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'Sterling Silver' – (Gladys Fisher, 1957)

(photo: Erich Unmuth)

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Anita Böhm-Krutzinna wrote a book about female rose breeders, *Rosenzüchterinnen*.

It was published two years ago in German. I knew about the book and also that she wanted to find someone to translate it to English.

Recently, Erich Unmuth reminded me about the book and I found out that the book was still not translated. So I decided to give it a try using nowadays' technology. In this issue you can read the review of the book by Erich Unmuth and also one chapter translated to English by me and then proofread by Erich Unmuth and Anita Böhm-Krutzinna.

In my opinion, the book greatly deserves a translation and I hope that someone, proficient both in German and English will put the final touch on the translation.

Eva Nedelko has a small distillery in Slovenia where she experiments with different classes of roses, telling us about her passion and achievements.

In March I attended the International conference in Portorož, Slovenia, 'Parks of well-being'. It was another opportunity to visit beautiful Slovenia and meet up with dear rose friends. Lucija Čok gives us a report about the conference.

The National Slovak Rose Society Maria Henrieta Chotek donated to the Slovak National Museum a valuable archive comprising documents from rosarians and breeders in Slovakia. Dedicated to preserve their national rose heritage, they also wanted to share the collection with the public. Ivana Komanická talked to Jana Hutťanová, on this topic.

With roses we can make the world a better place!

Angela Bokor
Romania
WFRS Vice-President for Europe
angela1710@hotmail.co.uk



Book review

Rosenzüchterinnen

by Anita Böhm-Krutzinna

review by Erich Unmuth

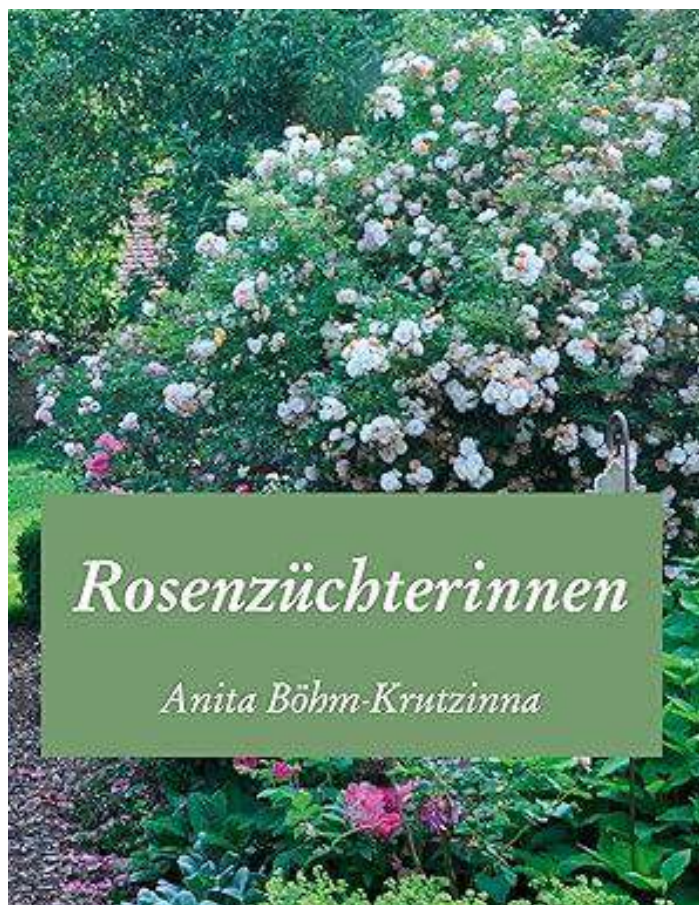
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The book ***Rosenzüchterinnen*** by **Anita Böhm-Krutzinna**^[1] was published two years ago, so far without a great response. This may be due to the fact that it was published in German and was therefore not recognised in the English-speaking world, and possibly also to the fact that women are usually perceived in connection with roses as dedicatees, as eponyms.

It is the author's great merit to dedicate a comprehensive book for the first time to women who were previously unknown even to rose experts, but whose cultivars are widespread and admired worldwide.

As early as 1820, there were passionate women rose breeders who worked in their gardens, in nurseries and later in state institutes.



Forty-six portraits are organised in four sections: Early Women Breeders 1820-1930, Women Rose Breeders at State and Private Institutions, Women Breeders within a Rose School and Enthusiastic Amateur Rose Breeders.

The very first portrait is surprising: 'President de Sèze', one of the most widespread and highly valued Gallicas to this day, was bred around 1830 by a woman whose full name was not known with certainty until then: **Mme Hébert**. The author was able to find this out as well as some details of her biography.

Nicolas-Joseph Prevost (1787 - 1855), one of the leading French breeders of the time and, like **Lucile Adèle Hébert** (1798 - 1834), based in Rouen, commercialised her varieties; he also mentions her as a successful breeder of fruit varieties.

Some of the portraits make it clear that the successful careers of these women began with a personal tragedy: the death of their life partner. One example is **Marie-Louise Schwartz** (1853 - 1938), known as **Vve. Schwartz**.

After the early death of her husband, left on her own with 4 small children, she managed to successfully continue the nursery and bring numerous new varieties onto the market. To this day, '*Mme Ernest Calvat*' (Bourbon Hybrid, 1888), '*Mme Charles Worth*' (Hybrid Rugosa, 1889), '*Roger Lambelin*' (Hybrid Perpetual, 1890), '*Monsieur de Morand*' (Hybrid Perpetual, 1891), '*Charles Metroz*' (Polyantha Hybrid 1900) and '*La Tosca*' (Hybrid Tea, 1900) are all well-known varieties that are still commercially available more than 130 years later.

The life of **Isabella Preston** (1881 - 1965) was completely different. Born in England, she emigrated to Canada with her sister in 1908 after training at Swanley Horticultural College in Kent. Initially working as a labourer in fruit plantations, she studied at the Ontario Horticultural College without being able to graduate as a woman. After successfully breeding her first lilies, she found a

job as an ornamental plant breeder at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa.

She became world famous with her lilac cultivars named *Syringa x prestoniae*, hybrids that are hardy and late-flowering and therefore suitable for Canadian gardens. Some of her roses can be found in the Europarosarium Sangerhausen, including '*Langford*' (Setigera hybrid, 1930), '*Patricia Macoun*' (Helenae hybrid 1923) and '*Carmenetta*' (Rugosa hybrid, 1923). She very much regretted the fact that rose breeding was discontinued in Ottawa from 1935 onwards for economic reasons.

25 years later, when a breeding programme for hardy, repeat-flowering shrub and climbing roses was launched at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa, this was another great opportunity for a woman: **Felicitas Svejda** (1920 - 2016). She recognised that strict selection of seedlings will be an essential factor for success. By setting up test gardens in the different climate zones of Canada, she was able to gain a comprehensive overview of the quality of her work. Her 'Explorer Roses' are a milestone in the development of shrub and climbing roses.



Felicitas Svejda near
'Schneewittchen' in
Rosenkultivarium
Baden

The portrait written by Anita Böhm-Krutzinna is highly successful and reminds me that I was in contact with **Felicitas Svejda** for many years and she was pleased to see that her roses not only thrive excellently in the harsh Canadian climate, but also in the Pannonian climate of eastern Austria. '*John Cabot*' (Hybrid Kordesii, 1969) or '*John Davis*' (Hybrid Kordesii, 1977) are fantastic roses. ^[2]

Anita Böhm-Krutzinna's portrait of **Ann Bentall** (1881 - 1941) is also very interesting. Her name is hardly recognised in connection with the Moschata hybrids of *Joseph Pemberton* (1854 - 1926). The author shows for the first time that both, Pemberton's sister **Florence Pemberton** (1967 - 1929) and **Ann Bentall** played a significant role in the breeding these roses.

For example, '*Felicia*' (Moschata Hybrid, 1926) and '*Robin Hood*' (Moschata Hybrid, 1927), which was so important for the further breeding of roses f.e. '*Schneewittchen*' syn. '*Iceberg*', '*Fee des Neiges*' (Floribunda, Reimer Kordes, 1958), can be attributed to **Florence Pemberton**, while '*Paulette Bentall*' (Multiflora Hybrid, 1916), '*Autumn Delight*' (Moschata Hybrid, 1933) and '*Belinda*' (Moschata Hybrid, 1936) were bred by **Ann Bentall** - but above all: '*The Fairy*' (Moschata hybrid, 1932), '*Ballerina*' (Moschata hybrid, 1937) and '*Buff Beauty*' (Moschata hybrid, 1939), which all can certainly be described as world roses, are also the work of **Ann Bentall**.



'John Davis'



'John Cabot'

With this brief overview, I hope to show that Anita Böhm-Krutzinna has succeeded with this book in creating a standard work on the history of rose breeding and that it would be highly desirable to distribute it beyond the German-speaking world.

[1] [Rosenzüchterinnen - Google Books](#)

[2] The Canadian rose breeder Felicitas Svejda was born in Vienna in 1920 and completed her studies here in 1947 with a doctorate. A planting of her roses is currently established in the Wiener Volksgarten. This historic rose garden will be developed into the Austrian Rosarium over the next few years.
(photos courtesy of the author)



‘Buff Beauty’ together with ‘Veilchenblau’

Gladys Fisher (1893 – 1993) USA

Gladys Fisher was blessed to remain in good mental health well into old age. Even at the age of 99 she often surprised her family with her astute remarks. However, she was unable to celebrate her centenary with her daughter and grandchildren at the end of December 1993, having died in a nursing home two months earlier - on 16 October - after suffering a stroke.

Gladys was born Esther Gladys McKone in Dover, New Hampshire, USA. She completed school and college and married Gordon Fisher, two years her senior, in November 1916 at the age of 22.

With a family friend, Mr Arnold, as their partner, the young couple set up a large horticultural business, the 'Arnold Fisher Company' in Woburn, Massachusetts, specialising in wholesale and retail floriculture. The small town was only a few miles from Boston. The company supplied numerous nurseries, simple and upmarket florists in Boston with its wealthy middle and upper classes, and in other cities along the American east coast. Later, the Fishers opened their own flower shops in Boston.

Although the company owned nearly 10 hectares of land, production was concentrated in its 5 huge greenhouses. The largest of these was 10 metres high, 18 metres wide and 100 metres long; in all, the greenhouse area covered almost a hectare! Only roses were grown, mainly for cutting. In 1928 around 40,000 roses were sold. Hybrid Tea roses such as the apricot '*Madame Butterfly*', the fragrant pink '*Columbia*' and the carmine '*Templar*' were grown. A coal-fired steam heating system was used during the cold season. The company employed around 16 people. While their business may have done well in the 1920s, they were not spared the effects

of the 'Great Depression' that began on 24 October 1929. By 1932, unemployment in the United States was around 25% and many wages had fallen dramatically. As a result, demand for flowers and ornamental plants fell.

For decades, plant breeders had argued that new plant varieties should be patentable, just as technical inventions had been since 1790. Perhaps the most famous American breeder of the 19th century was Luther Burbank. At the time, he advised young breeders not to make plant breeding their profession. You could patent a mousetrap or a bad song, he said, but if someone gave the world a new variety that added enormous value, the breeder would be lucky to have his name mentioned.

In 1930, however, the time had come: an American plant patent law was passed for plants that could be propagated above ground and asexually. This allowed breeders to protect their varieties. By paying royalties for good new varieties, breeders could share in the financial success of propagators for 20 or 7 years. It was hoped that this would lead to a huge increase in breeding activity.

Absurdly, the first plant patent was applied for in June 1930 by the landscape gardener Henry F. Bosenberg, who had not bred but merely discovered a mutation of the climbing rose '*Dr W. van Fleet*'. He had bought roses of this variety and noticed that a bush of the usually once flowering variety kept on flowering. He propagated the sport and observed its offspring for four years to be sure that the sport was stable. The Somerset Rose Nursery eventually

introduced the rose under the name '*New Dawn*'. It went into the Rose Hall of Fame and is still popular today.

It was not until the US government decided not only to implement half-hearted recovery programmes, but also to build up its military power and award huge military contracts, that the American economy began to pick up again in the late 1930s. Flowers and shrubs were again sold in large quantities, and nurseries expanded their production. Traditionally, many roses, above all new varieties, were exported from France to the United States.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, however, this trade came to a standstill and French and Dutch gardeners were ordered to grow vegetables and potatoes instead of ornamental flowers. This order resulted in the cessation of almost all rose growing in France for more than five years and beyond. This was the great opportunity for American rose breeders because strong French competition was eliminated! Royalty income from plant patents was suddenly worthwhile.

Gordon and Gladys Fisher were not unaware of this. Their enterprising daughter Betty, her husband Edward Hansen and later their son Gordon junior joined the company, which was now wholly owned by the family. The idea of growing fragrant greenhouse roses themselves became increasingly important to them, as there were very few of them. Good varieties could be patented, even if it was not cheap. Not only would this avoid paying royalties to other rose growers, but it would also provide a lucrative source of income for their business in the form of ongoing royalties from their own new varieties. This was all the more attractive as they had large

greenhouses, the expertise and labour to do the 'hard work', and many connections with nurseries, florists and customers.

One of the greenhouses was set up as a breeding department. When the pollination and selection of roses proved to be more time-consuming than expected, Gordon Fisher hired a young student, Harvey E. Barké, as a breeder.

Tragically, Gordon Fisher died that summer and a few weeks after his funeral, Harvey Barké was drafted into the Air Force. He had bred several roses which were selected and tested in the nursery. One of his hybrid tea roses, the yellow '*Pandora*', was patented by him and the company in January 1950.

After Harvey Barké was drafted into the army, the Fisher family debated whether to hire a new rose breeder.. Neither Betty nor her husband Edward had time to grow roses. Gladys' son Gordon Junior was also serving in the army as a pilot. They wondered whether a dedicated and experienced plant breeder would be too expensive for the company and whether they could really benefit from rose patents in the long term. Eventually, a surprising idea emerged.

At 49, the vivacious, petite Gladys Fisher, with her Grace Kelly hairdo, was in the prime of life. She had been a stay-at-home mum, bringing up her two children, and was a member of several organisations, including charities. As a young woman she had been somewhat superficial, once describing herself as a 'social butterfly', but when she witnessed the plight of so many people during the "Great Depression" she realised the importance of political education and helping others. A talented seamstress, she made clothes not only for herself and her daughter Betty, but also for others in need. She often debated with her husband Gordon about the sense and nonsense of the politics of the day.

When her husband died, she needed something to fill the void and occupy her mind. One day she happened to be leafing through the company's breeding programme and suddenly became very interested. So, she decided to become the company's breeding programme manager herself! However, she had no theoretical or practical knowledge of the subject. She quickly learned from books on plant breeding and genetics and from her own experience.

Her aim was to produce fragrant, healthy roses with special colours, beautiful flower shapes and long stems suitable for the flower trade. Her dream was to create a deep red rose to dedicate to her husband.

After her first tentative attempts, Gladys was successful and by 1947 there were more than 19,000 promising seedlings in the nursery's greenhouses. She later said that it was so exciting to go into her greenhouse every morning to see which seedlings had bloomed. You never knew what you would find.

Soon Gladys could no longer manage the breeding work alone and Scottish gardener Andrew Jackson was recruited as her assistant. In early 1950, after the company had succeeded in registering a plant patent for Harvey Barké's pale yellow '*Pandora*' with its fruity fragrance, three of Gladys Fischer's own roses followed at the end of the year: the very healthy, fragrant '*Bunker Hill*', '*Pink Parasol*' and the lavender, delicate '*Morning Mist*'.

Gladys patented more than a dozen of her new rose varieties, mainly hybrid tea roses and floribunda roses, most of them delicate to very fragrant.

One of her favourite crosses was the French rose '*Peace*'. It was also the parent of Gladys' hybrid tea rose '*Lovesong*', which was similar to its parent but had a strong fragrance.

The hybrid tea roses '*Tapestry*' (1958), '*Best Wishes*' (1959) and '*Velvet Beauty*' (1961) were also successful, but it was the silvery lavender '*Sterling Silver*' (1957) that made Gladys famous. She originally wanted to call this rose "First Lady" after the wife of the US President but decided on a more timeless name. '*Sterling Silver*' was a cross between '*Peace*' and an unnamed seedling. In the greenhouse and under good conditions, it proved to be vigorous, producing lilac-coloured, highly fragrant flowers on long, almost thornless stems. The large nursery Jackson & Perkins in Newark, New York, introduced '*Sterling Silver*' with great publicity at a popular rose festival and had a special silver bowl designed for it. At the time, this rose was considered the flower of choice for florists! Today its genetic material can be found in many "blue" roses such as '*Mainzer Fastnacht*', '*Blue River*' and '*Rhapsody in Blue*'.

'*Sunspot*' was the last rose to be registered by Gladys for a plant patent in the USA in 1965. In 1960 Gladys Fisher wrote the remarkable article 'Hybridising for the Amateur Gardener' which was published in the American Rose Yearbook. As well as writing about her breeding work in books and newspapers, she also lectured at rose shows and horticultural societies, consolidating her reputation as a clever and successful rose breeder.

The Arnold Fisher Company closed in 1975, and all the buildings were demolished except for a barn. Beautifully restored at the time, it became Gladys' home and is still occupied by her great-granddaughter Jamie.

Anita Böhm-Krutzinna, Germany
akrutzinna@gmail.com

An olfactory journey among the scents of roses

EVA NEDELKO

MSc, Aromatherapist, Distiller,
Author, Lecturer, Old Roses Lover
Slovenia
www.eywineo.eu



It has been more than fifteen years since I discovered the old fragrant varieties of roses and created my private collection of one hundred varieties of antique roses. And it has been more than ten years since I entered the world of distillation. The intoxicating scent of old rose varieties is the reason I completely changed my personal and professional life, opened my company EYWINEO, and fully dedicated myself to aromatherapy, distillation, lectures, and organizing fragrant events. In the heart of Slovenia, in 2019, I set up a boutique distillery, where I focus with great passion on rose distillation.

As a huge fan of old rose varieties, I have traveled through many rose gardens across Europe. I was enchanted by the old varieties of roses and sought a scent that would captivate me so much that I would try to capture it in fragrant drops. Most distillers, however, are not enthusiasts of roses, and knowledge of rose varieties is completely foreign to them. When I asked distillers around the world which rose varieties they distilled, I was often disappointed, as I received no answer. They only knew that they distilled Damask roses, which are known for their beautiful fragrance, but they knew nothing about the varieties of their roses.

It is the essential oil that gives roses their fragrance, hidden in very small quantities in their delicate petals. For the distillation of rose essential oil, however, large quantities of flowers are needed. To obtain one kilogram of pure rose essential oil, 5 tons of rose petals are required, along with a lot of hard work and, above all, love for roses.



The price of rose essential oil is, therefore, understandably, very high.

Distillers of essential oils in small batches are often quite passionate individuals who do their work primarily out of enthusiasm. They don't mind many hours spent in their distillery, creating fragrant drops. More uniquely, when the passion for roses and the passion for distillation come together in one person the obvious path is that of rose distillation. And that's exactly what happened to me.

After several years of distillation, I became more and more curious about what the scent of a hydrosol would be like if I distilled roses from other varieties, not just Damask roses. On my property, I planted different varieties and waited for the day when they would produce enough flowers for distillation.

After a few years, in addition to Damask roses, my distillery also had Bourbon, Gallica and English roses, as well as Hybrid Perpetuals. I eagerly awaited first drops to come out of the stiller.

When I finally inhaled their scent, I was speechless. For the first time in my life, I had in front of me the fragrant hydrosols of different rose varieties. I don't know if anyone else in the world distills roses from different varieties. I have read that in Provence, they also distill Centifolia roses, but unfortunately, during my trip to Provence, I did not find such hydrosols.

Through many tests and the selection of different roses, my intuition was confirmed that other varieties and groups, not just Damask roses, are suitable for distillation. The hydrosols of other varieties were just as fragrant as those of Damask roses. I was especially impressed by the fragrances of Bourbon and Gallica rose hydrosols, as they were much more refined than the scent of Damask roses. Unfortunately, I do not have enough rose petals to produce pure essential oil. However, since there is always some essential oil in the hydrosols, those carry roses' characteristic scent.



On our website www.eywineo.eu different rose hydrosols are available for all those who are as fascinated by the scent of roses as I am. For all the olfactory connoisseurs among rose lovers, we have also labeled them with the names of the rose varieties from which they were extracted, which is unique in the world of distillation. I wish you a fragrant journey to the seductive world of rose scents!



Parks of comfort and well-being

International Conference, Portorož (Slovenia), 21st March 2025

LUCIJA ČOK, Slovenian Rose Society



Spending time in nature, relaxing and experiencing the beauty of the seasons in a park, forest or simply on a city green is desirable and takes on real meaning in the increasingly stressful pace of modern life.

The opportunities to relax and to escape to nature in our living environment depends on the spatial policies of cities and suburbs. How to design urban parks, how to adapt them to the wishes and needs of visitors, and how green landscapes are designed for people's comfort and well-being elsewhere in the

world were the topics of the conference *Parks of Comfort and Well-being* at the Kampinski Palace Hotel Portorož, organized by the Municipality and its Environment Office of Piran, Slovenian Rose Society and Arboretum Volčji Potok.

Around 50 landscape architects, horticulturists and professionals from local authorities listened to invited experts from Italy, France, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.



Zdenka Čebašek-Travnik (Slovenia), in her presentation on Experiencing the Natural Environment for Therapeutic Purposes, opened up the range of possibilities for healing the body and soul through the various activities that parks can offer.

She supported the activities in the green environment that have a positive impact on health with the results of modern scientific research. Among other things, she presented the Memory Trail, designed especially for people with dementia and their companions, which was created in the Volčji Potok Arboretum on her initiative and by an interdisciplinary working group set up for this purpose.

Mateja Račevski (Slovenia) presented the process of planning the green space in the Arboretum Volčji Potok to ensure the comfort of visitors throughout the months and seasons. She stressed the importance of a holistic experience of the green space, including not only the sights, but also the smells and voices of nature. The cultural and natural heritage of Volčji Potok, protected and preserved, has been handed down from generation to generation for more than a century.

The next two lectures presented the examples of parks of well-being in two other countries. Jiří Malaska from Flora Olomouc (Czech Republic) presented the Rosarium in Olomouc. The “Rose Heart of the Town” is part of Olomouc Botanical Garden (1972) and offers activities for all needs and ages. The garden, which was extensively renovated in 2016, offers relaxation for personal and family celebrations as well as cultural and artistic events. The entry to the rose garden is free of charge.

Annalisa Marini (Italy) presented some of Italy's wellbeing parks (Liguria, Romagna, Friuli), with a particular focus on therapeutic parks around hospitals.

She described the Millepetali Park in Aviano, where student volunteers and members of the Rose Lovers' Association of Pordenone work alongside a team of hospital staff to maintain and care for the park. The park has created a place of rest, relaxation and reflection for patients, their families and hospital staff.

Matthias Meilland (Meilland International, France) was the special guest of the event. In the fascinating biography of the Meilland family, which extends from 1880 to the present day, having bred the legendary varieties 'Papa Meilland', 'La Sevilliana', 'Bonica' and 'Peace' (1945), the most famous rose ever created, which is proposed to UNESCO protection.

More recently, research has been focused to adaptability of varieties to climate changes, soils and sites, which require special attention in the breeding process. Around the world, at different latitudes, they study the influence of temperature, humidity, soil type, daylight hours, latitude and longitude on the growth and flowering of new varieties and monitor their persistence. Mathias Meilland has described various cases of this project, the success of which he personally verifies. Interestingly, he found that roses are still a popular flower, albeit planted in pots on balconies as living space becomes increasingly limited.



Matthias Meilland, France

In the afternoon's discussion, moderated by Matjaž Mastnak, landscape architects Stanka Dešnik, Andreja Vučer and Mateja Račevski examined how successfully the topics in case are addressed in the Slovenian environment

Successful solutions in local environments were applauded, but the panellists also highlighted bad practices resulting from an unprofessional and, above all, non-integrated approach.

Local authorities as commissioners of parks and green spaces and those responsible for their maintenance, as well as public and private suppliers of planting materials and services, rarely work together. While Slovenian legislation provides general guidelines and conditions for the location and design of parks, more guidance is needed from the horticultural and landscaping experts.

Angela Bokor, Vice-President of the World Federation of Rose Societies (WFRS), welcomed the meeting and invited those present to read the WFRS Newsletter for the Central and Eastern European Region (<https://regionalnewsletter.wordpress.com/>) and to contribute content for publication.

The second conference, the first being organized in 2024, under the auspices of the Municipality of Piran and with the substantive participation of the Slovenian Rose Society, was successful and interesting, judging by the reactions of the public.

The organisers would like to make such meetings of experts a regular yearly event with topics on natural and designed landscapes and successful solutions for human life, to raise public awareness of the importance of sustainable and healthy living of today's generations for the future of this beautiful planet we call Earth.



Jiří Malaska, Olomouc, Czech Republic



Zdenka Čebašek-Travnik, Slovenia

Valuable archive donated to the Slovak National Museum

An interview by Ivana Komanická with Jana Hutt'anová, rose historian and vice-president of the Rose Society Maria Henrieta Chotek, on the donation of the Society's archive to the Slovak National Museum

The archive of the Slovak Rosarians is a recent acquisition of the Slovak National Museum, a donation from the Rose Society Maria Henrieta Chotek. Could you tell us more about this archive?

The Rose Society Maria Henrieta Chotek was founded in 2010, but it continued the work of its predecessors. We had been collaborating with rosarians from the Rosa Club in Bratislava and the Rosa Club in Zvolen. Over the course of time we have acquired the archives of their former members, some of whom were also breeders. The archives include handwritten notes, personal documents, breeding records, many of which are truly unique, or various publications. We were looking for ways to preserve them and at the same time make them available to the public. And today I can say that they will enrich the collection of the Slovak National Museum. The publications will be stored in the library of the Slovak National Museum.

On the 22nd of May the exhibition about Slovak breeders will be opened in the library of the Slovak National Museum. You are the curator of this exhibition, what will be on display there?

The exhibition in the library of the Slovak National Museum on the bank of the Danube will last until the 19th of June 2025. There will be two lectures in the accompanying programme. On the 27th of May I will give a lecture about rose breeders in Slovakia and on the 12th of



June Alena Krátka will give a lecture about the rose tradition in Dolná Krupa and about Countess Mária Henrietta Choteková. Four panels will present rose breeders and their roses: Szilvester Györy, Štefan Dolinay, František Chorvát, Mária Henrietta Choteková, Rudolf Geschwind. Apart from written records and documents, visitors can also see various objects related to breeders and breeding, such as old rose tags from the Botanical Garden in Bratislava, which were used when František Chorvát was the Head of the Rosarium there, or the tags

installed in the Rosarium of the Borová Hora Arboretum by Viera Višňovská, a rosarian and breeder who worked there..



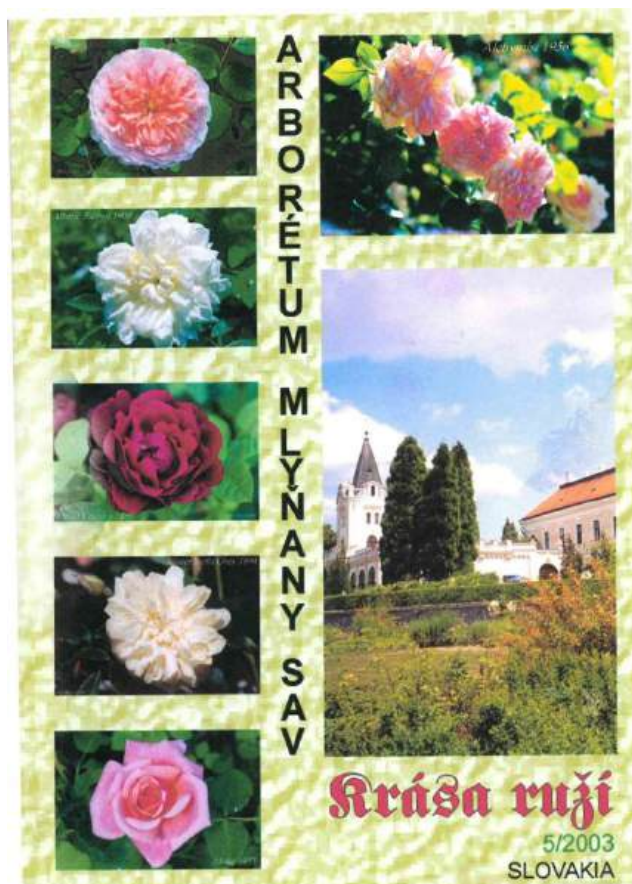
rose tags from Botanic Garden in Bratislava

Which books made it into the SNM archive?

For example, the *Newsletter for Rose Growers and Lovers (Spravodaj pre pestovateľov a milovníkov ruží)*, published twice a year from the 1970s to the present by the Rosa Klub in Prague. In the former Czechoslovakia it was also a newsletter for Slovakia. Rose historian Marián Kováč used to publish a lot there, you can find many interesting articles about rose exhibitions, as well as articles about breeders and rose growers from the Czech Republic, who had a major impact on the Slovak rose gardening, such as Pravdomil Svoboda, who founded a Rosarium at the Arboretum Borová Hora in Zvolen. The world of Slovak rose gardening in the 20th century is documented here in the period when the rose organisations worked very well. Complete issues of this journal will be available to the public.

Has there been any journal published in Slovakia?

Only six issues of the magazine *Krása ruží* (The Beauty of Roses) were published in Slovakia in the 1990s. The editor-in-chief was Mrs Številová, who was the chairwoman of the Rosa Club in Zvolen. The magazine did not appear regularly.

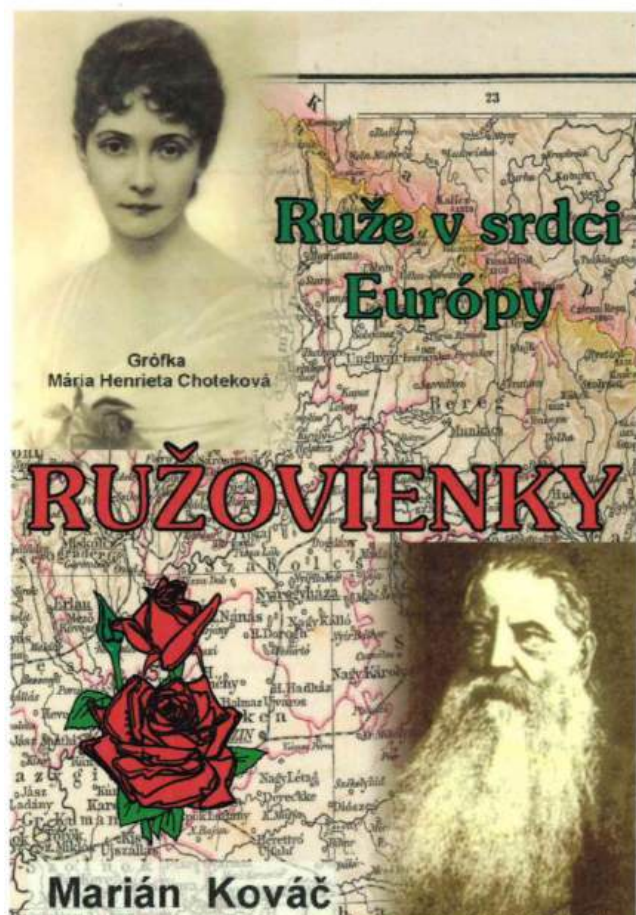


Journal *Krása Ruží* (Beauty of Roses)

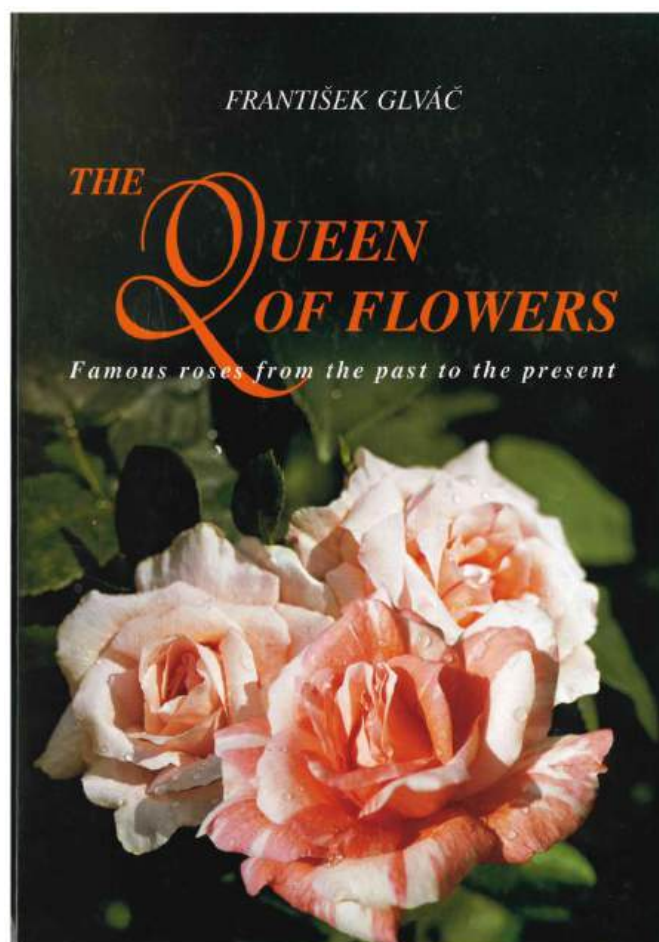
All six issues will also go to the library of the Slovak National Museum. The manuscript material of the individual issues will go to the archives.

Are there any rare, old or no longer available books?

There are the Kordes rose catalogues, publications co-authored by the breeder František Chorvát, but also the *Rosenlexikon* by August Jagger, the catalogue of the Olomouc Rosary from 1973, *Brief Practical Advice for Rose Lovers and Growers (Stručné praktické rady pre milovníkov a pestovateľov ruží)*, edited by Ján Böhm, and František Glváč's book *The Queen of Flowers - From Past to Present (Kráľovná kvetín - Od minulosti k dnešku)*. Some of them are available in only one copy. The most precious for us are, of course, the only existing photocopies of Rudolf Geschwind's diaries from 1869 and 1870, the originals having been lost. Thanks to them, we have the records of Rudolf Geschwind's breeding work and life.



Ružovienky (Rose in the heart of Europe)
published by Marián Kováč



Are these diaries from Marián Kováč's archive?

Yes, the photocopies are from the archive of Marián Kováč, who translated the diaries into Slovak. His archive also contains a number of photocopies of Rudolf Geschwind's articles, as he was preparing a publication about the life and work of Rudolf Geschwind.

Together with Josef Thomas, the long-time chairman of the Rosa Club in Prague, who also worked on the history of rose growing in Czechoslovakia, he was working on the Lexicon of Czechoslovak Roses, but unfortunately he did not finish it, the manuscript is preserved only in notes...

Marián Kováč has done an outstanding job in researching the history of rose growing and breeding in Slovakia since the 19th century.

On the Facebook page of the Rose Society of Maria Henrieta Chotek you have started to publish short articles about rose growing in our country based on his research and archive. You wrote about the first rose nursery in Ružomberok in the mid-19th century, which offered a assortment of 70 roses, or about the first major publication on roses called *Cultur, Benennung und Beschreibung der Rosen* (1836-1838) by Christian Nickels, which was published in five volumes in Bratislava and included, among other things, the first colour chart of roses.

Marián Kováč was primarily interested in Rudolf Geschwind, he did a lot of research on him, in his archive there are files from registers and various archives or the information he obtained on members of the Geschwind family, his family tree. But all this information is very fragmentary and scattered in his notes.

The archive also contains the articles he prepared for publication but which were never published, including an article on the aforementioned Christian Nickels. He did, however, publish a short article on Adam Čulen, who owned a rose garden in the 19th century.

Marián Kováč is also the person behind the induction of Geschwind's rose "Gruss an Teplitz" into the Rose Hall of Fame, is there any documentation about this in the archive?

Yes, it was his initiative and thanks to him this rose was inducted into the Rose Hall of Fame Old Roses in Texas, USA in 2000. In the archive there is a short article in the newsletter with the only photo of Mr Kováč that we have.

What else can be found in this archive?

We also managed to obtain materials from Szilvester Györy's family, a CD with his photographs of his roses, which he compared with various other varieties. From Štefan Dolinay we obtained his membership cards of the Rosa Club, which was a part of the Gardeners' Association from the 1980s, from the family of the breeder František Chorvát we obtained his private photographs, but also his notes on his roses, which have not been published anywhere before, so we discovered new varieties that he bred

Do these roses exist?

We don't know yet, it's difficult to tell from the description alone, but some of Mr Chorvát's roses are still preserved in his daughter and son's garden in Karlová Ves, where he originally bred them. His daughter started grafting roses in order to preserve these old roses from the garden. We will see, we will observe, whether any of them will turn out to be the roses from his description. These are all things we have found out recently, but it is possible that more information about his breeding will be found in the future.

Chorvát bred about twelve roses, how many more did you find in his notes?

About six, with names and descriptions of the crosses.

You mentioned the personal archives of breeders, what about institutional archives such as Rosa Clubs. Is there anything in the archives? The Rosa Club in Bratislava was founded in 1968, in Zvolen in 1973, we are working on getting the records of members or meeting records. Everything that is processed will be sent to the SNM archives. At the moment we have the records of the annual meetings from the 1980s or the lists of members from the 1980s.



Rosa Klub membership card of breeder Štefan Dolinay

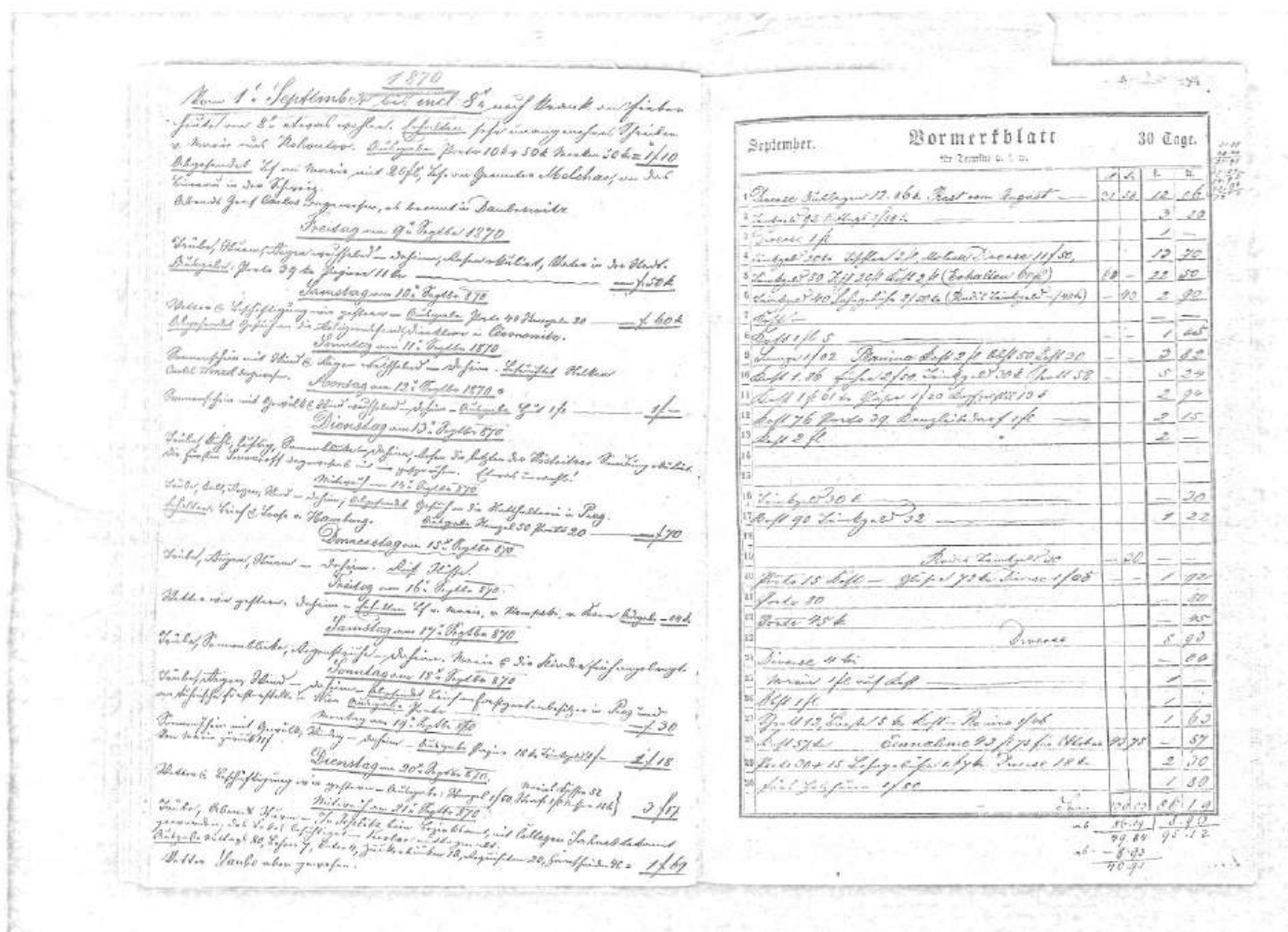


You are a professional historian working at the Slovak National Museum. Is the history of rose growing and breeding part of your research work in this institution?

I have been working at the Slovak National Museum - Historical Museum for twenty years. I work as a museum lecturer in the Bratislava Castle. The subject of rose breeding in Slovakia has also become a part of my professional work. I am currently working on the book *Rose Breeders in Slovakia or From the History of Rose Breeding in Slovakia*, which will be published in 2027, and this work is part of my research at the Historical Museum.

It is also partly based on Marián Kováč's notes and materials from his unfinished Lexicon of Czechoslovak Roses, which he was working on with Mr Thomas from Prague. Marián Kováč wrote about rose cultivation and breeding until the middle of the 20th century, so I had to do more research. The book will present all the roses bred in Slovakia with a list and description. The publication will also include locations where these roses are grown and can be seen today.

Rudolf Geschwind's diaries, translated by Marián Kováč including my commentary, will be soon published in the collection *Historia*, published by the Slovak National Museum - Historical Museum.



copy of a page from Geschwind's diary