

The American Rose Center
America's Rose Garden
Volunteer Newsletter
Volunteer Newsletter April 22—Issue #3

"News You Can Use"

The newsletter for volunteers to the American Rose Center to keep you apprised of service opportunities

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*Please contact Frank or Pam for work assignments or other information,
Contact Don (other than a Thursday) only if Frank or Pam are not available.*

ARC regular Volunteer Day is Thursday of every week

Master Gardener scheduled service day is the third Thursday of each month.

Master Gardener Volunteer Chair, Lou Osburn—Loucosburn@gmail.com
Master Gardener Volunteer Assistant Chair, Larry Williams—Larryw@broadmoor.tv

Rambler Ramblings... Claude Graves

With a tip of my hat to my first rose mentor, Howard Walters, I have named this column after Howard's famous "Rosarian Ramblings" column that ran in The American Rose magazine for 32 years.

In each issue I will be writing a *Rambler Ramblings* about ramblers, it may be about a hybridizer, a particular rambler variety, or group of ramblers.

Michael H. Walsh
1848 - 1922
Wood's Hole, Massachusetts



Anne Belovich's favorite rambler hybridizer was Michael Walsh, her collection contains 21 of his ramblers, far more than any other hybridizer although many others were more productive.

Michael Walsh was born in North Wales, England in 1848 and by the age of 12 was actively working in the family garden. Walsh moved to the United States at the age of 20 and held a number of gardening positions until in 1875 he became head gardener on estate of Joseph Story Fay, and found a patron in Fay's daughter Sarah. Sarah encouraged him to continue his career in horticulture.

By 1899 Walsh had moved to Wood Hole, Massachusetts and was hybridizing roses. Over the next 20 years he hybridized 40 ramblers many of which became the most popular of the time and some remain very popular today.

Walsh's production would have no doubt been much greater had it not been for a tragic event in 1901. The New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad, across the street from his nursery burned down an old unused building. The fire

burned for 3 days. Walsh's nursery was not consumed in the fire, but the noxious fumes and smoke killed a large number of unintroductory roses and over 300 of his new seedling crosses.

Walsh used Turner's Crimson Rambler to a great extent in his breeding program. The relationship can be seen in his many red and deep pink creations such as Excelsa, Babbett, La Fiamma and Hiawatha. Walsh was also noted for his pioneering work following Michael Horvath with his work using *R. wichuraiana*.

Michael Walsh was internationally honored as one of the leading rose hybridizers of his day. He won numerous awards in the US and Europe for his roses.

'Excelsa', HWich, 1909



"Excelsa" was one of Walsh's biggest successes it was extremely popular and widely grown.

Early in our involvement with ramblers at Chambersville, one of the staff reported they had seen what appeared to be a red rose growing in a ditch a few miles from the tree farm. We checked it out and found a deep pink ground cover looking rose growing out of the most miserable limestone you ever saw. We took cuttings and rooted the apparent rambler, giving it the study name "Limestone Rose".

A few years later we had received 'Excelsa' from the Anne Belovich collection. The following year it bloomed and we identified our "Limestone Rose", it was without a doubt 'Excelsa'.

Evidentially, someone in 1920's or 30's had planted it on a fence. The house and fence were long gone, but 'Excelsa' was still living where the fence once stood.



Above: "Excelsa" growing beyond its bounds at Chambersville. The ramblers look beautiful if you let them get too big, but they will become maintenance nightmares! The birds "plant" weed and hackberry tree seeds into the undergrowth. Experience dictates we can never allow the ramblers to grow on the ground.

Right: The typically heavy bloom of "Excelsa". The late bloomer is a magnificent sight as most of the other ramblers are finishing their bloom cycle.



'Babbett', HWich, 1904

Scarlet blooms with some white striping and in the center. Classed as a HWich, but was bred crossed with a seedling from a HMult. This is one of those HMult x HWich ramblers that so confuse the classification of ramblers. This rose was grown in too much shade at Chambersville and never reached its potential. I can't wait to see perform in full sun!

'Evangeline', HWich, 1906

Another late bloomer, the new blooms will be edged in with light pink, stunning against dark green leathery foliage. This rose does have a mild fragrance.



'Cinderella', HWich 1909

Small, medium to deep pink blooms in abundance, in very large clusters make this an outstanding rambler in the garden. Some of the Walsh ramblers are prone to powdery mildew. This is a much bigger problem on the both coasts, but not so much in our climate. Cinderella is one the more powdery mildew tolerant of Walsh's ramblers prone to mildew.

'Lady Gay' HWich 1903'

This rambler is somewhat a chameleon for us. In cooler weather the first blooms will be much more red than pictured here, they lighten with sun and warmer weather. This rambler is also very vigorous and can quickly grow to over 20 feet if allowed to do so. This is one of the varieties planted on the fence in the Secret Garden in America's Rose Garden.



First Rambler Master Gardener Training Day Review

The first Training Session for the Master Gardener's participating in donating their service hours to the Rambler Project was held on Thursday, March 17th. The day started off a little unsettled as some volunteers did not get the message of where to meet, and stopped at the Klima Building at the entrance to the gardens, instead of driving on back to the east end of the gardens past the Administration Building.

Once we all got together things went much better. There were 8 Master Gardeners present and 3 ARC volunteers. Some of the volunteers were surprised that this was to be a training day on "what to do" and not just a routine "pruning the roses" session. As one volunteer put it after about an hour of training, "there's a lot more to this than just pruning roses...". She was right, there is a lot more involved, hence the need for an initial training with each new volunteer.

The concept is to have a pool of trained Master Gardeners that Lou and Larry can draw from for each ses-

sion, the number being dictated by the amount of work to be done. At this point the roses are small and there is not a lot to do. In the coming months the ramblers will begin to grow at an accelerated rate and the demand for increased volunteer participation will also increase. Hopefully by that time we will have a sufficient pool of trained volunteers such that the preliminary training sessions will be less frequently required. I do plan to be at every session for the next 4 months to do training as necessary.

An added bonus for this next session coming up on April 21 is that a few of the ramblers should be showing off their first blooms. This is always an exciting time, since they only bloom once each year that bloom is special and greatly anticipated! The overall bloom will be good this year, next year it will be amazing!

Speaking of "amazing", if you have not seen the new circle gardens at the rose center be sure to stop by and see them while you are there.

Second Master Gardeners' Service Day

Thursday, April 21

8:30 AM - At the fenced area East of the administration building (not the west side).

We do not meet at the Klima Center near the gate. Please drive down the road thru the open deer fence gate.

You will see the Rambler Nursery on your left. Park on the side of the road.

Agenda for the day

Returning volunteers will be tying up the new growth since the first session. A few of the ramblers may be showing their first blooms, 'Dr E M Mills' should be in full bloom... be sure to smell it!

Tools needed: Pruners, Gloves, Knee Pads.

New Volunteers

Claude Graves, ARC Committee Chair and Curator of the Anne Belovich Rambler Garden at Chambersville Tree Farms will conduct a training session on the various tasks for the new Rambler Garden volunteers. This information will be essential for proper care and training and tying of the ramblers.

Upcoming Events at the Rose Center

The next event at the ARC is the first weekend in May involving activities around the ARS Board of Directors meeting at the ARC.

The Saturday May 7th activities are open to the public and include:

Garden Dedications – 9:30 am

Lunch - \$20 (this is for everyone)

Awards - 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Blake Hedrick Award & Lecture –

Klima Medal & Klima Address –

Garden Social with cake & Champagne – 3:00 – 4:30

I hope some of you can come, at least for the Garden Dedications.