

# Queensland Rose Bulletin

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Disclaimer:

This Bulletin may suggest some controls for pests and diseases. This does not mean endorsement of a particular company's product. The suggestions are intended as a guide only and the choice or controls is yours. The information is gained from sources we deem reliable. However, we cannot guarantee its accuracy, and interested persons should rely on their own enquiries.

## Coming Events

February 28th, Saturday, 1.30pm **Gold Coast Rose Society** Meeting, Presentation on World Rose Show, Robina Community Centre (arrive at 1pm if showing roses)

March 14th, Sunday 9am, **Qld Rose Society** Monthly Rose Show and Meeting at the Church Hall, 459 Annerley Rd, Annerley Junction

## February Event – “Rosedale” Visit

Paul Hains, Mt Gravatt East, Qld

This afternoon (Sunday) John and Joan Dale very kindly opened their garden for Queensland Rose Society members and their guests. Their property “Rosedale” is in Warner and occupies 1.7 acres.

The Dales have been here for just under 20 years. When I asked John how many roses he grew at his previous property in Everton Park his answer was, “as many as possible.” It comes as no surprise then that John has over 500 rose bushes on his current land.

Along with the roses John and Joan have excellent Gerberas, Orchids and Fruit Trees absolutely laden with fruit. John has a nursery area

up the back of the property where he grows root stock and buds his own roses. By doing so, he makes sure that he grows specimens that produce well for him, and it reduces the cost of replacing underperforming bushes.

There was a great attendance on the day with about fifty members being given a guided tour of the garden. It was great to see so many new faces too.

John pointed out his favourite roses and gave a history of the origin of many of his plants. John also described how he maintains his plants and the process for removing older bushes and replanting. It might seem ruthless when John describes the forty plus



bushes he has removed to make way for new roses, but it is understandable once you grow a large number. If there is a bush that doesn't produce many flowers and you have an alternative that could provide you with a great show, why not substitute it?

A number of people questioned John on the walls of Sash prizes he had displayed in his garage from winning rose shows. He said, “I only put the good ones up.”

Everyone had a great afternoon and we would like to thank John and Joan for the informative and entertaining day and the great food for afternoon tea.





Un-named seedling, picture taken at Ross Roses

*“George’s wife complains she never has any flowers for the house. The minute a flower looks like blooming George runs out and rips off its petals”*



Society Belle, 2008



Howard Florey

## George Thomson – Australian Breeder

By Toni Hains, Mt Gravatt East, Qld

We had the pleasure of meeting George Thomson recently when we attended The World Rose Conference in Adelaide. George resides at Wilunga, which is 44km south of Adelaide. He is originally from Scotland (where he worked with well known rose hybridiser Alex Cocker.) George came to Australia in 1958 after completing an apprenticeship at Kew Gardens in London. He has been breeding roses ever since and is probably Australia’s most productive breeder.

George is the first to admit that rose breeding is somewhat of a lottery. “It is 40% know how and 60% luck and if lady luck is on your side you can produce something really special”, says George. As with any process, the more seeds you plant the better chance you have. George concedes that of 320 000 seeds you might end up with two good roses. That means being ruthless and having a good eye and lots of experience when culling the seedlings. The new rose plant needs to be strong and able to weather the tough Australian conditions – a trait George strives for in his breeding program.

So what process does George use to produce such roses as “Mawson” 2001; “Crown Princess Mary” 2006; “Onkaparinga” 1997 and “Society Belle” 2008. “The first step in rose breeding is the selection of parents. It’s very important that you get that right” explains George. Each parent is selected for its genetic attributes. This could be the vigour of the growth, its flowering habit or reduced amount of thorns. Of course the major reason a rose would be selected as a parent is for its disease resistant qualities. This is particularly important for

roses grown in the subtropics of Queensland.

Once a parent is chosen George decides if it will perform the male or the female part of the partnership. George explains, “Each flower has got male and female parts. The male part is the part on the outside, those are the stamens, and the female part is in the middle.” Harvesting the pollen from the male stamens (by removing all petals to expose the stamen) makes the rose the “pollen parent” or the male of the reproductive cycle. The rose that is to be the mother or the “seed parent” will have the petals and the stamen removed. After this process George will pollenate it twice 24hrs apart with his chosen pollen. Then it is simply sit back and wait.

There is one draw back to all this removal of petals to prepare flowers to be a seed or pollen parent. George’s wife complains she never has any flowers for the house. The minute a flower looks like blooming George runs out and rips off its petals!!

Once the seeds have set and the hips have ripened George cuts open the hip and places the seeds in a box. “Now we

put them in the fridge. They’re a cold country plant, roses, and we chill the seeds for anything up to two or three months in the fridge, about 42 days, and it makes the seeds all come through at the same time”

George then plants his seeds in open top coolite boxes. While we were at Ross Roses (the nursery that represents George) we were shown these boxes full of 15cm high seedlings.



Each box measures about 50cm X 40cm and contained about 3000 seeds. All of the seeds in one box were the same two parents and George could have up to 10 boxes of the same cross. Promising seedlings are marked with a blue tag. When it is time to cull George simply up-turns the box into the garden and retrieves any plants marked with a tag. These are then potted up and will be culled again and again until he is left with two or three plants that he considers viable enough to go to market.

Rose breeding is definitely not for the faint hearted!!



George Thomson, centre with Paul and Toni Hains who attended the Centenary Rose Show and Convention from Brisbane.



## Upcoming Events: Christmas in July

Email Toni: [qrsed@bigpond.com](mailto:qrsed@bigpond.com) to register your interest

### SAVE THIS DATE

The Queensland Rose Society will be holding its first Christmas in July function on Sunday 26th July at the Oxley Golf Club.

Toni is making her secret recipe fruit mince pies and rum-balls. There will also be raffles and Christmas cake. The Golf Club is putting on a two course roast meal for us and the Society is subsidising the cost to its members.

The cost to QRS members is \$10 per person. For non-members and affiliates it is \$25 per head. Prepayment will be required and there will be a form in the June *The Queensland Rose Newsletter*.

Tea and coffee is included with a cash bar for purchasing other drinks.

The Golf Club is conveniently located near Ipswich Rd at Oxley and has plenty of parking and disabled access. The

view from the large dining room is out across the course.

### SPECIAL OFFER:

For readers of the Bulletin, join the QRS without nomination fee for just \$25 for a couple, then you can come along for \$10 each (Saves you \$5 on lunch and you get all the benefits of joining the Rose Society). If you join now your membership is for 2009/2010 with your next dues in June 2010!



The Oxley Golf Club



## What's happening in my rose garden?

Paul Hains, Mt Gravatt East, Qld

At the moment you might be surprised because you will see blackspot and a lack or effective deadheading in some sections of my garden. The rain has caused some havoc, and a lack of time on my part to get in there and do the work needed. It happens to all of us.



I have been working in the garden though!! This is my first attempt at budding a rose bush. It is a green floribunda, not available

commercially that I was able to get some budwood for. I have struck cuttings from the left-over budwood.

I have been collecting my hips as they ripen from crosses made late last year. This picture is of a hip of a David Austin rose crossed with a mini. I have 60 packets of seeds in the fridge waiting planting when it cools a little.



For the budding hybridizers out there, the QRS will be putting a Seedling class in the Spring Rose Show to encourage Queensland Rose Breeding.

I have been asked about the Rainbow's End climber we acquired cuttings of. These are the four that have survived.



*"QRS will be putting a Seedling class in the Spring Rose Show to encourage Queensland Rose Breeding"*

## Focus on Rose Types – Miniatures

From Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rose>

All of the classes of Old Garden Roses—gallicas, centifolias, etc.—had corresponding miniature forms, although these were once-flowering just as their larger forms were. As with the standard-sized varieties, miniature Old Garden roses were crossed with repeat-blooming Asian species to produce everblooming miniature roses. Today, miniature roses are represented by

twiggy, repeat-flowering shrubs ranging from 6" to 36" in height, with most falling in the 12"–24" height range. Blooms come in all the hybrid tea colours; many varieties also emulate the classic high-centered hybrid tea flower shape. Miniature roses are often marketed and sold by the floral industry as houseplants, but it is important to remember that these plants are largely

descended from outdoor shrubs native to temperate regions; thus, most miniature rose varieties require an annual period of cold dormancy to survive.

*The miniature rose on the right is "Delicious" by Eric Welsh, an Australian Breeder. I am beginning my quest now to breed some new miniature roses. Watch this space. - Paul*

