by any other name
the newsletter of the World Federation of Rose Societies' Heritage Rose Group
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welcome

FROM DI DURSTON, AUSTRALIA

Welcome to this Heritage Roses eNewsletter. Recently I was lucky enough to enjoy the company of two Frenchman who garden near Toulouse and live in Paris. Each year they house-swap to spend the summer months holidaying in Australia or New Zealand. This year they visited the Margaret River region with its stunning gardens, fantastic wineries and friendly local hospitality. Rosarians are a fun crowd and I certainly enjoyed their company.

In this edition Sally Allison writes about Species roses in her garden *Lyddington*. This reminded me that one person can inspire a rose collecting revolution. After fifty years Sally still has the original Species roses growing in her garden that she bought from the nursery of Trevor Griffiths.

Trevor Griffiths was a person to inspire. He operated his world famous rose nursery in the South Island of New Zealand and encouraged many Old Rose enthusiasts to begin their collections. Trevor unselfishly shared his amazing rose knowledge in many of his published books. *The Book of Old Roses* (1984), *The Book of Classic Old Roses* (1987), and *A Celebration of Old Roses* (1990) are my personal favourites. At the time when they were published there were no modern writings to compare with their wealth of information. It was in *A Celebration of Old Roses* that I read of the fascinating work that Jack Harkness was doing in his programme of rose breeding using ***Rosa persica***.

Persica Euphrates (1986) was the forerunner of many new varieties, the description, salmon and single with wine-purple blotches in the throat.

I do hope that you enjoy the eNewsletter, my thanks go to all who have contributed their fine articles and time. For those who are travelling to Barcelona for the Conference in May, have a wonderful holiday and bring home all your exciting stories.

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Produced as a PDF with an A5 page size,
best viewed in continuous facing page view.
We recommend printing two pages per A4 sheet


Hebes Lip

from New Zealand

species roses at *Lyddington Garden*

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY SALLY ALLISON

Fifty-six years ago my garden began as a few tentative plantings on a bare hillside in North Canterbury, New Zealand. From my gardening beginnings, a row of twenty two older tea roses given to me by my mother for my twenty second birthday, the garden has spread north, south, east and west up the hill and down the hill, quietly colonising surrounding paddocks and taking on a life of its own. Such is the beauty of living on a farm in New Zealand and having a husband who has always cheerfully humoured me, never complaining when asked to move the boundary fence yet again.

Back to the bare hillside days, I made a visit to the pioneering nursery of the world-renowned rosarian Trevor Griffiths at Temuka South Canterbury. The nursery, then in its infancy was my first introduction to old roses, their simplicity and their rich provenance simply blew me away and I knew immediately that these were what I wanted to grow.

I had no idea then what a huge part they would come to play in my life!

Today more than half a century later, there are at least twenty of my original Trevor Griffiths acquisitions still flourishing in this same garden. Over the years I have added many more species roses and equally as many hybrids, but it is the species which have truly earned their status as the doyons of the garden.

And why?

They are so easy to grow, never succumb to disease and are generally very uncomplaining, requiring little attention. Minimal pruning apart

Rosa roxburghii normalis

from cutting out the old wood and the cutting back of over-eager branches.

Apart from some huge members such as ***R. helenae***, ***R. leschenaultii*** and the ***filipes*** family, which at Lyddington have been relegated to areas where they have the space to wave their arms around and to romp at will without the worry that they may attack unsuspecting passers by, species roses do not get their just desserts, as they definitely make very useful average-sized garden plants which associate well with other shrubs.

After flowering many of the species give the added bonus of fruit in the form of lovely plump and curvy hips. The hips of moyesii are like miniature gourds, rugosa like small tomatoes, some pimpinellifolias have black hips and those on glauca are bunched like grapes.

My favourite of all the old girls who have been with me for so long is ***R. sancta***. Its simple pale pink flowers are pure perfection. Known also as ***R. richardii,*** or **the Holy Rose of Abyssinia,** it has been found in Egyptian tombs dating as far back as the fourth century AD. In the late 1880's Flinders Petrie, an English Egyptologist, unearthed a funeral wreath containing roses during his excavation of an Egyptian necropolis at Hawara. Botanists at Cambridge had little difficulty in identifying the blooms as ***R. sancta***. To see this same rose beaming in my garden all those centuries later is, to me, a miracle.

Rosa dupontii

A close second is ***R. dupontii*** dated 1817. The origins of this rose are unknown, but sometimes attributed to Andre Dupont, who advised Empress Josephine on her rose garden at Malmaison. A huge stunning bush, its only sadness being its fleeting flowering.

The first species to flower in my garden is ***R. bella*** [related to the original ***R. moyesii***] which appears in late spring and followed by ***R. ecae*** and its hybrids. Soon after this comes the delicate four petalled ***R. pterecantha***, which I grow mainly for its blood-red shark-fin thorns. These thorns are produced on the new shoots and the flowers on the old ones. I enjoy the benefit of both by having several bushes and alternating the pruning.

Another of my favourites is ***R. webbiana*** from Central Asia and in particular the Himalayas. It is the most graceful arching shrub with grey green leaves, fernlike in their delicacy and the perfect foil for masses of single pale pink flowers

Two roses from the north of the planet which thrive with me are ***R. blanda,*** the pale pink or white **Hudson Bay rose,** and ***R. acicularis***, the pink **Arctic rose**. While in the Americas ***R. setigera*** should not be missed. Late and long flowering, it is a native from freezing Ontario down to steamy Florida, and a parent of the lovely **Long John Silver** and **Baltimore Belle**.

Rosa setigera

I have a number of eglanteria hybrids. Two special hybrids for me are ***R. andersonii***, a much larger and brighter version of the sweet briar and is very little known in New Zealand. It makes for me a fine hedge.

Rosa andersonii

The other the utterly splendid **Hebes Lip** or **Rubrotincta**, sometimes also **Reine Blanche**. **Hebes Lip** is probably more damask but has some eglantine evidence. The buds are crimson and open creamy-white semi-double with a smudge of red on the outer petals.
R. beggeriana is a rose sometimes referred to as an Asian relative of eglanteria. I couple this rose with ***R. fedtschenkoana*** because they are very similar with small white flowers with pale lemon stamens and ferny foliage which has the fragrance of the briars.

Other grey leaved species for bigger gardens are ***R. brunonii*** and ***R. soulieana***. Both have creamy white flowers. ***R. soulieana*** has produced a very grand seedling, **Wickwar,** which hails from Keith Steadman's Wickwar garden in Gloucestershire UK. It is one of the stars of my garden.

The ***roxburghiis***, ***plena*** and ***normalis*** are both special for their ferny foliage, grey-brown flaking bark and fabulous chestnut-like hips. I find it surprising that ***normalis,*** the single version which I think the most beautiful of all wild roses, was discovered much later than the more widely grown double. A good hybrid is **Micrugosa** which is ***roxburghii*** crossed with a rugosa

R manetti is a very pretty semi-double pink raised in Italy by a Dr Manetti who was associated with the Milan Botanical Gardens. In New Zealand a variety called **Lippiats Manetti** has in the past been widely used as an understock.

One of the largest species in the garden is ***R. leschenaultii.*** Related to ***R. moschata*** it is a native of Southern India. I have seen it growing in Viru and Girija Viraraghavans garden at Kodaikanal in the state of Tamil Nadu. There its single white flowers were twice the size of mine, no doubt because of the warmer climate.
From the largest to the smallest: ***R. rouletti.*** This was found in a Swiss window box by a Colonel Roulette. It grows to only six inches and thought to be a midget form of ***R. chinensis minima***.

R. glauca or ***rubrifolia*** is an invaluable garden plant, not so much for its small bright pink flowers but for its purple foliage and copious crop of hips. It is a perfect foil for other roses, shrubs and herbaceous plants. **Carmenetta**, ***R. glauca*** crossed with a rugosa, is very similar but larger in all ways and more suitable for a shrubbery.

Rosa glauca

Last but not least is my favourite double rose, ***R. virginiana plena*** or **Rose d'Amour** and also known as **St. Marks rose** as it flowers in St. Marks Square Venice on St Marks day. There is some debate as to whether or not this rose originates from the single species, but regardless, I believe few roses compare. **Rose d'Amour** has exquisite slender buds with long calyces which open to a muddled pink fragrant bloom packed with petals. It is almost thornless with red wood. Unsurpassed beauty.

These are but a few of my original plantings, roses which have no trace of the breeders hand. Although my garden has probably reached its last frontier and won't be breaching any

more boundary lines I continue to search out species roses and I know I will continue to plant them, study them and continue to be totally enamoured by them.

post script

We are very fortunate in New Zealand to have an extensive Species Rose Garden situated in the Timaru Botanic Gardens in South Canterbury. If you are in New Zealand please make sure you visit, as it is truly worth while.

Also in New Zealand our Heritage Roses Register team is doing a great job rescuing lost roses, species and otherwise and making them available for public plantings and enthusiastic gardeners. At the moment I am awaiting the arrival of ***R. chinensis*** **Bengal Crimson** [which may possibly be one and the same as **Sanguinea** and also **Miss Lowe**] It is being propagated in New Zealand by the Register team.

Rosa virginiana plena

Hebes Lip

from India

Rosa clinophylla

BY VIRU VIRARAGHAVAN

In many ways ***R. clinophylla*** is one of the most distinctive of wild roses. First of all it is perhaps the only tropical wild rose, and found in India in places as far apart as the north-eastern states like Manipur and in the Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam; in Bihar, near Ranchi; in the Simlipal Wildlife Sanctuary in Orissa; on the Eastern Ghat mountains; in the border areas between Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, as well as in Kar nataka State, in South India.

Sir George Watt has commented on how typically the species , which was then called ***R. involucrata***, appears in fairly large numbers in restricted localities, and thereafter is nowhere to be seen for hundreds of kilometres, where conditions are apparently quite similar, and then it appears again quite suddenly.

The species is an upright semi-climbing bush, reaching 4-5 metres with five-petalled white flowers and prominent golden anthers with the distinctive fragrance of acetone – nail polish remover!

Another unusual feature of this species is the fact that it is semi-aquatic and favours locations like the islands in the River Ganges, which are submerged under the flood waters for six months in the year, leaving only the tops of the plants visible, or the banks of streams.

We have grown it along with water lilies in our garden. But the ideal location is where the plant is periodically flooded by flood waters which recede now and then.

There is an interesting account of the discovery of this rose by an Englishman , appropriately named Mr Rose, who was the Superintendent of Post Offices in British India and who, while travelling in the course of his official duties, by boat during the flood season, saw a rose coming out of the water. He collected the flower and some seeds, which later were identified as ***R. clinophylla***.

We have two clones of this rose, one collected by my friend, Mr Narender Singh of Ranchi. He was on a hunting trip and had camped by a stream's edge and early the next morning, just as the sun was rising, he saw to his amazement, white roses at the water's edge.

The other form is the Bengal form, originally collected by the well known Bengal horticulturist, Mr Shivaprasad Bannerjee. This was from an island on the River Padma which branches off from the River Ganges, near Murshidabad in West Bengal.

This species was carefully preserved by the late Dr N.C. Sen, and, at that time was probably the only plant in cultivation.

The third form, also called ***R. lyelli***, is found in the lower Himalayas around Kumaon, in Nepal, and in Mount Abu, a hill station at about 1200 metres in Rajasthan, in western India.

We were able, after much search, to locate this plant growing in Oriya Village, in Mount Abu, at virtually the same point where it was originally located by G. King in 1888. It differs from the eastern Indian forms in bearing flowers in corymbs, rather than singly.

From the taxonomic point of view, Ghora and Panigrahi, in their book *Rosaecea in India* indicate that apart from the type species, ***R. clinophylla*** is found in 2 other varieties – ***R. clinophylla*** var. ***glabra*** and ***R. clinophylla*** var. ***parvifolia***, where the leaflets are glabrous on both sides unlike the typical form where the leaflets are tomentose, woolly, beneath.

According to this authority, var. ***glabra*** has flowers up to 5.5 cms across, whereas in var. ***parvifolia*** the flowers are much smaller – 2 cms and the leaflets, as can be imagined, also smaller. The flowers of the typical ***R. clinophylla*** are in between in size.

As regards ***R. lyelli***, which is treated as a separate species by taxonomists, the most striking differences are the prickles which point downwards, and the flowers being produced in corymbs 3 to 7 together unlike the solitary flowering habit of ***clinophylla*** which has prickles pointing upwards.

The great taxonomist, M. Francois Crepin was of the opinion that ***R. lyelli*** is a hybrid of ***R. clinophylla*** with ***R. moschata***, in which he included the Himalayan ***R. brunonii***.

A word on the hips of ***clinophylla***. These are round and woolly (tomentose) outside, and quite light confirming that the distribution of these is through water, which corresponds to the typical flood plain habitat.

The shining evergreen foliage as well as the involucres which surround the buds are a feature of ***R. clinophylla***. This specie is closely related to ***R. bracteata***.

R. clinophylla Thory (1817) is native to tropical India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Laos and Thailand, where it thrives in swampy areas, living partly submerged part of the year. A mountain form grows in Nepal. Three variants have been recognized: var. ***clinophylla***, var. ***glabra*** (smooth and hairless) and var. ***parvifolia*** (small-leafed).

from France

the mystery of recurrent blooming finally revealed

BY PASCAL HEITZLER

Roses fascinate us by their diversity: perfume, shape and the color of their flowers. We are sometimes startled by their recurrent blooming or remontance, which is a horticultural heritage that dates back to the development of old Tea and *Chinensis* roses. In fact, even though some wild species have the tendency to rebloom in their natural habitat (***Rosa beggeriana***), most roses grow in the same manner as brambles, blooming only once in Spring. As a general rule, mature wild roses put forth each year new vigorous sterile canes which are not ramified or only slightly so. These canes, which can reach several meters in length in the *synstylae*, will only bloom in a second vegetative growth after a winter pause. Having passed through this stage, they then bloom every year but only for a few days in spring. It has long been recognized that some mutations that have appeared throughout the history in the cultivation of roses are at the origin of the ability to rebloom throughout the year, but the molecular mechanisms remained obscure. In this article I will summarise the latest developments in our understanding of this subject. A team at the French Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) of Angers have just described the responsible gene.

a bit of history

Recurrent Chinensis and Tea roses were created and developed in China probably during the Song dynasty (960-1279), a thousand years ago[1,2]. These roses have apical blooms on new growth as well as on the rest of the plant during the entire growing season. However, the canes are much shorter thus forming smaller rose bushes. Also, rather than growing haphazardly as brambles do, the compact growth of remontant plants proved to have horticultural benefits. It is true that the charm of the first hybrids of *Chinensis* and Tea roses, for the most part, has yet to be surpassed. Varieties such as **Old Blush** can be identified on very ancient silk paintings.

With the arrival of these roses in Europe, the remontancy was introduced into the types of roses known in the Occident despite the difficulties of recessive transmission. This character is now present in all modern roses, and its discovery constitutes a major event in the evolution of horticulture.

a landmark event of transposition that happened long ago

As a geneticist, I have had the chance to meet and appreciate the French scientific community working on roses. Fabrice Foucher's team, at the Institute for Research in Horticulture and Seeds of the INRA center at Angers, had already mapped out the gene for continuous blooming on chromosome 3 in roses (following the new nomenclature[3]). This chromosome region coincides with an important TFL1 gene implicated in the biology of flowering plants. These studies complement those carried out by Hikaru Iwata of Japan who was already well known for his work on the triparental origin of Damask roses[4]. They combined their research forces towards a common goal[5]. When Hiraku Iwata had a sabbatical year at INRA Angers, it provided me with the chance to go and see him and the team.

Their studies confirmed that the primary characteristic of recurrent blooming in roses is linked to a mutation in the TFL1a gene which is a key suppressor of blossoming. Hikaru renamed this gene KSN, for *Koushin*, the old Japanese name given to ancient remontant Chinese cultivars. It was in fact in the ancient Chinese cultivar **Old Blush** that they detected a transposon in the middle of the KSN gene (figure 1B) which disabled the gene's proper functioning[5]. As **Old Blush** and several other closely related cultivars have transmitted this remontance to numerous old as well as new varieties, the scientists had the molecular tools to explore the presence of this transposon in these varieties. They have in fact been able to confirm its presence in more modern continuous blooming cultivars such as **Little White Pet**, **Gold Bunny**, **Wendy Cusson**, **Pink Chiffon**, **Iceberg** and **Peace**. Proof of Chinese heritage has therefore been confirmed at a molecular level, as a mutation which must have appeared over a thousand years ago!

a complex molecular mechanism linked to growth

It has been shown that one of the mechanisms linked to remontancy in roses is due to a correlation with seasonal variations of a family of vegetal hormones, the gibberellins. This study, done by English researchers[6], was carried out on two genetically identical roses except for the reblooming factor: **Félicité Perpétue** and its sport **Little White Pet**. In **Félicité Perpétue**, a plant of vigorous growth that blooms only once a year, the gibberellins increase after the blooming hindering any further recurrence of blooms in the summer or in autumn. Whereas in **Little White Pet**, the level of different gibberellins remains low[6], allowing for perpetual blooming until the frost. Therefore, these natural hormones seem to play an inhibiting role in flowering. In nature, particularly with our native species, the bloom period is short (between two to four weeks) in spring. The KSN gene encodes a protein that acts as a suppressor to blooming. This protein, also modulated during the rose growing season, could act as an adaptor between transcriptional regulation and hormonal signaling. Therefore, when the gene does not function, the suppressor is not synthesised and continual blooming becomes possible.

the mystery of climbing sports solved

For decades numerous climbing sports have been recorded[7]. They correspond to spontaneous mutations which appear on a bud in recurrent blooming shrubs. The event is always spectacular. Imagine a well-established relatively small shrub that suddenly during one season puts forth a stem several meters long. Cuttings from this exceptional stem will perpetuate such mutation to make specimens which are uniformly climbers. Other than their growth they are similar in all their features to the original variety except in being weakly recurrent. Often they have a residual second blooming towards the end of the season; while far less spectacular than the first it is nonetheless sufficient to insure a certain popularity. These plants are more often than not hardier than the original bush form.
It is interesting to note that all climbing cultivars, whether they be old or new varieties, are descended from old Asian Tea Roses or *Chinensis*.

The team at Angers have shown that all climbing sports, tested so far, are associated with a partial excision event of the transposon in the KSN gene. The initial transposon has now lost around 90% of its sequence (Figure 1C). This is sufficient to restore the essential KSN function but not enough for it to revert completely to the strict non-recurrent blooming found in wild types. Molecular analysis of a range of climbing sports of different varieties have shown that similar reversion events occurred in an independent manner and on many occasions[5].

Conclusions

Old Blush is an exceptional recurrent bloomer, representing one of the oldest members of this pioneering line that appeared a thousand years ago in China. The Chinese have been growing roses for more than two thousand years, and the appearance of such recurrent mutants was a considerable advance in the history of horticulture. It is now known that these type of plants have a much shorter juvenile phase. No doubt but that the old Chinese masters must have particularly appreciated and pampered these young seedlings prone to bloom when only a few weeks old.

Fabrice Foucher's team has solved several of the enigmas linked to this phenomenon[5]. One of the principal mutations responsible for remontancy is linked to the presence of a copia-type transposon in the ksn gene, a gene that encodes a suppressor to blooming and that affects the actual growth of the rose. When the gene is functioning, the plant blooms only once in the spring and exhibits imposing growth as with most wild species. When the gene is not functional, as in the case of **Old Blush** where the transposon invalidates the ksn function, the plant blooms throughout the season, even year round should the climate permit. We then observe that reduced growth results in the bushy type rose.

Lastly, the transposon copia can sometimes undergo a partial loss. This occurs in climbing sports, and it partially restores the function of the ksn gene: an intermediary situation occurs, a plant with vigorous growth and weak residual second blooming later in the season, which explains the mystery of climbing sports. Researchers at INRA have also shown that remontancy in wild strawberries is linked to the loss of function of their corresponding ksn gene.

Officially, **Old Blush** appeared in Europe in the middle of the 18th Century, but it is probable that it, as well as other similar varieties, arrived earlier. The remontancy of the Chinese strains is especially strong and, therefore, all the more precious, but other remontant strains have appeared independently at different periods and in countries other than China, such as, among others, the ancestral moschatas and the Damask **Four Seasons**. Now that molecular tools have been developed, it will be possible to identify other mutations to help in our understanding of the fine-tuning of the ksn gene. But the possibility of discovering other genes that are implicated in remontancy, is also possible: great challenges still await researchers trying to unravel the many puzzles in the history of roses.

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Figure 1

These drawings depict the different types of blooming and growth according to the functioning of the ksn gene. The light-green branches are the new growth of the year. Growth from the preceding year is shown in dark green. On a molecular basis the diagrams represent the different versions of the ksn gene.

A. Wild type KSN

The fully functioning ksn gene which inhibits further remontancy after the year's spring blooming.
The vigorous new canes do not have blooms.
The rose is non-remontant, the classic situation for wild roses.

B. Recurrent blooming mutant version of KSN

The copia-type transposon, (a fragment of DNA that can mobilize independently in the chromosomes), is inserted into the ksn gene, where its large size completely negates the ksn gene's proper function. Since the ksn gene is a suppressor of blooming, this plant will continue to flower throughout the season, even on the tips of new growth. Note that the growth of these roses is stunted.

The transposon is depicted in red.

C. Partial reversion in Climbing sports

The activity of the transposon copia seems to point of the origin of the climbing sports. When it looses a part of its sequence, the residual transposon restores partial function to the ksn gene. The plant then shows vigorous growth but only residual blooming, usually toward the end of the season.

from New Zealand

Project Rescue – the War for the Roses

a description and justification of
the New Zealand National Register of Heritage Roses.

BY MURRAY RADKA

The 2013 World Federation of Rose Societies' Conference in Palmerston North was an illuminating experience, challenging me to justify in my own mind my ideas about preserving the old rose varieties.

For two days I listened as breeders, retailers and knowledgeable rosarians discussed the health and problems in the present day rose world and apart from two excellent presentations from our own Joy Chapman and Fiona Hyland, the over-riding theme was that the salvation of the rose lies in the future and within the modern rose.

There was no sentimentality at this conference. People are acutely aware that roses are no longer the plant of choice for many gardeners. Breeders and retailers are finding it increasingly challenging to find gimmicks and niche markets in which to sell roses, and generally the future for them looks bleak. The solution appears to lie with breeding the perfect rose for a throw-away society, and there was even talk of throw away roses. All of this flies in the face of all we as heritage rosarians are trying to achieve when we endeavour to save varieties which are at least one hundred years old.

As I seek to justify our efforts to preserve old rose varieties, four thoughts come to mind: history; unsurpassed beauty; fragrance; and landscaping value. I believe that true gardeners have an emotional relationship with their plants which transcends the desire to have just a neat and colourful garden. From little children we grow up with plants, and thus plants become an integral part of our lives, contributing to our pleasure, security, and memories. Should the rose ever become just a commodity in the minds of gardeners, its days will be numbered.

For as long as man has walked upon this earth, he has walked in the company of the rose. Enheduanna, a Mesopotamian princess of the third millennium BCE, and the first author we know by name, wrote about the rose; Sappho, who lived 2600 years ago, extolled the beauty of the rose, and possibly named her 'Queen of Flowers'. Throughout our history the rose has featured in our art, politics, religion, and landscaping; in our bridal bouquets, in the rooms of the great peace conferences, on the dining tables of kings and of commoners, and in our declarations of love. If only she could speak; what tales the rose would tell.

Of course, the roses so loved and valued by our ancestors are very different to many of the roses grown today. From the simple species Enheduanna and Sappho admired, sixteen old rose families have evolved, each of which reigned supreme during their time in history. We heritage rosarians are the guardians of these families, and just as modern rosarians look to the future to save the rose, we look to the past.

The birth of a new rose family challenged the older families somewhat, but never threatened them with extinction until the mid nineteenth century, when terrorism struck the rose world in the form of the hybrid teas. They bred like rabbits and, just as Genghis Khan and his hordes swept through the known world, hybrid teas swept through the gardening world, replacing all in their wake, till by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the old families had all but disappeared from the gardens of Europe and the new world. As in the Dark Ages when knowledge was preserved in the Monasteries, the old rose families were preserved in a few private collections, and in some neglected old gardens, although many varieties were lost.

In the middle of the twentieth century a renaissance sprang up in the heritage rose world, sparked by people like Graham Thomas, Constance Spry, and our own Nancy Steen. Old rose varieties were found in the most unlikely places and by the time I was smitten with them in the mid 1980s, they were once again fashionable and freely available in New Zealand. For a small country we had a very impressive collection.

Murray Radka greets visitors to *Brandy Hill*

Back then, too much choice was my problem. I purchased plants from ten suppliers, and in a single income family with four children, had to restrain my enthusiasm. My dilemma each year was to decide which roses to choose and which to wait-list for another time. In addition to the great public collections, there were also significant private collections at Roseneath, Kauri Creek, Trevor Griffith's Garden and the Speight's Garden.

Sometime within the last decade, a crisis of supply within New Zealand slowly became apparent to anyone who bought old roses on a regular basis. Suppliers disappeared until we had just one serious nursery. From purchasing an average of fifty plants annually, eventually I could find nothing new to add to my collection. In addition, I began to find it difficult to replace some of my rose varieties as catalogues were reduced. More seriously, I became aware that some of the big private collections had disappeared, and that rare varieties in public collections were often replaced with common varieties. New Zealand's stringent biosecurity restrictions, as well as commercial restraints, made it very difficult for nurseries to import bud wood of the old varieties.

In 2010 a chance conversation with Fran Rawling, then president of HRNZI, led to the creation of a project to find, register, and save what remains of the New Zealand collection of heritage roses. Much has been written and spoken about this unique project which is now gaining recognition and interest internationally, but in simple terms the project focuses on finding rare roses which are no longer available commercially, registering the rose bushes on our spreadhseet of rose varieties historically available in New Zealand, and, where the owner agrees, taking bud wood and having them propagated by a commercial propagator to make them available to Heritage Rose members and the public once again.

Coming from a career in education in which I worked on a number of major projects at a national level, two things strike me about this project. The first is how low-key the project has been for something that has generated such a rapid and impressive success rate, and the second is how cheaply it has been done, with low cost to the organisation.

With just four members, the managing committee has been kept deliberately small. Each member understands his/her role, and has had to be an active member. Meetings are infrequent and productive. Our small management base depend upon the support of all of our members. The impressive success we have enjoyed can be attributed as much to Regional Conveners and the individual members who have taken up the baton, surveyed their area and provided information and bud wood, as to the work of the management committee.

In the short time we have been in operation, we have created the Register, a living document now available online, that includes the close to two hundred rare and commercially unavailable roses have been found and rescued. A working relationship has been established with staff in a number of our major public gardens around the country. The profile of heritage roses within these gardens has been raised, and we are increasingly consulted about their welfare. A major blessing, which was not foreseen, is that this project has captured the imagination of many members, given our organisation a much-needed focus, and brought many closer together.

Our work is ongoing. In the coming rose season we will continue to seek further varieties and work on plans to further the project. We have yet to implement two further strands to the project: the creation of public plantings which will secure the roses futures, and the dream of importing bud wood of important varieties which we have failed to find.


Roses at *Brandy Hill*

Unsurprisingly, the committee's work has not been issue-free. This is new territory for heritage rosarians, and without a model to copy we have had to work much of it out along our journey. As problems become apparent, we do our best to fix them.

Our New Zealand membership understands that the Register is enshrined within the organisation, and that the goal is to take control of our roses and protect them, and that we are working towards a system that will make them available to the public.

We are indebted to the propagators, understanding their need to consider the commercial interests of their businesses. At present we are still considering ways to make the roses available to our members without burdening our propagators with mother plants of varieties which are not in high demand. In our eagerness to involve and reward our members, I believe that we may have moved too quickly to try and supply them with newly discovered varieties. While we are re-evaluating the best way to make this happen, we are asking members to remember that the important thing is that many roses have been saved and will eventually become available. The system which is likely to evolve will be the annual publication, on-line or in the Journal, of the Project Rescue rare rose varieties available for purchase.

I have gathered every known variety into my collection at Brandy Hill in Central Otago, in an unofficial National Collection, and from this or one of our other collections, we will provide the bud wood for propagation.

Interested members are able to consult the Register on our website to keep up to date with developments, and the Journal continues to be the major link between members and committee, announcing developments as they occur.

Heritage roses are, for us, a tangible link with our ancestors and with the past. From the Palmerston North International Rose Conference I learned that the modern rose lover's emphasis is on the beauty of the individual flower, and the goal is to breed the perfect rose. The heritage rose lover's passion is much more emotional and broad, and comes from admiring the plant in the landscape, the fragrance, and the history. When I gaze upon a flower of **Maiden's Blush** I know that Henry VIII gazed upon the very same rose, and that Empress Josephine beheld **Marie Louise** just as I am able to do. When I admire the little Polyantha **Orange King**, my grandmother is standing beside me. These people have gone; we can gaze upon their portraits, read their stories, and sometimes we can hold and smell their roses.

If we lose the old roses which survive, we will have lost not only their unique beauty and fragrance, but a wonderful part of our history. No matter how beautiful it may be, no modern rose could ever make up for this loss.

whither heritage roses?

BY CRENAGH ELLIOTT

There has not been a definition of heritage roses. Species are really the responsibility of botanists. Therefore we should let them do their thing and decide how many species really exist. However they have historic value as the foundation of all cultivated roses. Found roses have a real value because people have preserved them. This may be just because they are easy to propagate. Some may have importance because of where they have been found. An exceptional example is the Bermuda found roses. Many of these are of unknown origin.

Now we get to heritage or historic roses. Heritage and historic are terms which have been used interchangeably for old roses even though in English they have slightly different meanings. In Europe most rose societies include old and new roses. In France there are separate societies and *Roses Anciennes en France* excludes species. In Austalasia there are separate societies for modern and old roses, and all four of these societies are very active. It would be nice if the heritage and modern rose lovers could get together and agree to decide what is heritage. Remember that some roses in the 1970s have already gone extinct.

Then we look at what is happening. Two major data sources are the website HelpMeFind.com and *The Combined Rose List* by Scheider and Dobson. On the website, no photo means a rose is either rare or new. In the Combined Rose List it is easy to decide that a rose is only of limited availability in either North America or the rest of the world. Very few roses not in commerce are listed.

Now what else can I say. Someone has listed 20,000 roses pre 1900 AD. Most are believed extinct.

The Bermuda Rose Society was founded to preserve their mystery roses, some of which have now been identified.

New Zealand Heritage Rose has started a major database of pre-1945 roses linked to HelpMeFind.com. They realised that they have to know what they have before they can decide what is important. This was precipitated by several nurseries going out of business and the source of old roses drying up.

The British have a programme of gardens holding national collections. The Rose species collection exists as do the Pre-1900 Shrub Roses, The History of the European Rose and ***Rosa spinosissima*** collections.

In the United States of America there is a heritage section in the national rose society and two active national societies, one of which is considered international. Many of the roses collected by these societies are found roses preserved in various gardens. Once again we have to remember that these collections are dependant on volunteers keeping an eye on their preservation.

In South Africa and South America there is interest in preserving old found roses, but the main problem is trying to identify these roses.

I do not know what is happening in China, the source of the ancestors of the modern roses.

This is a very superficial view of what is happening world wide with regard to heritage roses and I apologise if I have erred or missed any critical information.

from Australia

a round robin revisited

BY TREVOR NOTTLE

It's 10:00am, and outside the temperature is already nudging 40°C. The weather bureau tells me that today it is expected to get as high as 47°C. Last night the temperature did not fall below 35°C. Emergency Services are broadcasting Catastrophic Fire Danger warnings and suggesting we leave our homes for safer places while the Health Department is telling old people to stay indoors out of the heat, to drink plenty of cool water, and to take a cold shower from time to time to cool off.

As an older person I'm mostly doing what I'm told by the authorities, but I'm not about to pack the dog and the cat into my car and leave home. Instead I will stay indoors, drink plenty of water, and keep as cool as I can. And I will follow our Editor's request for me to write something that has been derived from a Species Rose Round Robin that circulated some years back.

Given the vast changes in communication that have occurred in the last few years it is hardly surprising that the letter-based Robin has expired, yet most of the members still remain in touch, not just about wild roses, or roses in general, but on all manner of subjects.

With the weather as it is, I wonder how Girija and Viru Viraraghavan are getting by in Tamil Nadu. Keenly interested in raising new roses suited to their Tropical climate, they are focussed on breeding with ***Rosa gigantea***. The humidity here is distressing: what must it be like there? The Gigantea roses Viru is breeding would almost be at home here. How are they doing with Odile Masquellier in Lyon? She collected some seedlings from Viru when we met up in Cambridge for a heritage rose conference. Odile has a marvellous French greenhouse with an almost Gothic arch roof line. Maybe this is home to her Giganteas. It was large enough, and on the La Mulatiere hillside above the confluence of the Soane and the Rhone, it is probably well above the frost-line.

I recall Bill Grant got some seeds too. In the past he would have grown them up his big gum trees, but he took those down years ago to rid himself of fire risks, dropping branches, shedding bark and leaves, and hungry roots. I really ought to ask him what happened to the roses.

What about Martyn Rix at Rose Ash in South Devon? His big unheated greenhouses would probably be sufficient to keep out the frost and permit the rose to grow. It is very vigorous but would it ever flower there? And he grows so many other plants too. Things he has discovered and brought home from botanical expeditions to almost everywhere. I recall masses of Fritillarias and other bulbs growing in deep sandy beds which drew my attention, but was there a rose or two scrambling overhead. I don't remember it well, but it seems entirely possible, Martyn being such a keen plantsman, and a world renowned botanist. Remember how he travelled to China with Roger Phillips to find and photograph species roses for their book?

My mind turns to breeding work done with the same species by Alister Clark. I will never forget the sight of a massive cream flowered ***Rosa gigantea*** x **Mrs Richard Turnbull** (Clark, 1945) smothering a mature gold-leaved False Acacia at *Badger's Keep*, a miners cottage garden near Castlemaine in Victoria. I saw it 35 years ago. Is it still going strong? Most likely, I think. How I wished, at the time, I had room to grow it. Older and wiser now, I am glad I couldn't fit it in. Like the rest of the Robin members I now realise the value of not trying to grow everything, not even old roses.

The radio interrupts my reverie; we are now advised to make sure we listen on a battery powered radio for fire reports from the Country Fire Service, and to check on our older neighbours, and again, to keep well hydrated. The electricity supply will probably be shut down to prevent arc-ing and consequent spot fires.

I imagine Martyn and Odile are thoroughly hydrated as the storms now battering Europe drench the countryside there with indecent amounts of rain, while here we just stew in our own mid-Summer juices Down Under.

Quite likely Gwen Fagan and Barbara and Peter Knox Shaw in Cape Province in South Africa are feeling pretty much cooked too. Their old roses, like ours, are aestivating right now waiting for cooler weather and the morning mists of autumn before venturing to put out precious buds and re-bloom. Gwen has given us a huge gift in her research into old roses in her country, and Barbara and Peter continue to pursue good gardening and planstmanship – excuse me Barbara, but I'm sure you will feel included too. Planstwomanship is just too clumsy for me, and plantsperson too tainted with political correctness. It's been great fun to meet up with them at Chelsea from time to time and soak up their intense enthusiasm for growing plants and making gardens.

Other members came into that Species Rose Robin too. Some stayed and some left having satisfied their needs for information, support and ideas. Sally Alison in New Zealand was a stayer, as were Heidi and Wernt Grimm from Kassel in Germany. Eric Unmuth, an Austrian from Vienna helped everyone out with information from his extensive multilingual collection of rose books and journals, such translations being imperative to growing our understanding of the rose literature that exists outside the English language. Fred Boutin, a trained horticulturalist from California was a retiring member with a huge store of knowledge which he shared with Robin members when he wasn't busy with real botanical research and looking for old rose 'foundlings' in the Mother Lode counties of his home state. Somewhere in there we drew on the experiences of Don Gers and Michael Tallman, two travelling plant hunters from near Santa Rosa, California, who spent a great deal of time looking for plants in Baja California and Mexico. ***Rosa minutifoliawas*** is one of their most noted collections.

For myself the species roses were, and remain, a very great interest. I value them hugely as hardy flowering shrubs which provide habitat and food for numerous small birds, finches, wrens and honey-eaters. I grow them along a lane way where passers-by can see them, and I hope enjoy their flowers, heps and gracious form. I even let them self-sow, which they do with pleasing results. None of the seedlings will ever be registered or named, but there they are filling a necessary role with beauty and thrift.

Bill Grant, who established the Species Rose Robin, has stayed a life-long friend and mentor. Aside from roses all we Robin members now know that he enjoys a whisky at sundown, loves opera and listens to it on his huge sound system, enjoys good food and wine and sharing meals with friends; he is keenly interested in The Arts, architecture, travel, reading and books, and that he loves people.

That such multi-disciplinary interests could show Bill as his true self is evidence enough of the value of his initiative. We were all able to do the same within the generous scope for extended writing of a kind that is eschewed by most forms of e-communication. Tweets, Twitters, Instagrams, FaceBook pages, and all rest, just seek the surface reflections of our real selves with little allowance made for considered reflection and text rich in ideas, and even words. The benefit has been in our shared experiences and commonalities. Through our interest in wild roses and the exchange of ideas we have come to share a greater sense of being at one wherever we are around the world. And given the troubling times in which we find ourselves, that is a very reassuring thread from which to knit a more positive tapestry than the black and white encouraged by the media, spin-meisters, politicians, and others who seek to promote difference and fear among the peoples of the world for their own benefit and purposes.

The Director of Emergency Service wishes to advise that the fire situation has been down-graded from Catastrophic to Severe and asks us to stay tuned on a battery powered radio, drink plenty of water and be prepared to activate our Personal Fire Evacuation Plan at any time.

On that cheery note I will stop reminiscing before I wander too far into the realm of peace, love and international brotherhood (and sisterhood too).

This has been an Emergency Services Community Announcement, please keep listening on a battery powered radio, drink plenty of water...

from France

what is the next step?

BY JOHN HOOK

In any plant collection, there comes a point where virtually everything has been acquired, both commercially and from the Public and private gardens around the world, and one has to ask, "what is the next step?"

We have been collecting Teas and Noisettes for many years now and planting them in our display garden here in South West France. We are lucky that this area allows us to grow them to their full potential.

To feed our obsession, we have developed a passion for rose rustling in this area, along with obtaining as many found Teas and Noisettes from around the world as possible.

"Fusterouau Tea"

Our area is very rural, consisting mostly of small farms and vineyards. The local people have traditionally been suspicious of outside influences, and where possible have purchased plants from local breeders. Many plants have remained with families who passed them down through generations, and now they can often be found on derelict farms. Mostly these roses are found along the borders of the properties.

Cycling is a passion of mine, and this allows me to explore many of the remote roads looking for 'Finds'. Some of these have a bit of a story to them.....

One of my first rose find was "**Fusterouau Tea**" growing out of scrubby woodland on the side of the road. After talking to a few families familiar with the area, I discovered that there had been an old commemorative cross at the spot, which had disappeared many years before, swamped by the encroaching woodland. The rose had been planted at the cross and had continued to grow.

Another rose I discovered growing out of a hedge bordering a farm was "**Le Parré Noisette**". I asked the owners of the farm if they knew the history of the rose, and was excited to hear that it had been in their family for more than 120 years. I later found the same rose in an overgrown village property ("**Riscle Pink Noisette**").

"**Belle Bassoues**" had been growing in front of grain silos on the side of the road for who knows how long. When I asked about it, everyone just said "It has always been there". Each year it builds up strength, eventually reaching 3m x 2m before being cut to the ground by the highway maintenance crew.

Usually when I come across old and neglected roses, the owners of the property are enthusiastic about giving information. However, this isn't always the case.

Once, upon spying a very nice and ancient Tea rose growing out of an overgrown hedge on the border between a property and the road, I stopped and asked if I could take cuttings. The owner refused. I was stunned, as the rose was completely neglected and swamped by brambles. "Why not?" I asked. The owner replied sharply that in this life, one had to pay for things. "OK" I replied, "I will happily pay you for some cuttings." But the owner just said "No" and walked away. A couple of weeks later, I rode up and grabbed a few cuttings, riding away with the owner running after me. The rose was growing within 1 metre of the highway, so officially it wasn't on her property anyway. The original plant has now been grubbed out by the owner but the cuttings all took. This I have christened "**Laujuzan Tea**".

In the USA a large number of Teas and Noisettes have been found, as in Australia. Less well known are those found in Italy and India.

In Italy Walter Branchi and his friends the Ducrots have found many examples: "**Andreola Vittori**", "**Isabella Ducrot**", "**Octandre**" and ""**Philippa Pirette** are some of Branchis' finds, along with "**Manzano**", "**Arancera**" and "**Myra White**" from the Ducrots. The last rose was found near the ruins of St Nicholas Basilica in Myra, Turkey.

In India, the "**Seven Day Rose**", "**Renu Apricot Tea**" and "**Madirai Tea**" are but a few of the found roses. All of these have been given temporary names, but to be taken seriously they need to be identified to give them more chance of being preserved.

In my opinion, it is impossible to identify an old rose with complete certainty. I don't believe that all the roses from the old public gardens such as L'Hay and Sangerhausan are reliably named either. Over time labels invariably have been misapplied.

There are a lot of early descriptions of roses mentioning many characteristics, and these can be helpful, but over the period of 100+ years there is likely to be some genetic drift. In five generations of selectively taking cuttings, I have noticed variations. Locally, **Souvenir de Madame Leonie Viennot** is a good example. It has been growing everywhere around here, reputedly for the last 100 years. Over this period people have continually taken cuttings and started their own plants. Currently many variants exist such with varying leaf shape and length, prickles, flower shade, and both once blooming or remontant.

Consulting with Dr Pascal Heitzler, a geneticist from Strasbourg, I learned that the loss of one original characteristic in this time frame is entirely possible, and the loss of two characteristics hardly surprising.

"Le Parré Noisette"

The impact of growth conditions is also not yet understood. Giving an example using animals; coat or feather colour can be critical for animals to escape as a prey. In nature there is considerable selective pressure against variations due to the high maintenance of stress for survival. When animals loose their stress in captivity (lack of enemy, sufficient food... or more and better food, familiarisation with humans), a considerable increase in coat colour mutations occur. DNA markers have been talked about with enthusiasm, but even with my limited knowledge, this technique can have limited use when we are not completely certain of the identity of the rose we are using for the comparison.

We have in our collection **Mlle de Sombreuil** from Sangerhausen, L'Hay and Tête d'Or. All are different. We also have **Mme C. Liger** from Sangerhausan, Cavriglia, and L'Hay. Are these truly different roses, or are these roses exhibiting genetic drift?

Many roses currently in commerce and in public gardens were originally found roses that have been previously identified. Where the rose reasonably matches original descriptions with no other contenders, I have no problem with accepting this, as it gives the rose an definitive identity. Having said this, I think with any identification it would be prudent to document the identified rose, study name, identifier, finder and origin. Hence if a better example appears in the future, we would know we were dealing with a previously identified found rose.

Giving an identity to a found rose can be very intimidating. Peter Beales attempted to identify many roses, with very limited resources compared to what we have available now, and was frequently criticised. But by introducing these roses he stopped many from becoming extinct, I am very grateful to him for this.

Many of the criticisms were unfounded, as Beales had obtained the plants from Sangerhausen or L'Hay, of which several had been mislabelled, and these errors were propagated.

This fear of criticism has been a major reason for the reluctance to identify found roses, but one must not forget the huge number currently identified that originated as found roses. None of the remainder have a guaranteed history: at any point replacements could have been made in the big gardens by a rose or bud wood supplied from a nursery that was incorrect. **Beales Monsieur Tillier** originated from one of the major gardens, and has since been re-identified as **Marie Nabonnand** from a plant in L'Hay. This is probably correct, but there is always a chance that this rose too was mislabelled.

In our collection we have begun the process of identifying several of the found roses. Although these identifications are the result of personal observations, it may be of interest to some of the readers.

Etoile de Portugal....

Hybrid Gigantea bred by Cayeux in Lisbon 1898

We had obtained **Vicomtesse Pierre de Fou** from Beales, but this was obviously incorrect. We had suspicions this was a Hybrid Gigantea. A few years later we obtained **Vicomtesse Pierre de Fou** from Cavriglia which was more accurately named so we needed to find another name for the Beales version. After several years of research and study, we identified this rose as **Etoile de Portugal**, the first Hybrid Gigantea recorded in Europe.

Madame Pauline Labonté

bred by Pradel from Montauban, France in 1852

This was "**Fusterouau Tea**" mentioned earlier.

Madame Léopold Marchesseau.....

A Tea bred by Chauvry, Bordeaux 1904

This was the found rose "**Labatut Tea**"

Belle de Bordeaux……..

A Tea-Noisette introduced by Lartay (Bordeaux 1861)

This is the found roses "**Riscle Pink Noisette**" and "**Le Parré**"

Comtesse Riza du Parc....

A Tea bred by Schwartz 1876

This was "Laujuzan Tea" mentioned earlier

Grand Duc Pierre de Russie.....

A Tea from Perny 1885

This was discovered by Water Branchi in Italy and named "**Andreola Vettori**"

"Laujuzan Tea"

from Bermuda

"**Bermuda Spice**" identified as **Caroline** (Tea, Guerin 1833), and "**Miss Atwood**" identified as **Souvenir de G. Drevet** (Tea, Guillot 1884)

others from the Tête d'Or Lyon

"**Mme Melanie Willermotz"** has been identified as **Madame la Princesse de Radziwill,** a Tea bred by Nabonnand (France, 1886).

"**Souvenir du Rosiériste Rambaux"** has been identified as **Marguerite de Fénelon,** a Tea bred by Nabonnand (France, 1884).

There are several tentatively identified but we want to grow these on to good size plants before committing ourselves.

from India:

"**Renu Apricot Tea"** is possibly **Madame Beatrice Ephrussi**, a Tea from Nabonnand (France, 1912).

"**Seven Day Rose**" is possibly **Mme. Margottin**, a Tea from Guillot (France, 1866).

from USA

We think "**Old Gold** " could possibly be the correct **Sunset**

"**Odee's Pink**" is possibly **Iréné Watts**

The following are still unknown and we are currently researching them:

"**Aignan Apricot**"

"**Ducrot's Souv. d'Un Ami**"

"**Myra White Tea**"

"**Espagnet Tea**"

"**Sabazan Tea**"

"**Maubourguet Tea**"

"**Mondebat Tea**"

"**Beaumarchés**"

"**Aignan Church Yellow Tea**"

"**Tordun Cherry**"

"**Maubourguet Road Tea**"

"**Bassoues Tea**"

"**Plaisance Tea Noisette**"

"**Madiran Climbing Tea**"

etc.

This has all been a lot of fun for us, and we hope we can continue for many more years without taking ourselves too seriously.