

REVOLUTIONARY



ROSES

Jackson & Perkins San Joaquin Chapter

remain one of three members that joined in this first year.

Charlie Perkins, nephew and namesake of the founder, became president in 1928. He loved the rose side of the business and hired Dr. Jean Henri Nicolas, an internationally-known French hybridizer who would become the first of only four full-time breeders in Jackson & Perkins' 100-year history of breeding roses.

“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose
by any other name would smell as sweet.”

Those famous words of William Shakespeare are still cause for debate among rose lovers everywhere. No matter where you stand on this issue, one thing is for sure—America’s flower has been captivating audiences for years. No one knows this more than the world’s leading producer of premium garden roses, Jackson & Perkins.

A Brief History

The Jackson & Perkins Company began in 1872 as a simple truck farm selling strawberries, raspberries, and grapes in the small town of Newark in upstate New York. The modest firm was a partnership between Charles H. Perkins, an attorney, and Albert E. Jackson, his father-in-law, a retired cheesemaker.

In about the company’s tenth year, Charles Perkins became intrigued by the art of rose propagation. In 1884, he bought additional land and had a greenhouse built using recycled church windows. Lacking the horticultural know-how, he hired Alvin Miller away from a nearby nursery and made him foreman of J&P’s new rose venture. Miller was given the resources and the charge to not only expand the wholesale rose business, but begin the intricate process of crossing rose varieties in hopes of developing something unique.

In 1901, Miller made a cross that would make him and the Jackson & Perkins Company famous. He had crossed a wild, Oriental trailing rose with a French hybrid, and the result was a vigorous pink cottage-style climber that bloomed in double flowers and grew up to 20 feet high! They named it Dorothy Perkins after Charles Perkins’ granddaughter.

In 1911, Jackson & Perkins, became one of the founding members of the then California Association of Nurserymen. They

J&P Mail Order is Born

In 1939 the World Fair in Flushing, New York, had a profound impact on J&P’s future. Charlie Perkins decided to participate in the fair with a 10,000-square-foot garden called the “Parade of Modern Roses” packed with 8,000 specimens. One red floribunda, aptly named World’s Fair, drew rave reviews. Some 40,000 potential customers left their names and addresses. Perkins decided to ride the World’s Fair into the mail order business. Catalogs for the home gardener were created, sent, and within a year J&P was selling \$80,000 worth of roses by mail.

Jackson & Perkins staged its annual Rose Festival in Newark during the month of June (photographed below). This 14-day event was a renowned phenomenon in the 1940s and 50s, and attracted over 250,000 visitors each year. The main draw was J&P’s 17-acre display garden, “the Living Catalog of Roses,” featuring over 35,000 plants and two million gorgeous blossoms. Onsite sales were brisk, and visitor reaction to various roses was helpful in determining future marketing plans.

continued on page 18



Lovestruck (left) and Pope John Paul II (top)

All photos courtesy of Jackson & Perkins

“Only America’s favorite flower.”



J&P was selling shrubs, miniatures, and climbing roses on their own roots.

In the 1980s and 1990s Jackson & Perkins took the next logical step—testing hybrid teas, grandifloras, and floribundas on their own roots. Today many best-selling rose varieties are offered as own-root New Generation® roses. New Generation roses are bushier, more symmetrical, and less susceptible to environmental factors as their budded counterparts.

This own-root revolution has enabled J&P to quickly respond to market demands and has greatly expanded how consumers can buy roses. Instead of being limited to a field-grown bareroot rose plant, customers can now purchase and plant roses in a variety of shapes and sizes.

Garden Ease® roses, for example, are sold in handy six-packs and arrive in the bud and bloom stage. In 4- and 6-inch pots, Garden Ease roses can be planted with a trowel instead of a shovel! J&P also offers blooming roses in quart and gallon sizes. This allows gardeners to purchase and plant roses all throughout the year—not just during bareroot planting season. By purchasing roses in smaller containers, customers also have the ability to plant them in a variety of settings—from decorative pots and hanging baskets to mixed perennial beds and mass plantings.

With over 100 years of rose growing expertise, Jackson & Perkins’ research department, now led by world-renowned rose breeder Dr. Keith Zary, has led the rose revolution by creating new rose hybrids with increased disease resistance, exceptional bloom production, new colors, strong fragrances, own-root vigor, and a variety of growth habits. J&P’s new rose introductions reflect this experience and are better than ever.

“Roses are the perfect plant for any gardener,” says Dr. Zary. “What other perennial blooms all season, flowers as prolifically, is available in an array of colors and sizes, and can fill your entire garden with an intoxicating fragrance? Only America’s favorite flower.”

Hot New Roses

April in Paris (photographed above left) earned the distinction of being named the 2008 Rose of the Year® because of its elegant bloom form, intoxicating fragrance, and excellent garden performance. April in Paris is a high-centered, richly perfumed cream

and pink blend hybrid tea rose that inherited the beautiful characteristics of both its famous parents, Pristine and New Zealand. Each 4½-inch bloom has over 30 petals that slowly spiral open and last over a week in a vase. The classic exhibition blooms are framed by a lush backdrop of glossy dark green foliage. April in Paris is a 2008 Mailorder Gardening Association (MGA) Green Thumb Awards winner.

Lovestruck (as photographed on the cover and page 16) is the brightest and most distinctive variety ever awarded J&P’s coveted Floribunda of the Year® honors. Each bloom is a work of art—from the handpainted look of glowing hot pink petals to their dramatic white petal reverse. Large clusters of bright 4-inch ruffled blooms are borne on long stems on a compact, high disease-resistant plant. The compact, rounded plant habit—growing up to 3½ feet—provides gardeners with a variety of planting options. Lovestruck can be grown in decorative containers, small corners, along walkways, in mixed perennial beds, or in mass plantings. Lovestruck is a 2008 MGA Green Thumb Awards winner.

Mardi Gras (photographed right) is a tall, hedge-like floribunda that literally creates a rainbow of blooms. As an All-America Rose Selections (AARS) winner, Mardi Gras has proven to perform exceptionally in gardens across the country in one of the most rigorous rose trials in the world. Each bright, high-centered bloom begins as an apricot orange bud that slowly spiral open to reveal a 4-inch flamboyant orange and pink blend blossom with a bright yellow base. The colorful flowers are perfectly offset with dark green, semi-glossy foliage. With a tall, columnar habit, Mardi Gras makes a fantastic hedge or border for mixed perennial beds.

When you think of the most fragrant roses of all time, which roses come to mind? Double Delight? Mister Lincoln? There’s a



new rose to add to that list—Pope John Paul II (photographed on page 17). With an incredibly strong citrus fragrance that fills the garden, Pope John Paul II is winning fragrance awards in international trials around the world, including the Rose Hills International Rose Trial in California. It is also quickly gaining the reputation among rose growers as possible the best white hybrid tea of all time. Each pure white, high-centered, exhibition quality bloom is filled with up to 50 petals that slowly spiral open to reveal an elegant 5-inch bloom. As the highest scoring hybrid tea in the AARS trials, Pope John Paul II has proven to be an exceptional performer throughout the country.

To learn more, visit Jackson & Perkins at www.jacksonand-perkins.com.



Award-Winning Innovations

In the late 1950s, Jackson & Perkins developed the J&P Rose of the Year® award program as a way to increase consumer input on new rose introductions. For a token fee of \$10, four or more select roses were sent to thousands of home gardeners across the country. Using criteria established by the company, the amateur gardener “test panelist” grew, observed and rated the candidates. The national scores then determined the Rose of the Year. Almost 50 years later, feedback from test panelists still determines Jackson & Perkins’ Rose of the Year winner each year.

From its very first commercial rose introduction in 1901, Jackson & Perkins quickly earned the reputation as “the company that revolutionized the rose industry.” From creating the first direct-to-consumer mail order rose catalog in 1939 to bringing the now well-known “floribunda” rose into mainstream America, J&P has continued to lead the rose industry in innovations throughout the 20th century.

One of these innovations was created in the early 1980s when J&P developed Redi-Plant® roses, sold in biodegradable, plantable boxes. More container plants, miniatures, and bud-and-bloom varieties were offered, as well as low-maintenance climbers and shrub roses to satisfy changing tastes.

The Own-Root Revolution

Historically, all roses had been grown, produced, and sold as budded plants. In the 1960s Jackson & Perkins started experimenting with own-root rose production, an innovation that has revolutionized the way roses are produced today. By the 1970s,