Preservation of Heritage Roses

by Judy Eitzen

The Great Rosarian program at the Huntington in January included a number of speakers on a variety of topics. One was Gregg Lowery of Vintage Gardens who spoke on the importance of preserving old roses and the work done by those working in many gardens throughout the world.

Mysteries, Conundrums and Enigmas

Gregg began by expressing his preference for the term “mystery roses” because it “encompasses found roses and also all the other conundrums and mysteries and uncertainties that we face in the world of plants.” We have no way of knowing that the plant we discover on a one-hundred year old gravesite or by an abandoned cabin is actually the same plant that was placed there long ago. Until genetic studies are completed on many of these roses, we will not know for sure if they are even the same rose, much less the original named variety. Many of the roses in the Historic Rose Garden fit into this category.

Origins of Mystery Roses

These plants come to us from many sources, perhaps beginning with Empress Josephine of France who collected many roses from wherever she could (or could send people to find) and planted them in her garden, becoming the ‘queen’ of the roses. Hybridizers of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries have also contributed to the mystery roses.

Open Garden—April 16

The 2011 Open Garden will be held on April 16 from 9:30–2:00 and will include a number of activities:

- Tours of the garden
- Historic tours of the cemetery
- Silent auction
- Various garden and cemetery items for sale
- Sale of propagated roses.

Volunteers have worked especially hard to make the garden beautiful; companion plants have been included, roses primped for spring and tour guides prompted and ready for tours.

This free event includes visits to Hamilton Square Perennial Garden and the California Native Plant Demonstration Garden.
Springtime = Changetime

Spring is a season of changes and this year is no exception. The sap is rising and our roses begin to leaf out. At the same time, our parent organization is undergoing a number of changes (see below). Additionally, we have concerns about a pest quarantine (see p 9). All this may some changes in how we manage the Historic Rose Garden and how we conduct tours and events.

At this season, the roses are changing, too. It is sometimes necessary to remind ourselves gardens alter from week to week, even day to day. We become focused on what needs to be pruned or fixed or irrigated and may not always look up to see what else is happening.

Early in the year, we saw paper whites, pansies and violets—the violets attracting attention with their sweet scent—then daffodils appeared to brighten up winter’s garden.

Our Parent Organization

A number of changes are taking the Old City Cemetery Committee in new directions.

In November, Lynda Walls, President of the OCCC, resigned as a Director, placing Vice President Connie Bettencourt in the position of directing the activities of the OCCC Board. In addition, all of Lynda’s tasks are being reassigned to others:

- Nancy Laran has taken charge of planning OCCC events
- Kris Oglivie will be the new webmaster for the OCCC website.
- Judy Eitzen will publish the Epitaph
- Sharon Patrician and Cat Franklin are handling publicity

Board members continue to handle the day-to-day tasks that keep the Committee running; many in addition to their prior duties. For example, Sharon Patrician continues as Volunteer and Adopt-A-Plot Coordinator.

Additionally, City staff have proposed that the OCCC consider a merger with two other non-profit organizations that focus on history activities in Sacramento: The Sacramento History Foundation and the Historic Old Sacramento Foundation. It is proposed because one larger organization might be more productive than three smaller ones.

The OCCC Board has begun to consider issues related to making such a major change in organization and has appointed a team to look into the proposal. Members will be kept appraised via the OCCC website and Epitaph newsletter.
Preservation, Cont.

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19th century added their contributions as did garden designers (especially in France) and plant collectors who brought plants to Europe and America from around the world.

Repositories and Restorations
In Sacramento, we have created a repository of these roses. In fact, Gregg referred to our garden saying, “What I think is the most beautiful garden in America today is the Sacramento Historic Rose Garden in the Sacramento City Cemetery.” That’s quite an accolade and we all work hard to live up to it. He also spoke of the garden restoration at Mableton Mansion in Santa Rosa and we are aware of other such garden restorations throughout the U.S. Such restorations should include historically appropriate plantings as they have done at Mableton, using four ‘Perle d’Or’ roses transplanted from our garden.

Our Mission
Gregg pointed out that there is no garden in the world that has in its mission statement the preservation of the plants within it. Our Rose Garden mission statement includes these words, “To collect, identify and preserve roses that are part of California’s horticultural heritage, while enhancing the Sacramento Historical Cemetery.” However, we are part of the Old City Cemetery Committee and the OCCC mission statement does not specifically mention plants. As we reorganize the OCCC, we need to include a strong statement of our commitment regarding the heritage roses, as well as other historically significant plants on the cemetery grounds. As Gregg stated, “We need a garden whose mission statement, whose purpose and whose funding is based upon the long term goal of preserving heritage roses. We need that. We must have it.”

He concluded by saying in part, “And I put that back on your shoulders if you love old roses and want to pass them on to the future. And while we pass them on, we pass on the work that we have done over all of these years in research, in discovery, in exciting one another about them.” I couldn’t agree more.

Several Rose Garden volunteers traveled to the 2011 Great Rosarian Event at the Huntington
The 2011 honoree is Ruth Knopf, best known for her work popularizing and preserving the Noisette roses she has discovered growing in her beloved American South, beginning with old garden roses found near her home. She ultimately broadened her activities to include roses from all over the South, propagating them and sharing with friends. In her talk, she described these roses and showed photographs of many of her favorites, including those in a garden she designed at Boone Hall in North Carolina.

“For those seriously interested in the preservation of old gardens as well as roses, and especially for those who don’t know where to start, I recommend these two books:

For Every House A Garden: a guide for reproducing period gardens by Rudy and Joy Favretti (1990, University Press of New England). This small book is designed for the ‘weekend gardener’ as well as professional landscape architects intent on restoration of historic properties.

Restoring American Gardens an encyclopedia of heirloom ornamental plants 1640-1940 by Denise Wiles Adams (2004, Timber Press). Adams, a horticultural consultant and ornamental plant historian describes how to discover the original garden plans, historical plant varieties by plant families (including roses) and many lists of plants by region, date of introduction and availability.
A Chorus of Companions

Not long ago, we didn't have many companion plants in the Historic Rose Garden. You could find 'Crimson King' bearded iris, violets, some spring bulbs and scattered California poppies in some of the plots, but mostly the roses were surrounded by weeds and bare mulch.

It's great to have companion plants in a rose garden. They attract beneficial insects and add year-round color and interest. However, we first had to concentrate on the roses, irrigation, and weed control. Only recently have we had the time to increase the plantings of perennials and self-seeding annuals. We selected varieties appropriate to our Victorian garden, trying to choose companions that are not too aggressive, and which require minimal care or supplemental water. Most of what we've planted have been “passalong” plants from our yards, or donated by the Perennial Plant Club from their sales or from Hamilton Square.

'Crimson King' iris was introduced in 1893, and has probably been grown in the cemetery for a century or more. It's a purple iris that blooms early and often repeats in the fall. Other irises have been donated by gardeners and the Sacramento Iris Society. Their spiky foliage and tall flowers accent the roses well. Irises take a bit of work to cut off the spent flowers, remove dead leaves, and divide them occasionally, and we could always use helping doing so.

Fred Boutin's wife, Dee, brought dark purple violets into the cemetery during the first planting. Our violets have mostly have reverted to paler tones, blanketing the plots with heart-shaped leaves and fragrant early spring bloom. Violets need no care, although we do pull them away from the center of the roses if they are crowding them.

Over the years, Barbara Oliva planted spring bulbs, including large-flowered and miniature 'Tete a Tete' daffodils and purple freesia. She also spotted an heirloom narcissus, ‘Erlicheer,’ growing in the cemetery and added it to the rose garden. We've divided it and put it into several additional plots.

For several years, I scattered additional California poppy seeds into bare areas. Now, they have self-seeded throughout the rose garden. We have the Sheriff's Crew weed them out of the pathways, and pull them out or cut them back when they start to look shabby after spring bloom. We've learned that if you cut them back, they will send up fresh foliage and bloom again, although with smaller, paler flowers.

Self-seeding plants can be invasive, but they are a wonderful gift to our garden. We planted a six-pack of Leucanthemum paludosum (Paludosum Daisy) around a 'Hermosa' in the Broadway Bed a few years ago. They died back when it got hot, but returned in greater numbers the following year. Now, their perky little flowers blanket several neighboring plots. Other

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Maintenance Report

The pruning season began with fall rains that germinated a lot of weeds and kept us from getting much pruning done. We prefer not to make fresh cuts when wet conditions can spread bacterial and fungal diseases, and it seemed to be raining every Tuesday work day. It didn't rain much in January, but it was cold and foggy. Then, in February, record warm temperatures began to push buds and blossoms. As I write this on Feb 24, we are expecting record low temperatures and possible snow.

Despite the rollercoaster weather, we did indeed get a great deal of pruning done, helped by an Americorps team on January 14 and twenty-two volunteers at the pruning party on January 15. We pruned nearly all of the Hybrid Perpetuals, the Hybrid Teas, and many climbing roses. We took a few climbers down altogether, cut out their new canes, and re-attached selected new ones. For the rest, we kept them in place, but pruned out old wood and cut back laterals.

As we do every year, we moved and removed a few roses. “Camptonville Cemetery Noisette” was so big that it blocked the wooden marker in the Meiss plot. Americorps helped us cut it back, dig it out and replant it where it will have room to grow. They also removed ‘Silver Moon’ because city staff asked that it not be allowed to climb in the oak tree. This is a very vigorous commercially available rose, so we took it out altogether. We potted up a couple of other roses that we hope to offer at the Open Garden, 'Souvenir de la Malmaison' and “Miss Lowe's Variety,” a single red China. It has a variety of names, including “Bengal Fire,” 'Bengal Crimson' and 'Sanguinea.' When I saw it growing in London's Ecclestone Square, Roger Phillips said that it was a case of “too many names and not enough roses.”

I took a sample of a diseased cane from 'Blue Girl' to the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Plant Pest Diagnostics Center. Dr. Cheryl Blomquist confirmed that it is common canker (Coniothyrium fuckelii). What was uncommon about it was the way that it was all over the canes, rather than just on cut or damaged areas. Dr. Blomquist thought that this cultivar may be particularly susceptible, and our damp weather has certainly not helped. All of its canes are diseased, it's a modern rose (Hybrid Tea, bred by Kordes, 1964), and commercially available. Three strikes and it's out. We removed it from the garden.

This year, we pruned some of our Tea roses. We haven't done much to them in recent years, other than to trim them back from monuments and pathways, to remove dead or diseased wood or to cut out one or two old woody canes. This year, some of the work was more drastic. Barbara Oliva directed a major pruning of 'Mons Tillier,' cutting away all of the canes which have lain on the ground for years, filling the plot and extending into the pathways. The beautiful headstone in the plot is now clearly visible. A couple of other roses were pruned just as decisively, although they didn't start out as big as “Monster Tillier.” Depending on the approach of the volunteers and the need of the roses, the Teas were pruned in various ways, from firmly cutting back canes and removing twiggy growth, to more moderate trimming that opened out the center growth and shaped the plants, to much lighter pruning. It will be interesting to observe how the roses respond. Will new twiggy growth generate from latent buds? Will the plants trimmed to laterals be more bushy and have greater bloom? I think that we will confirm what we already know, that there is no one “right” way to prune.

During our pruning, we discovered several roses infested with Pacific Flatheaded Borers, nasty creatures whose larvae leave large holes in the canes. The University of California advises us to remove any infested canes, which we have done on most of the roses, although we've left a few borer-damaged major structural canes in place on 'Susan Louise.' Borers are opportunistic, attacking sunburned and damaged canes, so we now re-

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California Gold & Gardens

Around the time of the founding of Sacramento’s Historic City Cemetery, the state’s largest gold mine, The Empire Mine near Nevada City, began its century-long operation. Owned by the Bourne family, the property eventually included extensive gardens around the large home and clubhouse. The site is now a California State Historic Park with gardens restored and open to the public.

The summer home built by the Bourne family (later owned by the Roth family) in Woodside is currently an historic site for the National Trust for Historic Preservation and also open to the public to tour both the home and extensive grounds. Both sites hold events throughout the year that feature their gardens which include many historic plants. In late February, I visited Filoli for the “Daffodil Daydreams” event.

It was rather chilly in the Bay Area that weekend, so many daffodils kept their heads hidden, but there was bloom enough to make a good show. Speakers told of daffodil history, species plants and daffodil culture. The Bournes & Roths collected art, including botanical art, and a special exhibit of hand-colored botanical prints.

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Companions, con’t.

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self-seeding plants in the rose garden include alyssum, forget-me-nots, Nigella damascena (Love-in-a-Mist), Viola cornuta (Johnny Jump Ups), and an antique sweet pea, ‘Cupani’s Original.’ (photo p.9) Sharon Patrician of Hamilton Square gave us some scabiosa last year. We cut it back a couple of times, and it rewarded us by blooming constantly with a froth of foliage and burgundy or pink flowers, attracting bees and butterflies. The original plants are now surrounded with seedlings.

One of the most striking plants that Sharon has given us is Watsonia borbonica, a South African plant that grows from corms. Similar to a large gladiolus, it sends up tall pink flower spikes in the spring and goes dormant in the summer. Shearon’s also shared several different hardy geraniums, yarrow, foxgloves and dwarf Shasta daisies.

Perennials such as Japanese anemones can grow in shady spots where roses won’t thrive. We are planning to add acanthus, another shade-lover that was used in Victorian gardens. Acanthus leaves are commonly used as a design element on Victorian monuments.

Other old-fashioned perennials in our garden include centranthus (Jupiter’s Beard) and lychnis (Rose Campion). Chuck Hatch brought white versions to augment the more common pink ones. Chuck brought in artemesia, too, and has planted other seeds and perennials.

We still haven’t figured out what will work best in the corner plot by the Sacramento Historic Rose Garden sign, the spot that welcomes visitors to our garden. Five or six years ago, Barbara planted an old chrysanthemum, ‘Sheffield,’ which produces single apricot flowers in the fall, and Judy Eitzen put in iris and some annuals and perennials. Pat Schink and I are planning to add more annuals and perennials for year-round color. The pansies that Pat put next to the sign looked great all winter long.

The roses are still the stars of the show, but they’ve been joined by an increasingly large chorus of companions. We hope that their harmony will make our garden more beautiful than ever.
Daffodils, cont.

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was available for view.

With all our focus on historic roses, it can be interesting to learn about other plants appropriate for the Cemetery.

We learned that daffodil aficionados are concerned about the same issues as we are in the rose world. One speaker described these threats to daffodils:

- Smaller homes with small garden spaces limits naturalization.
- Urban sprawl erases old plantings
- Limited funding is available for public gardens
- Worldwide recession has dwindled Dutch bulb industry. Formerly more than 100 bulb companies shipped to U.S., now about 10 remain.

We call the plots in the cemetery “family” plots which leads to an expectation that everybody who is buried in them is related in some way. However, that's not always the case.

Burial plots were often divided between different families, or had individual burials in them. Deeds were purchased directly from the city or from the plot owners. Funeral homes also bought plots and offered burial sites to bereaved families as part of their services.

For years, we thought of Plot 77 in the Broadway Bed simply as the plot with the Tea rose, 'Mme Joseph Schwartz'. It also has some perennial plants, including Scilla peruviana and Senecio cineraria (Dusty Miller), that still survive after being planted by early “Adopt-a-Plot” volunteers. There were no visible grave markers in this plot.

Many of the people buried in the cemetery lie in unmarked graves, often because the families couldn't afford them. Markers can also be covered with dirt and mulch. Volunteers searched for stones and documented them years ago, but some have once again been covered, and others have not yet been found.

In 2007, one of the Sheriff's crew members weeding in plot 77 found a little handmade cement marker with the inscription “Dennis Lawrence Cole, 2-17-1941 - 2-18-1941.” Intrigued, we checked with the Archives and discovered that this plot was owned by George L. Klumpp, whose “Chapel of Flowers” funeral home is located across from the cemetery on Riverside Blvd. This baby was one of eight children buried there between 1938 and 1941, along with three adults who died earlier. According to records in the Cemetery’s Archives, there should be another cement marker for “Baby Corey”. Our crew member located it, and carefully put it in place.

Babies’ Plot

by Anita Clevenger

More Information:
Empire Mine State Park—http://www.empiremine.org/index.shtml
Filoli - http://www.filoli.org/
Babies’ Plot, cont.

(Continued from page 7)

Recently, yet another marker was placed in this plot. This beautiful little granite stone memorializes Baby Amber Regalado, who was stillborn in 1940. It has a cherub, lamb, dove and flowers on it, along with the words, “In God’s Care.” We are glad that someone still remembers her seventy years later, and that our beautiful white Tea rose shelters Baby Amber and all who rest in this plot.

Further research discovered that the plot was owned originally by Margaret Crocker and sold to J. W. Marsh in 1879. Two burials in the plot were reinterred elsewhere in the cemetery when the plot was sold to Klupp in 1936.

Thanks to Jane Howell, for research and insight. The burial index is available on the Old City Cemetery Committee website, and a wealth of information resides in the Cemetery Archives and with its volunteers. Note that Rose Garden numbering differs from the burial records sometimes vary between the burial records and the grave markers.

Plot 77 Burials

- Sulser, Andrew, 54 years, 18 days, Oct. 16, 1936
- Lewis, John, 31 years, 4 months, 8 days, Dec. 10, 1936
- Bebilas, Efthathias, 54 years, Feb 2, 1937
- Dong, Baby Boy, 2 hrs, Feb 3, 1938
- Miller, Eugene, 4 years, 4 months, 13 days, Aug. 19, 1938
- Romandis, Male Infant, stillborn, Nov 4, 1939
- Regalado, Amber, Stillborn, May 3, 1940
- Corey, J. L., jr, 2 days, October 10, 1940
- Willis, Male Stillborn, Jan 23, 1941
- Cole, Lawrence Denny, 1 day, Feb 20, 1941
- Wells, son of H. & L, stillborn, Sept. 30, 1940
The Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) is the latest in a series of exotic (i.e., non-native) pests to appear in California. Such pests are regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), such regulations administered by local Agriculture Commissioners. In 2007 CDFA classified LBAM as a Class A pest.

Class A pests are defined as organisms “of known economic importance subject to state enforced action involving: eradication, quarantine regulation, containment, rejection, or other holding action.”

CDFA classifies LBAM as a Class A pest because
- It is potentially damaging to a wide range of plant species.
- It does not occur elsewhere in the U.S. or in most other countries.
- Were it to become established in California, quarantine restrictions and prohibitions on shipments would likely have severe impacts on agricultural industries.

The Cemetery is now inside the quarantine area of Sacramento County which may have direct effect on plants grown and moved to and from the Cemetery. We will continue to monitor the situation.

Additional information on this and other exotic pests can be found at the Integrated Pest Management website of the University of California at Davis: http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/. Click on Exotic Pests for details on this and other potential pesky problems.

Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery Event—April 30

Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery’s “Rose Brigade” has worked to preserve the surviving roses in their cemetery, to restore many of the roses that were lost, and to plant additional ones. On April 30th, you can take a docent-led walking tour through the newly-planted Memorial Rose Grove. You will meet a number of historical characters with connections to the Rural Cemetery roses, such as Josephine Bonaparte, Ralphine McDonald, and Luther Burbank, who will be portrayed by actors dressed in period dress who will identify each of the roses in their particular section of the Rose Grove and tell a little about each one. Tours leave every 20 minutes between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. The tours are free. About sixty roses propagated from their collection will be offered for sale.

Cemetery info can be found on the city of Santa Rosa website: http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/departments/

Santa Rosa’s Rose Brigade

The Rose Brigade is now overseeing the survival and maintenance another kind of cemetery flora, the Cupani Sweet Pea, which have naturalized and have been growing wild on several knolls in the cemetery for decades.

This particular two-toned sweet pea, which was discovered growing wild in Sicily by a botanizing monk, Francesco Cupani, in the 1600’s, is the oldest in existence. This extremely fragrant sweet pea is one of those rare scented flowers that does not produce an essential oil that chemists can capture. The scent can only be experienced live. Threatened by eradication by the cemetery maintenance workers, the volunteers will keep it under control, pinch it back to encourage rebloom, and collect seeds. Perhaps they should now be called The Rose and Sweet Pea Brigade!

Pesky Pests

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Maintenance, cont.

(Continued from page 5)

move compromised canes even if we don’t yet see any borers.

The garden is looking tidy, with new chips on most of the pathways and weeds fairly well under control. We’ve spread alfalfa pellets, and are putting down mushroom compost around the roses. Will the weather rollercoaster bring us good Spring bloom? We’ll have to wait and see.
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:
More Bees, Please

Encourage bees to your garden for a more floriferous rose season by planting bee-friendly plants into spaces between roses and around your garden. Include a variety so something is blooming all year.

Spring: catmint, ceanothus, lavender, rosemary, crocus, hyacinth, borage, calendula.
Summer: bee balm, cosmos, echinacea, snapdragons, foxglove, and hosta.
Fall: zinnias, sedum, asters, witch hazel and goldenrod.

See the Honeybee conservancy for additional ideas to encourage bees.
http://thehoneybeconservancy.org

“The hum of bees is the voice of the garden”
Elizabeth Lawrence—Through the Garden Gate