



*Dusky Maiden*



*Dainty Maid*

# **S**ingularly **B**eautiful **R**oses

*A Publication Dedicated to Single,  
Nearly Single, and Semi-Double Flowered Roses  
Volume 3, Issue 5*

## Contents

Status: Single, English, and Nattily Attired . . . . .	Page 2
From the Editor . . . . .	Page 10
Sources . . . . .	Page 11

## Status: Single, English, and Nattily Attired

If you have been growing roses since the late 80's to early 90's you will remember you began seeing something altogether new in rose catalogs - English Roses. One catalog stated, "These new hybrids are the culmination of nearly 40 years of research and rose breeding. They are the result of crossing old roses with modern bush roses. Their form and flower, delicacy of colouring and their rich fragrance can be compared with the Damask, Gallica, and Alba roses of years gone by. But unlike these, they flower repeatedly throughout the season, have a wider colour range and are disease resistant. English Roses have the feel of informal, old country garden roses. They'll be a delight in any garden large or small." (1992 Jackson & Perkins Roses, p. 36.) I ordered four varieties to sell at the nursery and greenhouse business where I was employed ('Graham Thomas,' 'Heritage,' 'Mary Rose,' and 'Othello').

David Austin grew up the son of a farmer, immersed in the world of agriculture. As a young man he was introduced to the world of plant hybridizing through a friend of his father's, Mr. James Baker, a local nurseryman. During the 1940's a copy of Edward Bunyard's book *Old Garden Roses* found its way into his hands. One highly recommended rose in particular caught his eye, the hybrid spinnossima, 'Stanwell Perpetual,' unique in its class for having the form of the old garden roses, but with a continuous sequence of bloom. Mr. Bunyard wrote of this wonderfully perfumed rose, "We might develop a race of 'Stanwells' of varying colours as this is the only variety which flowers perpetually, due, in my opinion, to the introduction of Damask blood (p. 85)." A vision was born – new roses in the style of old roses!

Traveling counter to the direction of commercial rose growers and hybridizers of the time, David Austin began collecting albas, gallicas, damasks, and other old rose types. A growing friendship with Graham Stuart Thomas began in the early 1950's, further broadening his appreciation of the OGR's. During the next decade he experimented with numerous crosses of the once-blooming types with the modern, repeat-flowering hybrids in an effort to create roses that captured his dream.

### The Journey Begins

A cross between the light pink gallica, 'Belle Isis,' and the slightly darker single-flowered floribunda, 'Dainty Maid,' produced a seedling that he chose as his first introduction, 'Constance Spry.' Released in 1961, this once flowering climber/tall shrub was named for a well-known English society florist and author, and demonstrated the often unpredictable results arising from using roses with such diverse genetic backgrounds. Its fat buds and warm pink, cupped flowers exuded a rich fragrance, for all intents defining the look of David Austin's English Roses. His next introduction, 'Chianti' (1967), was a rich red cultivar resulting from a cross of the nearly single-flowered floribunda, 'Dusky Maiden,' and a dark purplish-red gallica, 'Tuscany.' This once-flowering, fully double, tall growing shrub also possessed a rich damask fragrance, and its name – well, use your imagination. One year later 'Shropshire Lass' was introduced, a nearly single-flowered, pale pink to blush white variety clearly revealing its alba ancestry. These early varieties were sold by Sunningdale Nurseries where Graham Stuart Thomas had originally established his entire collection of roses.

1969 saw the opening of David Austin Roses, Ltd. and the introduction of six new varieties, all repeat flowering and all but one named for characters in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. The exception was 'Canterbury' which was the destination of the pilgrims whose tales are the subject of Chaucer's work. Often referred to as single, it frequently had two to three rows of pastel pink petals highlighted by bright yellow stamens. The blooms were too large for the slow to



'Constance Spry'

establish plant and it didn't make a big splash commercially. But . . . a repeat flowering single-flowered (sort of) David Austin rose . . . hmm.

It was in 1983 that the rose world finally took notice of David Austin's roses. That year two roses were introduced at the Chelsea Flower Show, 'Graham Thomas' and 'Mary Rose.' The media attention they received launched the nurseryman and his vision of a new class of roses into a new level of prominence.

### To the New World

One of the early advocates of the Austin roses was Clair Martin of the Huntington Botanical Gardens who was introduced to them while speaking at a Heritage Rose Conference in Adelaide, Australia in October of 1986. Upon returning home he found that a number of them from were available from several Canadian nurseries, including Hortico and Pickering (I still have a Hortico catalog from 1988-89 and it lists over 50 varieties). Within a few short years the Huntington was growing over 100 cultivars.

Wayside Gardens was the first American business to be licensed to grow the English Roses. John Elsley, the Director of Horticulture for Wayside, had come to the U.S. from Great Britain as a highly educated and experienced botanist having worked at Wisley, the flagship garden of the Royal Horticultural Society. While there he benefited from a close relationship with Graham Stuart Thomas, who in turn, introduced him to David Austin. The contract with David Austin Roses arose out of Mr. Elsley's appreciation of the unique horticultural qualities of the English Roses. In 1990 Wayside Gardens produced the first of a series of catalogs dedicated solely to roses. Picturing 'Heritage' on the front cover, over twenty of the Austin roses were included, and Graham Stuart Thomas served as the consulting editor.

In no time other companies began to negotiate with Wayside to obtain the rights to market these new roses. Jackson & Perkins quickly jumped on board and in 1992 they included a dozen varieties in their wholesale catalog. John and Louise Clements of Heirloom Roses were also early supporters of the garden worthiness of the English Roses. In 1987 they had visited England searching for virus free European varieties and happened to visit David Austin's nursery in Shropshire. Impressed with the growing fields and display gardens they determined to make them a part of their transition from a wholesale miniature rose business to a retail and mail-order nursery specializing in own-root, virus-free roses. In 1992 Heirloom Old Garden Roses, as the business was then known, produced their first full color catalog offering over fifty David Austin roses. Arena Roses (now closed) offered eleven varieties in their 1995 catalog and in 1996 Roses Unlimited's catalog had fifty David Austin roses.

Articles began appearing in gardening magazines promoting this new "class" of repeat flowering roses that were suitable for the mixed perennial border/bed. In a special issue of *Better Homes and Gardens*, "Simply Perfect Roses & Old-Fashioned Flowers," author Bonnie Blodgett wrote, "Perhaps more than anyone, David Austin is responsible for restoring old-style roses to worldwide prominence." Cynthia Van Hazinga opened her article "Get a Whiff of These. . . the Most Fragrant Roses You Can Grow," with the following statement; "Beloved for their exotic, old rose form and irresistible fragrance, David Austin's English roses have set the rose world on fire."

As mentioned, I began growing David Austin's roses as soon as they appeared in J & P's catalog. At the same time I was entering a transitional phase in my gardening life when the idea of mixed perennial borders that included roses was strongly appealing - they were perfect in that setting. I was also becoming a rose catalog addict and I noticed that there were a small number of single and semi-double English roses being offered. My interest was piqued! Over the years a number of truly single and even more nearly single roses have made their way from the seedling beds into the David Austin Roses catalogs. With very few exceptions the English roses are registered as Modern Shrubs. About the singles Mr. Austin has written; "I always find it difficult to know where to place the single English Roses. The justification for putting English Roses into a group is that they have flowers of the Old Rose formation, but the singles could just as well go in with the group known, rather vaguely, as Modern Shrubs."

Perhaps you may find room for one or more of the following (listed in chronological order by date of introduction; some dates may reflect year of introduction in England; Canadian nurseries have frequently sold the Austin roses earlier than U.S. sources because of differences in quarantine laws).



Canterbury



**‘Shropshire Lass’** – This large once-flowering shrub/climber has the coloration of its seed parent ‘Madame Butterfly,’ pale pink with some apricot tones. The four inch blooms, highlighted by delicate yellow stamens, fade to white as they age and drop off cleanly. Its pollen parent, the hybrid alba, ‘Madame Legras de St. Germain,’ also makes its influence known in the blue green foliage, the arching habit of growth, and some tolerance for shade. Introduced in 1968, it is named for the region in which David Austin grew up and still resides.

**‘Scintillation’** – Also introduced in 1968 is the almost forgotten ‘Scintillation.’ This once-blooming cross of *R. macrantha* and the hybrid musk ‘Vanity’ closely resembles its seed parent in color and habit of growth. The ten petalled, strongly fragrant blooms are a very pale pink fading to white and the bush grows wider than tall, perhaps four feet in height and six to eight feet in width. It doesn’t appear to be available in the U.S., but if found would be a great candidate for a sloping bank, cascading over a wall, or grown as a climber.



**‘Red Coat’** (AUScoat)– The decade of the 70’s was clearly a time spent establishing David Austin Roses as a business so one doesn’t see many introductions from that decade. This variety separates itself from the vast majority of English roses by its year of introduction, 1973, and by its classification as a floribunda. It is a true single, having five to eight scarlet red petals with a striking yellowish white eye and vivid golden yellow stamens. ‘Red Coat’ is regarded as an outstanding cultivar for hotter climates and has performed well for me here in Georgia. The rose’s chief attribute lies in the quantity of bloom. It along with a sport that appeared ten years later, ‘Dapple Dawn,’ prompted this comment from David Austin; “In studying ‘Red Coat’ and ‘Dapple Dawn’ at

regular intervals throughout the summer, we have found them to be hardly ever without bloom, and with the exception of 'Ballerina' I know of no other roses so consistent in this respect (*Old Roses and English Roses*, p. 174)." According to Austin, 'Red Coat' is a cross of the Gene Boerner climber 'Parade' and an English rose.

**'Dapple Dawn'** (AUSapple, 1983) differs from its parent only in color, primarily pink, with the same striking eye and stamens. In cooler temperatures the pink may be a slightly paler shade with darker pink veins. Its name is taken from an English sonnet written in 1877 entitled, "The Windhover," by Gerald Manley Hopkins.

"I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon . . ."



**'Jacquenetta'** (AUSjac) – Also released in 1983, 'Jacquenetta' is a seductive, apricot buff colored rose of eight to twelve petals. The flowers are produced in large clusters and have a strong fruity scent. Its rarity in commerce belies its potential to offer a rich display of color. A seedling of 'Charles Austin,' it requires some space, often growing wider than tall. Jacquenetta is a character in Shakespeare's *Loves Labours Lost*.



**'Windrush'** (AUSrush) – Introduced in 1984, 'Windrush' is a very fragrant second generation offspring of Roy Shepherd's 'Golden Wings.' Its ten to twelve pale yellow petals age to creamy white and are offset by darker yellow stamens and bright apple green foliage. 'Windrush' may grow to 6' x 6'so give it plenty of room to show off. In my garden it requires diligent attention to dead-heading to promote continuous flowering.



**‘Robbie Burns’** (AUSburn) – This is a rose that is curiously absent from much of the literature available to American rose growers, presumably because it is once blooming. The only nursery offering this rose in the Western hemisphere is Hortico Roses. Released in 1986, ‘Robbie Burns’ resulted from a cross of the strongly scented ‘Wife of Bath’ and the equally fragrant species *R. pimpinellifolia*, sometimes also referred to as *R. spinosissima*, ‘Scotch Briar,’ or ‘Burnet Rose.’ It closely resembles its species parent having small two to three inch white to pale pink single-flowered blooms, delicate-looking but very durable fern-like foliage that turns a very pleasing orange-red in the fall, and numerous needle-like prickles.

Grown in good soil all the *pimpinellifolia* forms and hybrids can reach 5-6.’ Another unique feature inherited from its species parent is the blackish maroon hips it sets in the fall. I have several *pimpinellifolia* hybrids in my Georgia garden and they all are very disease resistant. Additionally, they are all very early blooming.

**‘Wild Flower’** (AUSwing) – A truly single-flowered species looking rose, ‘Wild Flower’ (1986) has become quite rare. Its parents are listed as ‘Canterbury’ x (seedling x ‘Golden Wings’) and its two to three inch pale yellow, fragrant flowers arrive in clusters. It will not be as vigorous on its own roots as when grafted. Perhaps not seen much in commerce for a reason?



**‘Peach Blossom’** (AUSblossom) – This 1990 introduction is a cross between an older David Austin rose, ‘The Prioress,’ and ‘Mary Rose,’ ‘Peach Blossom’s’ eight to twelve almost transparent petals are pale pink with a yellow center and bright golden stamens. Often ruffled and cupped in appearance, the petals gracefully age to white, giving the rose a delicate appearance that does not accurately reflect its true character. ‘Peach Blossom’ is a large growing plant that once established is continuous flowering. Very suitable for growing on a tripod.

**‘The Alexandra Rose’** (AUSday) – One of my favorite English roses and one of the few singles that continues to be offered by David Austin Roses ten years after its introduction (1992), ‘The Alexandra Rose’ is definitely a new rose in the style of the old. Its two and a half inch blooms open with a darker halo of pink surrounding a coppery yellow center. The sweetly fragrant flowers arrive in clusters and grow paler in color as they age much like one of its parents, a ‘Shropshire Lass’ x ‘Shropshire Lass’ seedling. Its rebloom is quite dependable with dead-heading, otherwise, like many singles, it will set hips quite easily. With its strong alba heritage, ‘The Alexandra Rose’ produces long thin canes that are perfect for pegging and its foliage is gray green in color. The name honors the Alexandra Rose Day Charity (founded by Queen Alexandra, wife of England’s King Edward VII) which raises money for a variety of volunteer organizations.



**‘Doctor Jackson’** (AUSdoctor) – Another single-flowered English rose introduced in 1992 was ‘Doctor Jackson,’ a seedling of ‘Red Coat.’ It is a vivid crimson red with golden stamens that provide a striking contrast. The once-blooming character of this rose seems to recall Mr. Austin’s use of the gallica ‘Tuscany’ to bring dark red into his rose creations. To my mind this rose hearkens back to the similarly colored (and also single) 1952 Kordes hybrid gallica ‘Scarlet Fire.’ By all accounts ‘Doctor Jackson’s’ profusion of bloom is breathtaking, large nicely formed clusters of flowers arriving on arching canes. An extra bonus for arrangers might be the big crop of beautifully shaped hips. It was named for a local physician.

**‘Heavenly Rosalind’** (AUSmash) – The parentage of ‘Heavenly Rosalind’ is ‘Shropshire Lass’ x ‘Heritage,’ similar to that of ‘The Alexandra Rose.’ This is another of my favorite English roses. It fits nicely into the garden without growing as large as several of the previously mentioned roses and displays above average resistance to disease. The white to pale pink blooms blush to darker pink around the edges and are highlighted by gorgeous yellow stamens that are red at the base of the filaments. This 1995 introduction repeats quickly and is highly recommended.





**‘Huntington’s Hero’** – This variety is not actually a David Austin rose, rather a sport from the English rose ‘Hero’ (several generations removed from its ancestor, the bourbon rose ‘La Reine Victoria’). ‘Huntington’s Hero’ was discovered in the Huntington Botanical Garden in southern California in 1995 and one year later was named by Clair Martin and chosen by the trustees to honor of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Huntington Library. It differs from its double-flowered pink parent in having almost single, shallow cupped blooms of pale pink to white with a faint yellow cast at the base of the petals. An extra bonus is its strong myrrh scent. In California it grows slightly wider than tall, approximately 3-4’ x 5.’

**‘Morning Mist’** (AUSfire) – Somehow this rose had escaped my notice until recently. Released in 1996 ‘Morning Mist’ has coppery pink flowers with amazing red and gold stamens. A blush of carmine appears as the blooms age. My small plant grew to almost four feet in one growing season so I moved it this year to give it more room. David Austin’s website states that it has the same alba background as ‘Heavenly Rosalind.’ Blooms appeared throughout the season for me.



**‘Rushing Stream’** (AUSstream) - Over the years David Austin has introduced several ground cover type roses, most notably ‘Francine Austin.’ ‘Rushing Stream’ (1997) is another addition to this category. Small creamy white blooms in large clusters cover this variety which grows about eighteen to twenty-four inches high and four to five feet in width. Reported to be very rugged and very hardy.





**‘Ann’ (AUSfete)** – I’ve been growing this rose for years. It is a medium to light pink single-flowered rose with soft yellow stamens. ‘Ann’ has grown to about three feet on its own roots and looks like it might need babying with its thin wiry stems and pastel coloration, but it has proven to quite rugged. This tough little English rose has been extremely black spot tolerant in my garden and only seems to need dead-heading to keep it in bloom and growing nicely. It is named for a long-standing employee of David Austin Roses, Ann Saxby. (Note: I have an op seedling of ‘Ann’ that is demonstrating outstanding resistance to black spot!)

**‘Rose of Picardy’ (AUSfudge)** – David Austin has not revealed the parentage of this single, bright red flowered hybrid, but it looks a little like an updated version of ‘Red Coat.’ Highlighted by yellow stamens, the flowers are medium in size, three to four inches, and cover the plant. It will grow three to four feet in height. The rose’s name was inspired by a poem written during WWI by a British soldier who fell in love with a young lady in the Picardy region of France.

“Roses are flowering in Picardy  
But there’s never a rose like you.  
And the roses will die with the summertime  
And our paths may be far apart,  
But there’s one rose that dies not in Picardy  
‘Tis the rose that I keep in my heart.”



**‘Kew Gardens’ (AUSfence)** – Although released in Europe in 2009, ‘Kew Gardens’ is just making its way into American gardens. Registered as a hybrid musk, this rose has large clusters of small two and a half inch white single flowers with bright golden stamens. It is reported to be quite happy in hot, humid climates and very resistant to disease. It will grow to roughly five feet in height and is mostly upright in growth. The rose was named to celebrate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kew Gardens in the U.K..



In the forward of *Old Roses and English Roses* Graham Stuart Thomas described what David Austin dreamed was needed in the world of roses as he began his journey – “shrubs of great grace and beauty in a variety of sizes, with good foliage, capable of producing flowers of all shapes – doubles and singles, simple or sophisticated - in a range of colors and fragrances, so that they could play their part in the general furnishing of the garden, and not merely in beds or lawn or paving (p. 8, 9).” To quote another Englishman – “Play on . . .”

## From the Editor

For some time the idea of a whole issue devoted to a larger subject has been percolating in the back of my mind. Voila! A number of folks deserve a big “Thank you!” for assisting with the biographical and catalog information about David Austin and his roses. They include: Connie Vierbicky, my climate zone 9 English rose expert; Clair Martin of the Huntington Botanical Garden; Susan Rushton, Lisa Rogers, and Debbie Remblence of David Austin Roses; John Elsley, formerly with Wayside Gardens; Louise Clements of Heirloom Roses; and Pat Henry of Roses Unlimited. Also, many graciously offered the use of great photos, a huge part of what I envision as an important component of the newsletter (see photo credits list). I had several email conversations with a special HMF contributor, Marina Parr. Marina grows over one thousand roses, including all the English roses that are available in the U.S. She is also a great photographer! In the interest of finally completing the newsletter I pared down the list of roses I originally intended to write about; due to its length this will be both my winter and spring issue. A supplement will be mailed to you shortly featuring varieties that fall into the semi-double and marginally semi-double category.

## Photo Credits

**David Austin Roses** – ‘Dainty Maid’, ‘Constance Spry’, ‘Canterbury’, ‘Scintillation’, ‘Windrush’, ‘The Alexandra Rose’, ‘Doctor Jackson’, ‘Kew Gardens’

**Marina Parr** – ‘Robbie Burns’, ‘Morning Mist’, ‘Rushing Stream’, ‘Rose of Picardy’

**Sue Brown** – ‘Jacquenetta’

**David Giroux** – ‘Wild Flower’

**Mashamel** (HMF tag) – ‘Huntington’s Hero’

**Annbellis** (HMF tag) – ‘Ann’

**Rosalinda84** (HMF tag) – ‘Peach Blossom’

**Stephen Hoy** – ‘Dusky Maiden’, ‘Red Coat’, ‘Dapple Dawn’, ‘Heavenly Rosalind’

A brief announcement that should be of interest to growers who can make a trip to central Florida: Pam Greenewald of Angel Gardens is hosting her 4<sup>th</sup> annual Rose Lover’s Gathering, April 14, 2012 from 11:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. at the nursery in Alachua, Florida. Her guest speakers include [Ruth Knopf](#) and [Peggy Martin](#)! Contact Pam at 386-462-7722 or [angelgardens.com](http://angelgardens.com).

# Singularly Beautiful Roses

Editor: Stephen Hoy  
223 Sentry Oaks Dr.  
Warner Robins, GA 31093  
[hoy127@cox.net](mailto:hoy127@cox.net)

Please feel free to share this e-newsletter.

## Sources:

David Austin Roses; [www.davidaustinroses.com](http://www.davidaustinroses.com) – ‘Heavenly Rosalind’, ‘Kew Gardens’, ‘Peach Blossom’, ‘Rushing Stream’, ‘The Alexandra Rose’

Heirloom Roses; [www.heirloomroses.com](http://www.heirloomroses.com) – ‘Heavenly Rosalind’, ‘Jacquenetta’, ‘Morning Mist’, ‘Peach Blossom’, ‘The Alexandra Rose’

Hartwood Roses; [www.hartwoodroses.com](http://www.hartwoodroses.com) – ‘Shropshire Lass’

Hortico, Inc.; [www.hortico.com](http://www.hortico.com) – ‘Jacquenetta’, ‘Morning Mist’, ‘Red Coat’, ‘Robbie Burns’, ‘Rose of Picardy’, ‘Rushing Stream’, ‘The Alexandra Rose’

Rogue Valley Roses; [www.roguevalleyroses.com](http://www.roguevalleyroses.com) – ‘Dapple Dawn’, ‘Doctor Jackson’, ‘Red Coat’, ‘Windrush’

Roses Unlimited; [www.rosesunlimiteddownroot.com](http://www.rosesunlimiteddownroot.com) – ‘Dapple Dawn’, ‘Huntington’s Hero’

Vintage Gardens; [www.vintagegardens.com](http://www.vintagegardens.com) – ‘Dapple Dawn’, ‘Jacquenetta’, ‘Peach Blossom’, ‘Red Coat’, ‘Robbie Burns’, ‘Shropshire Lass’, ‘Wild Flower’ (?), ‘Windrush’

‘Ann’ and ‘Scintillation’ do not appear to be available in the U.S. or Canada.