

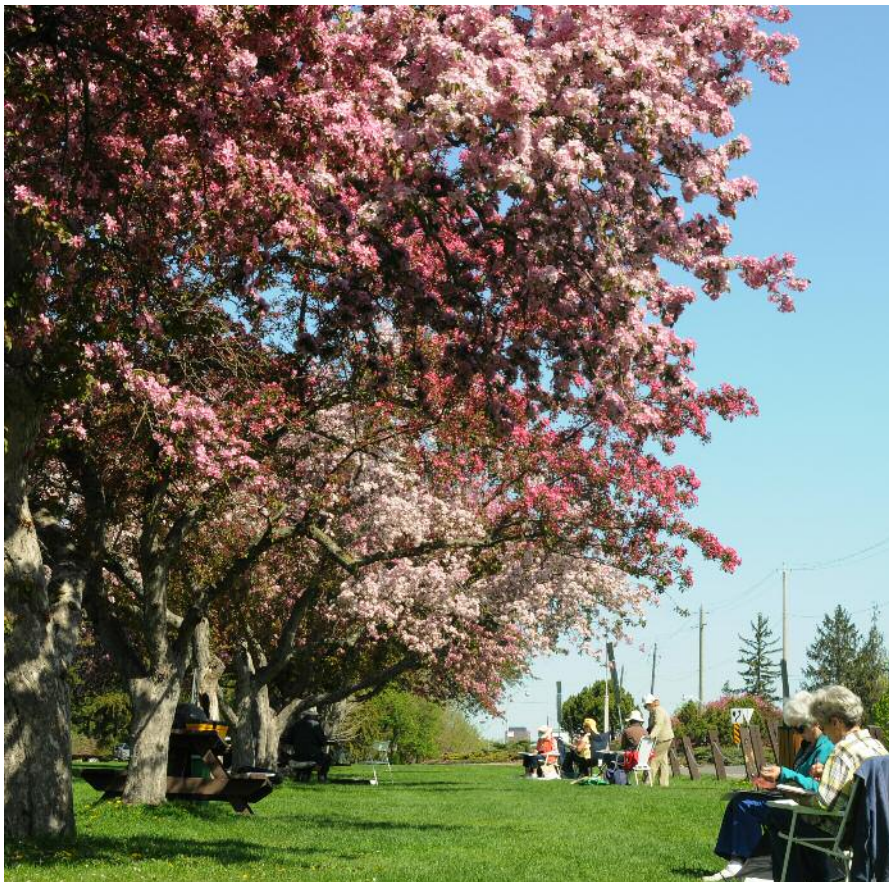


Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

Spring 2013 Newsletter

Volume 25 No. 2

Crabapples at the Farm - Enjoying their Beauty, Tracing their Heritage



R. Hinchcliff

Preston crabapple blossoms, Prince of Wales Drive

Of all the ornamental trees in the Arboretum, the crabapple is easily one of the most versatile – beautiful spring flowers, lovely fruit, interesting bark and foliage, cold hardy, yet small enough not to dominate the landscape. Its profuse spring flowering, coupled with its fast growth and multi-season decorative usefulness, make it one of the most popular, if not most common, ornamental trees in Canada.

The ornamental crabapple shares its lineage with the many edible apples found in grocery stores across the globe. It is unknown when apple breeding first began; however, today, almost 50 species of apple (*Malus*) have been identified, and these in turn have given rise to over 7,000 distinct varieties.

Roughly 800 of these apple varieties produce fruit less than two inches in diameter and are thus labelled “crab.” It is believed the name “crab” refers to the branching form of the crabapple tree, thought to resemble the many arching legs of a crab. Crabapple trees are traditionally selected and bred for their ornamental value and exhibit a wide array of leaf colour, fruit/flower colour and size, as well as time of flowering, branching structure, growth habit, and size at maturity.

In the Arboretum, the crabapple collection is one of the largest and most diverse. There are roughly 350 individual trees in the collection represented by 12 distinct species and over 100 different varieties.

Isabella Preston's Lake Series – A spring showstopper

Every spring, blossoming crabapple trees transform Prince of Wales Drive as it winds through the Central Experimental Farm. On either side of the road, stretching north and south of the roundabout, stand roughly 100 mature trees. Planted in 1952, they represent the better part of the Central Experimental Farm's collection of the Lake Series of

Rosybloom crabapples. Rosyblooms are hybrids between *Malus pumila* 'Niedzwetzkyana' (Turkestan crabapple) and *M. baccata* (Siberian crabapple).

The Lake Series, developed at the CEF by Isabella Preston, a pioneering Canadian ornamental hybridizer, are not true Rosyblooms as they resulted from open pollination and their true parentage is not accurately known. That said, they exhibit the same dark, deep rose, red and purple flowers, and characteristic reddish/purple foliage, and have always been categorized as Rosybloom.

Continued on Page 3

President's Message

Warm spring greetings!

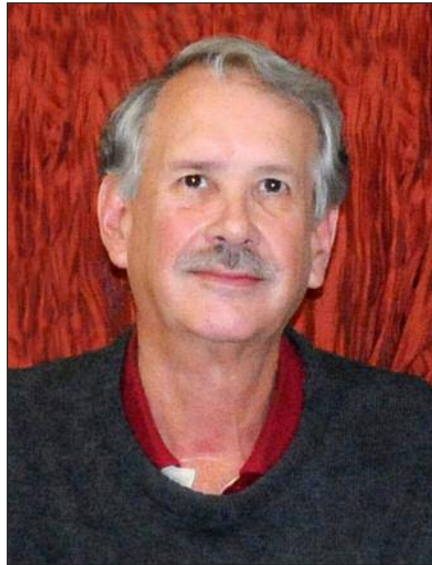
My first message in this issue is to potential members of the Friends of the Farm who think that being a member means work! We often hear of people who choose not to subscribe because they are unable or prefer not to be involved in our volunteer activities.

Being a member does not mean being a volunteer! Our mission is to help protect the Farm and the more members we have, the stronger our voice. Being a member contributes enormously to our efforts to speak out on behalf of the Farm.

Many of our members provide donations in support of specific projects or for our general program and, along with membership revenue, this financial support is critical to our success.

So, you can make a vital contribution to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the Central Experimental Farm without being a volunteer!

And we need to increase our membership. As demographic trends make it more and more difficult to recruit volunteers, we need the support of members. I encourage current members to renew their membership and to try and interest others



Chuck Craddock

in joining. This could include relatives, friends and neighbours. We've been operating for 25 years - and I would like to see us celebrate our golden anniversary.

When you receive this newsletter, spring should be knocking on the door. I'm looking forward to getting into my garden as, I'm sure, are those of you who are gardeners.

And I'm also keen to get back to work at the Farm. My second message is to potential volunteers. If you are considering becoming a volunteer, just think of the beautiful workstations we have in the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Shelterbelt! We need to keep them looking their best and can always use more volunteers. Remember, we only require one morning a week, although you are very welcome to offer more time.

On Page 8 of this newsletter, Eric Jones describes our various outdoor teams and their activities, and provides a phone number and email address for you and your friends to join. Information is also on our website.

And, finally, to our current members, please mention these opportunities to younger relatives, friends and neighbours who might be interested in volunteering at our beautiful Farm.

Mots du président

Saluts cordiaux à l'occasion du printemps!

Dans cette édition, je m'adresse d'abord aux membres éventuels des Amis de la Ferme (Amis) qui pensent que le fait d'être membres représente du travail! Fréquemment, nous entendons parler de personnes qui décident de ne pas se joindre aux Amis parce qu'elles sont dans l'impossibilité de participer à nos activités bénévoles ou préfèrent ne pas le faire.

Être membre n'est pas synonyme de bénévolat. Une aide dans le but de protéger la Ferme, voici en quoi consiste notre mission. Plus nombreux serons-nous, plus considérable sera la portée de notre action. En tant que membres, nous sommes en mesure de déployer de plus grands efforts dans notre rôle de porte-parole de la Ferme.

Un grand nombre de nos membres font des dons qui sont destinés à des projets particuliers ou au programme en général, et compte tenu des revenus provenant des cotisations des membres, notre succès est donc tributaire de cet appui financier.

En conséquence, vous pouvez

apporter une contribution substantielle à la protection, la préservation et l'amélioration de la Ferme expérimentale centrale sans toutefois faire du bénévolat!

Tout de même, il est impératif d'augmenter le nombre de membres. Comme les tendances démographiques rendent notre tâche de recrutement de bénévoles de plus en plus difficile, nous nécessitons l'appui des membres actuels. Je les invite donc à renouveler leur cotisation et à recruter d'autres personnes intéressées à prendre cet engagement, soit parmi les membres de leurs familles, leurs amis ou leurs voisins. Le groupe des Amis a été créé il y a 25 ans, et je formule le souhait que nous soyons témoins de la célébration du 50e anniversaire.

Le printemps sera déjà là lorsque ce bulletin vous sera livré. J'ai hâte de me rendre dans mon jardin, comme tous les jardiniers parmi vous d'ailleurs.

De plus, il me tarde de me remettre au travail à la Ferme. Mon deuxième message s'adresse aux bénévoles potentiels. Si vous considérez en être,

imaginez un peu les aires de travail qui se trouvent dans les jardins ornementaux, dans l'Arboretum et le long du brise-vent! Nous devons garder ces espaces en excellent état, et un plus grand nombre de bénévoles sont toujours les bienvenus. Pensez-y bien! Il s'agit d'un engagement d'un matin seulement chaque semaine, mais vous pouvez y dévouer plus de temps si vous le désirez.

À la page 8 du bulletin, sous la signature d'Eric Jones, vous noterez une description des diverses équipes de travail à l'extérieur et de leurs activités, ainsi qu'un numéro de téléphone et une adresse électronique pour vous permettre ainsi qu'à vos amis de vous y inscrire. Vous trouverez également de l'information sur notre site Web.

Enfin, aux membres actuels, je vous invite à faire part de ces occasions favorables aux jeunes personnes dans vos familles et parmi vos amis et voisins qui seraient désireuses de faire du bénévolat à notre belle Ferme.

Crabapples at the Farm..... (continued from Page 1)

There are 22 different cultivars in the Lake Series, each carrying the name of a famous Canadian lake. Only five occur as parkway specimens in the rows on Prince of Wales to any great extent ('Cowichan', 'Arrow', 'Rousseau', 'Makamik' and 'Geneva'). The remainder of the collection are represented as solitary specimens in the rows, or in locations elsewhere on the Farm.

As Rosyblossoms are some of the most popular cultivars in the world, and since so many were developed on the Farm, it's the mandate of the Dominion Arboretum to conserve the Lake Series collection. In recent years, several of the trees have succumbed to age, disease and the occasional runaway car. Beginning in 2005, then Foreman Brian Douglas began a program to rejuvenate the collection by both purchasing and propagating existing Rosyblossom cultivars, as well as repatriating lost cultivars. With the help of the Canadian Clonal Genebank in Harrow, Ontario, the Arboretum has since been able to recover the cultivars 'Scugog', 'Dauphin' and 'Athabasca', leaving 'Babine', 'Kingsmere', 'Muskoka', and 'Okanagan' still lost to our collection.

Beyond the Prestons

Other than the Lake Series, there are many crabapples in the Arboretum collection, which can be found in several groupings. The "old" crabapple collection is located just north of Building 72 and has a number of the oldest apple trees on the property. Its proximity to visitor parking makes it one of the most visited areas in

the Arboretum and its collection of mature, species crabapples provides a glorious range of bloom colours and bloom times each spring.

A newer grouping of crabapples can be found on the "big island" adjacent to the Rideau Canal. As one travels north on the NCC bike path from the Hartwell Locks towards the arched steel bridge, a long row of some 30 Siberian crabapples flanks the shores of the Rideau Canal. This row ends at the foot of the bridge where a grouping of 15- to 20-year-old crabapples can be found of popular varieties such as the weeping 'Red Jade' and the white flowered 'Dolgo', or newer cultivars such as 'Brandywine' and 'Thunderchild'.

"Crabapple valley"

The last large grouping of crabapples in the Arboretum is also the newest and has been colloquially referred to as "crabapple valley." Although not located in a valley as such, this collection sits just north of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden in a small depression at the base of the escarpment below the interpretive centre. The vision for this grouping, which was started in the early 2000s, was to be a representation of the wide range of bloom colours available in flowering crabapples. From east to west the varieties chosen were to transition from white through light pink, red and into deep purple.

Another purpose of this collection was to represent the range of crabapples available to the Canadian public through commercial nurseries. Consequently, the majority of the specimens chosen for this

location are of recently introduced cultivars, or of time-tested favourites. Unfortunately, many of the crabapples planted in the area proved intolerant of the poor soil conditions and high water table, and the master plan was eventually abandoned. Today, about 30 trees remain in this grouping, including the popular Rosyblossom cultivar 'Hopa' and the unique large-fruited Lake Series crabapple 'Geneva'.

Part of the Farm's heritage landscape

Along with these main groupings, crabapples can be found scattered across the campus of the Central Experimental Farm, a testament to their versatility as an ornamental landscape tree. Some notable specimens include: *M. ioensis* 'Plena' (Bechtel's Crabapple), located in the woodland, a late bloomer with showy two-inch, rose-coloured double blossoms; 'Montreal Beauty', found at the west entrance to the K. W. Neatby Building and believed to be one of the first ornamental varieties developed in Canada; and the lovely weeping 'Red Jade', about 50 years old, just west of the main entrance to the Saunders Building.

As they form an important part of the heritage of the Central Experimental Farm, the Arboretum will continue to conserve and improve this beautiful collection.

Crispin Wood
Arborist/Horticulturist, Arboretum
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Huge Volunteer Effort in 2012

Friends of the Farm volunteers at the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum and Merivale Shelterbelt recorded a 9.4% increase in hours over 2011, reports Donna Pape, Director, Volunteers.

"This remarkable effort is much appreciated and we look forward this year to another great effort by our dedicated volunteers in these beautiful areas of the Farm," says Donna. Please join them on one of our weekly teams described on Page 8.

Or, if your talents don't lie outdoors, you can assist with office tasks, work at the mammoth June book sale, bake for our fundraisers, work a shift at the craft sale - there's a job to suit everyone's interests.

A few hours a week or a few hours a year - your time is important to us and greatly appreciated.

To become a volunteer or for more information, go to www.friendsofthefarm.ca and click on "Become a Volunteer" or telephone 613-230-3276.



Siberian crabapple (*M. baccata*)

Upcoming Events

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

Craft and Bake Sale

- Saturday, April 20, 10 am to 4 pm.
- Take home the creations of area artisans and delicious baked goods.
- Location: Building 72, Arboretum, CEF.
- Admission and parking are free.

Rare and Unusual Plant Sale

- Sunday, May 12, 9 am to 1 pm.
- Enhance your garden with plants from the many specialty growers and nurseries gathered for this event.
- Master Gardeners of Ottawa Carleton will be available to answer your questions.
- Location: Parking lot beside K.W. Neatby Building, Carling and Maple Drive, CEF.
- The Ottawa Food Bank will be there to collect donations.

Tour of the Lilac Rows

- May, to be announced
- Enjoy a guided tour of the CEF lilac rows with the Friends of the Farm lilac team. Discover the many lilac varieties on display.
- Location: Macoun Garden, Ornamental Gardens. Free parking at the Canada Agriculture Museum, south of the Prince of Wales roundabout.
- Free admission; donations gratefully accepted. No registration required.



Fletcher Wildlife Garden Native Plant Sale

- Saturday, June 1, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.
- Find native plants grown in the area.
- Volunteers and growers available to answer questions and offer suggestions.
- Free admission and parking.
- For more information, email fletcher@ofnc.ca or call 613-730-0714.

Preston Lilac Collection Tour

- June, to be announced
- Take a guided tour of the Preston Heritage Lilac Collection with the Friends of the Farm lilac team. Discover the variety of lilacs that Isabella Preston created at the CEF.
- Free parking at the Canada Agriculture Museum, south of the Prince of Wales roundabout.
- Free admission; donations gratefully accepted. No registration required.

Peony Tour

- Saturday, June 8, 9 am to noon.
- Enjoy a guided tour of the peony beds at the CEF. Get tips on what would work best in your garden and ways to keep your peonies happy.
- The tour begins at the peony beds in the Ornamental Gardens. Free parking at the Canada Agriculture Museum, south of the Prince of Wales roundabout.
- Free admission; donations gratefully accepted. No registration required.



Rose Workshop

- Saturday, June 15, 1 to 3 pm.
- A workshop on roses, rose pests and diseases at the Heritage Rose Garden. Information on the collection will be available to help with a self-guided tour of the roses. Bring a folding chair.
- Free parking at the Canada Agriculture Museum, south of the Prince of Wales roundabout.
- Free admission; donations gratefully accepted. No registration required.

Book Sale

- Saturday, June 15 and Sunday, June 16, from 10 am to 4 pm.
- Come and check out the thousands of books. Stock up for your summer reading.
- Location: Building 72, Arboretum, CEF.
- Admission and parking are free

Victorian Tea

- Sunday, July 14*, 2 to 4 pm.
 - Classic tea served under the trees of the Arboretum.
 - Bring a patio chair and listen to live music.
 - Enter the best hat contest and don period costume (not required).
 - Location: Building 72, CEF Arboretum.
 - Admission and parking free; formal tea \$8.
- *Note date change. This event will now be held in July.**



Victorian Tea Times

On the Bus

Summer fun awaits us in Mont Tremblant, the highest peak in the Laurentians!

An 8 am departure on July 12 from the Canada Agriculture Museum parking lot will allow us five hours to enjoy the sights and activities at the pedestrian village nestled at the foot of the



mountain. You will be able to watch street entertainers in the village, take a one-hour cruise* on, or walk around, Lake Tremblant, take the cable car* to the summit, go for a hike, and have lunch* in one of the village's many bistros.

We leave Mont Tremblant mid-afternoon for a visit to the five-acre Jardins D'Emmarcalles (Daylily and Perennial Gardens) in Ripon. Our hosts in Ripon will gladly give us personal tours of their gardens and, if you wish, you can purchase a plant or two for your garden! Our return to Ottawa is planned for 8 pm on the same day.

Cost per person is only \$100 and includes:

- return trip to Mont Tremblant aboard a luxury coach
- entrance fee to Les Jardins D'Emmarcalles (Daylily and Perennial Garden)
- attentive escort services of FCEF volunteers
- a charitable donation receipt of at least \$45

*Cable car to summit (\$20 per person), one hour cruise around Lake Tremblant (\$15 per person), and lunch are at your expense.

To reserve, complete and mail the registration form on our website, or call 613-230-3276 and ask for Denise Kennedy (tour organizer). Trip payments by cash or cheque please, no credit cards. Email enquiries to Denise at tremblanttripinfo-2013@yahoo.ca

Reserve early! Don't be left behind! Come on your own or with a friend or two. We take pride in promoting a very congenial atmosphere on our trips! Trips like this and other Friends of the Farm events raise funds to finance our many projects at the Farm. Your participation is very much appreciated.

Denise Kennedy

Digging In and Getting Things Done

Linda McLaren first heard about the Central Experimental Farm from her father. "He worked in the boiler room at the Ottawa Civic Hospital from 1944-45," she explains, "and after he married my mom and the children were born, he would tell us stories of that year in Ottawa, which included his visits to the Farm." Although that first mention is clear in Linda's memory, it didn't entice her to explore the Farm when she moved permanently to Ottawa in 1975 in search of a job after completing a Master's in Public Administration at Queen's University. "I would drive by on Prince of Wales and look at the gardens and say to myself, 'isn't that pretty,'" but while Linda did occasionally walk through the Ornamental Gardens, it wasn't one of her "go-to" places.

Although she had no particular affinity for the CEF during her professional life, it has become a big part of Linda's life in retirement. She has been a Friends' volunteer since 2009, after leaving a 33-year-career in the federal government at Corrections Service of Canada. Linda says she was drawn to the Friends of the Farm because "it was one of the few volunteer opportunities that offered the chance to work outdoors." The first of 10 children born to Jim and Betty McLaren, and raised on a working farm near Lanark, Ontario, Linda spent a great deal of her childhood outdoors, helping with the family vegetable garden and lending a hand at haying season.

When Linda contacted the Friends, she was given a list of garden teams from which she chose the Hosta and Explorer Roses teams. The hostas offered shade from the summer sun and she already grew them in her own garden. And although Linda always thought "roses were too much work to grow," she had read about Explorers in Hole's Garden Catalogue and was willing to give them a try.

In 2011, Linda stepped in to lead the Hosta Team, her expanded duties coinciding with the construction of the new retaining wall. The team was not involved in the actual construction, but expended considerable physical labour to remove, move and replant over 150 hostas. Linda credits team members Chris Hindle and Marilyn Letts with handling much of the heavy work, as well as fellow team mates Fiona Cowell and Polly McColl for helping to get the job done. The Arboretum team also pitched in to help move the plants and to unload mulch and place it in the hosta garden.

Linda, Fiona and Polly are now busy creating an electronic inventory of all the plants. Several years ago, the labels were removed in hopes of staving off thieves in search of a particular species. It's a painstaking task — there are over 100 varieties and so far only 25-30 have been identified.

Successful Annual Non-Dinner

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to thank those members who accepted the invitation to our annual non-dinner in December. Over 60 members donated a total of \$2,700.

Members who did not accept our invitation missed a great opportunity to save money - no taxi fares, no tips, no parking fees, no baby-sitting fees, no parking tickets, no expensive drinks...

Bert Titcomb,
Director, Fundraising



Linda McLaren

R. Hinchcliff

It's a challenge but Linda is used to digging in and getting things done. A year after joining the public service, she got involved in the local union. "No one else wanted to run for secretary-treasurer and I felt that I should pitch in. It's something I think I learned from my parents who were willing to step forward in organizations, not just sit back and let others do the work."

As she was exposed to various union issues and areas of work, Linda became a union activist. "I was a member of the Public Service Alliance, the Ontario Federation of Labour, and the Ottawa and District Labour Council. It was very interesting, but very time consuming. I was at meetings nearly every night."

Linda may have left the workplace, but she remains true to her union roots. She is involved in creating a virtual Workers History Museum, which tells the story of workers in the Ottawa region. The first project has been completed and provides a history of how family leave came about.

Linda is also a long-time member of the Board of Parkway House, a home for adults with severe physical disabilities. And this winter, she ventured into the bowels of Building 72 at the Farm, to sort books every Tuesday for the Friends' June book sale. It was the perfect job for the voracious reader and helped pass the cold, snowy days while she waited for the hostas to appear and the roses to bloom.

Mary Ann Smythe

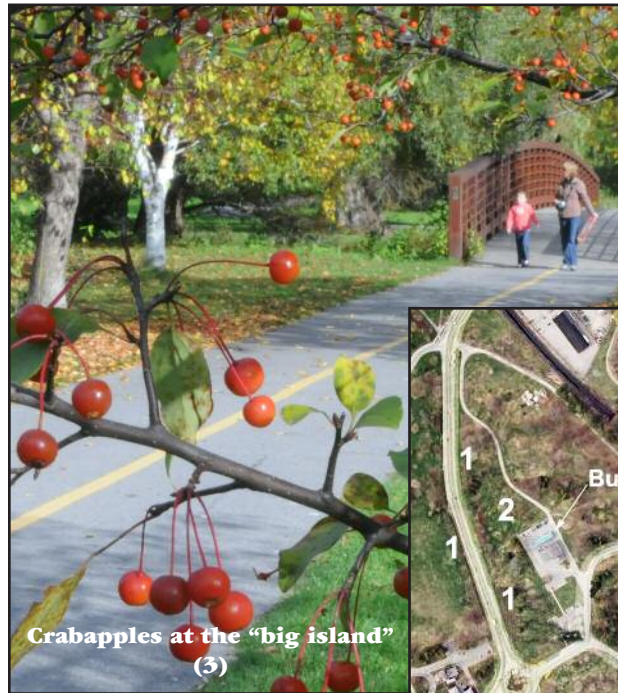
Where to Find the Farm's Crabapples



A range of colours in the "old" collection (2)

Crispin Wood has introduced us to the crabapple collection (Pages 1 and 3) and their various groupings around the Farm. The aerial photo on this page shows the locations of the following major groups.

1. The Rosybloom rows along Prince of Wales Drive are easy to find. Who could miss them during their splendid spring show! Isabella Preston hoped that Ottawa might one day be as famous for its crabapples as Washington was for its cherry blossoms. She certainly played her part, breeding beautiful ornamental Rosyblooms.
2. The "old" collection, just north of the Friends' offices in Building 72, has a "glorious range of bloom colours" and is a popular and handy place to visit. A fine 'Red Jade' specimen is close to the Arboretum path heading north.
3. The "big island" collection east of the two bridges features the Siberian crabapples alongside the Rideau Canal



Crabapples at the "big island" (3)



'Makamik' (1)



'Golden Hornet' in "crabapple valley" (4)

and a group of younger beauties between the two paths. On the other side of the bridges, near the woodland, is a 'Cameron' crabapple that, like the Lake Series of Rosyblooms, originated at the Farm. D. F. Cameron succeeded Isabella Preston and resumed her hybridizing work after WWII.

4. "Crabapple valley," formerly known as the rainbow collection, is the newest group at the Arboretum and shows a range of available colours in crabapple blossoms.

The collection of crabapples at the Farm, as Crispin writes, is large and diverse. He mentions notable specimens that are in the woodland and near the K. W. Neatby and William Saunders Buildings. They, and others at various locations, will be noticed for their blooms during May.

Birds, Bees and Butterflies Buffet Revisited

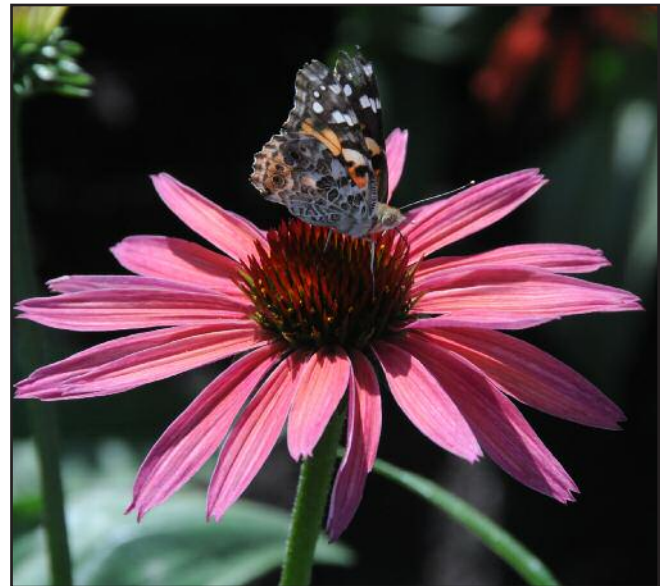
The Ornamental Gardens’ team will be throwing its straw hats into the ring for a second time and entering the 2013 All America Selections (AAS) landscape contest. We did well last year, placing second in our category.

To qualify, a garden must feature AAS seed winners and we have some fine new flowers to use in our “Birds, Bees and Butterflies Buffet” bed. Winners in 2013 include three beauties in the daisy family (*Asteraceae*) – *Echinacea* ‘Cheyenne Spirit’, *Zinnia* ‘Profusion Double Deep Salmon’ and *Zinnia* ‘Profusion Double Hot Cherry.’ With such tasty names, these plants should prove favourites for food among our winged friends, as well as being popular with visitors.

The kidney-shaped bed at the southern end of the Ornamental Gardens at the entrance to the parking area off Prince of Wales Drive will again be home to the garden. Many *Echinacea* and *Buddleia* plants have wintered there and, although snow coverage was good, several bouts of extreme cold could prove fatal for the *Buddleia*. I did take about a dozen *Buddleia* cuttings that are doing well in the greenhouse.

Disk or That

“Disk or That” is the theme of this year’s garden. “Disk” (or “This” in the play on words) alludes to a part of the flower in the daisy family. This family (*Asteraceae*) is also known as *Compositae* because the flowers are composed of two kinds of florets – disk and ray. In disk florets, the petals are fused into a tube shape and usually found forming a disk shape in the centre of the flower. Ray florets look like petals and are arranged around the centre disk. *Zinnias* and *Echinacea* are good examples of



Painted Lady and *Echinacea*, Buffet Garden, 2012

R. Hinchcliff



All-America Selections

Zinnia ‘Profusion Double Deep Salmon’

“That” will include a range of plants providing tapered vertical elements in the design. They include several varieties of *Salvia*, Ornamental Millet, *Digitalis* ‘Foxy’ and Wheat Celosia (*Celosia spicata*). Of course there will be room for whimsy in our All America Selections contest bed – maybe a new birdhouse?

Sharon Saunders
Horticulturist, Ornamental Gardens
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada



All-America Selections

Zinnia ‘Zahara Starlight Rose’

flowers with disk and ray heads.

The winning 2013 varieties mentioned above, as well as AAS winners from previous years, such as *Echinacea* ‘PowWow Wild Berry’, *Zinnia* ‘Zowie! Yellow Flame’ and *Zinnia* ‘Zahara Starlight Rose’ will be used in this year’s Buffet bed. *Rudbeckia*, Sunflower and *Gaillardia* will round out the collection of daisy-like flowers used in the display.



All-America Selections

Zinnia ‘Zowie! Yellow Flame’

Here Come the Teams!



Inez Causley of the Perennials and Annuals Team

The Friends supply a small army of volunteers to assist Farm staff in tending the Ornamental Gardens, Arboretum, and Merivale Shelterbelt. The teams are generally active from April to September.

The volunteers' mix of age, gender and background adds to the enjoyment of being outdoors, socializing, learning about the plants and picking up gardening tips, and, of course, helping the community by improving a great public space!

The two **Lilac Teams** help staff with the Farm's many lilacs, which include more than 800 specimens of about 325 varieties. Lilacs were introduced at the Farm in the late 1800s and a new species bred in the 1920s.

Our team members gain expertise in the care and use of lilacs. One team focuses on pruning and deadheading lilacs throughout the Farm, the other does weeding and other maintenance work on specimens in the Ornamental Gardens. Some members also help identify, document, label and acquire new stock.

The **Peony Team** cares for this ever-popular flowering plant. Duties include initial cultivation and weeding, supporting with hoops, recording of bloom dates, identifying, summer weeding, and, in the fall, removal of hoops and stem-cutting. The team has recently focused on new beds and maintaining the health of heritage plants.

While labour-intensive, the work is not difficult and doesn't involve heavy lifting. There is no fear of pulling out the wrong plant because peonies are easy to recognize. Some team members are peony enthusiasts, while others just like to help out and get some fresh air.

Two **Rose Teams** support the long history of rose cultivation at the Farm: the CEF Heritage roses and the "Explorer" series of roses.

Roses demand consistent attention due to challenges that include removing Japanese beetles every season.

The teams assist staff with maintaining and rejuvenating roses through pruning, fertilizing, weeding and replacement, and identification of varieties. The work requires some bending and kneeling to care for the plants, and offers in return the experience of gardening lovely roses in a beautiful setting.

The **Iris and Daylily Team** works on bearded and Siberian irises and daylilies, and helps out occasionally in the rock garden. The Siberian irises and some of the daylilies are due for dividing this year. A future goal is to re-establish some older varieties that once grew at the Farm. The work involves digging, replanting, weeding and clipping – activities that are demanding but not too strenuous. Team members have many diverse interests outside the plants, which adds to the experience.

The **Macoun Memorial Garden Team** does general plant maintenance in this special garden established in the 1930s on the former site of W. T. Macoun's home. The team keeps perennials and annuals looking fresh throughout the summer, and assists occasionally with other gardens. Team members need a basic acquaintance with gardening and weed identification. Their reward is friendship, knowledge of plants, and satisfaction of a job well done. At the end of shifts team members leave tired but happy to have contributed.

The **Rock Garden (or Rockery) Team** is a small group working on plants tucked into the rocks of the Ornamental Gardens. These plants include conifer trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, as well as plants typically associated with rock gardens. The team attends to plant care as well as removing grass and invasive plants that pop up between rocks and flagstones.

Team members should be agile enough to maintain balance on uneven surfaces. They benefit from the shade provided by the trees, and get firsthand experience with rock garden sites.

The **Hosta Team** tends a secluded garden located along a path leading from the Arboretum circle. They are in the process of redesigning the site, including reseating loose stones and moving large plants to more suitable locations. The team is also involved in identifying and marking varieties.

This garden is one of the areas on the Farm that is always in shade: a cool place to work. The team is quite small and welcomes new members, noting that some physical strength and love of digging helps with redesign and replanting. The team takes a break during July-August when there is little to do for hostas except take satisfaction from the results of their work.

The **Perennials and Annuals Team** covers a wide range of plants, weeding and deadheading as needed. Team members put

in three hours of physical labour, sometimes in hot summer sun, and need patience in caring for their subjects. This is a versatile team that enjoys the pleasure of being outdoors in beautiful surroundings in the company of like-minded people.

The **Shelter Belt Team** oversees the strip of trees and shrubs along Merivale Road at the western edge of the Farm. Volunteers are responsible for planting and maintenance, including grass-cutting, weeding and watering. More trees will be planted this year to extend the belt northward along Merivale. After each growing season, trees are protected with guards and burlap to minimize rodent and salt damage.

Physical strength is an asset for this team in view of work demands. Members gain a working knowledge of trees and shrubs and the satisfaction of seeing the landscape evolve from bare ground to a newly forested area.

The **Arboretum Team** focuses on shrubs planted among the trees in the Arboretum. The work includes pruning, edging and weeding. The invasive dog-strangling vine and buckthorn present a constant challenge to the shrubs (and to the team).

The volunteers enjoy seeing their favourite shrubs and trees at all times of the year. In May, the ceremonial guard for Parliament Hill starts training on the Carleton campus across the river. You can hear the marching orders and bagpipes playing, so there is the added benefit of free entertainment!

The **Bloom Time Team** keeps a record of bloom times for deciduous trees in the Arboretum. Volunteers must be able to



R. Hinchcliff

Volunteers on the Explorer Rose Team

locate and identify their target trees and shrubs. Their reward is the stroll in the Arboretum, and the sight of new blooms.

The **Donor Plaque Team** attends to commemorative plaques on trees. Although this program has ended, replaced by a donor plaque program at the Shelterbelt, there are still records to be updated and plaques to be maintained. This small team gains knowledge and appreciation of the wide variety of trees on the Farm.

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At the end of the day, volunteers get an opportunity to contribute to beauty. There is considerable satisfaction in looking at the gardens and knowing you have helped maintain their splendour. The physical exercise improves flexibility, and many find working with their hands relaxing. Team members are hardworking and very pleasant companions. For more on the gardens, see "collections" on the www.friendsofthefarm.ca website.

Eric Jones

Join a team today by calling 613-230-3276 or by sending an email to Donna at volunteer@friendsofthefarm.ca. Visit our website www.friendsofthefarm.ca for a volunteer enrolment form.



Collin Freebury

Janice and Paul Bertrand



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: Mary Ann Smythe. Design & Printing: Nancy Poirier Printing. Contributors: Edythe Falconer, Eric Jones, Denise Kennedy, Sharon Saunders, Bert Titcomb, Crispin Wood. Translator: Lise Anne James.

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More Room in the Macoun Memorial Garden



Before conifer removal



After conifer removal

Spring will reveal a newly opened area at the west entrance to the Macoun Memorial Garden.

Last fall, the Ornamental Gardens crew felled several old conifers that were clearly past their prime and had grown too large for the site. Two cedars (*Thuja occidentalis* 'Fastigiata') on either side of the pathway were removed, as well as a clump of *Thuja occidentalis* 'Wareana' and one large *Mugo* pine.

It was sad to watch these old trees being cut down, but they were no longer the beautiful little shrubs that were planted in 1936 and 1937. Seventy-five years is a good long run; even with yearly pruning, they were bound to outgrow this small area.



Mertensia virginica (Virginia Bluebells)

In keeping with the Garden's formal look, we want to replace them with pyramidal-shaped shrubs. We'll make our selection of evergreens soon but they will not be planted in 2013 since I would like the ground to settle for a year. My choice would be a pair of

Chamaecyparis nootkatensis 'Pendula' (weeping Nootka False Cypress), which are pyramidal and open at the same time, with slow to moderate growth in the Ottawa area, as well as being completely hardy. Since these trees are slower growers than cedars, maybe they will survive the axe after 75 years.

We should see a flurry of spring bulbs and flowers such as *Mertensia virginica* (Virginia Bluebells), *Corydalis lutea* (Yellow Fumitory) and the ubiquitous *Ornithogalum umbellatum* (Star-of-Bethlehem) festooning that small area. If not, we shall make it very colourful for the summer.

Sharon Saunders
Horticulturist, Ornamental Gardens
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada



Ornithogalum umbellatum (Star-of-Bethlehem)

Photos by Sharon Saunders

NEW MEMBER REGISTRATION FORM

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 ADDRESS: _____
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 FAX #: _____
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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:

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INTEREST IN VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

YES NO

TOTAL \$ _____

Here's to a Glorious 2013.....

(continued from Page 12)

Our fenced enclosure keeps out rabbits and groundhogs and the fences make great trellises. Pots of flowers in each corner attract pollinators. Although the enclosure is small, crops are rotated. Paths are sheet composted and every three years are relocated and relayered. **Tip – Mulching and composting paths keeps weeds down and reduces dirt splashback.**

Ours and our neighbour's front yards join to form a dry shade garden. Ours gets only morning shade. In mid-summer this side bakes. 'Autumn Joy' Sedums thrive to add great fall colour. A row of garlic chives provides salad material and clusters of starry white flowers in fall. The new planters are in full sun having replaced tarmac. They absorb rainfall and reduce heat island effect.

Tip – Water plants in the morning at root level.

On the west side of the house is a messy alley collection of tough vines, hardy cultivars and resilient wild flowers. Kiwis bloomed last year and then received a brutal pruning. I hoped for and was rewarded with a little fruit this year. The alley is a busy thoroughfare for pollinators. **Tip – Don't forget to feed "toughies." Top dress them with compost/manure at least once per season.**

I love good edges. As I edge, I monitor and plan. Edging can be hard on the back so I alternate it with less demanding garden tasks like drinking lemonade on the patio. There I toil with plans for new projects – a privacy area near the back door and a small herb garden nearby. **Tip – The more edibles I can incorporate in the designs the better.**

July and August were hot and dry. In the spring I seed bald patches with clover, a legume that fixes nitrogen in the soil. Established clover is more drought resistant than most grasses. Both can go dormant for lengthy periods without dying. In the summer I mow higher and leave cuttings where they fall. Cuttings can supply up to 50% of a lawn's nutritional needs. The rest can be provided with topdressing in fall and spring. **Tip – Water lawns deeply once a week in the morning.**

By late September everything was under control! Edges were gorgeous, crops were harvested and processed, yard wastes were snug in next year's composters, the fall display up front was brilliant, there wasn't a weed in sight, and lawn patching and composting was complete.

It's all naively optimistic, don't you think! **Tip – Optimism feels better than pessimism.**

Edythe Falconer, Master Gardener, Ottawa-Carleton

References:

Garden Activities Calendar and H2O Fact Sheet, <http://mgottawa.mgoi.ca>
Gardening Help, 613-236-0034 or mgoc_helpline@yahoo.ca
Master Gardener Plant Sale – May 11, 12 – Trillium Tour
Canadian Organic Growers – Google Ottawa Chapter for 2013 conference presentations

Valerie Cousins Awarded Medal



Congratulations to Valerie Cousins, former president and life member of the Friends of the Farm, who was awarded a Diamond Jubilee medal for her achievement as managing editor of the book *Vimy: Canada's Memorial to a Generation*. The authors of the book, Jacqueline Hucker and Julian Smith, and the designer/producer, Alison Hall, also received medals.

Marking the 60th anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne, the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal honoured significant contributions and achievements by Canadians during 2012.

The superbly illustrated book, which is available at www.sanderlingpress.com and in bookstores, tells the story of the extraordinary Vimy monument that commemorates Canada's contribution to the First World War and the sacrifice of 60,000 Canadians who lost their lives.

Master Gardeners Lecture Series

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

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

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

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

Creating fabulous container combos is easy once you understand the basics. Catherine will discuss choosing appropriate containers and growing medium, principles and

elements of design, plant selection and seasonal options.

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

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

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

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

Here's to a Glorious 2013 – What the Future May Hold for the Year

In the winter newsletter, Janus, the two-faced God of hindsight and foresight, reviewed 2012 and promised to forecast 2013. Here is his forecast, proven to be true for the first three months!

January 2013 provided us with a generous blanket of snow. Along with soil and mulch around new plantings, roots and crowns were well protected. Winter birds and busy squirrels hustled around competing for food and forage. My tree protection was effective against rabbit damage. **Tip – Soil protection and tree guards are worth the effort.**

February made cocooning a very attractive option. Cabin fever was replaced with quilting fever – a good thing, as I don't want to die with a large stash of fabric. Eventually, I braved the outdoors and waded through deep snow to get at fruit trees for dormant pruning. The work included taking out the leader of a very tall 'Dolgo' crabapple tree to encourage it to grow out instead of up. If pruning is left too late unwanted sprouts can result. **Tip – Disinfect pruners between each cut.**

In the house, one sweet potato plant managed to survive. I ordered more cuttings. This year's vines were protected from the start. In 2012, vines recovered from animal pruning and even managed a crop of fine medium-sized tubers. **Tip – Sweet potatoes are frost sensitive. Wait until the end of June to put out cuttings.**

In February, I presented "Water Management for Home and Market Gardeners" at the Canadian Organic Growers conference. Soil is the most effective and least expensive means for storing water. Barrels, plant choices and surface modifications also support water conservation. We need to be ready for extreme weather conditions. **Tip – Feed the soil.**

As of February, Master Gardeners of Ottawa launched a new bug review. I introduced the squash vine borer, a nasty visitor to my backyard last year. Layering squash vines is a proactive technique but there are others.

Tip – Learn to layer. It's a useful skill.

In March, indoor seeding occupied considerable time. I chose things that are easy to grow and good to eat. A soilless potting medium was used so that seedlings were less likely to damp off. Farmers and gardeners are good at hoping and I hoped late frosts would not damage fruit blossoms, which was indeed the case. **Tip – Remove winter protection from shrubs and evergreens on an overcast day.**



R. Hinchcliff

Pond at Macoun Memorial Garden

In the pond, in the company of a de-icer, were three kois adopted in 2012. They'd escaped raccoons and herons in 2012. In April, they were welcomed back with water lettuce, water hyacinths and a gentler pump. Fall leaves were removed from their pond more promptly this year. **Tip – Too many decomposing leaves change the chemical balance of the pond.**

The de-icer was cleaned and stored. The tool shed received its spring cleaning as did outdoor storage areas. I tried to be better organized and resolved to do **NO** bad lifts this summer! A garden dolly was a smart addition to the tool shed and far less expensive than physiotherapy. **Tip – Remove matted leaves from the garden and use as mulch or composting material.**

Lilacs and forsythia were pruned soon after blooming. Both flower on last year's growth. I found homes for surplus azaleas. A couple went to spring plant sales. Reclamation of overgrown shrub roses continued. Heights were reduced by a third two years in a row. They rested this year. **Tip – As a general rule, it's best to prune shrubs soon after they blossom. Then you don't need to remember what bloomed on last year's growth.**

There are six principles of gardening self-sufficiency I continued to refine this year - 1) growing plants with more than one use, 2) supporting gardening needs in more than one way, 3) increasing biodiversity, 4) cultivating native plants, 5) planting in guilds, and 6) harvesting on-site

biological materials rather than sending them to landfill. **Tip – Elderberries are a beautiful multi-use plant.**

Piles of wood chips from tree work last fall were relocated as mulch. Distributing them around trees and shrubs was a major task similar to cleaning the Aegean stables. Does mythology say whether Hercules bagged and sold stable contents? He could have made a fortune! **Tip – Before mulching with fresh wood chips put down thin layers of compost or manure.**

Cold tolerant vegetables were planted/seeded in April. Potatoes can be sown in both fall and spring. Over-ripe tomatoes can be strategically plopped in the fall and seedlings obligingly sprout the following year. Many sunroom occupants wanted out this month, especially the geraniums. White geraniums intoxicate Japanese beetles that then fall to the ground to be eaten by birds – hopefully. **Tip – Potatoes and beans can be started indoors.**

Soybeans were planted as ground cover in the orchard. The use of ground cover with crops is becoming more sophisticated. Soybeans fix nitrogen in the soil, provide edible pods, and foliage shades the surface to reduce moisture loss and weed growth. Last year's compost was dug into the soil. **Tip – Sweet potato and squash vines make good ground cover.**

Continued on Page 11