

Wake Up...

I only know of one collector who collects Roses, specifically...Surprising! It seems to be such an attractive category, having a number of things going for it. For instance, it has so many emotions and values attached to it in our society. It symbolizes love, tenderness, caring, commitment, and so on. If you give roses, others see you as a suitor, a loving spouse, generous, thoughtful, etc. We name places and events after it: Roseville, the Rose Room, the Rose Bowl. Stella Williams, OH, has 1,060 in her collection.

The father of Botany, Theophrastus (371-286 BC) first classified and identified plants. In his classic books *Enquiry Into Plants* and *De Causis Plantarum* (The causes of plants), he wrote about a "hundred-petaled rose" and called it centifolia (literally: hundred petals). Roman Emperor Nero liked to shower his guests with fresh rose petals. According to the legend, the dense rose-petal cloud nearly suffocated some of the guests.

In the Middle Ages, it was customary for the wealthy to put rose petals and rose oil in their baths. Many noblewomen carried bouquets of fragrant flowers to cover body odors. The early Christians saw a correlation between the five petals of the *Rosa sancta* and the five wounds of Christ. The red rose stood for Christ's blood, while the white rose for the Virgin Mary. It was in the 17th century that French explorer Samuel de Champlain brought the first cultivated roses to North America.

The oldest garden rose is the *Rosa Gallica Officinalis*, the apothecary rose. The oldest garden rose classes include the Albas, Centifolias and Damasks. The first patent ever registered for a plant was a patent for a hybridized rose, which gave "ever-blooming" characteristics to the climbing rose. It was issued by the United States Patent Office on August 18th to Henry F. Bosenberg for his "Climbing or Trailing Rose".

The largest rose ever bred was a pink rose measuring approximately 33 inches in diameter. It was bred by Nikita K. Rulhoksoffski from San Onofre, California. The world's largest rosebush is a white Lady Banksia



And Smell The Roses!

located in Tombstone, Arizona. It's original root came over from Scotland in 1885. From a single trunk, which is nearly six feet in diameter, it spreads over an arbor that covers over 8,00 square feet, enough to shelter a crowd of 150 people.

The world's oldest living rose is believed to be over 1,000 years old. It grows on the wall of the Cathedral of Hildesheim in Germany and its presence is documented since A.D. 815. According to the legend, the rosebush symbolizes the prosperity of the city of Hildesheim; as long as it flourishes, Hildesheim will not decline. In 1945 allied bombers destroyed the cathedral, yet the bush survived. Its roots remained intact beneath the debris, and soon the bush was growing strong again.

The largest private rose garden in the world is in Cavriglia, Italy, and holds over 7,500 different varieties of roses. The only rose known to have only four petals is Rosa Sericea, brought to Europe from the Himalayas at the end of the nineteenth century.

The oldest representation of a rose is a fresco in the palace of Minos in Cnossos, Crete. It depicts a five-petaled pink rose; dated to about 1450 B.C.

The first rose to leave the earth was as miniature rose called "Overnight Scentsation" that had been cultivated by Dr. Braja Mookherjee for experiments in space. The rose needed to be small to fit inside the middeck of the space shuttle. The purpose was to measure how low-gravity would influence the rose's smell.

Today, 150 million rose plants are purchased by gardeners worldwide each year. 60% of the roses grown in the U.S. are produced in California. The rose is the favorite flower of 85% of Americans. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rose]

