

Report From The Register Team.

The New Zealand National Register of Heritage Roses is part of a conservation project created in 2011 to protect the remaining heritage roses in New Zealand and was designed and is managed by four HRNZI member volunteers.

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At the time of writing, Murray is travelling with Noeleen through those northern regions that have invited him to meet members, look at their roses and talk about the National Register. Most regions have given generous invitations.

He will give a detailed report of the visit another time but has already been very touched by the warm welcome and hospitality they have received, the passion of individual members to save roses in many different ways and excited to find some rare roses which will join the growing list of saved ones next season.

This season's bud wood collection was even more successful than last year's with around fifty varieties sent to our propagators for saving. At this time we do not have an estimate of the success rate but will inform conveners with a list when it seems safe to do so.

At our last meeting in March we spent considerable time agonizing over ways to make the saved roses available to members and the general public.

At the beginning of our journey with the Register it seemed to us that this would be the simplest of all of the tasks we had to carry out. Our propagators agreed initially that they would keep mother plants of all of our roses so that members could place orders with them directly. No one imagined how great the number would be and with an excess of two hundred found roses it is not commercially viable for our propagators to look after that number of mother plants in the hope that they will receive an order from time to time. We learned, in many cases after the event, that nurseries were not keeping our plants after one season. Fortunately Murray has bought at least one of each saved rose and they are all safe with his collection at Brandy Hill.

We agreed at our meeting that it is now time to produce a catalogue of the roses we have saved and send this to all conveners who can inform their own members. We invite members to order roses they would like from the catalogue via the Register Team. We shall provide one of our propagators with the bud wood and once the rose has been propagated the client will be informed and deal directly with the nursery. We shall not be involved with any financial transactions.

This is far from a satisfactory solution. It will involve us in a lot of extra work and cost if there are significant orders. Plants cannot be guaranteed and there will obviously be a waiting list and delay in receiving plants. We shall, in effect, be adopting the "as available" approach practiced by the Frank Mason nursery years ago. A deadline date for orders will be set by our propagators.

If anyone can think of a more satisfactory solution please talk to us as we believe it is important that we don't lose sight of our number one goal which is to find and rescue rare roses. We must be careful not to be distracted too much from that goal but we also recognize that the members who have supported us so generously with the project deserve a reward for the fruits of their labours and, at this time, this is the only way we can see to do it.

A beautiful mystery in the Bolton Street Cemetery, Wellington.

Ben and Ruth Pratt with Nelson convener Clare Haig and Murray Radka in the rose fields at Tasman Bay. Inger continues to receive lists of roses from individual members and from public plantings. She is presently working on an update which will include a more accurate introduction. She will continue to update the Register as appropriate.

Some initial work has been done to investigate importation of seed of species roses. It is early days but signs look good that eventually this will be possible. We have sourced some seed and are receiving advice on germination. Murray is in touch with a botanist at the Dunedin Botanic Gardens who will assist him with this.

Murray Radka – for the National Register Team.