If you asked me a couple of months ago where to go to see great rose gardens, I might mention the Huntington Botanical Garden, the Sacramento Cemetery Rose Garden, or the San Jose Heritage Rose Garden, and of course Quarryhill. If you were going to be traveling in the New York area, I would mention the New York Botanical Garden and the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. However, now I would insist that you must go to China if you really want to see roses in their full glory. Recently, I returned from a two week trip to China that was hosted by the China Rose Society and various rose gardens in eastern China. I was traveling with the President of the American Rose Society, Jeff Wyckoff and his wife Kathy, along with my wife Joanna, Ron and Chris Mickelsen, Dr. Bob Smith and Rori Habas. Ron and Bob are both longtime trustees of Quarryhill. All of us were amazed by the scale, beauty, and quality of the gardens that we visited. Mr. Wang Hui, the Director of the Horticulture Department of the Shenzhen Park Service, met us at the airport in Hong Kong and led us on the short 45 minute drive to our hotel in Shenzhen.

Our first stop in Shenzhen was at the Fairylake Botanical Garden. Opened in 1988 and covering more than 1,300 acres, this garden is tucked into low mountains and surrounds a small lake. On one mountainside, a large grove of trees is planted in the shape of a map of China. All the trees in the grove are *Aquilaria sinensis*, an endangered tree whose fragrant wood is used medicinally and for incense. Hong Kong, which means “perfumed harbor”, derived its name from this tree, as the area around what is now Hong Kong was a major source of this wood. We were hosted by Dr. Zhang Shouzhou, Head of Plant Introduction and Conservation Unit at the garden. I had traveled with him previously in Yunnan and Sichuan, working together on magnolias. Time only allowed us to see the shade garden, orchid garden, and the petrified wood garden of this impressive display of China’s rich flora.

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Our first rose garden was in Shenzhen Renmin Park, one of many city parks in Shenzhen. This garden was founded in 1983 and is a rose-themed park, displaying large numbers of cultivars that thrive in Shenzhen's sub-tropical climate. Mr. Wang Hui walked us through the maze of thousands of roses in full bloom. In 2009, the garden was honored as the first rose garden in China to receive an Award of Garden Excellence from the World Federation of Rose Societies. This was due to the careful attention in creating and maintaining this garden by Mr. Wang Hui.

Our next stop was the very new rose garden at the Shanghai Chenshan Botanical Garden. Only two years old, this masterpiece covers 511 acres on the outskirts of Shanghai. The rose garden is on a small island in a lake in the middle of the garden. It was a dazzling sea of color with some areas comprising a mix of every imaginable rose color and others a broad swath of one color. Arched trellises were covered with brilliant red climbing roses. We all wondered how it was possible to build such a large and showy rose garden so quickly.

We then drove on to Taicang, a suburb of Shanghai, to see the En Tian Rose Park. This outstanding rose garden was created to honor Ms. Jiang Entian, China’s most celebrated rosarian. Born in Taicang, Ms. Jiang Entian devoted her life to the cultivation, study and promotion of roses in China. She was responsible for the creation of several rose gardens in China and the En Tian Rose Park is a fitting tribute to her legacy. The garden is a superb display of the beauty and fragrance of this quintessential garden flower. A highlight for me was to see a large planting of the rose “Madam Entian” named in honor of Ms. Jiang Entian by the World Federation of Rose Societies in 2008.

Leaving Taicang, we stopped briefly at the famous city of Suzhou on our way to Changzhou and visited the "Humble Administrator’s Garden". Originally built in 1509, this large and impressive garden is listed as a World Cultural Heritage site and has also been designated as one of the Cultural Relics of National Importance under the Protection of the State. It is considered to be one of China’s four most famous gardens and it made for a delightful stop during our drive to Changzhou.

After the rose gardens that we had seen so far, it was difficult to imagine that Changzhou would be able to equal or surpass the others, but this it did. Changzhou has a long history of rose cultivation and long ago declared the city flower to be a rose. The Zijing Park in Changzhou is a shining example of how to display roses in their full glory. Paths meandered through huge beds of thousands of roses in full bloom. Changzhou was the host for the 4th China Rose Exhibition and the World Federation of Rose Societies Regional Convention in 2010 (the WFRS’s first in China) and hopes to receive an Award of Garden Excellence from the WFRS later this year. Zijing Park also had a wonderful display, created by the highly respected rose scholar Dr. Wang Guoliang, of the early uses of roses in China and their important influence on modern roses.

From Changzhou we drove on to Nanjing and caught a flight to Beijing. While in Beijing, we were hosted by Professor Zhang Zuoshuang, President of the Chinese Rose Society. It was he that had kindly invited our delegation to China and had made all of our arrangements for this wonderful journey. Dr. Wang Kang, Research Horticulturist for the Beijing Botanical Garden, who had met us the night before at the airport, also joined us for our time in Beijing. Our first rose garden there was at the Temple of Heaven. Hundreds of roses were on display in containers surrounding the Temple. As with all the other rose gardens, these roses were in perfect health and in full bloom. There was also a large and unique collection of rose penjing (bonsai). We slowly made our way among the crowds to the large “in-the-ground” rose garden on the expansive grounds of the Temple of Heaven, and found it, too, to be of the highest standard and very well maintained.

Our next and last day in China found us wandering the immense Beijing Botanical Garden. Spread over more than 1,000 acres, this garden is nestled in the Fragrant Hills outside Beijing. The garden has more than 4 million visitors a year and is home to the Shifang Pujue Temple, a Buddhist temple originally built more than 1,300 years ago. The rose garden there seemed to ramble on infinitely as, at every twist in the pathways, more roses came into view. Roses in almost every conceivable color (no blue, of course) delighted our eyes at every turn. We concluded the evening with yet one more delicious banquet dinner, hosted by Dr. Zhao Shiwei, Director of the Beijing Botanical Garden, an old friend of mine, at a private reception room in the Summer Palace.

I couldn’t begin to tell you how many roses we saw, but it was certainly well over a hundred thousand. At every stop during our short visit to China, we were greeted and welcomed like old friends and were given exquisite banquet lunches and dinners, usually with several officials and garden directors. It was wonderful to see the smiles on our many Chinese hosts with their magnificent rose gardens, especially in light of the fact that China is not only the center of origin and diversity for roses, but also the source for so many of the characteristics that we all love and appreciate in modern roses.
Jiang Entian Heritage Rose Garden
Howard Higson, Head of Horticulture

For many years, the east side of the main office has offered a beautiful view of perennial beds, a classic herb garden, and a rather large expanse of America’s ever-popular monoculture: the lawn. Today, the latter has been greatly reduced, making way for a rose garden devoted to the cultivated descendents of the many Asian rose species that have thrived in the main garden for years. In fact, Quarryhill was recently honored for its impressive number and diversity of species roses, in fact, by receiving the Rose Garden Hall of Fame Award from the Great Rosarians of the World. The new rose garden, though quite small, aspires to present the legacy of these species roses, which have spawned numerous and diverse varieties and groups over the centuries, enjoyed the world over.

The fascinating story that unfolded from the late 18th century onward, involving the introduction of China and Tea roses into Europe, provided the impetus to display this history through the creation of a rose garden. Despite substantial controversy surrounding the natural origins of many cultivated roses over the centuries, there is little doubt that two source species of primary importance are Rosa chinensis var. spontanea, and Rosa odorata var. gigantea, both flourishing here at Quarryhill. These two are considered most closely ancestral, among native Asian roses, to the China rose and Tea rose groups, respectively.

Considering the novelty of hybridized specimens in a species garden such as Quarryhill, it was apparent from the outset that a special and separate location was required to showcase this story. The east side of the main office provided the solution, close to the new Visitor & Education Center and parking/reception area, and bordered by an established and relatively formal landscape.

With the help of Landscape Architect Don MacNair, Contractor Manuel Larios Moya and his crew, and Quarryhill’s gardeners, the project was completed by mid-2011 and planted this spring. Assistance with the construction of rock walls and a central fountain, using limestone closely matching that which exists throughout the garden, was provided by John Benward and crew. The garden was named in memory of Ms. Jiang Entian, a renowned and revered Chinese rose enthusiast. See Bill’s accompanying article for more information on this tireless contributor to rose culture in her native China.

Selection of rose varieties for the new garden, in bold, below focused on those most important in establishing new traits: combinations that would define new and enduring rose classes, described briefly below, and those varieties that were most popular when first developed. At the garden’s center, each quarter circle is planted with one of the four so-called Stud Chinas, transported by boat to England or France from SE Asian ports in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. ‘Slater’s Crimson China’, also named ‘Belfield’, appears in the NE quarter, predominantly influenced by Rosa chinensis var. spontanea, with its deep crimson flowers. ‘Parson’s Pink China’ (also called ‘Old Blush’ or ‘Common Monthly’) appears in the NW quarter, the parent of the Noisettes, Bourbons and Miniatures. ‘Hume’s Blush Tea-Scented China’, named ‘Spice’ in our garden and located in the SE quarter, is more strongly influenced by Rosa odorata var. gigantea, with its cream to pink color and large, lax petals. Lastly, a space is reserved in the SW quarter for ‘Park’s Yellow Tea-Scented China’, yet to be rediscovered and perhaps lost, a China rose with strong Tea rose characteristics that, along with ‘Hume’s Blush’, contributed a wide array of new colors and other traits to their many descendents in the Tea and Hybrid Tea groups. When introduced to northern Europe, all of these Stud Chinas displayed a characteristic almost unknown in old European roses—the ability to bloom more or less continuously throughout the growing season. This “remontant” condition was the overriding impetus to include these plants in breeding efforts of the time, as only the Autumn Damask roses of Europe were then known to bloom outside of the spring. In addition, truly crimson flowers, smooth wood, and a compact habit were attributes of China roses that were previously unknown in European roses. The latter were comprised mainly of Gallicas, Centifolias, Musks, Damasks and Albas, many of which displayed very globular, petal-packed flowers with strongly perfumed scents, yet lacked those novel traits now apparent in the newcomers from Asia.

The east side of the garden features an arbor, in design closely matching that of the main garden, on which several climbing rose varieties are displayed or planned. Among them are the two source species mentioned above, as well as several other climbers such as Fortune’s Double Yellow and a climbing and like-named cousin of Park’s Yellow China. The following early rose groups can be found in the inner circle of the garden.

The China roses are characterized by flower shades from white to pink to infinite shades of crimson, often intensifying with the passing days. They are very floriferous and relatively tender, freezing to the ground in cold winter areas though readily reviving in spring. Examples in the garden are the early varieties ‘Cramoisi Supérieur’, ‘Fabvier’, and ‘Ducher’. Several Bourbon roses, a group originating from a cross between ‘Old Blush’ and the Autumn Damask, appear near the Chinas, including ‘Gloire des Rosomanes’, which was a source for many subsequent Bourbon varieties. The seminal ‘Rose Edouard’ was ostensibly named for M. Edouard Perichon, in whose garden on the Isle de Bourbon the rose was first discovered. This named cultivar today probably represents a number of sources that were widespread around the Indian Ocean at the time. Seeds and cuttings from these varieties were brought to France, whence came the full line of Bourbon offerings, with their waxy, grey-toned foliage and autumn blooms.

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Jiang Entian Heritage Rose Garden
Continued from page 3

Hybrid Perpetuals form a complex group originating from the Damask Perpetuals of Europe crossed with China roses. They are mostly quite fragrant with varied colors from white to all degrees of red to the darkest maroon-black. Like the tulip craze of the 17th century, these varieties were riotously popular to the Victorians of the 19th century, with their novel combination of familiar, old European rose traits and a decent amount of repeat-blooming throughout the season. Miniature Roses probably developed from 'Old Blush' via a rose developed in England called the “Fairy Rose”, a dwarf pink China that reportedly could bloom when 6” tall, also given the name Rosa lawrenceana. The so-called Lawrencianas that followed include hundreds of varieties, mostly of recent origin, though some very old ones are included in the garden: ‘Rouletti’, a climbing version (planted at the arbor) of ‘Pompon de Paris’, both from the early 1800’s, and ‘Oakington Ruby’, a 20th century selection yet very similar to the early Lawrencianas with double, ruby-red blooms. ‘Mabelton Rouletti’ will hopefully soon join the others as it is almost an exact miniature of ‘Old Blush’ and found in an old house, after which it was named, in Santa Rosa – a remarkable, local discovery.

Within the two south quarters of the inner circle are found many of the Tea roses, larger and more robust than the Chinas, with strikingly beautiful new wood and foliage colored plum to bronze to chartreuse. The variety of flower colors in this group was a completely new phenomenon in Europe when first introduced, with many shades of pink, apricot, copper, peach and ivory. These roses were also prolific bloomers, like the Chinas, even year-round, weather permitting. Their infamous, potent fragrance has been likened to fresh tea leaves, though some cite their ancestors’ transport on ships laden with tea, from Asia to Europe, as a source for the name. The following rose groups can be found in the outer ring of the garden.

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A transitional group from the early 19th century known as the Hybrid Chinas constitutes first generation crosses between the old European roses and the China, Tea, Bourbon and Portland roses. Due to the recessive genetic inheritance of repeat blooming, this group failed to strongly demonstrate the trait yet served as a vital link in the development of remontancy over time. These varieties are important to prune only after blooming, as spring flowers appear on the previous year’s growth. They also do not need the typical winter chill of the European roses to bloom strongly, though reduced cold hardiness is also a trait.

The Noisette group are descendants of ‘Champneys’ Pink Cluster’, an invaluable cross between ‘Parson’s Pink China’ and Rosa moschata (Musk Rose) created by John Champneys of Charleston, South Carolina. As a first generation hybrid, it did not strongly express the desired traits of repeat blooming and compact growth, yet from this single cross the Noisette brothers of France and other plant breeders went on to develop this vitally important group in rose breeding history. Noisettes are characterized by a large, shrubby form with large-clustered, musk-scented flowers combined with the large, pink and remontant blooms inherited from the China roses. Subsequent crossing with Teas then created the Tea-Noisettes, with Tea rose traits such as a climbing habit, large flowers in small clusters, and tea-scented blooms.

The Polyantha group originated from crosses between Rosa multiflora from Japan (found throughout the main, wild-origin garden) and various China and Tea roses likely descended from ‘Parson’s Pink China’. They are characterized by small-flowered bouquet clusters that repeat bloom and a dwarf or compact habit, and were at their zenith in the period between 1870 and 1930. ‘Mignonette’ and ‘Paquerette’ are two seedlings that originated this group, and ‘Ébouissant’ is a seedling derived from the China rose ‘Cramoisie Supérieur’. ‘Yvonne Rabier’ represents a Polyantha derived instead from Rosa wichurana, inheriting the latter’s low, scrambling habit with bright green, glossy leaves that have a fresh, sweet apple scent.

Floribunda roses developed gradually from the Polyanthas as they became larger in flower size and habit, due primarily to hybridizing with the large-flowered Hybrid Teas that contributed new and amazing colors to the group. This group flourished most between 1930 and 1950 and offered delicate flowers at first, gradually becoming more like Hybrid Teas in later years. This period marked the age of brilliant hybridizers such as Svend Poulsen, Eugene Boerner, Jack Harkness and the Kordes family of rose breeders. ‘Dusky Maiden’ is a grandparent of the Austin roses, and both ‘Eise Poulsen’ and ‘Kirsten Poulsen’ were the first of the large, semi-double-flowered Floribundas. The flowers of ‘Iceberg’ are the whitest imaginable and ‘Swantje’ is another Rosa wichurana hybrid in habit and foliage.

Several roses from the largest and most successful group, the Hybrid Teas, are scattered along the front of the outer circle. They derived from crosses between Hybrid Perpetuals and Tea roses, adopting the hardiness and vigor of the former group and the flowers and growth habits of the latter. Though generally quite upright, this group is actually quite varied in habit. Their large, upright flowers introduced flame and yellow colors to the extreme and in stunning new combinations, particularly evident in the Pernetians and the offerings from the hybridizer Pedro Dot. More recently, however, Hybrid Teas have become somewhat “endangered” due to a strongly restored interest in old roses and the new English roses of David Austin, which are well represented in the garden, as well.
The staff at Quarryhill is incredibly grateful for the support of its major donors. Without your generous contributions we could not make our positive impact in the conservation, study, and cultivation of the flora of Asia.

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Jiang Entian Heritage Rose Garden at Quarryhill Botanical Garden
Events Calendar

August
11 Flower Essence Walk with Kathleen Aspenns
18 Third Saturday Docent Tour
Master Gardener Workshop Series - Gardening with Ornamental Grasses, Rosemary McCreary
25 Self-guided garden tours are free on the 25th of every month in our 25th anniversary year!

$10/ $15
$5/ $15
No charge

September
14 Cocktails in the Garden
15 Third Saturday Docent Tour
Music in the Garden - The Whiskey Thieves
22 Master Gardener Workshop Series - Long-lasting Floral Arrangements, Gaius Robinson
25 Self-guided garden tours are free on the 15th of every month in our 25th anniversary year!

$125/ $150
$5/ $15
$15/ $30
No charge

October
20 Third Saturday Docent Tour
25 Self-guided garden tours are free on the 25th of every month in our 25th anniversary year!

$5/ $15