

Veterans' Honor

A Quest for the Perfect Red Rose

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What a confusing identity this beautiful new rose has had! Since its introduction in 1995, it has had no fewer than five names! First known as 'Five Roses Rose', with the hybridizer's name as JACopper, some of us have had the opportunity to grow it "unofficially." Later, new names filtered around our network for this healthy specimen, one of which was to be its new appellation. These included 'City of Newcastle Bicentenary' (imagine that one on an entry tag!) and 'Lady in Red.'

Now, as the official Jackson & Perkins Rose of the Year for 2000, 'Veterans' Honor' is home with honor. Just as the groundbreaking for the new Veterans of World War II Memorial is about to occur in Washington DC, we can acknowledge the propriety of this final name for a strong, vibrant red rose that rightfully commemorates the men and women who have sacrificed, fought, and sometimes given their lives for our country and for the freedom of mankind. Additionally, ten percent of sales from 'Veterans' Honor' will be donated to the Department of Veterans Affairs medical research program. I personally express appreciation that J & P selected a rose for this program that by its quality, floriferousness and strength should sell widely for garden use as well as exhibition, thereby generating a meaningful contribution to this program.

That said 'Veterans' Honor' appears to be one of the best roses to come forth in recent years. It has survived through two years of record heat in my zone 9 Arizona garden. After its first season as 'Five Roses' I added an additional selection of bushes budded onto both the standard 'Dr. Huey' rootstock as well as *rosa fortuniana*. All have grown vigorously and produce large medium red blooms with moderate fragrance. The 30 petals are velvety, very wide and thick, darkening slightly toward the edges. Foliage is medium green and leaves are sized proportionately.

These blooms not only last longer than most both on the bush and in the vase, but will maintain a pinpoint center through their lifespan! One cut bloom had been about $\frac{3}{4}$ open for 6-7 days and continued to look fresh. When moved, however, to my surprise, half of the outside petals fell off, but the tight, high center was still there! 'Veterans Honor' has already recorded many awards on show tables, particularly in the Texas, Midwest and Pacific coast areas. Look for 'Veterans' Honor' to be one of the "bankers" on exhibition tables and in the garden!

