

NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL REGISTER OF HERITAGE ROSES: ANNUAL REPORT MAY 2020 - APRIL 2021

Ngā mihi mahana. Warm greetings to all of our members from the National Register Team. This is our eleventh year of operation and our tenth annual report.

INTRODUCTION

Recently we were asked by a member if, after ten years, we might be approaching the end of our task to rescue our roses and if it is time now to concentrate on distributing them to the public.

It is a lovely thought, but makes two erroneous assumptions. The one supposes that once we have found and registered a rare rose it has been saved for posterity. A dangerous thought and it is this thinking that got us into the mess we found ourselves in ten years ago. My question in reply would be who is keeping these roses safe?

The second assumption is that distributing the new-found roses is the responsibility of the Team.

This was not our goal when we began our search. Our plan was for the five nurseries who propagated our budwood to distribute the roses through their catalogues. This failed because of the lack of demand and hence lack of economic viability.

We took on this responsibility and I will remind members how to request and obtain roses later in the report.

ACTIVITIES

Over the past ten years we have had to respond to changing circumstances, and the issues we faced at the beginning are not the issues we are dealing with now.

I am proud to say that so far, to my knowledge, we have not lost any more varieties since we commenced our work and have rescued in excess of three hundred previously lost varieties but the scene is very different now.

In addition to the roses that had been lost for many years and we were seeking to find, we have, over those ten years, lost all but two of our supply nurseries and the deletions from catalogues continue to grow.

I am aware personally of 182 deletions within recent years but the total will be much greater than this.

Thus, the new deletions form a large part of our focus now. When we become aware that a rose is no longer available commercially we place it in the endangered category and must make sure we know where that rose may be found in order to have access to bud wood.

This is time-consuming work and our members could assist us by letting us know of roses they would like to purchase but are no longer available. We may in future print lists of such roses and seek regional support to discover where else they may be growing in addition to Brandy Hill and the public collections.

THE PUBLIC GARDENS

In November the Team continued its work with the conservators of the public collections by visiting the Timaru Species Garden, The Trevor Griffiths Garden and the Christchurch Botanic Garden.

We were warmly welcomed and spent many hours in each garden helping with identification and checking on the health and at-risk varieties.

In January I visited the propagation staff for the Jessie Calder Garden in Invercargill and checked out the roses within the garden itself.

The Register Team is anxious to support all of the public gardens to maintain their collections and to help source varieties for them. I have been given a list of twenty seven roses that are required for the Southland garden and a start has been made on having them propagated.

We have worked closely with all of the public gardens since the beginning because they are a source of varieties that are not common in gardens and because we believe that, as people downsize their own gardens, the public



Photo credit: Mary Ruston

collections will become more and more important in showcasing our roses and helping to ensure their survival.

THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

In December the Team met with most of the members of the National Executive at Wylde Willow on the occasion of the Dunedin fortieth celebrations. Our purpose was to explain our work, clarify issues and describe the methods we have used to distribute the new found varieties.

The National Executive is considering new ways to make roses available to members and committed to working on a plan that might complement the work we are doing.

While we are an independent group working within the organisation that is HRNZI, we value our relationship with the National Executive which is able to assist us and expedite actions that would be difficult for us. We are very grateful that this Executive has taken the trouble to meet us and learn all they can of our work.

THE ROSE REGISTER BY INGER GLEDHILL

The supplier lists in the Rose Register have been updated. D&S nursery has closed, so it has been removed from the table. Wairere and Matthews nurseries have been added. Order early as there may be limited numbers of the old treasures, but do contact the nursery as they may be able to place the wanted variety on the propagation list for the following year.

I have added one new PR-private garden list and updated a public garden list. Once the travel restrictions are over I hope that garden stocktaking will occur and revised lists from the public gardens and regional collections will reach me. It is always interesting to see the different collections in different areas.

NEW FINDS

Rosa longicuspis: For many years ***Rosa mulliganii*** has masqueraded and been sold as *Rosa Longicuspis* around the world including here in New Zealand. I discovered the real deal a few years ago in an old Southland garden but it has taken until now to confirm the identity. It is a relative of ***Rosa moschata*** with reddish wood and foliage at certain times of development and beautiful, sharp crimson thorns when young.

Jules Margottin: This is the find of the year for me. I was approached some months back by a retired couple who live in Wanaka who told me of their

family rose that came out on a sailing ship in the C19 with their ancestor who had been in service in the UK and was gifted the rose by her mistress when she emigrated.

Jules Margottin is an 1853 Hybrid Perpetual. It has several remarkable features including robust health for a Hybrid Perpetual, beautiful crimson new wood and thorns, and the ability to bloom throughout the season. The blooms are a lovely shade of pink and have an attractive shape. It has long been out of production.

“The Glenorchy Rose”: Ann Speight discovered this rose growing close to Glenorchy at the northern end of Lake Wakatipu. The bloom is reminiscent of one of the Penzance Hybrid Eglantines hence it is an exciting find. Sadly she has not managed to successfully propagate it. I visited this rose in February and took some cuttings. If these fail I shall have it budded next season.

“The Port Craig Rose”: I have found myself in many unusual, comical, exciting and sometimes hazardous



Jules Margottin (1853)

Photo credit: Murray Racka

situations in my rose rustling career but my journey into Port Craig back in November ranks as one of the most unusual, exciting and rewarding.

Several years ago I was told by one of our members of a rose she found growing at Port Craig while on a tramping trip. An article was supplied to our *Journal*. This reminded me of a story I had heard many years previously from a teaching colleague who had found the same rose on her tramping trip. Port Craig is an abandoned, historic logging settlement in a remote part of Western Southland on the border of Fiordland National Park. I knew that any rose growing there must be in the running for most south-westerly growing rose in the world. I hatched a plan to tramp the twenty kilometres into the site and collect cuttings, but how to keep it secret from my wife, Noeleen, who would have banned such a venture and perhaps had me committed.

I contacted the Department of Conservation (DoC) for permission and received a very positive response. DOC was unaware of the rose but was anxious to record and save it as part of the history of the area. It has taken at least three years of negotiations and I had all but given up my dream when I was contacted last November and invited to fly by helicopter into Port Craig to recover some cuttings. I completed the journey, managed to collect one barely viable cutting and am thrilled to report that it struck in January and is presently growing



Photo credit: Murray Radka

"Port Craig Rose"

happily in its pot and has flowered.

Mrs H.J. Cutler: An unusual and beautiful early Hybrid Tea rose courtesy of Executive member Rachel Solomon from the Wellington Botanic Garden. I thought I had lost this rose but found a struggling bud this year and moved it into a better position. I have not been able to find out much about it except that it is one of the Pernetiana roses which are hybrids of *Rosa foetida persiana*.

***Rosa gallica velutinaeflora*:** This variety is my other highlight of the season. It is a single form of *Rosa gallica* with unusual colouring and disappeared from commerce years ago. It is not in any public garden. It, along with **Conditorum**, **Rosa Mundi**, **Officinalis** and **Complicata**, makes up the various forms of *Rosa gallica*. I have sought this rose for years to complete my collection and thought I had found it in the Jessie Calder Garden only



Above: Mrs J.H. Cutler

to discover that their plant had died. I found this rose in an old collection of roses which the owner knew under another name and it has taken several years to identify.

Rosa blanda alba: This is one of the first rose species I bought more than thirty years ago and, in my ignorance, though surprised by its pale colour



Rosa gallica velutinaeflora

believed it to be the common pink version. Recently, Maureen Viggo found a *Rosa blanda* growing in the Dunedin Botanic Garden which initiated a discussion about this rose and sent me back to the reference books. Roy E. Shepherd in *The History of the Rose* describes *Rosa blanda* in detail and mentions a rare white form. I realise now

that this is the form I have growing in this garden.

White Gruss an Aachen: A lovely white version of this rewarding rose that complements the pink and cream versions.

In addition to the new finds I am delighted to report that a number of the endangered varieties we worked on last



Rosa blanda alba

season have been successfully propagated and we hope will come online later in the year. Some may be available to members once we have filled orders. We want to pay a special tribute to Olga Yuretich for her assistance with this work.

PLACING AN ORDER

As indicated at the beginning of this report, the Register Team took over supplying the new finds when the nursery system failed. For a number of years now, members have been invited in the Annual Reports to contact us with any requests. We advise that, if looking for a rose, you check it out on the Rose Register first. If it is listed in the 'Private' category only this means that it is not available commercially, but we know of someone who is growing it. Members may contact one of the Team or write a

Photo credit: Murray Radka



White Gruss an Aachen

request to roserequests@gmail.com

If at all possible we shall have the rose propagated for you but you should expect a wait of at least two years and will have to pay the service fee of \$7.50 per rose to the Executive to support the work of the Register Team. Payment for the cost of propagation and freight goes to the propagator.

Murray Radka for the Register Team