

And Mountains Moved!

Étienne Bouret

SINCE MY PRESENTATION on the Hybrid Perpetuals of the Roseraie du Val-de-Marne at l'Haÿ-les-roses at the 2005 HRF Conference in El Cerrito, California, the County Council of Val-de-Marne, owner of the Roseraie since 1968, has received many letters from all over the world asking them to save the remaining unique Hybrid Perpetuals of l'Haÿ. Of the 3,000 Hybrid Perpetual varieties that existed worldwide before World War I, Jules Gravereaux col-

lected 2,000 varieties at l'Haÿ. Today, only 480 varieties of HPs remain in the Roseraie, of which 180 varieties are found in no other gardens in the world.

In November 2005, the president of "Les Amis de la Roseraie de l'Haÿ-les-roses" met with the vice-president of the county council of Val-de-Marne and came back with very good news. The county council having recognized at last that a community of passionate people, not just scientists and rosarians, exists, is determined to preserve and collect endangered varieties. The council is now looking into why the Hybrid Perpetuals have not been doing well at l'Haÿ.

First, the HPs will not be pruned this year but simply observed to see how well they grow. The council is also having the soil and the rose wood in the Roseraie analysed to identify possible necrosis and viral diseases, and will try a new Australian treatment on the Hybrid Perpetuals. Budwood already collected from most of the unique varieties will be grafted at the county nursery and planted in the new Parc des Lilas in Vitry-sur-Seine next to l'Haÿ, as we had wanted. Two private French nurseries, Pépinières Sarraud and Francia Thauvin, have also collected many HP varieties and will release them commercially as soon as possible, hopefully within two to three years. I have also been allowed to collect budwood of a number of the HPs and will try to make them grow at my home.

And lastly, the prefect of the Paris region has classified the Roseraie as an official historical monument, proving that passion can move mountains! Many thanks to all of you for your support and letters.

ÉTIENNE BOURET is a frequent contributor to *GardenWeb*, *Chez Vibert*, and other Internet forums on the rose. He began the first rose forum for French speakers, *Roses Anciennes*. Born in the Manhattan of France, *La Défense*, he lives now near Versailles with his wife Corinne and teenage daughter Charlène. An engineer at Sun Microsystems near Paris, he plays bass guitar and loves progressive rock music and old roses. He has recently joined the Foundation's Board of Trustees, and is a contributing photographer for *Rosa Mundi*.





This gallery of Hybrid Perpetuals photographed by Étienne Bouret provides a glimpse of the rarest of old roses preserved only at l'Haÿ-les-roses.

LEFT TO RIGHT TOP ROW:
Marquise de Mortemart, Mme. Jules Grevy, Bouquet de Marie, Claude Million

MIDDLE ROW:
Inigo Jones, Mme. Adélaïde de Meynot, William Warden, Golfe Juan

BOTTOM ROW:
Léna Turner, Monsieur Jules Monge, Miss House