



# Rose Ramblings

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SEPTEMBER 2009

## GETTING TO HOPE YOU LIKE ME

### David Austin's English Roses

By Dick Streeper, [streeper@cox.net](mailto:streeper@cox.net)

*Getting to know you,  
Getting to know more about you,  
Getting like you,  
Getting to hope you like me!*

This is the fourth and final article of a series about David Austin's English Roses. In the preceding installments we described a new class of roses and the man that created it, the world into which English Roses first entered and factors that have led to their success both in America and England. In this final installment we will consider what you should do to get your English Roses to put on a good show for you.

For the past century and one-half the fashions in roses have constantly changed and never faster than they are changing now. Changes are tied to the changes in society and the way we live. In the parts of the world disposed to be attracted to floral beauty, the public has less land and time to devote to rose culture, and economic and population growth-factors do not favor large rose gardens. Not surprisingly, the rose business is rapidly changing.

Roses still claim a soft spot in the hearts of most

householders. Who wouldn't like a beautiful rose bush outside the kitchen door? That has put a lot of pressure on rose breeders and introducers. New rose plants need to have stand-alone beauty, lots of beautiful blooms with long-lasting life and fragrance that we can recall even



*Young Lycidas, a deep pink English Rose, will be introduced in the United States in 2010. Photo courtesy of David Austin Roses.*

when the plant is out of bloom. David Austin has responded to that need with unmatched focus and craft and his roses will certainly be widely grown and loved long after we are all gone.

As with all types of roses, there are a few fundamentals that should be observed for maximum garden beauty. That begins with selection, first of varieties to be added to your garden design and second of the specimens that you will plant and grow. Selection of varieties best begins with your personal observation of growing plants. In San Diego it is fairly easy to

form some opinions of what you might like and how you can nicely fit it in your garden design. The best display in San Diego is found at the Barona Ranch Resort which

has multiple copies of sixty varieties English Roses mostly grown in groups of three plants. A new planting of multiple copies of thirty varieties of English Roses was made in the Inez Grant Parker Rose Garden this past winter and will provide a good educational display next year. A very large and mature collection of English Roses is included in the rose garden at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California.

A corollary to the rule for selection is: "Do not rely on catalog descriptions or catalog photos when making a selection." I guarantee that you will never see anything other than an exceptionally fine specimen pictured in any sales material, and in these days that photo is commonly enhanced through Photoshop editing. Use photos as an aid for identification, recollection or introduction to a variety but not as a basis for final selection for use in a garden design.

This brings me to the subject matter of this article, "Getting To Hope You Like Me." You might also call it "Basic Rules of Horticulture."

Beautiful color in your garden requires both a promising plant and one that is happy in your garden with the love and care you are committed to give. What does it take to make these English Roses look their best?

With only a few exceptions, English Roses perform best if their growing stems, originating near the base of the plant, are cut slightly or not at all, particularly in the first year of growth. New growth stems should be pulled as close to horizontal as possible and cut as little as necessary to fit within the garden space. The reason for this will become obvious shortly after the first bloom cycle. You will find that this first long stem will produce a few flowers at the tip of the stem. Following the first bloom cycle, you should cut no more than the flowering

tip of the stem so that those blooms will not produce seeds.

I like to plant most Austins in groups of three plants of the same variety within a circle at three feet apart or in a hedge at the same spacing part. Then weave the stems together. In most cases you will be able to do



*Munstead Wood is a fragrant dark red English Rose to be introduced here by David Austin this coming spring. Photo courtesy of David Austin Roses.*

so by using the plant's prickles to hold the stems in place. If that doesn't work, use any kind of plant tying twine or wires. In most cases by mid-summer of the first year you will be able to weave three plants of the same variety into a globe about six feet in diameter or into a hedge that is impenetrable. The advantage of horizontal canes over vertical canes is that this will trigger much greater bloom production. How and why does this happen? At every point where a leaf is attached to a rose stem there is a collection of latent growth buds. There is a dominant center bud, commonly beginning to swell shortly after the flower immediately above on the stem has been pollinated. Now

and then the center bud is damaged and two stems, one from each side of the center bud are formed. If roses are improperly pruned, the uppermost growth bud will likely be on a very thin stem from a tiny growth bud. This will likely give you one undersized bloom on a stem that develops six weeks following the preceding bloom.

By contrast, if you pull a substantial length of a new stem into a horizontal plane after cutting away the recently spent flowers, the plant will tend to direct its new growth at several points along the horizontal stem. Following that same practice as nearly as possible throughout the year, you will find superior growth and bloom production. With a little bit of luck, you may find that English Roses are precisely your cup of tea.

# Rose Ramblings

Rose Ramblings  
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Monthly meetings of the San Diego Rose Society are held on the third Monday of each month at 7:30 PM in room 101 of the Casa del Prado in Balboa Park, excepting in July and August, or as otherwise announced in the Rose Ramblings or the Sunday Homescape Datebook of the San Diego Union-Tribune.

Annual Membership dues are \$15 on an email electronic PDF file format and \$25 USPS per calendar year per person or household. Send dues with name(s), address, including zip + 4, and telephone number to San Diego Rose Society Membership, P O Box 86124, San Diego CA 92138-6124.

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

S.D. ROSE SOCIETY  
MEETING  
Rm. #101 Casa del Prado  
7:30 p.m.  
Speaker: Dr. Tommy Cairn

OCTOBER 3, 2009

EAST COUNTY ROSE  
SHOW  
Barona Convention Center  
Lakeside, CA  
Info: Sandy Campillo  
Email: [s.campillo@cox.net](mailto:s.campillo@cox.net)  
Kristi Sutherlin  
Email: [ksuthe4187@aol.com](mailto:ksuthe4187@aol.com)

OCTOBER 17 – 18, 2009

L.A. ROSE SOCIETY,  
ROSE SHOW  
AND ROSE FESTIVAL  
Descanso Gardens, La  
Canada, CA  
Info: Alice Hart –  
[foodforfilm@pacbell.net](mailto:foodforfilm@pacbell.net)  
OR Marcia Sanchez-Walsh  
(818) 395-0840

OCTOBER 19, 2009

S.D. ROSE SOCIETY  
MEETING  
Rm #101 Casa del Prado,  
Balboa Park  
6:30 Pot Luck  
7:30 Meeting and Speaker

OCTOBER 24 – 25, 2009

ORANGE COUNTY  
ROSE SHOW  
Roger's Gardens – Corona  
del Mar, CA  
Info: Jan Brider  
[janbrider@earthlink.net](mailto:janbrider@earthlink.net)

NOVEMBER 7, 2009

SANTA CLARITA ROSE  
SHOW  
Wm. E. Hart Park  
Info: Kitty Belendez-  
[rosextckb@aol.com](mailto:rosextckb@aol.com)

NOVEMBER 11 – 15, 2009

2009 ARS FALL  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE  
AND ROSE SHOW.  
Rose Show is Friday, Nov.  
13.  
Doral Desert Princess  
Resort. Palm Springs, CA.  
Info:  
[www.desertrosesociety.com](http://www.desertrosesociety.com)  
Show schedule is now in  
this website

## MEETINGS

AND

## PROGRAMS

**DATE: SEPTEMBER 21, 2009:**  
(3rd Monday). Save the date.

**Time and Place:** 7:00 to 9:00pm  
in room 101 of the Casa del Prado.

**Program:** Dr. Tommy Cairns speaks on A Century of Roses, A historical journey of the last one hundred years of rose development.

**Little Rose Show:** 7pm-7:30pm.  
Bring your blooms to show off!

# A Centenary of Roses

## Historical Journey of the Last One Hundred Years of Rose Development

**T**ommy is an internationally renowned rose expert and exhibitor. He holds judging credentials both in the Royal National Rose Society of Great Britain and the American Rose Society. He has judged international rose shows in South America, Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Japan and Europe. Prior to his election as president of the World Federation of Rose Societies for 2003-2006, Tommy served as the 50th president of the American Rose Society in 2000-2003. He was editor of both *Modern Roses 10* and *Modern Roses XI - THE WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ROSES* and currently is editor of *World Rose News*. His recent literary efforts have been chronicled in *Botanica's Roses* and the series of popular books namely *All About Roses*, *All About The Easiest Roses to Grow*, and *The Complete Guide to Roses*, published by Ortho/Meredith Books. His latest work is *The Ultimate Rose Book*, published in October 2007 by Abrams, New York. Tommy has won many awards for his involvement in roses, including the Dean Hole Medal by the Royal National Rose Society, regarded as the top award in the rose world, and the ARS Gold Honor Medal. At his home, he enjoys almost 1,000 award-winning rose bushes.

## Rozlvr's Report

Roger English, rozlvr@cox.net

**I**t will be great to get together again after the summer hiatus and greet our new members. We can talk about how our roses performed in our different microclimates. In my area about twelve miles from the coast, facing west, my floribundas have done well and the hybrid teas have suffered. Part of this is because my hybrid teas are in a canyon that is shaped like an amphitheater and this plus the concrete block retaining walls intensifies the heat. The floribundas are in the upper level adjacent to the back of our house where there is nothing that increases the heat. Floribundas also are much better clothed in leaves which help them to produce some of their own shade and also shade their neighbors. For those of you who are near the coast, summer may well be one of the best seasons with regards to less powdery mildew and rust.

Another pertinent topic will be how we have done conserving water during the severe heat

of July and August this year. In 2008 July and August were relatively cool, followed by a very hot September. Trying to reduce water use by the prescribed 20% this summer compared to last year has been a challenge. In spite of my best efforts I'm quite sure that I have used more water and am concerned about what the water bill will show. There is also the potential for a fine for being a "water hog." By the time of our meeting I will have more information regarding this. Let's compare experiences. Perhaps some of you have found some water-saving methods that will help others.

Fall weather often gives us one of our best bloom cycles. In warmer areas the summer hybrid tea blooms are much smaller due to the heat. We can look forward to full-sized blooms. Also, the leaves seem to lose their luster in the heat and it will be good to see them renewed in the cooler weather.

**A**bout

**B**asic

**C**are

## Rust Control This Time Of The Year

By ARS consulting rosarians—  
Gary Bulman, [gossbulman@cox.net](mailto:gossbulman@cox.net)  
Doug Kalal, [kala15@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kala15@sbcglobal.net),  
[www.sdgreatgardens.com](http://www.sdgreatgardens.com)  
Roger English, [rozluvr@cox.net](mailto:rozluvr@cox.net)

**Rose Ramblings:** *This is the time of the year that rust begins to show up on some roses. How do you control this disease?*

**Gary:** As temperatures cool and moist weather conditions begin, rust on rose leaves will appear. Some varieties are more susceptible to rust than others. My Moonstones are the plants I look to as indicators in my area of the county. The disease will develop on leaves that remain wet for over four hours as often happens during extreme humid conditions or when mist/heavy dew moves in from the coast. It appears as orange spots on the underside of leaves and yellow on the tops. Rust can cause entire defoliation of a plant although I have never seen such a severe condition. Remove affected leaves and bag them up for the garbage. They should not be tossed into compost piles as this disease will ultimately turn up in composted materials. Spraying with fungicidal soap or wettable sulfur should stop further rust. Initial wise planting of your rose bushes should also help minimize the emergence of rust. Limit wetting rose foliage by watering early in the day so leaves will dry. Have good breeze circulation by cleaning out unwanted growth and spacing roses well apart from one another. Rust spores overwinter so a good autumn cleanup of the garden will also contribute to not having rust.

**Roger:** I use Banner Maxx alternating with Compass every two weeks with excellent prevention. In my area about twelve miles from the ocean rust is not usually a problem until the cooler fall weather arrives. The best way to prevent rust is to grow only rust-resistant roses. Shovel prune and replace any roses that are susceptible in your microclimate. There are other organic and synthetic chemical sprays that have variable effectiveness against rust.

**Doug:** First, plant disease-resistant varieties such as roses that have won the All-America Rose Selections award (Betty Boop is a great one). Second, keep the middle of the bush clear of small woody growth so that you have good airflow. Third, remove any rust-riddled rose leaf as soon as you see it before it spreads to other parts of your rose bush.

**Rose Ramblings:** *Now that summer is over what do you do in the way of pruning and feeding to get your roses to flourish*

*in the fall?*

**Gary:** Most rosarians let their roses rest during the hot months of July and August. Growth tends to be slow, blooms small and if you have not maintained a spraying program foliage and blooms display insect damage. Mid to late August through early September is the time to visit each rose bush to get it back into shape for a productive fall bloom cycle. The first task is to provide a minor pruning which means to clean out all the small unwanted twiggy and crossing growth from the center of the plant. I shorten long canes by pruning them back to pencil-thick size leaving as many leaves on the cane as possible. Remove small branches and leaves close to the ground. This will ease the application of fertilizer, which, after watering well, is the next step. I move the mulch aside from around the rose out as far as the drip line. Then I apply Ada Perry organic fertilizer one cup per bush, gently work it into the soil so as not to damage the tiny feeder roots and replace the mulch. If you have not sprayed during the summer I encourage you to begin spraying a fungicide and also look for insect damage and deal with it if damage is more than you can tolerate. This time with your roses will be rewarded with a flush of blooms well into the fall.

**Roger:** I advise pruning hybrid teas back by about one third or to the point where the stem is of sufficient diameter that the resulting length will display nicely in your selected vases. Floribundas are pruned to the point where they will support a nice spray. Cutting out twiggy growth in the center of the bushes will increase air circulation and help prevent disease and pests. During the summer I have not fertilized in order to not encourage new growth that is susceptible to burning in my microclimate. Feeding will resume with Magnum rose food weekly.

**Doug:** In addition to the usual deadheading, this is the time of year I like to clean out the middle to improve the airflow. This pruning is very helpful for cutting down on any rust that might spread through the bush. As for feeding, I like to add some Dr. Earth rose food in the beginning of the month and some Miracle-Gro towards the end of the month for a final burst of color before the late autumn shut down.

# Planning Ahead for Rose Fertilization

By Ruth Tiffany, [ruthsgarden@msn.com](mailto:ruthsgarden@msn.com)

Roses give us so much they deserve a really good plan for feeding. I have a very strong commitment to early spring fertilization for several reasons:

1. The roses are pruned so I can actually walk between them.
2. This is the beginning of a new growing season.
3. All I did wrong or left out in the last season can be rectified now.
4. If things happen and I don't get all the feedings in that I plan for the coming year at least I did the really important one in the spring.
5. Most importantly, I absolutely love the sequence of --roses cut back to bare canes>> then dormancy>>silence>> regeneration>>I spread a scrumptious table of rich and nutritious organic food>>continued silence and watching>>and the rains come forth>>NOW I know something is happening! Not because I can see it yet but now I can SMELL the rich smell of "roses promised." (Well actually mostly just a very rich smell.) But I love it.

So in the past I have acquired bags and bags of chicken manure, alfalfa pellets, Milorganite, Biosol, cottonseed meal, hoof and horn meal, fish meal bone meal, kelp meal, soft rock phosphate, worm gold.... The actual feeding depended on what I could find and afford. It was a lot of work—1 cup of this, 2 cups of that, ¾ cup of the other, trundling it all around the yard, having enough to go around—a really big job. I shared my recipe at a meeting once and Frank Hastings came up to me and said "Ruth, you are putting 8 cups on each bush." And that was before the mulch!

Sooo... with over 650 roses I now must simplify. For 2009 I discovered BioStart 3-4-3. I went to Growmore in Gardena for a good price on Magnum Grow, my food of choice after the spring organics, and found BioStart. I love the great array of ingredients in BioStart—blood meal, bone, meal, kelp meal, fish meal, cottonseed meal, alfalfa meal, feather meal,

worm castings, calcium rock phosphate, potassium sulfate. BioStart also contains humic acid and several of those lovely bacteria that are supposed to be so beneficial, plus ecto and endo mycorrhizae. If you are interested in the entire ingredients, I will have more information at the September meeting. I also love the smell as it percolates into the soil and rose roots.

BioStart worked really great for me in 2009. I also added 9 yards of A-1 LifeLike mulch from Hanson Aggregates on top of the BioStart. Even when I have failed to get all the water-soluble fertilizer feedings done that I had planned, I've still had huge numbers of roses, vibrant bloom color and very fast bloom repeat.

I would like to share this great resource because BioStart is more affordable than some of the other rose fertilizers. The San Diego Rose Society has chosen to make this fertilizer available to members as a fund raiser. The SDRS will make a few dollars, you don't have to go to LA to get BioStart, and you get a great rose fertilizer for seventy cents a pound. I used a pound or about 3 cups on each rose bush, 1 ½ cups for minis. BioStart comes in 50-pound bags and will sell for \$35. One bag will feed 50 roses in the spring. If you have 10 roses you might still want one bag. You could feed your roses spring and again in late summer for 2 years and have some left over for new roses who come to live in your garden. If you have more than 10 roses you will want this fertilizer for sure.

Count your roses--do the math--decide how many bags you need and place your order. You can order through me, Ruth Tiffany, 619-548-6950 or [ruthsgarden@msn.com](mailto:ruthsgarden@msn.com). Place your order by December 30, 2009. Delivery will be January 10, 2010. You will pick up and pay for your bags of BioStart at my San Carlos home by January 15, 2010.

Isn't planning ahead great? And your roses will love you for it. Remember everyone needs to eat. Roses too.

# David Austin - Great Rosarians of the World Ten

By clair Clair G. Martin, Curator of Roses at The Huntington Library.

Today I am pleased to announce that David Austin will be our 2010 Honoree. David has almost single handedly changed the way we think of modern roses and shown us anew what a rose can be. David began a breeding program that produced his first commercial success 'Constance Spry' in 1961, a wonderfully fragrant shrub/climber which was such a success worldwide that by 1969 David was encouraged to found the David Austin Rose Nursery Ltd. in Albrighton near Wolverhampton. This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Austin Nursery and all of the wonderful roses he has produced over the years.

As 2010 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Rosarians of the World Annual Lecture series, I am very pleased to be able to announce David as our tenth honoree. We are planning a number of exciting events for this anniversary program both here on the West coast and in New York as well. GROW 10 will be held at The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, California on Saturday and Sunday, January 23-24, 2010. The Manhattan Rose Society will be holding their event for GROW 10 on Friday and Saturday, June 11-12, 2010 with the Award Lecture on Saturday, June 12 at The New York Botanical Garden. We are expanding our West coast event to include on Saturday, January 23 a rose propagation workshop, rare rose book and art photography exhibit during the day, and that evening a Banquet honoring our honoree



□ David Austin being interviewed by Clair Martin in the Renaissance Garden Pavilion, David Austin Rose Nursery, Albrighton UK



□ The Renaissance Garden, David Austin Rose Nursery



□ 'Phyllis Bide' a Rambler from 1923 in the David Austin Rose Nursery



*The Manor House, Upton Grey, a 1909 Gertrude Jekyll garden restored by Rosamund Wallinger; one of the fantastic gardens on the Summer of British Rose Gardens Tour.*

with Stephen Scanniello as our after dinner speaker. On Sunday, January 23 we will have two panel discussions with well known rosarians discussing the best roses for your garden and building a personal rose library. This year's lunch will be optional but if you chose to upgrade your ticket to the Silver VIR (Very Important Rosarian) level you will receive a GROW 10 commemorative gift and private lunch for the price of your ticket. We will also be offering a complete package, the Gold VIR which will include all the events, the banquet, lunch, and commemorative gift this year for the first time. Not all of the details for New York have been worked out at this time but there will be an event at New York Horticultural Society on Friday and the 4<sup>th</sup> Metropolitan Rose Council Dinner that evening. The lecture will be hosted at The New York Botanical Garden on Saturday, June 12.

This coming year, for the first time we will be sponsoring the Summer of British Rose Gardens Tour, a ten day tour of the best of British roses and gardens. This tour will gather in London on June 15 and return home on June 25. We are structuring this tour along the lines of the ones our friend Bill Grant developed and made so popular, using Discovery Tours, the same firm he used for all those years as well. Mid to late-June is the peak of the rose season in the UK and, weather permitting we will see the best in British roses. Watch our website and this blog for more information as it becomes available about this exciting opportunity.

*Note: reprinted from <http://greatrosarians.com/weblog> with permission from the author.*

# Rose of the Month: Altissimo

By Maggi Jensen, [rosecat@cox.net](mailto:rosecat@cox.net)

If red is your favorite rose color and you particularly like the tomato red hues which are the colors of pyracantha berries or fire engine trucks, then Altissimo may be the right colored rose for you. Looking like a lacquered Asian vase and almost surreal in beauty, this LCL (large climber) often sports seven petals instead of the usual five found in single-petal varieties.

As well as having unique color and petal count, the stamens of this rose are sunshine yellow with dark golden anthers. The large buds of this climber are borne in small clusters or as one single bloom. Unique in its statuesque height, Altissimo grows up to at least seven feet.

In France during 1966, the French firm Delbard-Chabert hybridized Rosa Delmur which is another name for Altissimo. The parentage was Tenor and an unknown seedling. The word Altissimo means "very high."

As well as being extremely popular in Europe, Rosa Delmur also attracted many followers in North America. The ARS rated Altissimo 8.5, and this rose has kept its high score over many many years.

In the rose garden, Altissimo is a show stopper. Many rosarians grow it on posts, trellises, over walls, along fences, and on pergolas. The best place is to train the canes to grow horizontally and then to drape them over an arbor.

So if you are looking for a large, unique looking brilliant rose, not fragrant, and which is almost thornless, I would try Altissimo. Besides the former attributes, it is disease resistant, likes the seashore as well as the desert, is hardy, exhibits well, and is useful to arrangers, especially in the Oriental and Modern show arrangement sections.

Je t'aime, Altissimo.



Two glorious Altissimos in the background of Frank Hastings' garden. Photo by Frank Hastings.



Closeup of one Altissimo bloom. Photo by Bob Martin.

## FREE NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

### *Rose Ramblings*



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ARS CLASS A BULLETIN