

The Ventura Rose



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VCRS May Meeting & Presentation

May 28, 2015
Show & Tell

The Roses of Spring: Show & Tell

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for refreshments
Rose Sharing & Celebration 7:00 p.m.
Guest Speaker Presentation 7:30 p.m.

5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo, CA
www.venturarose.org

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The Roses of Spring by VCRS Members

This is your program...made possible by your love of roses and the joy that sharing the beauty of the Rose brings to our hearts, our little plot of ground and our community. Bring a few of your favorite cut roses in a container of water to share. Talk about the roses you have on your 'wish list'; tools you can't do without; changes to your irrigation system; which fertilizers and mulches you use in the rose garden; or what variety of rose grows well in your climate. This is a program where we have lots of time to learn from one another and exchange ideas. The success of the evening depends on YOU!

Janet Shlar

Musings from Elton MacPherson



Hello Fellow Rose Lovers,

Soon we will be taking our Summer Break (no meetings or newsletters) in July and August. But before that we have three terrific events lined up.

First is our May 28 meeting which will be a Show & Tell. Everyone is encouraged to bring two things: roses from your garden and a guest or guests. We had such a good time last year that we decided to do this every year.

Second is our trip to Descanso Gardens. On Saturday, June 6,

we will join with the San Fernando Valley and the Beverly Hills Rose Societies for a docent led tour of the Descanso Rose Garden. After that we are free to roam the grounds on our own. There is plenty to see and do. The admission price is \$10 but if you are a member of ARS you only pay \$4 which goes to the docent. Be sure to bring your ARS membership card with you. I will have a sign-up sheet at the May 28 meeting. Please bring your admission fee with you to the meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring your family or friends for a wonderful day in the Gardens. I'm

hoping my daughter Lori and her husband Keith and my two Grandchildren Liam and Aidan will join us. Imagine three generations of MacPherson/Rawlinsons!

Third is our regular June meeting which will feature Suzanne Horn who will speak on Gardening in Containers. I'm especially looking forward to this because all of my roses are in containers and most of you probably have some containers in your garden.

I'll see you at the May 28 meeting.

Elton MacPherson
VCRS President

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Otto & Sons Rose Days - Barbara Morse

I visited Otto & Sons on Friday April 24th to help with the VCRS information table and to check out the roses I love. I arrived under overcast skies with cool temperatures; a first in all the years I have attended Rose Days at Otto & Sons. The information table, set up by Dawn-Marie Johnson, was well supplied with roses and literature, and located in a protected area from the weather elements.

There were very few visitors on this afternoon and no talk scheduled until late in the day. So after checking in with Scott Klittich and several other employees working the sales, I took myself on a walkabout to find roses to photograph as those are what I would take home. Definitely a first for me!

The fields were abundant in colors and varieties with most in

bloom. Of course the acre of icebergs, white and pink, were in bloom. I roamed through hundreds of my favorites: Austins, hybrid teas, and floribundas, taking delight in the fragrance and care that Scott gives all his roses to bring them ready for sale.

Bishop's Castle, Sunstruck, Opening Night, and many others came home with me on my camera.

Barbara has just returned from a "Grand European" tour of rose gardens in England and Italy. She will also be the guest speaker for the June meeting of the Pacific Corinthian Yacht Club.



Opening Night (above)
Sunstruck (below right)
Pink & White Icebergs (left)
Bishop's Castle (below left)
Photos by Barbara Morse

If you have never been to Otto & Sons Rose Days, what are you waiting for?

Elton just bought California Dreaming, white with pink edges.



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Our Roses and That *%#@* Drought!

This quote from the Huntington Gardens Bulletin was shared by Karen Fitzpatrick: "You can still have a beautiful garden while using less water; you can even keep your roses. The secret to growing roses sustainably?" "Mulch, mulch, and mulch some more," says Tom Carruth, The Huntington's E.L. and Ruth B. Shannon Curator of the Rose Collections. "A thick application of mulch is an absolute necessity to conserve moisture and cool the plant's roots and soil."

If you don't know how much water your roses need, try this technique. After you've watered them well, stop and wait until you see the rose wilt and the little buds start to hang their heads. That will give you a baseline. If it takes 8 days for your roses to wilt, then you know you should water about once a week. Experts say that roses are tougher than people think, and they will leaf out and increase their blooms when cooler weather arrives in the fall.

Roses in Early America by Alex Bugaeff

Adapted from ARS&You, May 2015:

Some time ago, Stephen Scanniello, President of the Heritage Rose Foundation, made a presentation to the Connecticut Rose Society describing his efforts to reintroduce the roses of history to New York City by planting surviving varieties throughout Manhattan. In the course of his talk, he recounted how Alexander Hamilton's wife Elizabeth had included roses in the landscaping of their estate, The Grange, in upper Harlem around 1802.

This got me thinking - we know that roses go back long before that in the rest of the world, but what about in the New World? As a student of early American history and author of two books on our nation's founding, I was well aware of Hamilton, his wife Elizabeth and The Grange; but I did not know about their incorporation of roses into their landscape. So, I did a little research. This is what I learned.

Roses have been grown in North America for longer than most of us imagine. When the Jamestown settlers first landed on a Virginia Beach, the Native Americans were already beautifying their villages

with roses. Captain John Smith reported seeing roses all around the Powhatan camps in his journal. He did not report the varieties, their origins or whether they were used for medicinal or culinary purposes (perhaps he did not know); but going back at least to 1607 seems like heritage enough.

The Pilgrims planted roses at Plymouth Plantation starting in 1621. Their first governor, John Carver, reported in his journal that they planted "reds, whites and damasks." He did not say where they got the plants and there is no mention of roses on the bill of lading for the Mayflower. We can only surmise that, knowing what we know about the Powhatan roses, the Pilgrims may have obtained them from the surrounding Native American tribes.

in 1699, on his return voyage from London, William Penn, founder of the Pennsylvania colony, brought "18 rose bushes." In addition to growing them on his property, he must have propagated them; as starting, in 1731, he used them in lieu of cash for payments of rent on land parcels he was occupying. Thus, we know that roses were held in high value in the colonies. Being something of a

botanist, Penn also made reference to them for the "beauty and medicinal properties" in his *Book of Physicks*.

Benjamin Franklin, the earliest of the six major Founding Fathers (I call them "The Super Six"), was renowned in the western world as a groundbreaking scientist. He proved that lightning is electricity. He invented batteries, the wood stove and bifocal glasses. You would think that he might have dabbled in the most popular plant of the day - the rose. He did not. At least, there is no evidence of it in his writings or records.

Neither did another of the Super Six - James Madison. However, we can forgive him as he was fragile and sickly his whole life; and oddly enough, outlived all the rest and achieved the age of 85. Nonetheless, with an estate of hundreds of acres in which he took great pride, it is hard to imagine that he did not have roses as his friends did - especially Thomas Jefferson.

Continued next page

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Roses in Early America continued:

We know Thomas Jefferson to have been a plantsman, botanist, farmer and landscape designer. His papers are replete with references to his growing of Gallicas, "Sweetbriars" (likely what we now know as Eglantines) and wild roses of unnamed varieties. Jefferson placed an order with the William Prince Nursery of Flushing Landing, New York in 1791 for as follows: "Two Roses of the Month" (yes, the merchants of the day conducted marketing campaigns very much like ours!) - 'Old Blush', two China roses, and two Musks, *Rosa moschata*." Not only do his papers contain the original of this order, but also the receipt signed by him.

In a November 1, 1816 journal entry, Jefferson reported his planting of roses at his getaway retreat, Poplar Forest, thus: "... (I) planted large roses of diff. kinds in the oval bed in the N. front, dwarf roses in the N.E. oval...". There is no doubt that Jefferson was an avid rose grower, if not rosarian.

Nor can there be any

doubt about John Adams' affinity for roses. While there is no mention in his or Abigail's papers of his growing roses on his various personal properties, we know that he ordered the first planting of roses on White House grounds in 1800. So, despite claims that Ellen Wilson established the White House Rose Garden in 1913, or that maybe Edith Roosevelt did in 1902, it turns out that John Adams beat them to it by at least 200 years.

Was Steve Scanniello correct when he reported that Eliza Hamilton planted roses at The Grange? he surely was. From Alexander's papers, we know that he was captivated by landscaping. In planning for the construction of The Grange, Alexander sought direction from agricultural expert Richard Peters, from Thomas Jefferson himself and from Dr. David Hosack, a professor of botany at Columbia College and founder of the botanical garden there.

Alexander visited the botanical garden frequently and got

advice from Hosack on his landscape plan. This culminated in Alexander's specific directions for Eliza's installation that included the front rotunda: "...the space should be planted with wild roses..." He didn't specify the varieties, leaving that to Eliza, but we know from the pride he showed in the finished estate in 1802 that she chose and positioned them wisely.

This leaves the last of my Super Six: George Washington... The history books report that Washington bred roses. The most prominent reference is to the 'Mary Washington' - a double, repeating white/near white/white blend Noisette that he is said to have named after his mother.

This leaves the last of my Super Six: George Washington. As with other aspects of his life, he is credited with much; but some must be assessed with what they call in the Navy "a weather eye."

The history books report that Washington bred roses. The most prominent reference is to the 'Mary Washington' - a double, repeating white/near



'Mary Washington' rose, photo from Rogue Valley Nursery

white/white blend Noisette that he is said to have named after his mother. Here's the problem: George died in 1799; the Noisette is reported to have been first hybridized in 1810 (by John Champneys of South Carolina). Did Washington create a rose of another class that history now assigns to him as a Noisette? Or, has a myth 'grown' up around Washington's love of roses as a simple gardener? You be the judge. In any event, 'Mary Washington' can still be bought as a direct descendant of that original plant with those same qualities, regardless of whomever bred it.

This article first appeared in the February 2015 issue of The Connecticut Rose.

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Coming Soon

**May 28: VCRS Meeting
Roses from Your Garden**

**June 6:
Descanso Garden Tour**

**June 25: VCRS Meeting
Suzanne Horn
Container Gardening**

**July 18: Suzanne Horn,
LadyRedLHW@aol.com
LA Arboretum
Consulting Rosarian School**

2015 Board Members

President: Elton MacPherson
Vice-President: Connie Estes
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Secretary: Dawn-Marie Johnson
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Audit Chair: Bud Jones
Program Chairs: Elda Bielanski & Karen Fitzpatrick
Sunshine Chair: Nell August
Online Information: Earl Holst
Webmistress: Penni Tyler

Volunteer Thank You's Go To:

The following VCRS members came to help at our VCRS Information Table at Otto & Sons Rose Days from April 24-26: Barbara Morse, Earl Holst, Barbara Drury, Elton MacPherson, Karen Fitzpatrick and Crystal Salapatas. Although the weather changed from cold and cloudy to warm and sunny over the three day event, the spirit of the rose lovers who attended never varied. The Klittich family and the Otto & Sons Nursery staff are always so welcoming and helpful. Rose Days is the perfect opportunity for our society to make new rose friends, share our love of roses and give helpful advice on growing good roses!

A few volunteers did find roses they 'just couldn't live without' as the variety and quality was outstanding. Be sure to ask all of them what roses came home with them as it is always fun to hear about the 'New Roses.'

Karen Fitzpatrick recruited a speaker on 'Healthy Soil' for 2016 and Suzanne Horn was there to speak on Austin Roses. We will hear from her on June 25 at our General Meeting.

From Dawn-Marie Johnson: With back seats down and covered with a big blue tarp, I managed to load up three really big healthy 5 gallon climbers into the back of my good old Toyota. Two 'High Society' to grace the front of the rose pergola (love that deep magenta pink color) and one red 'Blaze Improved' - a special request from my gardener to give to his wife for Mother's Day...smart man! In the Garden Shop I found two rolls of clear plastic garden tape to tie up the climbing roses and if I had any extra room in the car I would have bought a garden bench too! I also enjoyed listening to and

learning from Scott's "Grow the Best" program.

From Barbara Drury: I love Romantic Roses and I came home with 'Ann's Promise', 'Brother Cadfael' (a consistent bloomer for me), 'The Pilgrim' as a salute to my ancestors who came to America in 1660 and 'Tranquility' because I am a Moon Child.

From Earl Holst: I did not get a plant of any kind this Rose Days, but I did stock up on rose and fruit tree fertilizers that are priced better at Otto & Sons than any place else. I also found some bird netting for the fruit trees as well. The birds are already starting to get interested in the peaches. So for us, going to Otto & Sons is about going to a well run garden nursery.

From Karen Fitzpatrick: Crystal Salapatas and I had a wonderful time in the Rose Tent at Otto & Sons. Yes, we both added several amazing specimens to our gardens. One especially delightful new rose is 'Boscobel', which we both purchased. Described as a Leander hybrid with a medium strong myrrh fragrance, it has beautiful salmon blend rosette blooms and is shade tolerant. It is a lovely experience to spend time at this incredible nursery and we always learn about the newest products and tips. We heard Suzanne Horn's talk on Austin roses where she was surrounded by gorgeous selections from the Otto & Sons extensive collection. Then we listened to Jack Engberg (of GroPower) and his presentation on soils and fertilizers. We met visitors who were interested in our Rose Society. We were both very glad we were given this opportunity to attend Rose Days.