

## **ANNUAL REGISTER REPORT**

**2018-2019.**

### **Introduction:**

It has been a busy and anxious year for the Register Team as we operate within a new environment. In my time supply has never been more limited and the threat to our roses greater nor has the Register been more essential in our fight to preserve what we have. No one else will do it for us. We are on our own.

On the plus side Inger's research and monitoring give us immediate information about what came into the country and where much of it is. We also keep track of the public collections and the nursery catalogues and much of our work is to secure those roses that are suddenly deleted. We are fortunate that we began this work when we did as it would be very difficult to start now.

Our work is of benefit not just to members but to the Public Gardens who are no longer able to replace some lost varieties except through us. Unless gardening habits and fashions change back to old roses we don't see the situation changing in the near future.

### **Tasman Bay Roses generosity.**

Last June I was very touched and a little overwhelmed when a large truck entered our drive with more than two hundred potted roses; a gift from Ben and Ruth Pratt of Tasman Bay Roses. These are all varieties they have deleted from their catalogue. The Pratt family has always supported old roses and our organization and this gesture is just another example of their generosity.

### **Support from members**

Thank you to the many members who have sent us cuttings or information about old roses this past year. We have exhausted the Public Gardens' collections and in future shall find lost varieties only in gardens, historic places and abandoned gardens. We depend upon our members and members of the public to assist us and are grateful to those of you who have offered photographs and cuttings of unidentified roses in your area. It is from these roses that we shall continue to make more discoveries so if you have "Great Aunt Fanny's Moss" please let us know. In all of the years that we have been operating, our requests have been refused just a handful of times. Some of you are very proactive and don't wait for me to ask for material but send it unsolicited. Some important discoveries have come from these gifts and it is a relief not to have to beg. A small team of intrepid rose rustlers around the country keep us informed of unidentified roses in their area and generously send, at their own expense, cuttings or rooted plants they have propagated themselves. As varieties are identified they are added to the Register for members to request.

### **Upcoming Event**

In April the Team, supported by Executive, is planning a two day, two night event for heritage rose staff from all of our public gardens. Fran will host at Wylde Willow, The Dunedin Northern Cemetery and the Dunedin Botanic Gardens. The purpose is to build and strengthen relationships and for both sides to present their ambitions, challenges and ideas for heritage roses.

### **Jessie Calder Garden.**

Daphne has responded to a request from the staff of the Jessie Calder Garden in Invercargill to visit and advise. She worked with Joyce Robbins a Southland member and wrote a well received report to assist the staff. Maintaining the public collections and the ongoing health of these collections is paramount and building supportive relationships should be the main focus of our work. I am working on a list of more than fifty varieties to be propagated from Brandy Hill stock for our national collections.

### **The Register**

Inger hopes that the new edition of the Register will be available by the middle of the year. She has received many new member rose lists from various regions and is also dealing with the large number of varieties that have been deleted.

## New finds.

- **Charles Albanel** - a lovely, rare rugosa.
- **Coral Cluster/Conchita** confusion. - for years Coral Cluster, a rare polyantha, has been identified as Conchita. This year I was able to sort both in my garden. Coral Cluster is a simpler form of Cameo and Conchita is a deep salmon/orange.
- **Eblouissant** China/Polyantha. Confusion has also reigned over these two roses. There are in fact two roses of this name, a lovely, deep red, double China rose and a deep red polyantha. When grown together there is no doubt they are different. Mystery solved.

We have managed to track down a group of attractive and rare ramblers including:

- **Eisenach, Jacotte, Lady Godiva, Little Compton Creeper, Maxime Corbon, Queen Alexandra.**

There are still a number of mystery ramblers living in pots at Brandy Hill awaiting identification.

- **Heinrich Munch** a pink seedling of Frau Karl Druschki often called Pink Druschki. Rare and beautiful, this rose was discovered by a Christchurch member some years ago and sent for propagation. It has finally been identified.

- **Lady Penzance** A Lord Penzance briar hybrid. An impressive bronze, orange colour and most unusual among briar roses.

- **Mystery Hybrid Perpetuals.** Tasman Bay Roses sent a number of Hybrid Perpetual varieties they have deleted which caused me to look closely at this family. There are 45 growing at Brandy Hill and I have 8 unidentified HPs in pots from Wellington, Reefton, Lawrence and this area. We are looking for Victor Emmanuel, Triomphe de l'Exposition, Charles Lefebvre and Eliza Boelle which we know were widely distributed. Hopefully, I will find these among this group of unknowns. Thank you sincerely to the people who alerted me to the existence of these roses and sent cuttings.

- **Niles Cochet** a red form of Maman Cochet. I acquired this rose under the name Maman Cochet and had no reason to doubt it until I saw the real Maman in Northland. A new plant confirmed that I had been sold the sport the first time around. The Tea Ladies identified this rose in another part of the country so I suspect that there could be a few imposters around.

- **Pompom Blanc Parfait** an exquisite alba rose that doesn't quite fit the mould. It is small by comparison and produces pretty, white to blush pink pompom blooms sporadically throughout the season after the first flush has finished. A treasure I am delighted to have.

- **Rosa fareri** a dainty little white rose species. I purchased the little pink R. fareri 'persetosia' many years ago from Roseneath. This rose was sent to me as an unknown three years ago. It flowered for the first time in November.

## Eugenie's Roses.

For a year, Ann Speight, a Central Otago member, has systematically surveyed the hundreds of surviving roses in Eugenie's old nursery. She has plotted and numbered the roses into a plan and photographs them as they flower to allow identification. Most families are represented but of particular interest to me are at least eight unidentified rugosa roses. This is a massive undertaking and we express our gratitude to Ann for her service.

**Rosa chinensis 'spontanea'** This elusive species is probably the most iconic rose species. It is the parent of the China roses and an ancestor of the Tea roses. Most modern roses have this rose in their breeding.

First seen by Europeans in China in the nineteenth century and then lost from sight until 1983 when it was photographed by Ogisu. Seeds were sent to various arboretum and collections around the world but to my knowledge the rose never came here.

In 2016 I began researching and negotiating to bring this rose to New Zealand. Eventually, an overseas arboretum, wishing to remain anonymous, acknowledged the conservation work of the register team as outlined in our book 'Project Rescue' and agreed to supply seeds. With assistance from MPI the first seed arrived last year with instructions for its germination. Seed, from six different bushes of this rose, was sent, in colours ranging from almost red to white. It has been a long wait but at this time of writing six seedlings of two different clones of the rose have germinated. I hope for more next season. The question now is if they will survive the winter but if successful will be one of the most significant introductions to the country.

**How to order roses.**

The Register Team offers a propagation service. If you wish to acquire a rose that is not available commercially, check the Register online. It will tell you if the rose you seek is available.

**PR** means it is in private hands but you may order through us. Go to [roserequests@gmail.com](mailto:roserequests@gmail.com) and make your request. We will make every effort to have the rose propagated for you if you are prepared to wait to receive it. There is a service fee for every rose ordered to be paid to the Executive.

**Cuttings Policy.**

For practical reasons the Register Team instituted a 'no cuttings' policy although I have propagated and gifted many roses from cuttings for people who have generously supported the cause. We do encourage the sharing of cuttings among our members as a way to ensure the survival of the roses.

**Conclusion.**

We cannot conclude this last annual report for the present executive without acknowledging Olga and her Northland team.

The National Register Team is an independent body and the Register enterprise was designed and promoted independently of the National Executive, but cooperation, support and encouragement from the Executive make our jobs much easier.

This Executive has supported our work with encouragement and in practical ways throughout their term in office and their positive engagement with us has, in turn, allowed us to further the project.

We are in awe of the achievements over the past three years: a complete review of the Constitution to give clarity and protection to members, an enjoyable tour of the regions by Sue and John Zwar, a professional development weekend for conveners, a gold medal exhibit at the New Zealand flower show, an attractive quarterly Journal that never missed a deadline crowned with a magnificent conference that brought our members together from around the country and welcomed a number of international visitors.

Such events do not just happen. They require leadership, commitment, team work and the ability to put the interests of the organization and the roses above individual agendas, all of which were on display in abundance last December. In everything they have done it is obvious that concern for the well being of members and for the roses has been the cornerstone of their endeavours.

You have led us by example Northland and we salute you. Ngā mihi nui.

Murray Radka

for the Register Team.