
San Jose Heritage Rose Garden

Tour of Rose History

Welcome! The San Jose Heritage Rose Garden is an unexpected jewel in the midst of a revitalized downtown San Jose, California; a five-acre rose garden that contains 3,500 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 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.

Our gardeners-all volunteers-do not use pesticides or fungicides, or chemical fertilizers.

Old European Garden Roses- Section O

There are several species of roses native to Europe- *Rosa gallica*, *Rosa fedtschenkoana*, *Rosa canina*, *Rosa eglanteria*, *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-8-24, 'Cora'.

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-14-5. 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. 'Marie de Blois' is a typical Moss Rose, and can be seen here: O-15-20.

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 the well known 'Harison's Yellow' at O-22-18, a hybrid of *Rosa spinosissima* and *Rosa foetida*, a bright yellow species from the Middle East. Another popular variety is 'Doorenbos Selection' at O-22-13.

Rosa eglanteria (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. 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.

Some 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.

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 to 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 cross of a Gallica and an Autumn Damask. Later, China roses were bred into this group to extend the bloom season. 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.

The Ile de Bourbon (Mauritius) 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. Our Bourbon roses are in rows P-9 through P-11. A very popular Bourbon rose is 'Souvenir de la Malmaison' at P-9-14.

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 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 this variety that were found in cemeteries throughout California. One of them was found at an old cabin in Santa Cruz (P-21-7).

Japan has 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 Autumn' at P-24-13. They are distinguished by the red splotch at the base of each petal.

Chinas, Noisettes, Teas – Section K

First generation hybrids of Chinese roses and European roses were called Hybrid Chinas, and are once blooming 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. One of the nicest China roses is 'Archduke Charles' at K-4-8.

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, 'Mary Washington' at K-17-21.

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, it's not certain that either of these varieties still exist, either in the West or in China. Most roses

sold under those names have been proven not to be those roses. 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 roses 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.

A small group of roses resulted from crosses of Tea and Noisette rose, 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, which we have at O-6-1, 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 'Margo Koster' at P-5-20.

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 'Frau Astrid Spath' at L-9-9, 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 'Chuckles' at L-11-23 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' at L-15-2. 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 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. Two of our Pernetianas are 'Angèle Pernet' at L-18-32, and 'Ville de Paris' at L-18-13. 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 roses were concerned mainly with extending the color range. 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, lavender 'Royal Air Force' at M-17-38, and the coffee-colored 'Julia's Rose' at M-19-38, 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 'Trier' (N-2-3) and the still popular 'Excellenz von Schubert' (N-2-2). 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. One example is 'Vanity' at N-5-8. Other breeders also added to this group, one being the German breeder Wilhelm Kordes, who created 'Hamburg' at N-7-3. 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 hasn't been disclosed, but it is thought that they were created 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 with the range of colors available in the modern roses with 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-15-32), 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.

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 'Golden Glow' at P-2-49. Others are Noisettes and Tea-Noisettes (see 'Lamarque' at N-5.5-0), 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.