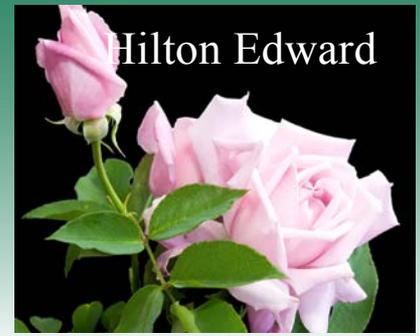




# Macarthur Rose

Newsletter Vol 27, No 8

10 April 2021



## Making Better Meetings

During Covid while our meetings were suspended we have not had regular reminders that successful meetings need everyone to contribute.

We all enjoy attending the meetings but increasingly the work to make our meetings run smoothly has fallen on the shoulders of a few willing volunteers. Many of these people are regular volunteers and have been contributing for a long time to make the meetings run smoothly.

It would be helpful if more of our members could arrive around 1:30pm to help with setting up chairs, tables, afternoon tea

Likewise at the end of the meeting if you can pitch in and help with packing up that would be great. Many hands make light work and any contribution, no matter how small or large, is always greatly appreciated by the regular volunteers.

### Afternoon Tea

One of the best parts of the meeting is having a 'cuppa' and enjoying each other's company in an informal way. Coffee, tea, sugar and milk are provided for afternoon tea – please remember to contribute a gold coin to help with costs.

If you can bring your own mug that would also help lessen the impact on the environment from



## Dear Rose Friends

As the weather changes and we move into autumn I am sure we are all battling various fungi and other pests and diseases in our gardens. Now that our Neutrog has been delivered we can tidy our gardens and provide them with the last little boost for the final bloom cycle of the season.

Thank you to Graham and Janet Wright for the enormous amount of work that they put into making the Neutrog delivery successful. Although there was a slight glitch thanks to the substantial downpour that occurred during the week of the expected delivery, the Neutrog order was safely delivered. But not before the truck got stuck in the driveway. Photos of the Neutrog pick up day are on Page 4 of this newsletter.

A special thanks to all the volunteers particularly Gary Crawford and Michael Darby for helping with the lifting and loading of the Neutrog orders. Your help was greatly appreciated by those who needed assistance on the day.

As some of us may have already discovered, It is best to take fertiliser out of your car (especially Who Flung Dung) ASAP and not leave it overnight. It seems to leave a new earthy fragrance permeating your car upholstery for the next few days.

Ordering our Neutrog online was a new experience for us all. I would like to thank you all for your support of the new system and taking the hold ups and difficulties with calm and competence. It greatly helped us all to implement the new system.

The Royal Sydney Easter Show is currently in full swing and many of our established exhibitors are exhibiting. We wish you every success over the next several days of competition.

On April 17 the only Miniature and Miniflora Rose Show in Australia is being held at Mittagong RSL in Mittagong. Other than the Sydney Royal, this is the first 'live' rose show that has been held in NSW since the COVID 19 lock downs. This show is well worth visiting to learn more about miniature and miniflora roses and to see some excellent examples. I encourage you all to attend.



NSW Rose Society stall at the 2021 Easter Show

You will have all noted that our newsletters have become quite irregular. We are currently very short of volunteers and I am grateful that Roslyn Tidsley has offered and begun working with me to assist with the newsletter. This should help to ensure that your newsletters come regularly once again. Thank you Roslyn for volunteering and for your capable help.

Any contributions that help with the running of the Rose Society is greatly appreciated. Even the smallest contribution makes a huge difference and helps us all enjoy the Rose.

Annual subscriptions are due before the end of June. You can pay your subscription directly to our subscription secretary Maureen Thackeray at the regular monthly meetings (please have the correct change).

Yours in Roses

*Judith*

## Soil structure

Our soil is the foundation for growing good roses and Autumn is an ideal time to attend to its needs before we begin our winter planting of bare root roses.

Good soil, with the right pH levels are essential foundations for rose growth and good blooms throughout the growing season.

Soil is composed of sand, silt, clay and organic matter. The minute particles of sand and silt are bound by clay and organic matter into aggregates. These are the crumbs or lumps soil breaks into when you dig it. Good soil structure has adequate spaces (pores) between aggregates to allow water and air to enter the soil and drain easily, while holding enough moisture to maintain plant growth. Poor soil structure has few aggregates and few pores between soil particles.

A rich sandy loam is considered a good composition for growing roses as it allows water and oxygen to penetrate the root system. Organic material feeds the bacteria in the soil and that facilitates the conversion of nutrients into forms available to the root system of the rose.

A good loam is considered to have about 50% pore space by volume, of which roughly half is normally air and half water. Organic material may be 4-6% of the loam composition, but its importance belies this relatively small percentage. It plays a significant role in assisting soil clumping and pore space formation. The remainder (just under 50%) is inorganic: sand (60%), silt (20%) and clay (20%).

As the organic material decomposes in the soil, it gives off carbon dioxide, which replaces some of the oxygen in the soil. Air in the soil contains less oxygen and more carbon dioxide, but carbon dioxide is dissolved by water in the soil to form a weak acid. This reacts with minerals and forms compounds that the plants can take up and use as food.



If your soils are heavily weighted to clay as we often find in the Macarthur region you can remove some of the clay and add in organic matter, a good loamy soil available from soil or sand suppliers or from the local gardening centre. Alternatively you can build up your garden beds on top of the clay to at least 20cm to ensure your roses have the best soil and drainage to grow in.

## Soil balance

Soil balance is the key to successful rose growing. Without good drainage too much organic material may retain excessive amounts of water causing root rot. Too much silt or clay will compact the soil reducing oxygen to the roots. Too sandy a soil will not hold water long enough to be absorbed by the roots. As interaction takes place, soil structure and composition changes. It is important to check regularly to keep the necessary balance.

### DIGGING

Digging a small hole 20–30cm deep will give you some idea of the structure and strength of your topsoil, although dry soils are often hard and not necessarily poorly structured. Dig the hole, take a slice off the side and carefully lift it out so it stays intact.

Lay the slice on its side to examine it. A crumbly soil is usually softer and more encouraging to root and shoot development than a massive soil where soil particles are all the same size (such as fine silt), or cloddy soil which breaks apart into large clods and is difficult to break down further, or platy soil which breaks into flat plate-like layers (such as soil crusts).

### Porosity

Examine the spadeful of soil closely for channels created by earthworms, ants, old plant roots and crack lines. These are very important features of a well-structured soil as they allow easy root penetration and water and air flow.



### Texture

The combination of sand, silt and clay gives soil its texture. The following test helps you assess the texture of your soil.

1. Take a small handful of topsoil or subsoil and remove any gravel, stones, leaves and twigs. Break up any aggregates.
2. Adding a drop of water at a time, knead the soil in your palms to make a small ball about 4 cm in diameter. Stop adding water as soon as the ball starts to stick to your hand and knead for another 30 seconds. You will find it almost impossible to mould a ball with very sandy soil, and much easier with a clay soil.
3. Press the ball between your fingers to determine its texture. A gritty feel indicates fine and coarse sand. (You can hear the sand grinding if you hold the ball to your ear.) A silky feel indicates silt, and a plastic, sticky feel indicates clay.



4. You can also determine texture by making a soil ribbon. Press the ball between your thumb and forefinger. The longer the ribbon, the more clay is in your soil.

## Tasks for Autumn

Autumn is the best time to start tidying up your rose garden. After all the heavy rain of recent weeks it has been a struggle to keep the black spot down so ensure you do not leave the infected leaves on the soil.

As the soil still retains some of the summer heat, keep up the dead heading to encourage the last of the blooms before the cool weather seeps over us all. Add Seamungus to help with the soil structure.

Now is the time to prepare your special spots for the new roses that you ordered back in February.

Remember to test your soil to find out the pH levels as you have a good opportunity to make some long term changes to the pH levels while the soil is soft and the days are not quite as hot.

Your local nursery, Mitre 10 and Bunnings all sell several inexpensive types of test kits such as the Manutec one displayed below. They can all give reliable results if you test across a wide area to understand your soil composition. The ideal pH level to get the best roses in Australia is 6.5-7.0.

If your soil is acidic (less than 6.5), add lime to the soil where possible. Remember that surface applications to the soil are very slow to change the pH level (three months or more). Over liming must be avoided as lowering the pH levels can be difficult.

Magnesium can be cheaply and easily added to the soil using Epsom Salts. This will encourage water shoots that will be the basis of your bloom producing canes next spring and summer. Add a handful to a watering can of water and apply around the drip line. Or sprinkle a handful near the drip line. Avoid leaving it too close to the drip line.



## Medicinal Roses

The Rose is mentioned in the **Capitulaire de Villis** a text written during the reign of Charlemagne., evidence that it was present in medieval gardens. Particularly monastery gardens as it was essentially considered to be a medicinal plant.

At the time these were wild roses, particularly the dog rose (Rosa Canina). Apothecaries would later make wide use of the French rose, mainly in the form of the Provins rose (Rosa Gallica Officinalis), hence another of its names - the Apothecaries Rose. But other varieties of roses can also be used, especially heirloom roses.

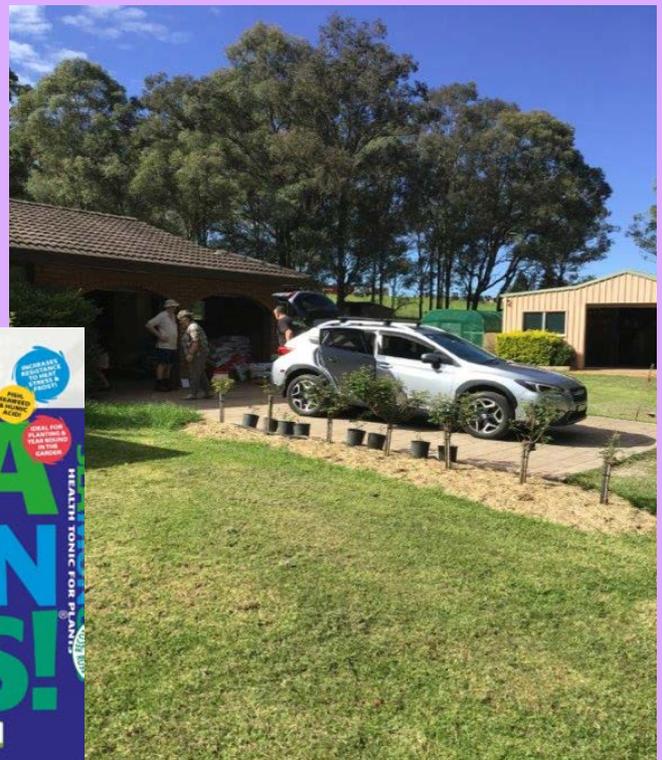
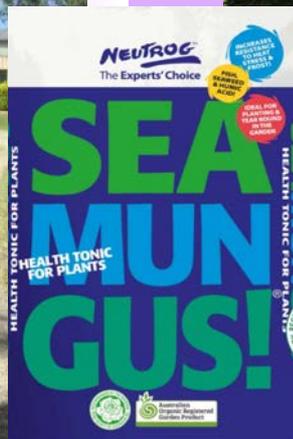
Different parts of the plant are renowned for their therapeutic value but the petals are recommended for which a pleasant tasting infusion can be prepared that is considered effective for the treatment of respiratory conditions. Use 15gms of rose petals in 500ml of boiling water for 15 minutes. By concentrating the same infusion a little more, it becomes a mouth wash to treat mouth ulcers and also a lotion that encourages the healing of inflammation and bruises. Always remember to test a small amount on the skin first in case it causes an allergic reaction. And use petals from perfectly healthy, fully opened roses picked from untreated bushes. From the 'Little Book of Roses'



**Complicata:** Has large and beautifully formed single blooms of rich rose-pink, paler to the centre. Mass flowering in early spring on a spreading bush.



# Neutrog Delivery



## Bench display and enjoying our Roses

Every month tables and display containers are set up outside in the undercover area for members to prepare their roses for display. You need to bring your own foam.

The bench display is traditionally an opportunity for new and experienced exhibitors to practice their skills and obtain substantial feedback from other experienced exhibitors and the top class judges who belong to our region.

However everyone is encouraged to bring their roses and display them so that we can all learn from each other. This is the strength of our region and expands our knowledge and understanding of the rose. We can all learn.

It is always enjoyable to see each other's roses and it is pleasure to smell and enjoy them after the formal part of the meeting concludes.

Being able to learn both from experienced exhibitors and the first class judges within our group is a great opportunity to improve our rose growing and display skills.

Just one or two roses from everyone provides a great display for us all to enjoy.

Have a go and display your roses at a meeting,



Congratulations to Maureen and Ian Thackeray on their Championship wins at the 2021 Royal Easter Show.

## SHOW BENCH CLASSES

CLASS 1: 1 Exhibition Rose

CLASS 2: 1 Vase Bunch Roses, 5 stems, 1-2 cultivars

CLASS 3: 1 Vase Bunch Roses, 3 stems, same cultivar

CLASS 4: 1 Vase of Decorative Roses, 3 stem and/or cuts, same cultivar

CLASS 5: 1 Vase of Full Bloom Roses, 3 stems, NND (Not Necessarily Distinct)

CLASS 6: 1 Vase of Roses, Bud to Full Bloom, 4 stages, same cultivar

CLASS 7: 1 Vase of Floribunda roses, 1-6 stems and/or cuts, same cultivar, minimum of 10 blooms

CLASS 8: 1 Vase of Miniature Roses, 3 stems and/or cuts, same cultivar

CLASS 9: 1 Vase of Modern shrub roses, one stem or cut. This section included old types such as David Austin (and their equivalents from other breeders), Hybrid Musk, Ground Cover and Landscaping Roses.

CLASS 10: 1 Vase of Heritage or Old Garden Roses, one stem or cut

## BEGINNER'S CLASSES

CLASS 11: 1 Rose at any stage of development

CLASS 12: 1 Vase Bunch Roses, 3 stems, NND (Not Necessarily Distinct)

**Stem** – a stem is defined as original new growth, which carries one bloom or bud and has no check from pinching, stopping or pruning from the time of growth start to flowering. Disbudding is not regarded as a check to growth under this definition. The stem should be proportionate in thickness and length to the size of the bloom it supports.

**Cut** – a cut is similar to a 'stem' (original new growth) that carries more than one bloom, and/or bud(s).

**Foliage** – should be adequate in quantity and size, undamaged, fresh and clean in appearance and of good colour and quality for the cultivar.

## other Events

### March Birthdays

3<sup>rd</sup> Pauline Jelich

14<sup>th</sup> David Hawke

26<sup>th</sup> Helen O'Hearn

27<sup>th</sup> Jan Stibbard



### April BIRTHDAYS

5<sup>th</sup> Ian Thackeray

7<sup>th</sup> Graham Wright

11<sup>th</sup> Ron Grimaldi

17<sup>th</sup> Judith Carll

Neutrog hint for the Autumn. Prepare your soil for winter rose planting by using Seamungus crumble. It will help prepare the soil for the new rose roots to give them strength and vitality as they establish in their new home. It will also help them to resist pests, diseases and weather the winter frost. Remember to keep the watering up especially when the days consistently reach over 25C.

## MEETING DATES FOR OUR DIARIES

### Macarthur District Regional Rose Society Meeting Dates for 2021 (subject to Covid-19 restrictions)

The theme for our meetings this year is going to be 'Roses'. Each meeting will focus on different aspects of rose growing and enjoyment of the rose including soil health, displaying roses, different ways to utilise all parts of our roses, showing roses, insecticides and herbicides that can help or hinder our rose growing and finally a celebration of the rose in all its beauty.

10<sup>th</sup> April Macarthur Regional Monthly meeting.

17<sup>th</sup> April Miniature and Miniflora Rose Show at Mittagong RSL Club Mittagong.

2<sup>nd</sup> May How to Exhibit your Roses and what the Judges are looking for: at the Macarthur Centre for Sustainability.

08<sup>th</sup> May

12<sup>th</sup> June (AGM)

10<sup>th</sup> July

14<sup>th</sup> August

11<sup>th</sup> September

09<sup>th</sup> October

13<sup>th</sup> November

11<sup>th</sup> December (Christmas Party)



They Royal Sydney Easter Show is currently underway with the last days for Rose Exhibiting from 11- 13 April. Maureen and Ian Thackeray are just two of our members who are exhibiting. Buy your tickets and go and look at the best roses in Australia.

### Contributions

Your contributions to this Newsletter are always welcome. If you have items of interest, including photos, that you may want to share or distribute please send them to:

Judith Carll, Chairperson at Email: macarthurrosesociety@gmail.com, or Tel: 0410 444 562.

### Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at 2:00pm on 10 April at Elderslie Primary School, 170 Lodges Road, Elderslie.

**COVID SAFE** Our Rose Society operates in a **COVID** safe way. **Hand sanitiser** is available. **There is sufficient space for us to be able to meet and keep the designated safe distance off two metres from each other. All Welcome and we look forward to seeing you.**

