



# ROSE LETTER

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*ROSA incarnata. Park. Acad.*

# ROSE LETTER

## The Heritage Roses Group



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## ROSES NAMED FOR OR AFTER ELLEN WILLMOTT

**Stephen Hoy**

Ellen Willmott is known to have purchased plant material from all across Europe. If the Bernaix family, rose breeders from the outskirts of Lyon, France, weren't familiar with her name, then surely winning the Victoria Medal of Honor brought her to their attention. Alexander Bernaix had been breeding and selling roses since 1860. ('Monsieur Tiller' and 'Baronne Henriette Snoy' are just two of the very fine roses to his credit.) He retired and left the business to be managed by his son Pierre in 1895. Pierre Bernaix is credited with introducing a Hybrid Tea named '**Ellen Willmott**' in 1898. It was described as having large pale pink full blooms with a blush of salmon at the base of the petals, thick foliage, and as lacking in fragrance. Numerous sources pronounced it a "strong grower." Capt. George Thomas, Jr., who dedicated himself to buying almost all the new varieties coming out of Europe, considered it

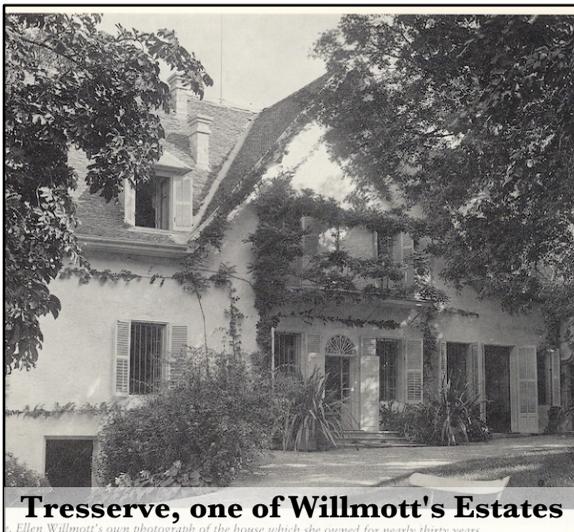
one of the best sixteen all-around roses for the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. His evaluation was based on his observation that it didn't ball in wet weather and on its summer and fall repeat-flowering characteristics.

George Paul had already had some commercial success with several single-flowered hybrids, 'Paul's Single White Perpetual' (1883), 'Paul's Single Crimson' (1883), and 'Paul's Single Scarlet' (1897) when he introduced '**Miss Willmott**,' a coppery-red five-petaled rose. Released to commerce in 1899, it is, sources suggest, a seedling out of the similarly colored Tea-Noisette 'L' Ideal,' and thus it was classified as a Tea. Graham Stuart Thomas compared it in flower form and size to the compact growing crimson China 'Miss Lowe's Variety.' The only



known illustration of this 'Miss Willmott' appears in her two-volume tome *The Genus Rosa*.

Ernest H. Wilson, who wished to go down in history as "Chinese" Wilson, began his second collecting trip to China in 1903. Sponsored by James Veitch and Sons, he was charged with specifically collecting specimens of *Meconopsis*





**Rosa willmottiae**



**R. blanda var. Willmottiana**

*integrifolia* as well as the seeds of as many trees, shrubs, and perennials as possible. Records show that his second trip netted 510 seed lots and 2400 herbarium specimens. One lot of seeds were from a “wild” rose found on China’s

western frontier near Tibet. A resulting seedling bloomed for the first time in 1907 and was named *Rosa willmottiae*. Unlike the two previous varieties, *R. willmottiae* is still in commerce. The smallish single flowers range from rose-purple to lilac-pink. Growing to roughly six to eight feet in height and width with an arching habit, its petite foliage is an attractive gray-green.

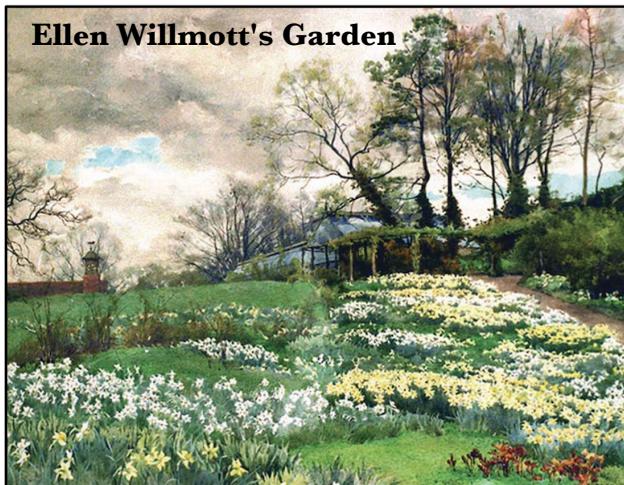
Two roses follow that were grown in Miss Willmott’s Warley garden

and were first described by her in *The Genus Rosa*. She indicates in the work that *Rosa blanda var. Willmottiana* originated from seeds sent from America years earlier to John Baker at Kew. Its coral-pink single flowers and more compact habit of growth were thought by Mr. Baker to be distinctive enough to warrant naming. It doesn’t appear to have been grown by anyone other than Ms. Willmott. Likewise, *Rosa x warleyensis* was also raised from seeds that had been sent to Kew years earlier. In her comments she described it as a hybrid between *R. rugosa*

and *R. blanda*, having characteristics of both. The note that it was “very free flowering” leads one to believe it had *R. rugosa*’s remontancy. Some botanists reversed the parentage suggesting *R. blanda* was the seed parent. [Author’s note: Baker gives two German botanical sources that suggest an earlier synonym may be *R. rugosa* x *R. virginiana*. The 1893 Koehne source has no botanical description and Koehne actually states that he had not seen the rose. The 1902 Ascherson source merely quotes Koehne.] Pictures/references on helpmefind/roses indicate the rose grows at Sangerhausen.



In 1917 Sam McGredy II released a Hybrid Tea he named ‘**Miss Willmott.**’ It, along with a number of others, was a recipient of a Gold Medal from the National Rose Society in the summer of 1916. ‘Miss Willmott’s exhibition blooms were white to pale yellow with edges lightly flushed pink. Some sources claimed it was highly fragrant while others reported only moderate fragrance. It received acclaim as a good exhibition and garden rose on the continent, in Australia, and in



America. *National Rose Annual* editor Courtney Page wrote, “There is a particular charm about this Rose, and I am inclined to think that it will rank as one of the raiser’s best efforts.” The 1929 Bobbink & Adkins catalog boldly stated,

“This is the almost perfect white rose.”[Ed. It's no longer in commerce.]

Two years after Miss Willmott's death, the hybridizer of 'Dainty Bess,' William Edward Basil Archer, introduced another single Hybrid Tea he named '**Ellen Willmott.**' A cross between 'Dainty Bess' and 'Lady Hillingdon' (an unusually hardy apricot-yellow Tea), the Archer version of 'Ellen Willmott' is creamy white touched by a hint of lemon yellow with a pale frosting of pink around the edges of the petals, especially in cooler weather. Its stamens consist of red filaments topped with golden anthers, and are a prominent and attractive feature as evidenced by a comment recorded by Daphne Filiberti, "If roses had eyelashes this one could certainly bat her eyes." The wavy petals occasionally have the imbricated look of 'Dainty Bess.'



**Ellen Willmott**

# Sakura Rose Garden: The World

**Gregg Lowery**

If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden.

—Francis Hodgson Burnett in *The Secret Garden*

If you look the right way, you can see that Sakura's rose garden is the whole world. This beautiful and magical place has gathered together the world's history of roses. But it has also gathered a world of admirers of the rose, and from them it has accepted gifts of many roses given by many people around the globe. The garden tells a story of human love for rose flowers. It reaches out to a worldwide fellowship who find peace in a garden. Sakura's rose garden is the world of human



**Yuki's Dream**

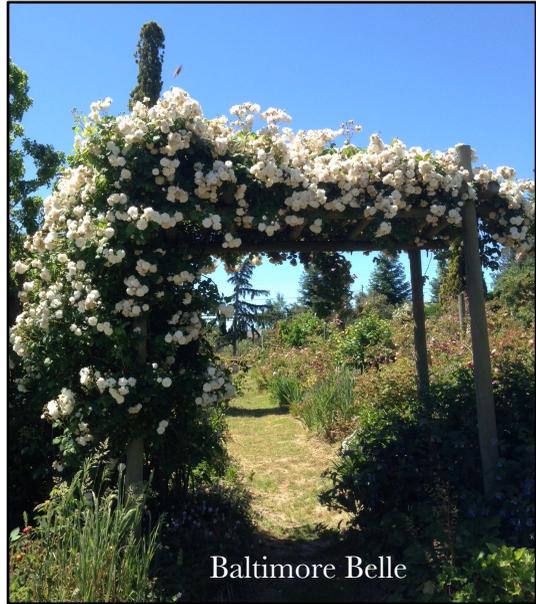
generosity, love of beauty and peace—a vision of a world that exists because we can imagine it.

I grew up encouraged to believe in a world of beauty and peace. It led me to a life with roses and to the creation of a large collection of old roses, the forming of a rose garden and a nursery. Not many

years ago, while the Sakura garden was being created, I was asked if I would share some of the rare roses that I grew. The call came from Dr. Yuki Mikanagi on behalf of Katsuhiko Maebara, the man who dreamed of and brought to life Sakura's garden of old and ancient roses.

That simple request has led to friendships and experiences in my life that I cherish today. In 2013 I traveled to Sakura to see the garden and to participate in an international conference on old roses. I was able to share my knowledge of the wild American rose of my childhood, *Rosa setigera*, the parent of the very sweetly scented rose of 1845, 'Baltimore Belle'.

Katsuhiko Maebara and Yuki Mikanagi had visited me in my garden in California a few years before this conference. They saw 'Baltimore Belle' and many other roses that thrived then. I spoke with them of my passion for preserving old roses, and how I had gathered nearly 4000 old rose varieties over 30 years, and had planted my garden of three acres. My passion led to opening a nursery of heritage roses, Vintage Gardens, which thrived until its closing in 2014.



In 2016, I returned to Japan and to Sakura for a second visit. It followed a conference in Beijing where I gave a presentation on the roses of China and their influence on the world. Once again my friends invited me to meet with rose friends in Japan, to visit Sakura and many other rose gardens, and to grow my love for Japan and its roses. In Sakura I visited many roses that had passed from my garden to the Sakura garden. Some are roses that are discoveries and for which we continue to seek the old names.

Since the closing of my nursery, I focus on trying to preserve a collection of 3000 roses. A group of American friends have joined me to create a non-profit dedicated to saving these old roses. We call it The Friends of Vintage Roses. It is a steep challenge for us, but we work very hard at it. Many of the 'Friends' have adopted roses from the collection to grow in their own gardens. My friend Pamela Temple took my entire collection of rambler roses, more than 500, and now grows them on her hillside garden in the forest. We have learned that to save one living creature, a being of beauty, is an honor and a joy, and makes our lives worthwhile. Sakura's rose garden taught me this lesson years ago; to share a rose is to save its life for another season on Earth.

## A MONOGRAPH ON ALBA ROSES

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**



**Alba Maxima**

When New Zealander rosarian Nancy Steen visited the British Isles in the 1960s, apart from wild roses, the rose she most frequently encountered was ‘Alba Maxima’, the Great White Double, growing luxuriantly in cottage gardens and hedgerows. Among the finest specimens of this rose were those spilling over stone walls and against stone

cottages of Northern Wales. And as she traveled through the western parts of England, she came across other varieties of many fine Alba roses. A decade later or so, Graham Stuart Thomas would echo Mrs Steen’s observations, adding Cornwall, the north country, Scotland, and Ireland to the list. “Frequently,” he added, “they are remnants of plantings of a hundred years ago, so strong and self-reliant are they.”

In 1829 Narcisse Desportes listed a total of 112 Albas in his catalogue. That quantity of white roses may have overwhelmed his contemporaries, for in the catalogues of De Pronville, Prevost, Boitard, and others, only a dozen or fewer were listed. Even in his *Hortus Britannicus* in which Robert Sweet in 1827 listed 1,059 cultivated roses, he included only eight Albas, at least four of which are still available today. (I am uncertain of what he meant by ‘Cluster Maiden’s Blush’. Since he did name ‘Great Maiden’s Blush’, that name may refer to ‘Small Maiden’s Blush’ despite both being corymbose.)

Going back in time, we find one or two Albas mentioned by John Rea (1665), John Parkinson (1629), Johann Karl Rosenberg (1628), Caspar Bauhin (1623), Peter Pauw (1601), and three or four others, but the earliest mention of Albas seems to be by the Flemish Rembert Dudoens in 1557, all of which is to declare that we do not

know the origin of this rose.

Several paintings of the Renaissance in the 1400s depict a white rose. In a few instances, the rose depicted strongly resembles an Alba. Luini's (1481-1532) *Madonna and Child* show the Virgin seated in front of a rose trellis. The white rose reveals foliage, stem, flower, and a bud with long wing-like sepals extending above the tip, all traits of an Alba. Earlier, Giotto (1266-1336) also had painted a *Madonna and Child* in 1330, depicting the holy Mother holding a flat white rose of many petals and the telltale bluish-gray-green leaves characteristic of an Alba rose. Consequently, if the rose identification is correct, we can claim Alba roses date back at least to the early 14th century.

In the late 12th century *Book of Agriculture* by Ibn al-'Awwam of Seville, the author cites his near contemporary Abu-Abdallah ibn-el-Fasl who asserts there are four kinds of roses, two of which are white: a double white and a white blended with incarnadine or "flesh" color of more than a hundred petals which produced a soft but penetrating scent more substantial than the others. Either or both of these roses could have been an Alba rose. It does seem to be the first mention in the literature of full white, scented roses, cultivars, not species.

The original parentage of Alba roses is either *Rosa gallica* crossed with a member of the *R. canina* group or *R. damascena* crossed with *R. canina*. Botanically they differ from Gallicas, Damasks, and Centifolias in being hexaploid (six sets of chromosomes to a cell) rather than tetraploid, as most of the other three are.

Unlike nearly all other rose types, Albas are not much affected by the roots of trees. Consequently, they are both shade and drought tolerant. To add to their worthiness, they can endure rather severe weather and—most of them—boast disease resistance. Known for their vigor and longevity, most varieties carry a purity of perfume, a scent of Damask or Grandma's face cream. Because they bloom early, Albas also lose their sap early, so their leaves tend to fall before those of the majority of rose types. They do well on north walls. More than other Old Garden Roses, Albas appreciate close pruning. New, small wood should be cut low, and long shoots to a third of their length. However, Albas are difficult to root from cuttings.

General identifying features are the following: glaucous-green

foliage with five or seven leaflets, serrate and ovate acuminate. The petioles are usually glandular, the stipules most often narrow and fringed with glands, the bracts lanceolate concave. The hispid peduncle holds a solitary rose or a small cluster, each with a leafy calyx. Usually white, the flowers can also be a delicate pink, variable of shape among the varieties, and abundant in bloom. The canes exhibit strong prickles toward the base but otherwise show them sparsely.

In the British Isles, Albas have been used as hedgerows for centuries, especially ‘Alba Maxima’. And often they have been planted beside stone walls, as Nancy Steen remarked, over which they spill in picturesque fashion. King George IV chose ‘Alba Maxima’ as the floral decoration for his signature, as did Queen Victoria’s consort Prince Albert. King Christian IV of Denmark imported this rose from the

Netherlands for his Castle Rosenberg gardens in Copenhagen.



‘Alba Maxima’ is probably a sport of ‘Alba Semi-plena’. Certainly it has been known to revert to the latter. A fully double rose in white on a tall, erect plant of intermittent prickles, it grows seven to ten feet in height. Although it seems to be this variety usually referred to when the Alba is mentioned by

writers of past centuries, Robert Sweet in 1827 averred that the 1597 rose was a single, not a double. Two hundred years later, J. Symmons of Paddington House was growing the single *Rosa alba* in his garden. Alfred Parsons painted the rose for Ellen Willmott’s *The Genus Rosa* at the beginning of the 20th century. This single rose can still be found in gardens and nurseries of Europe.

However that may be, ‘Alba Maxima’ comes with an assortment of old names: ‘Alba Florepleno’, ‘Alba Plena’, ‘Alba Vulgaris Major’, ‘Anglica Alba’, ‘Common White’, ‘Common Great White’, ‘Jacobite Rose’, and in a hand-colored copper engraving by Pierre Vallet from

1623, which I own, the rose is called ‘Rosa Alba Multiplex’. Prevost in 1829 used that last name as well. Understand that until into the 19th century, breeders and nurserymen were not universally, let alone locally, often in contact with each other, so the name given a rose varied.

‘Alba-Semiplena’, a particularly lovely Alba, is likely the archetype of this class of roses. Believed by some to be the White Rose of York, it should probably cede that name to the single *R. alba*. Milk white with a large circlet of yellow stamens within its eight to twelve petals, it exemplifies a most refined Alba, usually in small sprays of



flowers. (Also see back cover.) In warm climates it can grow to twelve feet. Shade tolerant, etc, the typical features of Albas mentioned above apply.

‘Celeste’ (also ‘Celestial’), a Dutch rose that is the same as Redouté’s painting of *R. damascena* ‘Aurore’, also grows as a semi-double



but of soft pink. Half-open buds are especially attractive.

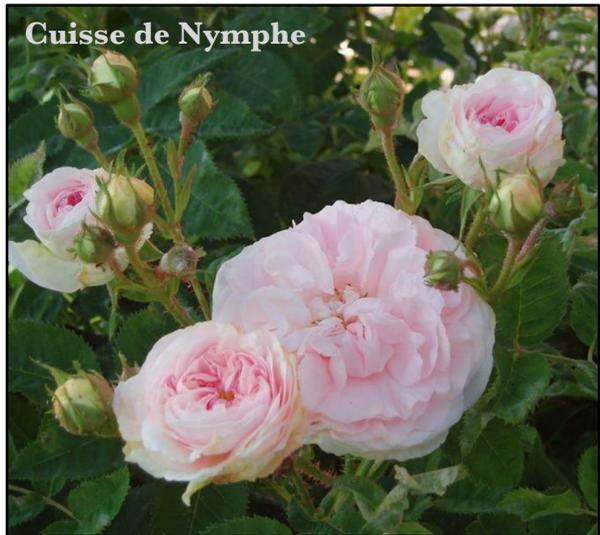
The flowers emerge among leaden green foliage on a large rounded bush. Its first mention in the literature seems to be in 1810. Redoute also painted a Hybrid Alba named ‘Belle Aurore’, a rose from Holland at the end to the 18th century which Dupont propagated and Empress Josephine grew in her garden. Jacques Louis Descemet listed it in his catalogue. Though

no longer in commerce, it can still be viewed at Roseraie du Val-de-Marne à l'Haÿ-les-Roses.

The pre-1815 'Chloris' by Descemet thrives on a healthy bush of few prickles and dark green leaves held horizontally. The reflexed petals reveal a clear, soft pink like that of 'Celeste', but on a full rose with a button eye. Though similar to 'Maiden's Blush', it refuses a muddled center. Ostensibly, Jules Gravereaux erred in compiling his list of Empress Josephine's roses, classifying Descemet's rose as a Gallica.

There is no Gallica 'Chloris', but the confusion perpetrated in 1912 continues to this day.

'Cuisse de Nymphe' and 'Cuisse de Nymphe émue' (translated as Thigh of the Nymphe and Thigh of the Nervous Nymphe, respectively) are both also known as 'Maiden's Blush'. When the flower is a Caucasoid pink, i.e.,



a tannish pink (previously called 'Alba Incarnata', 'Incarnata Major', 'Carne', 'Regalis', and 'La Royale'--see our front cover) and of an average size, 'Maiden's Blush' is the correct term. When the flowers are larger and show a more pronounced pink or blush, the blush showing in the center of creamy pink outer petals, it may be called 'Cuisse de Nymphe émue' or 'Great Maiden's Blush'. Though the edges may fade, the blush in the center remains. By many Alba lovers it is considered the lovelier. Should the flowers be smaller than those of either one and more compact, the rose is 'Small Maiden's Blush', first observed in 1797. The pedicels of this small Alba are covered in bristles. Like several other Albas, the plant is apt to send out runners. It resents wet weather. Of the fully double Albas, 'Great Maiden's Blush' may be the oldest. It

is this rose that Parkinson may have meant when he wrote of “the English white Rose.” And it may be the rose “of a hundred petals” described in Ibn al-‘Awwan’s 12th century *Book of Agriculture*.

In 1944, Ethelyn E. Keays wrote in *House and Garden* magazine of an Alba rose she had encountered in Salem, MA, where it had “quite a long family

history.” She determined the rose was ‘Blanche de Belgique’ a rose still sold today. The centers of the purest of white flowers are lightly tinted with a sulphur yellow that does not fade. The full blooms grow on an upright, compact bush of branching habit and dark green leaves, reaching six feet, its roses carrying a marvelous scent. Though fairly well attainable outside the United States, stateside only Rogue Valley Roses in Oregon offers it.

Of all the Albas, ‘Konigin von Danemark’ is the most different



**Konigin von Danemark**



**Blanche de Belgique**

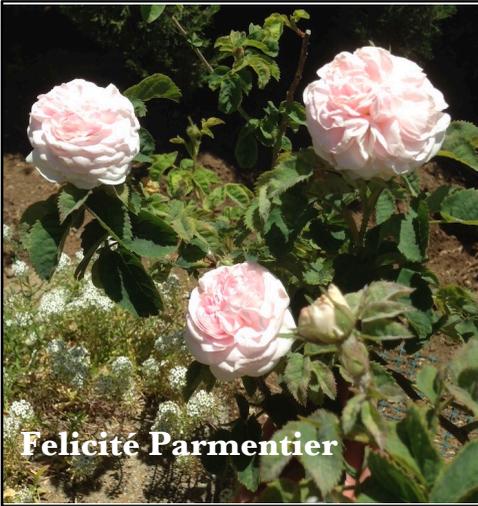
in color and form of flower: deep rich pink petals, usually quartered with a button eye, bordered by a circumference of very pale, almost white, petals. The open habit shows nearly procumbent, arching canes that extend four to six feet, superbly lush with roses. The canes are armed with red falcate prickles of different sizes;

leaves, mostly elliptic but some cordate, are markedly serrate. The apex of the leaflets varies: some are acuminate, some acute, and others almost obtuse. This rose establishes itself swiftly and by its second year presents an array of roses in joyous abandon. Both disease and pest resistant, it is also (so I've been told) deer resistant. Equal to its beauty is its rich perfume. The loveliest plant of it I've ever seen grows at the Hinton Ampner estate near Winchester, England.

'Konigin von Danemark' was raised by James Booth of Flottbeck Nurseries in Schleswig-Holstein near Hamburg, owned then by Denmark but now by Germany. Bred in 1816 but not introduced to commerce until 1826, it was named for Queen Marie Sophie Frederikke (1767-1852), wife of Frederik VI of Denmark. The couple was married in 1790, eighteen years before Frederik, her first cousin, acceded to the throne. She was an attractive, youthful, dark-haired woman with piercing eyes and a small mouth, shy, reserved, and dignified. Of her eight children, only two survived. Her final childbirth in 1808 resulted in an injury, preventing further intercourse. Consequently, the king took a mistress—and later a second mistress—but Queen Marie Sophie “wore the crown with dignity,” as one historian wrote, “but with a bleeding heart.” She was widowed in 1839 and died thirteen years later.

To my knowledge, the Alba 'Josephine de Beauharnais' is not, unfortunately, to be found in the United States. It does grow in many European gardens but is sold only in Germany and Scandinavia. Listed by Alexandre Hardy in his 1837 catalogue, he cites Vibert as the origin of this rose. This full medium-sized rose of very pale pink or soft incarnadine pink almost conceals a bunched set of stamens peering from the ruffled center. It claims some fragrance. The name of the rose has been incorrectly attributed to Empress Josephine. Actually, it was named for her granddaughter, offspring of the Empress's son Eugene de Beauharnais. The rose was introduced in





1823, the year she married the man who would become King Oscar I of Sweden. She was Queen Josephine of Sweden until he died, from 1844 to 1859.

‘Felicité Parmentier’, bred prior to 1834, one of a few hundred roses produced by Louis Parmentier (1782-1847), is still commonly sold, no doubt as much for its scent as for its beauty in bud and flower. The buds, quite dense and of a pale yellow, open to soft pink rosette

blossoms that age to creamy white. They grow in small, tight clusters of three to seven. The flowers are slow to open and long to bloom. The plant, more luxuriant of foliage than most Albas, grows four or five feet tall. Somewhat prickly, it does prefer some shade. Unlike most other Albas, no *R. canina* genes determine its hybrid status. The erstwhile Fickle Hill Old Rose Nursery in Arcata, CA, in its 1999 catalogue remarked that the sight of this shrub was “enough to make you dig out all your hybrid teas and toss them!” And who was Felicité? Not Parmentier’s wife named Désirée, but no doubt a member of the family.

A most outstanding rose is ‘Mme Legras de St. Germain’, a rival—according to Graham S. Thomas—to ‘Mme Hardy’. Indeed, it is one of my favorites. In Oregon pioneer cemeteries that have preserved old roses, it is often seen growing in a lax but luxurious mound. Somewhat cupped, the large, flat blooms in bright ivory white are flushed at the base in pale lemon yellow. It cradles a lovely perfume. A few out of hundreds of the floriferous flowers exhibit the peculiar phenomenon known as phyllody or perfoliation, i.e., a leaf or even a bud growing from the center of a rose. Virtually without prickles, the stems and flexible wands allow easy rose gathering. The downy leaves are soft to the touch. A hybrid Alba, probably crossed with a Damask, the rose dates to prior 1846. Historically, a few women have been known as Mme Legras, but I have encountered only one with de St. Germain to



**Mme Plantier**

the name. This is Marie Jeanne Flora Dehault who wed Antoine Edouard Legras de St. Germain in 1792, the same year in which she gave

birth to their daughter Adela Maria Flora (1792-1876). Unfortunately, that is all I know of her.

Another rose, but not always classed with the Albas, is ‘Mme Plantier’. Apparently a Noisette resides in her genes. But the Cels Brothers catalogue of 1842 lists it as a Bourbon.



**Mme Legras de St Germaine**

It was named for the third wife of Jacques Plantier, Lyon’s father of roses. (His first two wives had died.) The flowers come in large cheerleader pompons of creamy white. A long-lived but sterile rose (hence, it has no offspring), it usually grows to about six feet but in rich soils can reach into trees at twelve feet, though it is virtually unarmed.

Because ‘Mme Plantier’ and ‘Mme Legras de St. Germain’ can be easily confused, I offer a few distinguishing traits. ‘Mme Plantier’ can be pale pink to white while Mme Legras is white with a small pale lemon center. ‘Mme Plantier’ generally produces clusters of five to twenty flowers while ‘Mme Legras’ is mostly solitary of bloom. ‘Mme Plantier’ shows winged sepals, but ‘Mme Legras de St. Germain’ exhibits both winged sepals and plain sepals. ‘Mme Plantier’ can grow twelve or thirteen foot canes, whereas ‘Mme Legras’ can reach sixteen feet or more. The leaves on ‘Mme Plantier’ are light green with uneven

serration; those on ‘Mme Legras’ are grey-green with wide, often sharp, serration. And, as mentioned above, ‘Mme Legras de St. Germain’ tends to show a few perfoliated blooms among her wealth of roses.

*Alba* means white. The gardener desirous of a vintage white rose should consider this category. A harmonious match of leaf and flower color, a lack of prejudice to sun and shade, hardiness, fragrance, graceful beauty—what knowledgeable rose lover would not invite an *Alba* to the garden?

**A questioner asked:**

*What is a ‘damask’ fragrance like, and how about a ‘myrrh’ fragrance? ‘Old rose’? I’m finding these descriptions are very confusing.*

**Alice Flores replied:**

*Start sniffing roses!*

*Find a nursery or public garden that has some species, or very old hybrid, roses. Study up a little on their parentage.*

*If you’ve ever smelled the ‘Autumn Damask’, or a few other old Damask roses, you won’t forget the distinctive sweetness.*

*Smell a Musk rose, and you’ll catch whiffs of spices.*

*An *Alba* will define myrrh for you – smells like your grandma’s face cream.*

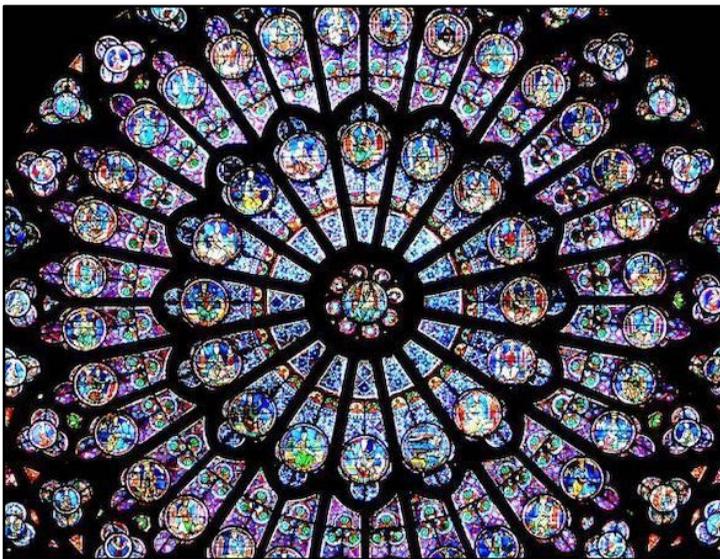
*Get the original scents into your aroma memory bank, and then when you smell a modern hybrid, its smell will give you a clue to its heritage. There’s really no way to describe scent – you just have to work at it a little, and you’ll have your own knowledge.*

**RENEW OR BECOME A MEMBER**

To renew or become a Heritage Roses Group member with a subscription to the *Rose Letter*, four issues a year, send \$20 for the print format or \$10 for the online format to

Clay Jennings, Membership Chair, 22 Gypsy Lane, Camarillo, CA 93010 or contact him at [e.c.jennings@gmail.com](mailto:e.c.jennings@gmail.com)

**See also pages 23 and 29 of this issue.**



*Rose window of Notre Dame Cathedral*

## **Rose Windows**

**Brian Schofield**

We are very fortunate here in the UK and also in Europe to have, both medieval and modern, very beautiful buildings of architectural interest. Of special interest, though, must surely be the churches and cathedrals, some of which can be dated to the 12th century, each no doubt having its own special attraction in the design and fabric of the building. Some of the gems to be found within these historic buildings are the stained glass windows. Surely one of the most spectacular of them must be the Rose Window.

Early in the Middle Ages, some church and cathedral windows came to be made in a circular form or in the form of a rose, and with the coming of Christianity, the rose, which had previously held a bad reputation in its association with the Romans and their pagan rituals and excesses, was reinstated, becoming a symbol closely related to Christ and ecclesiastical architecture.

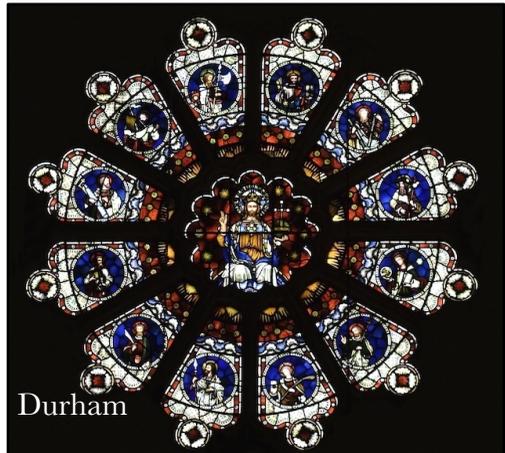
It is said that the idea of these rose-windows, often found in transitional and early Gothic Cathedrals, could have originated in the

Roman Oculus, which is a large circular opening set in the top of a roof dome, letting both light and air into a building. The oculus then became a window, and so evolved one of the most beautiful and characteristic features of medieval architecture, especially of the French Gothic style, supporting the theory that it was brought to France by returning Crusaders.

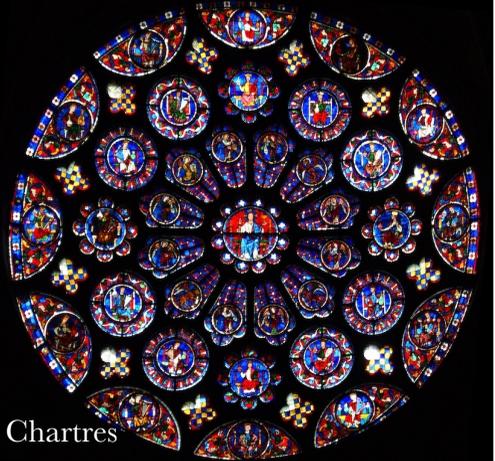
As Gothic architecture developed, so did the size of the rose window, achieving its greatest possible size in the entire width of the nave. These windows were then filled with stained glasses of great beauty, thus creating a marvelous effect within the interiors of the buildings, especially when seen with sunlight filtering through.

But the Rose Windows clearly went far beyond letting in light, each having its own meaning and significance; for example, the Signs of the Zodiac appear in the west rose of Notre Dame, the south rose of Angers and the rose window at Lausanne; the Tree of Jesse, the Last Judgement and God's Creation of the Universe, etc. appear in others.

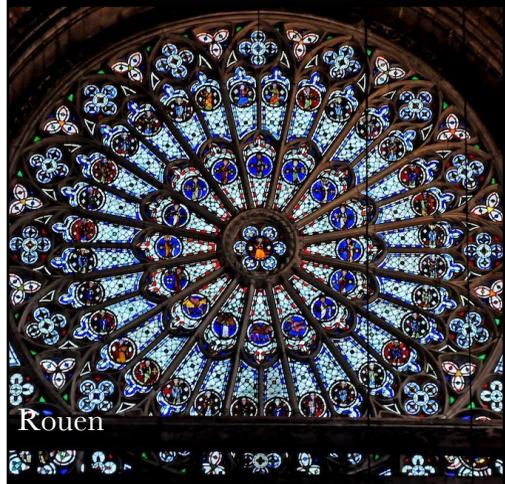
Originally built in 1092,



Durham



Chartres

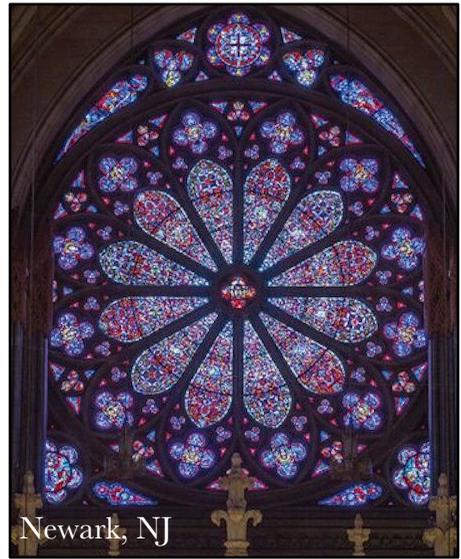


Rouen

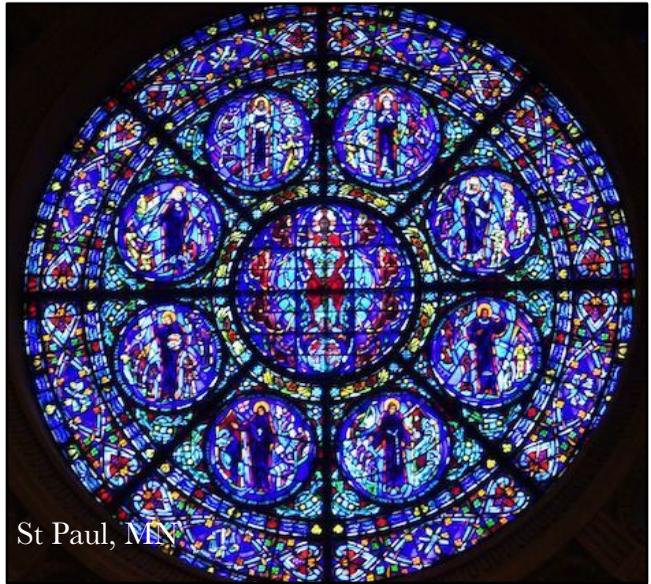
Lincoln Cathedral has two rose windows: the Dean's Eye in the dark north side and the Bishop's eye on the light south side of the building. Their meaning is that north represents the devil, and south the Holy Spirit, and it is in these directions that the two eyes look, the Bishop faces the south in order to invite in and the Dean the north in order to shun. With these Eyes the cathedral's face is always on watch. The rose window thus became one of the most spectacular creations of the Gothic era, and even today those surviving are found spectacularly attractive by today's visitors to these old cathedrals and churches.

The fact that they survive is testament to the skill and integrity of the craftsmen employed in the Cathedrals Works Department.

In Europe the art of manufacturing stained glass reached its peak between 1150 and 1500, and it was a twelfth century German monk called Theophilus, a skilled glass and pigment and metal worker, who studied these early methods and then recorded them for posterity. He describes the basic ingredients for making the glass as sand and wood ash (potash). This mixture is then

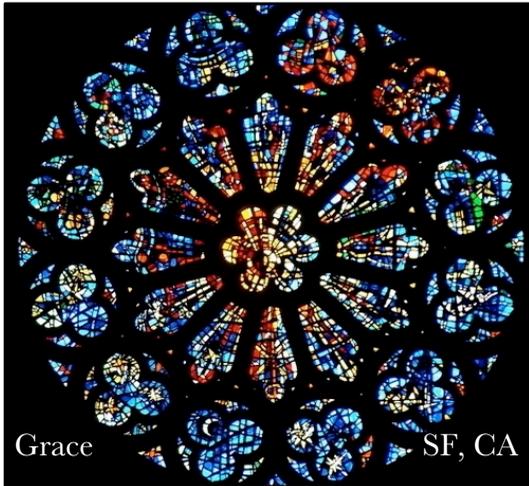


Newark, NJ



St Paul, MN

melted, and whilst it is still molten, certain powdered metals were added to it to colour the glass. It would then be blown and flattened into a sheet. Theophilus describes the use of beech wood as the preferred source of ash, but other plant matter, such as bracken, was also used. As well as containing potash, beech ash comprises an assortment of compounds, including iron and manganese oxides, which are particularly important for generating colour in glass. Experimental manufacture of potash glass emulating Theophilus' recipes resulted in colours ranging from colourless to yellow, amber, brown, green, blue, pink and purple. These variations in colour, hue, and depth could probably be affected by the source of the beech wood ash, depending on the soil chemistry where the beech tree grew, the age of the tree and the climate conditions, etc. Some of the stronger reds, blues and greens that are a feature of medieval stained glass rely on the addition of copper oxides.



The design of the window would then be drawn on a board with the image created by arranging different pieces of coloured glass over the top, rather like a jigsaw puzzle, any further colouration or detail being painted onto the glass by the artist.

To assemble the window the coloured pieces are re-laid onto the design board with the edges of each

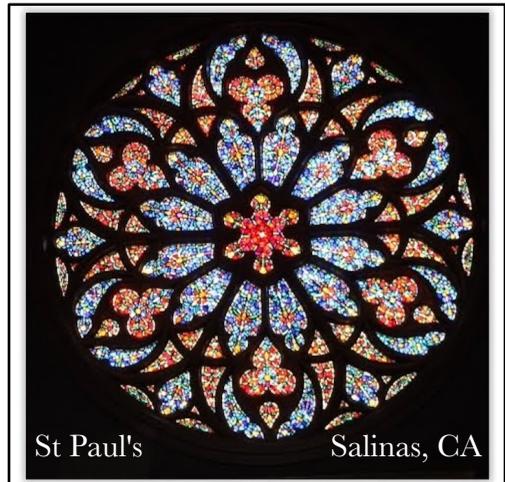
piece fitted into H-sectioned strips of lead called 'comes'. These comes were then soldered to one another to secure the panel, which when complete had putty inserted between the glass and the lead comes for waterproofing. The entire assembly would then be stabilised with an iron frame (armature) and mounted in the window.

Whitefriars Glass, possibly Britain's longest running glass house and arguably the best, can be actually dated to 1720 to a small

glassworks off Fleet Street in London. The factory was purchased in the early 1834 by James Powell, a London Wine Merchant and entrepreneur. Although initially ignorant of the art of glass making, Powell and his three sons soon acquired the necessary expertise. Then through adaptation and new technologies, they invented and patented manufacturing processes to set them up as leaders in the production of glass for stained glass windows new and old. It is now re-established in larger premises in Wealdstone, and it is interesting to note that live coals were taken from the old works to light the first furnace at the new works so it could be said that the Whitefriars furnaces has burned continuously.

Obviously the design of more modern buildings incorporate rose windows also. A fine example is the St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Salinas, California. Its third building, dedicated in 1953, includes such a window, which interestingly is glazed with glass procured from the Whitefriars Glass Co here in the UK.

(A slightly longer version of this article first appeared in *White Rose Notes*, spring 2013.)



## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Dues for the Heritage Roses Group will increase to \$20 as of this year, 2022.

We have not raised our dues for ten years. Cost of postage, ink, paper and envelopes necessitate this raise. We can accept PAYPAL payments, but we must add an extra \$1 to cover its fee! Make PAYPAL payments payable to [e.c.jennings@gmail.com](mailto:e.c.jennings@gmail.com). We hope you will continue to support HRG.



## **A DUKE, AN OPERA, A ROSE**

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**

At the Celebration of Old Roses in El Cerrito, CA, the year its founder Miriam Wilkins died, 2009, an exquisite rose excited me. Far from being fondled, I was enchanted, enamored, smitten. The rose was 'Robert le Diable', a name as fascinating as the rose. The colors, the shape, the fragrance of the rose forced my feet to return to its vase again and again.

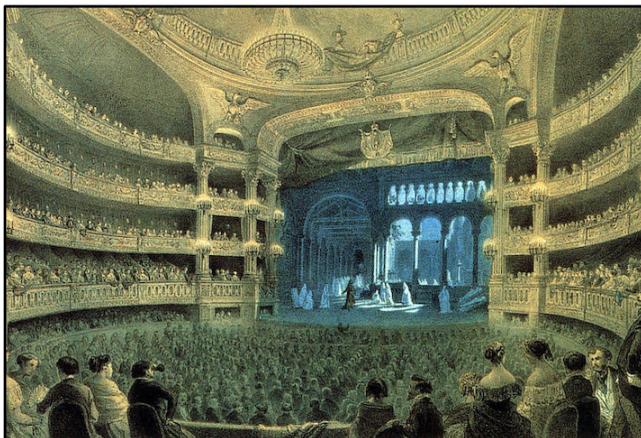
Graham Thomas declares the rose "most beautifully shaped, the half-open blooms have bold outer reflexing petals, and later all the petals reflex somewhat except those held centrally, which remain erect and poised outwards." He sees the color as predominantly "dark slatey lilac-purple." Suzanne Verrier's eye for color sees the rose as "tinted lilac-purple, violet-purple, cerise, crimson, and gray, changing to mauve-gray at maturity." Erstwhile vice-president of the erstwhile Royal National Rose Society describes the color as "prevailing parma violet," sometimes with dark purple petals and "intense cerise, while some are splashed with scarlet." The purple prose of Nancy Lindsay in 1955 claims "the ambrosial, lustrous flowers shimmer heliotrope and fuchsia and orchid-purple to an elegiac parma-violet." (*Ambrosial* and *elegiac* are

rather over-the-top. And she did get the name wrong, calling the rose “Robert de Diable.”) It is a beautiful rose!

This strongly scented *Centifolia* (some claim it is a *Gallica* —“definitely a devil to classify,” quips Suzanne Verrier) grows about four feet tall, a height more suggestive of *Gallica* than *Centifolia*, which generally favors heights of five to seven feet; but its tendency to sprawl suggests *Centifolia*. No doubt it is a hybrid.

While no one seems certain of this rose’s year of origin, according to Peter Harkness, it was offered for sale in a Parisien nursery catalogue in 1837, six years after Meyerbeer’s opera *Robert le Diable* made its debut, a work regarded by most musicians to be the first Grand Opera. The *ARS Encyclopedia of Roses* makes a guess that it was introduced about 1831, which, if named for the opera, seems unlikely since opening night occurred November 21 of 1831.

The opera was immediately successful from its first night. The histrionic music, superb orchestration, melodramatic story, the star-quality singers, and dramatic stage effects compelled



**"Robert le Diable" at Salle Le Peletier Opera**

audience member Frédéric Chopin to exclaim, “If ever magnificence was seen in the theatre, I doubt that it reached the level of splendour shown in *Robert* . . . . It is a masterpiece! Meyerbeer has made himself immortal.” When performed on July 13, 1832, Berlioz, Honore Daumier, Alexandre Dumas, and Victor Hugo sat in the audience. By April of 1834, the opera had performed more than 100 times in Paris. In 1847 Felix Mendelssohn, who detested the music, nonetheless attended a London performance in order to hear Jenny Lind’s British debut in the role of Alice.

In brief, the opera's protagonist Robert is the son of Bertram, who has sold his soul to the Devil and now attempts to manipulate Robert to do the same by inducing him to sign a document that he will serve his father (and the Devil) for all eternity. He has until midnight of a certain day, but, about to sign, he is foiled by love, Robert's lover Isabelle. And Bertram is pulled into hell.

Whether for the opera or the man, the rose is named for Robert, Duke of Normandy (1000-1035), also called Duke Robert the Magnificent for his love of sartorial splendor, and sometimes called Robert the Devil. This last title pertained on the suspicion by some malcontents that he had instigated the murder of his brother, the previous duke. One legend also claims he was born in answer of prayers to the devil. He founded the Abbey of St. Trinité at Rouen in 1030—partly, perhaps, to counteract such rumors.

Though he fathered two children, each from apparently a different woman, he never married. His son was none other than William the Conqueror. Returning from a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Robert le Diable died in 1035. Initially buried in Turkey, he was later—in 1087—disinterred and reburied in Apulia, Italy.

### **CREDITS**

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# SCENTED ROSES FOR THE BLIND—AND OTHERS

**Darrell g.h. Schramm**

At the annual Celebration of Old Roses in El Cerrito one year, where I helped sell roses for The Friends of Vintage Roses, several times I was approached by prospective buyers requesting, “Which rose here smells the best?” or “Please point out for me the roses with the strongest scents.” In one instance I held a strongly fragrant rose under the nose of a woman who declared she could barely smell it. “Really?” I replied. “Its scent is quite strong to me.” I should have taken that opportunity to educate the public.

So a quick word about the scent of these flowers. The strength of a rose’s fragrance often depends upon the time of day, the weather, the soil, and your own nose. Some roses release their scent in the morning, others in bright sunlight—‘Arrillaga’, for instance, seems to have no scent unless in full sun; some roses are more fragrant in one type of soil than another; some are more fragrant on the bush than in a vase and vice versa—‘Darlow’s Enigma’, for example, seems only weakly scented until brought indoors where its fragrance can fill a room; and some people have a more sensitive nose than others. Some roses release their scent from the petals, others from the stamens. But there is general agreement about roses that have a noticeable perfume.

As I searched through the more-or-less 300 roses for sale, I noticed that most of those known for their perfume had already been sold. Quite likely some of those were the first to go because they had been bought by people who knew of those roses. Here, then, for those unfamiliar with these beauties of the garden, are the names of old roses bearing or even wafting a perfume; many of them are repeat bloomers.

Aimée Vibert

Alfred Colomb

American Beauty

Arthur de Sansal

Barcelona

Baron Girod de l’Ain

Baronne Prevost

Belle Amour

Belle de Crecy

Barcelona



Belle Poitevine	Isphahan
Blanc de Vibert	Jacques Cartier
Blush Noisette	Jaune Desprez
Boule de Neige	Jens Munk
Bourbon Queen	Joasine Hanet
Buff Beauty	John Hopper
Captaine John Ingram	Kathleen
Catherine Mermet	La France
Cecile Brunner	La Reine Victoria
Celsiana	Leda
Chloris	Louise Odier
Clytemnestra	Maman Cochet
Comice de Tarn et Garonne	Marechal Davoust
Commandante Beaurepaire	Marechal Niel
Comte de Chambord	Marie Louise
Comtesse de Murinais	Marie Pavie
Conrad F. Meyer	Mme Alfred Carriere
Constance Spry	Mme Ernst Calvat
Crimson Glory	Mme Hardy
Dainty Bess	Mme Isaac Pereire
De Meaux	Mme Lariol de Barney
Empereur du Maroc	Mme Louis Lévêque
Etoile de Hollande	Mme Pierre Oger
Eugene de Beauharnais	Mme Plantier
Felicia	Mme Scipion Cochet
Felicite Parmentier	Mme Zöetmans
Ferdinand Pichard	Moonlight
Francois Juranville	Mrs. John Laing
General Kleber	Nastarana
Gloire de Rosomanes	Nur Mahal
Gruss an Aachen	Papa Gontier
Gruss an Coburg	Papa Meilland
Hadley	Paul Neyron
Hansa	Penelope
Hebe's Lip	Pergolèse
Henri Martin	Prince Camille de Rohan
Henry Hudson	Queen of the Musks
Henry Nevard	Reine des Violettes
Honorine de Brabant	Rêve d'Or

Roger Lambelin  
*Rosa carolina*  
Rosa Centifolia Muscosa  
*Rosa moschata*  
*Rosa rugosa alba*  
*Rosa rugosa rubra*  
Rose a Parfum de l'Hay  
Rose de Rescht  
Rose du Roi  
Roseraie de l'Haÿ

Shot Silk  
Sombreuil  
Souvenir de la Malmaison  
Souvenire de St. Anne's  
Souvenir du Dr Jamain  
Stanwell Perpetual  
Variegata di Bologna  
Ulrich Brunner *filz*  
William Lobb  
Zepherine Drouhin



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to cover their fee!

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## **Remembering Anne Belovich**

**Pam Greenwald**

Many rose lovers found a friend in Anne Belovich who recently passed on November 16, 2021. Her love of flowers was instilled by her mother who had cottage gardens surrounding their modest home on the coast of California. Most of her young adult life was spent teaching as a botanist. She and her

husband Max restored an old wooden boat and sailed around the world, but her love for plants never subsided.

When Anne and Max returned to land, they first lived in San Diego Canyon, but upon retirement decided to move to Washington State where they could be closer to the snow and their passion for sledding with their Alaskan malamute dogs. There they built their craftsman-style home and began to fill the five acres with roses. Anne got hooked on the Ramblers when she realized that no other rose would put out such a spectacular bloom and grow so large as these hybrid species roses. So she set out to collect all she could, ending up with over 350 varieties. These were showcased in one of her several books on roses, called *Ramblers and Other Species Hybrids* (2016).

Anne was a fearless charmer, admired and loved the world over for her knowledge and expertise on these cultivars which she freely shared with rose friends and gardens. Many were super rare, collected from all over the world. Finally in 2012 Anne was honored at the Heritage Rose Foundation Conference held at the Chambersville Farm near Dallas, Texas.

“Ramblers were very popular in gardens in America and Europe in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s. Many of the roses existing today were hybridized during this era. Today Rambling roses are more correctly referred by their botanically correct classifications such as Hybrid Multiflora or Hybrid Wichurana; however, they are still called Ramblers by most rosarians. Ramblers are simply first or second generation, once blooming, crosses of species roses with more modern, larger flowered roses.”



**Anne planting one of her ramblers at Chambersville**

The above description comes from the Chambersville Tree Farms in McKinney, Texas, where Anne was honored in 2012 with the planting of the Anne Belovich Rambler Garden. This culminated in her dream of her high priority of preserving her valuable collection of rambling roses for future rose lovers to enjoy. I was fortunate to be a scheduled speaker at that event, and I carry away fond memories of the last time I saw Anne in her element. Her new namesake rose, a yellow Rambler by Kim Rupert, was also introduced at this time.

Anne was very proud of the garden space provided by Dean and Carol Oswald and the design created by Stephen Scanniello and curator Claude Graves. For her small 80-something lb. frame, Anne was still as spritely and carefree as ever. I can see her frolicking among the roses on the other side where her beloved Ramblers are probably in bloom for Eternity.

## ROGER PHILLIPS: IN MEMORIAM

Author, artist, gardener, photographer, pacifist, mycologist, and rosarian—each of these labels, professions and pursuits—define the fearless versatility of vocations married to the man Roger Howard Phillips. He died November 15, 2021. He was 89.



Rose lovers generally know him through his books on roses, collaborations with botanist Martyn Rix, but he wrote more than forty books, books on wild flowers, “wild food”, trees, herbs, medicinal plants, mushrooms, and more. A prolific and vibrant man.

Born in December of 1932, he shared life with Nicky Foy by whom he sired two daughters. A son Sam was of an earlier marriage. Described by one of his friends as “colorful—not to say wacky—and enthusiastic,” Phillips became a jazz enthusiast and a painter. For more than four decades he developed and managed London’s garden of Eccleston Square.

In 1975 he began photographing plants, including roses. His co-authored book *Roses* was published in 1988. Allowing no moss to amass underfoot, Phillips, with Rix, soon found himself in China’s interior where for at least nine days they traveled, searching for and identifying roses. One rose was a discovery they named “Lijang Road Climber”, a rose according to Phillips, that made “the whole trip worthwhile.” It was clear to both men that Chinas and Tea roses had long been bred in the interior.

The result of that trip generated the 1993 book *The Quest for the Rose*, which led to a six-part TV series on the BBC. Book and series were followed by a booklet in 1998, *Old Roses*. In 2004 their supposedly “comprehensive” *Best Rose Guide* (which unfortunately is neither comprehensive nor the best available) appeared in print. Phillips’ color images of roses are meticulous, many against a white or ivory backdrop. *The Quest for the Rose* on page 211 contains a photo of the remarkable Miriam Wilkins, founder of our Heritage Roses Group.

## FROM OUR READERS

Dear Editor D. Schramm, Just a note to say—wow! I was bowled over by this issue [Nov.]—starting with your gorgeous cover! Thanks for (again) making my day (in these dark times).---Judy Rock, PA

I can't tell you all how much I enjoy the *Rose Letter*. I was pleased to see Joe Kern's name & his wonderful rose collection mentioned. In the early 1970s I ordered any number of varieties from Joe & visited with him on the phone. He was so thoughtful and interesting. My favorite of Joe's roses is Alika, what a great hardy, fragrant, healthy rose.

—Nan Slingerland, WY

I'd like to let you know how much I enjoy your articles in the Heritage Rose Group "Rose Letter". —Christine Tweet, NV

## IN MEMORY OF DAVID ELLIOTT

David, who had been ill for more than a year, died peacefully in his sleep at home early Friday morning, Nov. 12, 2021, as he had wished.

David and his wife Crenaugh Elliott have been Communicators for the World Federation of Rose Societies Heritage Rose Committee and have been responsible for sending email copies of its newsletter *By Any Other Name* to rosarians around the world. The publication gives a world-wide view of news in the world of Old Garden Roses and Gardens. David is also credited with many photos of roses on HelpMeFind.

In honor of David, you may wish to donate to the Friends of Government Gardens Society, of which he and Crenaugh were members: 1402 Rockland Ave., Victoria, British Columbia. The formal gardens are huge and quite worth viewing.

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oldtearoses@gmail.com or perry@calcentral.co

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*Rosa x alba Semiplena*