We have covered a lot of ground since beginning this history of roses series a year ago.

To sum up, roses are incredibly complex and many rosarians are opinionated. That makes for a witches’ brew of non-aligned thinking and some downright nasty disagreements. You may have heard the saying that "I went to a fight, and a rose meeting broke out." That is because there is a lot of room for conjecture, angry opinions and wild guesses.

Many of the Greek and Roman writers refer to the roses of Paestum, which according to Virgil and Pliny, bloomed semi-annually. Some historians assert that this rose has died out, although others say it may be related to the ‘Autumn Damask’ rose. The number of rose varieties may have been limited in ancient times, but they had a lot of "tricks" to get them to bloom in off seasons. Pliny wrote that in Carthage, the roses could be forced to bloom in the winter, then the roses of Campania bloomed next, followed by those of Malta and lastly Paestum, which flowered in the spring and again in the fall. The species, whatever it may have been, that bloomed in Paestum may be the one used by the gardeners in Seneca's time in Rome to force in warm greenhouses or retard blooming by withholding water at certain periods. Nicholas Culpepper (1616-54) prescribed in his Herbal a dry conserve of rose hips from Rosa canina for weakness, and a conserve of "sugar of rose" to help digestion. Cuttings of the gallica rose the ‘Apothecary's Rose' were often tucked away by goodwives and others for medicinal purposes.

Although we know roses were cultivated in China for thousands of years before the European countries got into the act, not many details of rose genealogy are known. Written records of rose breeding and culture are almost non-existent before the 17th century and scarce until the 19th century. Very little sound, scientific research existed until the late 1800's.

We are indebted to Empress Josephine of France for her creation – Malmaison - which was for a shining moment in time, the epicenter of the rose world. She acquired every known rose in the world for her gardens and protected them during the harsh French winters in huge greenhouses heated by 45 coal-burning stoves. The gardeners she employed, and the hybridizers and nursery people she bought from were the rock stars of the rose world back then. Pierre-Joseph Redouté painted most of her roses, but his book was not published until after her death in 1814.

By 1848, some 1,500 different roses were listed, described, and offered for sale by William Paul's "The Rose Garden" catalogue. There were nearly 800 alba, centifolia, moss, damask, and gallica roses. But, by the time of the 10th edition of this catalogue in 1910, this list of old roses fell to below 90 roses, and the bulk of the roses were as we know them now: hybrid teas and other remontant classes.

Many rosarians who wrote for the American Rose Society Journals from 1914 on captured what was then the state of the art in rose growing. Great rosarians such as Graham Stuart Thomas, Peter Beales, David Austin and Brent Dickerson have written extensively, but still much of the early information has been lost.

Over millions of years, roses still have no single system of universally agreed upon classification. Botanists usually get along, (at the top of their voices...) but don't agree on how roses should be classified. Some of this disagreement is due to the limitations of our human minds. People with minds like Einstein and Buckminster Fuller are rare. Most of us use mental crutches to classify things in groups so we don't have to waste neurons and synapses in contemplating individual entities.
The American Rose Society classifies types of roses into three main groupings, using the magical date 1867 as the divider. The year 1867 was chosen because it was the year of the introduction of the first hybrid tea: ‘La France’. Roses known to be in existence prior to 1867 are referred to as Old Garden Roses or OGRs, and those after 1867 as Modern Roses.

So, the three major types of roses (groupings) are:

**SPECIES ROSES, OLD GARDEN ROSES and MODERN ROSES**

**SPECIES ROSES**
Wild roses have fossil evidence going back some 70 million years in Asia. There are about a hundred and thirty native species of wild roses, all in the northern hemisphere. Many of these 'wild roses' have been interbred over millions of years. Some of the various species roses are the Rosa canina, known as the ‘Dog Rose’ or ‘Brier Bush’; Rosa gallica, known as the gallic rose and ‘French Rose’ and ‘Apothecary's Rose’ and the ‘Red Rose of Lancaster’ during the War of the Roses. The oldest rose identified today is Rosa gallica which once bloomed wild throughout central and southern Europe and western Asia and still survives there. Although the exact origin of R. gallica is unknown, records of it appear as early as the twelfth century B.C. where the Persians considered it a symbol of love. There is also Rosa laevigata, known as the ‘Cherokee Rose’; the Rosa multiflora, known as the multiflora rose; the Rosa rubiginosa, known as the ‘Sweet Brier Rose’, the Rosa virginiana, known as the ‘Virginia Rose’ and Rosa rugosa, known as the ‘Rugosa Rose’ and the ‘Japanese Rose’. R. moschata is a shrub (to 3m) with single white 5 cm flowers, blooming on new growth from late spring until late autumn in warm climates, or from late summer onwards in cool-summer climates. The flowers have a characteristic "musky" scent, emanating from the stamens, which characteristic is also found in some of its descendants. The rose genome has been decoded, but the genetic study of roses is still in its infancy. Eventually genetics will probably unravel many of the complexities of our heritage roses.

**OLD GARDEN ROSES**

**Alba Roses**
The albas are white roses which are derived from Rosa arvensis and Rosa alba. Alba roses are hybrids whose antiquity may go back further than the Roman Empire. Pliny, who lived from 23 to 79 A.D., mentioned white roses in his Natural History. Botanists believe these roses may have been albas. Graham Thomas however, supports Dr. C. C. Hurst's theory that albas are derived from the dog rose, R. canina, and the Damask rose, Rosa damascena,
The Graham Stuart Thomas Rose Book. Albas are elegant upright shrubs with beautiful blue-green foliage, which some may call grey. Botanists have differentiated the albas from other roses by their grey, scentless leaflets. They only bloom in spring. They have delicate coloring ranging from white through exquisite soft shades of pink. They have a penetrating pure rosy fragrance with tones of citrus. They are resistant to disease for the most part and many can tolerate shade and/or drought. Most are winter hardy. The famous War of the Roses used roses as emblems for the two houses (something created by Shakespeare, by the way). A red rose was for the Lancasters, and a white rose was for the Yorks. The York house most certainly used either the 'Alba Maxima' or 'Alba Semi-plena' for their white rose.

Ayrshire Roses
The origin of the Ayrshire roses is somewhat ambiguous because there is a discrepancy as to whether they belong natively to England or not. It seems that the variety was developed from *Rosa arvensis* in Scotland and from there various hybrids were produced. These types of roses are single blooming, sprawling roses that originated in Scotland. Also known as Scotch roses and Burnet roses, these roses generate a lot of controversy. ‘Ayrshire Splendens’ (*Rosa arvensis splendens*) - also known by the name of ‘Splendens’ and ‘Myrrh-Scented Rose’ – is a grand choice for forming a rose fountain with fragrant blooms pink in color. It has a vigorous growth to 15’ and has been in existence since pre1830.

Boursalt Roses
Boursalt roses are thornless, once blooming, rambling type roses. The now almost forgotten Boursalt roses take their name from Mons. Jean-Francois Boursault, a French amateur horticulturalist, who obtained *Rosa alpina* in 1812, raised the first double variety in 1820 and gave it his name. He was an unsavory character but an influential rosarian of Napoleon's time. It was said that his approval of a new variety guaranteed its popularity, and he particularly liked this small group of thornless climbing roses. 'Mme Sancy de Parabère' is one of only three Boursaults still cultivated today ('Amadis' and 'Morletti' are the others). All three are roses that originated in Paris between 1829 and 1883.

Damask Roses
One of the smallest groups of old roses. It is said to have been brought back from Persia by Robert de Brie, around 1254. There are two groups of damasks: the ‘Summer Damask’, flowering once in summer, and the ‘Autumn Damask’, which has a second flowering in autumn. Most are repeat blooming but all have a very heavy fragrance. Bushes grow 3 to 6 feet. They have more vicious thorns than many other rose types. The 'Autumn Damask' (or 'Quatre Saison' as it was originally known in France) was the first rose in Europe to produce two crops of flowers every summer. Other Damasks include: ‘Celsiana’ (before 1817), a typical damask rose; ‘Ispahan’ (before 1832); and ‘Mme Hardy’ (1832), one of the classic old roses. Hardy, who was in charge of Empress Josephine's renowned rose collection at Malmaison, named this rose after his wife. Other examples are: ‘La Ville de Bruxelles’ (1836) and ‘Omar Khayyam’ (1894), a rose that was first raised from seed from a rose on Omar Khayyam's grave at Nashipur in Persia. It was planted on the poet Edward Fitzgerald's grave at Boulge, Suffolk in 1893.

China Roses
The China roses are actually a complex (you can say complex again...) mixture of natural and cultivated hybrids that have evolved over more than three thousand years in Chinese gardens. Screen paintings from the 10th century depict a blush China rose identical to ‘Hume’s Tea-Scented China’, one of the four China stud roses brought to Europe in the early 19th century. China roses were grown in East Asia perhaps as long ago as four thousand years ago. These roses bloom repeatedly in summer and in late autumn. They are smaller and less fragrant than other roses. They also are tender in cool climes.
The Four Stud Chinas
'Slater's Crimson China' was imported by Gilbert Slater of Knot’s Green, Leytonstone in 1792, and by 1798, the French, who dominated rose breeding efforts at the time, had begun hybridization experiments with it. Within a couple of years, rose plants had been distributed to Austria, Germany, and Italy. (A very closely related form is actually believed to have existed in Italy since the mid-17th century.) 'Parsons' Pink China', aka 'Old Blush', is generally accepted as the pink China rose which transformed the world’s roses coming to Europe via Sweden in 1752. The first mention in England comes in 1771 when William Malcolm included in his nursery list ‘Evergreen Chine’ and ‘a new Chine’. Seven years later he added a botanical name for the first one, Rosa indica—Indica in this context, in fact, meaning China. ‘Hume’s Blush Tea-Scented China’ was introduced by Sir Anthony Hume from the East Indies (then including China ) in 1810. It was originally named R. indica odorata and later R. indica fragrans, 'Parks’ Yellow Tea-Scented China’ was brought to the Royal Horticultural Society in 1824, having probably arrived from China in 1823. John Reeves (1774-1856), chief inspector for the East India Company at Canton from 1812 to 1831, was most likely responsible for this import.

Bermuda Roses
These roses were found growing in Bermuda for a century or more. They are highly resistant to plant diseases and nematode damage and fungal diseases. Most have been identified, but several are still listed as “found” roses.

Bourbon Roses
These roses are said to have originated on Le Isle du Bourbon, off the coast of Madagascar. These roses are semi-climbing shrubs and have a purple tinted cane. Bourbons probably originated from a natural cross between the China ‘Parsons' Pink' and the red 'Tous-les-Mois', a damask perpetual, two roses which were used as hedge material on the island now known as Reunion. ‘Souvenir de la Malmaison’ (Deluz of Lyons - 1843) loves a warm climate, and is one of the few bourbons that reaches its greatest perfection in the dry warmth of the Southwest. Those who have seen it at its best speak of it as the quintessential old rose.

Hybrid Perpetual Roses
The damask was the premier rose in the early days of the last century, and fertilizing the damask with the hybrid China produced in this, the third generation from Rosa indica, the hybrid perpetual, which thus combines in its constitution the strain of R. indica, French provence and damask. Hybrid perpetuals are usually six foot bushes in mostly pinks and reds. They were more famous in the 19th century for their scent and repeat blooming. 'Général Jacqueminot' (Roussel, 1853) gives us strong glowing reds, as, for instance, do 'Marie Baumann', 'Senator Vaiisse', 'Duke of Edinburgh', and the most beautiful of all 'Horace Vernet'. 'Baronne Prévost', a clear bright red rose, is one of the finest; 'La Brillante', is a bright transparent red and 'Duchesse de Caylus', is a red of the most perfect form.

Noisette Roses
The noisette is a result of a cross between the China rose 'Parsons' Pink', aka 'Old Blush', and Rosa moschata on a Southern plantation. John Champney crossed 'Old Blush' with Rosa moschata, a circa 1600's species rose from the Himalayas. This resulted in 'Champney's Pink Cluster' (1802), a major contribution from an American grower to the rose family. John Champney then gave Philippe Noisette seedlings of 'Champney's Pink Cluster' in return for Philippe having given John 'Old Blush'. Philippe sowed the seeds of 'Champney's Pink Cluster' and produced 'Blush Noisette', which he sent to his Nurseryman brother, Louis, (Philippe had 15 siblings...) in France in 1814. Other great noisettes include the following: ‘Aimée Vibert’, Vibert, 1828; ‘Céline Forestier’, Trouillard, 1842;
‘Rêve d’Or’, Ducher, 1869 (One of the highest ranked roses in the ARS.) and ‘Mme Alfred Carrière’, Schwartz, 1879.

**Moss Roses**
The first moss rose apparently was the result of a sport or mutation from a centifolia at the beginning of the 1700's. Named because of the "moss" covering the top of the stem, the bushes are 3 to 6 feet tall and winter hardy. Examples are: 'Mme Louis Levêque' (1898), 'Général Kléber' (1856), and 'Goethe' (1911), the only true single moss available today.

**Centifolia Roses**
Centifolias, meaning hundred petals, are also called cabbage roses due to the globular shaped flowers. These flowers are a result of the damask roses crossed with albas. They are once-flowering.

**Portland Roses**
Portland roses were named after Margaret Cavendish, Second Duchess of Portland. They came from a hybrid between an ‘Autumn Damask’ and *Rosa gallica officinalis* and are repeat flowering. Some examples include: ‘Comte du Chambord’ (about 1860), ‘Jacques Cartier’ (1868) and “Indigo’ (before 1845).

**Tea Roses**
Tea roses, or tea-scented China roses, as they were first called, appeared in London about 1810, from a cross between *Rosa gigantea* and *Rosa chinensis*. They were called tea-scented because their fragrance seemed reminiscent of a newly-opened chest of tea. (In those days, tea was shipped from the Orient and sold to English households in small wooden chests.) Tea roses are the result of crossing China roses with various noisette and bourbon roses. They are more tender as compared to other garden roses. Their color range includes yellow, white and pink. Their petals tend to roll back at the edges, and therefore the petal at the middle has a pointed tip. 'Duchesse de Brabant', introduced by H.B. Bernede, Bordeaux, France, 1857, has been selected as an Earthkind rose because of its hardiness and disease resistance. Another tea rose 'Mons Tillier', bred by Alexandre Bernaix, France, 1891, achieved Earthkind status, too. In *Modern Roses 12*, the definitive book on roses, there are 1,156 tea roses listed!

**MODERN ROSES**
Modern garden roses can be quite confusing because the modern garden roses do have old garden roses in their ancestry. The hybrid tea is one such modern garden rose. The hybrid teas were brought about by hybridizing hybrid perpetuals and tea roses. They have colors like apricot, copper, yellow bi-colors, lavender, brown, gray and deep yellow. Hybrid teas are now the most common types of roses. The French breeder, Guillot, introduced the first hybrid tea, 'La France’, in 1867 which had elegant blooms and also repeated. Breeders were quick to realize that roses could be 'planned' for various characteristics and overdid it by concentrating only on color and bloom shape. Other characteristics such as scent, hardiness and disease resistance were not often considered.

**Hybrid Tea/Grandiflora Roses**
These are the most popular of modern roses with their large, shapely blooms of 30 to 50 petals in all sorts of shades and colors. The 'Peace' rose introduced in 1945 was immensely popular, before the ‘Knock Out’ rose was introduced in 2000. In 1954, the grandiflora was created by crossing the hybrid tea with the floribunda. Grandifloras grow to well over 8 feet. 'Queen Elizabeth' was the first grandiflora in this class.
Floribunda Roses
Bushes have large clusters of flowers with many blooms in flower at one time. These are the second most popular rosebushes after the hybrid tea, although the hybrid tea blooms in a 5-7 week cycle while the floribunda blooms continuously. Floribundas are easy to care for, hardy and more reliable than hybrid teas.

Polyantha Roses
Polyanthas tend have smaller flowers on smaller, sturdy bushes.

Miniature Roses
Miniature roses are miniature versions of the hybrid tea form of rose bush. They are hardy, usually on their own root system and displaying miniature flower forms. Very versatile, they can be used for edging a bed or put in hanging baskets, for example. They usually grow to about 3 feet.

Miniflora Roses
Miniflora is a new category recognized in 1999. It is a sort of intermediate stage between floribunda and miniature roses.

Shrub Roses
Some of these types of shrub roses can be sprawling, large bushes (up to 15 feet!) in every direction. Both compact and large versions are vigorous and hardy with large clusters of flowers. For some, remember that you will need plenty of room! David Austin roses, or English roses, are in this group.

Large-Flowered Climbers and Hybrid Wichurana Roses
Both large-flowered climbers and hybrid wichurana roses have a large range of shapes and flowers, but are characterized by their long, arching canes and climbing habit. These form large bushes that need space to climb—fences, walls, barns and arbors!

Hybrid Musk Roses
Hybrid musk roses are generally attributed to those created by Englishman Rev. Joseph Pemberton and his gardeners, the Bentalls. Many of the best of his roses have ‘Trier’, a hybrid multiflora, as one of their parents, and ‘Trier’ has a tenuous link to the musk rose, R. moschata. Subsequently, many others have developed roses that they describe as hybrid musks. The Vintage Gardens website has an apt description of this group of roses – “what binds the hybrid musk group together is its shrub-rose nature. These roses are best grown freely, without pruning, allowing their natural grace to develop. They are mostly fragrant, bearing subtly colored smallish flowers in
clusters, often very large clusters, especially in the fall. Healthy, lustrous foliage is a hallmark of the hybrid musks and several varieties can be pushed quite far with shade tolerance. …” 'Paul's Himalayan Musk Rambler’, 1899, is an extremely vigorous bush. It blooms only once a year, covering itself with innumerable sprays of pink blossoms. Its unusually long, pointy leaves tend to droop. It has very flexible canes which can be trained with ease over arches, pillars, and pergolas. Some other examples of hybrid musks are: 'Ballerina' (Bentall, 1937), not a typical hybrid musk but a beautiful rose; 'Belinda' (1936); 'Buff Beauty' (1939); 'Francesca' (1922); 'Lavender Lassie' (1960); 'Nur Mahal' (1923), one of the few red hybrid musks; 'Penelope' (Pemberton, 1924), one of the best hybrid musks; and 'Prosperity' (1919).

**Hybrid Rugosa Roses**

These roses descend from *Rosa rugosa*, a very hardy species rose from Northern Japan, China, Korea, and Siberia. Some of the best hybrid rugosa roses are: ‘Blanc Double de Coubert’ (1892), a superb rose with pure white flowers exuding an excellent perfume; ‘Roseraie de l’Hay’ (1901), one of the best and most popular of all the hybrid rugosa roses; ‘Sarah Van Fleet’ (1926), one of the most reliable of the hybrid rugosas which seldom sets fruit; and ‘Max Graf’ (1919), one of the best roses for ground cover.

In conclusion, it is difficult to draw an absolute line between the three groups, but at the same time, we think it is important to keep a distinction between them. Species, old garden and modern roses each possess truly distinctive characteristics that make all three interesting for the rose collector. A nicely designed rose garden should, therefore, include at least some representatives of each of the three groups.

**Joséphine de Beauharnais**

At long last, this series of historical articles is finished. Well, sort of... While researching material on historical roses, I found a ton of interesting tidbits of information. If I live long enough, a book on the connectivity of roses is possible. I'm fascinated by the interplay of people in the rose world, and the way their lives influenced the history of roses. For example, I wrote that Empress Joséphine died of pneumonia after touring her garden with Czar Nickolas in chilly weather. What I did not mention was that the fashion of the time was for women to reveal their charms by wearing only the lightest of scarves caught around their elbows and to wear very low-cut bodices and extremely thin muslin dresses, which were often dampened with water to provide even more transparency. Joséphine was a walking invitation to Pneumonia…