



# Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Spring 2008 Newsletter

Volume 20 No. 2

## Historic Lilac Collection to Showcase 2009 Convention



Photo from the Lilacs of the Farm CD

*S. vulgaris* 'Adelaide Dunbar'

**Editors' Note** - The Friends of the Farm will host the International Lilac Society's Annual Convention in 2009. In anticipation of that event, the Friends of the Farm Newsletter asked lilac expert Joan Speirs to highlight the lilac collection and its history at the Central Experimental Farm.

Spring brings many pleasures to winter-weary Ontarians, not least of which is the delight of lilacs in bloom at the Central Experimental Farm (CEF). With the lilac convention being held next year, this spring is an opportune time to highlight our collection at the Farm.

According to their Quarterly Journal, the International Lilac Society (ILS) is a non-profit corporation made up of individuals who share a particular interest, appreciation and fondness for lilacs. Through the exchange of knowledge, experience, and facts gained by members it is helping to

promote, educate and broaden public understanding and awareness. Membership is currently about 372 from 24 countries; attendance at annual conventions is in the range of 50 to 65. The last convention at the Central Experimental Farm was in 1982.

Activities will include tours of the Ornamental Gardens, in particular the lilacs, including the new Preston Heritage Collection, tours of the Arboretum, lectures by scientists, a trip to the Franktown lilacs (see the article in this issue), and an auction of donated lilacs open to the public, with proceeds going to the ILS, their major annual fund raiser.

Today there are four rows of lilacs in the Ornamental Gardens, where about 273 plants of 227 types are arranged for easy viewing, with plaques showing the name, originator and year of introduction. They offer a spectacular show of colour

from mid May to early June.

There are 21 species of lilacs worldwide with none of them being native to North America. Two are from Europe, the others Asia, mainly China. The much loved common lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*), a native of Europe, was brought to North America in the baggage of early settlers. Happy with our climate, it readily naturalized.

Lilacs were among the first 200 trees and shrubs planted in the Arboretum in 1889. Of the 15 lilacs, two are still growing. The number of lilacs was broadened to 130 by 1899; many were *S. vulgaris* cultivars originating in Canada, Europe and the USA. Throughout the years many lilacs have been added, first in the Arboretum and later throughout the grounds of the Farm. Today there are over 800 of 335 different types with the greatest concentration in the Ornamental Gardens where planting started as early as 1919.

Another group of 82 lilacs, planted in a random manner in 1982, is found facing Carling Avenue, in front of the K.W. Neatby Building. Smaller groupings are found in the campus area, to the south of the William Saunders Building. In the Arboretum, on the slope just south of the toboggan hill is the site of the original plantings in the 1890s. Many were moved, but a few *S. vulgaris* cultivars and tree lilacs remain. Among the latter is the Arboretum's only *S. pekinensis*, planted in 1902. Other tree lilacs in the area are several plants of *S. reticulata* (Japanese tree lilac) and *S. reticulata* subsp. *amurensis* (Amur or Manchurian lilac).

Further to the east and south, along the Farm road, is a grouping which includes the two oldest Farm lilacs, *S. vulgaris* var. *alba* and var. *purpurea*. Farther east is a grouping of species lilacs.

In 1920, Isabella Preston was hired to breed ornamental plants that would withstand the Canadian climate and beautify Canadian gardens. At the Farm

*continued on page 2*



until 1946, her work with lilies, roses, Siberian irises, crab apples and lilacs brought her and the CEF worldwide fame. With lilacs, she crossed two late-blooming (*Villosae* series) lilac species from China, *S. komarowii* subsp. *reflexa* (with attractive drooping panicles) and *S. villosa* (very hardy). The hybrids became known as Preston lilacs and in her honour the hybrid species was named *S. Xprestoniae*. Cultivars 'Audrey' and 'Isabella' received Awards of Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society, London, England, in

1939 and 1941, respectively. Other crosses were done among the late-blooming lilacs, one between *S. josikaea* (native of Europe) and *S. villosa* resulted in a new hybrid species, *S. Xjosiflexa*. In all, 81 of her late-blooming hybrids are recorded in the International Lilac Register, although only about one-half of these were distributed to other institutions or nurseries. The term "Villosae Group" has recently been introduced to simplify the naming of cultivars formed by crosses within the



*Villosae* series, e.g. *S. (Villosae Group)* 'Ethel M. Webster'.

Since 2001, the Friends' lilac team has been attempting to acquire Preston cultivars that are missing at the Farm. Bruce Peart, while at Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG), Hamilton, ON, was instrumental in providing us with rooted cuttings of many present at that institution. Sadly, RBG has been unable to provide this kind of support for the past several years. We have turned to doing our own propagating (volunteer Anne Vincent showed us the way) from both old plants at the Farm and cuttings obtained from other institutions.

In the spring of 2005, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and the Friends started planting a collection of late-blooming lilacs which will honour Isabella Preston and feature her originations. This collection also includes cultivars of other originators - in particular, Canadian Drs William A. Cumming, William R. Leslie and Frank L. Skinner. The Heritage Lilac Collection is in the south part of the Ornamental Gardens, by the Friends' shed near the public parking lot off Prince of Wales Drive.

By Joan Speirs



The Friends of the Central Experimental Farm is a volunteer organization committed to the maintenance and protection of the Ornamental Gardens and the Arboretum of the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Membership in the Friends of the Farm costs \$25 per year for an individual and \$45 per year for a family, \$20 Seniors/Students. Membership fees support the many projects of the Friends of the Farm.

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# Lilac Capital of Ontario – Franktown

Photo Credits: Wendy from Kingston



There are probably people in Ottawa who have never heard of Franktown; hard for lilac lovers to believe because it has a peculiar distinction. Located about 50 kilometres south-west of the Farm, Franktown's acres of naturalized lilacs attract many visitors each spring. For lilac lovers in Ottawa and Eastern Ontario, Franktown is a destination they will not want to miss. In 1994, the municipality was officially designated 'Lilac Capital of Ontario'. Starting in 1995, the residents have hosted an annual Lilac Festival on the fourth Saturday in May.

Lilacs probably came to Franktown in the early 1800s, with Scottish and Irish settlers. A lilac behind Franktown's old stone store is thought to be the oldest surviving specimen, brought from Scotland in someone's purse in 1807. Today naturalized lilacs thrive on many untended acres - truly a magnificent sight.

Conditions at Franktown are clearly agreeable to lilacs, which flourish in full sun and well-drained, sandy loam. A County Soil Survey has shown that the soils are predominantly Farmington Sandy Loam, a sandy loam till which is generally less than a foot deep over sandstone rock and is well drained.

The townsite of Franktown goes back to 1818, when it was surveyed and divided into 24 park lots consisting of 25 acres each, with reserved lots for a church, a school and a cemetery. Park lots were granted to early inhabitants and disbanded soldiers and, by 1850, Franktown was a thriving community. But in 1860 a railroad was built connecting Brockville, on the St. Lawrence River, with the Upper Ottawa River Valley. This railroad

bypassed Franktown and is thought to have brought about the town's demise. Today it is a bedroom community for people working in surrounding larger towns and Ottawa.

In May, 2007, several members of the Lilac Team (Janice and Paul Bertrand, Jean Currie, Maura Giuliani, Audrey Pullan and Joan Speirs), Friends of the Central Experimental Farm, examined lilacs in and adjacent to one of the 25-acre Park Lots. Thick with suckering lilacs of variations within *Syringa vulgaris* (Common Lilac), the area was in peak bloom. Suckering was so intense in many areas that other plant species were mostly excluded.

The lilac flowers were predominantly single and pinkish in colour. About 10%

were white and single. Other colours for singles were lilac, magenta, and bluish. The latter were last to bloom. Around clearings - pathways or rocky areas, where one could walk readily among the plants - there were occasional plants of other species. Of great interest were some young non-suckering lilacs with double florets. We noted five plants with pinkish flowers and two with white. Of interest too was a lilac with single white flowers but with pink buds. We surmise that these individuals started from seeds produced by natural hybridization within the neighbouring lilacs. Seedlings were able to become established because of some clear area away from the dense suckering. We did not find a large plant with double flowers that might have served as a parent for the doubles.

The Friends of the Farm are hosting an International Lilac Society Convention in 2009. We believe that the convention participants would be pleased to have an opportunity to view and comment on Franktown's lilacs. As with all lilac enthusiasts, they would appreciate Franktown's high regard for these lovely plants and its designation as the Lilac Capital of Ontario.

Thanks to Brian Dowdall (Beckwith Township Councillor), Julie Krahule (former Franktown resident) and Freek Vrugtman (Registrar, International Lilac Registry) for their interest and help with this project.

- By Joan Speirs, Lilac Team Coordinator  
and Cora Nolan, Committee Chairman,  
Franktown's Lilac Festival



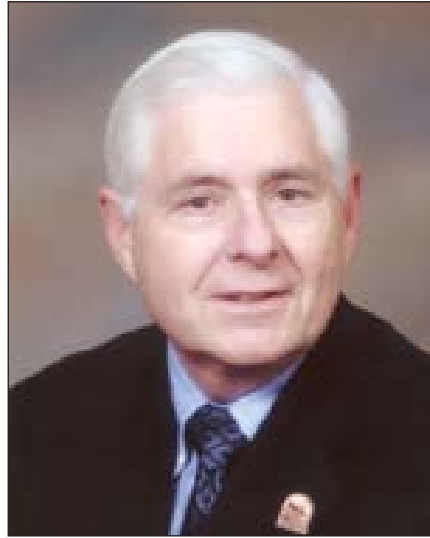
## President's Report

Hello again to all you loyal supporters of the Friends and greetings to the many new members who have joined us this winter and spring.

My term as President will be up as of our General Meeting in September, 2008. It continues to be an honour to serve you, and through you, our whole community. There are so many wonderful people working on so many projects, that it is easy to be a cheerleader for the Friends. As you read this newsletter, look at how much is being done. Each member and/or volunteer contributes, and together we accomplish so much.

We also have strong support from the public, from politicians at all levels, and from the Department of Agriculture staff from the Deputy Minister, Yaprak Baltaciolu, right through to the people we work with on a daily basis.

On page 6 of this issue, we are proud to announce our new initiative "Safeguard the Future." In the past we have had a few



Doug Shouldice

large donations, but this is a new endeavour which we would ask you to read about and consider. Our past president Valerie Cousins and her husband Douglas are starting the fund off with a most generous \$10,000 donation. Our most sincere thanks to the Cousins.

We are hoping that Doug and Valerie's donation might inspire you to make a donation too—large or small. We appreciate any support you can give.

At our March board meeting, your board asked Denise Kennedy to join the board. Denise has been the main organizer behind the four bus trips we have had this year, and she and her crew have also been working hard for months to ensure a great used book sale. I should mention that our publication *For the Love of Trees* has had to go to a third printing already. Yes, it was only launched last October and we have already sold about 4,000 copies. Call the office (613)230-3276 to reserve a copy.

**Best wishes for a great summer. Enjoy your personal garden; enjoy our public gardens on The Farm, and throughout the capital.**

## Mots du Président

Salutations aux Amis de la Ferme et bienvenue aux nouveaux membres qui se sont joints à nous au cours de l'hiver et du printemps.

Mon mandat à la présidence prendra fin à l'assemblée générale de septembre. Pour moi, l'opportunité de vous servir, et ce faisant, de servir ma communauté, a été un honneur. J'ai eu le plaisir de ravailler à de nombreux projets, avec de merveilleuses personnes, ce qui a rendu ma tâche facile et agréable. En lisant ces lignes, pensez à tout ce qui a été réalisé, grâce à la participation enthousiaste de tous les membres et/ou bénévoles.

Nous sommes riches aussi de l'appui de la population, des politiciens, à tous les paliers de gouvernement, et d'Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada, depuis la sous-ministre Mme Yaprak quotidiennement.

Vous prendrez connaissance à la page six du nouveau projet "Garants de l'avenir" don't nous sommes particulièrement fier. Par le passé, nous avons parfois été les heureux récipiendaires d'importantes sommes d'argent, mais ceci est différent, et nous vous serions reconnaissant d'étudier ce projet.

Notre ancienne présidente Valérie Cousins et son époux Douglas y ont généreusement donné le coup d'envoi avec un don de 10 000 \$, pour lequel nous sommes très reconnaissant. Nous espérons que le don de Valérie et de Douglas saura vous inspirer. Aucune somme n'est trop petite. Quelle qu'elle soit, elle sera grandement appréciée. A la réunion du Conseil en mars, vos représentants ont invité Denise Kennedy à joindre leurs rangs. Denise a organisé les quatre voyages en autobus que nous avons

effectués cette année. Elle et son équipe ont aussi consacré énormément de temps et d'énergie pour assurer le succès de la vente de livres usagés.

Je me dois de mentionner que notre livre *For the Love of Trees* en est à sa troisième impression. Bien que lancé en octobre dernier, il a déjà été vendu à près de 4 000 exemplaires. Pour vous procurer une copie, appelez le bureau à (613)230-3276.

**Je vous souhaite un merveilleux été dans votre jardin, les jardins publics de la Ferme et ceux de la capitale.**

# Canada Blooms 2008 – A Trip to Remember

Photo Credit: Denise Kennedy



Tour bus driver, Claude Roger, took out a Friends' membership.

It was another successful trip for the Friends of the Farm starting with a busload of gardening enthusiasts leaving the Agriculture Museum early on March 13<sup>th</sup> to go to Canada Blooms 2008. This is the largest gardening show in Canada and to be there was spellbinding! As soon as we entered the Convention Centre in downtown Toronto, we immediately forgot the 55 cm. avalanche of snow, left behind in Ottawa.

The exhibits were awesome, the vendors inspired us with their new garden plants, art or a tool that we just can't do without. There were 27 new members among the participants on this bus trip and it was wonderful to hear their wholehearted offers of volunteering and wanting to know more about what it is that the Friends do!

On that note, spring is a good time to plan your garden and it is also a good time to clean your book shelves! We need your surplus books so that we may showcase them at our Mega Book Sale coming up in June. The proceeds of the sale will go to support the Friends' efforts in the Ornamental Gardens, to buy tools and equipment needed for our volunteers in the gardens.

Parmi nos voyageurs lors de notre récent voyage à Toronto, nous avons 27 nouveaux membres. Le plus nouveau de tous, fut notre chauffeur d'autobus préféré, Monsieur Claude Roger. Il a demandé de se joindre à nous et il a payé sa cotisation avant de reprendre son poste

le deuxième jour. Il a reçu des accolades de tous et nous étions enfin un groupe complet d'Amis de la Ferme !

Quoique nous avons plusieurs nouveaux membres, il est bon de rappeler à tous que nous avons toujours besoin d'aide avec tous nos projets. La date pour la Grande Vente de Livres approche vite et nous avons besoin de vos livres usagés, français et anglais! Allez, vite, faites le ménage de vos bibliothèques et donnez nous un coup de fil.

- Denise Kennedy



Photo Credit: Peter Hecht



Busload of Passengers on their way to Canada Blooms 2008

Photo by Richard Hinchcliff



## Making sure the Farm always has its “Friends”

### Our goal to raise \$100,000

This spring the Friends of the Farm is launching a “Safeguard the Future” fund raising campaign so that the work we do will carry on for future generations. We want our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren to be able to enjoy the Farm as we do. Our goal is to raise \$100,000 by May 2011. This target amount is above what we are now fund-raising through our ongoing projects.

Currently our dedicated volunteers raise approximately \$65,000 each year from scratch and this funds all of the work we do on the farm, including the salary of our one part-time staff. We raise this money through dozens of different events every year—the Victorian Tea, Art on the Farm, the Rare and Unusual Plant sale are examples. The amount of time and effort required to host these many different events can be daunting.

In addition, our volunteer population is aging; younger volunteers are harder to recruit. We are concerned that we can't maintain all of these fundraisers every year, forever. Therefore, we are embarking on the “Safeguard the Future” campaign to start a foundation that will

establish stable funding for our organization over time.

### What we accomplish

As a reminder to long-term members and as information for new members, these are the main activities in which we engage in order to fulfill our mandate of helping to protect, maintain and enhance the Farm.

#### 1. Recruitment and management of 200 active volunteers and over 600 members

Our active volunteers donate on average at least 12,000 hours per year working on the Gardens, the Arboretum and the Shelterbelt and our many other activities. Our membership of over 600 (and growing) is important

to strengthen our voice with government and other agencies.

2. *Building strong relationships with government*—The Friends has become a respected community stakeholder, consulting with all levels of government on issues that affect the Farm. We also helped set up an advisors' group in which our volunteer horticultural specialists help the Arboretum and Garden staff with their planning and execution of each season's work.

3. *Media Relations* - Our Public Relations volunteer together with our Office Manager work hard to keep the media informed of all our activities and this allows us to have good contacts when public issues arise that affect the Farm.

4. *Major projects* to enhance the Farm and to raise public awareness of its historic and horticultural value:

- i. Development and care of the Merivale Rd. Shelterbelt
- ii. Restoration of historic collections such as the rose and lilac gardens
- iii. Development and maintenance of the hosta garden
- iv. Raising public awareness of the Farm through lectures, tours, speeches and talks, fine art exhibits and publications such as the recently launched “For the Love of Trees” now in its third printing in 6 months.

### Donate a gift now

To keep all of these activities going, we need your help and donating to our “Safeguard the Future” campaign is one of the best ways you can support our efforts. There are a variety of ways in which you can contribute. Some of these are:

- **Cash in a lump sum** (of any size—large or small) for which you receive a charitable tax receipt. For example a donation of \$10,000 produces a tax savings of \$4600, resulting in out of pocket costs of \$5400.

### Great tax benefits from donating securities

	Sell shares and then donate cash	Donate shares directly
Fair market value	\$10,000	\$10,000
Original cost of shares	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Capital gain	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
Tax credit (at 46%)	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600
Tax on gain (at 23%)	\$ 1,840	\$ 0
Tax savings	\$ 2,760	\$ 4,600
Actual cost of donation	\$ 7,240	\$ 5,400

- **A pledge of cash which you give at intervals over the next two to five years.** This allows you to give in an affordable way and receive tax benefits each year.
- **Give securities** (of publicly traded companies). Many people don't realize that since 2006, the Federal Government has exempted charitable donations of securities from any capital gains tax, which makes this type of gift very attractive. The chart below identifies the tax benefits of donating securities directly as compared with selling the securities first and then donating the cash.

The Friends has set up a mechanism that makes donating securities and stocks very simple. Tax receipts are valued based on the closing price of the date upon which the stocks are transferred to the Friends' brokerage account.

**Remember the Friends in your will**

In addition to making to donations now, you can also include the Friends as a beneficiary of your will. You can identify any part of your assets as a donation, either in cash or as in the example above, you can donate securities to benefit from savings on the exemption from capital gains tax.

You can name the Friends as a beneficiary of your RRSPs, RRIFs, or pension. You can also name the Friends as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy. All of these forms of "Planned Giving" can be easily incorporated into your will and most estate and tax lawyers in Ottawa are very familiar with the procedure.

The citizens of Ottawa are blessed to have this beautiful historic green space in the centre of our city. Yet like everything that we hold dear, it needs to be nurtured and cared for. This is what the Friends of the Farm is dedicated to doing. Help us continue this work for many years to come by giving generously to the Friends' "Safeguard the Future" campaign.

For more information or to make your donation, please call Marsha Gutierrez, Office Manager, Friends of the Farm at 613-230-3276 or Valerie Cousins, Past President and Volunteer Director of Fund Raising at 613-722-6228.

- Valerie Cousins

**Invest In Your Community's Future**

In partnership with the Great Canadian Theatre Company, the Friends of the Farm is hosting a seminar on Planned Giving. Learn how to make the most of your charitable gifts and maximize tax savings.

Knowledgeable speakers will provide information on tax benefits, giving stocks and securities, and financial planning.

**When:** Monday May 26, 2008 - 9:30 AM to 12 PM

**Where:** The Great Canadian Theatre Company (corner of Holland Ave. and Wellington St.)

**To Register:** Call the Friends of the Farm office 230-3276 on or before May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Coffee, tea, juice and snacks provided.

**Speakers:**

**Who needs a will? You do!**



Douglas Buchmayer, a partner in Drache LLP law firm, practices law in the areas of Estate Planning, Administration and Litigation.

Douglas has chaired and spoken at numerous continuing legal education seminars and is a frequent guest on many local radio shows.

**Gifts of Stock and Flow-through shares: What are they? What is the difference between the two? How can they help your charitable dollar go further?**



Douglas Cousins is currently a Senior Advisor at Doherty & Associates, Ottawa's leading investment counsel firm. Prior to joining P.J. Doherty & Associates, he was Vice President of Investments for Royal Trust, where he was responsible for all personal investments, including foundation and endowment assets.

**Charitable remainder trusts and charitable gift annuities—what are they, how do they work and who should consider them?**



Randy McIntyre, Senior Financial Advisor, Integral Wealth Securities Ltd.

After a successful career in the Armed Forces, Randy worked with Investors Group in the capacity of Representative, Trainer and lastly Division Manager before he joined the Berkshire Group in 1999. In 2008 Randy opened the first Ottawa office of Integral Wealth Securities Ltd.

## Children's Art Workshop



Photo by Reid Barry

Galina Ponomarenko with the children holding their art work and two volunteers - Rita Ilinich and Andrea Thomas

On March 13, our newsletter team visited Building #72, home to the Friends of the Farm, to check out the children's art workshop, taking place under the direction of Galina Ponomarenko.

The 11 children in attendance were coached in the art of watercolour by Ms. Ponomarenko and her two youth volunteers - Andrea Thomas and Rita Ilinich. Two workshops were held during the March break - one on March 10 and the one we attended on March 13.

The children are taught to draw the picture first and then do the painting. The ideas are the children's own. Ms. Ponomarenko's interest in children's art has led her to set up a small children's art studio at her home, located near the Farm.

Judging by the dazzling paintings the children produced, we can perhaps hope that these budding artists will look to the Farm for their future inspiration, whether as artists or as citizens.

-R.D. Barry

## When does your pine tree bloom?

For the past three years, a group of volunteers has been recording the blooming (flowering) times of trees and shrubs in the Arboretum and the Ornamental Gardens. For many of us, the existence of blooms often separates the male and female ones. On trees such as pine, larch, birch, and ash, this comes as a revelation and our interest in and admiration for them blossoms. Come and see for yourself!

Your copy of the Friends book *For the Love of Trees* will be a great help in describing and locating tree blooms. For more detail, J.L. Farrar's *Trees in Canada* is a good reference book along with *Taylor's Guide to Shrubs*.

Hundreds of recorded data are summarized in table form - and there is still a lot of material to be covered as there are over 1,600 varieties of trees and shrubs and each should be recorded for at least three years. Thankfully, the Lilac Team provides the data for over 300 kinds of lilac. The volunteers work independently or in pairs in a specific area of the Arboretum on any day of the week.

For additional information, please contact our part-time office manager, Marsha, at the Friends of the Farm office in Building #72. Marsha also has copies of the form for recording the information. For your convenience, the form may also be emailed to you at home.

- Catherine Hooper

## 2008 Program

### May

6 - What You Need To Know Before Buying Trees & Plants Lecture

6 - Volunteer Information Session

11 - Rare and Unusual Plant Sale

13 - Historical Walk of the Farm

24 - Lilac Tour

31 - Iris & Daylily Tour

### June

1 - Iris & Daylily Tour

3 - Volunteer Information Session

7 & 8 - Book Sale

14 - Peony Tour

15 - Farm & Explorer Rose Tour

### July

1 - Strawberry Social

22 - 24 - Reford Gardens Escorted Bus Tour

23 - 10-mile run

### August

10 - Victorian Tea

16 - Art on the Farm (rain date 17th)

19 - 21 - Reford Gardens Escorted Bus Tour

### September

17 - Annual General Meeting - at 7 p.m. Sir John Carling Bldg.

18 - Escorted Bus Tour to Prince Edward County Wineries

### November

1 & 2 - Craft and Bake Sale

# J. P. Gratton – New Arboretum Supervisor



Photo by Peter Hecht

Jean Pascal Gratton is the new arboretum supervisor. Very approachable, friendly and knowledgeable, JP, as he is known, has worked on the Farm for over 15 years. His first job was a short term contract where he cleaned out attics of all buildings on the Farm. He found a lot of interesting relics and learned much about the buildings.

As a hands-on person, JP has learned about trees, forestry, pruning, planting, landscaping, gardening and equipment operation, on the job. He also became fluent in English, knowing little when he arrived. Currently, he is registered at

Guelph University for doing a horticulture degree by long distance learning.

He works under the leadership of Pierre Huppé and is responsible for the arboretum and ornamental gardens, the traffic circle planting, landscaping around buildings, grass-cutting for the Agriculture Museum and maintenance of all trees on the Farm.

He has ten full-time employees including himself, two seasonals, one term employee and during the summer, four students. Five are full-time employees are qualified horticulturists and two as arborists.

Summer work consists of tree and shrub pruning and removal, nursery operation, flower bed preparation, plant transplanting and maintenance, grass-cutting and landscaping of all Farm buildings.

Drive along Farm roads, you will see the results of JP's tree pruning. He is very concerned about maintaining these tree rows and preparing for the arrival of pests such as the Long Horn Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer. JP would also like to replant trees where dead trees had to be removed. 'These are some of the most

attractive parts of the Farm,' he says.

JP has instituted an annual tree assessment survey and keeping of records and work data. He classes this as research for future use such as determining problem areas or procedures which work well. Data is also kept on greenhouse seed germination, bloom times, as well as updated tree maps. JP is very research oriented, being as he says, 'focused on the future but with an eye on the past.'

Jean Pascal looks forward to working closely with the Friends of the Farm so he can plan the most effective use of resources on Friends' projects. For 2008, his big project will be the rehabilitation of the hedge collection and, possibly, the introduction of a collection of small ornamental trees. As well, the Mahonia collection will be relocated to the ornamental gardens.

It was a big pleasure to talk with JP and learn about the arboretum and ornamental gardens. I am impressed by his knowledge, his future plans and his excitement with improvements in cooperation with the Friends.

By Peter Hecht

## Tour of Prince Edward County Wineries

Join us for an exciting escorted one day bus trip to two Prince Edward County wineries, with wine tastings and lunch included.

Don't delay, call today!

We are selling tickets now!

Cost: \$105.00 for members, \$120.00 for non-members.

Contact Denise Kennedy, Tour Manager,

Friends of the Farm.

E-Mail: [DeniseKennedy@rogers.com](mailto:DeniseKennedy@rogers.com)

Phone: 613-738-9724



## Birdhouse Workshop

**K**en Last, dedicated volunteer for the Friends of the Farm, was the instructor for the birdhouse workshop held March 25 in Building 72 from 7 to 9 pm.

In all, there were 13 participants and 3 volunteers. The birdhouses were constructed of recycled cedar, alder and birch bark from dead trees. Everyone left with birdhouse in hand.



*Now isn't that a great-looking birdhouse!*



*Instructor Ken Last shows off a well-constructed birdhouse.*

## Annual General Meeting of the Friends of The Farm

**Wednesday September 17, 2008**

**7 PM**

**Sir John Carling Building  
Cafeteria**

**The Central Experimental Farm**



*A photo from the Paradise Found Lecture series on Sissinghurst with inset photos of Virginia Woolf and Vita Sackville-West*

### Paradise Found Creators to be Guest Speakers

Co-producers and presenters of the popular and dramatic Paradise Found Lecture Series, Joanie Flynt, horticulturist, and Karen Molson, biographer and historian will make a presentation entitled How We Found Paradise. Through anecdotes, slides and discussion, we will get an inside view of the trials and triumphs of creating these extraordinary photo documentaries on Sissinghurst, Jekyll and Lutyens, The Lost Garden of Heligan, Monet's Muse, and most recently the Love of the Labyrinth. All are invited to come and enjoy!

# Stamps Honour Canada's Lilac Heritage



*Syringa vulgaris* 'Princess Alexandra'



*Syringa x prestoniae* 'Isabella'

In the spring of 2007, Canada Post issued two stamps depicting two typically Canadian lilacs. They chose the white *Syringa vulgaris* 'Princess Alexandra' and the *Syringa x prestoniae* 'Isabella', which is pale purple.

Cultivated in 1874 by James Dougall of Windsor, Ontario, the 'Princess Alexandra' was one of the first lilacs to be planted in Canada. Dougall was the first person in North America to originate lilac cultivars and named his hybrid after Alexandra, the Queen-consort of King Edward VII.

The 'Isabella' was originated in 1927 by Isabella Preston. Preston started hybridizing lilacs in the hope of obtaining attractive, hardy, late-blooming Canadian lilacs. She began her work in 1920 by crossing two wild species from China. The resulting hybrid - the 'Isabella' - blooms from late May to mid June. The most prolific originator at the Central Experimental Farm, 89 of her cultivars are recorded in the International Lilac Register.



Isabella Preston



## Passing of Harvey Speirs

The newsletter team wishes to express our sincere sympathy to Joan Speirs and her family on the passing of Joan's husband, Harvey Speirs, while the newsletter was in preparation.

As our Volunteer Horticultural Adviser for lilacs, Joan was an important contributor to this issue with the page one article on the lilac collection as well as the page three article on the Franktown lilacs.

We extend our thanks to Joan for her expert assistance with this issue and once again, our sincere sympathy to Joan and her family on Harvey's passing.



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