
San Jose Heritage Rose Garden

Tour of Rose History

Welcome! The San Jose Heritage Rose Garden is an unexpected jewel in the midst of downtown San Jose, California; a five-acre rose garden that contains 3,000 plants.

In 1987 San Jose Mayor McEnery initiated turning land cleared for airport safety, a weed infested eyesore, into a central park for San Jose. In 1988, Tom Liggett was approached by Lorrie Freeman, an avid rosarian, to develop a competitive proposal for a rose garden in the area. His concept grew from an initial half-acre plot to a full city block. In 1992, Tom's proposal for a San Jose Heritage Rose Garden was selected and funded by the San Jose City Council. Local Councilmember David Pandori steered the garden safely through the political shoals. In March 1995, the garden was planted after five years of procuring and growing plants from all over the world in a field over 40 miles away. More than 750 volunteers showed up over 3 weekends in spite of record rains! Since that time, we continue to collect and grow additional varieties. It was dedicated by city officials in September 1995.

The Heritage Rose Garden is laid out in Sections titled with the letters K, L, M, N, O, and P. Rows are numbered from the center to the outside in ascending order. Each plant occupies a numbered space. Thus, a specimen at "K-21-5" is in Section K, in Row 21, in Space 5. The database that can help you find a rose you want to see, or find the name of a rose that doesn't have a plaque is available from any smartphone or computer at this URL:

<https://fm70.triple8.net/fmi/webd#HRGMaster> Just click in the search box at the top of the page and enter the name or location. If you're not sure of the location, you can just enter the section and row number to get a list of all that are in that row. Similarly, if you're not sure of the spelling of a rose name, you can put a part that you're sure of, and get a list of all that have that part. (We can't guarantee that it is always up to date because plants die and are replaced throughout the year. It can take a few weeks to update the database with these changes.)

Our gardeners-all volunteers-do not use pesticides or fungicides, or chemical fertilizers. We always welcome more volunteers at our workdays- Wednesday and Saturday mornings, 8:30-11:30 am. Please don't pick flowers or collect cuttings, or prune, etc. without permission from the Curator or garden Supervisors.

Old European Garden Roses- Section O

There are many species of roses native to Europe- *Rosa gallica*, *Rosa fedtschenkoana*, *Rosa canina*, *Rosa eglantheria*, *Rosa moschata* and *Rosa spinosissima* -to name the better known ones. Where their ranges overlap, natural hybrids occurred. Some of these were brought into gardens, and from them, several classes of roses developed. The Gallicas, or French roses, were the dark red roses, such as the 'Apothecary's Rose', also known as the 'Red Rose of Lancaster', and its sport 'Rosa Mundi'. Gallicas like a cold European winter, which we can't provide, so few of these well known varieties are in the garden. You can see a typical Gallica here: O-10-6, 'Belle Biblis'.

The Alba class contains white and pale pink roses. The 'White Rose of York' is a famous Alba, also known as 'Alba semi-plena', or 'Alba Suaveolens', and you can see it here: O-14-2.

There are two classes of Damask roses, which developed from natural hybrids of three species. The Summer Damask class blooms only once, while the Autumn Damask class repeats. An example of the Summer Damasks can be seen here: O-9-14, 'La Ville de Bruxelles'. The 'Autumn Damask' is at O-16-6. It's also known as 'Quatre Saisons' and 'Rose of Castile'.

The Centifolias, sometimes called Cabbage Roses, were raised by Dutch growers during the 1600s. They are complex hybrids of several of the above species. Species roses have only 5 petals, but occasionally a mutation occurs that will produce more petals or larger flowers. Selective cultivation of these can lead to roses with large flowers and many petals, which was the goal of the Dutch nurserymen. 'Rose Des Peintres' is typical of the Centifolia class, and can be seen here: O-16-10. The original Moss Rose was a mutation of the Centifolia rose, and contains scented glands all over the leaves, stems and especially the sepals. If you rub the sepals (the green leaves that surround the buds) of a moss rose, you will smell a resinous scent, like pine. The Autumn Damask also produced a moss mutation, but Damask Mosses tend to be a bit pricklier, and the moss smells more like pepper. 'Henri Martin' is a typical Moss Rose, and can be seen here: O-20-16.

The Scots roses, hybrids of *Rosa spinosissima*, produce fairly small suckering bushes, sending up new canes from the roots. In the fall they are distinguished by their black hips, which are the fruits of the rose. We have a number of Scots roses in row O-22, including 'Ormiston Roy' at O-22-18, a hybrid of *Rosa spinosissima* that contains *Rosa foetida*, a bright yellow species from the Middle East. Another popular variety is "Mary, Queen of Scots" at O-22-13.

Rosa eglantheria (correctly called *Rosa rubiginosa*) is probably the 'Sweet Eglantyne' of Shakespeare and is the Sweet Brier of the English countryside. It grows readily from seed, and has become invasive in the New Zealand countryside. Several of our own plants of eglantine in section O may have grown from seed spread by the local birds. To many people, the foliage

smells like Granny Smith apples when brushed or rubbed. In the early 20th century, Lord Penzance hybridized many nice roses from *R. rubiginosa*, including 'Lady Penzance' at O-26-6.

Many other species roses can be seen in section O, including *R. moschata* at O-27-3, *R. clinophylla* at O-12-30, *R. palustris plena* at O-24-24 and *R. laevigata* (the Cherokee rose) at O-21-30. More species roses can be seen behind the propagation house at the back of section O. They grow far too large to keep in the main garden, or they sucker all over.

Classes of roses developed after introduction of China Roses to Europe - Section P

There were two major drawbacks to most of the European roses- all but Autumn Damask bloomed only once yearly, and they had a narrow range of colors from white to pink to magenta or maroon. No matter how fragrant and plentiful that bloom was, the Europeans longed for more. Yellow roses (*Rosa foetida*) had been brought from the Near East, but were not well behaved as garden plants, and did not hybridize with the European varieties. Plant hunters in the late 1700s and early 1800s brought back roses from China that bloomed from spring through fall, and European nurserymen quickly started distributing their seeds and breeding them to their Gallicas, Albas and Damasks to create new varieties. These China roses were not species, but selected varieties that had been grown in Chinese gardens for centuries. Several new classes of roses were developed from these new Chinese roses when crossed with the Gallicas, Damasks and Albas of Europe.

The Portland roses, also called Damask Perpetuals, started from 'Duchess of Portland', a hybrid of Autumn Damask, Centifolia and Gallica. Our Damask Perpetuals are in row P-8. The 'Portland from Glendora' is a popular variety in this class, and can be seen at P-8-16, and the row end P-10.5-0. It used to be thought that their reblooming quality came from a Chinese rose, but genetic testing has proven they don't have Chinese genetics.

The story of the Bourbon roses is that one was first seen on the Ile de Bourbon (Mauritius) which was a territory of France in the early 1800s. In a garden there, the owner grew both the Autumn Damask and 'Parson's Pink China'. A new rose that grew there from seed was called 'Rose de l'Ile de Bourbon'. Seed from it was sent to a nurseryman in Paris, and the resulting roses were called Bourbon roses. The often reported story has been discounted, and it is likely that the Bourbon class originated in India. Our Bourbon roses are in rows P-9 through P-11. A popular Bourbon rose is 'Mrs. Bosanquet' at P-9-15.

As the name implies, Hybrid Perpetual roses are a class of hybridized roses that should bloom all the time. That's a bit optimistic, but they do repeat bloom. They are the result of several generations of crosses between the Chinese roses and the European roses. One of these important early crosses that became a parent of many of the Hybrid Perpetuals was 'Gloire des

Rosomanes'. One of our plants of this rose is at the row end: P-14.4-0. It is a favorite in the garden for its profuse, nearly constant bloom and fragrance. The Hybrid Perpetuals retain the fragrance of the European roses, and grow on upright bushes with stiff canes. This was a very popular class of roses from the mid-1800s into the early 1900s. The garden has Hybrid Perpetuals from row P-13 through P-22. A very popular variety is a found rose called "Grandmother's Hat" because of its large, full and very fragrant blooms. Another name for it is "Barbara Worl", and it is identical to roses sold under the names 'Mrs. R. G. Sharman-Crawford' and 'Cornet'. It's at P-13-17. Another Hybrid Perpetual was named 'Duchess of Sutherland' (P-12-25). We have at least half a dozen plants of another variety that were found in cemeteries and by old houses throughout central California. One of them was found at an old cabin in Santa Cruz (P-21-7). Many of the Hybrid Perpetuals are susceptible to rust, an orange fungus that tends to show up on the foliage just after spring bloom. From a distance the whole area looks orange in early summer.

Japan has many native rose species, including *Rosa rugosa*. It was widely introduced to western gardens around 1870. It adapted to the New England climate so well that it grows wild along beaches there. It's not as happy in San Jose, as it misses the cold winter of its native land. But some of the Rugosa hybrids do quite well. They are mainly in rows P-23 and P-24. One of the favorite roses in the garden is the rugosa hybrid, 'Linda Campbell' at P-25-8. Another Rugosa hybrid that does well is 'Pink Grootendorst' at P-24-21, which has flowers that look like carnations.

Hulthemia is a special subdivision of rose species. Two modern rose breeders who have succeeded in creating new roses using Hulthemia were Jack Harkness and California's own Ralph Moore. Jack Harkness bred the roses 'Tigris' and 'Euphrates' in the 1980s. These two roses of the Hybrid Hulthemia class unfortunately didn't survive in our garden. Ralph Moore used these roses, crossing them with his miniature roses to create a number of new Hybrid Hulthemia roses. We have several, including 'Persian Flame' at P-24-15. They are distinguished by the red splotch at the base of each petal. There are now a number of breeders developing new varieties of roses with these characteristic red splotches.

Chinas, Noisettes, Teas – Section K

First generation hybrids of Chinese roses and European roses were called Hybrid Chinas, and are once blooming, mostly sterile varieties that look a lot like the Gallicas. (We have some of these in Section O, rows 24 and 25.) The China class of roses has obscure origins, involving mainly the imported roses, with some mixing with the Tea and Bourbon roses and possibly some of the Hybrid Chinas. The original imported Chinese roses are 'Parson's Pink China', also called 'Old Blush' at K-2-1, and 'Slater's Crimson China' at K-7-12. Several others were imported during the 1800s. Some of the nicest China roses are "Lane China" at K-4-8, and 'Archduke

Charles' at K-8-13. The Chinas are the first to bloom in late winter and the last to stop blooming in late fall.

In Charleston, South Carolina, a Mr. Champneys was growing *R. moschata* and 'Old Blush' in his garden. A seedling was produced in 1802, which a local nurseryman named Philippe Noisette called 'Champneys' Pink Cluster'. A seedling of this was named 'Blush Noisette', introduced in 1825, and from these two roses the Noisette class of roses was derived. Some are climbers, and some are small shrubs, but their characteristic is large clusters of fragrant, small white or pink blooms. In the garden we have 'Champneys' Pink Cluster' at P-12.5-99, 'Blush Noisette' at K-10-17, and a typical shrub Noisette, 'Caroline Marinette' at K-17-19. Noisettes are well adapted to our climate, and tend to be free of fungal diseases.

The Tea class started with two other Chinese imports, 'Hume's Blush Tea-Scented China' and 'Park's Yellow Tea-Scented China'. Although roses are sometimes sold under these names, they are not the original varieties. Probable plants of both have recently been found in Asia, and may someday become available again here. These two original roses were crossed with the other China roses, with 'Blush Noisette' and with the Bourbon roses, creating what was originally a small group called the Tea roses. Continued breeding within this class eventually produced 2000 Tea varieties, of which probably fewer than 300 remain today. They love our mild winters, and are the first group to start blooming each spring. There are years when many of them will bloom throughout the winter months. A favorite Tea rose is 'Lady Hillingdon' at K-3-6. Many Teas are susceptible to powdery mildew after their first early spring bloom. It's caused by our typical spring weather and usually clears up by the time rebloom starts in late spring.

A small group of roses resulted from crosses of Tea and Noisette roses, called Tea-Noisettes. They tend to be climbers, with larger flowers and smaller clusters than the Noisettes, and we have them on row ends in several parts of the garden. One very nice one is 'Rêve d'Or', at K-8.5-99.

Miniatures and Polyanthas- Inner Two Circles

Before continuing to the next section, we will detour to the center of the garden. The complete first beds of roses are Miniatures. They continue through the second bed in Sections L and M. On the other side, Sections O and P, the second bed comprises the Polyanthas.

Miniature roses are descendants of a small group of China roses. Their origin is a bit uncertain. In the early 1800s a small rose was imported from China, called 'Miss Lawrance's Rose' or *Rosa chinensis minima*. At some point it became lost, but in about 1918, a Colonel Roulet found miniature roses in a window box in Switzerland. He told a friend about them, and the friend reintroduced the miniature China as *Rosa rouletii*. The variety 'Pompon de Paris', at L-3-

39, is probably the same rose or a very close relative, as is another found rose from the 1930s, 'Oakington Ruby', L-2-3. As miniatures have been bred with many types of modern roses, they have developed a great variety of plant sizes, bloom forms and colors. In general, though, they retain the small flowers and small pointed leaves of the China ancestors.

Rosa multiflora is normally a large rambling species with large clusters of small white blooms. In the late 1800s, seedlings from it included a dwarf form, and a seedling of this dwarf form was bred in 1875 and named 'Paquerette'. This rose was the original rose which started the Polyantha class. It and another early seedling, 'Mignonette', at O-7-14, were the ancestors of most of the other Polyanthas, including the popular 'Leonie Lamesch' at O-5-17.

More Polyanthas were planted around the nursery area, and have the Section letters NU-.

Hybrid Polyanthas, Older Floribundas and Hybrid Teas and Pernetianas – Section L

As with the Miniatures, Polyanthas were crossed with other classes of roses, creating the Hybrid Polyanthas, which is a catch-all name for any rose with Polyantha and another class in the rose's ancestry. One example is 'Salmon Spray' at L-9-4, which had Polyantha and Hybrid Tea ancestry. It still shows the smaller clustered flowers of the Polyantha line. Eventually, some of these descendants of the Polyanthas had larger flowers, more like Hybrid Teas, though still blooming in clusters. They were given a new class- Floribunda, recognizing their abundant bloom. A couple of our older Floribundas are 'Centenaire de Lourdes' at L-11-12 and 'Bride's White' at L-14-38.

Hybrid Tea, in the late 1880s meant a rose with a Tea and a Hybrid Perpetual parent. Crosses of this type go back to at least the 1850s, but not until 1867 did one of these crosses appear sufficiently different from both parents that it ushered in a new class of roses. That rose is 'La France'. We have a young plant of the climbing sport of 'La France' at L-27-33. A favorite of this early Hybrid Tea era is 'Lady Mary Fitzwilliam' at L-15-12 and 13.

A major innovation in rose breeding occurred in the early 1900s when Mons. Pernet-Ducher succeeded in pollinating a Hybrid Perpetual with *Rosa foetida*. From this, foetida genes were bred into the Hybrid Teas, creating a sub-class called Pernetiana. The importance of this is that for the first time, bright yellow garden roses were available. Further crosses created many shades of orange, salmon and blends of these colors. Some of our Pernetianas are 'Soeur Therese' at L-19-30, 'Julien Potin' at L-19-4 and 'Talisman' at L-27-29. Eventually, further breeding with Pernetianas and Hybrid Teas merged the two groups into the Hybrid Teas, and the Pernetiana name was abandoned by 1940. A favorite Hybrid Tea from this era is 'Peace' at L-22-25.

Newer Floribundas, Grandifloras and Hybrid Teas – Section M

These are the roses most of us saw when we were growing up during the latter half of the 20th century. Older roses were not widely available, and certainly not found in local garden supply stores. Breeders working with these newer roses were concerned mainly with extending the color range and creating roses of perfect form for winning prizes at rose shows. As this was the period of chemical warfare on diseases, breeders were not generally concerned with creating roses that were resistant to blackspot, mildew and rust. Gardeners were expected to spray on a regular schedule. Since we do not spray, you shouldn't be surprised to find these leaf diseases in the garden. But remember, if you find roses that are healthy here year round, those varieties will also be healthy in your garden. Sadly, fragrance was also not of great importance to many breeders in this period, although a few are among the most fragrant roses of all time. Some interesting Floribundas from this period are 'Sun Flare' (also sold as 'Yellow Blaze') at M-12-17, 'Playtime' at M-13-20, and 'Eyepaint' at M-11-17. 'Picasso' (M-11-28), by Sam McGredy IV, is one of a series he created called "hand-painted" roses, for the unusual way the colors blend. The popular 'Betty Boop' is at M-14-1.

Grandiflora is a class in the US for Floribundas that are taller plants with larger flowers than other Floribundas. It is not a separate class in England. One of these is 'Scarlet Queen Elizabeth' at M-16-31.

Among the Hybrid Teas, some unusual colors and combinations of colors are seen: the very dark red, and very fragrant 'Mr. Lincoln' at M-16-3, coppery-pink 'Thanksgiving' at M-17-33, and the mauve-colored 'Angel Face' at M-18-3, the red with a white reverse 'Typhoo Tea' at M-19-21, and the striped and blended 'Claude Monet' at M-24-36.

Hybrid Musks, English Roses and other Shrub roses – Section N

Shrub is a catch-all classification for modern roses with a rounded shrubby habit. While many shrub roses fall into other groups, like the Hybrid Musks or the English roses, many others have such mixed ancestry, that Shrub is the only class where they can be placed.

The Lambertianas are named for Peter Lambert, who bred a group of climbing roses related to 'Rosa multiflora' in the early 1900s. Two significant Lambertianas are 'Heinrich Conrad Söth' (N-5-1) and the still popular 'Hoffmann von Fallersleben' at N-4-4. Joseph Pemberton soon started breeding mainly with 'Trier', creating a group sometimes still called Lambertiana, but more commonly called Hybrid Musks. Hybrid Musk was a bad choice of name, since the Musk Rose, *Rosa moschata*, is a very small part of their ancestry. The sweet scent of musk or myrrh is derived from *Rosa multiflora*. These are lovely, healthy, reblooming round shrubs, with clusters of small to medium flowers. Examples are 'Vanity', 'Penelope', 'Clytemnestra', and 'Felicia', all in row N-5. Other breeders also added to this group, one being the German breeder Wilhelm

Kordes, who created 'Rostock' at N-7-10. There has been renewed interest in this group, and Belgian Louis Lens bred many Hybrid Musks. One of his is 'Verdi' at N-10-17.

David Austin took the rose world by storm when his English Roses became popular in the 1980s. That popularity continues to this day. Their breeding isn't always given, but it is known that they originated by crossing modern Hybrid Teas and Floribundas with Old Garden Roses like the Gallicas. The purpose was to get healthy, fragrant shrubs with old rose form and the range of colors available in the modern roses and continuous bloom. We have a large collection of English roses in the back beds of section N. They were designed to do well in the cooler, rainier English climate, so success in California is variable. Some, such as 'Graham Thomas' (N-15.5-28), can grow to be large climbers and bloom profusely, thoroughly enjoying our warmer, drier climate. Others retain a smaller size, bloom well and are very popular in this part of California, such as 'Golden Celebration' (N-17-22) and 'Mary Rose' (N-15-36), while some don't bloom very well at all.

We have many other Shrub roses, mainly in rows N-12 through N-14, that don't fall into any of these sub-classes. One nice one is 'Meilland Décor Arlequin' at N-12-17, which has Hybrid Tea, Floribunda and *Rosa rubiginosa* in its background.

The back rows of Section N contain roses too big to grow in the other beds. They are not all classified as Shrubs.

Row Ends

Most of the row ends are climbing roses. Eventually we plan to have climbers on all row ends. Climbing roses come in many forms. Some are hybrids of rambling species such as *Rosa multiflora*, like 'Laure Davoust' at O-18.5-0, or *Rosa wichurana*, like 'Mel's heritage' at N-11.5-0. Others are Noisettes and Tea-Noisettes (see 'Crepuscule' at M-9.5-0), climbing Hybrid Teas ('Captain Thomas' at M-11.5-0), hybrids of *Rosa gigantea* (Lorraine Lee, Cl. at K-10.5-49) and climbing Miniatures ('Pompon de Paris, Cl.', a sport of the mini, at L-2-99). Large-Flowered Climbers is another catch-all term for climbing roses of mixed ancestry, including Hybrid Tea and/or Floribunda along with a rambler such as *Rosa wichurana* or *Rosa multiflora*. One of our favorites is 'Thor' at L-24-40. Besides Hybrid Tea, it has *Rosa setigera* and *Rosa sempervirens* in its breeding.

Others Rose Plantings

Behind the sheds, we've planted 3 rows with some very large roses. They are species and species hybrids, so most of them only bloom once. We do very little pruning- only enough to be able to get between them- letting them show their natural forms. The locations here have the section letters PH.

Along the trail that runs between the garden and the Heritage Orchard are more roses. The first row has section letters TR. The second row, on the other side of the trees, is understocks, which can be used for creating grafted roses. They are proven to not have any of a common rose virus. They have the section letters US. The rest of the roses are low-growing spreading groundcover roses. They have the section letters OP berm-, but the more recently planted ones may not have been given locations in the database yet.

There is also an area of Miniature and Patio roses in the Courtyard Garden. They are in a sad state due to a lack of volunteers willing to weed and care for the area on a regular basis. The regular volunteers in the Heritage Rose Garden do not have the time or enough people to spend time in the Courtyard Garden. If anyone reading this wants a project, you can contact the Guadalupe River Park Conservancy at 408-298-7657 and volunteer.