

Rose Letter

The Heritage Roses Groups



August 2011

The Rose Letter

of The Heritage Roses Groups

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ROSES		by
1885		Ida Bothe

Front cover photo: 'Mme Antoine Rebe' tea, 1900
taken by the editor in his garden, summer 2010

The following article was published 13 years ago after the **first** Celebration of Old Roses:

From *Heritage Roses*, vol 4., no. 3, August 1978. M. Wilkins, ed.

A RARE ROSE EVENT by Marc Frappier, SW

A Celebration of Old Roses sponsored by the Old Garden Roses Section of HRG took place at bloom time. It was held in a community center across from California's Golden Gate.

During our wet winter, we had pondered the question, "What can we do for the old roses in view of all that they have done for us?" We decided to throw a party, familiarize everyone with the Genus *Rosa*, get some of these roses back into general garden knowledge and use.

First we started propagating non-patented roses, contacted those whose talents would ensure the project's success, provided posters for shops and fliers for garden groups. It was a busy five months.

On May 20 we brought as many old rose specimens as possible for people to see. Over 200 plants from 40 different varieties were offered for sale; the funds will be used for future projects and meetings.

Inside the center, a room was set aside for talks and slide shows. The subject matter ranged from making rose wine—with tasty samples of different varieties—to a slide display on the species, on through to a presentation on rose names and the people and history behind them, ending with a slide show of roses in mixed bouquets.

The displays were stunning. I had never seen anything so lovely, could only compare it with the Austrian rococo pilgrimage churches. The horseshoe shape of the display tables was embracing. Each flank offered examples of the different varieties and classes, leading up to the species, and at the transept, there was a terraced cascade of mixed bouquets filling out the U like a copingstone. On the stage behind this august profusion was yet another series of compositions rising toward a three-tiered pinnacle, each

bouquet reminiscent of the old masters' canvasses. A sight of rare beauty! Perfume filled the large room with a vapor that must have had curative properties, if not the power to produce heart's ease.

The day progressed with a fine flow of people. There were always enough to keep the feelings lively, a certain feeling from the floor, all the talk and cross-referencing. Groups moved to and fro trying to identify this, asking questions about that. The room carried with it an ambiance of a great hall of learning.

Around the perimeter of the flower display were information tables with a large display of rose books and articles. Heritage Roses had a grand information table. There were educational displays and artists' concessions—beautiful hand-painted china, prints, paintings, sachet. We learned a great deal from this day, strong points and shortcomings of our effort, but most important, we surprised ourselves at what we could accomplish and what we did for our friend, The Rose.

DOES ANYONE KNOW . . .

where I can buy or otherwise obtain the rose 'Perpetual White Moss' aka 'Quatre Saisons Blanc Mousseaux'? Contact Olivia Cox: olivia333@aol.com.



ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF OBSCURITY: 1911 ROSES

Darrell g.h. Schramm

One hundred years ago in 1911, painter of roses Paul de Longpre, who had grown 4000 roses on his estate, died in Los Angeles. That same year Richard Strauss premiered his opera *Die Rosenkavalier*, and the U.S. celebrated its first transcontinental flight, New York to Pasadena, the city of roses. Of course other historic moments occurred that year as well: the Titanic was launched; Ishi, the last of his tribe, emerged from northern California wilderness; Hiram Bingham discovered the lost city of the Incas, Machu Picchu; Sun Yat-Sen became the first president of the Republic of China; George V was crowned king of England; North Dakota enacted hail insurance; Chevrolet entered the automobile market; and Portugal granted women the right to vote.

And roses? About sixty, hybridized or propagated, were introduced that year to the Western world, give or take a few whose dates are uncertain. But nearly all of these roses are obscure. Though six or seven were propagated sports, that is, not originally hybridized roses, the United States led in numbers of roses introduced—at least two dozen. Germany followed closely behind with 21 or 22, France eleven, England two, Ireland two, and Denmark perhaps one.

The rose introduced in Denmark by Dines Poulsen was 'Rodhatte', meaning Red Riding Hood. The date is given sometimes as 1911, sometimes 1912. As a hybrid of a polyantha and a hybrid tea, it is perhaps the most famous rose under discussion here, for not only was it bred for cold Scandinavian climates but it is probably also the first floribunda (though some would give 'Gruss an Aachen' that distinction). The rose is a semi-double, medium red. It is still sold in Europe.

Perhaps equally well known of the roses launched in 1911 (though neither are constantly on the lips of rosarians)

is the lovely, pale yellow tea rose 'Alexander Hill Gray'. It is named for the affluent Scottish landowner who sold his ancestral estates to move to Bath, England, where the climate was more conducive to his roses. He was called King of the Teas by the National Rose Society, which he served for many years. The rose is fragrant, on a bushy plant about four feet tall, sometimes called 'Yellow Maman Cochet'.

It was introduced in Ireland by the famous Dickson firm. This rose is still commercially available, though oddly not through the Dickson company.

Another Irish rose to debut that year was 'Edward Mawley', a dark red hybrid tea from the rival Sam McGredy nursery. The flowers are usually borne solitary on tall stems. The rose was named for a meteorologist and secretary of the National Rose Society, who is probably best remembered for co-authoring the book *Roses for English Gardens* with Gertrude Jekyll. Mawley also initiated the yearly "Rose Analysis" of the rose society (still used today) and eventually became its president in 1915, but died the next year. Only one nursery in the world still carries 'Edward Mawley', and this is Vintage Gardens in Sebastopol, California.

By far the most prolific of breeders to introduce roses in 1911 was Michael Walsh (1848-1922). He had arrived from England in 1868. His focus in breeding was hardy climbers and ramblers, such as the once popular 'Excelsa', 'Hiawatha', 'Minnehaha', and 'Sweetheart'. In 1911 he commercially presented 'Bonnie Belle', 'Celeste', 'Kalima', 'Lucile', 'Mrs. M. H. Walsh' (for which he won an ARS Gold Medal), 'Summer Joy', 'Winona', and perhaps 'Coquina' (the date is questionable). All of these are presumably hybrid Wichuranas. No breeder in the Western world comes close to his output that year.

Excelsa



E. Gurney Hill (1847-1933) of Richmond, Indiana, (but, like Walsh, from England) placed four roses on the market one hundred years ago: 'Alice Lemon', 'Rena Robbins', 'Robert Heller', and 'Rose Queen', all hybrid teas, none of which survive today. Fortunately, his later roses 'Columbia' and 'Madame Butterfly' do.

Jackson and Perkins introduced three roses that year (all hybrid Multifloras), as did the California Rose Company (all sports). Indeed, the U. S. was prolific in the rose world, a sign of things to come forty and fifty years later.

In Europe, German rose breeders were particularly active 100 years ago, much more so than the English and the French. Peter Lambert (1859-1934) of Trier, Germany put his country on the map as a rose-growing nation with his many and popular hybridizations. His was the first rose of *R. multiflora* parentage that was repeat-blooming and not a polyantha dwarf (1901). His 'Trier' four years later was especially noteworthy for being a repeat flowering, short climber, one which he used to hybridize many of his other roses. The four roses he introduced in 1911 were 'Freifrau Ida von Schubert', 'Furstin von Pless', 'Hauff', and 'Goethe'. Only the second and the four named roses are still available. 'Furstin von Pless' is named for Princess "Daisy" von Pless, a liberated social reformer and peace advocate who served as a nurse in World War I. In 1922 she divorced her husband Hans Heinrich XV, a prince, a count, a baron, and one of the wealthiest heirs to the German Empire. A Gibson beauty, she had her portrait drawn by John Singer Sargent. The rose 'Goethe' is named, of course, for the famous German poet and writer, author of *Faust*, and known to have loved roses. A possibility exists, however, that 'Goethe' may have been a rose bred by Rudolph Geschwind, for Lambert is known to have introduced a few of Geschwind's roses as his own.

Two other German breeders who bred roses during this oddly unhistorically historical year (who really remembers events of 1911?) were Nicolaus "Nicola" Welter (1854-1920) and Otto Jacobs (1860-1893), each forwarding three new roses, none of which are on the market today.

One German rose, offered to the public by Wilhelm Hinner (who had worked for Lambert), is still available in

two U.S. nurseries, Rogue Valley Roses and Vintage Gardens. That rose is the silver pink hybrid perpetual (some say hybrid tea) 'Heinrich Munch'. Its long, large petals unfurl very leisurely. According to *Journal des Roses*, a Mr. Heinrich Munch of Munch & Haufe nursery near Dresden discovered this as a pink sport of 'Frau Karl Druschki'. Hinner introduced it. Hinner was also famous for his very popular 'Pharisaeer' in the early decades of the 20th century; like his 'Georg Arends', it is still sold.

Of the ten or so 1911 roses ushered in by the French, four or five are still commercially for sale, but only three of them in the United States. One is 'Maman Turbat', a peach-pink polyantha with tiny flowers on a dwarf bush bred by Eugene Turbat, ostensibly named for his mother. A second is technically not from France but from the firm of Souperet and Notting, Luxemburg; 'Maman Lyly'. According to *Journal des Roses* of that year, this rose resembles 'Souvenir de la Malmaison'. Supposedly it is blackspot resistant. In 1935 the great Australian hybridist Alister Clark wrote of his concern that the rose was already then "being lost sight of." While 'Maman Lyly' can still be found in some gardens, of nurseries worldwide again only Vintage Gardens offers it.

The other French rose is an overlooked but outstanding hybrid tea, which was the inspiration for this article: 'President Vignet'. Unfortunately, it came into being too late for Paul de Longpre to paint it; I'm sure he would have. Bred by the famous Pernet-Ducher, the rose, a very full, cerise-red growing on a narrow, upright bush of dark green leaves, reveals at least forty petals that change to a luscious magenta with age. Though in spring somewhat susceptible to blackspot and rust, the bush blooms unashamedly, ignoring the fungus. Because this prolific, strongly perfumed rose is a favorite of mine, I wish to describe it in some detail lest its obscurity decline into a lost rose.

The flowers of this rose grow singly or in panicles. The simple, hairless sepals are more or less the same in size and shape, reflexing along the small, smooth calyx and petiole. The leaflets are broadly elliptical and serrated, with an acute tip; the leaf, whether of three or five leaflets, forms three or four small prickles along the back of the stem. The

adnate stipules display minimal auricles. The brown canes produce some straight prickles but not in vicious exuberance. In my garden 'President Vignet' grows about three feet tall.

The rose seems to have been named for Louis Vignet, a mountaineer and writer. A contemporary of Fernet-Ducher and fellow citizen of Lyon, he belonged to the French Alpine Club for which he wrote a section of the book by the same name in 1881. In 1886 he wrote another book, *Alpine Rhapsodies* (full title in translation: *The Bottom of the Bag of an Old Tourist: Alpine Rhapsodies*). Much respected, admired, and often wasted, Louis Vignet in the early 1880s was serving as vice-president of the club. While I have been unable to verify it, it is quite conceivable that he later became its president.

We have lost so many roses in the last 100 years to obscurity or to oblivion, sometimes because the rose was not healthy or hardy or handsome, but often for no other reason than fashion and fad. Consider this article, then, as a verbal scrapbook of lost and obscure roses of 1911—and a birthday card to the few survivors.

President Vignet



From *Roses et Roseraies*, Bulletin de l'association, "Les Amis de la Roseraie du Bal-de-Marne" a L'Hay les Roses, 56, July 2004, pp. 47-50

The Wichuraiana Rose and its First Hybrids

Anne and Elizabeth Peron

(Robert Cromey, transl.)

As we walk, Leontine Gervais offers us its first coppery buds; further on, May Queen presents the opulent flowering of a rose fresh and almost quartered; still further Henri Barluet shows its rose-red and white ruffles particularly well this year. What do they have in common? The Wichuraiana rose. We seem to find ourselves in a parade ground of historical Wichuraiana hybrids. And they are all there: the Jersey Beauty, the Universal Favorite, the Alberic Barbier, Paul Transon, Edmond Proust. All these first Wichuraiana hybrids are reassembled only here, at l'Hay. If this article creates a desire to discover or to rediscover them, then they have reached the summit of their flowering.

Rosa wichuraiana: Its Introduction

R. wichuraiana is originally from Asia, from Western China, Taiwan, Okinawa, Korea, and Japan. And it was from Japan, where it scarcely was held in esteem, that it was introduced into Europe and the United States. [Ed. note: In 2006 the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature changed the spelling to the more correct *wichurana*. This article was written in 2004.]

Yet the date of its introduction to the West remains somewhat controversial. It was introduced, presumably, at the beginning of the 1870s into Europe and the 1880s into the United States. It was named for Max Ernst Wichura, a Prussian judge posted to Tokyo in 1859-1860 who, aware of

its strengths, collected and shipped some *Wichuraiana* plants to the botanical garden of Berlin. As a matter of course, he also sent some to Francois Crepin, a celebrated Belgian botanist specializing in roses. This first shipment miscarried, and it was only in 1871 that Crepin finally received it. He



Rosa Wichurana

thereupon named the species for Dr. Wichura, since deceased. Thus it was Crepin who first described the *Wichuraiana* species scientifically, in a Belgian journal of 1886.

For a while *R. wichuraiana* was confused by Crepin himself with *Rosa luciae*, which it closely resembles, and for a while it would therefore be known as *R. wichuraiana* var. *luciae*. *Luciae*, however, was first published and described as a new species in 1871 by Adrien Franchet and Alphonse Tremeau of Roschebrune in France's Southern Alps, who dedicated it to Madame Lucie Savatier, wife and collaborator of one of Japan's European explorers. But as usual the name given in the first scientific description of a new introduction, here by Crepin, eventually was adopted under the more correct name *R. wichuraiana*. [Ed. note: More correct, yes, but

not completely correct. *R. luciae*, by the way, is now recognized as synonymous with *R. wichurana*.]

Its Description

Rosa wichuraiana belongs to the division *synstylae*. Its growth is absolutely prone, trailing, with long branches reaching three to four meters that root themselves quite easily. These branches are of medium thickness and moderate in their number of prickles, which are small, thin, bent to the right or slightly hooked. Leaves are small, oval to rounded, numbering seven to nine leaflets on the smaller auxiliary branches, dark green on both faces, the upper being shiny as if varnished. Its eight to twelve flowers, in clusters, are single, each of five petals, quite white, puckered at the summit, about two centimeters long, with numerous stamens, and ovoid fruit measuring one centimeter. *R. wichuraiana* flowers in July-August and is not remontant.

Aside from its own future hybrids, the original *Wichuraiana* is, incidentally, notable because it was one parent of the start of a new class of roses, the *Kordesii*.

Its Reception

What struck all observers in the era of its introduction was its particular carriage—supple, more prostrate than even *R. arvensis*—together with the fact that it flowered later and more generously than *R. sempervirens*, with good distribution of its flowers along the plant, and finally its very beautiful, varnished, almost evergreen leaves, at least as good as *Sempervirens* and certainly better than *R. multiflora*. Equally remarkable was its exceptional vigor, with supple, long boughs able to cover slopes, arbors, and rock.

Its Hybridization

As so often with botanical roses, the original flower itself had nothing extraordinary about it, although some admired its scent. Therefore, breeders immediately aimed to improve the flowers while conserving the plant's initial advantages. They used *Wichuraiana* as seed-bearers, other roses as pollinators.

The gene controlling the qualities of its leaves revealed itself to be dominant, and its descendants still benefit from their attractiveness. But research above all involved making it remontant and enlarging its flowers. At first, mating was attempted with hybrid perpetuals, teas, and hybrid teas. And with time, particularly after WWI, the flowers attained a respectable height. But we now know that these initial hybridizations were made easier by a compatible chromosome count: *R. wichuraiana* is diploid (14 chromosomes) and so are the China roses. Mating with tetraploid hybrid teas eventually proved more frustrating.

Some breeders eventually remarked that the Wichuraiana hybrids did not endure extreme heat but needed a long winter sleep. On the other hand, their eventual hybridizations with chinas and teas were seen to make them more susceptible to the cold of European climates. Breeders quickly became aware of this problem, and initially Rene Barbier in 1911, recalling their supposed lack of hardiness, tried to mate them with a second type of parent in varieties of the moss rose, which are much more vigorous than teas; but this was a choice that eventually proved difficult to accomplish because of chromosomal incompatibility.

The American Hybridizers

Americans immediately had adopted the Wichuraiana, and they were the first to hybridize it. Initial hybridizers like J. Dawson, M. Horvath, and W.A. Manda were soon followed by others, notably Dr. Walter Van Fleet and the house of Jackson and Perkins.

In 1888 the nurseryman Louis Spath of Berlin had sent Wichuraiana to the U.S. It was planted by mistake in the Arnold Arboretum, an adjunct of Harvard University. There it completely covered a public lawn that became white with its flowering in June. Jackson Dawson, chief gardener at the Arboretum, after having crossed Wichuraiana with the well-known French hybrid perpetual 'General Jacqueminot', then pursued hybridizing with *R. rugosa* and *R. setigera*. One of the first presentations of his results took place in 1896 at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Today these early crossings by Dawson have unfortunately vanished, with the

exception of 'William C. Egan' (*R. wichuraiana* x 'General Jacqueminot'), a somewhat later hybrid of 1900.

Michael Horvath worked from 1892-93 at Rhode Island's Newport Nursery Company where he noticed *Wichuraiana*'s magnificent shiny leafage. He crossed it with two varieties at hand, 'Mignonette', Guillot's well-known polyantha, and 'Climbing Cramoisi Superieur, a china obtained from James Sprunt. He thus introduced 'Manda's Triumph' (1898) and 'Universal Favorite' (1899) from the polyantha and 'Pink Roamer' (1898) and 'South Orange Perfection' (1899) from the china. [Ed. note: Charles Quest-Ritson suggests that the polyantha was 'Paquerette' and the china 'Climbing James Sprunt'.] At the American Rose Society's first exposition, held in 1897, his creations proved a great success.

It was W.A. Manda of the house Manda and Pitcher of South Orange, N.J., who began distributing Horvath's creations; he then became a hybridizer himself. To him we owe 1898's 'Gardenia' and 'Jersey Beauty' (both *R. wichuraiana* x 'Perle des Jardins'), 'Evergreen Gem' (*R. wichuraiana* x 'Mme Hoste'), 'May Queen' (*R. wichuraiana* x 'Champion of the World') and in 1901 'Pink Pearl' (*R. wichuraiana* x 'Meteor').

At the end of the nineteenth century Dr. Van Fleet also created numerous hybrids, like 'May Queen' in 1898 (*R. Wichuraiana* x Mrs. Degraw), although perhaps this rose really was identical with that attributed to Manda—same name, same year, but distributed by Conard and Jones. Then in 1902 came the ever-popular 'American Pillar' (*R. wichuraiana* x *R. setigera*). In 1930 Van Fleet obtained the first remontant hybrid *Wichuraiana*, the long-awaited and still-admired 'New Dawn' (a sport of the 1910 'Dr. W. Van Fleet': *R. wichuraiana* x 'Safrano' x 'Souvenir du President Carnot').

In 1901 Jackson and Perkins obtained the famous 'Dorothy Perkins' (*R. wichuraiana* x 'Mme Gabriel Luiset') with Walsh of Woods Hole, Massachusetts following in 1902 with 'Debutante' (*R. wichuraiana* x 'Baroness de Rothschild'),

followed in 1905 by 'Lady Gay' (*R. wichuriana* x 'Bardou Job').



**'Dorothy Perkins' at Westport Cemetery
Mendocino, CA**

With the appearance of the Wichuraianas, the role of the American breeders became a major force in the world of roses. This certainly was not an accident. From the start their interest had turned toward climbers, creepers, and other ramblers, types generally admired by Anglo-Saxon rose lovers.

The French Hybridizers

It was thanks to this American challenge that Albert Barbier came to introduce his striking and celebrated roses 'Alberic Barbier' and 'Leontine Gervais'. Traditionally it is admitted that the Barbiers had worked with the *R. wichuriana* var. *luciae*. Between these two exist several morphological differences—in the height of the flowers, for example, which seems higher with *Luciae*. But there existed above all a

difference in the flowering period: *Luciae* is earlier and flowers in May-June.



Alberic Barbier

Naturally the Barbiers were not the sole discoverers of *Wichuriana* hybrids, but they were the first and most important in France and Europe, as much by the number of their discoveries as by the variety of forms and colors sent into commerce. Their example was followed at Orleans by the Fauques, the Turbats, then, among others, by the Nonins, Girin, and Tanne. Meanwhile, it is well to avoid some retrospective illusions: interest in hybridizing this new rose did not appear equally attractive to everyone in the French horticultural milieu. For example, Charles Baltet in the *Journal des Roses* reporting on the horticultural congress of 1897, discussed types of rose plants proper for grafting [but . . .] plainly did not overflow with enthusiasm for this novelty. . . .

Albert Barbier sent his first hybrids into commerce in 1900: 'Alberic Barbier' (*R. wichuriana* x 'Shirley Hibberd')

'Paul Transon' (*R. wichuriana* x 'L'Idéal'), 'Francois Foucard' (*R. wichuriana* x 'L'Idéal') and in 1901 'Elisa Robichon' (*R. wichuriana* x 'L'Idéal') and 'Edmond Froust' (*R. wichuriana* x 'Souvenir de Catherine Guillot'), the first products of a long series.

Yet the best ally of Albert Barbier in this adventure would be Edouard Andre. This celebrated rustic architect and editor-in-chief of *Revue Horticole* would support Barbier in his journal's pages, assuring him a favorable media exposure. Albert Barbier in turn would dedicate to Edouard Andre's son one of his foremost hybrids, the rose 'Andre' in 1901. But above all, Barbier provided these *Wichuriana* hybrids to Jules Gravereaux, who at the time engaged in fully fitting out his extraordinary rose gardens, now La Roseraie du Val-de-Marne at L'Hay-les-Roses. Thus these three horticulturalists—Barbier, Andre, Gravereaux—displayed these new climbers to their best advantage and would contribute remarkably to promoting their use.

And from these hybridizers come the many *Wichuriana* climbers still found in such profusion at L'Hay for our enjoyment today.

The Pasture Rose/*R. Carolina* by M.E. Eaton



The First Rose Rustler

Darrell g.h. Schramm
(with thanks to Laura King)

One tends to think of the “rose rustling” phenomenon as fairly recent, originating in Texas during the 1960s. However, the Pioneer Rose Association, an early organization in the northwest devoted to rose rustling and the care of old roses, was established by Mary Drain Albro in 1936. Born in 1876 to a family that had followed the Oregon Trail in 1852, Mary grew up listening to tales of pioneer life in Oregon Territory. (Her grandfather founded the small town of Drain, south of Eugene.) When she was sixty years old, she began to notice that the roses of old Oregon were being abandoned in the new era of hybrid teas. Determined to preserve some of the old roses, she set up the Pioneer Rose Association whose mission was to locate old roses brought by the pioneers, to propagate them, and to preserve them for posterity. She and her group scoured the Oregon Trail from Walla Walla, Washington to Applegate Valley in southern Oregon, searching old homesteads and land claims, eventually identifying 23 different historic roses that Mary believed had arrived before Oregon’s statehood in 1859.

Mary Albro oversaw the planting of four formal rose gardens to preserve these old roses. Today only one remains. That one is the Roses of Old Oregon in Lone Fir Cemetery of Portland. Today a group called Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery is working to preserve Mary’s legacy. Fortunately, Mary Albro, who died in 1962, kept notes on the roses found and transcribed some of the stories and tales she heard from old-timers about the roses she collected. This early rose rustler’s manuscript currently rests in the archives of Pacific University at Forest Grove, Oregon.

Unfortunately, some of the roses once growing in Lone Fir Cemetery are now missing, and identifications of many others are lost. But, again fortunately, Becky Oswald, Nancy Hawver, and Laura King of Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery are working to find and identify those roses. Apparently some of the roses Mary Albro identified were done so incorrectly, and the group is seeking to remedy that.

With the approval of the Metropolitan Regional Government and the Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, the group will remove any roses that do not belong to the pioneer era and reintroduce roses that do. Some members in the group also hope to plant in public places some of these heritage roses and others passed down family generations.

One rose commonly found at Lone Fir and in the area goes by the name of "Old Cardinal," sometimes also called "Mad Lane Rose." The second name derives from the story that a dangerous feud arose between two landowners regarding a property line, a feud that was resolved only when it was learned that years ago the "Old Cardinal" roses had been planted there to demarcate the boundary of the properties.

In the next issue, we hope to print several stories about some of the found roses in Lone Fir Cemetery. As Laura King says, "It is not just the roses but the rose lore and histories that make this garden so special."



"Old Cardinal"

BOOK REVIEW

Mystery Roses Around the World

Virginia Kean, editor

Heritage Rose Foundation, \$25.

Published early this summer, *Mystery Roses Around the World* is an exceptionally lovely and informative softcover book devoted to the passion of both discovering and rediscovering antique and often forgotten roses. Its 112 pages contain a helpful index, contributors' notes, an array of beautiful photos, and fascinating information about lost and found roses the world over and about those who found—and find—them.

Two long articles are especially enlightening: Dr. Wang Guoliang's "Rare China Rose Species and Ancient Cultivars"—the Chinese were breeding roses over 1000 years ago!—and Lars-Ake Gustavsson's "Sweden's National Inventory Uncovers Mystery Roses" on Sweden's creation of a national gene bank for the preservation of old roses. Articles on mystery roses found in Bermuda, France, India, and other countries are captivating as well.

Many of the articles are followed by a short piece on a "rose sleuth," a person on the lookout and the runabout for old roses whose identities are uncertain. Isabella and Vittorio Ducrot of Italy, John Hook of southern France, Bred Boutin, Jeri and Clay Jennings, Ruth Knopf, and several others are such sleuths without whom our rose world would be much the poorer.

My one complaint: This, like nearly all rose publications, needs a fact checker. For instance, if, according to one writer, *R. x odorata* was imported to England in 1824 (p. 43), it could NOT have been shipped to Empress Josephine at Malmaison, for by then she had been dead for ten years. Furthermore, her son Eugene, who inherited the estate, was not living there then and died that very year, 1824. Another article states that Josephine's collection of roses "vanished during her lifetime" (p. 73), but this is clearly incorrect, for she was still tending to her garden days before her sudden death in 1814. Another article identifies 'Josine Hanet' as a hybrid perpetual (p. 104), but the rose is a clareusk perpetual, also known as a Portland. The same article asserts the often-repeated misinformation that 'Le Pactole' means bonanza or gold mine; but the name derives from the Pactolus River (today called the Sarabat River) in western Turkey, "a river of Lydia," according to a Latin text of 1879, "said to bring down

golden sands." In mythology, this is the river in which King Midas bathed to wash off the curse of the golden touch; hence, the reference to gold.

Despite these few discrepancies, this book is *de rigueur* for any lover of heritage roses. Indeed, I find it a small treasure. Rather than dine at a restaurant, save the price of the meal to buy and savor the book *Mystery Roses*. It's stimulating, it's illuminating, it's beautiful, it's unique.

Darrell Scramm



"Old Homestead"

According to Alice Flores, "Homestead Hybrid China" was the name that Joyce Demits chose for this rose when she first found it in the 1970s at the site of the old Abelobadish homestead north of Ft Bragg, CA on the Mendocino Coast. That plant was soon bulldozed during highway construction. However, subsequently, Alice found the same cultivar, now called "Old Homestead," at two other Mendocino County locations. Those plants remain healthy and vital. One of them has reached approximately 10 feet high and easily as wide, spilling over a tall fence at an old stagecoach stop.

Study the rose in the painting below. Can you identify the rose?
Can you make an intelligent guess? If so, give the reasons for
your identification or guess and send it to the editor at

schrammd@earthlink.net

(Your guess is probably as good as or better than mine.)

— The Editor



Chloris: A Summer Rose

By

John William Godward, 1901

Chloris (Kloris) was the Greek goddess of flowers.
The Romans called her Flora

events

NATIONAL HEIRLOOM EXPO

SEPT. 12-16, 2011 SANTA ROSA, CA

EXHIBITS EVENTS SPEAKERS DEMOS

Billed as “*The Woodstock of Garden Events*,” this exposition will feature talks by prominent experts on home gardening, seed-saving, food politics, etc. Both business and educational sessions will take place. Visit over 250 natural vendor booths, Heirloom varieties are the focus of this national event. For more information, visit:

<http://theheirloomexpo.com>

FALL OPEN GARDEN

SAN JOSE HERITAGE ROSE GARDEN

SATURDAY, SEPT. 24, 2011 9:00-2:00

TALKS, DEMONSTRATIONS

SALES OF OLD ROSES AND RARE ROSES

Taylor & Spring Streets, San Jose, CA

For more information, visit:

www.heritageroses.us/

Rose Classification Seminar

Sat., Oct. 8, 2011 10 a.m. FREE

At the Historic Rose Garden, Sacramento City Cemetery

With Anita Clevenger & Bill Harp

Talk & Discussion of Old Rose Types & Their Characteristics

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rose Garden & House For Sale

The one & one-half-acre rose garden and 4-bedroom 3-bath house of John Dallas is for sale. John Dallas was a founding member of the North Bay Rose Society, and collected many old garden roses. Some climb into tall trees. The acreage is situated just outside the town of Napa in a lovely setting.

For more information, see

www.1020mtgeorge.com and <http://johnsrosegarden.org>
or contact his daughter Christel Bezas at cdbezas@comcast.net

Rose Studies

Watercolors and drawings by Maria Cecelia Freeman can be viewed (and purchased) on line at

<http://mcf-art.com>

Ms. Freeman (aka Cissy) illustrated the roses in The Sustainable Rose Garden Reader, published last year. Much of her work was on exhibit at the Helen Crocker Russell Library in San Francisco's Strybing Arboretum from January through April of this year. The art is both botanically correct and delicate, as well as beautiful.

MORCOM GARDENS NEED HELP

Morcom Gardens, the 7.5 acre municipal rose garden in Oakland, established during the mid-1930's in a European style, is in need of volunteers for pruning and weeding. The upper garden contains most of its old roses. If you live in the Bay Area, and would like to volunteer some time, contact the Friends of the Morcom at

www.friendsofoaklandrose.org

Morcom is located at 700 Jean St., just off Grand Avenue.

In Memoriam

Rosarian Hazel Le Rougetel died in January of this year, 93 years of age. One of the founding members in 1990 of Historic Roses Group in England, she was influential in preserving and reintroducing old garden roses in the United Kingdom. In her book, *A Heritage of Roses*, she writes of locating the old Fa Tee Nurseries of Canton, source of several everblooming roses ('Slater's Crimson China', 'Hume's Blush', etc.) brought to England in the late 18th and early 19th Centuries. She herself introduced from China the tea rose, 'Topsy Imperial Concubine'. We are grateful for her love of roses, her contributions, her life.



*We are proud to present our Heritage Roses Group
"ROSE LETTER."*

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HOW FOUND ROSES ARE NAMED

It is now standard practice to give a study name to a found mystery rose. Usually the name is determined by the site — grave plot, cemetery, town, or other place — where the rose was discovered; thus, we have unidentified roses with names such as “Durst Plot,” “Forest Ranch Pom-Pom,” “Old Homestead.” Or it can be named for the person or persons associated with the rose: “Pulich Children,” “Anna Sofia.” Sometimes the color and/or class of rose is added: “Moser House Pink Stripe,” “Honeymoon Cottage Purple,” “Bell Street Tea,” “Magnolia Cemetery Tea.”

Note that the study name is in double quotation marks (unlike known cultivated roses whose names are enclosed in single quotation marks).

When found roses are sold, sometimes the letters ROR follow the name on the label, meaning “renamed old rose,” and sometimes, if it has been shown that a certain rose had been promoted under an incorrect name, the label may begin with “NOT . . .” or “Rose sold as . . .”

While there are no hard and fast rules and regulations concerning the naming of these old, unidentified roses, past practice has developed into a present system of nomenclature that is helpful for rose lovers of every ilk.

The Editor

The Heritage Roses Group is a non-profit association formed in 1975 as a fellowship of old rose lovers.

Members receive four Rose Letters a year, in February, May, August, and November.

TO JOIN OR RENEW . . .

Send **\$16.00** (printed format)

OR

\$10.00 (digital format, downloaded at

www.theheritagerosesgroup.org)

to Clay Jennings, Membership Chair, 22 Gypsy Ln., Camarillo, CA 93010-1320 OR Contact him at: e.c.jennings@gmail.com Print format for Overseas memberships is \$26.00 in U.S. funds.

PHOTO CREDITS

Front cover: 'Mme Antoine Rebe',--Darrell Schramm
Page 5 : 'Excelsa'--Ron Robertson
Page 8 : 'President Vignet'--Darrell Schramm
Page 10: *Rosa wichurana*--submitted by Jolene Adams
Page 14: 'Dorothy Perkins'--Judy Eitzen
Page 15: 'Alberic Barbier'--Ron Robertson
Page 18: "Old Cardinal"--Linda King
Page 20: "Old Homestead"--Darrell Schramm
Back Cover: 'American Pillar'--submitted by Jolene Adams
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A PARTING WORD

As the new editor of *Rose Letter*, I have found my first issue of this quarterly both challenging and exciting. Please forgive the flaws and omissions. With so much to learn, I confess I was too lazy to place the Acute and Grave accents on French words. It won't happen again. I look forward to any correspondence on the contents & design of this issue

—The Editor schrammd@earthlink.net