

Flower named after Forsyth ancestor

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affiliated with the University of Manitoba. The YMCA-sponsored school offers courses in counseling, community development, religion, administration, and other programs necessary to join the YMCA staff. Forsyth's work in the School of Social Work earned him a position as honorary lecturer.

Forsyth moved to Ontario and lived in a number of towns before settling in Toronto, where he worked as executive director of the largest YMCA branch in Canada. He stayed there until his first retirement in 1964, but was scooped up quickly by the Social Planning Council.

Forsyth helped with a study to determine why youngsters were leaving home, specifically focusing on children with drug problems. A hostel was established to help these children. After his work was completed, Forsyth retired for the second time in 1970. This time the Addiction Research Foundation grabbed Forsyth. Three years of dedicated work concluded with a third retirement. Forsyth managed to elude other organizations long enough to enjoy the "standard" definition of retirement, and to indulge in his passion for plants.

"I didn't have enough room in my own garden for all my plants," Forsyth explained, "so my daughter (Margaret) recommended we move to the country." The Forsyths moved to a farm east of Markham, where Charlie expanded his collection to 98 different trees and almost 300 different types of wildflowers. "I got information from Ottawa about which trees and flowers were native to Canada, found out where the plants were most common and then I phoned farmers in the area to get permission to dig out seedlings," Forsyth

explained.

Appropriately enough, Forsyth discovered a flower was named after one of his ancestors. In 1820, William Forsyth, a gardening apprentice in Scotland, participated in a gardening competition in London. He was given a small bush which he had to maintain for one year. Under his care, the bush produced lovely yellow flowers, and the plant came to be known as forsythia. William Forsyth went on to become superintendent of Kew Gardens in London, where a plaque remains in his memory.

Charlie Forsyth explained his interest in plants stemmed from a curiosity regarding their early uses. "Did you know that sassafras makes a wonderful toothbrush?" he asked, "or that native Indian women used elm bark for summer skirts?" He listed many other uses for plants, but hesitated on the Latin name for the cedar tree. "When you pass 80, your memory starts to go," he quipped.

When the Pickering Airport was built, the Forsyths had to move. The provincial government would not allow them to take their collection with them, but recognizing its value, the government compensated the Forsyths - \$36,000.

After moving to several other towns, Charlie and Catherine settled in Georgetown. "We had no choice," Forsyth chuckled. "My daughter insisted we get a condo. She was worried I'd go out in the bush and get lost. I told her I'd whistle, but she didn't find it funny."

Other family members concerned about Charlie and Catherine were their grandchildren - Stephen, Peter and Janice. Asked if he had any great-grandchildren, Forsyth responded - "no." Asked if great-grandchildren were anx-

iously awaited, Forsyth pointed to the adjoining room, where his wife was sitting, and responded, "In that room they are."

The Forsyths also had a son, Jim, but he was killed in a car accident in 1989. He was in the midst of completing a master's degree when he went for a ride with his friends and they were hit by a drunk driver.

Living without a garden has not slowed Forsyth down at all. "I've never been so busy in my life, since I've retired," he said. Forsyth is actively involved with the Georgetown Kiwanis Club, and has been for 40 years. He has spoken on a regular basis to branches all over eastern Canada, but stated he "prefers not to travel over 200 miles in one trip."

In 1974-75, Forsyth was the governor of the Eastern Canada and the Caribbean District, which includes the area east of the Great Lakes and 11 Caribbean nations. Two years ago, Forsyth was voted Kiwanian of the Year for the Casa Loma Division, which includes branches in Toronto, Mississauga, Georgetown, Oakville and Etobicoke.

Other projects include hosting the Halton Hills Seniors TV. Production, recorded monthly by Halton Hills Cable Systems. "I've interviewed some really interesting people, and learned some very interesting things," Forsyth said.

Forsyth has also learned some very interesting things while organizing speakers for the Extended Learning Opportunity program, which he and a few friends started. Professors from the University of Guelph and the University of Waterloo lecture for an hour, to approximately 70 people, after which time everyone participates in a discussion. "It's really a sophisticated bunch," Forsyth stated. "They're very

intelligent and keen on learning."

Forsyth's level of energy is amazing. He said he attributes his philosophy on life to a saying of his university professor - "When growth ceases, death begins."

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