

This week is the first week that it really feels like the plants are taking off. Most of the spring flowering plants and bulbs are finished. The early roses are coming into bloom and the others are starting to look like they are happy and will put on a glorious display in another month or so. We are on track to have the rose gardens ready for the annual Rose Tour at the Gardens in mid-June and had the spring plant sale last week at which we sold almost thirty rose plants to raise funds to support the Gardens.

Some of the early bloomers demanded that I take some photos of them while working with my team yesterday. So I thought perhaps that I would perhaps share a few with you all.





An ancient plant of *Rosa Primula*, native to China and Turkestan. This rose is deep down a perimeter path around the neglected north boundary of the Gardens. Innocuous most of the year, but stunning for a couple of weeks in May. There is another much smaller plant of this in deep shade elsewhere in the Gardens that I think I will move to a location where it will be seen in spring.







Prairie Peace in full bloom, gorgeous against the Former Superintendents House in the Canadian Heritage Rose Garden.





Louise Bugnet, what I consider to be George Bugnet's best rose, better than the widely grown Therese Bugnet. The blooms always remind me of the classic Damask Rose Leda, not in shape so much, but because of the colour and potent fragrance. This rose is hardy, healthy, blooms profusely in May here, repeat blooms and very fragrant with a lovely shrubby habit and is virtually thornless.









And finally, an image of a bloom of Paul Barden's "Allegra". Still in a pot on my back deck, but ready to go into the Summerland Collection when I find time. She may go into the English Shrub Rose Garden where we already have planted two other Barden Gallica crosses, Marianne and Galicandy x2. Oshun and Jeri Jennings, also Barden creations, are elsewhere with other repeat blooming shrubs. Come to think of it, I may move Rosa Primula to the edge of the English Shrub Rose Garden as well. The English Shrub Rose Garden is now complete, but still has a bit of room for further rose treasure.

All of our cutting grown roses from John Prendergast's rose garden in California, through Jason at Fraser Valley Rose Farm are now in the Summerland Ornamental Gardens rose collections. And all the plantings and projects on the five-year plan will be virtually complete by summer. It is has been a long and sometimes daunting dream, but thanks to John and Jason both, and the dedicated work of the volunteers, it is nearly complete. Even the eight ladies on my Rose Team think we have enough roses now. Though they keep adding to their own personal collections it seems.

This past savage polar vortex winter also drove home the point that the original impetus of this project; to create repository collections of heritage value, garden worthy rose varieties that are becoming rare, is a good idea. The fact that we had multiple plants in various places meant that even with a few plant losses, we didn't lose the variety.

Cheers, Rick