

The Rose Times

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

SUMMER 2023

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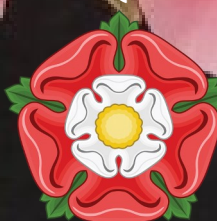
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We should always remember
Dean Samuel Hole's words ...

"He who would grow
beautiful Roses must have
them in his heart"

The Rose Society UK - Summer 2023

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF



THE
ROSE
SOCIETY UK

[GO BACK TO INDEX](#)



Our front cover rose this time is England's Heroes
A bright pink floribunda bred by Bob Webster and introduced in United Kingdom by [R.V. Roger Ltd.](#) in 2014.
England's Heroes is a superb garden rose and has also done well (particularly this year - see page 34) at the society's amateur rose shows winning prize cards at Malvern, Shepperton and Pelsall. This is a truly 'all purpose' rose

From the Secretary

The summer draws to an inevitable end as we wave goodbye to August. But what a summer it's been!

Everyone in the UK was expecting another year like 2022 when we were bathed and baked in the hottest summer that many of us can remember. Our roses last year suffered in the drought that was our summer and many of us were planning new measures to keep our roses well watered for this year's certain drought!

Well for us, our council, who are the landlord for our allotments had other plans and issued instructions that watering systems would not be allowed and my detailed plans for a summer full of spectacular blooms was scuppered.

As we now know, forecasts of desert-like conditions were wide of the mark and we in the UK returned to a damper scenario. Of course, as rose growers (and gardeners in general) we are never happy with whatever weather we receive. For us in the East of the country (the far East as I'm known to call it) we are quite used to drier conditions and we are also quite used to extreme winds. This year has been different. In early June I could be spotted on the allotments, wrapped up with a couple of sweatshirts, a body warmer and (yes I know, I'm a southern softy) even a bobble hat (beany hat for our over-seas members). A chance here for a blatant plug; beany hats and baseball caps bearing our distinctive Tudor rose logo are now available to purchase.

As we all looked at our rose beds hardly showing any colour in early June, we feared that our show season would be a very late starter but no. The weather changed as if someone had turned on a switch and some lovely hot June days produced a fantastic display of roses for our main show of the year at Squires Garden Centre in Shepperton and, as everyone who attended will agree; it was the best show for many years. Derek Lawrence was clicking away and some of his photos will appear later in this edition.

Of course the society is not just about showing; this year has been a busy one with all kinds of rose events which we'll share later; the WFRS Conference in Brussels; the Rose



Monograph in Winchester, Mottisfont and Hinton Ampner run for and by the National Trust; the Belfast rose trials; the Rochford International rose trials; a wonderful weekend of roses at Whartons Roses and Peter Beales Roses in Norfolk. It's a big list and personally I was absolutely delighted to meet 'face-to-face' so many of our lovely members. There were other shows to attend of course; R V Rogers held their annual summer rose festival, the Rhondda Rose Society may be small in numbers but still have amongst their members some of the country's best amateur rose growers. We went to Windsor Show and rubbed shoulders with (well almost) the Duchess of Edinburgh. We went to Sandringham Show where the new King was guest of honour. Pelsall Rose Show may not have had blue blooded Royalty but there was Rose-Royalty in abundance as we staged our 'Little Rose Show'. There were plenty of roses, plenty of cream scones and a pleasant friendly atmosphere where the main purpose was to mix, talk roses, share experiences and have a good old rosy day out!

As I write these opening words I never really know what will fill the coming pages, but, if there is room (there's always room), we will share some images of all the summer events. If you didn't make any this year, please consider trying to get to one or two next year. We may not be the biggest of the specialist societies but I'm fairly sure that we are one of the friendliest!

We do have some sad news to relate; our dear friend Bob Mercer passed away in August. I'm sure many of you will have met Bob at some point along his rosy story. He joined the Rose Society UK when we first formed and was so keen to spread and share his love of



*Bob on our stand at Chorley Show
when Carol Kline visited*

roses to everyone. He was an active participant and organiser of the BIRS rose shows at Rogers and Carnforth even though his health had been failing for a number of years. Like us Bob loved California and lived in San Diego with his wife Gladys until her health caused them to move back to Wigan where sadly, she passed away.

Bob was a joker and always the life and soul of any gathering. He was an avid collector of vinyl records and also a model railway enthusiast and had a track layout at his house.

Larger than life, generous and funny. He will be sadly missed by everyone who knew him.

Finally, another apology, this newsletter is late (again) but hopefully reflects a busy summertime (and of course, you can't report on something until it's finished!) which for us has been all the better for meeting up with so many of our members.

Ray Martin

The Chairman's Rosy Ramblings

The summer seems to have flown by so quickly as I write these notes in early September.

I guess in common with most rose gardeners, when the temperatures soared in the long hot June weather, it brought my roses into full and early bloom. I had a blaze of colour during the whole month with many of my Climbers and Ramblers flowered out by the end of June. There's no doubt now about the changing weather patterns we are experiencing! In July it was a month of fluctuating temperatures with more spells of rain than usual. This encouraged a spurt of growth on my roses which had received an application of Fish Blood and Bone fertilizer at the end of June.

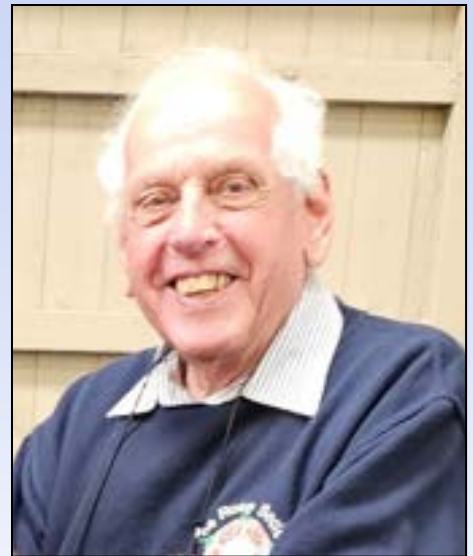
The indifferent weather conditions continued into August; the month that Black Spot disease really becomes a problem. I don't use or have access to the harsh chemical sprays of my former exhibiting days, most of which have now been withdrawn. During August Black Spot developed on many of my varieties particularly some of the recognised exhibition HT varieties which I still grow, and these became defoliated.

I now use Uncle Toms Rose Tonic with an added half strength liquid High Potash fertilizer as part of my spray programme which has sadly been unable to protect the older vulnerable varieties this year. I must however admit I did add a retail fungus fighter spray during late August to assist the new growth on my defoliated bushes and it remains to be seen if this helps to protect the new growth.

The lesson to be learned from my experience this year is that I should grow modern, healthier varieties. Sadly, most of my older show bench varieties are not in this category!!

Having grown roses in my garden for over forty five years and replanting several times during that period, replanting in the same spot has become a problem. Over the years most of the growing area has been used more than once. The once accepted method of changing the soil is impractical for me because of the number of roses I've grown.

The method I now apply is to lift and remove all the failing bushes in early autumn about now in fact (September) and leave the ground fallow for about six weeks until November. At this time a liberal amount of well-rotted compost is spread over the replant area and dug in and left until the new replacement roses are available. The planting hole is then dug in the usual manner and the new rose planted adding Mycorrhizae to roots. This method has been successful for me and has proved I can grow roses successfully in the same



ground.

The pictures show two beds where this method was employed last November, and the bushes have successfully established. They have grown and flowered well, look healthy and are now about to give a good second flush. I should add here these roses have only received the spraying described above.

I have really enjoyed the Society Summer



Plenty of bloom on these new bushes of Lucky



The new Lucky plants now have plenty of Autumnal growth

programme and must thank all who in anyway organised the events

We held our Great Summer Rose Show at Squires Garden Centre at Shepperton in June which was a huge success with twenty exhibitors staging over three hundred entries. It was reminiscent of a few years ago seeing that large marquee filled with so many roses and maybe with a little help from the sunny June we experienced! A great credit to all who took part.

My best memory of the summer though will be the Society Weekender visit to Whartons where we given a warm welcome by the Wharton family. We were given a detailed look at the facilities for their rose preparation and distribution. This was

followed by a guided tour of the rose fields containing 1.5 million new roses, an amazing sight! After an excellent lunch, the day was rounded off with several excellent talks. Thanks to Jo Davey for organizing the event

The weekend then rounded off on Sunday with a visit to Peter Beales Nursery. It will be unlikely to top this as my outstanding rose event of the year

Now as late summer advances I'm looking forward to meeting up with members on our Society stand at Malvern Autumn Show later in the month.

Happy Rose growing

John Anthony



**Derek Lawrence, Executive Director of the
World Federation of Rose Societies and
Rose Society UK Committee member**

Reports on his WFRS Convention Trip

DOWN UNDER

PART TWO

One experience which will forever resonate, was taking a gentle stroll around Adelaide's Grundy Gardens. The gardens which nestle beside the River Torrens are remarkably British in design and influence, with landscaped terraces of fine herbaceous borders and trees, as well as intricate stone walling on staircases that are adorned by Victorian ornamental lamps and columns. I felt that I was walking through park land on the outskirts of London. However, the reality of the situation was confirmed by the raucous sound of sub-tropical birdsong from foraging brightly coloured parakeets, Australian magpies and noisy miners. Although Australia is a unique country, it has a long-established reputation of being the second most English country in the world. Wherever you go in Adelaide, you can see clear symbols of British heritage. This was apparent on a visit to the Magnolias; a fine elegant property built by the owners, Peter and Rebecca Kennedy, over a ten year period. The couple inherited a large lake when they purchased the land, and they initiated a plan to create a traditional English garden. Stepping into their garden was like being in suburban Surrey and testimony of their diligent efforts. We discovered finely clipped box hedges,

ornate water features and a rather enchanting Japanese garden. The owners even served us with cups of tea and delicious English scones! Not many roses – I hasten to add. However, any disappoint immediately dissolved when delegates visited the remarkable rose garden that was created in the 1990's by Kelvin and Melanie Trimper. I've known



Kelvin and Melanie Trimper's Garden

Kelvin and Melanie for a number of years, and was excited by the prospect of finally visiting their garden.

Located in the quiet suburb of Greenwith on the outskirts of the City, the one acre garden is filled with more than 2,000 roses; contains over 40 fruit trees, extensive companion plantings, and the overall design is complimented by fine manicured lush green lawns. The couple have an immense affinity for varieties created by the wizardry of David Austin, with



Brilliant Pink Iceberg

such beauties as 'Gertrude Jekyll', 'Leander', 'The Pilgrim' and 'Lady of Shalott' and



Marilyn Monroe

'Munstead Wood' on display. Other noteworthy cultivars to be enjoyed are: 'Brilliant Pink Iceberg', 'Butterfly Kisses', 'Marilyn Monroe' and 'Tequila Sunrise'

"I've always loved all kinds of plants, both native and exotics", explains Kelvin "but particularly roses". He admires the many qualities of the genus *rosa*; the diversified colours, blends and deep fragrances.

"Roses symbolise friendship, love and peace and are integral to our culture".

Kelvin has been very proactive in the rose

world. He is a Past President of the National Rose Society of Australia, the Rose Society of South Australia and the World Federation of Rose Societies. Melanie's passion for roses began in the 1970's, as a teenager. She said, "My mother established a rose garden in the 1960's, choosing Hybrid Teas. If I wanted to talk to her, I needed to go out where she was dead-heading, watering or admiring the display. Invariably, the conversation would turn to a discussion on roses, and this is where my education began!" Reflecting on her busy lifestyle she added, "For us, growing roses is a family affair. I have many fond memories of our children playing and working in the garden. Certainly, there has been significant work involved in maintaining a large collection of roses, but it's our absolute passion". Over the years, Melanie has become an ardent photographer. "To get quality rose photos usually



Over 2000 roses grow in the Trimper's one acre garden

try to achieve depth of field in my photos". As I took a number of images for 'The Rose Times' which I hope will meet with Melanie's approval. During the tour of the garden, the Trimper's reflected on the changing Australian climate. They've endured extreme drought conditions where mulching the beds to encourage water retention has become essential, but also experienced acute wet weather conditions. A terrible hail storm, last spring, severely damaged their property and garden. Like many other countries, Australia is very concerned about the increasing effects of global warming.

The result of the harsh hot conditions, which in recent years has blighted this magnificent country, was evident by the vast swathes of natural habitats that have been destroyed by bush fires in remote parts of the surrounding countryside. Forestry and wildlife have been subsequently lost. It was heart-warming to pay a visit to the Cleland Wildlife Park, where the team of dedicated zoologists have commenced a fundamental long-term programme to conserve such native species as koalas, kangaroos, wallabies and wombats for future generations.

Being Executive Director of the WFRS for the past eight years has made me realise that Australia has many dedicated rosarians who are intent on filling up the country's

takes a little bit of planning. For me the most important elements are natural lighting and the quality of the rose to be photographed," she revealed. "I prefer to take rose photographs in the morning or in overcast conditions to try to avoid distracting shadows on the petals. Sometimes visiting a garden it's very sunny and its unavoidable. I also prefer using sharp focus and wandered around this rose oasis, I



Derek meets one of the natives

(Derek is on the left)



A show class where roses are used to decorate a cake

exhibitors. I was very interested to see the concept of using roses as cake decorations, and also to incorporate the use of circular tables to highlight some exhibits. Maybe we could consider these ideas for our UK shows? I was conscious that many Hybrid Teas were exhibited in bowls, vases or picture frames. David Austin's English blooms were favourably represented in the displays. The gorgeous Convention rose, 'Australian Beauty' was named by conducting an international competition to find a befitting



A miniature arrangement in a picture frame



Hybrid Teas at the Australian Nation Show

name. It was launched in grand style at the show. Like many British rose shows, the event was a true celebration of the rose with social activities such as talks taking place and an award presentation that culminated with a splendid afternoon tea, served with delectable cakes! Honoured guests at the show were his Excellency, David Hurley, Governor-General to Australia and his lovely wife, Linda



Australian National Rose Show in Adelaide

who, on behalf of His Majesty, King Charles III, are the official representatives of the British Royal family in Australia. Mrs. Hurley is a keen gardener and a rose fanatic. We spent most of the afternoon engaged in active and lively discussion about the 'Queen of all Flowers'.

One of the abiding memories of visiting Adelaide is the genuine camaraderie and friendship given unreservedly by rosarians, whose devotion and sheer passion is apparent when visiting those wonderful rose gardens. The species may not be an indigenous plant, but the Australian people have truly embraced the rose. Despite the continued increasing effects of global warming, rosarians will learn to cope and deal with future challenges. I am quietly confident that the rosy obsession experienced 'down under' will continue for many centuries to come.



The WFRS Adelaide Convention Rose

Australian Beauty

Derek Lawrence

007 



National Trust Rose Monograph

What, you may ask, is a Rose Monograph? To be honest that was my first reaction, but soon found out after talking to the Trust's Mike Beeston, that it was part of a new initiative spearheaded by Andy Jasper, Director of Gardens and Parklands. Each year the NT run a workshop for their gardening staff to improve their knowledge and understanding of some of the many genus of plants that they care for in the NT gardens. Last year it was narcissus, next year it will be rhododendron and azalea. This year it was the rose.

The monograph included a programme of speakers and workshops covering many topics; visits to nearby NT gardens, Mottisfont and Hinton Ampner; and a rose show for some friendly rivalry between the NT gardens.

The Rose Society UK were asked, as the National society for all things rose, to get involved. We were able to advise them about classes that they could include in their show by writing a schedule for them and then judging to entries. We had our own National Champion, Neil Duncan on hand to advise and demonstrate to the mainly first-time exhibitors, exactly how to display their roses to the best effect. We also did a talk for the 150 attendees on general rose care. Some of our members were also on hand to help at a Rose ID Clinic where the attending gardeners brought unknown roses to have their ID confirmed so that they could label them back at their gardens. Another aspect of the Monograph was a 'Living Catalogue' of roses. Each of the attending garden were invited to bring blooms, cut from their NT gardens, and the resulting collection was set up in alphabetical and type order. The result was a magnificent display of modern and heritage roses in over three hundred varieties. It was a wonderful display, the biggest collection of its type that most of us had ever seen.



A small section of the "Living catalogue" of roses from the National Trust's gardens



With Neil Duncan on hand to encourage and assist where necessary, the National Trust gardeners staged a really attractive rose show with some first class exhibits. All roses were cut from the Trust's gardens, up and down the country proving, if proof was necessary, that showing roses can be fun, informative and achievable with 'garden roses'. The real shame was that the event was not open to the public; the National Trust gardeners will hopefully have learned much from the event and workshops and this will most certainly be reflected in the quality of the roses that we can all enjoy at the Trust's gardens. It's very likely that the Trust will have another Rose Monograph in the future. We will liaise with the National Trust in the hope that future events may also be shared with the public.

Included in the event were visits to nearby Mottisfont and Hinton Ampner gardens. Our members, Martin Stott and Michael Marriott were both at Mottisfont giving 'impromptu' talks to the garden's visitors and at Hinton Ampner we put up the Society Information bureau in a small marquee shared with Pococks roses.



The images on previous page show Rose Society UK Secretary, Ray Martin and the National Trust's Mike Beeston, one of the driving forces behind the Monolith event, strolling in the walled garden at Mottisfont. In spite of staffing issues partly caused by the COVID lockdown, Mottisfont still has plenty of colour from its mainly Old Garden Rose collection. There are plans being drawn up to improve the garden for next season.



Martin (the Storyteller) Stott was in the garden at the weekend, entertaining and educating the garden visitors

One of the worst kept secrets was finally, officially revealed during the event.

We had been desperately trying to track down the 2023 recipient of the Dean Hole Medal.

We announced at our AGM that Michael Marriott was this year's DHM winner, but finding a date when we could actually present him with the award had proved impossible.

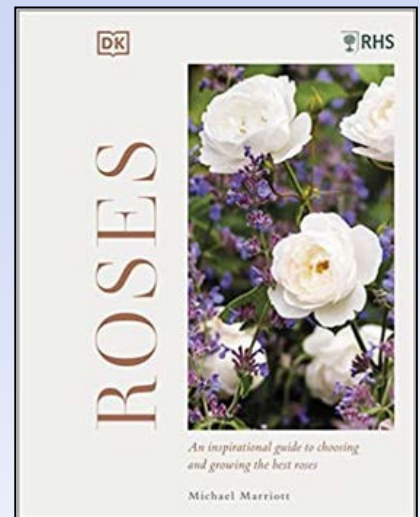
The National Trust's Andy Jasper was very gracious in allowing us to 'hijack' the evening function where Michael was the keynote speaker, to finally present him with the medal. Our Chair of Honours Committee, Derek Lawrence and our President, Colin Squire OBE DHM

were invited to the event to make the presentation. Michael was humbled and delighted to receive the medal, which acknowledges and rewards his life and career in roses.





Book Review by Steve Durham



RHS Roses: An Inspirational Guide to Choosing and Growing the Best Roses **by Michael Marriott (DK 2022)**

A new book on roses is welcome. A beautifully photographed 250 page volume published by the RHS is very welcome. When such a volume is written by Michael Marriott, rest assured it is a superb read. I am sure that this book will establish itself as a must buy for all keen rosarians and more general gardeners.

Most of our members will be aware of Michael Marriot's credentials for writing this book, but let's just look at what is on his CV. Michael is perhaps best known for his work at David Austin Roses where as a key member of the nursery team he played an important role in popularising English Roses. Michael has designed thousands of rose gardens and borders throughout the world, these include the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, Queen Mary's Rose Garden in Regent's Park and Hampton Court Palace.. It is these two aspects of Michael's knowledge and experience which make the book so authoritative.

The book starts by introducing the history of the rose and the importance of scent. This is followed by a long section on roses in gardens, this is certainly a strength of the book and will doubt be very helpful to all gardeners who want to use a rose, or roses in a variety of situations such as mixed borders, hedges and climbing walls.

This section is then followed by a very helpful review of rose types, taking it through a

range of historic categories through to the various categories of modern rose.

My favourite section of the book then follows this, What a treat! Over one hundred pages of rose recommendations for so many situations such as front or middle or back of the border. Michael's expertise shines through this section and I am sure the vast number of recommendations will have readers searching through catalogues and internet searches to find these varieties to purchase. In this section David Austin roses are well represented, but you will find dozens of other old favourites, varieties you have never

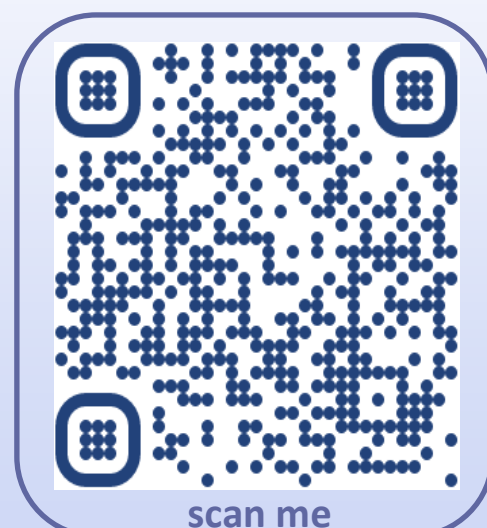
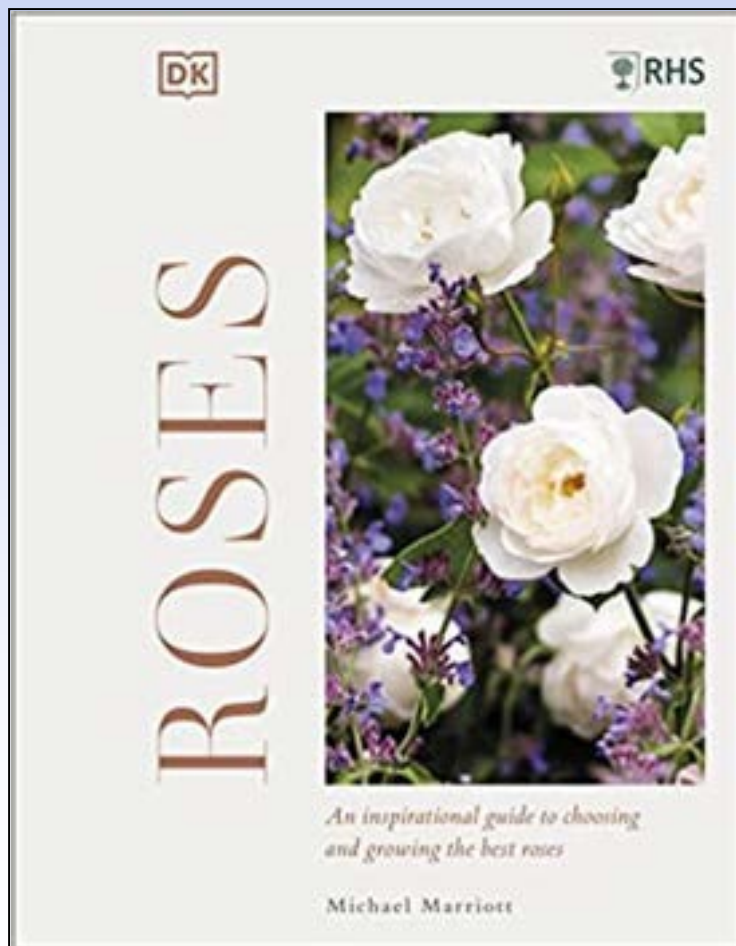
heard of and modern types. I was reassured that in this great listing with descriptions and pictures that several of my own "all time favourites" were discussed, these include Absolutely Fabulous, Gertrude Jekyll and Rosa xanthina Canary Bird.

The book concludes with a very helpful section on rose care, reflecting on reliable methods for the aged we live in now. The book, I believe, is likely to become a definitive guide to roses and their place in a variety of garden settings. To quote that old strapline "it does what is said on the tin", it is an inspirational guide to choosing and growing the best roses. The book is very highly recommended and available from all good booksellers.

Steve Durham

Please don't forget to visit our web shop

Click on [THIS LINK](#) or use the QR code to go straight to the shop



By Royal Appointment

We have for many years been attending the Royal Windsor Rose Show. To be fair, the show has been getting smaller each year which has been a concern. When the show was held in the grounds on St Georges School in the shadow of Windsor Castle it always had more of a village fete vibe about it; albeit with the possibility of a Royal visitor each year.

When Alex Denman was tasked with reinventing the show a few years back, things began to look up. The show was moved into Windsor Great Park, to the York Club and grounds and the show was 'upscaled'.

Now, with more trade trade stands and plant nurseries the show has more to attract a good sized audience and this June, record numbers were reported. The Duchess of Edinburgh has opened the show for the last few years, aided and abetted by TV gardening guru, Alan Titchmarsh and it now really lives up to its 'Royal' title.

We erected a Rose Society UK information bureau once again this year and mixed briefly with the great and the good (although the stewards did 'turf' us out of the marquee this year just before the 'Royal Party' came around so we were denied a photo opportunity - very disappointing!).

The actual rose show is not an easy one as the early date in June means that there are only a few roses blooming. We were just returning from a WFRS event in Belgium and were unable to bring our own roses but thankfully Neil Duncan managed to coax a few early blooms to put up a good show.



Neil Duncan presented with show cup by Alan Titchmarsh and show sponsor



Make a date in your diary for next year,
it's a lovely show in a lovely setting
If you have blooms in June they would love
to see them



Henry Bennett

1823 – 1890

“The Father of the Hybrid Tea”

2023 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of Henry Bennett the world renowned Victorian rose grower, and the 140th anniversary of being the first winner of a Gold Medal awarded by the National Rose Society in 1883 for his rose “Her Majesty.”

Henry was described by writers at the time, and as judged by history, to have been “the father of the Hybrid Tea” and “The man who transformed a profession,” he was a pioneer with strong commercial acumen. His legacy is not only seen in the techniques he pioneered but, in the roses, he bred which are still grown today, more than 100 years later and the influence some of them have had on today’s roses through their parentage.

Henry started life as farmer but ended it as a nurseryman recognised by his peers as bringing science and breeding techniques to rose breeding which formed the basis of today’s methods. Henry was also a businessman and introduced his roses to many countries, notably, America, France, and Australia, all of this was achieved in just a few years between his first introduction in 1879 and his death in 1890.

During the 1860’s Henry was farming 700 acres in Stapleford Wiltshire as a tenant, but farming was going through tough times, cereal and livestock prices were falling. Henry was looking for an alternative business opportunity.



Her Majesty
hybrid perpetual 1878

By 1865 Henry had already decided to investigate the breeding of roses in more detail and started what he called “a special study”. Having concluded that there was little real progress in the breeding of roses other than by random fertilisation and selection, Henry started his own experiments in 1868. He pollinated 1000’s of blooms but by his own admission this was a failure producing weak plants. In 1869 he tried again but with no greater success, however in July 1869 Henry read a lecture given at the Manchester Horticultural Congress on plant hybridisation and cross-breeding which suggested that there had already been great advances made in France. Henry decided to visit France through 1870 to 1872 going to the key nurseries raising roses, especially around Lyon, and learnt a lot from Monsieur Jean Sisley.

Henry must have been well received as French growers named roses after him. Antonie Levet introduced “Henry Bennett” and “Mme Henry Bennett” both tea-scented roses in 1872.

Henry concluded that much breeding in France was still simply “*leaving nature to herself*” having failed to detect any scientific means of propagation and therefore Henry concluded there was a great opportunity for new ideas. Henry continued his experiments and kept records to know all the parentage of the roses he bred but said “*self interest compels me for the present to keep my modes operandi secret.*” Henry was not only applying scientific methods but was also aware of the value of new introductions.

Henry’s “secret” was to use heated greenhouses, he realised he could not rely on the English weather to ripen his seeds and grow seedlings, by controlling the environment his experiments were done on a scientific basis, a great innovation at the time.

By 1877 Henry had given up farming and had moved to Shepperton, Walton-on-Thames to establish his rose nursery and, not to miss a business opportunity, he purposely called it “The Pedigree Rose Nursery.”

In 1879 Henry introduced 10 varieties for which he claimed, “greater perpetuity as regards blooming, greater depth of petal, and that they are altogether different in type from any rose before seen” He published the parentage of his roses, the first to make such claim, and described the 10 introductions as “Pedigree Hybrids of the Tea Rose”

However, they were not well received. Undeterred, and to confound his critics he took plants in pots, and covered hips, to a show in Kensington in 1879 to demonstrate to the Scientific Committee of the RHS the nature of his experiments. The Committee reported “*the results were not only interesting from the scientific point of view, but practically valuable in the production of what is virtually a new race of roses of great beauty and vigorous habit*”

In 1880 Henry was invited to Horticultural Society of Lyon, the meeting decided the new roses should be called Hybide de The, but the National Rose Society did not adopt the classification of Hybrid Tea until 1893.

In May 1882 Henry introduced 6 new varieties which included Lady Mary Fitzwilliam.

SEEDLING ROSES.

H. BENNETT (LATE OF STAPLEFORD, WILTS),

Will distribute, the first week in June next, strong Pot Plants of Roses of his own raising:—

<p>PRINCESS OF WALES (Tea). COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE (Hybrid Tea). DISTINCTION (Hybrid Tea).</p>	<p>LADY MARY FITZWILLIAM (Hybrid Tea). EARL OF PEMBROKE (Hybrid Perpetual). HEINRICH SCHULTHEIS (Hybrid Perpetual).</p>
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Descriptive PRICED LIST Post-free on application.

Intending Purchasers should order at once, as the stock is very limited, two-thirds having been already booked.

H. BENNETT,
PEDIGREE ROSE NURSERY, SHEPPERTON, WALTON-ON-THAMES.

1882 - Lady Mary Fitzwilliam which became part of the parentage of 1,000's of future roses notably "Mme. Caroline Testout"

Photo R Farrington 2023

The public's growing interest in roses, specifically the new rose cultivars introduced at rose exhibitions, inspired the creation of the National Rose Society's Gold Medal, Henry Bennett won the first and second Gold Medals awarded, with *Rosa 'Her Majesty'* (Hybrid Perpetual) in 1883 and *Rosa 'Mrs. John Laing'* (Hybrid Perpetual) in 1885.



Lady Mary Fitzwilliam 1882

"New Roses were not numerous and unquestionably the finest of all was the one selected for the society's gold medal. This was Mr. Bennett's Mrs. John Laing, a superb flower of fine globular form, very fine in petal, of a rich deep rose-pink, and of delicious fragrance. It has a great future before it without doubt" - The Garden

"Few roses have so many good qualities" - Gertrude Jekyll



Mrs John Laing 1885

The Garden *“New Roses were not numerous and unquestionably the finest of all was the one selected for the society's gold medal. This was Mr. Bennett's Mrs. John Laing, a superb flower of fine globular form, very fine in petal, of a rich deep rose-pink, and of delicious fragrance. It has a great future before it without doubt”*

Mrs John Laing was also awarded a Gold Medal in New York.

“Few roses have so many good qualities” - Gertrude Jekyll.

Henry's commercial attitude meant he had sold the early stock of Her Majesty to America, and it was not available in England until 1885 when plants cost half a guinea each (£83 in 2023 terms)

In 1883 he sold “William Frances Bennett” to American Mr Evans in Philadelphia for \$5,000 (£120,000 in 2023 terms) however, the contract prevented Evans from producing his own plants for 4 years, he could only sell cut flowers, Henry was again being commercially innovative and protecting his “invention.”



“Rose William Francis Bennett. — It is a beautiful Rose, particularly in the bud state, the form being admirable, and the colour, a rich crimson-carmine, is most pleasing. It was certified as a decorative variety, and as such it has but few rivals.”

The Garden - December 1883

The sale of his rose to America made headline news and in September 1887 Henry was a speaker at the annual meeting of American florists at Chicago where he received a standing ovation from the 600 attendees.

One of Henry last introductions was Captain Hayward in 1890



Captain Hayward

bred by Henry Bennett in 1890

“Flowers of a finely coloured and scented new Hybrid Perpetual Rose have been sent us by Mr. Henry Bennett, and it is another valuable addition to a long list of good things this raiser has given us. The flowers are very showy, their colour is rich crimson, shaded with a bluish tone when open, while the scent is strong and rich. The vigour of the bloom and stem indicates unusual robustness in the plant, and if this is the case, then we have a welcome Rose of fine bold character for the garden” – The Garden July 1890.

Photo R Farrington 2023

Henry’s Obituary in The Garden sums up his importance to rose breeding “Rose growers in all parts of the world will learn with deep regret of the death of this famous raiser of seedling Roses. To Mr. Bennett is due the honour of having raised some of the finest English seedling Roses, last, though not least, Captain Hayward. Had Mr. Bennett only given us Mrs. John Laing, rose growers would have been grateful.”

In just 10 years, Henry introduced at least 30 named varieties of Hybrid teas and transformed the breeding of roses to a science. We are all indebted to his innovation and dedication to the breeding of roses.

By Nigel Spicer

Great, Great Grandson of Henry Bennett

After 200 years it is of little surprise that few of Bennett’s roses are still in commerce however, some still are; Captain Hayward and Mrs. John Laing are both available from Trevor White Roses - <https://www.trevorwhiteroses.co.uk/>

Watch This Space

In 2019 under the guidance of Philip Hesketh, the current Dean, Rochester Cathedral celebrated the centenary of Dean Hole's birth with a weekend of festivities: talks, music and guided tours. A great deal of memorabilia was amassed and it would be a fitting tribute to this remarkable green fingered giant of a dean to provide a more permanent exhibition. Philip has even suggested that a new physical home might be found for the Rose Society at Rochester Cathedral as part of the present aspirations to develop its gardens and open spaces. Surely, there is no more fitting place than Rochester?

A group of us were invited to Rochester in July to see what the Dean and his gardener Graham Huckstepp were doing in the Cathedral gardens.

Our visit began with a welcoming cup of tea with Philip at the current Deanery. It's a newer building and a much humbler dwelling than the Deanery that Reynolds Hole called home. We were then treated to a guided tour of the cathedral by the Dean himself and it was clear that Philip has a passion for making the whole visiting experience pleasurable and worthwhile. The Reynolds Hole connections are everywhere of course but the cathedral has a rich and fascinating history which was made all the more interesting by Philip's enthusiasm. The grounds of the cathedral are now quite different to when Hole was in residence. His rose gardens have long since disappeared as new buildings have appeared on the site but a new rose garden has been planted with more roses planned for areas of grass in front of the Old Deanery. Plans for this fine old building include using part of it for the NHS but retaining a portion for a museum and library dedicated to Dean Reynolds Hole and his life long involvement with roses.



The Old Deanery

The old Deanery (Reynolds home for 16 years) looks remarkably untouched by the ravages of time and provides a fine backdrop for new rose beds (potentially). In fact, if I'm honest, as a proper Dean Hole enthusiast, just standing there, in front of the old building did give me goosebumps. I truly believe that without Reynolds' rose vision, we would never have had the love affair with roses that we all have!

So why are we looking at Rochester? Why are we involved? Well, Philip would like us, the Rose Society UK, to be involved in the redevelopment of the Cathedral gardens as a

memorial and a living memory of the man that caused us all to love roses. What that looks like is entirely up to us but having visited the cathedral and gardens, it already has the feel of a spiritual home for rosarians. It's an exciting project and has a lot of potential.



When Reynolds died in 1904 he was buried at his parish church of St Andrews in Caunton, Nottingham. In Rochester a life-sized statue was commissioned which is in the cathedral.

The cathedral gardens have plenty of roses; growing all around the cloisters, around the perimeter fencing and scrambling over some of the decaying stonework.

The new planting in the memorial garden includes some heritage varieties, dating back to Reynolds time (including Dean Hole and Mrs Reynolds Hole) and modern varieties. On our visit we asked Graham for a couple of blooms from Savoy Hotel, that was growing happily in only its first year. We popped them in a bucket and took them to our amateur rose show at Pelsall the following weekend. Historically, these were the first roses to be grown in the Dean of Rochester's garden and exhibited in a National show for over 120 years! No happy ending to this story as the resulting entry failed to win a prize; but it's a start!



Mermaid scrambling over old masonry



*President Colin Squire and
Dean of Rochester Cathedral
Philip Hesketh*



*Savoy Hotel from the Dean Hole
Memorial Garden in a picture
frame at the Pelsall National Show*

It's still early days yet, but we are considering using Rochester Cathedral as a starting point for a future Rose Society trip. Its proximity to many other historical gardens and nurseries will make an interesting, enjoyable destination. We will keep you posted!

First Time Rose Exhibitor

- it's not as scary as you may think

Despite a lifelong love of roses the very first Rose Show I attended was the one day show at Pelsall in July 2022. This coincided with a couple of weeks of blistering heat and I remember saying to my husband, Frank, that there would probably be very little on show, going by what we had in our garden. How wrong I was!



Sally Holmes

A first prize-winner at Pelsall

I couldn't believe the fabulous sight when we walked in to Pelsall Church Hall. Full of beautiful blooms it was a sight to behold. I spent a great deal of time examining the exhibits and taking lots of pictures. I was bowled over, but at that point I didn't consider that exhibiting would be anything I could aspire to.

However, there was an article in the Spring issue of the Rose Times which was encouraging first time exhibitors, and I began to think that it was something I could have a go at. I found the videos on "How to Show your Roses" on the Rose Society site and was intrigued.

At the 2023 AGM I picked up a copy of the Rose Society Schedules and had a chat with Pauline, who made it sound so easy! I decided that it would be fun to enter a rose or two from the garden and looked through the schedule to see which classes I could enter.

The Spring Rose Show in Malvern was completely out as I didn't have a single rose in bloom.

Never mind I would have to look forward to the Summer Show in Shepperton. I managed to enter several classes, and thoroughly enjoyed picking the blooms and then arranging them according to the schedule the night before the show. I must admit I had no idea what I was doing, just enjoying the experience and having a good time. As they say ignorance is bliss. It turned out to be a fabulous weekend and I got two 2nd and a 3rd place which was unbelievable and quite thrilling. I must add that I got lots of advice from the other exhibitors who were very friendly and helpful. Some of these exhibitors' entries are quite monumental in scale and beauty, but don't let that overawe you, as there is a place for everyone and every rose.

After the Summer Show I decided it might be a good idea to buy the Rose Society's "Little



A collage of blooms

wave in 2023 but rain, rain and more rain! Oh, I forgot the fierce winds and dull clouds too. Funny old game this exhibiting roses. I counted the rose bushes in the front and back garden and found we had 98 in total so surely there would be some worth cutting? Well, there were a few I could bring along and once again I really enjoyed the whole experience of choosing, picking and then displaying alongside other exhibitors. I was completely surprised to see I had two 1st and three 2nd places! This was thrilling, but the real enjoyment for me was being part of the show alongside fellow rose enthusiasts and showing off my own home grown roses to their best.

If you have a couple of rose bushes (or even 98) consider entering one of the shows. You won't regret it. You will find it really rewarding, interesting and above all it is fun!

I think I might have caught the bug and am looking forward to the next show!

Stella Morris

Thanks Stella, it's nice to know that we're not scary!

Black Book about Judging and Showing Roses" to give me some guidance. Perhaps it would have been a good idea to have bought it before Shepperton? A very interesting read and I read it several times hoping that the wisdom would somehow be assimilated into my brain. Well, you can only hope.

Next on the list was the one day show at Pelsall where it all began for me one year before. No heat



Felco voucher for Star Floribunda

Sally Holmes at Pelsall

Mysterious Micro

Over the past eight years, I have been trying to find out if anybody knew of a rose bush that only grows to 3 inches by 3 inches, as I have one in my garden.

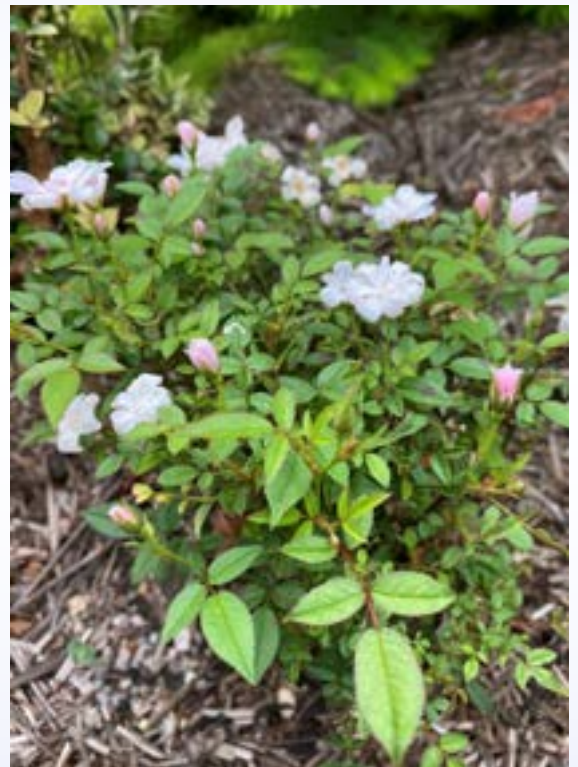
We are not sure how we came about owning the rose. We think we brought it as an alpine rose at a small garden centre near Newton Abbot in Devon about seven years ago. Expecting it to grow as a miniature patio rose, we left it in a pot for two seasons, but it didn't grow any bigger than the height of my middle finger or produce any blooms.

Five years ago, I made a miniature mountain landscape of trees between 6 inches (15cm) and 18 inches (45cm) high and thought that as the rose was semi-evergreen, it would look good among the trees (apparently, the Bonsai Society said I couldn't call them Bonsai as they are planted in the ground, not in small pots). The following year the rose bloomed into life.

Last year I met Inger Schierning at the Society's summer event at Chris Warners rose nursery, Greenfields and she said that she knew that the Dot Nursery in Spain were known for producing ultra-miniature rose bushes called micro minis. Unfortunately, I had no luck finding any information on the internet. I was beginning to believe that the rose we had was a sport of a wild rose as it had all the characteristics of a *Rosa 'Canina.'*

Then by luck, in June 2023, I found a book called *Miniature Rose* by Dawn and Barry Eagle at a charity shop. Lo and behold, near the back of the book was a picture of a finger touching the cup of a tiny rose. Inger was right, and hopefully, I am beginning a journey to discover more.

The information beside the picture said (reference Dawn and Barry Eagles book) that the rose is called *Rosa 'Si'* (pronounced, See), produced by Pedro Dot in 1957. The cultivar comes from crossing 'Perla de Montserrat' (seed parent) with an unnamed seedling (pollen parent), bred by Dot from a cross between 'Anny', another micro mini x 'Tom Thumb' a miniature bred by deVink, 1936. *Rosa 'Si'* is widely recognized as being the



*Rosa 'Si' Dot 1957,
in Madrid's
"Rosaleda del Parque del Oeste"*

smallest miniature rose in the world.

I now believed, from the information from the Eagle's book, that my rose is the micro miniature *Rosa 'Si'*.

By chance, at another Rose Society event in Norfolk, I met Brigid Quest-Ritson who also thought it was a *Rosa 'Si'* but to be sure, she would confirm with her colleague, the rosarian Juame Garcia, an expert in ultra-miniature roses. She has now confirmed that Juame also believes that it is *Rosa 'Si'* but was surprised that I have one as it is not sold commercially or in trade catalogues.



A "Si" bloom compared to the size of a finger nail

I would like to thank Inger, Brigid and Jaume for their help in me discovering what my rose is called. My new quest now is to find out what other ultra-miniature cultivars have been cultivated.

If anyone has any information they like to pass on or questions to ask you can contact me on email – pwassell2001@yahoo.co.uk

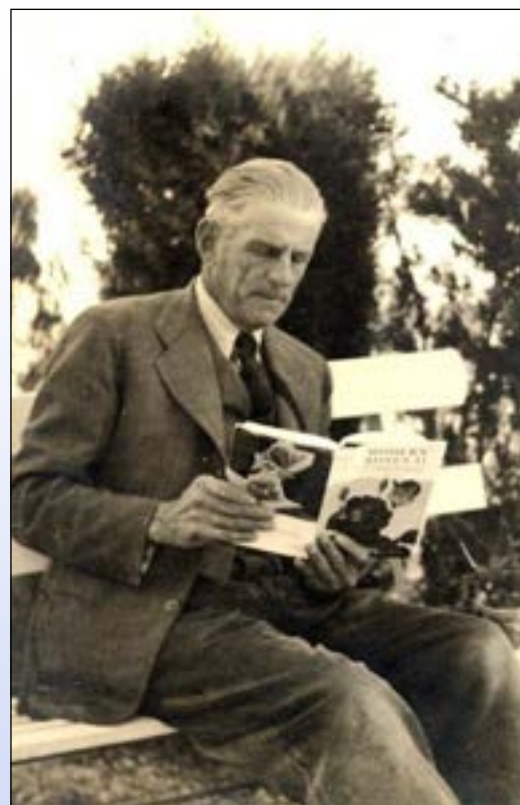
Paul Wassell



A fully grown potted plant of "Si" growing in California

Just 4 inches in width

picture by Kathy Strong



Pedro Dot (1885 - 1976)

Experts in their Fields

This year's summer rose event was held in East Anglia; it's probably a little known fact that this region is responsible for producing the greatest number of British-grown roses. But here we were, in Pulham St Mary near Diss, and hosted by family owned rose growers Whartons Roses.

Nearly fifty members signed up for a rose weekend in bright East Anglian sunshine; we were to have a guided tour of the rose fields, followed by lunch and an afternoon of rose talks and rose conviviality.

We were greeted by Robert Wharton and son Paul, who is now MD of the company, along with Jo Davy and their wonderful staff. Teas, coffees and home made cakes and a quick look around the facility including chill store and prep areas. Then onto the tour!

Paul really pulled out the stops as we were invited to board purpose-made and specially hired trailers.



All loaded up and ready for a tour



Our tour guide, Paul Wharton (Jo Davey was guide in trailer 2), told us the facts and figures about what it takes to produce this many grade A roses.

Producing roses on this scale is a logistical challenge; in June and July the serious work of budding is undertaken but the work doesn't end there! Every year there are three crops to look after; last year's crop that will be harvested in November, next year's crop that will need ground preparation and stocks planting in March and of course this year's budding



and maintenance of the crop.

The many fields are a colourful patchwork quilt of roses in bloom from June until they are lifted in October and November before sales of bare root begin and the potting up is started for the garden centre sales throughout the season.

The 'budders' and 'patchers' are a mix of contractors, who bud roses all around the world and some of Wharton's 50 permanent staff for whom budding is just one of their many jobs!



Our members took great interest in the budding. The professionals here will complete over 1.5

million budded roses in just a few short and intensive weeks. Amateurs like us are obviously slower and only bud a relatively few stocks, often to increase numbers of our own-bred roses.

Whartons run their own trials of 'pot grown' roses and we were invited to choose our favourites amongst the rows of potted roses on trial to assist their aim in supplying quality healthy roses to UK garden centres and nurseries.

We finished the tour back at rose HQ and were all surprised and very grateful to each receive a containerised rose as a memento of our visit. The rose variety was Pink Flower Carpet and my plant is now in full bloom. Thanks so much Whartons.

We then made our way to the Pennoyer Centre for lunch and our afternoon programme.

Jo and Paul showed us the other parts of the Whartons operation including nearby Weybread, where the potted roses are grown on. The production of one and a half million roses is a massive undertaking, there were many questions and all we all learned so much.

Next we had a presentation by Mark Leivers from Whartons who showed us the current results of a 'peat-free' compost trial that Whartons were carrying out. With the retail ban on peat-based compost in 2024 and a trade ban starting in 2027 they, like us, must look at

the alternatives. Their findings are not yet complete and will be inviting Mark to share their latest results as part of our Zoom Winter programme. The over-riding fact about the peat-free discussion is the need for education and a fuller understanding of how to properly use the alternatives.

Ian Limmer was our next speaker. Ian gave us an insight into the current position of Peter Beales Classic Roses and what we would be able to see on our visit to the nursery the following day. Ian also gave us a close look at Climber and Rambling roses; how to tell one from the other and the best way to grow them.

Finally, and for me a highlight of the day, was Martin Stott giving his talk on his rose hero. "The Humour of Hole" is Martin's light-hearted impression of some of the musings and teachings of a remarkable rosarian, Samuel Reynolds Hole. As you all know Reynolds' story is fully intertwined with roses and the Rose Society and in all his writings and his activities, he displayed a humour and a passion for roses that we could do very well with re-kindling for today's rose lovers.

We thanked Robert, Paul, the Wharton family and all the staff who had helped to make this one of the most enjoyable rose events that any of us could remember.

Day two of our Rose Weekend was a visit to Peter Beales Classic Roses, a few miles south down the A11.

Simon and Anita White greeted us on arrival and before taking us on a guided tour of the garden, Simon answered rose questions arising from the previous days packed programme and showed us once again how to 'T' bud but at a much slower pace! Simon's passion is



Simon and Anita White

clear and we continued the questioning as we wandered around the garden.

Simon and Ian both confirmed the fact that Peter Beales nursery was now officially 'up for sale' but were able to share the happy news that a prospective new owner was in discussion and negotiation to keep the nursery trading as a specialist supplier of classic roses, maintaining the legacy of Peter Beales Roses for the foreseeable future.

Our members rose weekend was now over as we all headed home, with our roses, some good memories and hopefully some new rose friends. Now how are we going to top this next year?

Pruning Workshops 2024



In March this year we ran a very well received pruning workshop in Sunbury - on - Thames near Shepperton and we've been asked if we plan on repeating it next year.

Well, the answer is; yes, we do!

We restricted the numbers to 20 last year and will do so again so that we can have a more intimate experience and this year will offer two dates at Sunbury.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, we are forging new relationships with the National Trust and have been in discussion with Amy McCormack, Senior Gardener at Anglesey Abbey in Cambridge and we are planning to run similar workshops in cooperation with the NT as well. We will share information with you as soon as details are available.



And the award
goes to

David Kenny

At the recent Rochfords International Rose Trials our President Colin Squire was able to present David with the Society's **Silver Tudor Rose** Award to celebrate all the work



Dave has done in rose breeding and promoting the rose!

At the Belfast Rose Trials at Dixon Park Belfast, David was also awarded the '**Fellowship of the Rose Society of Northern Ireland**', their highest accolade for services to the rose, signified by a Gold Lapel Rose Pin. David has a long history of involvement in the Northern Ireland Rose Society and is also an award-winning breeder

Congratulations David on his much deserved awards
good things really do come to good people

A Chilling Thought

We get many questions from our website and via Facebook about a range of subjects concerning our favourite flower.

One lady last year enquired about how she could preserve or rather extend the flowering period of some roses in her garden to use in her daughter's wedding bouquet. She apparently had a rose bush that was her late mother's and desperately wanted to ensure that she had some blooms from it to use at the wedding for the bouquet.

This problem faces exhibitors all the time! Potential show-winning blooms have a nasty habit of turning up exactly in between shows!

For many years we have tried using our refrigerators to slow down the development of our blooms and that in all honesty is the best way to do it.

There are also bloom treatment chemicals that can be used to a) keep the blooms growing whilst in the fridge and b) keep them alive and virtually dormant whilst in the fridge

For the home user, option a is the most practical. When purchasing bouquets of flowers from most of our supermarkets, the bouquets normally come with a sachet of bloom preserver which will preserve the blooms and help them to develop whilst in the vase. If the blooms are in a fridge then that happens much more slowly.



It is obviously a case of trial and error, some varieties respond to refrigeration better than others. Red ones traditionally don't do as well in the cold air and can turn 'blue'. Whites, pinks and yellows always tend to do better.

As an experiment, I tried a rose and photographed its performance over a number of days. The results in this case were quite surprising.

This is a bloom of an orange sport of the Kordes rose Kardinal 85. This is an orange version of the normally red rose and in the case of this sport, it is slightly smaller - more a miniflora sized bloom than an HT.

This bloom was photographed on 22nd August



The water in the vase was treated with Chrysal Clear and after 6 days in the fridge (28th August) the bloom still looked good. In fact it can be seen that the bloom has actually improved in as much as the sharp, pointed centre



seems to have actually risen!

So far so good. Closer inspection of the bloom revealed no deterioration of the bloom or its petals!

On now to 3rd September, yes 12 days in the fridge!

The bloom still looks very good. The petals still nice and stiff with good substance.

Of course this is not a scientific test and I can't be sure how the bloom will be once it's removed from the fridge but I think it proves that refrigeration can be effective. I leave it to you to make your own rules with trial and error!

Remember, whilst this is an exhibitor's 'trick', it can equally be used by any rose grower / lover who wishes to use a certain rose or roses for a certain occasion.



I often wonder if that lady ever managed to get grandma's rose blooms into her daughter's wedding bouquet? I really hope so

Pauline's Rosy Ramblings

Summer shows round up

Where do I start – what a successful summer show season. The Summer rose Festival at Squires Garden Centre was probably the biggest show in recent years. We had 20 exhibitors, the most we've attracted for a long time. These included 4 new exhibitors which is a very promising development. I worked out that the huge marquee was full of at least 3000 stems of roses. The sight and smell was wonderful to see. Our President Mr Colin Squire OBE DHM hosted the rose festival and laid on a wonderful lunch for our judges and exhibitors as well as some of the Rose Society sponsors.



We are so lucky to have such an excellent venue and attentive, generous hosts.

Neil Duncan won the most points in the Dean Hole classes and most points in the show – he had some superb exhibits and is a worthy Open Champion. Neil also won the best exhibit in the show with his bowl of mixed roses. The most points in the growers of under 150 roses was won for the second year running by Philip Hildred who like Neil had some superb blooms.

One of our newest exhibitors, Matthew Pitt won a several classes doing really well at his first show. One to watch for the future?



Matthew Pitt's winning picture frame

to watch for the future?

Ivor Mace won the most points in the Miniatures and Minifloras and the Best Exhibit in Miniatures too. He didn't have it all his own way with some stiff opposition from Neil Duncan, John McCarthy and Carole and Jim Anderson



Neil's superb basket of England's Heroes



Judges Caddy Sitwell and Jim Anderson with Show Steward Mark Nash

A word of thanks to everyone who returned at the end of day two to help with the show clear-up. Done in record time so that we were able to head off home at a reasonable hour.



Thanks to all the clean up crew including, Steve Durham, Hannah and Dan Myhill, John Anthony, Margaret and John McCarthy, Laurie Burrell and Steve James who was not in the picture as he was

hard at work, sorting and correctly storing the vases, bowls, frames and other show equipment into their boxes for the next show in Pelsall! Well done Steve, such precision, you are a star!

Our Little Rose Show at Pelsall is a one day show, still a competitive show but aimed at



*A new variety to many UK growers
Neil won Star HT with Ring of Fire*

encouraging and helping newer exhibitors

Once again, our show with cream teas was a huge success. We again had a good number of exhibitors from across the UK with exhibitors from Scotland, England and Wales.

Our reigning Champion Neil Duncan was on top form again and won the most points in the Dean Hole classes and gained

most overall points in the Open classes.

John McCarthy won most points in the classes for growers of under 150 roses.

Our novice exhibitors were once again amongst the prizes and really benefitting from coming to this special, friendly show where help is never far away.

Neil entered this 1966 bred Dickson Red Devil in the bowl of 12 HTs class.

This is the rose variety that all aspiring exhibitors should be growing. Even at nearly sixty years old Red Devil has never looked lovelier



Martin Stott - success at his first show!



Ivor Mace had some superb Miniatures and Minifloras and gained most points in that section as well as Best exhibit in the show with his bowl of 12 Miniatures

*You don't need to grow hundreds of bushes to produce a bloom like this for the floating class! But of course you can if you wish!
Beautiful!, simple exhibit.*



Once again, the clear up part of the show is very important, thanks to everyone who stayed behind and helped the tidy up!

*Some familiar faces, including, John, Margaret, Barbara, Phil, John, Paula and Neil, Dan, Ray, Steve and Jane and of course Me with the camera!
Teamwork making the dream work!*



Our next amateur show and final national show of the year is to be held at Newby Hall on 15th – 17th September. Free entry to all our members. Free entry to the Harrogate Autumn Show if you enter late entries accepted on the day as long as you let

pauline@therosesociety.org.uk

know in advance of your intention to exhibit. We have traditionally had less exhibitors at the Northern shows so please come along and support the show.

The Rose Society have an advice and information stand at Newby Hall and a week later at the Three Counties show in Malvern 22nd – 24th September.

What to do in next few months in the rose garden?

It's the time of year to be choosing and ordering your bare root roses if you haven't

already done so. Many roses that can be used for exhibiting are also excellent garden roses. I will be putting together some lists for people to help with choosing roses. Asking people who grow roses of all types what is good and maybe not so good about individual varieties and collating the information into a new leaflet – ‘Roses recommended by the Rose Society’. I will be asking you all for your opinions on the roses you grow sometime in next couple of months.

The shows committee will be meeting at the end of the season to consider next years schedules so if any of you have ideas for classes in the national shows, please send me your ideas.

If you want to try your hand at growing roses from seed an easy way of starting is to gather hips from your roses in the next month or two. These are known as open pollinated seeds rather than deliberate crosses. Its still a fun way to grow your own roses. Put them in a plastic bag in the fridge until January and then take the seeds from your hips and plant in compost with some sand and perlite. I usually use half size seed trays and cover with vermiculite; not forgetting to keep them covered with a plastic bag or propagator lid to stop them being eaten by mice. They grow quicker if you have a heated propagator or hot bench but you can have success on a window sill.

If you want to have roses blooming in early May you can grow roses in pots in an unheated greenhouse. Plant your roses up into pots that should be 10 -20ltrs in good quality compost with some loam added. Put in the greenhouse from mid-November and feed and water once signs of growth take place. You could have roses for the Spring show at Malvern in May – **don't forget if you enter the show you will get free entry to the Malvern Spring show.**

In the meantime with our outdoor roses we will be needing to trim up any tall stems to prevent damage from windrock. Clean up any leaves that have been shed around your roses and burn them.

Of course, this year the weeds have had a hey day with the wet weather so keeping your roses tidy ready for the winter months is important. It's a good time to plan your garden beds, if you intend on having mixed planting its always a good idea to get your roses established before introducing perennials or annuals to your beds.

Pauline Martin



New Dimensions in Rose Growing

TO CHANGE OR NOT TO CHANGE – THAT IS THE QUESTION

The Lord Merlyn-Rees used to say, “We must keep abreast of change – or change will be abreast of us”. We all live in a changing world and the older we get, it seems to go quicker and quicker. So too with growing roses – it is changing.

The traditional beds of roses we saw regularly in Municipal Parks are now too labour-intensive to maintain AND A GOOD THING TOO!. Rose diseases thrived with the close-proximity of these plants and these rose beds often looked in a sorry state.

As living becomes more expensive and labour-costs escalate, we all expect greater results in life for the minimum effort. The popularity of the rose seems to have dropped – membership of the Royal National Rose Society dwindled and (sadly), the Society went into administration in June 2017, casting doubt on the future of the world-famous display gardens and trial grounds at St Albans. However, all is not lost; let me tell you about some new ways of growing roses being promoted by experts; and, as an amateur, here are a few of mine.

I must have been born with roses – the flowers, not the thorny bits!

I was always interested even from an early age because of my Dad’s interest and tuition. As a flyer in WW1, he was injured but he survived. Left disabled, we managed over the years to keep his interest going and I benefitted from his enthusiasm in roses.

In 1965, I had the opportunity of student travel to the United States and was the guest of the American Rose Society based in Wilmington near Columbus, Ohio. Also, a memorable day was spent at Star Roses (used to be called Conard Pyle & Company) in California with Mr Sydney Hutton. It was Mr Conard Pyle who developed the “Peace” rose on behalf of the French rose breeder Meilland when propagation material was smuggled in the diplomatic bag out of occupied France in 1940. I was interested to hear that Peace was a triploid (with



Dad's perilous position as an Observer in the Fe2b aeroplane in 1916



Climbing rose "Temptress" and Clematis "The Presidents" grow well together

three sets of chromosomes) which might explain its excellent strength and vigour. This sparked an idea – could we increase the vigour in roses by increasing the sets of chromosomes of attractive but less vigorous varieties using colchicine? Over the years, Dad and I did achieve growth on occasions but when the meristems grew on after treatment, the leaves were very leathery and the plants did not flower: perhaps, we got too many sets of chromosomes? Looking back, I think this was not a good idea (messing around with nature) and seeing the recent fears of genetic engineering in crop plants.

In our early years of marriage, my late wife and I spent most of our spare time growing roses, learning to bud them and saving our favourite varieties. As a student, I even spent one summer budding roses when I worked for Captain Stanley (Rose breeder) of John Sanday Roses at Almondsbury near Bristol.

Nineteen sixty-six was a major event in my life, a milestone. A special unit was being set up at the University of Bath to look at “New Aspects of Plant Pathogenesis in Roses”; to understand the biochemical, physical and physiological changes when a rose becomes diseased. For example, why does a plant sometimes react to the presence of another organism with disease? What is the basis of tolerance or resistance to a pathogen? This new approach to diseases involved horticulturalists, chemists, soil scientists



The climber "Temptress" growing up a veranda. The hole in the foreground is for a tank to collect rain and bathwater to flush the toilets. Oleanders in pots show how mild it is in Devon and the vines on the veranda shade the windows in summer

and plant pathologists – headed by Professor Leonard Broadbent, a virologist who was famous for his work on virus-free “seed” potatoes. One of these posts was to work out the biology of Rust on Roses and I was glad to be offered the post.

This is the past, now what about exploring the contribution that roses can make today.

Thanks to the efforts of many talented rose breeders, the habit, range of colours, scent and vigour of roses are immense.



The climber "Albertine" does a good job covering this old building.



Rambler "Mountain Snow" in David Austin's Display Garden



Shrub rose "Graham Thomas" grown as a climber against a building

like to use climbing roses which add height-interest to a garden. Climbers growing against fences and walls add a new dimension in the garden. One of my favourites is a deep red pillar rose called “Temptress” which I grow up alternating pillars of a veranda. Last year it came into flower in mid-May, was still full of flower in mid-August and gave occasional flowers right up to Christmas. The individual flowers last much longer than most roses and it keeps repeating throughout the summer. It looks well growing alongside clematis; equally compatible with a dark blue (“The President”) or a light blue (“Prince



UK "Dog rose"-Rosa canina

Charles”). Each pillar alternates with a spectacular orange climber called “Warm Welcome”. Temptress appears to be fully disease-resistant here in Devon (over the years, I have only ever seen a few spots of “Shot-hole” disease) but we need to keep an eye open for rust arriving on Warm Welcome; but with care, it can be contained.

HEDGES: two of our native rose species, *Rosa canina* (the Dog Rose) and *R. eglanteria* (the Sweet Briar), and to some extent, *R. arvensis* (the white Field Rose) all grow naturally and



Rugosa typica and Rugosa Alba make an excellent but slow-growing hedge



The vigorous and sweetly scented Rugosa "Roseraie de L'Hay is better value in a new hedge

thrive in hedgerows. Here, the thorns on roses appear to have evolved originally to support the stems and to enable them to grow up into the thicket provided by other plants, making them ideal to grow in hedges. Roses have been grown for a long time as hedges in their



This Rambler rose provides a spectacular entrance to a property on Stafford Road, Uttoxeter. Almost a hedge

own right and *R. rugosa typica* (single red blooms and attractive, large hips in Winter) and its closely related white variety (*R. rugosa Alba*) are well-known, vigorous hedging plants. As ever-green roses, Rugosas make ideal hedges and grow well near to the sea, however, they take a long time to develop into an effective hedge and barrier, particularly where security is an issue. Rugosas do have very prickly stems which makes them suitable to

provide security but try interplanting them with Pyracanthas which also have vicious thorns. The orange/yellow berries of Pyracantha add an attractive dimension to hedges in the Autumn and provide food in the Autumn for Blackbirds. Both Rugosas and Pyracanthas can be trimmed with hedging shears without harm but avoid planting the red varieties of Pyracantha which are susceptible to Fireblight disease and to severe attacks by Woolly Aphids.



An existing Escallonia hedge enhanced all summer with a mixture of roses



Vigorous Pillar rose "Golden Showers" grows well in existing hedges



The Climbing rose "Alibaba" grows well in an existing hedge

The best variety of Pyracantha is "Orange Glow" for health, vigour and providing an impenetrable screen of thorns. However, these hedges could be better enhanced by using a variety of Rugosa called "Roseaie de l'Hay" (deep pink) which has double, sweetly



This hedge has been trimmed with shears making the roses flower at the top

scented blooms and a white double variety called "Frau Dagma Hastrup; both of these varieties flower over a longer period and also produce the large, attractive hips in Winter. I always remember the Rose Hip Syrup company planting acres of Rugosa roses on the coal tips in Northumberland to produce the vitamin-rich juice we enjoyed as children. Rugosas were one of the few plants that would grow on coal-tips.

While roses have proved to be successful hedges in

their own right, you will be pleased to know that most vigorous roses are ideally suited to grow up into existing hedges and provide an added attraction to the garden. They grow well into Hawthorn and Escallonia hedges making them much more interesting. All Climbers, Ramblers (avoid Dorothy Perkins as she is so susceptible to Powdery Mildew), Pillar roses and even vigorous Floribunda roses are suitable, with one proviso:- soil under existing hedges is extremely dry and impoverished, thorough preparation is essential. Prepare as large a hole as possible and incorporate new loam, wetted compost and rotted horse manure. It is important to wet peat compost before digging into the soil because, otherwise, it remains dry and never wets to do its job. Frequent watering is essential until these roses are established; the only maintenance is to remove any diseased wood, remove dead flower heads and to pull any new growths back into the hedge. It is best to pull these shoots in horizontally because this encourages the development of side shoots which flower more prolifically next year.



The rambler "American Pillar" grows well in hedges. Sometimes known as the "Railway Rose" because it was introduced just before railways were developing in Britain. Best-kept station competitions encouraged its planting in many of the newly built stations

CLIMBING INTO TREES (YOU SHOULD KNOW BETTER!!) I also plant Climbing roses to grow up into fruit trees, so that after the apple blossom is finished you get flowers on the trees throughout the whole Summer. Lovely climbers to use are "Maigold" (golden yellow) and "ParkDirektor Riggers" (a scarlet-red rose produced by Kordes). This red rose appears to be



"Maigold" climbing in an apple tree

resistant to diseases here in Devon and, as an open flower, is good for bees. Mind you, even the tight, shapely roses ultimately open fully to let the bees in. Two varieties of Ramblers are most successful up trees, "Wedding Day" and "Rambling Rector", both are white flowered.

To make your garden even more pleasant, try planting a vigorous variety of Clematis alongside the tree and your climbing rose. This will introduce another colour dimension into your orchard and enhance the colour



Climbing "Parkdirektor Riggers"



The Rambler "Wedding Day" is spectacular growing up an apple tree

throughout the whole season. I have found the following varieties most successful: "Jackmani", "Wisley", "Prince Charles" and "The President". Similar to planting in an existing hedge, if planting close to a well-established tree, soil preparation, care and



Clematis "Wisley" and rose "Temptress" growing with two apple trees, back to back. Note the brown "Braeburn" apples and the green "Golden Delicious"

watering are essential to get your plants established.

On one occasion, I planted two trees, a climbing rose and a clematis all at the same time. This certainly helped them to become established simultaneously. As pollinating insects seem to be becoming less in numbers (others as well as bees), I chose two, pollen-compatible apple varieties and planted them back to back in the same hole. This was with the post in the middle and the tree roots spreading outwards on either side. Crossing branches had to be pruned off. Pollination secured! The only draw-back was the annual abundance of fruit which, because of the numbers, had to thinned out every June to prevent a crop of very small apples.

SPECIMEN PLANTS IN MIXED BORDERS:

I love the new, innovative "English Roses" which have been developed by David Austin in Shropshire. Their "Old-English", cottage garden, full-petalled flowers are reminiscent of the old Centifolia roses and the repeat-flowering habit of the more vigorous varieties makes them ideal for growing in borders. Two of my favourites are "Gertrude Jekell" with a deep pink flower and "Crown Princess Margareta" which has deep yellow flowers tinged with a pinkie-orange centre. They make excellent specimen shrubs in a mixed border and, because they are growing less intensively, they usually escape the ravages of the common rose diseases. Both of these varieties grow well as climbers, up fences, up trees, trellises and alongside walls. There are so many suitable varieties



"Crown Princess Margareta" grown as a specimen shrub in a friend's garden (Over 6ft high!)



"Crown Princess Margareta"

available from rose breeders and nurseries today, it is worth trying many more.

BEAUTIFUL!



Perfectly formed flowers of "Gertrude Jekell"



Graham (Thomas) would have been delighted by this rose named after him

EXPERIMENTATION: Following Val Bourne's work on using ground-cover plants as mulches, I have been looking at using Golden Marjoram to prevent overwintering spores infecting new rose growth in the Spring. Its intense, carpet growth and rapid low-growing habit make it ideal for this purpose. Also, the golden colour contrasts well with the bronze new growth of roses at this time.

HAPPY DAYS – ENHANCED BY ROSES!

John Howden



Underplanting with Golden Marjoram

In memory of a gentle and talented man, Dr Douglas Duthie.

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