

Southern Highlands Rose Society

Newsletter



April 2020



Greetings Members,

The executive of the Southern Highlands Regional Rose Society wishes you all the very best during these troubling and very different times. Life is very strange in lockdown with few face to face social contacts and few enjoyable outings. How lucky are we here in the Southern Highlands to have our gardens and our roses to get us through? And as much as we all wish it had never occurred, if it had to happen then it happened in the best possible weather conditions for gardeners. Enough rain to replenish our tanks and ground water and give our gardens the best possible autumn chance, followed by glorious days with mild temperatures - perfect for gardening. Even the few terrible windy days are forgiven.

This month's newsletter will by necessity be a bit different to others. There will be no minutes and no follow up of guest speakers. Instead I am going to include a couple of hints for what to do in the garden now and include a few reminders. And remember, contributions to the newsletter are always sought and welcomed. You will see I have gone out of area for some articles. Local would be great! So send me some bits and pieces; photos, articles, snippets. If you found it interesting or beautiful, then there is a good chance that someone else will too.

Stay safe, stay gardening and above all, enjoy those roses and get things ready for next year when life returns to normal.

Jo Babb – Secretary and Editor



Reminders

- *Memberships for Rose Society of NSW are due by 30th June. You received a renewal form in your "NSW Rose Journal" which you received somewhere around 17th March. Please return it as per the instructions on the form.*
- *There will be no branch meetings until further notice*
- *Roses by the Sea - October 2020 - plans are proceeding, it is too early to tell what will happen*
- *Please send me photos of your blooms - they will go in the next newsletter*
- *Our branch signature rose, Best Friend, will feature in the winter edition of NSW Rose. Do you have one? Information about it would be much appreciated. A survey was previously sent; please complete it if you have not. Email me if you have lost the original request.*

Garden tips and cultural notes

Cultural notes for April, kindly supplied by Braidan Swan. (Southern Sydney)

- Water, water, water. Keep your roses well hydrated by following the rule of 10 Litres per rose. This will help maintain healthy growth in the last few flushes of flowers come before winter.
- Any pelleted fertiliser should cease now as the roses are getting ready to rest for the year, your liquid applications of products such as Neutrog's Gogo Juice and Seamungus can continue throughout the year, and will be beneficial to areas where some members may plant some of the winter bare root roses.
- Nurseries such as Treloars, and Swanes have catalogues out now with a vast range of Hybrid teas, Floribundas, Climbers and miniatures including Australian bred roses which are by far the best for our climate.
- Continue your spraying watching out for aphids, as any new growth is irresistible to them. Eco oil and Eco neem mixed together is a great spray to combat most chewing and sucking insects.
- Some of you may notice your roses losing leaves from the bottom area. That's normal for this time of the year. Keep your mulch up to the roses as this will help stop the weeds from coming up. Neutrog's Whoflungdung is a great product as a mulch and adding nutrients to the soil.

Happy Rose growing.

Braidan

Best Friend – is anyone interested in joining a bulk online order of our signature rose? Payment would be to me as the person ordering. The saving is in postage if there are enough orders.



Are you planning some new bare rooted roses this year?

Then now is the time to prepare the holes for bare rooted roses.

Dig a big hole, apply compost, Seamungus and dig in well and if available, some well rotted cow manure. Water and dig over every three or four days for a few weeks. – **Peter Miller**



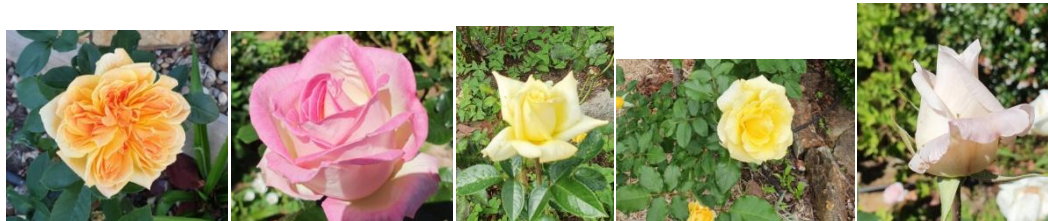
- **Liquid Lime SULPHUR** is a product made by Yates and others.
- The idea is after you have pruned your roses you apply the diluted SULPHUR to the roses liberally and all around the plant after all old dormant leaves are collected. It is supposed to stop diseases.
- But it does not stop the onset of black spot according to my experience.
- So why do I do it? Because the books say you should.
- Why do sheep follow one another? That's why I do it!

Peter Miller



Rescued Roses

Remember the roses rescued from Council? Who can identify them for me?



I would love to know what they are. Please email me your responses. I don't need the name of the aphid!

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Make Your Own Soil – Braidwood style

A contribution by Phillip Owen, formerly of Robertson

Not much will grow till spring so plenty of time to make a good mix.

COMPOST (Yates Garden Guide) As Mr Yates says:

- the carbon-nitrogen ratio is very important.
- Carbon materials are paper, straw, sawdust, wood chips
- Nitrogen sources are animal manures, grass clippings, green prunings from shrubs

Compost also needs a starter feed. This can be fertilizer and also soil.

Moisture content is important – too dry and not much will happen.

For raised beds, I would start with a newspaper base. Most newsagents will give you bundles of newspapers. Use a fair bit. The layer of newspaper will help hold moisture in the bed.

Ingredients

- Use a catcher on the mower to collect grass clippings. Otherwise, buy a bail of straw from the hardware store.
- The stables at the race course (Braidwood) have stable cleanings which are a mixture of horse manure and saw dust. \$20 a trailer load which will last a life time. (Improvisation needed in Wingecarribee but there are options)
- The saw mill should let you collect a few garbage bins of saw dust.(again, improvise locally)
- The hardware store sells 20 kg bags of Grow Plus fertilizer for around \$20. Again, this will last a long time. (or use one of your already purchased Neutrog products, such as GoGo Juice)
- Lay a base of paper inside the raised bed. Pile a mixture of grass clippings, house vegie scraps, saw dust, stable cleanings and some soil in half of the bed. Make the heap two to three times the height of the bed. Wet the mix.
- Dissolve some fertilizer in a bucket of water. Splash a container of the solution on to the heap, daily.
- Each day, use a garden fork to transfer 10 fork loads from the heap to the other end of the bed. When you get all the mix to the other end, start again. This aerates the mix.
- It helps to cover the heap with plastic. The mix should decompose and generate heat.

Thanks Phil. Some members may remember Cathie and Phil's beautiful open garden in Mackey's Lane, Robertson. It was a five acre beauty.

Braidwood Roses

Cathie Owen - formerly of Robertson

Braidwood has an extreme climate: Very hot summers and very cold winters with overnight temperatures often falling to minus 5 or more. However a walk around the streets soon shows that this climate suits roses.

In 2017 my husband Phillip and I decided to build a house in Braidwood. The block was north facing and with enough room for a house and garden in our "later" years. Being part of a new development meant the area had been scraped and left bare. The remaining soil was fine powder. We used the time while the house was being built to make as much compost as we could. Roses require 6 hours of sunlight per day which meant the front garden was the ideal site. The catalogues were studied and after much agonising, a list was prepared. Modern shrub roses were the choice with glossy dark green foliage, repeat flowering and a height of 1m. If there was perfume this was an added bonus. Of the roses chosen, the stand out favourites are; Twilight Zone, a deep purple and Soulmate, a yellow turning gold with maturity. However whatever is flowering gives such joy it is hard to have a favourite.

To plant, Phillip had to use a crowbar to get through the rock hard soil. I was kind and limited the first planting to just six roses and even this stretched the friendship. Once the very deep hole was done the improved soil and compost could go in. The mail order roses arrived and on the coldest of a July day the first roses went in. By November they were flowering and my respect for these amazing plants grew. The next season was awful. With the whole district in dreadful drought, eventually Braidwood went to level 4 restrictions with water for the town being trucked in daily. The roses had been on a once weekly soaking of ten litres per plant and our house tank had enough water to keep that regime. These tough plants survived the forty degree heat, the continual north westerly winds and then the bush fires. The town itself was safe enough with a few scary moments but the months of smoke from the surrounding fires was very tedious.

And finally it rained. Good soaking rain and at last the roses could have a proper autumn season. With just two seasons of growing a gardener could not ask for a better or hardier plant.



- That's it for this newsletter. Now I would ask that you send me some photos of your gardens or roses. As well, if you have questions, send them in and we will start a Q&A section in our newsletter.
- The only item of business is to notify that the NSW State executive has suggested that all regional committees stay in place until 2021 as there may be no AGMs this year.
- All contributions, photos etc to jo.babb@bigpond.com - secretary and newsletter editor