

BLGC Talk on Saturday March 17th by André Poliquin on “Roses for the Quebec Climate”

Notes on André Poliquin’s talk to prepared by David Oldacre

Notice from BLGC Newsletter

March 17, 2018 – André Poliquin

ROSES FOR THE QUEBEC CLIMATE André Poliquin is a well-known biologist and horticulturalist and popular Quebec horticultural speaker. Some of his specialties are orchids, clematis and roses. With this lecture and photo presentation he will take us through the history of roses, growing tips, helpful pruning information, disease prevention, winter protection, and the best roses for our area.

SUMMARY of the Talk

There was a very large crowd of perhaps 70-80 people. Mr Poliquin provided a summary hand out of his talk which has been posted on the BLGC website. His talk covered a tremendous amount of detail. At the end of the talk, there were lots of questions – some of which were every specific, and this was still going on when I left at about 4pm.

In his introduction, Mr Poliquin reviewed the three basic divisions of roses, and their modern successors which can be summarized as follows:

- The three large divisions are Original Species, Old Garden Roses and Modern Roses (from 1867 onwards)
- In the last division there are many groups - Hybrid Tea (HT), Floribunda (FL), Grandiflora (GR) all known in Europe as Hybrid Tea Roses,
- In addition to these there are Climbing roses, Miniature roses, English roses, and Modern Shrub roses.

Mr Poliquin then went on to describe the characteristics of the more important species in each group, and then reviewed how to plant roses, how to prune roses, common pests and diseases, and techniques for winter protection. In the final section of the talk he showed some beautiful photos of rose gardens he had visited in Europe as well as his own, and then went on to do a quick review of the best roses which can be grown in Quebec as well as hardy roses developed by the Agriculture Canada.

Rose Classification - Relationship

As described above, roses are classified into three divisions and a slide was presented which indicated the time line relationship between these various groupings of roses. I have used the following references to help me understand these relationships

- Ref 1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Garden_roses
 Ref 2 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_chinensis
 Ref 3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_multiflora
 Ref 4 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floribunda_\(rose\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floribunda_(rose))
 Ref 5 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_C.H._Austin#%22English_Rose%22
 Ref 6 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Rosa_species

Old Garden Roses	Ref 1	European Roses – non blooming
Hybrid perpetual	Ref 1	A reblooming hybrid of attempted crosses between Asian & European species
Rosa Chinensis	Ref 2 & 1	Re-blooming Asian roses
Rosa multiflora	Ref 3	Native to eastern Asia, in China, Japan and Korea. (Syn = Rosa polyantha)
Hybrid Tea	Ref 1	Cross between Rosa Chinensis (Tea Rose) and Hybrid perpetual (1867)
Rosa Floribunda	Ref 4 & 1	Cross between Hybrid Tea and Polyantha roses
Grandiflora	Ref 1	Back cross between Hybrid Tea and Floribunda
English Rose	Ref 5	Varieties bred by David Austin

Old Garden Roses

Rosa glandulosa There are 84-110 species in this grouping. Their blooms have 5 petals and are about 2” in diameter. They are completely open when they bloom and they all bloom at the same time – from about June 20th to July 15th. They produce lots of fragrant flowers and they only bloom once a year.

Rosa Rugosa These are a group of hybrid members of the Glandulosa group and comprise a number of species such as

- Moschata – musk rose

- Gallica – French rose
- Phoenicia - from the Near East (Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Turkey).
- Canina – dog rose

These are Old Garden roses which produce a huge bloom and grow very high – up to 2 – 3 storeys high. An example of this is Blanchefleur which is very fragrant and looks more like a peony than a rose but with a clearly visible reproduction system. These roses only bloom once/year but they do not like a climate like ours, preferring a softer Mediterranean climate from where they originated

Other examples are

- Rosa × alba, the white rose of York, is a hybrid rose of unknown parentage that has been cultivated in Europe since ancient times
- Gros Choux d'Hollande -Big Cabbage of Holland - an historic Centifolia Rose
- La Noblesse – another Centifolia rose from Europe
- Honorine de Brabant – of unknown origin discovered in France in 1916.
- Bourbon - a group of ancient garden roses, originated in the “Île Bourbon” (now called Réunion Island) off the coast of Madagascar, in the Indian Ocean.

Modern Roses

Hybrid Tea – La France

This is considered to be the mother rose of Hybrid Teas. It was raised in 1867 by Jean-Baptiste André Guillot, a French nurseryman. He did it by hybridising a tea rose, supposedly 'Madame Bravy', with a hybrid perpetual, supposedly 'Madame Victor Verdier', hence "hybrid tea".

The centre of the bloom will always be higher than the outer petals and will not be open, but the petals will not be as high as Old Garden Roses. There is one stem per bloom which can be as high as 36”- 48” They last about two weeks as a cut rose, whereas Old Garden Roses will last only a week.

A popular development of this rose was HT Paul Shirville which was created in 1983

Hybrid Tea - Peace

This was created in 1938 by Francis Meilland initially under the name “Mme A Meilland” who sent a few cuttings to various rose breeders in Europe including France, Germany, and Italy In 1942 they were marketed in Italy under the name Gioia and in Germany under the name Gloria Dei. He managed to get royalties on these flowers after WW II.

For further details on the development of this rose

See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosa_Peace

Hybrid Tea x Rosa Multiflora

This was an attempt to back cross a Hybrid Tea with Rosa multiflora which according to Wikipedia is a scrambling shrub. Rosa multiflora is grown as an ornamental plant, and also used as a rootstock for grafted ornamental rose cultivars.

The idea was to create roses that bloomed with the polyantha profusion, but with hybrid tea floral beauty and colour range. The result was *Rosa Floribunda* which is a multi-stemmed rose (as many as 10-15) with much smaller flowers, each stem having a single bloom.

Two very popular developments of this rose are

FL Guy de Maupassant

FL Winchester Cathedral

Further Hybridisation resulted in

FL Amber Queen which was created by a cross with a climbing rose “Zehprine Drouhin”

GR Tournament of Roses

GR Tabris

But one thing was lost as a result – and that was fragrance.

English Rose – By David Austin

David Austin (born in 1926) is a rose breeder and writer who lives in Shropshire, England. His emphasis is on breeding roses with the character and fragrance of old garden roses (such as gallicas, damasks and alba roses) but with the repeat-flowering ability and wide colour range of modern roses such as hybrid teas and floribundas. His aim was to develop roses which retained their fragrance and were sturdy because they needed space, and they needed support.

Most of his roses are hardy in Zone 5. Well known examples are:

Austin - Graham Thomas: This looks like a modern rose and when can reproduce when the bloom opens

Austin – Golden Celebration: This is one of his best and has all the characteristics of a modern rose and an Old Garden rose. It has a huge bloom which collects a lot of water, and grows to a height of 6 feet

Austin – Gertrude Jekyll - with pink blooms

Other Roses of Interest

Miniature Roses

Childs Play This needs 6-8 hours of sunlight, it does not need snow for protection, but is hard to prune

Jeanne Lajoie A climbing rose with miniature flowers. It is a “rambler” which can grow very high

Heidelberg Kordesii A fast growing shrub which will grow up to 20 feet stems! At the top of the stem is non blooming bud known as the “Apical dominant”. The trick is to get the plant to grow horizontally by bending the stem horizontally

Champlain

Most of these roses are a like a modern rose bush and are hardy in zone 5, but experimental projects have been initiated to grow it in Zone 4 and even in Zones 2-3. L’Attention Quebe gave some of the roses the names of explorers.

Planting Roses

Caution: When buying roses – ensure the label is correct – for example, he bought an HT Rose plant, which turned out to be a climbing rose!

You can plant roses in small patches in an open garden, or you can grow roses on lattices and walls

Conditions for healthy growth

- Direct sunlight – at least 6 hours/day
- Well ventilated area - beware: powdery mildew indicates that the plant is not well ventilated. To deal with this he used a fan every night and that seemed to work
- Heavy soil – *Rosa multiflora* and *Rosa canina* love heavy soil. These are grafted plants as are most of the roses we grow. Sometimes a multiflora will grow its own stems which take energy from the rest of the plant. So you have to watch for these and remove them
- Wet soil
- Rich soil – not sandy
- Neutral pH level 6-7
- Add thick mulch – huge amounts – Neutral Maple tree mulch prevents mildew and some insect pests

Planting Process

- Dig a hole about twice the diameter of the plant - the hole has to be large and deep
- Open the root system
- The graft must be above the soil – the problem in Canada is that the graft has to be protected in winter, and for that the graft has to be well under the soil during winter,
- Wet roses about 12 hours before planting
- Use manure and bone meal as fertilizer.
- Heavy watering once it has been planted
- The graft should be below soil level.

There is some controversy about this point, and below is a website which discusses this issue in some detail <http://homeguides.sfgate.com/plant-rose-bush-above-graft-72645.html>

- Compact the soil around the plant after planting
- Add mulch

Pruning

New plant After 12 hours in water, prune any dead stems. Prune back the outside stems but keep a few external buds – not more than three because each bud produces a new stem and bush

Old plant This is necessary to ensure more blooms and should be done in autumn or spring. It should be a hard prune if it is done in autumn

Remember that one of the major objectives of pruning is to give the bush an aesthetically pleasing shape

- Discard any dead stems or crossing stems
- Discard any weak stems
- Prune at a 45° angle at an external bud after flowering
- Discard old stems
- Disbud after flowering – which prevents the development of buds
- Autumn pruning is necessary for Old Garden rose bushes and for species of miniature hardy roses

If a plant is not pruned it will grow old

Remove only the outer stems for climbers

Prune hard means anything which grows under the graft should be removed

Avoid blind buds.

Productive buds - for an open blooming bud, the apex of a true leaf has 5 leaflets (compound leaf). For a blind bud there are only three leaflets

If pruning for re-blooming, find the lowest 5 leaflet on the stem which is outward facing.

Pests and Diseases

Insect pests include wasps, aphids, spider mites and cutting bees.

Disease pests are black spots, white powdery mildew, rust, and virus,

Insect Pest control

- Pruning in Autumn for protecting beneficial insects attracted to other plants.
- Dormancy oil applied in the spring, will prevent most of the attacks by pests.
- Watch for leaf curl. This is caused by larvae eating the plant. Spray a weak solution of ivory soap for watering
- Cutting bees live in the soil near the plants
- Aphids – soap is the only real answer – but perhaps a lady bug infestation might help!

Disease control

- Autumn is the time for fungal diseases. For roses this is black spot – which occurs if there is earth on the underside of the leaf, – One of the causes of this could be by splashes of earth in heavy downpours of rain.
- Powdery Mildew occurs (as mentioned above) if the plant is not well ventilated.
- Burns at the edges of blooms - Some blooms cannot tolerate more than 6 hours of sunlight
- Mosaic virus attack – this is not a fatal disease but it does weaken the plant

Winter Protection

- Climbers have to be brought down to the soil. This must be done gradually so it will take some time to bring stems down to the ground
- Rose bushes can be protected by earth over the base of the plant
- Mulch – use the leaves of maple trees and cover with netting
- Use protective covering - there was quite a technical discussion on this issue. Mr Poliquin puts a white blanket over all of his rose bushes to prevent early defrosting in the spring. He also showed an interesting slide of winterising a climbing rose on a lattice arbour
- In spring, all of the coverings should be removed. At this time it is best to remove stems with too many buds at this time

Visits to famous Rose Gardens

Mr Poliquin showed slides of a number of rose gardens he had visited while in Europe. One of the most significant was the one at The Bois du Boulogne in Paris. “Parva sed Apta”, the inscription on the entrance to the Château de Bagatelle within this famous park, sums up the impact of the wars in the 19th and 20th centuries.

For more information, see

<https://www.travelfranceonline.com/bagatelle-chateau-gardens-bois-de-boulogne/>

- If you want to view how to grow roses, visit the Orangerie in Bagatelle park
- Rose Parasols (Rose Trees) in this park are made by two grafts on top of one another

St Bruno, Quebec – Closer to home – there is a 10,000 square foot rose garden

Slide Show of the Best Roses

The final part Mr Poliquin's presentation was a slide show of his selection of Best Roses which are listed in his handout for the talk. He went through about 40 of these before he had to curtail his talk because time was needed to allow questions from the audience, many of which were specific for the person asking the questions, while others were asking for clarifications of certain points discussed in his presentation.