

NORMAN E. LOONEY

Charles Johnson Bishop
1920-2006



Canadian agriculture and the world of horticultural science benefited in many important ways from the life and work of Dr. C.J. Bishop, who passed away in Ottawa on October 31, 2006. Raised in a fruit growing family in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia and educated as a botanist and geneticist (PhD Harvard University 1947), Dr. Bishop was amongst the first to apply irradiation breeding techniques to apple. He also made important contributions to the development of early-ripening tomato cultivars for Eastern Canada. While primarily a scientist and research manager, his lifelong interest in horticultural crop improvement through cytology and genetics was passed along to the next generation of plant breeders. He found a way to balance his early work as a fruit breeder and ultimately Superintendent of the Kentville, Nova Scotia Agricultural Experiment Station (1947-1958) with being a professor of genetics at Acadia University. Later in life he was to be feted by Acadia University with an Honorary Doctorate of Science.

However, it was between 1960 and 1985 that Dr. Bishop was in a position to profoundly influence horticultural science and industry across Canada. Based in Ottawa, he served Canada's re-organized Federal Department of Agriculture (re-named Agriculture Canada and then Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) as a research coordinator, first focussing completely on horticultural crop research and then on all crop research supported by the Department. He proved to be highly influential in determining both direction and quality of plant science research within the organization. Furthermore, through leadership of Canada's Expert Committee on Horticulture, he had great influence on the entire horticultural research, education and extension community of Canada.

A quiet, thoughtful man, Dr. Bishop worked tirelessly and strategically to strengthen horticultural science and industry in Canada. He was particularly influential in mentoring the Canadian Society for Horticultural Science for which he became a Life Member and Honorary President in 1968. The C.J. Bishop Award honours the best paper on horticulture in the Canadian Journal of Plant Science. His service to horticultural science and industry nationwide was recognized by the Canadian Horticultural Council with its Award of Merit (1972) and by Life Membership in 1985. Dr. Bishop was the first Canadian scientist to become a Fellow of the American Society for Horticultural Science (1968). The Agricultural Institute of Canada recognized him as a Fellow in 1977. His ongoing academic interest in cytology and genetics led to his election as President of the Genetics Society of Canada and a term as President of the Science Section of the Royal Society of Canada. He was recognized as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1958.

As Canada's representative on the Council of the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS), Dr. Bishop played an important part in the early development of the ISHS. While unable to travel to the inaugural Council meeting (The Hague, 1960), he was an active participant in meetings at Brussels (1962), Edinburgh (1964) and Beltsville (1966) where the present-day form

and function of ISHS was largely established. He continued in this role until 1980. He was profiled in *Chronica Horticulturae* in the July 1970 issue.

Charlie Bishop was a well-mannered gentleman who always listened carefully and responded generously. He was an avid gardener and collector of orchids. He was an enthusiastic amateur musician (piano), enjoyed the sport of curling and was an accomplished bridge player. He served his community through Rotary International where he was an Honoured Life Member of the West Ottawa Club. He is survived by Kay, his wife of 55 years, and by their son John of Lanark, Ontario.

*Norman E. Looney
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(Author's title given as of the time of writing)