

SYMPOSIUM NOV. 1st

See p. 9

*The Old
Texas Rose*

Vol 5 No. 2

Sep 1986

LOUISIANA RAMBLINGS

Dr William C Welch
President, Brazos Symposium

While on vacation in South Louisiana in mid-August, I spent the better part of 3 days touring gardens and visiting old rose collectors. I was delighted to find Josephine Kennedy (Mrs. Walter) in good health and spirits after some difficult times health-wise. Josephine, her husband Walter, and daughter Regina live in a rural area 4 miles from the community of Springfield, which is about 40 miles east of Baton Rouge.

I first visited the Kennedys 3 years ago and was impressed by Josephine's practical knowledge of old roses, and her generosity with cuttings and rooted plants. Josephine's ancestors were part of an early Hungarian settlement in the area, and she remembers family roses with fond associations. Although mid-August is far from an ideal time to see roses in Louisiana, Josephine's plants had enough color to make them interesting. 'Mrs. B.R. Cant' (Tea, 1901) was well over my head and blooming furiously with good quality flowers. Hybrid Musks 'Cornelia' and 'Belinda' were not blooming much but appeared ready to put on a good show for early fall. The 'Chestnut Rose' (1814) in its double form had a few scattered blooms and was at least seven feet tall and about 5' wide.

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To me, the most interesting roses in the Kennedy garden are the unknowns handed down through Josephine's family. "Uncle Will's Rose" is a chrome yellow tea of considerable merit. "Grandma's Powderpuff" is another yellow tea not quite so dark in color, but having a beautiful quartered form. It is very similar, if not identical, to the unknowns in the Antique Rose Emporium Collection called "West Emma" and "Ode Yellow". "Grandma Shandor's Rose" is a beautiful climbing tea (a pink blend) that was growing above the back porch and had a few scattered flowers.

I received an unnamed gallica from Mrs. Kennedy several years ago that has made a splendid show of double, violet-pink flowers with excellent fragrance each year since planting at our Washington County farm. I was saddened to see the her 'Marechal Neil' was declining. Josephine said that since the 1983-84 "Christmas Freeze", it had never fully recovered.

My next visit was to the home of Susan Turner and her husband Scot Purdin in Baton Rouge. Susan is a member of the Landscape Architecture faculty at L. S.U. and is an authority on the restoration of Southern Gardens. She is a Board Member of the Southern Garden History Association and has extensively studied Thomas Affleck, the early nurseryman and writer well known for his almanac which was published in the 1850's and 60's. Susan's husband Scot is also a member of the L.S.U. faculty in the English Department.

Susan and Scot have recently become very interested in the roses, and are busily planting them around their newly restored Victorian home in the historic Beauregard Town section of Baton Rouge. Susan has restored four other two-story Victorian homes in her block and converted each into two spacious and elegant apartments. Wherever sufficient sunlight is available, they are including vintage climbing, shrub, and container roses.

While I was visiting in their home workmen were completing a beautifully designed pergola near their front entrance. They are planning to cover the structure with 'Belle of Portugal' roses (1901). The pink home trimmed in white with 'Belle of Portugal' roses in bloom should be a beautiful sight in two or three years.

Susan arranged for us to visit two old rose collectors west of Baton Rouge. Dr. and Mrs. Jack Holden have one of the most beautiful homes and gardens I have seen. "Maison Chenal" is a Louisiana raised cottage of late 18th Century vintage. It is located in Pointe Coupee Parish about 25 miles west of Baton Rouge. Jack and Patsy Holden bought the house on its original site eleven miles away and moved it onto the present location in 1975. The site is on the banks of an ancient bed of the Mississippi River known as False River which is near the Point Coupee (cut point) in the Mississippi. The setting is among ancient live oaks, cedars and mulberries but sufficiently away from them to provide plenty of sunlight for the gardens.

The gardens of Maison Chenal are based on information the Holdens gleaned from Louisiana books, drawings and letters of the 18th and 19th Centuries. The formal gardens surrounding the home are enclosed by a fence constructed of vertical planks of split cypress. Total enclosed space is approximately 100 feet wide and 150 feet deep. The geometrically patterned, French style parterre garden is composed of privet-lined beds divided by walkways bordered with wood. When viewed from the second floor galleries of the home, the design is quite impressive.



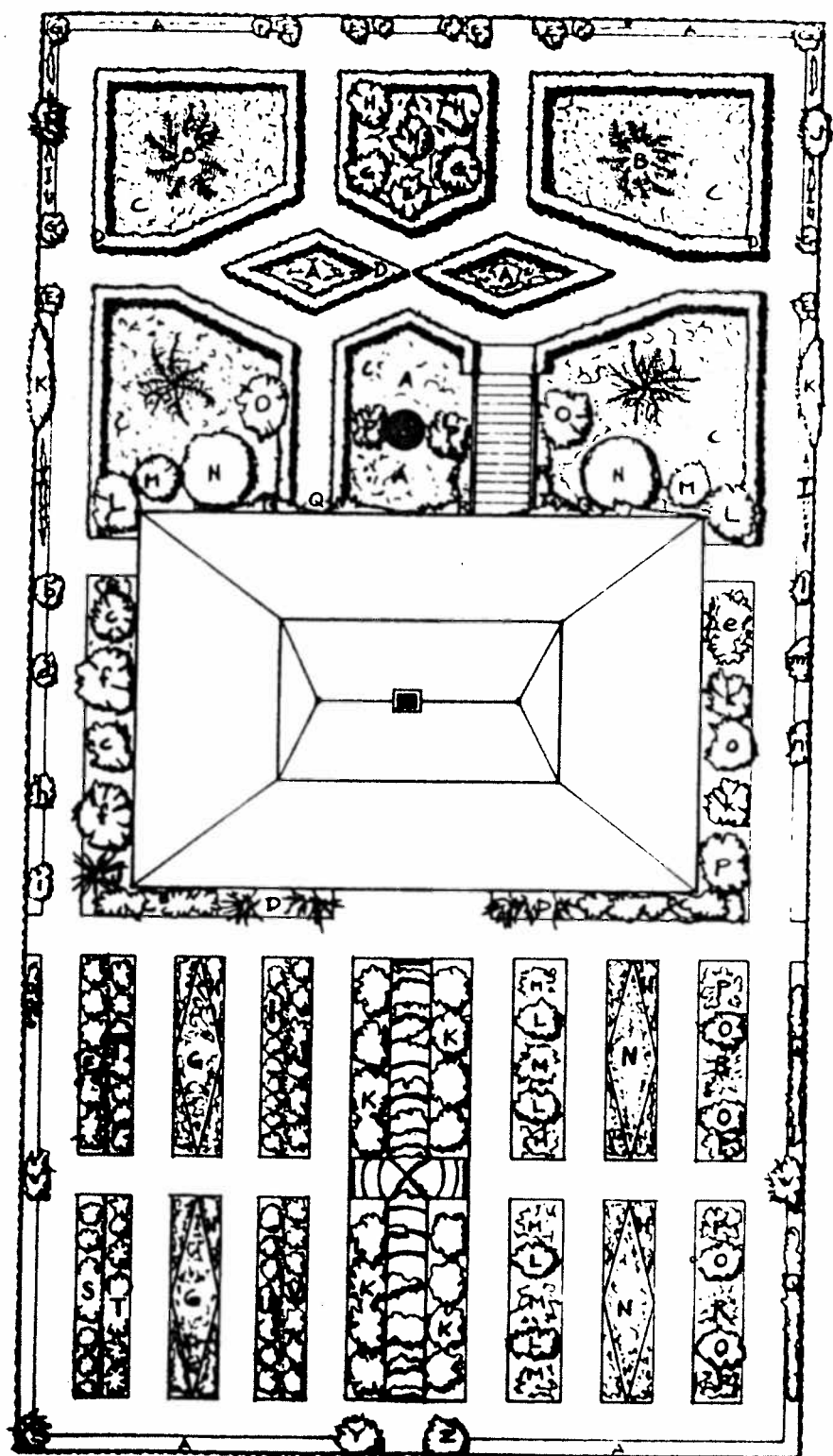
THE GARDENS OF MAISON CHENAL

The Holdens have collected and propagated a number of old roses from the surrounding area. 'Duchesse de Brabant' (Tea 1857), 'Louis Philippe' (China 1834) and 'Chestnut Rose' (Species 1814) are prominent in the front garden. I expected a locally-collected rose known as the "Malmaison Rose" to be 'Souv. de la Malmaison'; but upon seeing it in the garden believe it to be 'Clothilde Souperet' (Polyantha 1890). The 'Chestnut Roses' were trimmed into large cones and had a few scattered blossoms.

The rear garden featured a central walk covered by a long arched trellis, planted with muscadines. Yellow Lady Banks' roses (Species 1824), what appeared to be 'Seven Sisters' (Hybrid Multiflora, 1815), and several interesting spring-blooming unknowns ramble on the fences. Culinary herbs and perennials serve as companion plantings and provide a cottage garden look to that part of the landscape.

After seeing the Holdens fine collection of 18th Century Louisiana furniture, and having real Louisiana coffee in their downstairs dining area, we proceeded approximately 40 miles south to Breaux Bridge and the home and garden of Robert Smith. Robert has also restored an early Louisiana raised cottage and created a small garden in the style of the period. The entire garden is about 100 feet square and is bordered by a board fence accented with sweet autumn clematis and climbing roses. A gravel area about 25 feet wide surrounds the fence and contains diamond- and circular-shaped beds bordered by low privet hedges. Old roses and crapemyrtles were prominently placed in the beds. A large, uninterrupted panel of St. Augustine turf in the center provided a pleasant contrast to the geometrically-shaped planting areas.

In addition to the varieties at the Holden residence, Robert had collected an interesting unknown tea rose, what appeared to be 'Archduke Charles' (China 1840), and 'Russell's Cottage Rose' (1840). Robert is aware of a number of old roses in Lafayette area gardens and has successfully propagated some of them in a small, attractive glass enclosed cold frame.



THE GARDENS OF MAISON CHENAL

FRONT GARDEN

- A ANNUALS & PERENNIALS
- B SAGO PALM
- C ASIAN JASMINE
- D PRIVET HEDGE
- E DUCHESS DE BRABANT ROSE
- F LOUIS PHILIPPE ROSE
- G MAISON ROSE
- H MOSS ROSE
- I RUELLIA
- J CHINESE ROSE
- K HONEY SUCKLE
- L 4 O CLOCKS (WHEEL OF FORTUNE)
- M LANTANA
- N CAPE JASMINE (GARDENIA)
- O BANANA SHRUB (MAGNOLIA FUSCATA)
- P SWEET OLIVE
- Q CAROLINA JASMINE (CLIMBING)
- R FERN

SIDE GARDENS

- a ANNUALS & PERENNIALS
- b VALCOUR AIME
- c CAMELLIA (SEASIDE)
- d CONFEDERATE ROSE
- e PEPPERMINT
- f WAX MYRTLE
- g PLANT LILY
- h ROSE - MALLOW
- i DIPPER GOURD
- j YUCCA
- k ANGEL'S TRUMPET (DATURA)
- l INDIGO
- m SPIDERWORT (TRADESCANTIA)
- n CLEMATIS
- o SWEET SHRUB (CALYCANTHUS)

REAR GARDEN

- A ANNUALS & PERENNIALS
- B RICE PLANT
- C NANDINA
- D BUTTERFLY LILY
- E BROWN COTTON (SUMMER)
- F MUSTARD (WINTER)
- G PERIQUE TOBACCO (SUMMER)
- H CABBAGE (WINTER)
- I HERBS
- J STRAWBERRY
- K SWEET POTATO (SUMMER)
- L GARLIC (WINTER)
- M TOMATO (SUMMER)
- N MUSTARD (WINTER)
- O MUSCADINE (CLIMBING ARBOUR)
- P STAR ANISE
- Q CHRISTMAS BERRY (ARDESIA)
- R BEGONIA
- S FRENCH MULBERRY
- T HYDRANGEA
- U RAIN LILY
- V JERUSALEM CHERRY
- W FERN
- X POLE POTATO & BEAN (SUMMER)
- Y MUSTARD (WINTER)
- Z OKRA (SUMMER)
- AA CABBAGE (WINTER)
- AB TABASCO PEPPER (SUMMER)
- AC SHALLOT (WINTER)
- AD EGG PLANT (SUMMER)
- AE MUSTARD (WINTER)
- AF STAR OF TEXAS (NATIVE)
- AG RED HIBISCUS
- AH RED BAY TREE
- AI LADY BANKSIA ROSE
- AJ MOCK ORANGE

The home which also serves as a shop is filled with antique furniture, glassware, and textiles. Robert's collection of early Louisiana textiles is featured in the August issue of Country Living Magazine.

While in Baton Rouge, Diane and I visited the townhome of our friend Elizabeth Williams. Miss William's garden is small but quite beautiful. She is beginning an espalier of *Rosa chinensis Mutabilis* (prior to 1896) near her front door. A graceful specimen of the 'Swamp Rose' (1726) is nearby. Another brick wall near the entrance has a handsome specimen of fruiting pear trained against it. The living room opens into a small terrace and cottage garden with the L.S.U. University Lake only a few feet away. 'Marie Paule' (*Polyantha* 1888) and 'Cl. Cecile Brunner' (*Polyantha* 1894) are part of the garden that is filled with interesting perennials. A large wisteria tree has been trained as a bonsai and hangs over the water of the beautiful lake.

When I hear someone say that they don't have enough space to grow old roses or have an interesting garden, I think of Elizabeth Williams's townhome and how she has made a small space so personal and beautiful.

August is my traditionally least-favorite month of the year, but this trip to Louisiana brought many unexpected pleasures. There are many other places I want to include my next trip. The Natchez Cemetery is only an hour-and-a-half drive from Baton Rouge, and I am told contains numerous old roses. St. Francisville is on the way to Natchez and should yield some unexpected treasures. Roses grow faster in the rich soils and abundant rainfall of the area but fewer specimens live to be as old as they do in Central Texas because trees and undergrowth often overwhelm them. There are many beautifully restored plantation homes and gardens in Louisiana, but I have not seen these used to the extent I believe they were once. Thomas Atlee's nursery in Natchez was in its heyday in the 1840's and 50's. Let's hope that this potential will come about.

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STATE OF THE STATE

NEWS. Our most important news is the 4th Annual Texas Symposium, when the Brazos group (Houston and College Station) and the Historical Roses Group (Dallas and Fort Worth) get together. See page 9.

REVIEWS. See Conrad's latest on the facing pages. He proposes an upcoming issue to deal with books. (As members will recall, our last was September 1983.) If you have a favorite book, please review it for us in any manner you wish. (Even though I'm a retired high school English teacher, I promise not to grade them!)

← The illustration opposite should remind everyone how much they like their riding mowers. Even I remember the push kind, but not from the 1860s, as this is!



J Conrad Tips,
VP, Houston

Ella M. Foshay, Reflections of Nature: Flowers in American Art. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984. With a foreword by Tom Armstrong and an introduction by Barbara Novak. Illus.

In the spring of 1984, the Whitney Museum of American Art presented the exhibition of which this is the catalogue. The idea behind the effort was Miss Foshay's and it was a very, very good idea. After all, we are continually subjected to shows of flower pieces by French Impressionists or Dutch Old Masters or whatever -- are our own artists so dull? I think not. There are three points to consider before pressing on to the illustrations: first, folk art, by and large, has been omitted; second, the floral images discussed have been chosen for their aesthetic excellence and their naturalistic representation within the conventions of the era; third, the author's purpose is to establish links between modes of representation and scientific and philosophical attitudes about nature, as the term was understood during the periods in which the images were made. Worthy aims, one and all, but I'm not so sure about naturalistic representation. Miss O'Keeffe's White Rose III of 1927 looks not much like a white rose. Nor much like a rose at all.

Now, this is what I saw:

Plate 27. Severin Roesen, Victorian Bouquet, circa 1850-55. A lush flower piece in the Dutch taste but without the Dutch passion for specificity. I don't trust Roesen's pink, blush, and golden roses one bit. Plates 81 and 82 are more of the same, all very confectionary but not really repulsive.

Plate 33. John William Hill, Bird's Nest and Dog Roses, 1867. Finely painted sprays of pink and white R. canina.

Plate 44. John La Farge, Wild Roses and Water Lily, 1882-85. The artist's wild roses look strangely like dogwood blooms to me. See also Plate 114.

Plate 45. Maria Oakey Dewing, Garden in May, 1985. A view of Mrs. Dewing's roses, a pretty tangle of white, cream, ivory, mauve, purple, pink, copper, gold, and yellow blossoms, painted in a close view and from the perspective of one who is industriously weeding the bed. Did Mrs. Dewing make a habit of painting on her knees? Fortunately, details of this truly beautiful piece of work are reproduced, which should give those who enjoy identification a lot of fun.

Plate 83. George Henry Hall, Still Life: Vase of Flowers and Watermelon, 1865. A cruder Roesen but the vase contains a spray of what looks to me like Devoniensis.

Plate 85. Julian Alden Weir, Flower Piece, 1882. Somewhat in the manner of Fantin-Latour but looser. The roses are indicated by strokes of pink, lemon, and ivory pigment dashed against a dark background; really luscious.

Plate 94. George Cochran Lambdin, In the Greenhouse, no date. A noticed Safrano?

Plate 96. John William Hill, Tearoses in Landscape, 1874. The color, in reproduction at least, seems dry, even bleached. Might this represent Old Blush?

Plate 103. Martin Johnson Heade, Branches of Cherokee Roses, circa 1880. Perfect, a little masterpiece of observation.

The book is exceptionally well produced, the illustrations are profuse, and the bibliography is tantalizing. One could hardly ask for more.

William H. Gerdts, Down Garden Paths: The Floral Environment in American Art. Cranbury, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson Univ. Press, 1983. Illus.

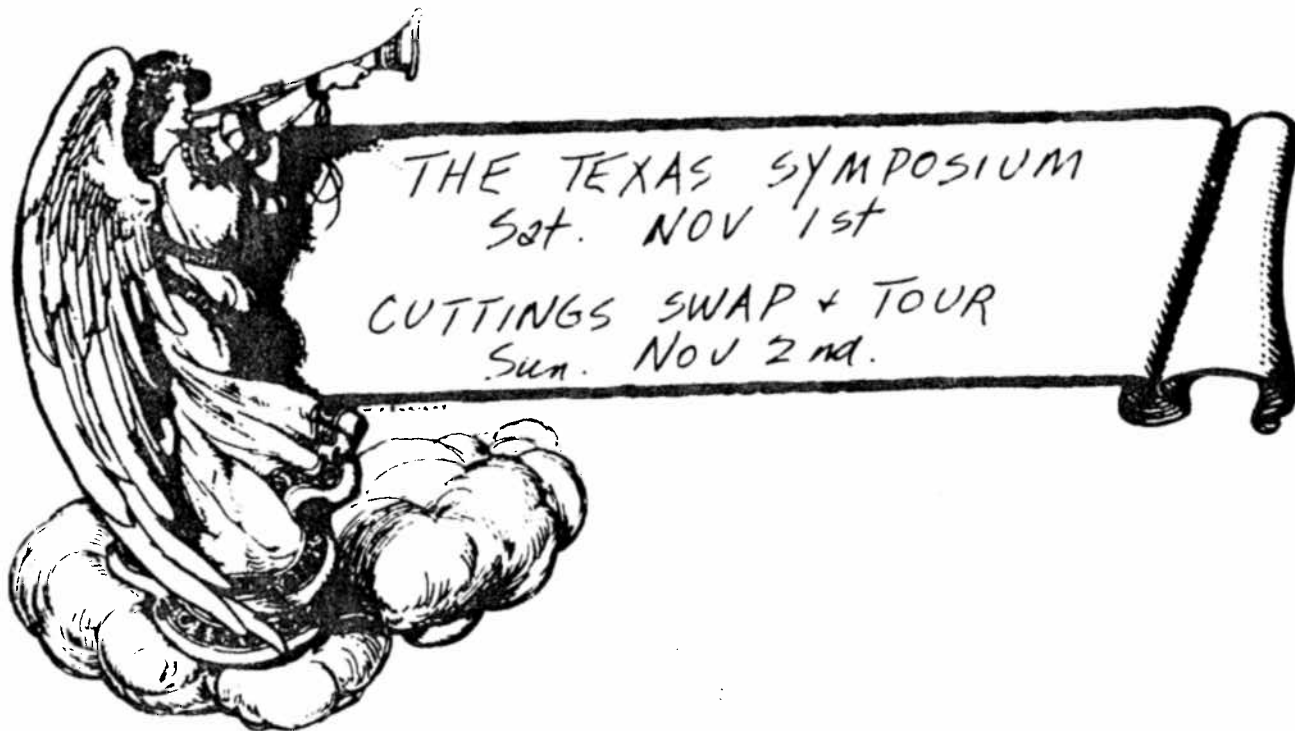
Dr. Gerdts, a pioneer (culturally sneaking) if ever there was one, attempts in his book to trace a movement in American art which began in the middle of the last century — a departure from the conventional still-life, almost inevitably in the Dutch taste, and the emergence of a genre featuring flowers growing wild or in gardens. The artists of course were influenced by the polemics of John Ruskin and even more by the Impressionists, who actually went outside and painted what they saw. Revolutionary! It was a time in American life that saw the establishment of the first ladies' gardening club, in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1890, the publication of Guy Lowell's American Gardens, one of the truly superlative pieces of book making in the history of our horticultural literature, and the dawn of interest in old-fashioned gardens and the plants which furnished them, a taste flourishing still. An era of some interest, it seems.

The illustrations are a mixed lot. The color plates, quite good, include Edwin Deakin's Homage to Flora, circa 1903-04, a gorgeous tumult of purple, red, pink, salmon, white, and cream roses, and George Lambdin's Roses on the Wall, 1874, pink and crimson roses, perhaps chinas, exquisitely rendered against a piece of rugged masonry, and three views of Mrs. Thaxter's celebrated garden in Maine. The black and white pictures are poorly reproduced at best; at worst they are wretched. It is maddening not to be able to see with at least a degree of clarity Sargent's Roses or Enneking's Rose Garden or Graves' Pink and Red Roses or Lambdin's Roses in a Wheelbarrow.

But let us be grateful for any blessing obtainable. Dr. Gerdts' text is admirable and students of garden history will find the bibliography valuable.

John Harris, The Artist and the Country House: A History of Country House and Garden View Painting in Britain 1540-1870. London: Southeby Parke Bernet Publications, 1979. Illus.

For the serious — and seriously well-off — student of garden design, this exhaustive, sumptuous, large, heavy, costly, superbly produced, and downright unique volume will be an invaluable source of information and pleasure. In 26 excellent color plates and 400-odd illustrations in black and white, the reader may trace the evolution of British gardens — that is, American gardens at one remove — over a span of more than 300 years. As it happens, I am not passionately interested in the great landscape parks of the 18th and 19th centuries, glorious as they are. Few of us, after all, have hundreds if not thousands of acres in which to indulge ourselves in lakes, lawns, and immemorial elms. So unfair! On the other hand, I am very interested in what we rather loosely call the old-fashioned garden, which derives from the gardens of the Tudors and Stuarts: parterres, knots, allées, mazes, topiary, the lot. I don't wish to be a bore but may I say yet again that these little walled pleasaunces were the models from which American gardens evolved, generally, until the arrival of the Landscape Style in the late 18th century. Would I lie to you?



9

The time has come around again for our annual meeting! Every year I think that we can't have any more fun, and every year we do, with better facilities, more people, and more enthusiasm!

Our Honored Leader, Dr Welch, has proposed this tentative schedule: We will assemble at the Horticulture Building at A&M, College Station, on Saturday, November 1st, at 3:00 pm. We will attend ten short lectures, with breaks between, of course, and an hour break for supper at 6:00. He will get the same firm to cater as last year; I thought they did a good job, especially the meats selection which were very tender. This will be \$5 a plate. We will resume for the second half of the program, which should be over by 9:00pm. We have prepared press releases inviting the public, and I want to see at least a hundred people!

The following Sunday morning, we will meet here in Navasota at our house for a cuttings swap. I think the way that we will work it is that everyone should take, say, six slips from an unusual rose or an unknown, wrap the bottoms in damp paper towel, and place in a ziplock bag -- remembering to label it clearly. If one is coming from afar, they should be placed in an ice chest. When one gets here, one should be able to take for one's self as many other ziplock bags as one has brought! (This will reward industry!!!) This should begin about 9:00 am. We will then have a very elegant catered brunch, and a little after ten should start for a tour of Mike's retail center. (The brunch will also be \$5 a plate.)

At the retail center, the cottage garden should be in full bloom to be admired, and Mike promises to have cuttings to give everyone of some of the most interesting of his unknowns. I guess I know what everyone will be doing when they get home Sunday night!!!! Of course, you may stay at Independence for as long as you wish.

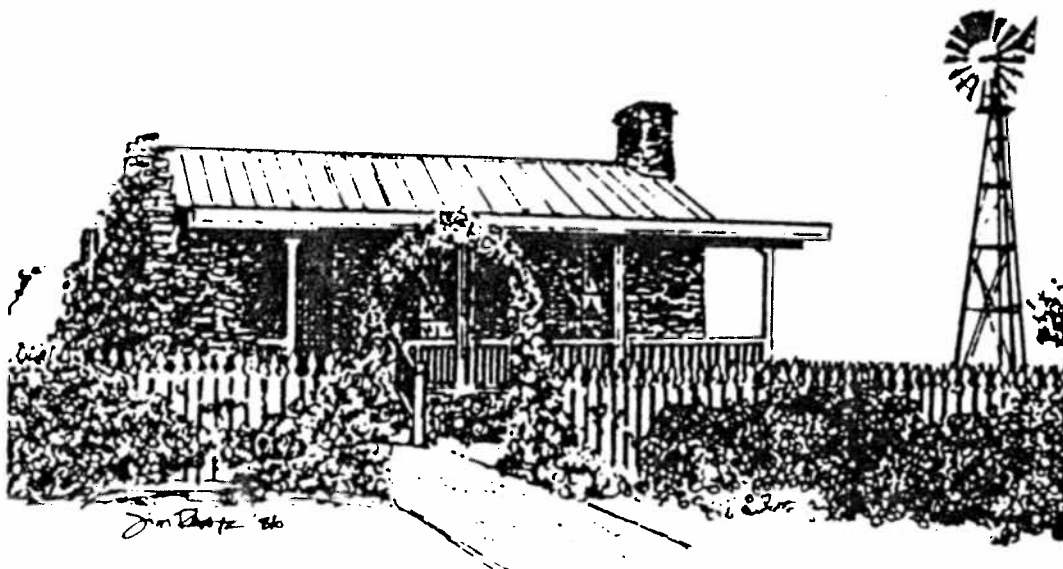
We are also organizing a rustle later in the month to go to Smithville, Fayetteville, and Bastrop. We will announce the particulars at the Symposium.

Members' Dues also come at this time, and a table will be set up both days to receive them. 1987 will be \$7, as the copy center has gone up twice.

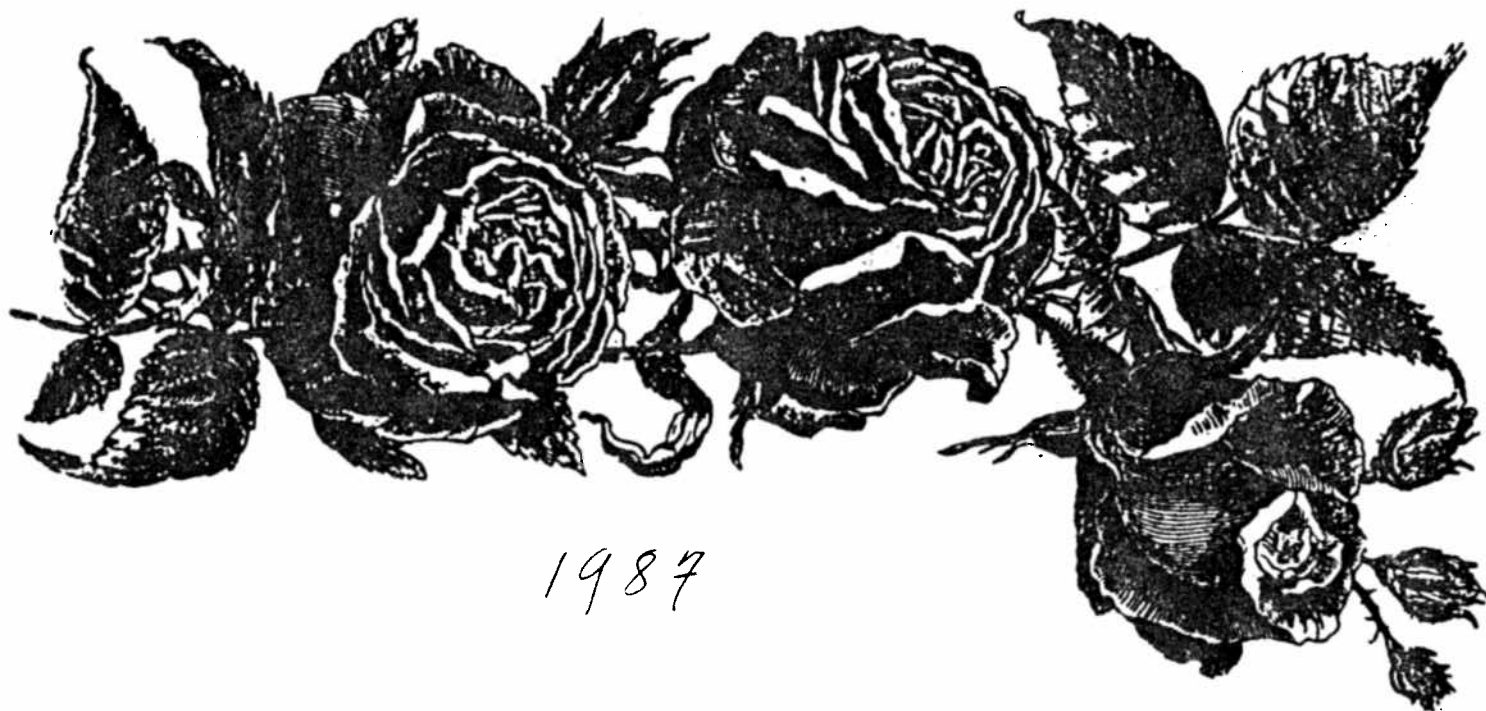
Tom Christopher	^{from} Columbia Univ., NY	^{on} "Dean S R Hole: Prototype of a Rose Collector"
Marsha Conrad	"Angel's Eye Garden & Herb Farm," Hous	"Herbs and Old Roses"
Sara Jean Derby	Houston rosarian	"Arranging Old Roses"
Margaret Sharpe	Judge & our VP	"Skeletons in your Potpourri: History & Development of the Rose"
Peggy Keener	"Keener's Classics" Friendswood	"My Ten Favorite Roses"
G Micheal Shoup	Antique Rose Emporium Brenham	"Propagating Old Roses"
Joe Woodard	Judge, Ed of Yellow Rose, His. Roses Group	"Breeding Roses"
Greg Grant	A&M Hort. grad.	"Cottage Garden Construction"
Pamela Puryear	Ed OTR	"Native Plants for Cottage Gardens"
Dr William C Welch	Pres Bragos Syp, Hort. Ext Agt	"Old Roses in Gardens: a Tour"

Hopefully, we might also have talks by Lamont & Belle Steadman, Deanna Carroll, and perhaps HRG Editor Pat Cole, NM.

Please call one week in advance for reservations; my number is 409-8253220. You should try to get the money to me at least the day before.



The Cottage Garden created last spring around the old stone kitchen of the Hairston House, Independence. (ca 1855) The roses all



1987

The Brazos Symposium on Old Roses, known informally as the Texas Rose Rustlers, is a non-profit society whose aim is to collect, preserve, and identify old garden and species roses in Texas, and to share information on their sources (both commercial and private), their use, and their cultivation.

Our newsletter The Old Texas Rose is published erratically about four or five times a year. Other information sheets are available at cost to both members and non-members. We hold meetings twice yearly: our Great Rose Hunt in November with the Symposium (with Historical Roses Group of Dallas; together we constitute the Texas Symposium), and informal tours and garden visits in April and May.

Articles in OTR include book reviews, the landscape uses of old roses, historical pieces on early Texas nurserymen, the descriptions from old catalogues, personal accounts of rose collectors, biographies of famous rose personalities, and great gardens, rose recipes, and so on.

CUT HERE

Name & Mailing address

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