

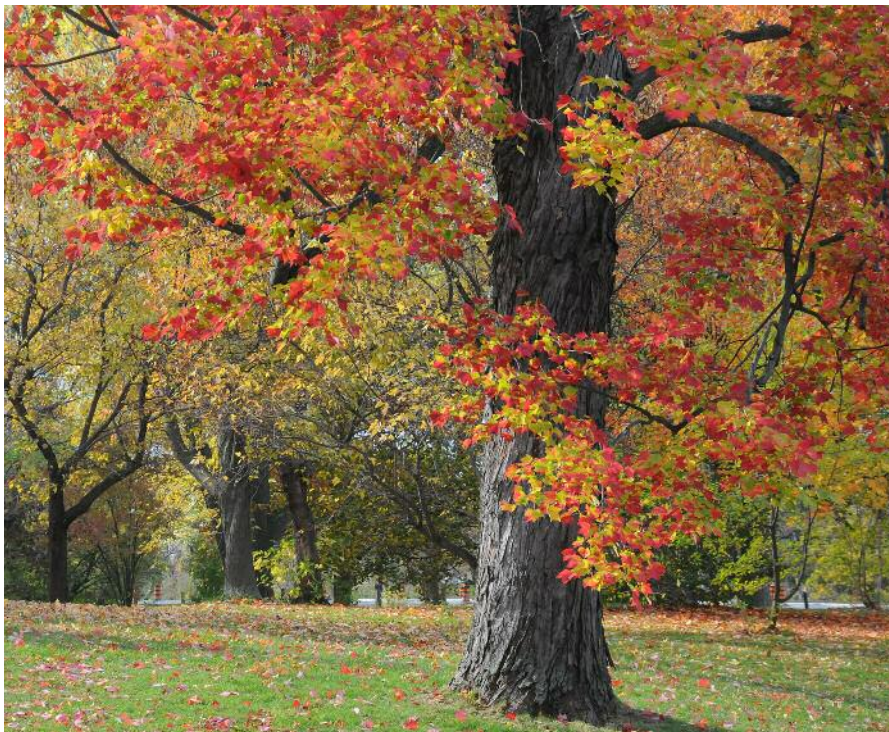


Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Fall 2013 Newsletter

Volume 25 No. 4

Partners at the Farm



R. Hinchcliff

Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) in the Arboretum

“They’re going wild over at the Central Experimental Farm,” wrote Nicole Baer in the *Ottawa Citizen* on September 23, 1990. “No, Agriculture Canada employees are not in revolt and the piglets remain safely penned.” She was writing about the new wilderness area that was to become known as the Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG).

Also that year, garden plots were introduced to the Farm on the other side of Prince of Wales Drive to demonstrate the organic option for urban and rural landowners.

In this newsletter, we salute the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and the Canadian Organic Growers’ Demonstration Garden, which, like the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm, are long-standing partners at the Farm with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

Fletcher Wildlife Garden

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists’ Club and Friends of the Farm began negotiations in August 1989 with Agriculture Canada,

as it was then known, to establish a wildlife area in the Arboretum.

People gathered in June 1990 for a ceremony to turn the sod, plant a butternut tree and celebrate the beginning of this natural space. Members of the Field-Naturalists gave tours of the area, the Tally-Ho wagon gave tours of the Arboretum and Friends of the Farm grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for a picnic.

Barry Cottam (Page 12) writes about how and why the FWG began, about the various habitats at the Garden, and about the work and research conducted there.

Organic Demonstration Garden

In June 1989, the Canadian Organic Growers (COG) and Friends of the Farm presented a one-day lecture and demonstration program on urban sustainable agriculture. Throughout that summer, the two organizations combined to provide a composting display at the gardens.

In the following spring, coinciding with the launch of the FWG, work began on an Organic Demonstration Garden in the Ornamental Gardens. With assistance from Agriculture staff, volunteers with the local chapter of COG installed plots adjacent to the large parking lot off Prince of Wales Drive. The Garden has been a feature at that location ever since.

Telsing Andrews, on Page 8, writes about the Organic Demonstration Garden and how it has evolved.

Maplelawn Garden

Although not at the Central Experimental Farm, Maplelawn Garden on Richmond Road has a past connection to the Farm.

Over the last two decades, a dedicated group of volunteers has restored this important part of the heritage of Ottawa and Canada, and we congratulate the Friends of Maplelawn Garden on their 20th anniversary this year.

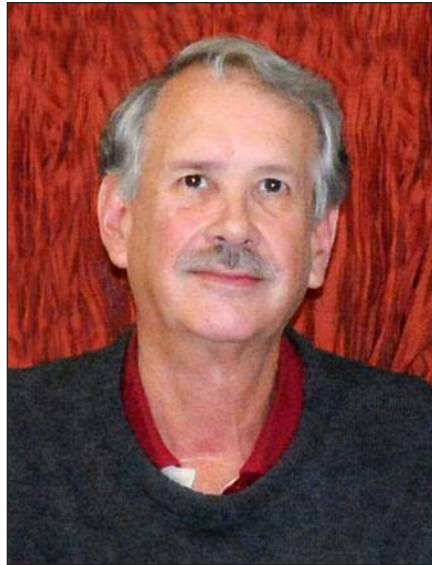
Ann Nowell, on Page 10, writes about Maplelawn, its connection to the Farm, the volunteer group and their celebration activities.

Farewell Message from the Outgoing President

This will be my last message as President. After three years in this position, it is time to let someone else take over. I have enjoyed presiding over the many improvements and changes to the Friends. During my term, many of the directors I served with have moved on and others have stepped in to fill those vacant positions. The same holds true for the volunteers who work in the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum, Shelterbelt, office and on our many events. I look forward to continuing as a volunteer with the Friends and as past President on the Board of Directors.

This summer's weather has been an improvement over last year, although we had to contend with the effects of last year's drought that damaged some of the trees in the Arboretum and the Shelterbelt. Also, with the onslaught of the emerald ash borer many of the ash trees on the Experimental Farm have died or been badly diseased and have had to be removed.

On the other hand, thanks to good growing conditions the Ornamental Gardens have fared quite well as have the Hosta garden and the Shelterbelt. The



Chuck Craddock

Japanese beetles were not as hard on the roses this year, but the dog-strangling vine excelled in the Arboretum.

The good weather also contributed to the success of the Friends outdoor events.

The indoor events have also done very well, and I expect that the remaining events this year will show similar results. This year's bus trip was a great success.

One major initiative that started last year and will continue for the next several years is the Friends' plans for our contribution to mark Canada's 150th Anniversary in 2017. A committee composed of the Friends, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and others have been meeting to come up with ideas and funding proposals. Hopefully we will be able to start some of these projects prior to 2017, with a major initiative ready for 2017.

Once again our work to support AAFC in the maintenance and preservation of the Central Experimental Farm has been greatly facilitated by the excellent working relationship we have with the grounds staff of the Farm. I would like to thank the many volunteers and members without whose dedication, tireless work and financial contribution the Friends could not carry out their operations.

I thank you all for letting me serve as your President for the last three years.

Message d'adieu du président sortant

Il s'agit de mon dernier message à titre de président, poste que j'occupe depuis trois ans. Il est donc temps pour moi de céder la place à quelqu'un d'autre. Alors que j'assumais les fonctions de président, j'ai été agréablement fier de voir se réaliser de multiples améliorations et changements chez les Amis de la Ferme. Durant mon mandat, bon nombre de mes collègues du conseil d'administration ont accepté d'autres défis, et d'autres encore sont venus remplir ces postes vacants. C'est notamment le cas pour les bénévoles qui œuvrent dans les jardins ornementaux, l'Arboretum et le brise-vent, ainsi que les personnes qui travaillent aux services administratifs ou participent à d'autres activités. Je me réjouis à l'avance de pouvoir servir à la fois comme bénévole avec les Amis et comme président sortant du conseil d'administration.

La température estivale de 2013 a bénéficié d'une amélioration par rapport à celle de l'an dernier. Nous avons dû toutefois lutter contre les effets de la sécheresse de l'été précédent qui avait causé des effets néfastes à certains arbres de

l'Arboretum et du brise-vent. De plus, l'agrite du frêne s'en est pris à un bon nombre de frênes de la Ferme expérimentale, lesquels ont été détruits ou gravement touchés, et nous avons dû les abattre.

D'autre part, grâce à des conditions de croissance favorables, les jardins ornementaux, les plates-bandes d'hostas et le brise-vent ont donné d'assez bons résultats. Cette année, les rosiers n'ont pas subi d'attaques trop vigoureuses de la part des scarabées japonais; par contre, le dompte-venin de Russie a joui d'une excellente croissance dans l'Arboretum.

La température clémente a également contribué au succès des activités des Amis, tant pour celles qui se sont déroulées à l'extérieur, que pour celles tenues à l'intérieur. Je suis donc confiant que les autres événements de l'année en cours obtiendront de tels résultats, à l'instar de l'excursion en autobus qui, d'ailleurs, a été des plus réussies.

Une nouvelle initiative majeure entreprise l'an dernier se poursuivra au cours des prochaines années. Il s'agit des plans que les Amis formulent

à titre de notre contribution pour la célébration du 150e anniversaire du Canada en 2017. Un comité formé des Amis, d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada (AAC) et d'autres groupes ont participé à des rencontres pour élaborer des idées et des propositions de financement. Nous espérons être en mesure d'aborder certains de ces projets d'ici 2017 et, d'ici là, de réaliser un projet intéressant en temps opportun.

De plus, notre travail qui consiste à appuyer AAC dans l'entretien et la préservation de la Ferme expérimentale centrale a été rendu plus aisé grâce à l'excellente relation de travail que nous entretenons avec le personnel sur le terrain de la Ferme. Je désire remercier les nombreux bénévoles et membres pour leur dévouement, leurs efforts incessants et leur contribution financière. Leur apport essentiel a contribué pour beaucoup au bon fonctionnement des activités des Amis.

Je vous remercie tous de m'avoir donné l'occasion de servir dans le poste de président au cours des trois dernières années.

Eric Jones: Friends' President Wears Many Hats

By Mary Ann Smythe

There are two important things to note about Eric Jones: first, he has considerable knowledge of trees and, by way of his wife Sheila Burvill, a former president of the Ottawa Horticultural Society, a great appreciation of plants, and second, he is calm, cool and collected.

Eric's knowledge of trees, appreciation of plants, and calm demeanour stand him in good stead as he assumes the presidency of the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm (FCEF).

A life-long interest in trees

Trees are a big part of Eric's life. His interest was awakened "visiting national parks out west and seeing giants like redwoods and cedars" and when it came time for university he headed to the University of Toronto because of its (then) undergraduate forestry program and attention to urban forestry.

In 1976, Eric accepted a job offer in Ottawa with the Canadian Wood Council, a national organization of Canadian manufacturers of wood products used in construction. Given his interest in urban forestry, Eric was soon a frequent visitor to the Arboretum where he was amazed by the number and variety of trees.

Eric's "retirement" at the Farm

Fast forward 30 years. With retirement a reality, Eric was looking for volunteer opportunities. He had worked three years with the Ottawa Forest and Greenspace Advisory Committee, which was subsequently disbanded by the City, and was seeking opportunities related to trees and urban forests.

Searching through the Volunteer Ottawa website he spied the Friends' call for volunteers. Eric signed up for the Arboretum Team in 2008 and immediately came face to face with the team's biggest challenge – dog-strangling vine - which continues to plague the Farm's trees, shrubs and plants, and, he says, "shows how the urban forest is constantly under pressure from invasive plants." The team also worked on updating the donor plaque program, and although the program had been discontinued, it was important to

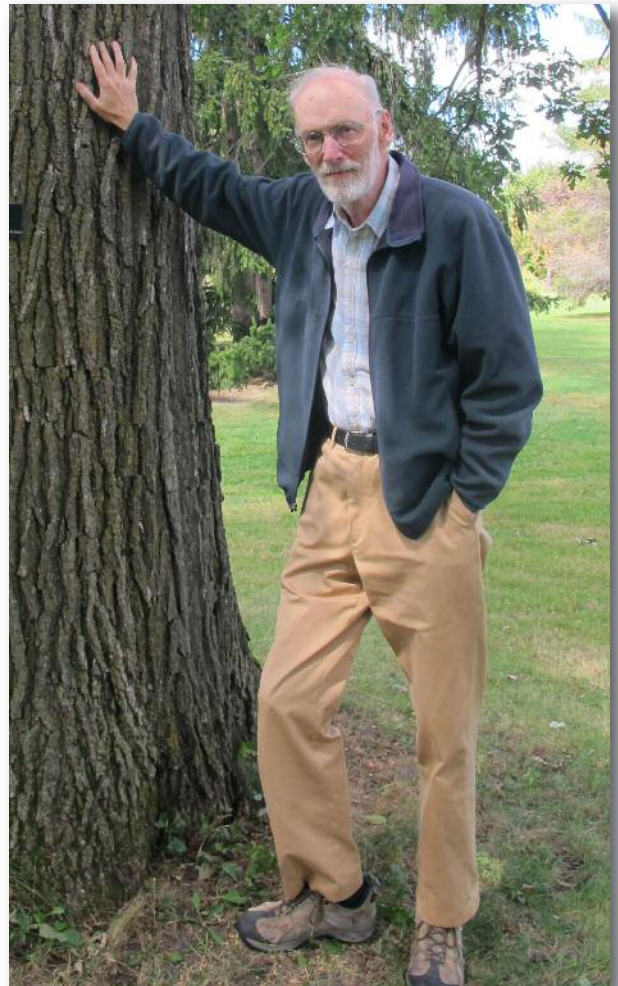
know where the plaques were located should a donor enquire.

From there, Eric decided it would be "kind of neat" to have a database of all the trees in the Arboretum, and took it on as a personal project. Thanks to his painstaking work, there are now over 3,000 trees in the Location Guide posted on the Friends' website. It's a wonderful tool and a great resource whether to simply help people identify a tree or to see how a tree or shrub they may want to plant will look in their own yard.

Eric compiled the database off and on over two years, while working on the Arboretum team and sitting on the Board of Directors where he has served as co-ordinator of the Garden Teams and, for the last two years, as Vice-President. He also helps with the set-up and take-down at fundraising events, and also heads the 2017 Committee. A joint venture of FCEF members and Agriculture and Agri-Food staff, the committee is planning projects at the Farm to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary.

Educating people

One of the most exciting proposals is to put QR codes on some of the Arboretum trees so that people can use their smart phones to link directly to a website that describes specific trees or shrubs. The project is another means of educating people about the value of the Farm, says Eric. "People do have a great interest in the Farm, but some still think of it as just another park. We have gone a long way in promoting the Farm, but there is still room for giving people a better appreciation of the value of the Farm, and of the trees in the Arboretum."



Mary Ann Smythe

Replenishing membership

An even bigger challenge, Eric continues, is to ensure that FCEF's membership is continually replenished. "We need volunteers for events, for the office, and for the gardens. We have strategic positions in the gardens that require knowledgeable, experienced people. When our current garden advisors step down, we must have people to pick up the reins." Eric would also like to tap into new technologies to help the Friends improve administration tasks and expand promotional opportunities. But that too means finding the people with the expertise to lead the way. "It's all about people," adds Eric, "and about finding new ways to bring new people in."

As well as writing volunteer profiles for the newsletter and the Friends' website, Mary Anne Smythe is a member of the perennial garden and book sorting teams.

Upcoming Events

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

Used Book Drop Off

- Saturday, October 26, 10 am to 3 pm.
- Please note that we do not accept magazines, textbooks or encyclopaedias.
- Location: Building 72, Arboretum, CEF.

Craft and Bake Sale

- Saturday, November 2, 10 am to 4 pm.
- A fascinating selection of items to choose from.
- Don't forget to pick up some delicious baked goods.
- Location: Building 72, Arboretum, CEF.
- Admission and parking free.

Thanks ... and Welcome

Many thanks to Mary Ann Smythe for the editorial expertise she has provided to this newsletter over the last four years. Her contribution to the quality of the publication has been significant and very much appreciated. We look forward to her continuing contribution as a writer.

And a warm welcome to Barbara Woodward, who brings a wealth of experience and a ton of enthusiasm to the editorial team.



Koryn Goretzky

Koryn Goretzky and Denise Kennedy with their flower arrangements for the Victorian Tea

The Sale of Crafts

A Crafts Group at the Friends of the Farm was formed in the early days. After a pinecone struck a member of the Saturday gardening team in the summer of 1991, an idea surfaced about how the cones could be used and the production of Christmas wreaths began.

The sale of pinecone wreaths at the Chrysanthemum Show that year was a huge success. "We couldn't make them fast enough to keep up," said Louise Moore. Spearheaded by Louise and Dianne Elliott, the group held many more sales during the following years at various venues around the city until it disbanded about ten years ago.

Besides Louise and Diane, members of the original group included Jack and Noni Anthony, Marie Preston, Velta Aultis, Pam Brunt, Agnes McIntosh and Janet Neatby. Many others joined later.

Crafters are now invited from outside the Friends to participate in craft and bake sales, the next one of which is coming up in Building 72 on November 2 – see details above.



FCEF Archives

Craft group members Louise Moore, Jane Ann Douglas, June Luneburg, Dianne Elliott, 2003

Denise Kennedy: Touring With Friends

By Mary Ann Smythe

Denise Kennedy is an anomaly among Friends of the Farm volunteers. Although born and raised in Ottawa, she doesn't recall visiting the Farm until she became a volunteer. "I was raised in a country atmosphere (now Rothwell Heights in Ottawa East)," she explains. "We had acres of vegetable gardens, and raised chickens, pigs and geese. My parents had a general store and my dad was the butcher. I helped in the garden and in the store. There was no need for me to visit the Farm. We already had everything it could offer."

Driving along Prince of Wales Drive on a cold February morning in 2006 with thoughts of life after retirement and plans to expand her own flower gardens fresh in her mind, Denise spotted a sign for the FCEF, and, well, the rest is history.

Denise has done tremendous service in support of the Friends of the Farm. In September, she completed a six-year term on the Board of Directors, serving as Director of Membership and Bus Tour Manager. Her duties proved an excellent match for the retired real estate broker's sales skills.

Always on the lookout for opportunities to increase the Friends' membership, Denise has been an enthusiastic spokesperson, visible at most fundraising events to capitalize on the public's interest in the Farm. "When people come to an event it's usually because they enjoy being at the Farm. A natural extension of their enjoyment is to join the FCEF so I try to tap into the opportunity to increase our membership."

From roses to bus tours

When Denise initially joined the Friends, she wanted to work in the gardens and the Rose Team caught her attention. "I was getting more into gardening at home but really didn't know much about roses. It was a way to learn more as well as keep busy while supporting a good cause." With Ottawa in the midst of a deep freeze gardening was but a distant dream. Wanting to capitalize on an eager volunteer, then Office Manager Marsha Gutierrez asked Denise to answer phones one day a week.

"I was hesitant. I knew nothing about the organization so how could I answer people's questions?" But Denise was won over by Marsha's promise to teach her everything she needed to know. Answering the phone led to helping with fundraising events. Denise worked on the Friends' first book sale in 2008, sorting books in the basement of Building 72 and even picking up left-over stock from other book sales; the following year she stepped in to manage the event.

When the Board decided that bus tours might be a means of promoting the Friends and raising funds, then President Valerie Cousins approached Denise to take on the task of bus tour manager. "You want me to do what?" she answered in disbelief, "I've never even been on a bus tour. When Valerie said we'd learn together, I thought 'why not?' I ran a real estate office and knew how to budget and the rest just evolved. Marsha was a terrific sounding board."



R. Hinchcliff

The first two trips were to the International Garden Show in Montreal with the Ontario Botanical Society. Soon Denise was organizing a four-day jaunt to the Niagara region. And as a full bus left the Farm in 2009, the tour manager was being wheeled into surgery for a hip replacement. The trip was so well organized that it went off without a hitch. The bus tours sell themselves, attracting repeat customers, and adding substantially to the Friends' coffers.

New challenges

Given her multitude of duties with the Friends, it's not surprising that Denise has only been able to help sporadically in the Ornamental Gardens. Her own gardens have fared much better, however; she is now in the midst of an ambitious project to turn her entire front lawn into perennial beds.

In the spring of 2012, with the end of her term as a Director fast approaching and an invitation extended to head one of the garden teams, Denise took over as leader of the Macoun Garden Team. It was the Ornamental Gardens that initially attracted her to the Farm and she's delighted with her new duties. "I love our Monday mornings in the garden. We have a great team and I enjoy the companionship. I love the continuity of working in the gardens and being out in nature again."

“Best Ever” Victorian Tea

By Richard Conway



Elaine Stuart and Donna Cook

Shade from the Arboretum trees was much appreciated by the excellent crowd that attended the Friends' Victorian tea on a sweltering day in July. Volunteer servers coming and going from Building 72 could not, however, avoid the heat.

The kitchen volunteers felt the “heat” as well. They had to swiftly provide more food for the larger than expected turnout



Lara and Josephine Crone

in advance and put aside for volunteers, 60 of whom participated this year.

People described it as our “best ever tea,” says Polly, who reported that almost 250 tickets were sold. Contributing to the successful event was the music provided by sisters Violette and Lynnette Khodabakshi on violin and viola, respectively, and by Mary Lepage, one half of the Moonstone Harp Duo.

Best hats

Natalie Schiebel and her two young companions, Lara Crone, aged 12, and Josephine Crone, aged 10, won the best hat contest. Linda Ganning and Amanda Schrader were runners up.

Inspired by googling “Victorian Tea hat,” Natalie decorated a black straw hat with white rosettes and crocheted butterflies. Lara used a Swan Lake theme for her Juliet cap with ostrich feathers and rosettes, while Josephine covered a straw hat with pink taffeta, silk flowers and ostrich feathers.

Best period costume contest next year

Looking as if she had stepped out of the pages of a Jane Austen novel, Alyssa Gladish wore a pink Regency style dress that she made herself, using a historical pattern, and her grandmother's hat from the early 1920s. A graduate engineering student at Carleton University, Alyssa was one of the servers who performed so admirably in the 31-degree heat.



Alyssa Gladish

Elaine Stuart was another who wore a dress she had made from a historically accurate pattern. It was a lavender Victorian model, circa 1890. Elaine also made the yellow Edwardian dress that her friend Donna Cook wore to the tea.

To recognize such dress-making skill applied to the Victorian theme, Polly will be adding a contest at next year's event for Best Period Costume.

Richard Conway is a former Board member of the Friends of the Farm and a long-time contributor to the newsletter.

“Disc and That” Display

By Sharon Saunders

The “Disc and That” bed, at the site of last year’s award winning “Birds, Bees and Butterflies Buffet,” is our entry in the 2013 All America Selections (AAS) landscape contest. It’s the kidney shaped bed south of the Gardens at the entrance to the Centennial parking lot off Prince of Wales Drive.

Spring surprises

Spring revealed many surprises, such as *Lobelia siphilatica* and *Centranthus* (Jupiter’s Beard) thriving as well as *Centaurea* ‘Jubilee Gem’ seedlings. Many *Gaillardia* ‘Arizona Apricot’ and ‘Mesa Yellow’ survived so we consolidated them into a large grouping. All but one *Buddleia* made it through the winter.

The *Echinacea* took a beating; of the 88 plants in the bed only eight escaped the jaws of that tiny terror named ‘vole’. They had a veritable buffet over the winter creating runs under the snow and feasting on *Echinacea* roots, leaving only heaps of dead leaves.

By mid-June the Bachelor Buttons were in full bloom providing valuable food for bumblebees and bees.

As of September, I’ve seen only two Swallowtail butterflies this summer but many Sulphurs. In 2012 you couldn’t take a photo without a flutter of wing in your viewfinder. Let’s hope this is not a harbinger of things to come.

Disk and ray

“Disc and That” is a play on words alluding to *Asteraceae* or *Compositae* flowers that are composed of two kinds of florets – disk and ray. In disk florets the petals are fused into a tube shape and are usually found in the center of the flower. *Zinnia* and *Echinacea* are good examples of a disk and ray flower head. *Rudbeckia*, Sunflower and *Gaillardia* will round out the collection of daisy-like flowers used in this display. The ‘That’ consists of several



Sunflower ‘Ring of Fire’, Ornamental Millet ‘Purple Majesty’, (foreground) *Rudbeckia* ‘Indian Summer’

varieties of *Salvia* AAS winners, Ornamental Millet ‘Purple Majesty’, *Digitalis* ‘Foxy’ and Hollyhock for tapered vertical elements.

The team planted the bed on June 18 mixing the established with the new transplants. There are approximately 1,295 plants in the bed of which 1,053 are

AAS winners. Fifteen varieties make up the ‘disc’ in the title while 18 varieties are the ‘that’ portion.

All-America Selections

Founded in 1932, All-America Selections is the oldest independent plant trialing and award program in North America. Independent horticultural experts volunteer their time as AAS judges. Only after extensive trials are the best performers deemed All-America

Selections Winners. The CEF Ornamental Gardens is proud to be a part of the prestigious AAS Display Gardens group.

Sharon Saunders, Lead Hand and Horticulturist, Ornamental Gardens, and her team are responsible for the dazzling floral displays at the Farm each year.



Zinnia ‘Double Sahara Cherry’



Digitalis ‘Foxy’



Zinnia ‘Double Sahara Fire’

Growing with the Times: The Organic Demonstration Garden at the Farm

By Telsing Andrews



Telsing Andrews

Over 20 years ago, the Ottawa Chapter of Canadian Organic Growers (now known as the Ottawa-St. Lawrence-Outaouais Chapter) broke ground on what was to be a place to demonstrate how a gardener could have a beautiful garden full of vegetables, fruits and perennials without synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or fungicides.

They installed themed beds including an herb garden, butterfly bed, rockery, mixed perennials and a xeriscape garden front and centre with a couple of lovely red-leafed roses that always draw attention. In addition, there is a hedgerow with apples, Nanking cherries and currants, a row of annually grown vegetables and a series of compost bins. Volunteers and plants have since come and gone but the garden remains and has become beautifully mature.

Showing a little something of everything

Shortly after its installation, Gillian Boyd joined the volunteer team, coordinating its growth and development for the next twenty years. When I asked her about its initial vision, she said "I thought it was a good idea to have a small garden with a little something of everything to show visitors plants and techniques that they might find useful and could use or adapt in their own gardens."

Jim and Denise Davidson joined in 2004 and have been steadfast guardians of the garden ever since. As Jim cuts up greens to add to the compost bin he says, "Sometimes people take

vegetables but you have to expect that in a public garden." He quoted from a sign at a public garden that said, "A nibble here, a nibble there but leave some food for others to share."

Denise, removing some grass from the stone border of the dry garden, agrees and says, "These gardens are so beautiful - a great place to spend time. I've learned a lot since volunteering here such as which plants grow in different conditions and a lot about different pollinators." In fact, people often stop to take pictures of the plethora of insects from bees to butterflies fluttering from flower to flower.

A sense of achievability

It is a lovely location. After moving to Ottawa in 2003, I would bring my children to see the animals at the Canada Agriculture Museum and found myself exploring the Experimental Farm and Fletcher Wildlife Gardens. I enjoyed walking the extensive networks of gardens but something about this modest demonstration garden has always stood out for me.

Perhaps it is the beautiful specimen of seakale or the carefree apple trees or perhaps it is the way you can see your own garden in it. That sense of achievability is a nice accompaniment to the masterpieces of the mixed ornamental beds nearby at the Farm or the rows of lilac and daylily cultivars all in bloom. It is also why I volunteered to help care for the COG-OSO demonstration garden.

Since the day the demonstration garden began, growing organically has gone from an alternative system to the dominant way that most home gardeners in Ottawa care for their yards. The cosmetic pesticide ban and people's changing habits mean that visitors may not be as amazed as they once were that a garden can flourish without synthetic treatment; however, there is still much for the COG-OSO garden to demonstrate.

Adding more edible plants

Whenever I am there to tend the garden, I stop to show those who visit its virtues. They inevitably ask me questions about what to grow at their own homes and increasingly those questions are about edible plant culture. Food growing has turned



Telsing Andrews

the horticultural world upside down. Where in the recent past, vegetable patches had been the hobby of a few and usually hidden in a back corner, many are now interested in growing food at home wherever they can. Here is where the demonstration garden also wishes to grow.

The garden has always incorporated fruit, vegetables and herbs into its design but those elements are now being strengthened in order to inspire the sub/urban gardener. We plan to incorporate more perennial edibles, ornamental vegetables and companion plants.

Perhaps, in 20 years time, the majority of home gardeners will not only be organic, but will only have to step outside to fill their plates. Imagine a city full of organically grown, truly local food.

Telsing Andrews is an inveterate gardener and Demonstration Garden volunteer.



Courtesy of COC-OSO

Tour of the Demonstration Garden, July 2006

It Needed the Big Yellow Sun

How did the familiar logo of the Friends of the Farm come about? "I presented a draft sketch to the first Board of Directors," said Peter Elliott, former general manager of the Friends of the Farm, "that was essentially the same as what we have now, but without the sun."

"There was discussion around the table, not going anywhere. Luckily, artist Ben Babelowsky was on the Board. He took a yellow magic marker, said this is what it needs and stabbed out a big sun over the barn in the design. That was it!

Friends of the Farm volunteers, said Peter, sewed logo badges like the one shown here on their sun hats while working in the Gardens.



Happy 25th, Friends of the Farm

I would like to thank the dedicated volunteers who have worked in the Ornamental Gardens over these 25 years. The Friends have weeded, deadheaded and pruned countless wagons full over the years.

Twenty-five years ago I was only a 'casual' worker in the Ornamental Gardens with the task of shepherding the teams in the fine art of weeding the annual beds. The teams were smaller, willing to tackle the jobs assigned.

Today, volunteers can choose to help in any of the six 'garden rooms' in the Gardens, learning the pace and needs of that area.

The team leaders assist the Lead hand in determining work for the group; without their help I would be stretched to the limit at times.

On behalf of the staff, past and present, I would like to thank you for your participation in making the Central Experimental Farm Ornamental Gardens 'the Jewel in the Crown' of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

*Sharon Saunders, Lead hand and Horticulturist
CEF Ornamental Gardens, Ottawa*



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: Telsing Andrews, Richard Conway, Barry Cottam, Ann Nowell, Sharon Saunders, Mary Ann Smythe. Translator: Lise Anne James.

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Friends of Maplelawn Garden Celebrate 20 Years

By Ann Nowell

Congratulations to the Friends of the Farm on your 25th anniversary. The Friends of Maplelawn Garden (FMG) are also celebrating this year – it’s our 20th anniversary. And there is a connection to the Central Experimental Farm in the history of the Garden.

The area at Maplelawn was settled in 1820 by the Thomson Family who, as they prospered, built the stone house in 1834. The wall around the garden area of approximately one acre was erected a year or two later. The enclosed space, similar to designs in their native Scotland, was mainly used by the Thomsons as the vegetable and fruit garden for a working farm.

Founding of the Friends of Maplelawn

The property changed hands, to the Coles then the Rochesters, until the Federal District Commission, later the National Capital Commission (NCC), bought it in 1969. House and garden were designated a heritage property in 1989 and it became a National Historic Site in 1995, being a fine example of a 19th century layout, one of very few gardens with complete walls. Today the house is occupied by the Keg Manor Restaurant.

The garden became an ornamental flower garden in the early 20th century, but by the early 1990s it was neglected and overgrown. Two residents of Westboro, Nancy E. M. Smith and Anne Faulkner, approached the NCC with plans to organise a group of volunteers willing to put the garden back into good order. Approval was given and, following an appeal to interested volunteers, the FMG got started in July 1993. Eight of those original volunteers continue to work at Maplelawn and have watched it grow from plants hidden under a sea of yellow *Heliopsis* that first summer to today’s regular seasonal changes of colour.

A planting plan from the Experimental Farm

When the FMG began, we found an old planting plan for the Maplelawn Garden from the 1930s. Commissioned by the Rochester Family, it was drawn up by R. Warren Oliver, who was on the staff of the Horticulture Division at the Central



Anne Dorion

Experimental Farm. We do not know for sure whether this plan was ever implemented but we have used it as a guide in choosing varieties of perennials. Also, within the Garden, there is an old apple tree which we believe was developed at the Farm by Isabella Preston in the 1930s.

Anniversary celebrations

During twenty years of rewarding work, many volunteers have come and gone, giving thousands of hours toward keeping the garden looking as good as possible. Today we have a core group of around thirty-five people.

We celebrated our 20th with a picnic supper in July and in September the NCC hosted an Anniversary lunch to honour the Friend’s dedication to the restoration and maintenance of Maplelawn Garden.

The garden is located at 529 Richmond Road in Westboro. Entry is free, although donations are welcome. For more details and pictures please visit our website at maplelawngarden.ca.

Ann Nowell and husband David are founding members of the Friends of Maplelawn Garden. Volunteering there combines Ann’s love of history with a deep appreciation of the natural world.

NEW MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM

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

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	\$ _____

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
 Telephone: 613-230-3276
 Fax: 613-230-1238
 Email: info@friendsofthefarm.ca
 Website: www.friendsofthefarm.ca

INTEREST IN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

YES NO

TOTAL \$ _____

“The Power of a Small Green Place” *(continued from Page 12)*

to the east. Trails fan out from here: a popular choice winds up a short hill to the Butterfly Meadow. An early project of the FWG – founder Peter Hall being one of Canada’s foremost lepidopterists – the Meadow is being created by the hard-working Wednesday evening crew, led by Diane Lepage for the past six years. The entire FWG was designated a Monarch Waystation in 2011 by Monarch Watch and Evergreen Foundation funds enable the creation of a Model Monarch Waystation within the Meadow.

The Old Field and Ash Woods

South of the Meadow and its associated birch grove lies the Old Field. The AAFC used the field for experimental crops until 1996 and it has been managed ever since by our resident naturalist and photo blogger, Christine Hanrahan. The AAFC mows alternate sections every three to five years to maintain its old field status.

The only other habitat to have a continuous manager is the Ash Woods, which Sandy Garland took over on joining the volunteer team in 1993. The AAFC had mowed among the trees, so an understory was established by adding tons of leaves to boost the soil and by planting many species of wildflowers and other native plants. Sadly, the ash trees are under virulent attack by the emerald ash borer, perhaps aided by damage caused during the 1998 ice storm. Although the Ash Woods is morphing into a stand of maples, oaks and conifers, it remains a pleasant and peaceful place. A pair of dedicated volunteers is creating a fern garden in the centre of the Woods, to be named in honour of botanist and long-time OFNC member the late Bill Cody.

Invasive species

Unfortunately, the emerald ash borer is not the only invasive species working its harmful magic on the FWG. Much energy is expended by the Invasive Species Group and other volunteers on dealing with garlic mustard, common burdock, common and



R. Hinchcliff

The Backyard Garden, June 1, 2013.

Visit www.pbase.com/fwg/backyard_garden to see how it changed from a mowed field. Supported by the Friday morning crew, Isabelle Nicol works overtime to keep the Garden in shape

glossy buckthorn and, worst of all, dog-strangling vine (DSV). As FCEF members know too well, no solution is available and many volunteers in both FCEF and the FWG have spent too many back-breaking hours trying to find one.

The good news lies in the research interest that the FWG has drawn. In 2001, a Carleton biology professor undertook studies of DSV, but without clear results. Last year, the FWG was included in a study of its spread in Ontario; this year, researchers from Algoma University’s Invasive Species Research Institute are examining our “mystery circles,” strange, generally small round areas that keep DSV at bay – we’d love to know why!

Locus for research

The FWG continues as a locus for research by scientists at the AAFC and graduate students at several universities. The latest – hot off the press and available online – is a University of Ottawa PhD dissertation by a long-time volunteer and student of geography, Renate Sander-Regier. She writes of “The Power of a Small Green Place,” one that can provide for the volunteers – on whom the FWG is entirely dependent – “a place of stimulation and renewal, a place of enrichment, a place of kinship and revelation, and a place of inspiration.” Surely something like this can also be said of the FCEF and its efforts, as we continue to share our enjoyment of nature in the city.

Barry Cottam is a member of the FWG management committee and co-ordinator of the Tuesday Invasive Species Group. He thanks Christine Hanrahan, Sandy Garland and Renate Sander-Regier for their helpful comments. Sources for his article include Christine’s many publications in the OFNC Trail & Landscape, information on the FWG website and Renate’s recent dissertation.



Diane Lepage

Butterfly Meadow manager Diane Lepage took this photo in June 2012 of volunteers using the infamous soil sifter, a labour-intensive device that gets rid of dog-strangling vine roots and other undesirable stuff

“The Power of a Small Green Place” 23 Years at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden

By Barry Cottam

The Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG) has been described as Ottawa’s “hidden gem” and a “small green place” of power and significance in the relationship we humans have with nature. Some twenty-five years ago, before this long-term project of the Ottawa Field-Naturalists’ Club (OFNC) started, the area was a series of mowed fields and remnants of an attempt in 1967 to establish a Centennial garden.

This is a brief account of the years of toil, tears and profound joys that have seen the creation and growth of an oasis in the city for animals of all kinds to enjoy. It is offered as a contribution to this year’s celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm (FCEF). The FCEF and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) were founding partners with the OFNC of the FWG. Having celebrated its own 20th anniversary in June 2010, the FWG has, in some ways, grown up with the FCEF. As with most siblings, the relationship has been varied, sometimes close and sometimes cool, but the ties remain.

The founding of the FWG

A key stimulus for the founding of the FWG was Wildlife '87, which commemorated the centenary of North America’s first wildlife reserve at the Last Mountain Lake Bird Sanctuary in Saskatchewan. The prime movers, OFNC members Peter and Judy Hall and Jeff Harrison who were backed by the Club’s Conservation Committee, worked to develop a place where a diverse series of wildlife habitats could be developed and maintained by holistic gardening practices. A main goal was to show the public the values and virtues of sustainable natural areas that both wildlife and the public could share.

The best location proved to be AAFC lands south of the Arboretum, and an ongoing agreement between AAFC and the OFNC provides for their use. Some 1,400 people came out to the opening celebration in June 1990. The next year the garden was officially named the ‘Fletcher Wildlife Garden’ in honour of James Fletcher, the Central Experimental Farm’s first chief of botany and entomology and a founding member of the OFNC. Although a well-known landscape architect, David Tomlinson, was hired to develop a plan for the FWG, the actual development deviated significantly from his award-winning ideas. Hands-on management was



Christine Hanrahan

The Pond area. Funding from the Friends of the Farm enabled the creation of the Pond in October, 1991. Photos at www.pbse.com/fwg/history&page=3 show its construction

provided by a Management Committee and supported by the FCEF and the Ottawa Chapter of Landscape Ontario. At that time, FCEF and the FWG took turns participating in each other’s committees.

Seven FWG habitats

In addition to our Interpretation Centre in Building 138, seven habitats comprise the FWG: the demonstration Backyard Garden (itself a series of habitats), the Amphibian Pond, Ravine, New Woods, Old Field, Butterfly Meadow and Ash Woods. An eighth, the Hedgerow, is no longer considered a distinct habitat and is included in the New Woods. At the FWG’s inception, only the Ravine and the Ash Woods were already in place, as the AAFC had planted 100 ash trees in 1967. The AAFC used the area known as the Old Field for experimental crops until 1996 and mowed all other areas on a regular basis until the FWG took them over. These nascent habitats required years of planning and planting by hundreds of determined volunteers. Taking base-line inventories of flora and fauna was a first step. The late Bill Holland, for whom our main trail is named, took inventories of bird life from the founding of the garden until his death in 1993. Many others have been involved, through individual efforts and a bioblitz in 1997.

The Backyard Garden and Amphibian Pond

Each of the habitats has its own history and they cannot all be delineated here. As the most prominent and direct example of our educational outreach, the Backyard Garden has received the most attention, with a succession of managers, supported by many volunteers, putting their stamp on it. Landscape Ontario was heavily involved in the early years, both through significant funding and initial design.

The Amphibian Pond so many (both humans and wildlife) enjoy today, was initially a mere depression in the ground planned as a sedge meadow. The transformation began with funds from FCEF that enabled construction of a dam to block the flow of water from the Farm. While the actual source of the water remains an intriguing mystery, the frogs, turtles, ducks and green herons don’t seem to care.

The New Woods, Ravine and Butterfly Meadow

A new bridge, built in 2011, provides an excellent vantage point for viewing the New Woods to the west and the Ravine

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