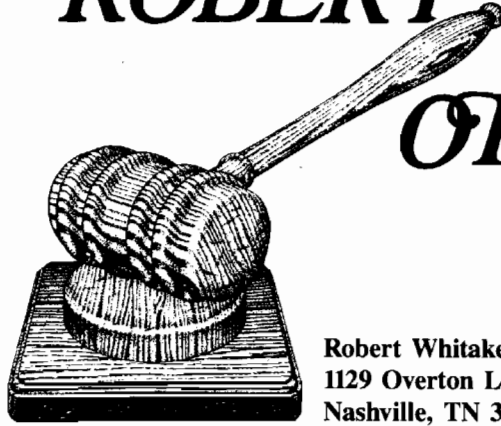




ROBERT'S RULES OF ROSES



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What's in a name? Everything! Rose judges disqualify our roses if the name isn't correct. Rose hybridizers try to find that right name for their new rose to aid in its sales appeal. Roses by Fred Edmunds is so excited about the subject they refuse to use the ARS registered name *Keepsake* for that cultivar in their catalog in favor of the more feminine 'Esmeralda.' Some rose enthusiasts actually get angry because they have to call 'Toro' by the name *Uncle Joe* — and that's no bull.

Your columnist this month has a simple solution to the problem of naming a rose that was prompted by the efforts of Whit Wells, one of our amateur hybridizers in the Tenarky District. At our fall district convention, Whit was showing off his new seedling, a cross between Lindquist's *Friendship* and Joe Winchel's *Dolly Parton*. As you may know, a new rose generally has the physical characteristics of each parent in its makeup, which causes us to see the parents in the child. But let's add to that scenario with the entrance of a name. Should the hybridizer name his new seedling 'Friendship, Jr.' because of its deep petaled edging color or 'Dolly Parton II' because of its beautiful form and fragrance? Or should the name truly reflect a hybrid of both parents and be called 'Bosom Buddies?' Now that's a name!

This astonishing breakthrough may put some of our noted rose hybridizers like Joe Winchel on a brand new tack to parent-seedling relationships. So much effort has been spent in crossing cultivars to give us exciting new color combinations — such as *Double Perfection*, and *Dorothy Anne* — fragrance, vigor, disease resistance, and plant habit. But what does John Q. Public get excited about? The name!

Is *Peace* the number one seller of all time because of its physical characteristics or because of its name? Hybridized by Francis Meilland of France just as World War II started, with only budwood escaping to freedom, the rose has had three names. This beautiful golden yellow edged with pink rose was first named for his mother, Madame Antoine Meilland. During the war the rose was grown in Germany under the name 'Gloria Dei' (Glory to God). Francis Meilland convinced the U. S. Consul in Lyons to take the budwood out with him to the United States as Germany invaded France in 1942. Conard Pyle propagated and tested the new rose during World War II and was ready to introduce it after the conflict. Pyle took out a patent for the rose on behalf of the hybridizer and renamed the rose *Peace*. Introduced in the U.S.A. at the United Nations con-

ference in 1945, what better name for a rose at that time than *Peace*? The name was so timely that the sale of the rose was sensational and amassed a small fortune for Meilland, leading the way for the now famous House of Meilland and its many fine introductions to the rose world. One of the significant contributions *Peace* has made to the rose scene is its prolific breeding use in our roses of today. Can you see *Peace* in the likes of *Garden Party*, *Swarthmore*, *Sterling Silver*, *White Knight*, and *Confidence*? Those are just some of its progeny.

Some rose names happen by accident, as in the case of the red HT cultivar *Alec's Red*. Alec Cocker of Aberdeen, Scotland, bred the rose and placed it in the rose trials in England in the early 1970's. It caught the attention of the trial judges who continually referred to it as 'Alec's red rose.' It won a Gold Medal from the Royal National Rose Society in 1973 while looking for a name. Habit overcame all else, and it was named what it had been inadvertently called, *Alec's Red*.

Of course, there are rare occasions when you can put delightful people together with entrancing roses as namesakes and the formula. For example, I think of Harm Saville's *Minnie Pearl* with its pale pink pearly beauty and form. A more perfect name to fit the rose's description could not have been found, as well as the wonderful lady for whom it is named. It's another form of immortality.

There is another facet of rose naming which I choose to call the Mary Beth Whitehead Surrogate Baby Syndrome. Sean McCann, our adopted Irishman, has finally brought it out of the closet by offering to name any one of his new seedlings the name of your choice for the small fee of \$10,000! What Sean didn't venture is whether he would sue to get his "baby rose" back if it turned into a huge commercial success. Do you want other examples of this prolific parent patronage? The AARS winner of 1973, *Electron*, is known in England as 'Mullard Jubilee.' It is not because the name *Electron* is shocking to English sensibilities, but because the name was sold to the Mullard Electronics enterprise to celebrate a special event. What parent would knowingly name her child 'Mullard Jubilee' except for a price? Does this enlighten us on how so many of those old garden roses received those jaw-breaking names? It's called patronage!

Now that we have discovered it's all in a name, here for the first time are some surefire breeding lines with a hybridized name for the cross. With tongue in cheek, let's take a tour of all the possibilities which would evolve if every new rose had to have

a name tied to its parents, as well as its physical characteristics. We will create the name and let the hybridizer create the rose. Hybridizers, be alert!

Lemon Spice x Musicale = Sour Note
Big Chief x Keepsake = Indian Giver
Blue Nile x Poker Chip = Riverboat Gambler
Snow Bride x Red Imp = Frost Bit
First Prize x Lady = First Class Lady
Yankee Doodle x Eiffel Tower = American in Paris
Dolly Parton x Center Gold = Split Centers
Electron x Tiny Tim = Short Circuit
Mary Marshall x Ferris Wheel = Merry Go Round

Midnight x Voodoo = Black Magic
Jack Frost x Jack O'Lantern = Frost on the Pumpkin
Pucker Up x Cornsilk = Kiss my Grits

Once you see how easy it is to hybridize by name, you can create some of your own crosses in word, if not in deed. There is one major drawback to this method, however. These offspring may not grow, could develop blackspot and mildew, bloom only on occasion, and as for fragrance, may actually stink! Having just read the latest version of the *Horizon Roses* checklist, I note we are in good company with the above comments. Remember just one thing from this article. If we don't make it as rose hybridizers, we can still be 'Bosom Buddies.'