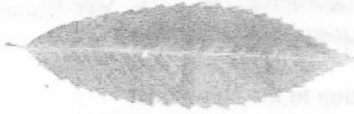


Canadian Chestnut Council (CCC)

...on the Chestnut Trail



NEWSLETTER # 43

January, 2007

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~chestnut>

In this issue: - Tree Photos...Correspondence...Annual General Meeting..and more!

Elderly Survivor, Chestnut Fairing Well

By Brett Hodgson, CCC Director

As miraculous as it is, an impressive American chestnut tree proves its reign as king of North Walsingham Township's forests. It has managed to defeat the blight's grasp for likely over 50 years.

During a Norfolk Woodlot Owners' Association field trip a few years ago, a North Walsingham woodlot owner informed CCC Director Mike Nemerovski of the existence of this tree, one of the largest survivors in North America.

CCC Director Brett Hodgson investigated the lead shortly after and found that this specimen is a truly impressive forest canopy maker. A canker was spotted at the base of the tree; there were, however, no indications of active blight present and the tree was very healthy.

In June 2006, Mike Nemerovski and Brett Hodgson visited the tree for a follow up inspection and found that it remained healthy.

The canker at the base of the tree shows no signs of advancement and is likely not of blight origin. Some lightning damage was present but had healed. An active blight canker was spotted just below the canopy but has not affected vigor.

The CCC will obtain genetic material for propagation and add it to the diversity of our gene pool, preserving this survivor's genes in the event that it succumbs.

At present this tree is likely 40-50 years old, occupies forest canopy and is 91 inches/231 cm in circumference and 29 inches/74 cm DBH.



CCC Director Mike Nemerovski admires this giant American chestnut.

EDITORIALS

This Newsletter needs a name!

We are tired of calling this despatch *The Newsletter*.

Other newsletters have names; why not this one? The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) calls its newsletter *The Bark*. Others are known to their members as *The Nuttery*, *SONGNEWS*, etc.

How about *The Burr?* *The Tree?*

We hereby offer a one-year subscription to the Newsletter ...*whatever it is...* to whomever convinces the CCC Board of Directors to adopt his or her name for it.

Correspondence

From Mount Bridges, Ontario

Hi from Strathroy-Caradoc Township!

This summer I found 2 American chestnut (not verified) trees on a farm....I checked this fall and although there were burrs on 1 tree I couldn't find any nuts ahead of the squirrels. I'm wondering if these trees are from an older one that I remember years ago on that property.

I own 48 acres across the road (Olde Dr) and as a child growing up in the 30s and 40s I remember a few dead chestnut trees still standing in the field. They were still there in the 50s as I had to clean up the fallen trees so we could make a corn field from an old pasture. The wood in the trees was still very hard and we burned a lot of it in my father's woodstove. I still have a few pieces of one of the trees.

I have an 8 or 10 year tree at my place (8119 Inadale Dr). Last year there were some burrs but no nuts, but this year, what a thrill! – I harvested about a 4 quart basket of shelled nuts. I have some other smaller trees but none that will bear nuts for a while.

There is a Chinese chestnut near the American chestnut and I'm wondering if the nuts I gathered will be crossed with it.

I am hoping to plant some of the American nuts. Some of the nuts were split in the burrs. I'm wondering why? Maybe from rain or hot weather.

- Keith Wilson

From E-mail

I asked this question before but received no replies. Has anyone had any success in air layering chestnuts for propagation? In this method you wound a twig, wrap it in damp sphagnum moss (perhaps with root hormone) and then tightly wrap clear plastic around it using tape.

Once you see roots growing inside the bag the idea is to cut the twig off the tree below the wound, remove the bag and plant it. I've read that the benefit of this is that the twig still has a lifeline to the parent tree (top half of the wound) while roots are grown on the bottom half of the wound. It sounds simple (on paper) but can anyone report on probability for success, chestnut-specific issues or do's and don'ts? I'm hoping to try this method out this Spring.

- Scott

The Editor responded by providing contact data to the CCC's Dragan Galic, who has rooted chestnut cuttings in this manner.

The Canadian Chestnut Council

The CCC is a scientific and charitable organization with the mission to restore the American chestnut. All its officers volunteer their services both in the field and at the desk. The CCC annual meeting, the web site and this Newsletter dispense information to generate support for saving and restoring this once-important forest tree.

Executive

- Chair - Dr. Terry Anderson
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- D/Chair - Mr. Tom Welacky (Research Committee)
527 Lake Drive, Kingsville, ON
N9Y 3S6 519-981-4076
- Secretary - Mr. Charles Hooker
RR # 2, Orangeville, ON L9W 2Y9
519-942-8085
- Treasurer - Mr. Douglas McKeen
RR # 1 Orangeville, ON L9W 2Y8
519-941-5765

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RR # 2 St. George, ON
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- Dufferin - Dr. Colin McKeen
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L9W 3B6, 519-941-9513
- Norfolk - Mr. Brett Hodgson
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- Elgin - Mr. Murray Alward
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- Wellington - Dr. George Collin (PR Committee)
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Mr. Thomas Amorim
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Dr. Arthur Langford, Simcoe, ON
Mr. Arthur Loughton, Vittoria, ON
Mr. Leslie Corkum, Falmouth, NS
Dr. Peter Rice, Hamilton, ON

Correspondence

From Prince Edward Island

I'll send you a JPEG of the Wolfville seed lot trees in my woods. Do you know if selfed nuts off the Ashdale tree will be viable? Will they be runts if they grow?

Jocelyn Clarke



[The Editor replied: The seedling is beautiful and looks quite healthy. I urge you to suppress the grass around the seedling with Roundup spray (while shielding the seedling from the spray) or some form of matting. The latter encourages mice over winter; so you must remove the mat before serious snowfall and replace it in the Spring.]

Self-pollinated nuts generally do not sprout, but there is some research to suggest that some isolated trees manage to self-pollinate, perhaps as a consequence of their isolation. Only growing the nuts will tell for sure.]

From Calgary, Alberta

I am interested in doing some field work and or library research out here in Alberta and or western Canada. I feel confident that the American chestnut can and will grow here, far from the blight area. I suspect that mature American

chestnuts will not grow to a hundred feet in Alberta, but would be perhaps half that height. The major hurdle to viable American chestnut groves in Alberta is the complete and total lack of available nuts and or cuttings. As I indicated earlier, I have a site in kind on my property and would be delighted to accept the opportunity to participate in the preservation program.

I am intrigued by the geographical distribution of trees such as the American chestnut, American beech, American elm, Bitternut hickory and Black walnut. I feel that these trees can and did once grow further north than they do today. There is a sense that some of these trees are very slowly regaining their old ranges after the bulldozer effects of the Pleistocene glaciations. Trees such as American elm on the other hand have regained territory much more rapidly than the nut bearing trees. The nut bearing trees need vector animals along with mother nature to increase their range. I do not know what animal or animals other than squirrels may have been involved.

Harry Kravec

[The Editor sent some Island Lake (Orangeville, Ontario) chestnuts to Mr Kravec, and indicated the CCC's interest in exploiting Mr Kravec's offer of research and land.]

From Sherbrooke, Quebec

This is the cheque for my membership in the Canadian Chestnut Council. If you could keep me informed to the news on the American chestnut in Canada, and also the Council news and happenings, it would be appreciated...

By the way, could you send me the chestnut germination procedure, just to be sure!

Thank you again!

Frederick M-Gladu

[The Editor sent some Island Lake chestnuts and a copy of "Growing Trees from American Chestnuts" that was distributed in final form at the Annual General Meeting.]

From Norwich, Ontario

20 survivors from trees received from CCC in 1996. Sandy loam hillside facing north.

Douglas Arthur

From Caledon, Ontario

I found my way to the AGM...I very much enjoyed the meeting, the presentation on turkeys, and left with chestnut "nuts" to try my hand at growing them once more. I was given some nuts earlier this year but they failed to germinate.

Thank you very much.

Darcie McKelvey

We encourage letters to the Board of Directors and the Newsletter. The Editor urges all with e-mail to communicate by that medium, as it is more responsive than Canada Post.

CANADIAN CHESTNUT COUNCIL
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
for the year ended September 30, 2006

INCOME STATEMENT

RECEIPTS

	<u>2,006</u>	<u>2,005</u>
Trillium Foundation grant	\$ 42,900	\$ 21,700
Memberships/Donations	5,697	7,860
Interest income	352	1
	\$ 48,949	\$ 29,561

DISBURSEMENTS

Annual General Meeting	831	692
Breeding Program - the University of Guelph	30,500	20,000
Computer and related equipment	18	2,878
Conference and educational programs	759	243
Insurance - directors' liability	810	810
Irrigation system	120	133
Newsletters	1,050	1,109
Office, postage and stationery	82	96
Transportation	729	-
Tree propagation, maintenance and nut harvesting	1,982	1,015
	\$ 36,881	\$ 26,976
Excess of receipts over disbursements for the year	12,068	2,585
Bank balance, beginning of year	7,825	5,240
BANK BALANCE, September 30, 2006 - Scotiabank	\$ 19,893	\$ 7,825

Statement put forward by: *D. McKeen*

Verified by: *Alex Clarke*
Date: *Oct 25, 2006.*

CANADIAN CHESTNUT COUNCIL
Proposed Annual Budget
for the year October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
Ontario Trillium Foundation grant	32,500	42,900
Memberships/Donations	5,700	5,697
Interest income	-	352
	<u>\$ 38,200</u>	<u>\$ 48,949</u>

DISBURSEMENTS

Annual General Meeting	850	831
Breeding Program - University of Guelph (2005 balance)	-	9,300
Breeding Program - University of Guelph (2006 balance)	6,500	21,200
Breeding Program - University of Guelph (2007)	14,400	-
Technical support and land maintenance	6,000	-
Computer and related equipment	100	18
Conference and educational programs (US trip for directors)	2,000	759
Insurance - directors' liability	810	810
Irrigation system maintenance	150	120
Newsletters	1,200	1,050
Office, postage and stationery	200	82
Plot development of additional site and travel costs	1,000	729
Preservation of germplasm, grafting	800	-
Public relations program (presentations)	15,000	-
Tree propagation, maintenance and nut harvesting	2,000	1,982
	<u>\$ 51,010</u>	<u>\$ 36,881</u>

Budget deficit	(12,810)
Surplus funds on hand, 2006	<u>19,893</u>
Remaining funds	<u>\$ 7,083</u>

Meet Your Directors

Tom Welacky, our Deputy Chairman, grew up along the shore of Lake Erie, the most southerly part of Ontario and Canada, on a fruit and vegetable farm near Harrow. In his early teenage years, Tom spent most of his summers irrigating the family orchards of peach, apple, plum and pear trees. The experience was useful in helping to understand the relationship between tree growth and survival under environmental stress.

Tom's father was instrumental in training him in the planting and care of horticultural, local nut and native trees. With this knowledge and experience, he went to several universities to



Tom examines an American chestnut tree at Onondaga Farms.

obtain degrees in biology and horticulture.

Tom and his wife were both employed by the Tillsonburg Association for Community Living, where he was privileged to develop a horticultural program on a large farm that included a sugar maple bush with a maple sugar boiler. The experience with the association members, the horticultural program and the sugar bush were very rewarding and helpful in future endeavours.

After a number of years, Tom joined Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada as a research biologist working on burley tobacco management and production; that later changed to soybeans as the burley tobacco industry declined.

The opportunity to move back home was hard to resist, and Tom and his wife bought one of the family farms. They raised apples, peaches, grapes and pears and took over the responsibility of managing the adjoining Mauser Harmony with Nature Foundation lake property from his father.

While working at the Research Centre at Harrow, Tom was involved in several volunteer groups such as the local Association for Community Living, woodlot owners and local conservation authority projects such as the Natural Habitat Restoration Program. He served on the founding committee of the restoration program; the primary purpose was to raise funds and coordinate seed collection, production and planting of native Carolinian tree species in Essex county. The restoration program proved to be very successful, raising awareness of Carolinian trees, increasing tree plantings and serving as the motivational group for development of several future projects leading to native-seed-collection groups and new additional planting programs.

Tom and his wife decided to sell the farm after living there for over 20 years; their priority was re-directed to raising upcoming teenagers instead of apples and peaches. Tom maintained an active role in maintaining the Mauser Foundation property and promoting its goals, joined the Chestnut Council and became a director a few years later. He is involved in the Research Committee and Public Relations, and believes strongly that the American chestnut will once again be part of the Ontario landscape.

President's Corner

In spite of a late frost that nipped the new leaves on trees in our orchards, the trees made good growth at both locations. Plans are underway for the first round of selection of the best trees and subsequent cross-breeding to produce the next generation of resistant trees with Ontario germplasm. Trial inoculations with the blight fungus on a few trees are planned for 2007 with the majority of inoculations planned for Spring 2008. The chestnut germplasm preservation program has been put on a formal basis: a planting of cloned chestnuts is scheduled for this Spring as part of the Canadian Clonal Genebank Collection at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Research Station at Harrow, Ontario and another tentative private site near Guelph. New co-operative projects with the National Wild Turkey Association (NWTa) should be beneficial to the goals of both NWTa and the CCC. We are planning a major update of our website which should occur in

the coming year. We hope to make the site interactive, allowing an exchange of questions and answers for the members and general public.

On a more pessimistic note, our membership has declined slightly in the past two years. I urge all of you to talk to your friends and acquaintances about the goals and importance of the CCC and to encourage their participation in the organization. The executive has a number of new initiatives planned for 2007 that should interest many of you. We will keep you informed via the Newsletter as plans become more concrete.

As 2006 draws to a close, I would like to wish all of the CCC members and their families a Merry Christmas, and to thank you for another year of support for our project.

- Terry Anderson

Annual General Meeting Held at Onondaga Farms

The Canadian Chestnut Council Held its annual general meeting at Onondaga Farms on Saturday, 28 October. About 45 persons – members and visitors - attended.

The Treasurer submitted his audited financial statement for 2005-6, and proposed a budget for 2006-7 (Pages 4 and 5). Both were approved.

Two directors whose three-year terms have expired declined to stand for re-election due to press of other commitments. Brett Hodgson and Murray Alward were re-elected and Thomas Amorim was elected as a new director. One position remains vacant.

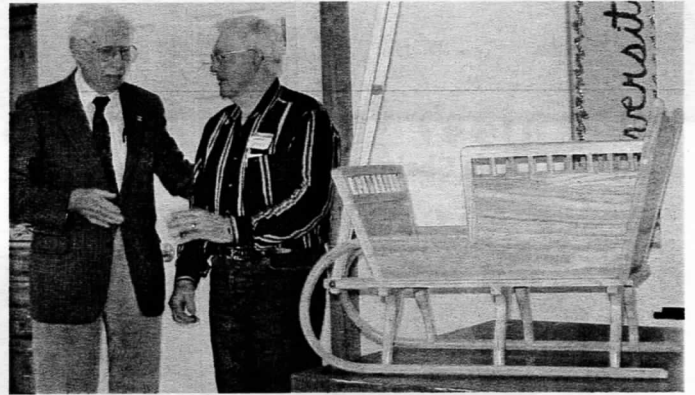
Chairman Dr Terry Anderson reported on the year's achievements and plans for the future. He warned that funds must be acquired for activities in the next few years, such as tree maintenance, blight testing and additional cross-breeding. More details are reported on Page 6.

Director John Hill made a handsome child's sleigh from American chestnut. He gave it to Dr Colin McKeen, retired Chairman, on behalf of the entire CCC membership in appreciation for the tireless work Dr McKeen has devoted to the preservation and restoration of the American chestnut.

A highlight was the presentation by the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) regarding their interest in the CCC. Scott

Smithers (Area Biologist, OMNR) and Mark Clifford (NWTF Regional Director) spoke of the NWTF's interest and illustrated their talk with slide photos. Wild turkeys love American chestnuts and the NWTF has about completed its restoration of wild turkey populations in Canada. It follows that excess NWTF energy and funds could be applied to restoration of the chestnut. A co-operative arrangement is being explored.

The meeting was concluded with a tour of the CCC planting site within the Tim Horton Onondaga Farms Children's Camp.



AMERICAN CHESTNUT SITE RECORD

Castanea dentata

The CCC wants to know where the chestnut trees are. You can help by submitting any of the listed information you can provide.

Owner's name, telephone, e-mail:

Street or rural address, township, county, province:

GPS or other location data:

Number of American chestnut trees:

Other environmental data:

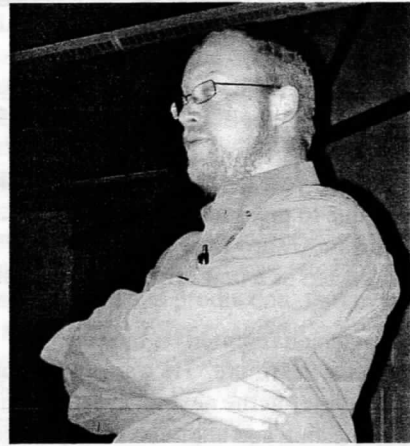
Send to any CCC director. Thanks!

Scenes from the Annual General Meeting

28 October, 2006 – Onondaga Farms



The Chairman's Report



Scott Smithers, OMNR Area Biologist



Membership

Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Membership Renewal:

Annual subscription = \$15.00 \$

Donations in excess of the annual subscription will be recognized in the Newsletter in the following categories.

(Requests for anonymity will be honoured.)

Gold Leaf:	\$1,000 or more
Silver Leaf:	\$500-\$999
Bronze Leaf:	\$250-\$499
Green Leaf:	\$100-\$249
White Leaf:	Less than \$100

Donation: \$

Total enclosed: \$

**Make all cheques payable to the
Canadian Chestnut Council**

Comments:

Volunteers

We need your help! As our program grows and our activities expand, we very much need the talents and skills of our members. If you would like to contribute your skills, please tell us. We start pollinating in early summer!

I'm interested in (check all that apply):

- Membership
- Publicity
- Fundraising
- Library research
- Field work
- Other:

Return your completed form to the Secretary:

Charles Hooker, 431068 19th Line, RR # 2
Orangeville, Ontario L9W 2Y9
chuckh@sympatico.ca