

# *Southern Highlands Rose Society*



## *Newsletter*

*March 2021*



Dear Members,

Welcome to the latest newsletter. At last we can see some hope for being able to put the terrible last twelve months behind us as we prepare to get in the queue for our vaccine shot. The roll out has started and gives us encouragement that the International Rose Show scheduled for October 2022 might just happen after all. It will certainly raise the spirits of the organisers of Roses by the Sea in Kiama to be held in October this year.

As luck would have it our next meeting falls on St Patrick's Day. No matter our origins, I think most of us enjoy watching the Irish celebrate their most famous saint and some of the fun that goes into celebrating the day. For those of us who might have been in Ireland on St Patrick's Day, we will recognise that there is more revelry outside of Ireland on the day than there is Ireland. In Ireland celebrations mostly consist of street parades in both big towns and villages and attendance at mass (pre Covid 19 of course) and not much more. Outside of Ireland it becomes an excuse for a great big party especially in USA and to a lesser extent here in Australia. As editor, I thought I would join in the fun and give this newsletter a bit of an Irish flavour and of course we will recognise St Patrick in some way at our meeting. Many of you will know the beautiful rose names for the saint, Saint Patrick, a beautiful yellow rose which brings cheer to all who see it in flower

Jo Babb – Secretary and Newsletter coordinator- Newsletter contributions to: [jo.babb@bigpond.com](mailto:jo.babb@bigpond.com)

**Next Meeting: 17th March 2021 -10 am at Annette Lane's House  
– Corner Oxley Drive and Bracken Street Mittagong**

**Special guest speakers – Maureen and Ian Thackeray on Miniature roses**

Ian will have some miniatures for sale so bring your money

**Miniature/Mini Flora Rose Show – 17 and 18 April 2021 – RSL Club  
Mittagong- (see separate brochure)**



**Flemington Racecourse**

Starting our Irish theme this month is our featured rose,

**St Patrick** (*Rosa* 'WEKamanda' )



**St Patrick – a rose that changes colour**



#### **Description**

The mildly scented St. Patrick™ Rose is a Hybrid Tea Rose. Its common name arises from the yellow petals that take on a slight greenish hue as they age. It will bloom in flushes throughout the summer into autumn.

#### **St Patrick Rose – the rose**

St Patrick was bred by American Rose grower Frank Strickland (1931 -2015). Frank was very much an amateur rose breeder who, like so many of us, began growing roses more by accident than design. In a new family home in San Bernadino back in the 70's he wanted to remove some sick looking roses but was stopped by his wife who insisted they stay until replaced.

After falling in love with roses he began hybridising in 1984 initially with little success. He was determined to breed two roses that he could name for his two granddaughters. Like his falling in love with roses, his St Patrick rose was very accidental. It was a sickly looking seedling with a cabbagey rose that didn't impress. However he kept it and the next year it produced what we now know is the beautiful St Patrick Rose. St Patrick was bred from Brandy (seed parent) and Gold Medal (pollen parent) .

The rose was named by the introducing nursery, Weeks Roses however the code name for St Patrick is "WEKamanda" honouring Frank's intention to name a rose after his granddaughter.

Frank has one other named rose, Spring Break code named STRAheidi after his other granddaughter. Frank won several prestigious awards as an amateur or as he referred to himself, as an independent.

(article written by Jo Babb based on information taken from an article about Frank Strickland by Kathy De Roo taken published in the Santa Clarita Valley Rose Society newsletter circa 1995).

#### ***So who was St Patrick?***

***Saint Patrick*** – (*Pádraig* in Irish) was a fifth-century Romano-British Christian missionary and bishop in Ireland. Known as the "Apostle of Ireland", he is the primary patron saint of Ireland and regarded by the Catholic Church as the Enlightener of Ireland. He is also regarded as a Saint within the framework of their respective doctrine by the Anglican Communion and the Lutheran Churches.<sup>1</sup>

*The dates of Patrick's life cannot be fixed with certainty, but there is broad agreement that he was active as a missionary in Ireland during the fifth century.*

*Saint Patrick's Day is observed on 17 March, the supposed date of his death. It is celebrated inside and outside Ireland as a religious and cultural holiday. In the dioceses of Ireland, it is both a solemnity and a holy day of obligation; it is also a celebration of Ireland itself.*

*Legend credits Patrick with teaching the Irish about the doctrine of the Holy Trinity by showing people the shamrock, a three-leaved plant, using it to illustrate the Christian teaching of three persons in one God. This story first appears in writing in 1726, though it may be older. The shamrock has since become a central symbol for Saint Patrick's Day.*

*Although it is stated since the 3<sup>rd</sup> century that there were no snakes in Ireland, St Patrick is credited with banishing all snakes from Ireland by chasing them into the sea after they attacked him during a 40-day fast he was undertaking on top of a hill.*

*(Information loosely taken from Wikipedia)*



### *An Irish blessing*

*Sure, and may there be a road before you and it bordered with roses, the likes of which have ne'er been smelt of seen before, for the warm fine colour and the great sweetness that is on them.*

I hope you will enjoy my selection of articles this month. I have been in touch with Ireland's best known living rose grower, David Kenny. David was due to speak at Roses by the Sea in October but his presence is now doubtful. David has given me a lovely piece honouring the lives of growers Pat Dickson and Sam McGredy and author Sean McCann. As well I have featured David's best known rose, Newsflash.

**David Kenny**



I am a retired teacher who has been growing and breeding roses for over forty years. In my breeding programme I concentrate on breeding healthy, novel roses in all types and colours especially yellow which is my favourite colour. I am also trying to get fragrance. My best varieties are Apple Jack (KENendure) a yellow floribunda/shrub, Showmee Sunshine (KENveron) a yellow shrub/ground cover, Lullaby (KENfrilpin) a pink climber with lovely form and Newsflash (KENdutch) an orange floribunda which is probably my best creation.

### *Three Irish Rose Icons*

With the death of Sam McGredy in August 2019 the last of the three great Irish rose icons of the twentieth century passed away. Sam along with Sean McCann and Pat Dickson spread the gospel of how great roses are. Pat and Sam bred some of the greatest roses of the twentieth century and Sean wrote about every aspect of rose growing.

Pat Dickson, was a quiet thoughtful man with a wonderful wit and a great sense of humour. He went about the business of breeding roses with intelligence, enthusiasm and knowledge. Early in his career he became known for his HTs, especially red ones such as 'Red Planet', 'Big Chief' and 'Precious Platinum' all of which are outstanding and of course the exhibitors "banker" 'Red Devil' but there was much more to his breeding. His 'Scented Air' was an excellent floribunda. Other excellent varieties of Pat's were 'Anisley Dickson' named for his wife, 'Manx Queen', the wonderful 'Bright Smile' and a personal favourite the beautiful coloured, novel 'Iced Ginger'. No discussion of Pat and his breeding achievements can be done without mentioning his patio varieties. He pioneered these novel very beautiful roses and in the 1980s he introduced 'Gentle Touch', 'Peek a Boo' and many others. I had the good fortune to visit Dickson's Nursery on many occasions and to hear Pat's comments on the many roses on test there. He was able to spot the qualities, good and not so good, of every rose on trial. He could point out features of roses that no one else had noticed and could say that this or that rose would do well in the USA or in Europe despite not looking so good in Ireland. Of the many outstanding varieties bred by Pat I think two stand out: 'Grandpa Dickson' which was very good in the garden and was excellent on the show bench and probably his greatest 'Eliná', a true world beater which was bred and introduced in collaboration with Colin. His greatest legacy is that his son Colin has carried on the Dickson tradition of breeding excellent roses.

Sean McCann was a soccer goalkeeper in his youth but was not tall enough to make it as a professional and so he became a journalist. He developed a passion for growing roses when he tried his hand at exhibiting and quickly became highly successful. He grew over 1,000 roses in his garden in South Dublin often with them planted only 9" (22.5 cms) apart. His first love was for the classic high centred exhibition HT but later he got a grá (love) for miniatures which he grew very successfully and later bred many varieties such as 'Admirable', 'Blushing Groom', 'Crazy Dottie', 'Gentle Annie', 'Little White Lies' to name but a few. Many of which were grown widely in the USA having been introduced by Jerry Justice. He wrote a wonderful rose column in Garden News for many years. In his column he didn't pontificate on how one should grow, prune etc. but in his own inimitable style explained how to get the best from one's roses and brought the news of what was happening in the rose world, writing about new varieties, rose events often in a very humorous way. He told us what he was doing in his garden and how he was breeding new varieties, especially miniatures. He wrote some excellent books on roses among them, "All the World's Roses", "The Rose, an Encyclopaedia of North American Roses, Rosarians and Rose Lore" and "Miniature Roses, Their Care and Cultivation".

Sam McGredy was known everywhere as he dominated gatherings of rose people with his wit, charm and general bonhomie. He was a great publicist for his roses and long before garden centres were going full out, he opened one in Belfast. Along with Pat Dickson he dominated the British rose scene in the 1960s. Varieties such 'Elizabeth of Glamis', 'City of Leeds', 'City of Belfast' and 'Mullard Jubilee' were known and grown everywhere. He and Pat were instrumental in getting the Plant Breeders' Law passed in the UK and were also involved in the establishment of the International Rose Trials in Sir Thomas and Lady Dickson Park in Belfast.

In 1972 Sam emigrated with his young family to New Zealand. He went back to being a more "hands on" breeder and was soon introducing several award-winning varieties e.g. 'Regensberg', 'Sexy Rexy', 'Aeotearoa/New Zealand', 'Paddy Stephens' and his huge seller in the US, 'Olympiad'.

All three were members of the OBN (Order of the Blue Nose), set up in 1969 during the celebrations for Niels Poulsen's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. When they met up at rose conventions and trials, they had great fun with their fellow rose friends Hette Spek, Reimer Kordes, Frank Benardella and several more. In 1994, when the world rose Convention was held in Christchurch, Sam organised a bus tour of New Zealand of fifty of the world's rose breeders and his rose friends. They must have had "mighty craic" as we say in Ireland.

It is amazing that such a small country has made such a huge contribution to rose growing and breeding. They are greatly missed.



This beautiful rose above, Newsflash is available in New Zealand was bred by Irish Rose breeder, David Kenny who was (is) due to speak at the Roses By the Sea festival in Kiama in October 2021.



<http://nsw.rose.org.au/national-rose-championships-and-conference.html>

**16 and 17 October 2021 - put it in your diary now. So close to us, it is not to be missed!**

## Who likes snow? This little rose



This brave little rose has just survived a winter in Ireland. It has been snowed on more than once and shivered its way through the last four months. And in spite of that it has lovely little new shoots. This photo of the rose was taken a week ago by my friend Mary who lives in Athlone, Ireland at my request. The snowy photo is her back yard some weeks ago. Thanks Mary!



## Foliage Diseases

An article from Silkies Roses (with sincere thanks – see below for details about Silkies Roses)

If the rose becomes poorly, dig it up and throw it in the garbage because no amount of spraying or fertilizing will heal it. Here are pictures of some issues which occur on rose foliage throughout the season:

**Rose Mosaic Virus:** It's highly likely that if every rose was scientifically analysed, it would reveal some virus or disease. In some seasons, Rose Mosaic Virus is more evident than others so you can remove affected stems then wait to see if the plant produces healthy, unaffected foliage subsequently.



**Black Spot:** These circular black spots typically develop on the upper side of the leaves but can also be found on the undersides. If not treated properly, this disease can spread and infect the entire rose plant. When pruning, cut out any stems with black spot and be sure to use plenty of mulch.



**Powdery Mildew:** This disease is caused by the fungus, *Podosphaera pannosa*. The microscopic spores produced by this disease spread until it infects all aerial portions of the rose plant. High humidity coupled with poor soil make conditions favourable for this disease to grow.



**Rust Fungus Spores:** Rusts are plant diseases caused by pathogenic fungi and only infect living plants. Infections begin when a spore lands on the plant surface and germinates.



We occasionally see some of these foliage diseases on potted roses in our nursery and also on roses in our gardens throughout the season. We are able to control them by using our organic rose management program but, when issues occur on your roses, it's most important to prune, fertilize and then deep-soak the plants!

You'll be amazed by how a problem can be turned into a beautifully lush bush which is consequently loaded with buds ready to give you masses of gorgeous rose blooms... all foliage issues forgotten!

***Cheers from us all here at SILKIES ROSE FARM, Clonbinane***

[silkiesrosefarm.com.au](http://silkiesrosefarm.com.au)

Don't forget our fabulous raffle this month!



At the March meeting there will be a fabulous raffle prize (think something Irish) so bring some money so you have lots of chances of winning. Tickets are always 3 for \$5 .00

Look forward to morning tea with an Irish theme.



It is time to think about your new rose purchases for winter planting. Most companies have opened their online sales now. Below is a small selection.

- ❖ **SILKIES ROSE FARM** - <https://rosesalesonline.com.au/contact-us/> -  
Subscribers receive a very interesting newsletter regularly. You don't have to purchase to receive the newsletter
- ❖ **Wagner's Roses** - <https://www.wagnersrosenursery.com.au/> -
  - Members of Rose Society receive a 10% discount on orders – when ordering use the code **100%roses!**
- ❖ **Treloar Roses** - <https://www.treloarroses.com.au/>  
Very popular with members – they offer free postage on large orders



Is there anyone out there with good computer skills who would like to collaborate on the newsletter? I have very poor skills but am happy to still put bits together. I would love some assistance with the layout. Please get in touch if so.