



# CEMETERY ROSE

*Old City Cemetery Historic Rose Garden  
Preserving California's Heritage Roses*



Volume 6, Issue 3

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## Open Garden

The Open Garden in the Historic City Cemetery will be held on Saturday, April 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. While our focus is on the Historic Rose Garden, both Hamilton Square and the Native Plant Demonstration gardens will be open to visitors.

Every year this newsletter states that the Open Garden event will be the best ever. In 2007 there are good reasons for stating it again. The extraordinary work done by volunteers under the very capable guidance of Anita Clevenger, the Farmer's Almanac predictions of nearly perfect spring weather, and remarkable success of plant propa-

*by Judy Eitzen*

gation success for this year's sale lead to no other conclusion. The roses are budding out now and promise to be exceptional.

The Rose Garden has been tended with great care and expertise. Extra volunteers who attended deadheading parties last spring and summer and January's pruning invitational have worked with regular garden volunteers to ensure that every rose got some attention. In some cases the attention was simply a visual assessment, but most received the attention of pruners, loppers or saws. The roses are responding with fresh new growth and buds

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***Cemetery Rose  
Garden  
Activities and  
Dates***

**Open Garden  
Saturday April 21  
10 a.m.—3 p.m.**

**Celebration of Old  
Roses  
El Cerrito  
May 20  
(page 5)**

## Rethinking Deadheading

As we've pruned this winter, we've been noticing strong canes that have been abruptly cut off at midpoint. Instead of those canes becoming major structural elements, they are awkward stubs.

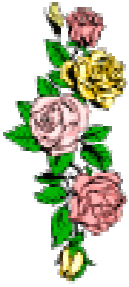
The more vigorous types, especially teas, chinas, noisettes and polyanthas, respond by frantically generating growth from buds below the cut. The new canes are less strong, and may be weakly attached. They head out at awkward angles, sometimes snaking across the

*by Anita Clevenger*

center of the plant. New growth often looks like spokes on a wheel, or a thicket known as "witch's broom." Whatever you call it, the results are ugly.

At first, we suspected phantom pruners who were sneaking into the cemetery and chopping off the canes while no one was looking. Then, we realized that we had met the enemy, and it was us. Barbara said it first. "Do you suppose," she ventured, "the problem is deadheading?"

*(Continued on page 5)*

*"I'm A Gardener, not a ....."**editorial*

**Many Thanks  
To our  
Pruning Party  
Volunteers**

*Master Gardeners:*

*Gold Coast Roses  
Group*

*Rose Garden  
Supporters*

Okay, spring is just about here. It's the time when we morph ourselves into those-who-garden-while-it's-nice-outside from those-who-prune-in-all-types-of- weathers. Getting into the garden is not only a imperative drive in our blood, but it becomes fun again.

For those old enough to remember the original Star Trek TV series, Dr. McCoy was always being asked to perform various non-medical duties. His response was, of course, "I'm a doctor, not a ...". A similar statement could readily apply to us all.

We should not consider ourselves rude when we respond to a friend who wants to go to the movies on a bright, sunny afternoon by saying, "I'm a gardener, not a judge for the Oscars."

Our non-gardening friends and family should just plan on getting through this season as best they can. I know my

house becomes less organized—and messier—when I spend more time in the garden. When everything begins to leaf out, I tend to leave the house and go out. If I work at it now, I can lie in my hammock in late spring and really enjoy being in my beautiful garden.

Recently, I spent just one such afternoon indoors, wielding needle-nosed pliers, working with friends to repair jewelry. How did I know it was going to be a perfect day for gardening? I suppose I could have said, "I'm a gardener, not a jeweler." That day I did not do so.

But I'm going on notice right now, that spring requires my being outdoors planting, weeding, coaxing, nipping and enjoying and if you hear me say, "I'm a gardener, not a .....", I'll apologize now.

Contributions, complaints, greetings: [verlaine@citlink.net](mailto:verlaine@citlink.net) or call me at 685-6634.  
*Judy Eitzen*

## January Pruning Party

*by Judy Eitzen*

A very cold January we had this year. Very cold indeed. It was not too cold however, to keep 19 intrepid gardeners away from the Historic Rose Garden's Pruning Invitational on January 20. We invited all volunteers, Master Gardeners and antique rose pruning experts...no the experts are not antiques...the roses are.

We bundled up and worked diligently to gently attack roses Anita Clevenger had identified as needing attention. Actually, some roses were rather vigorously attacked, and some roses attacked the volunteers. (We had band-aids on hand.)

Midway through the morning, Cass Bernstein of the Gold Coast Roses Group gave a very knowledgeable

demonstration of pruning techniques. We worked in groups of two or three on the larger plants, while some tackled roses on their own. Altogether, we pruned more than 30 roses in one day.

A volunteer-supplied lunch of hot soup and even hotter chili was well received on our cold day. (Not to mention, that our volunteers are good cooks, too!)

We stuck it out until mid-afternoon, retiring only when most of us were getting a little blue around the edges.

The 2nd Annual Pruning Invitational was a great success and will probably be repeated. If you're interested, give your name to Anita Clevenger for next year. We promise a hot lunch and many thanks.

## Open Garden, Cont.

*(Continued from page 1)*

everywhere. New tags will make it easy to identify each plant.


The event will include three guided tours of the Rose Garden; at 10:15 and 11:45 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Rosy items will be sold (t-shirts, aprons, etc.) and a raffle of special items will be held at 2:30 p.m.

Roses will be available for sale throughout the event. The majority of these plants are those propagated from the Cemetery's own plants by a group of dedicated volunteers. The work was done through the courtesy of Dave Andrews, of the Consumnes River College Horticultural Department. Each year, the campus greenhouse is the site of our

work and this year we labored long and your favorite Cemetery roses will be available for planting in your garden (at very reasonable prices).

Volunteers are needed for the Welcome Table, the Rose sales table, the rosy stuff sales table and set up and cleanup plus general "go-fers". If you can volunteer, please email [anitac@surewest.net](mailto:anitac@surewest.net). If you can't volunteer, please plan to come to the event as a guest. It's free!

All sales proceeds will be used to benefit the garden; purchase of tools, supplies, more roses, etc. Do plan to visit the garden on April 21 - it's going to be bee-u-ti-ful!



**OPEN GARDEN  
SCHEDULE**

*Tours:*  
10:15 a.m.  
11:45 a.m.  
1:15 p.m.

*Raffle:*  
2:30 p.m.



Cass's Demonstration ↑

↓ Christine gets into this one!



## Maintenance Report

*by Anita Clevenger*

Never has so much pruning been done on the cemetery's roses. The dry January weather made it possible for us to be there every work day, pruning shears in hand. There was no rest for we volunteers, so long as we remembered to wear our long johns to withstand the sub-freezing temperatures. Fortunately, it warmed up a little for the January 20th pruning party. We talked, absorbed a pruning lesson conducted by Cass Bernstein, worked and ate our way through a beautiful day.

The Sheriff's Work Project crew has been busy, too. We've asked them to defoliate the roses and they've spent many hours picking off old leaves, raking them off the ground, and hauling them away. It's much easier to prune a rose when the leaves have first been removed. Dead, discolored, damaged or diseased canes are readily apparent. It's also easier to stand back and assess the shape of the plant. We've had the crew focus on removing leaves from Hybrid Teas and Hybrid Perpetuals, as well as any other rose which tends to develop disease. Often, diseases such as rust are most prevalent on old (senescent) leaves. The spores overwinter on disease-bearing old leaves, so removing them is a priority.

We wonder just how the spring bloom will respond to all of the cold weather. We saw no sign of freeze damage, other than some shriveled leaves on 'Lamarque.' Many of the roses with European or species background bloom better with winter chill, so it is possible that the Albas, Gallicas, Hybrid Chinas and species will be better than ever.

Despite our cold weather, the roses seem to be budding out on a typical spring schedule. As I write this in mid-February, leaves are already unfurling on many of the bare canes, and we have noticed sap running on some of the roses as we complete our pruning. It's time to refocus our efforts. Barbara and I will lead a sweep through the garden, looking for dead canes to remove or other problems. We volunteers will also start picking off spent blooms and discolored hips, getting the roses ready to be at their best for the Open Garden. We're going to hang a new set of tags, too. Even though winter pruning is over, there is always something more to do! We also, of course, will take some time to enjoy our beautiful location, and stop to smell the roses.



## Ralph Moore Turns 100 and We Are There!

*By Judy Eitzen*

Four from Sacramento felt privileged to attend the 100th Birthday Party for Ralph Moore of Sequoia Nursery in Visalia in January. Anita Clevenger, Liz Hall, Barbara Oliva and Judy Eitzen traveled down the road to attend his official party which had grown so large as to be moved to the city's convention center.

We felt even more privileged when we attended a private birthday dinner with the well known and beloved rose breeder followed by a visit to the nursery the next day and a less formal, more intimate event. We came home feeling energized by the good company, good fellowship and lots of rose talk...not to mention that we all bought roses, too!

As they always do, a reporter asked Mr. Moore, "How do you get to be 100?", Mr. Moore replied, "When you get to 99 you start being careful."



## Deadheading, con't.

(Continued from page 1)

Well, yes, that is indeed the problem on many of these roses. Last year, we deadheaded more than usual, even to the extent of having deadheading parties during the summer months. As conventional wisdom dictates, we've cut to the first outward-facing five-leaflet bud. That's reasonably good advice for modern roses, but for our older varieties in the cemetery, it's way too far down the cane.

### Why?

Why do we deadhead, anyway? It's conventional wisdom, once again, that says that we need to deadhead to encourage another bloom cycle. Setting hips, it is said, will cause the plant to think that it's produced enough seed so that it doesn't need to bloom anymore. On some roses, that's true. But we've all seen new growth sprout just below the flower clusters on many of the older roses, whether or not they've been deadheaded. Some of these roses don't develop fertile hips, and others are simply blooming fools and will keep on pumping out flowers even if seed-bearing hips have been produced.

Of course, once-blooming roses won't flower again, no matter whether the spent flowers or hips are removed or not. So, deadheading is "necessary" for rebloom only on certain types of roses, or to remove spent flowers or hips that we consider unsightly.

At the gathering of rosarians at Ralph Moore's 100th birthday party I cornered a few of the most knowledge-

able and asked their advice. They all suggested that we deadhead by just snapping off the spent flower or newly forming hip. There's a point at which flower stalks readily separate from the plant, known as the "abscission point."

I had expected that the rosarians would suggest only doing this for teas, chinas and similar roses. To my surprise, they said this would work for all types of roses, even Hybrid Perpetuals and Hybrid Teas. Ron Robertson, of Garden Valley Ranch, said that we should just "bend and snap," borrowing a phrase from the movie "Legally Blonde." Growth buds are right below the abscission point, he says, and the rose will continue to grow and bloom.

We are still going to dead-head our roses this year, but without pruning shears in hand. We're going to ask volunteers to "bend and snap," and evaluate how well the roses respond. When we do need to shorten a cane, we will try to remove it altogether (a "thinning" cut) rather than lopping it in the middle (a "heading" cut). After all, there is no reason to shorten most of the cemetery roses, or to reduce their width, unless they are blocking the path or covering a monument.

"Oh, my God, the bend and snap works every time!" - Maurice

*Legally Blonde*

### **Celebration of Old Garden Roses El Cerrito Community Center—7007 Moeser Lane**

May 20 Sunday 11-4:30

Don't miss this annual fantastic show at the El Cerrito Community Center, sponsored by the Heritage Roses Group of Northern California.

Collectors bring in sample blooms of thousands of rare roses - one of the most beautiful mass displays. A number of nurseries will be there offering roses for sale. You can also find other plants (especially geraniums) and rosy stuff (jewelry, clothing, painted china, vases, etc.) Barbara of Bell's Books is usually there with the latest books on roses and horticulture.

A contingent of Cemetery Rose Garden folks are making the trip. If you're interested, please e-mail Judy Eitzen at [verlaine@citlink.net](mailto:verlaine@citlink.net) to join in the fun. OR on your own, take Hwy 80 or 580 to El Cerrito, Central Ave. exit, go east to Ashbury, turn left to Moeser.



OLD CITY CEMETERY  
HISTORIC ROSE



CEMETERY  
ROSE

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WE'RE ON THE WEB  
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Perks

Historic Rose Garden volunteers receive more benefits than one might think. Not only are volunteers able to spend time working on a project that benefits the entire community, they get to spend time learning about roses with others interested in antique roses, their history and horticulture. Volunteers are good company! Volunteers are the first to try growing roses from the Rose Garden in home gardens. Join in!

*Quick Garden Tip:*  
**Wise Watering**

Now (while it's cool) is the time to check your watering system to be sure your roses will get the water they'll need later in the season.

Turn on your drip or sprinkler system and check all emitters and sprinkler heads. Replace or add as necessary. Open connections and clean filters and screens.

In our hot inland valley, roses require less frequent, but deep watering. A little attention now will save problems (and maybe a rose) later.



*Garden Quote*

...And I will make thee  
beds of roses  
And a thousand fragrant  
posies,  
A cap of flowers, and a  
kirtle  
Embroidered all with  
leaves of myrtle...

*Christopher Marlowe*