



CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE - ISSUE 24, SEPTEMBER 2021

FOREWORD

It is has now been almost two years since the Corona Virus, starting in one country then spreading to all, has affected all of our lives. Many millions ill, uncounted millions dead, and yet we go on trying to find some order in our lives. What ought one to do? Maybe the final sentence in Voltaire's great novel about facing and surviving plagues, wars, and natural disasters *Candide*, that counsels simply "*il faut cultiver notre jardin*," can show a way.

In this, our last BAON issue as its Editors, we have chosen a wide range of authors and subjects on the many aspects of heritage roses: the greatest rose garden in Europe at Sangerhausen, roses in South Korea through the centuries, identifying roses in Slovenia through paintings, a breeder of modern roses on why heritage roses are essential, a French explorer in the early 19th century in India, a very memorable homage from New Zealand to the past by remembering roses, and concluding with the C&HR report.

With our deepest appreciation for our readers' support over the past years, to our multitude of talented authors, and those individuals in the WFRS and the heritage rose community who told us in 2015 that it would be fun to edit BAON.

They were right! Nimet Monasterly-Gilbert and Alan Gilbert, at: alannimet@gmail.com

IN THIS ISSUE. . .

THE SANGERHAUSEN ROSE GARDEN

By Harald Enders Page 2

HISTORY & HERITAGE OF THE ROSE IN KOREA

By Wook-Kyun Kim Page 7

MARIA AUERSPERG ATTEMPS: PAINTER OF ROSES

By Matjaž Mastnak Page 13

LESCHENAULT DE LA TOUR

By Girija Viraraghavan Page 17

WHY HERITAGE ROSES ?

By Dominique Massad Page 20

A ROSE GARDEN FOR OUR ANCESTORS

By Murray Radka Page 24

CONSERVATION & HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Report from Brigid Quest-Ritson Page 28

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THE SANGERHAUSEN ROSE GARDEN

By Harald Enders

PROLOGUE:

It was one of those mornings in early June with the weather forecast promising a hot day, but at that time of morning still cool enough to feel it on the bare skin. The sun was just starting to show up behind the Beyernaumburg mountains, giving the first warm sunbeams, affirming that the weather forecast would be correct. I closed the door of my cozy little hotel and started my way down to the Sangerhausen rose garden. It was a short walk down a relatively steep street, then a right turn, another one to the left, and I was there!

On a wide space outside of the entrance to the rose garden, the collection of species roses had found a new place, planted neatly in rows. And then I passed through the gated entrance to the Rosarium.

It was shortly after opening time when I arrived, so it was just me, some personnel of the rose garden and my expectations. I bought a ticket and proceeded on. What followed is not easily described. Almost instantly all thoughts about daily routine and some stress-producing thoughts fell away. There was just me and the vast rose garden. I sat down on one of the park benches just inside of the rose garden's entrance foyer, to savour my feeling; it was more than this sudden calmness of thoughts and then I realized: It was a feeling like finding a home.

That feeling generally has survived all those years through many return visits. And when I am privileged to entertain friends from all over the world, including a visit to Sangerhausen the feeling is still there, that I am showing these guests my home.

ORIGINS:



View from the entrance



Part of the species collection



The old entrance

Today, the rose gardens of Sangerhausen show the greatest diversity of rose cultivars (6.800) and species roses (500). For now after more than 100 years it attracts visitors from around the world. The town is situated almost in the center of Germany, Saxony-Anhalt, with Leipzig to its east and Göttingen to its west. The hilly landscape extends with a shallow inclination facing toward the northwest. On the horizon remain slag heaps from abandoned mines.

The idea for this rose garden came from the rose breeder Peter Lambert, the then secretary of the German Rose Society (*Verein deutscher Rosenfreunde, VdR*), which he first proposed at its General Assembly in 1898. For Lambert, this garden should become a refuge for those roses and rose classes which were threatened to fall into oblivion by the upcoming class of Hybrid Teas. It should also serve as a pool for rose breeders, so that parental material from old roses would be at the command of rose breeders if such a material should be needed. It was in short a plan to create a genetic pool for roses.



The Climbers quarter



Beds of Hybrid Teas



The Hybrid Musks quarter



The Moss roses quarter

Around the same time, the city of Sangerhausen was planning to expand its already existing Public Park of the city in liaison with the Society of Beautification (*Verschönerungsverein*) of Sangerhausen, which was led by Albert Hoffmann, who was also a Member of the Board of the VdR and a dedicated rose collector. When Hoffmann proposed to the magistrate of the city to situate the planned rose garden as a new part of Sangerhausen's Public Park, the magistrate snapped at the chance and provided *gratis* the ground.

Parallel to designing the rose garden, which in its formal part was by the garden architect F. Doerr, the physical collection of roses began. Appeals for the donation of roses were published in the *Rosen-Zeitung*, the Rose Society's periodical. These appeals were very successful. Groundwork and planting started in 1900. Already in 1902, prior to the opening, it was obvious that the planned outline would not take all the roses that were to be planted. So in 1902 more ground was provided. For this new area it was Peter Lambert who made the design while leaving the formal design of the older part to the landscape architect.

Finally in July 1903 the Garden had its Grand Opening. In 1913, further grounds could be bought adjacent to the original. This donation was made by a former citizen of Sangerhausen, who had emigrated to the U.S. For many years, especially during the first decades of its existence, the ownership structure of the Sangerhausen Rosarium was quite unclear. While the grounds stayed the property of the city of Sangerhausen, the roses themselves were the property of the German Rose Society. And very soon the purpose for the rose garden widened, as it became one of the major testing grounds for newly-bred roses of German origin prior to their commercial introduction, as well as a safe harbour for roses bred by amateurs, even those roses which might never make it into commerce.

Over all the years of its existence, the roses were tended by a relatively small number of employees. It was Richard Vogel, former head gardener of the rose collection of Conrad Strassheim of Frankfurt, and one of the great donators of roses for the Rosarium, who took responsibility for the assortment of the roses of Sangerhausen, and then his son and chosen successor Max Vogel, who kept up the work with never ending passion during the Great Depression and then World War II. With only a very few volunteer rosarians and laborers (funds were difficult to raise during those hard times), they kept alive the planted roses, with working hours often exceeding 16 or 18 hours a day.

During Cold War times the political relationships between West and East Germany were extremely difficult. This finally led to the building of the Berlin Wall and the creation of the Iron Curtain, making it impregnable from both sides. Journeys from the western to the eastern part of Germany were not possible. It was in the early 1970s, that, for the first time since 1961, visitors from the West were allowed to visit Sangerhausen and its rose garden. The direct exchange or donation of roses from West Germany or the West was still not allowed. However, many of the then new cultivars reached Sangerhausen by a detour through Poland, whose connections with both Germanys were not as difficult as they were between each other.

During a certain period in its history, the decision had been made to plant all the collected Polyantha roses together. So in a certain part of the Rosarium, nearly half the size of a soccer field, about 800 different Polyantha cultivars were planted together. This gives a really amazing view. Another great achievement of the 1970's was the restructuring and the renewal of the extensive irrigation system which secured a sufficient water supply to the roses and the trees.



Part of the Polyantha quarter

A NEW BEGINNING:



A quarter for roses from the GDR

After the re-unification of Germany, the last and to date largest revitalization of the entire rose garden took place. At the former back end of the Rosarium the new main entrance was built with additional parking. The oldest part of the gardens, that Doerr had designed, was rearranged, with a sector now displaying the rose heritage of the former East Germany (GDR) from the years 1950-1990. A major section was changed to a park-like structure due to the problem of the soil fatigue for roses (a phenomenon, not yet fully understood).

The new main entrance area now holds modern accommodation for the visitors: an atrium restaurant and coffee-snack bar, a lecture amphitheatre, and a shop for gardening-related objects, books and souvenirs. Today the Rosarium's total current area is 12.5 hectares (more than 30 acres).

All this was accomplished to meet the demands for the new concept of the Rosarium, to be, apart from the task of the preservation of roses, a recreation and meeting place for tourists. The gardens' new name, which came with the modernization, is "Europarosarium Sangerhausen". By the year 2000 improvements had cost more than five million dollars. Today the entire garden and structures are owned completely by the city of Sangerhausen, which in co-operation with the provincial administration, and with the Federal State providing the necessary annual funding. But the biggest and growing source of supporting revenue comes from the one-time visitors or tourists.

(Many-- as I like to call them—"hardcore rosarians", may look down on those tourists who cannot distinguish a Floribunda from a Gallica, or a Hybrid Tea from a Damascena, but who "just love" wandering the garden paths and enjoying the overwhelming views of tens of thousands of flowers in June and July. But remember, without them and their entrance fees, with only us few as the "hardcore," the Rosarium could not exist for a week.)

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Sangerhausen Rosarium, the VdR and the foundation "Friends of the Sangerhausen Rosarium" donated a special rose garden to the garden. Designed in a classical style and visually separated from the other gardens, its aim is to show the development of the roses in the last 100 years – all with roses, of course. Some of the choices of cultivars selected for this Anniversary Garden may well be questioned, but the overall appearance really is fantastic and a real marvel.



One of the many resting areas



Part of the modern Climber collection

What makes the Sangerhausen Rosarium so unique in its appearance is how the roses are maintained. For example: for the large climbers and ramblers where space has always been too limited, the climbers and ramblers were bound to stakes, made from the trimmed trunks of young fir trees, a tradition kept up until recently, only slowly being replaced by metal rods. But, of course, the Sangerhausen Rosarium is more than rambling walks and many roses. Sangerhausen today contains and keeps major parts of the worldwide rose heritage. Many cultivars exist at Sangerhausen only. For nearly 40 years after its opening, the rosarians collected and planted whatever new, or old, roses were available. For some years, serious efforts have been made to review the roses at Sangerhausen, to verify or falsify the correctness of the naming of the roses exhibited. But this is slow work, time and money-consuming work, and it will probably be years before any final results can be known.

AND THE FUTURE:

The main goal of the Rosarium today is--and in the future will be--the preservation of the existing rose collection in its present complexity, together with the acquisition of newly introduced roses. To achieve the preservation goal, any and every effort is made. So the garden's own nursery, for example, propagates hundreds of different cultivars each year to ensure the existence of those cultivars at the garden itself, just to be able to keep the *status quo* of the collection. Furthermore, extensive exchange programs with other rose gardens, organizations and private



Part of the 100th Anniversary garden

persons are on-going to regain cultivars which were lost at Sangerhausen over the decades, as well as to contribute to the efforts to ensure the survival of cultivars, many of which were never before present in the Sangerhausen collection.

Since 2009 the Europarosarium Sangerhausen is a member and part of the German project for saving the genetic biodiversity in ornamental plants. This project was installed by the Federal Government of Germany in order to catalogue and preserve the still existing horticultural heritage. For further multi-language information the Sangerhausen garden, contact: exner@sangerhausen-tourist.de

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The Author Harald Enders and his wife, and their newly acquired stray cat (who actually acquired them) live in Northern Germany where his private garden has almost 400 different cultivars, half of which are old German roses. Enders is a dedicated historian of German roses, rose breeder and contributor to several rose journals. (See his previous articles in BAON #12, #14, #17, #19.) His book "BourbonRosen" (2006) remains a classic in German rose literature. His contact email is: harald_enders@web.de All the photographs are the property of the author.

Note: This is an updated and revised version of an article which appeared in ROSA MUNDI, a publication of the Heritage Rose Foundation, in 2010.

HISTORY & HERITAGE OF THE ROSE IN KOREA

By Wook-Kyun Kim

The Korean peninsula has the unique position of being surrounded by two seas, the Yellow Sea and, the East Sea, and three countries: China to the West and North, Russia to the Northeast and Japan in the South. Korea can boast of having had only five dynastic changes in its long history.

Korean history can be divided into three periods: its “old-age” which refers to the Three Kingdom Period (50 BCE-918 AD), Medieval Korea (918-1392), and Pre-modern including the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910). The Pre-modern period includes the dawning of the “modern period” beginning with 1876 when the first trade treaty opened the doors to the “Hermit Kingdom”, as it was often called.

From this time a hectic series of remarkable events took place. The years between 1910 and 1953 contributed greatly to a sense of lost national identity and with it our history. We were colonized until 1945 and then, after a brutal war, we were split into two countries during the Cold War, and to this day remain divided into two rival Koreas. Koreans, however, are known for tenacity and perseverance.

WILD ROSES IN KOREA

The Korean peninsula is highly rated as a natural habitat of wild roses. There are not many areas in the world in which roses are naturally repeat-flowering. According to Prof. Robert E. Mattock, then at University of Bath during the WFRS World Regional Conference at Hyderabad, wild roses carrying the remontant genes are indigenous only to China, Korea, and Japan.



Rosa multiflora
© Korea National Arboretum



Rosa rugosa
© Korea National Arboretum

Rosa multiflora can be seen on the plains and mountains throughout the country. Some of the islands are sites for natural variation. *Rosa multiflora* is called *Jjil-le-kkot* in Korean, and is very familiar to the older generations, as it was planted as hedges around the villages in the countryside. “*Jjil-le*” means “sting”, “*kkot*” means “flower”. Many Koreans must have been hurt by the rose’s prickles while they were roaming around. They bring back memories of a childhood favorite treat, that of eating the hips and the nibbling of fresh growth. *Jjil-le-kkot* is also the reminder of “hard times” tinged with something good to remember. The flower of the *R. multiflora* is etched on the soul of the Korean people.

Rosa rugosa is called *Haedang-wha* in Korean, which means “seaside flower”. It occurs naturally in Eastern Asia from Ochotsk and south Kamchatka to Korea and northern parts of Japan and China. Our coastline was once a perfect natural habitat for *Rugosa* roses, and it can still be seen along the long stretches of sandy



Rosa koreana
© Korea National Arboretum



Rosa maximowicziana
© Korea National Arboretum

beach in Korea. The seasonal blooming reminds one of home, and it is associated with nostalgia for the home villages along the seacoast, evoking the warmth of mother's arms. Both the Multiflora and Rugosa have been part of the cultural traditions of Korea for a long time. There is a plethora of poetic descriptions of these roses. (see below). They are to Koreans what Dog roses or Sweet Briars are to Europeans.

The middle and northern parts of the Korean peninsula are habitats for *Rosa acicularis* and *Rosa davurica*. Going to the north, one finds *Rosa koreana* which is similar to *Rosa acicularis* but with white-flowers. *Rosa luciae* and its variants are seen in the southern coastlands and islands, *Rosa maximowicziana* is also found in these regions, though not as much. Along with *Rosa maximowicziana* are also noted *Rosa maximowicziana* var. *corona* (Realer) Kitbag with large prickles, and *Rosa maximowicziana* var. *pilosa* with hairy surfaces to the stems. Korean native varieties such as *Rosa taisensis* can be seen in the western islands as well. Other Korean native species are: *Rosa davurica*

Pall. var. alpestris (Nakai) Kitag., *Rosa davurica* Pall. f. *alba* (Nakai) T.B.Lee, *Rosa jaluana* Kom., *Rosa spinosissima* L., *Rosa xanthina* Lindl.

THE SYMBOLISM OF FLOWERS IN OUR HISTORY:

Koreans love for flowers has served as an emotional refuge through good times and bad. But the choice of blooms mainly reflects a perceived spiritual kinship to the flower rather than its sensual beauty.

Korean society adhered to a rigid social division of ranks, and the symbolism of flowers reflected this hierarchy. The peony, symbol of wealth and happiness, was reserved for those holding high ranks and were often depicted in paintings. Scholars amongst the elite in Korea deeply appreciated the blooms of apricot trees which appear in early spring despite the lingering cold, as well as the lotus which, while rooted in mud has flowers that attract the attention of people from afar, and the chrysanthemum as the flower for the late autumn until just before the winter begins. Orchids and bamboo symbolize the *Sunbi*, the hermit scholars who retreated in the countryside along with their wisdom. Their straight stems and leaves are meant to reflect the will of *Sunbis* not to submit to secular temptations. The flowers' ethical symbolism was that of tenacity and perseverance, while their transient beauty did not attract the attention of the common people. Multiflora, together with Rugosa roses, were the flowers most loved by those of lower status. As mentioned above these roses were intertwined with emotional



**"Rose with a butterfly" by
Sim Sa-jeong (1707 - 1769)**
© Gansong Museum

expressions related to the daily lives of Koreans, but were never meant to be given too much value or symbolic significance.

Roses used to be called "the flower of a long Spring", and in general refer to Spring, as the prime time of life. A rose also alluded to a beautiful friend, often a woman, and the *Rugosa* roses referred to a woman modestly dressed and with good manners. The now seemingly extinct Four Seasons rose (see below) symbolized a friend possessing classical grace and dignity. Korean scholars also thought of roses as friends whose friendship would endure and stand the test of time. Indeed, for many centuries, there was the practice among scholars of referring to friends in terms of flowers. Gardening was thought of as an act not only of cultivating the mind but also of breeding the habit of doing good to others. Each flower used to carry the name of a friend.

THE EARLIEST LITERARY RECORDS OF THE ROSE

As in China and Japan, the frequency of the rose in Korean literature and art is very low in comparison to Europe and the Near East. But this does not mean that they were totally ignored. According to existent records, roses were known for centuries and were described in poetry and literature. Around the seventh century during the Three Kingdom Period, a Buddhist monk named Seolchong narrated a fable entitled, "A Warning to the Flower King" in which the first mention of roses is found. It is a poetic allegory: "There was a king, portrayed by a peony, ruling the Kingdom of Flowers, who fell in love with a beautiful woman symbolized by the rose. One day, the *pasque* flower, described as a bent-over and old royal retainer, advised him to remember his duty and to stay away from the lady. Warning the king against wanton pleasure, Buddhist asceticism prevailed, exhorting him to return to a morally impeccable life." This story was the first personification of flowers that we know of in Korean literature.

During medieval history, preference for roses and emotional empathy were expressed in poetry. A scholar named Lee Kyu-bo (1168-1241) composed a poem which featured the stamens and prickle of roses euphemistically to refer to human emotions. And there is another poem about the Four Seasons roses which continue blooming into the snow season. By the time of the Joseon Dynasty, roses were linked with daily life, especially in relation to the Four Seasons roses, *Rugosa* roses and how to raise them.



Rose with birds ~ Joseon Dynasty
© Amore Pacific Museum

In paintings of the period, a rose sometimes appears with a butterfly, a deer, and a pine tree. All these aspects refer to the good fortune of long life. It was in the later period of Joseon, in the 18th and 19th centuries, that paintings of roses can be found in great numbers, appearing in folk paintings, folding screens, designs of jewel boxes and on pillows. These roses carried the wishful thinking of good fortune and the birth of many sons which guaranteed the wealth of the family. The rarity of pre-modern roses paintings today can be largely attributed to social disturbances following dynastic change. The Joseon Dynasty continued

for 500 years until its demise was hastened by the colonial rule of Japan, and this meant not only a transfer of power but the tragic end of many cultural legacies. Korea was in danger of losing its cultural identity.

SEASONS AND YELLOW ROSES

I mentioned that one of the roses that was grown on the Korean peninsula was a 'Four Seasons' rose. Long ago, Koreans introduced not only 'Monthly' roses, *Rosa chinensis*, but also the 'Four Seasons' which were repeat-flowering roses, which the literature describes as distinct from the 'Monthly' roses.



Assorted pillows with roses and flowers ~ Hyundai Gallery

The 'Four Seasons' rose is first mentioned in Medieval Korea. It is referred to in 12th century poems. It is said to have bloomed in March, June, September, and December in the lunar calendar, corresponding to April or May, July or August, October or November, and January or February in the solar calendar. The reason for describing it as 'Four Seasons' rose is therefore clear: even the last month of the four seasons sees it blooming regularly. This variety was grown in the garden or in a pot and there were both climbers and shrubs. It was said it grew amid wildflowers and could be often seen dotting the landscape at the entrance to villages and on top of ridges in the south. But the 'Four Seasons' rose no longer exists in Korea. It has not been possible to identify it since we cannot even find it represented in paintings, at least thus far. It is only possible to read its description in literature. Researchers continue trying to establish its identity.

A 'Yellow' rose is also described together with the 'Four Seasons' rose in Korean literature. In the 13th century a poem described yellow roses. There are records of yellow-purple roses in the 13th century and yellow-red rose in the 15th century. These roses were depicted in the embroidery of clothes for musical performance as well as on ritual hats. But the description is not detailed enough for us to identify it at the present time. The reference might have been to *Rosa xanthina*, which is a native Korean wild rose; otherwise, given its possible existence in 10th century China, it may be a cultivar brought from China, but we can only surmise that. This is centuries earlier



Lid of 19th century jewel box with embroidered roses
© Korean Stone Art Museum

than in the Western world where yellow roses were not recorded until the 16th century. It appears that any paintings that might have depicted yellow roses in pre-modern Korea no longer remain.

KOREAN ROSES NOW



**The landscape of roses at the Garden of Roses
© Jeonju Arboretum**

Despite the turbulent and difficult years leading up to the 1960's, the first Rose Society was organized in 1959. This might have been encouraged by several publications of rose bulletins written by and for rose-lovers and the inauguration of the Seoul Rose Society in 1961 which developed into the Korea Rose Society. The Korea Rose Society published newsletters and held rose exhibitions but shortly after the 17th Korea Rose Exhibition in May 1979 the Society folded. In the 1960s', there were still small vegetable gardens with roses grown along the

fences, but the 1970s' brought with it a boom of construction in concrete that covered up more and more of the green spaces, and we were once again in danger of losing our connection to nature as well as our love for roses. Regretfully, little had been done to preserve habitats, with extensive losses as a result. However, there is now a rising public concern for the care of natural habitats, and local governments have begun to voice their concerns to save natural habitats.

Moreover, as economic growth brought forth social and political stability, the demand for space for gardens grew. Motivated by rose lovers who continued to advance research surrounding the rose and its history in our nation, the inauguration of the Korea Rose Society in 2018 was a watershed moment for rose lovers. The growing popularity of roses, not only as a garden plant but also as cut-flowers given as a gift. That comes as no surprise for according to a recent Gallup poll, roses rank as the most popular flower in Korea (32%) followed at a distance by chrysanthemums (6%).



**The oldest rose garden
© Everland Rose Garden**

There are now about twenty well-established large rose gardens throughout the country, but almost all of these contain hybridized roses first bred in the West. This is greatly influenced by the Westernization in Korea. However, as our rose culture matures, there will be more concern for the heritage roses and Korean garden culture. In recent years, some rose gardens took their design concept from Korean traditional gardens, and some roses bred by Korean breeders have elegant fragrance and are known for strong disease resistance as well. We will have a long journey ahead of us to piece together our past knowledge regarding roses, both the cultivated ones as well as the species roses. But as noted earlier, we Korean are known for our tenacity and perseverance.



Silver Award winner 'Garden Everscape' Gifu Int'l Rose Competition. Introduced by Everland Roses

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Koreas' tribute to a founder of the World Federation of Rose Societies

Further information on native roses in Korea is available in English at the “Standard Checklist of Plants in Korea” (<http://www.nature.go.kr/ekpni/SubIndex.do>), which is monitored and check-listed by the Korean Plant Names Index Committee. The Committee classifies plants into native, cultivated and naturalized plants.

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Wook-Kyun Kim writes: “It was after my 50th birthday that I became interested in plants. Every weekend was spent searching for wildflowers... This inspired me to undertake graduate studies on people-plant interaction.... My curiosity led me further, to the aesthetic implications of plants and roses in particular, surprising for their reviving effect on the landscape. My wife and I now manage a nursing home for the elderly, surrounded by greenery and a rose garden. I serve as Chair of Korea Rose Society in addition to my profession in marine and in tourism” Email: wookkyun@gmail.com

MARIA AUERSPERG ATTEMS: PAINTER OF ROSES

By Matjaž Mastnak

At the Arboretum *Volčji Potok* in Slovenia, our staff have been studying the rose cultivars in paintings created between 1840 and 1850 by Maria Auersperg Attems (1816-1880). It is known that the painter and her husband were enthusiastic about gardens and plants and had created their own rose garden. Presumably she painted roses from that very garden, so these paintings should provide information about the roses grown there almost two centuries ago.

Of the unknown number of paintings by Maria Auersperg Attems (1816-1880), there are only eight which have survived in Slovenian public collections. All of them are floral still lifes and the only plant in all of the paintings is the rose. It seems that Maria Auersperg Attems had a penchant for this flower. We know that her husband loved to boast to guests about their impressive rose collection in the Rosarium at "Šrajbarski Turn Castle" near Krško in southeastern Slovenia.

Maria was the daughter of Count Ignaz Attems, the state governor of Styria. She spent her childhood and youth in Graz, Austria and married a man of similar social status, Count Anton Alexander Auersperg (1806–1876), a merger of two grand families who significantly shaped life in Styria and Carniola, which represent historical lands of today's Republic of Slovenia. Hence, her artistic work's relevance and importance for Slovenians.



Maria Auersperg Attems

Overshadowed by her husband's political and literary career, little is known about her personal life. Being a wife was an anonymous position even for a member of the 19th century upper class. Maria's husband, who used the pen name Anastasius Grün, was a poet and liberal politician advocating *Großdeutschland* (Greater Germany). (Possibly, having married into a staunchly conservative family, his previous political edge was rather tamed by his bride, wittingly or not). He wrote poetry in German but as well also spoke Slovene and he was friends with Slovene national poet France Prešeren. Tragically, the couple's only child and heir survived his parents by only a year. Thus, this line of the family was extinguished, and over decades the Auerspergs' gardens fell into ruin and its documentation lost. Maria's paintings remain the only testimony of the country's most famous rose garden in the mid 19th century.

Growing up in a family which had been collecting and commissioning artworks for generations, it is almost certain that Maria Atterns would not have been a painter had she not been born the daughter of a Count, due to which she received proper guidance and training. (Women were not allowed to study at universities and academies at that time.) It is known that Maria received private tutelage from famous Viennese painters. It is possible that Franz Xaver Petter (1791–1866), a Vienna-based still life painter and teacher at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, had an important influence on her.

For female painters, the painting of motifs without human figures was connected to the fact that women were not allowed to paint live (male) models, prompting many of them to focus on still lifes. During the Biedermeier period, in which Maria Auersperg Attems was actively painting, botanical-themed paintings were a flourishing genre. Floral subjects are the most important part of her painting oeuvre. Her intense devotion to this genre shines through from the pieces preserved in Slovenia, photographs of her missing paintings, as well as her other artworks that have sometimes shown up on the international market.



Floral Still Life, 1846 - SAZU



**Detail from the painting
"Flowers", 1840
Nat'l Museum of Slovenia**

Until recently, the artworks of Maria Auersperg Attems had been considered as a solid effort in copying and modelling older still lifes. However, when the professionals at the Arboretum *Volčji Potok* began to examine the painted flowers, it soon became clear that some of the pieces may in fact be botanical illustrations. This made it evident that the painter must have had a keen interest in botany and that she, at least in part, had painted live flowers.



Above: 'Old Blush China'

Below: *Rosa x centifolia*



For the author of this article, it was a really special moment when I observed *Rosa x alba* in the magnified photo of the painting "Roses" and noticed that on the edge of some innermost petals there were really depicted tiny black remnants of anthers. Evolutionarily, petals developed from stamens and this detail in *Rosa x alba* is evidence of it. The artist must have been an excellent observer. Such a detail cannot be copied, and the majority of painters would take it for an impurity or dirt and ignore it. Maria did not. During her training she had to copy works by older masters, but later, as a mature painter, she must have painted roses from her garden and observed them with a sharp eye.

For a rosarian, the most interesting of Maria's painting is simply titled "Roses", painted between 1840 and 1850. There are five cultivars depicted on it, some new and some old. The center position in the bouquet is occupied by a white rose, most probably 'Suaveolens'. It used to be very a common white rose in Central Europe since the Middle Ages because it is winter hardy and so agreeably scented. There is another Alba placed on the table in front of the vase. The flower's form, color and size suggest it is 'Cuisse de Nymphe,' i.e. 'Great Maiden's Blush'. The bluish hue of the leaves, the colour and form of thorns are also typical for an Alba rose.

Between the two Albas, on the left side, there is a red rose. The bright red colour is not an old rose red colour. The white marks in the petals show that *Rosa × chinensis* was among its ancestors. Paying attention to the form of the flower, especially to the inward curving smaller inner petals, and to the position of stamens, the cultivar could be 'Gloire des Rosomanes'. This was a famous rose at the time, grown from 1825 on. The rose was a novelty both in colour and for blooming in flushes throughout the season.

Another interesting rose in the picture is the golden rose. Before 1850, when the painting was made, it was too soon for a dark yellow rose bred from *Rosa × odorata*. It could be the Persian yellow rose (*Rosa foetida* 'Persian Yellow'), which appeared in England in 1837. The sepals, which broaden to leaflets at their end, support that supposition.

The fifth cultivar in the painting is a bright pink rose, represented in three stages its opening, whose forms are typical of a Hybrid Perpetual, such as 'La Reine', bred in 1842. Since Maria and Anton were keen plant collectors, it was feasible that they added this rose to their garden very soon after that. The fully-opened flowers of the supposed 'La Reine' with petals, curved and their edges rolled back, must have fascinated the painter for she featured such a rose bloom in the other paintings as well.



**"Roses" - 1840-1850
Nat'l Gallery of Slovenia**



'Gloire des Rosomanes' in the Rose Garden



Floral Still Life , 1845 - SAZU

In other paintings there are still more rose cultivars. Easy to identify is *Rosa foetida*, *Rosa foetida* 'Bicolor' and *Rosa × centifolia*. A bit more complicated to work out was 'Old Blush'. Altogether, there are nine cultivars identified. While the artist certainly painted many more *tableaux* and far more roses, only these survive. But these cultivars still enable us to conclude that Maria was up-to-date with advancements in horticulture.

Unfortunately, we will never know which other fashionable contemporary roses like 'Gloire des Rosomanes', 'La Reine' and the 'Persian Yellow' might have been grown in the now lost rose gardens at Castle Šrajbarski Turn.

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Main source of information about Maria's life: "A Cross-Section of Landscape, Architecture and Fine Art: Example of Maria Auersperg Attems" 2020 (papers in Slovene, with English summary); www.arboretum.si/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/zbornik.Arboretum-web2.pdf

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LESCHENAUT DE LA TOUR AND HIS ROSE

By Girija Viraraghavan

The upper reaches (over 6,000 feet elevation) of the southern Indian mountain range the Western Ghats, is home to a rose species belonging to the musk rose family, named *Rosa leschenaultiana*, after a French naturalist and ornithologist Jean-Baptiste Leschenault de la Tour. He found this rose species, among other new plant varieties, like a 'Mahonia,' a 'Vaccinium' and many others, all of which have his name attached to them in the forests of the Nilgiri and Palni Mountains of south India in the early 1800's.

Leschenault (1773-1826) was an intrepid botanical adventurer, traveling with Nicolas Baudin on his sea voyage to Australia (1800-1803), then to Java and other parts of Malaysia, India and Ceylon, and later to South America. While many plant species were discovered by him on his travels, the entire plant genus of *Leschenaultia* of Australia comprises a range of beautiful shrubs with flowers in incomparable shades of blue. They can be seen in all their glory in the Botanic Garden, outside Perth in Western Australia.

Born in Chalon-sur-Saône in France, the son of a judge, his botanical interests took him all around the world. He married Marguerite Bonin in April 19, 1796. (His wedding certificate was found by Dominique Massad in his researches.) He collected plant and bird specimens in every country visited and sent them back to Paris. His herbarium specimens and some of his documents are housed in the National Herbarium, while other manuscripts are with the Library of the Natural History Museum, in Paris. While he was researching plants in French Guyana in South America, ill health forced him to return to France, where he died in his own home. He and his wife seem to have been childless.

He came to India in 1816 with the title of "inquisitor rerum naturae" and was made Director of the botanic garden "Jardin Royal de Pondichéry" in what was then a French territory. However, he was given permission by the British in Fort St George, Madras (now Chennai) to travel into the areas under their governance in order to make botanical collections. He is said to have sent seeds and plant material to the French Island of Reunion, in the Indian Ocean. He also sent material of the rose species he found in the hills to the botanist Claude Antoine Thory in France, who named it *Rosa leschenaultiana*. The great painter Pierre-Joseph Redouté included this rose in his seminal book



Jean-Baptiste
Leschnault de la Tour



His tombstone at the
Père-Lachaise cemetery ~ Paris

“Les Roses,” making his illustration of the rose from Leschenault’s herbarium specimens. Leschenault remained in India as an active botanist until 1822, and he never returned.



**Above: An early drawing of
Rosa leschenaultiana**

**Below: Pierre-Joseph Redouté
painting of the rose**



Ellen Willmott in “Genus Rosa” writes that *R. leschenaultiana* has often been called the South Indian form of *Rosa moschata* ‘Mill’, but we believe it is a perfectly good and distinct species. It is closely related to the South European *Rosa sempervirens*, thereby referring to its evergreen character. Its leaflets are 5 to 7 together, elliptic and oblong, 1.5 to 2.5 inches across, numerous, in large corymbs, the buds very acute, the fruits globose. It was considered a “geographical form” being more robust, with larger flowers and with very glandular leaf petioles, pedicels and calyx. The modern view, however, is different as it is considered to be a part of the musk rose complex (*synstylae*). It is now called *Rosa leschenaultiana*, ‘Wight and Arnot’. (Robert Wight also discovered it in 1836 in the same Nilgiri and Palni Mountains). Earlier its nomenclature was either *R. sempervirens* var ‘Leschenaultiana Thory’ (in Redouté, ‘Les Roses’, 1824) or *R. moschata* var. ‘Leschenaultiana Rehder’ (in Bailey 1902).

The distinctive feature of this straggling, climbing rose is its violet and purple stems. It was once very luxuriant and common in the forests, festooning native “shola” trees to a height of 60 to 70 feet with long trails of single pure white flowers, which are faintly fragrant. With the onset of development throughout the area, it is increasingly rare to find. In the Centenary Rose Garden in Ootacamund (now called Uthagamandalam), the capital town of the district of the Nilgiris, the hedges on either side of the wide entrance steps are of this rose species, commonly called the “Ooty Rose”.

In the region where we live, the Palni Hills, a sister mountain to the Nilgiris (both are a part of the Western Ghats) and where the rose grows in the inner vastness of the forests, we have found it in a location by the side of a road leading to an interior hill village, making it easy to take rose enthusiasts to see this special rose species



Close-up photograph of *Rosa leschenaultiana*

growing in the wild. We also have a plant growing in our garden, clambering over our back verandah.

My husband Viru has hybridized with this species, and he has named and registered a seedling, a cross between 'Rêve d'Or' and *Rosa leschenaultiana* as 'Leschenault de la Tour' to honor and memorialize the Frenchman who traversed our hills in the early 1800's. It seemed singularly appropriate that this rose is doubly French, with 'Reve d'Or,' one of the best known of French roses as the seed parent, and *Rosa leschenaultiana* as the pollen parent.



'Leschenault de la Tour'

The new rose hybrid is virtually a larger version of that famous white Noisette, 'Lamarque', again French. It bears beautiful globular, white flowers, displaying an exquisite medley of petals, illuminated by the light gold of the center, wafting a soft fragrance, and happily it is remontant. This climbing rose has elegant light green foliage and climbs easily 3 to 4 meters. In our opinion, it is a fitting tribute to the sadly brief, but prodigiously rewarding life of this plant explorer. But what a life! A brief but brilliant meteor flashing across the star-lit skies of India, Australia and the West Indies.

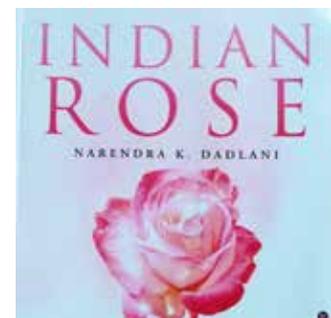
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Girija and Viru Viraraghavan are famed world-wide among rosarians for their extraordinary rose collection and the extensive gardens at their home in Kodaikanal, a hill station in the mountains of Tamil Nadu state in southern India. They have held almost every elected position in the India rose world, and both write extensively for international rose journals, including earlier issues of BAON. This was first published in the "Indian Rose Annual" and in the bilingual rose bulletin of "Roses Anciennes en France" both in 2016, and, finally, here in BAON somewhat revised. Their email is: veerugij9517@gmail.com

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INDIAN ROSE: ISBN 978-1-63806-523-4

To read more about the fabulous variety of this great country's roses, with more than 1,400 identified varieties, there is a new and beautifully-illustrated book "INDIAN ROSE," by Professor Narendra K. Dadlani, published in 2021 and distributed by Notion Press, No. 8, 3rd Cross Street, CIT Colony, Mylapore, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600004. This marvelous reference work in paperback is profusely-illustrated with colored-photographs. While possibly available soon on Amazon IN., it is sold and can be mailed internationally by the publishers Notion Press. Well worth the effort! Reviewed by Alan and Nimet



WHY HERITAGE ROSES ?

By Dominique Massad

Simply because without heritage roses none of our modern roses would exist. As the great Italian rosarian Domenico Aicardi wrote in his 1951 *Le rose moderne coltivate ed allevate da amatori, floricoltori seminatori*, "It is a true sin that a such valuable heritage is being lost while it would not be difficult to preserve it by using them in methodical modern crosses." While he was referring to climbing Teas, the same could be applied to all so-called heritage roses, indeed to all species roses found in nature and all roses bred by mankind since the advent of gardening.

SPECIES ROSES

As with many other cultivated plants, mankind found in nature the characteristics that they wished to integrate into the roses in their gardens, and they then travelled the world to bring back samples which were slowly and painstakingly bred into the genetic heritage of our roses today. In nature, the genus *Rosa* counts around 140 species of which only around 30 have been used so far to breed cultivated varieties, and only around 10 have been used in creating the most commonly-found roses in gardens today.

Some species roses were founders of great lineages, other were hardly used to hybridize and others have yet to be discovered. The importance and the history of some, such as *R. chinensis*, *R. multiflora*, *R. moschata*, *R. luciae* and *R. spinosissima* and more recently *R. persica* are well-known. But there remain numerous species which have only rarely been used in breeding programs yet which might be the genetic sources for much desired traits such as higher disease resistance or drought tolerance. For instance, consider:

- *Rosa glauca* for its glaucous purple stems and foliage,
- *Rosa arvensis* for its perennial and healthy foliage,
- *Rosa macrophylla* and *Rosa moyesii* for their stunning hips,
- *Rosa roxburghii* for its peeling bark and (spiny fruit) hips,
- *Rosa laevigata*, for its large simple white blooms which are perfectly set off by the dark green, crisp and polished foliage,
- *Rosa banksiae*'s resistance to drought,
- and *Rosa cymosa* whose lovely young foliage is light mahogany red and luscious.

And that is without yet investigating the newer species only recently discovered nor speculating on those which are yet to be found.

To cite an example, I brought back from China a few years ago a hybrid new to me which shows great potential. It is a previously unknown-in-the-West *Rosa banksiae* with pink flowers. For years I had been trying to cross the white *Rosa banksiae* with other white or yellow rose species and hybrids in the hope of obtaining a pink *Banksiae* but without success. All of my efforts had been disappointing. However, now with the introduction of this newly found pink hybrid my hopes and efforts are rekindled.



Rosa banksiae hybrid with pink flowers

ROSES CREATED BY HUMANS

For millennia mankind has used roses to decorate our gardens. The first would have probably been natural variants or hybrids, but with time we would have favored using new varieties. As early as the XVIII century in Europe, the gardener could try controlling the crosses by planting the roses whose traits he wished to combine next to each other in the hope that the seedlings would be interesting. So how is one to define a heritage rose from among the multitude that exist today? (In 1845, when Jean Baptiste Guillot père, one of my ancestors, deeply regretted the loss of old roses, he was referring to the Gallica roses which had been abandoned in favor of the newly fashionable Bourbons, Noisettes and others which were coming out of China.)

Some would define old or heritage roses as anything created prior to First World War (1914), whereas for others the date of introduction of the rose 'La France' in 1867 defines the first modern rose. But neither date seems satisfactory and there are a number among us who feel that a rose becomes a heritage rose after 35 or 50 years which corresponds to a human generation.

For me, I use the term "Roses à l'ancienne" for roses that appear to be "old-fashioned" which means those whose characteristics are different from Hybrid Teas with turbate buds, a shape favored from the end of Second World War and lasting until the 1970's. During this period most the roses were practically identical, varying only in the color of the blooms. This is in stark contrast to what are referred to as "old roses" whose diversity of plant shape, height and shape of bloom, number of petals or perfume is immense. It is this very diversity which interests us today and a great number of these traits could be integrated into our current breeding programs.



'Jenny Duval'

Some features have already been but many possibilities still remain. For example, the color of certain Gallica roses, 'Jenny Duval' (mid 18th century) or 'Cardinal de Richelieu' (Laffay 1840) or that of 'Roger Lambelin', (Hybrid Perpetual, Schwartz 1890) with interesting petal edges and unique variegation both on the petal as well as on their margins



'Cardinal de Richelieu'

or the shape of 'Köenigin von Dänemark' (Alba, Booth 1826) which opens in quarters. As for foliage, the color of *Rosa glauca*, the texture of *Rosa rugosa* and the bristles on the stems and calyx of *Rosa centifolia muscosa* remain to be explored.

Integrating features from species or old roses into modern ones is both complicated and long but the work done by David Austin in order to create the class now called "English roses" or the new roses that have been obtained through the use of *Rosa persica* by several breeders shows that with patience and tenacity, it is possible.

MY OWN ROSE BREEDING PROGRAM



'Marseille en fleurs'



'Tendre émotion'

The changing color of blooms as they open, a feature which was considered as a fault in the 20th century were the very same traits appreciated in the 19th century Tea roses and in the Chinas, an appreciation that I have tried to incorporate as a feature in many of my own roses. The quest began with a variety of Polyantha rose which I acquired in 1985 from a Dutch plant catalogue and which was misnamed 'Destiny', a hardy plant with pale yellow blooms, margined with pink. As the flower ages, the pink becomes dominant. To reinforce this trait I did crosses with the Tea Noisette 'Rêve d'or' (Ducher 1869) and with the China 'Comtesse du Cayla' (Guillot 1902), both of whose colors vary according to the temperature. From among the many descendants obtained, those showing these traits the most were continued to be used. Actually, several of those I obtained have flower buds that are yellow but which turn either red or pink as they open. Some have been put on the market, such as 'Monique Lestournelle', 'Marseille en fleurs' or 'Rosomane Janon' whereas others such as 'Tendre émotion' are still being tested.

In nature there are roses which reach huge proportions and that we have named "Ramblers". Among the species, *Rosa gigantea* or *Rosa filipes* are but two and for the most part are found in China. They have been used by many breeders and many varieties are often found in gardens today. But they often only bloom once a season and their colors do not vary greatly; the flowers tend to be small and lacking in scent.



'Parc de Maupassant'

Along with other breeders, I am attempting to improve and innovate Ramblers. Starting from a seed of *Rosa filipes* obtained from the Beijing Botanical Garden, I singled out the seedling which flowered the best. It was then crossed with Chinas such as 'Sanguinea', 'Mme Laurette Messimy' (Guillot fils, 1887) as well as 'Rosina', a hybrid of *Rosa wichuraiana* which had been sold as 'Le Vésuve'. The desired traits have been achieved after more than 25 years of trials: 'Gunsho' and 'Eridion' for color, 'Parc de Maupassant' and 'Château de la Mothe Chandenières' for their scent, 'Château de Guillerval' for the size of the blooms, and the reblooming traits found in 'Rose delacroix', 'Belle de Sardaigne' and 'Rêve de Mireille'.





'Christian Têtedoie'



'Jef l'artiste'



'Thibault Nicoloff'



'Apolline'

* * *

*Dominique Massad is one of France's pre-eminent creators of new roses as well as a writer on the histories of some of the great French rose-breeding dynasties. Retired as director of Green Spaces for the city of Marseilles, he is now devoted fulltime to developing new roses. He first contributed to BAON in our second issue #13 in December 2015. Some of his recent roses can be seen on the commercial site: petales-de-roses.com
His personal email is: dmassad@free.fr*



'Gil'

A ROSE GARDEN FOR OUR ANCESTORS

By Murray Radka



View from upstairs balcony

Spring arrived in Central Otago one day in August. Appearing by stealth, the harbingers could be felt in the air, heard with hope in the bird song and seen in a subtle, new bloom on the earth and on the trees, reminiscent of the bloom on a woman close to her time. We awoke to a frost and at first it seemed that nothing had changed but in fact everything had changed and the woodlands confirmed it with signs everywhere of burgeoning life reinforced with the first scent of violets as the day warmed.

I can think of nothing in the garden to match the feelings of optimism and joy that arrive with the spring and the anticipation of the flowers of spring.

Only those who live with four seasons can fully appreciate the emotion experienced with the first signs of earth's awakening after a time of barren contemplation when the physical world has passed into the deep sleep of winter so that grasses brown, plants disappear, evergreens take on a leaden hue and the skeletal remains of deciduous trees, shrubs and roses are all we have to remind us of what was and what we hope will be again. It is a stark reality, but I can imagine no inducement that could entice me to live anywhere that does not highlight and showcase the miracle of the seasons and I have found nowhere else that does it as beautifully and dramatically as nature does it here.



Brandy Hill in June 2007 and in November 2014

Far from being monotonous, no two winter days are ever the same with some blue skies and sunny until a mist creeps down the hills and through the garden enveloping the trees in a mysterious, ghostly silence. In a good year we may enjoy a fall of snow for a few days that paints our landscape white and brings every shape and form into sharper focus; even better, the stillness may encourage a hoar frost that bedecks trees, shrubs and roses with delicate, crystal blossoms creating, for

just a short time, a sparkling fantastical world. The most powerful impression throughout it all is the lasting silence and calm, free from driving rain or howling wind.

About this time a friend from the north posted photographs of stunning carpets of daffodils in her garden that were in their prime while I had nothing to show except a patch of reticulata iris, some carpets of crocus, primroses and clumps of miniature snow drops. I didn't envy her early season but she envies our ability to grow lilacs and peonies, violet blue scillas, icy blue pushkinias, miniature, sky blue, pink and white muscari, china blue chionodoxa, pulmonarias, delicate fritillaries, dogs tooth violets in pink, white and yellow, winter roses, woodland anemones and exotic trilliums. These, along with a multitude of spring blossoms and spring perennials extend our season for months. My friend has said she lusts to grow such plants but accepts it is too warm where she lives. Passionate words indeed and satisfying to hear of northern lust for what we in the south take for granted.



**"Valance
Cottage Rose"**

Along with anticipation, the arrival of spring brought a warning that any planned rose shifting needed to be completed as soon as possible and I had dallied too long in creating a garden of pure historical whimsy, a rose garden containing only roses brought to New Zealand by our ancestors and most of them family roses whose true identities are unknown.



**"The Braeside Rose"
*R. hemesphaerica
flora plena***

The temperament of the historian is, of necessity, sentimental especially if his interest lies with people as much as with events. Depending upon your point of view this may be seen as a blessing or a curse. My family is in the latter camp. For years I have collected old roses from cemeteries, abandoned gardens, road sides and families throughout New Zealand. Many of these have wonderful, sad and romantic stories that I hope to write into a booklet one day to enhance this garden. A growing number of our members across the country have joined the quest and, like me, see it is a privilege to conserve and continue to grow our ancestors' roses.



"The Birdgrove Rose"



"The Rangiora Rose"



**"The Cromwell
Rose"**



"Pessione Rose"

The site was readied in August and I began planting the Goldfields Roses, a group of ten roses saved by Central Otago's own Joy Chapman at the time that Lake Dunstan filled. I once had the privilege of interviewing Joy and heard a story of such courage



"Ida Valley" Rose



The garden in November 2014



The garden in November 2017



A section containing Alba roses

and determination; of a woman in her senior years defying Prime Minister Muldoon's 'Think Big' madness to scarp down steep inclines as the lake waters rose, to take cuttings from roses around miners' ruins that would soon be drowned. Son Lloyd placed ten of her roses into a collection and with names like 'The 'Lowburn Rose' and 'Chinatown Moss' I couldn't resist buying them all. They have struggled, neglected, for years in the vegetable garden but now, transferred to their new home, I indulged nostalgia and imagined the people who treasured these roses enough to bring them to a new world. How did they keep the cuttings alive on the journey? Some say they poked them into potatoes. What hardships did they endure? How precious the flowers as a reminder of home and a symbol of beauty in a harsh, lonely landscape. Holding these plants gives me a tangible connection to the people who brought them here and it will be a special moment when I behold the first blooms and imagine another person in another time gazing at and relishing the same bloom.

Our old Central Otago roses have another champion now in Anne Speight who, smitten with the bug, scours the countryside for ancient bushes on ancient sites and has already supplied me with many rooted cuttings of varieties that shall be added to the Goldfields Collection.

I stood on Brandy Hill at twilight and gazed north towards Leaning Rock, her Māori name, 'Haehaeata', meaning she who is first to see the dawn. Below me lay the garden; roses preparing themselves for their moment in the sun, a flowering apricot's dusky pink shadow adorning the house whose lights twinkled in the gloom, and the

woodland seething with activity as bulbs and dormant plants push their way through the leaf litter. To my left, the sun is about to surrender the light as he sinks behind Kopuwai; to my right, the silent moon's great golden globe claims the night. Like star crossed lovers these constant companions of our lives meet briefly just at dawn and at twilight. I am alone but not lonely and although touched a little by the melancholy of day's end reflect with pleasure on the new garden and think again of the people it honours.



View towards Kopuwai from the Scots Garden - Brandy Hill

They too stood in the twilight long ago watching the same southern moon light their world. Did it remind them of home I wonder? Were they homesick? Their lives were so hard and I feel grateful to them for their roses and for their struggle and strength that have allowed me to live in this place. It brings pleasure to remember that across the country our members are saving our early settlers' roses and although I do not always know the names of the people who sacrificed so much to bring them here this rose garden is my memoriam to them.

* * *

Murray Radka is a "Kiwi", dedicated to and in love with New Zealand, of Maori descent, a former high school history teacher and guidance counsellor. For almost fifty years his wife Noeleen and Murray have lived in a house they built on a hill (once barren, now wooded) in Central Otago on the South Island. There they created what is now the largest collection of heritage roses in the country. In the past ten years with a small group of volunteers, they have registered and rescued more than 300 heritage rose varieties. All the photographs were taken by the author, © copyrighted. His email is: murrayradka@gmail.com



Another June arrives....

CONSERVATION & HERITAGE COMMITTEE

Some Trends and Topics

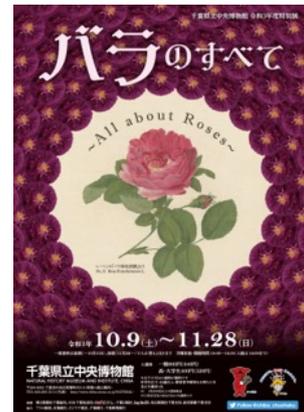
By Chairman Brigid Quest-Ritson

September 2021

Nimet Monasterly-Gilbert and Alan Gilbert have edited BAON since July 2015 – for more than half its existence. This is the last issue that they will edit. Over these six years they have provided rosarians with a varied diet of interest: articles of historic, heritage, conservation and scientific interest and entertainment. They have worked hard to do so, giving generously of their time, knowledge and enthusiasm. I want to thank them on behalf of the WFRS Conservation and Heritage Committee as well as personally for all that they have done. They will be missed.

Finding a successor has not proved easy. Both I, and other members of the WFRS, have approached a number of ‘possible’ future editors over the past eighteen months, but without success until recently. I hope to have more details in the near future. Delegates from around the world report that it is difficult to find volunteers to help run their groups and societies. Although the activities offered are popular, making a commitment to help is not.

In BAON 23 I expressed the hope that visiting gardens and meeting fellow rosarians would be possible in 2021 and 2022. Further waves of Covid-19 - mainly the Delta variant - have prevented international gatherings. Some visits and zoom lectures have taken place at a national level in the Northern Hemisphere. The exhibition planned and curated by Yuki Mikanagi at Chiba Museum near Tokyo in Japan will still take place next month. Visits are planned in the Southern Hemisphere too, along with more distanced activities such as photographic competitions.



The number of heritage roses available in commerce continues to decline. I noted this last March and continue to receive reports saying that fewer cultivars are available from nurseries. This is a worrying trend. Fortunately, exceptions exist. There are still some nurseries across the world that have wide ranging lists of old and rare roses. Over the coming months I shall write to Committee delegates asking them to note the number and range of heritage rose cultivars in commerce in their respective countries.

But buying roses from other countries is fraught with difficulty - and frequently made impossible by import restrictions. Nevertheless, it can be done: Rafael Maino, the Argentine delegate to the Committee, was asked in 2020 to design a garden showing the development of the rose. A large number of the roses he planted were dispatched from France by the Loubert nursery, which still lists more than 2,000 cultivars.

There are still good gardens to visit with old roses, even though it is becoming harder to buy them to grow ourselves. Such gardens are to be valued, though they too have had their problems. All have suffered from the pandemic in various ways. Fewer visitors has meant less income. This, in turn, has affected staffing levels and standards of maintenance. In some cases, where gardens are in public ownership, funds have been diverted for purposes considered of higher priority. Several important private gardens have also suffered from lack of income, and the death of the owner may result in the loss of the collection.

If we are serious about conserving the history and memories that heritage roses represent, we should visit those gardens that continue to grow them, buy them from those nurseries that still stock them and keep them for future rosarians to learn about and enjoy. Fortunately, many of us still do so. I have had reports of roses in endangered public and private collections that have been propagated and grown on in other public and private gardens. Similarly, I hear of special sales when cultivars are dropped from nursery lists that enable new growers to conserve them and keep them in cultivation. And, even during the pandemic, new gardens everywhere continue to be developed. Rosarians have much for which to be grateful.

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Brigid Quest-Ritson welcomes comment from readers on any issues related to heritage roses and conservation efforts. Her email is: questritson@aol.com