

MORE NEWS ABOUT SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Richard Walsh

The Rose Society of NSW approved the formation of “Special Interest Groups” at its November 2016 meeting and Richard Walsh was appointed co-ordinator.

Membership of these groups is free to all members and there will from time to time be relevant material posted on the “members only” area of the website. Registering your email address with the secretary will ensure the earliest access to the information and your ability to participate in the specially designed activities.

The groups will cover such activities as:

Rose Breeding: a non-competitive display of Richard and Ruth’s seedlings was set up at the Sydney Regional spring show in October. It is hoped this will become a regular feature of the Sydney show and be expanded to include other members roses with appropriate signage on breeding. We are also hoping to participate in the display day on the final day of the Royal Easter Show in April and also organise a breeders’ workshop later in the year (probably in early December). **The first *Rose Breeders’ Forum* e-journal is posted on the members’ only area of the website.** If any members have a particular interest in this aspect of rose growing, please register your email address with Richard Walsh (walshroses45@yahoo.com.au) to be included on the mailing list and to be kept informed of planned activities.

Australian Bred Roses: there is a need to raise the awareness in an impartial way of the many quality Australian bred roses “out there”. Some of these will be highlighted in the *Rose Breeders’ Forum*. **We will also be encouraging the regional groups to feature different classes for Australian bred and seedling roses in their schedules**, as well as looking out for the worthy ones that may slip through the cracks if no one champions them. Some of the less common roses of the Australian breeders will be pursued and sources chased up, with perhaps a database of the ones grown by our members set up. The list on the NRSA website will be updated in our publications.

Miniature Roses: some members already grow their miniature roses in pots. Some, because of space limitations to their gardens, find miniature roses more suitable to their conditions. We hope to increase the information available to members regarding propagating miniature roses (by cuttings) and making a wider list of varieties available by finding sources of cultivars for members. It is hoped that a special weekend involving a workshop and rose show focussing on growing, showing, propagating and breeding miniature roses can be planned and if successful, repeated on an annual basis. **Perhaps one of the Regionals would like to put their hand up to host perhaps an autumn event surrounding miniature Roses.**

Conservation: Heritage Roses in Australia (HRiA) is committed to the “preservation cultivation, distribution and study of old garden roses, roses no longer in commercial cultivation, roses of historical importance, species roses and their hybrids.” The task is huge and there are many which fall through the cracks between those targeted by HRiA and the recommended roses of the rose societies. There are many roses, which were on the recommended list when I first joined only 40 years ago that are hard to remember, let alone of which to find sources of cuttings or budwood. If we

can find sources and re-introduce some of these to our members, we will have achieved something good. Part of that would be to establish a list of desirable ones and find where they may be bought or propagating material sourced. **Some of our breeders are not well represented in the catalogues and we can promote them.** The Allan Read project is one way we can make his roses better known and more available. It is also appropriate to highlight some of our breeders in the *Rose Breeders' Forum*.

Potted Roses: there is an art to growing roses in pots. There are differences in the cultural requirements compared to garden roses. Pot culture is particularly applicable to those whose growing conditions do not allow garden plants, who may have limited garden space or only a balcony on which to grow plants. There is no reason why they cannot still be rose growers and even showers using their potted plants. **Perhaps shows could feature potted specimens more or roses shown by growers of less than say 5 plants.** A list of roses suitable for pot culture can be developed. We have found that there are some which perform better in pots than in the ground.

If members have any other suggestions regarding the Special Interest Groups, please register your thoughts with the secretary Kristin or with the co-ordinator Richard. **When notices are sent out to regional societies, it is important that the members are informed by the information being sent on or published in the regional newsletters.**