

## Bio for Gregg Lowery

Gregg Lowery serves as curator to a collection of more than 4000 rose varieties in a garden in Sebastopol, California. These rare old roses formed the basis for his nursery in California, Vintage Gardens, which closed in 2014. In 2012 he handed over this rose collection, his passion for 40 years, to The Friends of Vintage Roses, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving these roses for their educational, cultural, and scientific value. He served as Vice-President of the Heritage Rose Foundation and developed and co-edited the Foundation's journal, *Rosa Mundi* from 2005 through 2014. A prolific writer and speaker on heritage roses, Gregg has spoken on the history and future of heritage roses around the world, most notably in Perth, Australia; in Lyon, France; in Sakura, Japan, and at Dunedin, New Zealand. As a garden designer he has created more than 100 gardens in California and across the USA.

### Gregg Lowery

Gregg Lowery spent more than forty years developing a collection of rare old roses that has become one of the largest old rose collections in North America. For many years it formed the basis of Vintage Gardens, a retail, mail order rose nursery in the small Northern California town of Sebastopol. Vintage Gardens began selling on a small scale in 1984, and in 1991 the first mail order crop was planted. By 1994 the business had developed such a following that Gregg opened a retail store, which in 1997 moved to a larger location nearby. In 2006 Vintage Gardens returned to its roots to operate only via mail order. In June 2014 Vintage Gardens closed permanently.

A former High School teacher and Social Worker in London and Paris in the 1970s, since 1984 Gregg has designed and developed gardens and landscapes in Northern California that have covered a spectrum from old-fashioned and historical plantings to native Western gardens. Gardens he has contributed to continue to thrive in Seattle, Albuquerque, South Carolina and Louisiana. He has consulted on a number of historic rose garden plantings including Boone Hall Plantation in South Carolina, and Hearst Castle at San Simeon in California. His most current projects include the redesign of a garden surrounding the 1870 MacDonald mansion in Santa Rosa, California, known as Mableton, and a new rose garden for the Albuquerque Botanic Gardens. This latter garden, a garden of 'Desert Roses' aims to educate the public about species and hybrids which are at home in low-rainfall climates with hot summer temperatures.

Founding member of the Heritage Rose Foundation, a non-profit society that promotes education about old roses and their preservation, Gregg served as Vice-President for publications from 2005 through 2014. After organizing the HRF conference on California's Rose History in El Cerrito in 2005, Gregg and his fellow editors of the conference journal, 'California's Rose Heritage', conceived and developed a new heritage rose magazine, *Rosa Mundi*, Journal of the Heritage Rose Foundation. It features news from around the world about old rose preservation, found roses, cemetery gardens, and rare roses and rose literature. Gregg is currently working with the National Heritage Rose Collections Scheme, an HRF national committee working to recognize and to provide support to

significant collections in America that preserve old roses of all classes, including Hybrid Teas and Floribundas.

In 2011 Gregg co-edited *Mystery Roses Around the World*, a new book published by the Heritage Rose Foundation. This anthology of stories from around the world about finding, collecting, and preserving old roses includes contributions from China, Japan, India, South Africa, Italy, France, Sweden, Bermuda, the USA and Australia. In 2014 the HRF produced a companion book, *Old Rose Survivors: Wild and Untamed*. That anthology focussed on wild roses and their near offspring. He lectures frequently throughout the USA, and has addressed conferences in Western Australia, Lyon, France, Sakura, Japan and Dunedin, New Zealand. In 2016 he will address the Chinese Rose Society in Beijing at the conference co-sponsored by the World Federation of Roses on the subject of 'Chinese-American roses.'

In 2012 he handed over this rose collection, his passion for 40 years, to The Friends of Vintage Roses, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving these roses for their educational, cultural, and scientific value. Gregg currently serves as curator of that collection of 4000 varieties of heritage roses which covers a spectrum from wild roses to late 20th century Hybrid Tea roses.