiatives créatrices de nature bénévole, que ce soit à Ottawa ou ailleurs.

Les Amis de la Ferme élaborent actuellement de nouveaux projets liés à notre programme de 2017, lesquels nécessiteront la contribution de bénévoles pour un grand nombre d'activités différentes. Pour obtenir d'autre d'information sur ce programme et participer à l'un ou l'autre des projets, veuillez faire votre demande à l'adresse suivante :

volunteer@friendsofthefarm.ca.

Eric Jones

Changing the Scale of Urban Landscapes *(continued from Page 1)*

About two dozen small hardy trees or tree-like shrubs grow well in Ottawa. Some of these are native to North America, and some were brought from other continents over the last five hundred years. Ottawa's Arboretum contains almost everything - for a complete list you may look at the Location Guide on the Friends of the Farm website. I am going to mention a few common, but not often noticed, small trees that may suit changing urban landscapes.

Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*) is a large group of species of small trees common to forested areas in North America. One of these, Saskatoon serviceberry, is so hardy that it occurs in northern landscapes in Saskatchewan and Alaska. Growth habits, flowers and leaves vary slightly within the genus; however, common to all these species are the beautiful and abundant white flowers covering numerous thin branches in spring. Later in summer, small edible fruits decorate serviceberry trees. All kinds of red and purplish colours will be on display for a few weeks, then the fruits are gone but the trees do not lose their beauty.

American Yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea*) grows naturally in Eastern North America, but is generally more common south of Ottawa. Yellowwood is a large tree in Carolina, Oklahoma or Missouri. In Ottawa, it is small with a compact transparent crown. Its compound leaves do not cast heavy shade and its white, light flowers make the tree appear even more delicate looking in early summer. Long, light brown beans will decorate the tree branches later in fall but

will not clutter your yard before the snow comes.

Common Sea-buckthorn

(*Hippophae rhamnoides*) - the name may sound suspicious, but this small tree is not a close relation to common buckthorn, which is a noxious shrub species in Ontario. Sea-buckthorn was introduced to North America from Europe, where it grows on very poor, but well-drained, soils. Narrow, silvery coloured leaves will never block the view inside or outside your property. Both male and female of this species have inconspicuous flowers; however, in late summer you will know which gender you planted because that's when the species' bright orange berries become flashy on female trees. Long spikes protect attractive edible fruits, so be cautious if you want to collect some.

Cornelian Cherry (*Cornus mas*) came to North America from Mediterranean-type woodlands that grow in Europe and Asia. North American dogwoods are similar to this species, but they do not produce tasty edible fruits. Cornelian cherry is rather rare in Ottawa; local tree nurseries do not list them, but the Arboretum's collection has a few beautiful specimens. In early spring they are full of small yellow flowers that pollinating insects notice before (and more often than) the majority of visitors to the Arboretum. The relatively dense foliage does not look very dark in summer



Serviceberry trees (*Amelanchier*) at the Arboretum

because the leaves are light green underneath. In September, dark red tasty sour berries protrude through the still-green leaves of mature Cornelian cherry crowns. Birds, for sure, and possibly humans will enjoy such food before the really cold nights start.

Hopefully these few examples clearly show that Nature gives us plenty of choices to get what we need, regardless of what we willingly or unwittingly do to our immediate environment.

During the 15 years that Roman Popadiouk has been with the Friends of the Farm, he has served on the Board of Directors and contributed to many projects and events, from database creation to set-up crew for art shows. He is co-author of For the Love of Trees: A Guide to the Trees of Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm Arboretum.

First Place Winner!

Congratulations to Sharon Saunders and her Ornamental Gardens team for placing first in the 2013 All-America Selections (AAS) landscape design contest, up from second place in 2012. Their win was for Category II gardens, which are those that have between 10,001 and 100,000 visitors per year.

"The judges loved how you planted the AAS Winners in masses for that big 'pop' of colour for each winner," wrote Diane Blazek, Executive Director, National Garden Bureau of AAS in a message to Sharon, who had used 1,295 plants and 33 different AAS winners in the bed near the Prince of Wales entrance to the museum parking lot (see Sharon's article in the Fall 2013 newsletter, Page 7).



Friends of the Farm Annual General Meeting, 2013

Outgoing president Chuck Craddock welcomed everyone to the Friends of the Farm AGM in September 2013 at the wonderful new Learning Centre of the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum. He said it had been a privilege to serve the Friends during the 25th anniversary year of this important volunteer organization. He went on to thank those who had prepared the commemorative newsletter issue and organized the anniversary picnic at the Arboretum.

"The tens of thousands of visitors to the Farm," he said, "attest to the wonderful work done by the many volunteers in support of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)." Chuck mentioned that it had been a normal year in terms of growing conditions, even though many of the ash trees at the Farm had to be destroyed because of emerald ash borer infestation and the dog-strangling vine continued to flourish. On the other hand "Japanese beetles were not as prevalent this year" in the Ornamental Gardens.

Saying that, "with the good weather, our outdoor fundraising events achieved very good results, as did the indoor events," Chuck thanked director Tom Hillman who had coordinated all the events. He also thanked "our enthusiastic director Denise Kennedy" for another successful bus trip. She has managed such excursions for several years.

Chuck noted the excellent working relationship that had been established with AAFC and especially the grounds staff, acknowledged the dedication, tireless work and financial contributions from volunteers and members, and said "Thank you also for letting me serve as your president for the last three years."

On behalf of members, incoming president Eric Jones thanked Chuck for his valuable contribution to the Friends. Eric also provided a well-received presentation of the Friends' plans to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday.

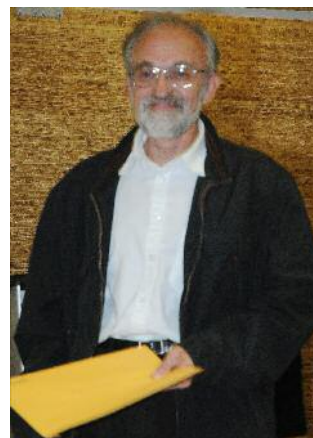
Treasurer's report

Attendees at the AGM received summary financial statements and Chuck Craddock read a report by outgoing treasurer Jane Cornish.

"Net revenue for 2012 was \$616 as compared to a net loss in 2011 of \$19,582. Revenues were lower in 2012 mainly as a result of fewer donations to the Shelterbelt, lower membership revenues and no major one-time donations in 2012 compared to 2011. On the other hand, expenses in 2012 were considerably

lower mainly as a result of the large one-time payment to restore the Hosta garden wall in 2011. With expenses falling more than revenues, we experienced a slight profit in 2012."

"As a result of a change in accounting policy, accounts receivable, prepaid expenses and inventory adjustment, total assets fell by eight per cent or \$12,400. The ending cash balance was \$7,605. The Trust Fund saw an increase of \$5,268 to \$103,763 as a result of higher stock prices in 2012 compared to 2011."



Roman Popadiouk,
15-year volunteer

Long-serving volunteers recognized

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

Roman Popadiouk has been a Friends volunteer for 15 years; Janet Smith, Bill Wegman, Lynne Zeitouni and Peter Ryan have served for 10 years.

Avril Agnew, Beverley Brooks, Anne Christians, Jenifer Craddock, Izabel Dabrowski, Claudette Davidson, Judy Swartzen, Bernadette Walker and Sylvia Williamson have each contributed five years of service.

Board of Directors, 2013-14

Eric Jones - president, Judy Dodds - vice president, Yvonne Ackerman (elected in October), Bob Barron, Charles Craddock, Marsha Gutierrez (elected in December), Kate Harrigan (elected in November), Richard Hinchcliff, Jeannine Lewis, Donna Pape, Bert Titcomb.

Gay Cook and the Three Sisters

Guest speaker Gay Cook, whose late husband Robert Cook was the first president of the Friends of the Farm, gave an entertaining address on Canadian cuisine. Noting that the meeting was in the Three Sisters Hall at the new Learning Centre, Gay said the room was not, in fact, named for Jean Pigott, Grete Hale and herself, the three Morrison sisters, but for corn, beans and squash. According to Iroquois legend, these are three inseparable sisters who grow and thrive together in a sustainable form of companion planting.

Membership Renewals

We are always looking for ways to reduce our operating costs, such as postage. This year (2014) when your membership is due to expire, our first contact with you will be by e-mail. As a member, you are very important to us and if we don't hear from you we will follow up with a letter, but please help us save, to help the Farm.

Used Book Drop-Off

Do you have gently used books looking for a new home? If so, please donate them to our June 2014 book sale. Volunteers will accept your used books on March 29, 2014, from 10 am to 3 pm at Building 72 in the Arboretum of the Central Experimental Farm. Please note that we are **unable to accept magazines, encyclopedias, dictionaries, Reader's Digests or text books.**

Old Memories Recaptured, New Memories Made at the Farm

Mary Ann Smythe remembers the Experimental Farm as a popular family destination when she was a child. As a teenager, she recalls tobogganing in the Arboretum – freezing rain making the journey perilous but all the more exhilarating. In adulthood, there were frequent walks through the fragrant lilac rows, and later, when her mother volunteered on the Perennial Team, Mary Ann watched her diligently deadheading spent blooms. Years later, she introduced her toddler grandson Christian to the barn animals at the Farm.

Memories made, and memories still in the making. A Friends' volunteer since 2009, Mary Ann's greatest joy is helping in the gardens. Initially, she worked on the Iris-Daylily Team. "I had no interest in either," she confesses, "it was simply the day of the week that suited me." It proved a wonderful experience, and much of the knowledge she gained from her team mates was transferred to her own gardens. "I am from Irish stock; I love working in the soil. There is nothing more peaceful than being in the garden – the colours, the fragrance, the fresh air, the sense of accomplishment – they more than make up for the heat, and the tedium of weeding and deadheading."

She enjoyed the companionship of her team mates – "it's the volunteers who make the garden teams such a joy; so many people of such diverse and interesting backgrounds, so willing to share their experiences" – but never really "warmed" to the plants under her care, and transferred to the Perennial Team.

At a cottage she and her husband Phil owned for 19 years, the couple created six small perennial gardens, as well as a "huge" vegetable garden that fed many of their friends. "It's that Irish stock," she laughs. The cottage was sold last year, but there are still plenty of perennials to care for – and to add to – around their Kanata home.

Mary Ann joined the Friends at the urging of close friend and fellow volunteer Libby St. Louis. The newsletter was in need of staff, and as a full-time freelance writer/editor since 1985, Mary Ann was a prime candidate. "I was reluctant, however," she explains. "I wanted to be in the gardens, and I thought I made it very clear." Not clear enough, it seems. Mary Ann was assistant editor of this newsletter for the past four years, and stepped down last September to spend time on other activities. "It was a difficult decision. I am proud to have been part of such a fine publication. I love writing and find editing fascinating; it's the attention to detail that really makes the written word shine." In addition to contributing editorial expertise, Mary Ann writes member profiles for the newsletter and for the website. "It's a privilege to be let into volunteers' lives, to hear their stories, to learn about their experiences."



Mary Ann Smythe

Phil Massad

Part of the team that toils through the winter in the basement of Building 72, this is Mary Ann's fifth winter sorting books for the June book sale. "We all love reading and the companionship is wonderful; it's like a quilting bee, only with books."

Mary Ann sat on the Board as Director of Volunteers for a year, designing and tabulating a questionnaire to determine volunteer satisfaction with good friend and long-time volunteer Donna Pape. An ardent baker, she contributes home-made goodies for the Craft and Bake sales, and often provides a freshly baked snack for her garden team's break. Like many volunteers, Mary Ann helps out wherever she can – at the Victorian Tea (a personal favourite), the spring Garden Lecture Series, and with Phil at book drop-off days.

It seems like a large commitment, but, she says, taken over nearly five years, it is a small, but very important and satisfying part of her life. "When I'm at the Farm I see my 12-year-old self careening through the Arboretum on my toboggan, catch a glimpse of my mother in the perennial beds, and feel my grandson's soft, warm hand in mine. Each time I come to the Farm, I know there are memories to be made, friendships to be forged, knowledge to be gained, and the absolute joy of watching the gardens change their many coats of colour through the seasons and of knowing that I played the tiniest of parts in creating that beauty."

Mary Ann Smythe

Mary Ann Smythe has written about 60 profiles for the newsletter and website. So who better to profile the profiler than Mary Ann herself.

A Picnic to Celebrate 25 Years

September 14, 2013 was a glorious day for a picnic at the Arboretum to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Friends of the Farm. There were activities for children, a guided walk to some of the trees, lots of music, birthday cake and beverages. Thanks to the Friends' organizing committee of Caroline Dabrus, Missy Hillman, Jeannine Lewis, Polly McColl and Bert Titcomb, and to all the other volunteers who helped at the event.



(Left) Volunteer Jeannine Lewis at the bubble site; (above centre, left to right) Kelsey, Courtney and Kevin Welsh; (above right) MPP Yasir Naqvi and Chuck Craddock



(Above left) Jean-Pascal Gratton, AAFC, his wife Carole Diotte, and Friends' "founding father" Peter Elliott; (top, left to right) Patrick Gillissie, and David, Josh and Kyle Felhaver; (above right) Trio Neutrino members Stuart Matthews, Daniel Wade, and Yu Yang Xie

(Left) Ottawa mayor Jim Watson and Chuck Craddock; (centre) Peter Elliott gives tips to a young artist

New Museum Learning Centre - a Recognized Heritage Building

By Richard Hinchcliff

The former Engineering Research Building is now the Canada Museum of Agriculture and Food's new Learning Centre. While the exterior may look 80 years old, the interior has been transformed.

Many of us who hadn't previously visited the Learning Centre, officially opened in May 2013, got a look at this superb new venue at the Friends of the Farm's annual general meeting in September.

One of 28 heritage buildings at the Farm

The Learning Centre building is one of 28 at the Farm designated as heritage. It has a "Recognized" heritage building status, which means, for example, that as far as possible the exterior is to be preserved in its original state.

The highest heritage designation, which is "Classified," has been given to five buildings at the Farm – the Main Dairy Barn, the Cereal Barn, and the Dominion Observatory and its two small outliers, the Azimuth and Photo Equatorial buildings.

Built in 1936, the Engineering Research Building was designated a heritage building "because of its historical associations and its architectural and environmental value," according to the Federal Heritage Buildings Review Office (FHBRO). "The building's institutional appearance reflects the Department of Agriculture's increasing emphasis on research over demonstration."

The building comprised a two-and-a-half storey office block and a long, two-storey workshop used primarily for designing, constructing and testing specialized agricultural machinery.

Retaining the 1930s look

Although the building had an institutional appearance, FHBRO wrote that it blended well with the character of the



The Learning Centre, August 2013 (entrance at left)



Kerry-Leigh Burchill (second from right), director general of the Canada Agriculture and Food Museum, at the cake cutting ceremony to open the Learning Centre, May 3, 2013



Guest speaker Gay Cook, Friends of the Farm founder Peter Elliott, and former Friends' presidents Eric Moore, Chuck Craddock, Polly McColl and Doug Shouldice, AGM, Learning Centre, September 18, 2013

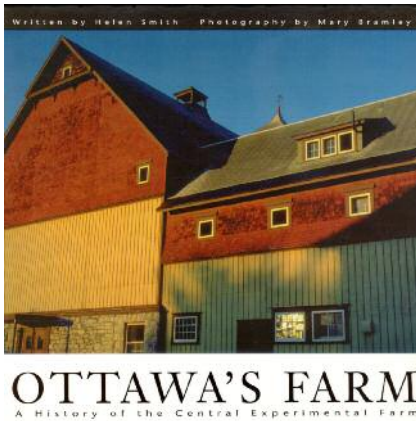
national historic site farm setting. The exterior of the Learning Centre has retained its original character. For example, even though new windows were put in, says Andi Hristoforov of the Museum's staff, they were done in a way to preserve the 1930s look.

Inside, the building is totally different. It had to be brought up to current code and redesigned to meet the Museum's needs. It is also now, says Andi, an up-to-date, energy-efficient building. The only heritage component on the inside was the hardwood floors, which are now a beautiful feature of the Learning Centre.

The Engineering Research Building played an important role in research at the Experimental Farm. As the Museum's Learning Centre it will now play an important part in educational exhibitions and programs about Canada's agriculture and food – past, present and future.

Ottawa's Farm – A Labour of Love

By Richard Hinchcliff



A 10-year labour of love – that's how Helen Smith and Mary Bramley describe the making of their book.

Officially launched in 1997, *Ottawa's Farm: A History of the Central Experimental Farm* is a captivating story of a national historic site, its people and their achievements. "I wanted to make it something that

people would want to read," Helen says, "whether they cared about history or not."

The cover image of the main barn and other dramatic photos by Mary, as well as portraits by her and evocative old photos, capture the life and beauty of the Farm. The attractive design is a tribute to Mary's expertise as an artist and photo editor and Helen's background as an editor.

How it began

In the mid-1980s, when Helen and Mary were both working at the Heritage Canada Foundation, the idea of a book on the Farm was mooted. Helen, who had written an article about the Farm, was interested and spoke to Mary, who was also keen.

"I was always interested in old buildings and antiques," says Helen about her interest in the Farm. "When my family went on holidays, we went to see battlefields, old buildings. So I grew into it." After working as a professional librarian, she had become a freelance writer and editor.

Mary was a professional photographer and photo editor. "I'm really passionate about architectural heritage and landscape design. This was a perfect project for me, because those elements are captured in the Farm."

Thus, the project began. "We both had demanding full-time jobs," Mary says, "so it was definitely evenings, weekends, and five o'clock in the morning." As if she didn't have enough to do, Helen joined the Board of the new Friends of the Central Experimental Farm organization and became the first editor of the newsletter.

The support of Peter Elliott was crucial for the book. He established the Friends in 1988 and became its general manager. Peter, who worked for Agriculture Canada and knew the department well, had a network of contacts that proved invaluable for Helen and Mary.

"Without him we wouldn't have been able to do the book," says Helen about Peter. "And we wouldn't have been plugged in to every single Farm kid who was coming back to Ottawa for a summer holiday," adds Mary. "For example, one former Farm kid came from New Zealand where she was living."

Wonderful people

The book introduces us to the men and women who lived and worked at the Farm during its first 100 years, and their children. Helen and Mary met many of these "Farm kids" and heard their stories of growing up at the Farm. "They were all so interesting and really wonderful people," says Mary.

They were all willing to talk about their experiences and face Mary's camera. Her portraits in the book reveal much of their character. "My challenge in the portraits," Mary says, "was to try and get at their personality in the limited time available, to find the essence of the person."

Peter not only alerted them to visits from people, but also to things that were about to happen at the Farm. For example, says Helen, "he let me know they were going to trim hooves, which led to Mary's photo in the book of the cow on its side getting its hooves trimmed. These were things the average visitor doesn't see."

Two women and one dog

The average visitor to the Farm also does not see its beauty at five in the morning. "I'm obsessed with light," says Mary, "so we'd have to get up at five o'clock in the morning, go back to the same spot, time and time again, throughout different seasons, to capture what I wanted."

"Because I insisted we get up that early, we thought that maybe it wasn't too safe for two women to be roaming the Farm alone, so we decided we'd bring Helen's big dog Alex with us. But of course Alex just loved people and if strangers approached she'd run up wagging her tail and give them kisses."

"She did have a good loud deep bark," adds Helen. "She was our protector," Mary says, "so it was the three of us out there at five in the morning, two women and one dog."

Digging and drilling down for details

There were many sources of documents and photos available at the time – at Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa Public Library, Ottawa City Archives, Science and Technology Museum, Agriculture Canada, Friends of the Farm and in private collections.



Helen Smith (inset) and "Farm kids" at a reception in June 1989. Peter Elliott is standing, fourth from the left

"I spent ages," Helen says, "reading old newspapers at the Ottawa Public Library, for example, just turning pages to find mentions of the Farm. I'd go there straight after work and spent an hour or an hour and a half there every night."

"As obsessed as I was with light," says Mary, "Helen was obsessed with researching, drilling down to find the absolute last detail. To my mind, that's what makes the book so rich, she just kept digging."

And there were exciting photographic finds. "Like that amazing shot of Farm kids that we used as the frontispiece in the book," Mary says. "Once I saw that image I was off and running. I wanted to feature it and try and find all the people in it. That image became an inspiration."

Very much a team, Mary would review Helen's draft texts and suggest things that might be added or changed. Helen would look for photographs they might use. "I'd get all excited about photos and sometimes Mary would look at them and say it's an interesting photo but it would never reproduce. There was one photo of the original gates to the Farm that would have been great to use, but Mary said the quality just wasn't good enough."

Fascinating people from the past

While it was wonderful for Helen and Mary to meet people who were kids at the Farm, it was also fascinating to learn and write about their parents and others who were there during the early days, such as the Saunders family.

If there was a political scandal in Ottawa and William was away on one of his many trips to experimental farms around the country, Mrs. Saunders would write to him that if their "usual



Farm kids. Frontispiece photo from *Ottawa's Farm*

FCEF Archives

Sunday morning visitor" came, she would find out more. "She was discreet and didn't say who the visitor was," Helen says, "but I assume it was John Carling, the Minister of Agriculture, because apparently they were really good friends."

"And Isabella Preston, or Miss Preston as she liked to be called – what a fascinating person. I think of Isabella Preston every time I drive through the Farm, every single time, because of all those beautiful flowers of hers, from the rosybloom crabapples to the lilacs, and so many other plants."

The book was a perfect project for Mary and a personal milestone for Helen. "It was long and tedious at times," she says, "but when we got to the end of it, I thought wow, we really achieved something significant."

Dates for Your Calendar!

Here are the 2014 lectures by Master Gardeners, to be held from 7 to 9 pm in Building 72, Arboretum, Central Experimental Farm. You can sign up for individual lectures or the entire series. Individual lectures: \$12 FCEF members, \$15 others. Series of five lectures: \$50 FCEF members, \$60 others.

April 8 – Vegetable Growing Possibilities in the Urban Landscape by Judith Cox

This experienced vegetable grower will give ideas and tips on making the most of your vegetable space. Growing from seeds, companion plantings, succession planting, crop rotation, growing vegetables in pots and growing herbs, are some of the topics to be discussed. Also, what to do about common pests in the vegetable patch!

April 29 – Practical Pruning Techniques (yes you can easily tackle this gardening task!) by Lee Boltwood

With good hand tools this experienced Master Gardener assures you that you can do all the pruning in your garden yourself! Just follow basic principles and your plants will be healthier – and prettier.

May 13 – Trouble in Paradise: Common Garden Pests and Diseases by Caroline Dabrus

Even with the best care and attention, your plants will sometimes fall prey to insects or be undermined by disease and infection. What can you do to protect your plants from some of these problems and what if anything can you do to deal with these plant ailments? This lecture will focus on some of the common pests and diseases gardeners encounter and on what to do if your garden falls under attack.

May 27 – Water Gardening, the Final Touch to Your Landscape by Diane McClymont Peace

This talk will explore the benefits and challenges of water features, be they small and simple or massive, and present step-by-step details on siting, construction, maintenance, plants and fish and their care.

September 9 – Spring Bulbs, an Essential for Every Garden! by Mary Ann Van Berlo

Mary Ann will discuss naturalizing with bulbs and the use of minor bulbs, she will offer suggestions for uncommon bulbs that make a great addition to the garden, and she will share some ideas on forcing bulbs indoors. Planting, maintenance and pest control for spring bulbs will also be covered.



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. The Newsletter (ISSN 1702-2762) is published four times a year (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall) by Friends of the Central Experimental Farm. All members receive the newsletter and it is sent either by regular mail or e-mail. Editor: Richard Hinchcliff. Assistant Editor: Barbara Woodward. Design & Printing: Nancy Poirier Printing. Contributors: Judith Benner, Edythe Falconer, Roman Popadiouk, Mary Ann Smythe. Translator: Lise Anne James.

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A Small Garden

By Judy Benner

A small garden behind a townhouse has kept this journeyman gardener busy and learning for several years. The garden I am happy with now has been a long-term, loosely defined project with an unfinished learning curve.

The garden starts where the patio behind the house ends and extends to a ten-foot grass strip and a very high cedar hedge. To accommodate our late cat, I set out a stone path leading to the hedge and separating about a third of the garden space on the east side.

From the outset I had in mind a naturalistic garden, based mostly on shapely foliage and white blooms. The idea was to create a sense of spaciousness, randomness, and a soft and somewhat translucent look, so that the end of the garden, only 12 feet away from the patio, isn't too defined.

The desire for a soft and open looking garden was up against hard definition in terms of location. The garden faces north and there are six-foot fences on the east and west sides, creating a widely varied sun exposure over the growing season. At times this setting and the heavy clay soil made a full patio seem like a good option.

An ambitious and thirsty juniper (about 25 feet high) at the bottom east side and the hot afternoon sun on the eastern third of the garden create conditions on that side quite different from those in the middle to west side section. (The garden's entire width is only 18 feet.) It was a slow process figuring out which plants would do well on the shady west side and which could cope with shade most of the morning followed by strong sun and heat in the afternoon on the east side. Gradually I learned that plants, like people, don't necessarily follow the rules and those sun/shade symbols on the plant tags don't tell the whole story.

Over time friends have given me perennials: lady's mantle, Siberian irises, hostas, and my favourite - beautiful, lacy meadow rue with its fine tall stalks and small leaves sitting out from the stalks like shapely little shelves. Gradually more



Richard Conway

perennials have filled the garden; Japanese painted fern, maidenhair fern, bugbane and coral bells have found their places by trial and error. Each spring it is a treat to see these plants reappear with little work and expense on my part. Large white cosmos blooms with their ferny greenery fill a gap area and fit in well with the permanent residents of the garden.

A wandering row of Siberian irises bloom at the bottom of the garden in June and their graceful leaves stay green all season. The irises and later blooms on the smaller hostas and meadow rue are not white; I like to think this helps achieve a less controlled look than all white blooms might have done. The garden is mostly about foliage so there is no down time while one sort of bloom fades and the next has not yet arrived.

Several years ago we planted a serviceberry tree close to the patio. It was pot-bound when planted and has only decided in the last year that it wants to be taken seriously. Another small tree came into the garden when a friend gave me a pagoda dogwood, which is near the bottom edge of the garden. Looking at the trees now, it is apparent they are the

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When Space is at a Premium *(continued from Page 12)*



This photo and the next were taken on a garden tour sponsored by the Owen Sound Horticultural Society

principles and elements of design.

Colour and decor

One of the most enjoyable and yet frustrating challenges of any garden is planning for “All Season Colour”. The road to achieving this Holy Grail of Horticulture includes leisurely visits to gardening centres and participation in delightful garden tours at different times of the year to see what is on show. If you want to

save gas, time and auto depreciation, surfing the internet and borrowing relevant publications from a local library can achieve the same results. Energetic deadheading once plants have settled is part of the secret of prolonged blooming.

Risk takers and those with extra money will want to consider pot and barrel decor, the pursuit of which is endlessly entertaining. The excitement of the hunt can go on and on – composters that don’t look like composters, storage features that don’t look like they store, benches that store tools underneath, barrels that look like ancient amphorae. The fun to be had rearranging furniture indoors can also be had outside as you alter outdoor setups to suit season and available light. Containers and plants can be matched colour and shape-wise. Everything can be mobile and changeable. The mood of this kind of garden can be altered at the whim of the gardener.

Print References:

- Frankie Flowers, *Pot It Up*, HarperCollins, 2012
- Bob Purnell, *Crops in Pots*, Reader’s Digest, 2007
- Pam Duthie, *Continuous Bloom*, Ball Publishing, 2000
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Photos by Edythe Falconer

Edythe Falconer, a regular contributor to the newsletter and long-time leader of the Friends’ heritage rose garden team, is a master gardener of Ottawa-Carleton.

Principles of Design	Elements of Design
Rhythm – Flow, movement, repeat design element Repetition– Repeated use of one or more elements Emphasis – Specific element stands out Balance – One aspect does not overpower others Proportion – Relationships to house, size of lot, etc. Unity – All elements work together	Line – Containment, meeting points, silhouettes – the dot Shape – Connecting line to create two-dimensional shapes Mass – The third dimension Form – Shape & structure of objects, land, plant & built form Movement – Component of form, seasonal change, progress to maturity, the stroll, the view, the lighting Space – Defined by plant materials, buildings, landform Texture & Colour – Touch and emotion

A Small Garden *(continued from Page 10)*

“bones” of the garden and, fleshed out by some large hostas, they anchor it. The remaining plants, some tall and some low, are placed randomly, rather than by graduated height, for a natural and spacious look.

Before I decided on foliage as the main event, I had planted a hardy rambling rose, ‘Seafoam’, where the sun exposure is best, at the bottom corner of the path. It didn’t do much until the year it was to be replaced by a better performer that would be more in keeping with the new plan. Suddenly it became vigorous and since then has produced so many lovely little roses all summer and into the fall that I foresee a time when I will let it have its unruly way.

A birdbath added this past summer didn’t solicit many bathers. We made do with large bees that love the white hosta and the magenta meadow rue blooms.

Judy Benner, a long time Shelterbelt volunteer, book sorter, Victorian tea helper and scone maker, was editor of this newsletter for six years until 2007.



Judy’s garden

Richard Conway

When Space is at a Premium: The Challenge and Beauty of Small Gardens

By Edythe Falconer

At the front of the house stark grey asphalt has been replaced with five planters that blend gently with pre-existing structures. Every detail counts. This includes the entry point for a nosy groundhog that is now blocked with an attractive rock resting vertically on river stone next to a deep pink geranium. Many small works of art can combine to produce larger masterpieces – or they can stand alone.

Why do we garden or wish to garden? Answers to this question provide excellent starting points for designing or redesigning any space. Check those that apply to you:

- ___ Apply sustainable practices
- ___ Add to city greenscape
- ___ Attract birds, butterflies, pollinators
- ___ Learn more about plants
- ___ Be part of the gardening community
- ___ Produce and share fresh food
- ___ Recreate Eden
- ___ Recreational horticulture
- ___ Love of beauty
- ___ Outdoor entertainment area
- ___ Competition with Jack and Jill next door
- ___ Other _____

Gardens happen in pots, barrels, planters, window boxes, work boots and heaven knows what else. A garden can host flowers, grasses, vegetables, shrubs, trees, berries, fruit trees and any combination thereof. A garden can flow horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Gardens can perch on top of garages, carports, homes or commercial buildings. They may even float on ponds or clamber up walls! Gardens are the realization of ideas that artistically combine landscape, plantscape and builtscapes.

Check your property lines

However, before waxing poetic over possibilities, it is prudent to check property lines. Horror stories abound re: fence, leaf litter and hedge wars. Discussions with neighbours about proposed changes are definitely advisable – unless you don't mind an uncomfortable aura of disharmony hanging around the edges of Eden. The Golden Rule, in conjunction with "cooperation" and "compromise", will smooth the way to successful negotiations.

A property needs to be viewed from all directions – inside and outside



Planters in front of Edythe's house in Ottawa

Edythe Falconer

property lines. Make rough sketches of the area you want to develop. List what is already there, especially trees and shrubs. Assess growing conditions. If a towering condo building looms over all or a stately old oak tree towers nearby, plan accordingly.

Some of us need more privacy – some less. Noisy neighbours may call for sound proofing of some kind. On the other hand a certain degree of openness may be desirable for security reasons or simply for air flow. Chain link aesthetics have improved and links serve as sturdy trellises. An eyesore on a neighboring property may need to be blocked out or you may want to disguise one of your own. "Good fences make good neighbours" is good policy. Usually!

Trees, lawns and lines of desire

For small yards that need trees, shrubs or vines there are many choices. Favorites include hop tree (*Ptelea*), Nanking cherry (*Prunus tomentosa*), serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), elderberry (*Sambucus*) and Amur maple (*Acer ginnala*). Add to this a growing catalogue of dwarf evergreens that can delight us both summer and winter.

If the traditional lawn is more nuisance than asset it can be replaced. There are many good low-maintenance alternatives – textured cement surfaces, flagstone, asphalt, pebbles or groundcover plants that don't mind being stomped on.

Most of us want to escape getting down on our hands and knees to scissor or shear small lawns. Next year *Ajuga* will be planted on a narrow part of my front yard. Lovely little ground cover. Keep contained!

"Lines of Desire" is not the title of a steamy new Hollywood blockbuster. It's about where we tend to walk in our gardens. Paths are connectors and one of the more worker-friendly do-it-yourself projects. Paths lined with stepping stones, pebbles, wood chips or cedar mulch on your favourite traffic lanes need to go somewhere. That can be through gates, arches or around sculpture and "found art" towards sheds, ponds or back to the house.

Defined by lines, the front part of my yard comprises three areas – planter area, driveway border and a long, thin section extending from house to street level – three "gardens" in one. The skinny bit blends well with the neighbour's shade garden. The planter area is in full sun where colourful annuals strut their stuff as the welcome committee. The driveway border, also long and narrow, is backed by a retaining wall and fence. These "gardens" are unified by a slight slope down to street level, meandering lines of border beds with adjacent strips of "eclectic" lawn and by the wooden structure of fence and planters.

Developed separately they still need to be kept integrated using relevant

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