



Chelsea Pensioner Rose Press Release

New Rose named for the Chelsea Pensioners, will raise funds for the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

A new rose has been bred by Harkness Roses 1879, celebrating the magnificent heritage of the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

About the Chelsea Pensioner Rose

Like the iconic scarlet coat worn with pride by the Chelsea Pensioners, our hybrid tea bush rose, splendours a similar shade. During the selection of the Chelsea Pensioner rose, Patrick Cody, one of the Chelsea Pensioners and a long time rose enthusiast, has been involved in helping to select the variety.

“The rose had to be scarlet. It had to be tough and hardy – like a Chelsea Pensioner – and it had to be garden-worthy,” says The Royal Hospital’s Head of Grounds and Gardens, Ric Glenn. After a rigorous process of testing and consultation with the Chelsea Pensioners, the experts at Harkness found the plant that they say still makes “our hearts flutter in excitement and joy.”

The rose has abundant glossy leaves, the shine is almost as dazzling as the pensioners’ shoes. It exhibits resilience against disease and is a pleasure to grow in the garden. Another attribute of this variety is its longevity as a cut flower.

The 50 petals in the flower open from a plump, rounded bud into a bloom of a traditional high centred hybrid tea shape. When fully open a bloom may be up to 10cms wide with each individual bloom creating its own impact. An abundance of these scarlet blooms makes a spectacular display. Its light fragrance evokes spicy notes of cinnamon and cloves. Rich, radiant and simply delightful.

This plant, which will grow to 1.1 metres tall by 80cms wide is happy when grown in beds and borders, while equally being at home in a large planter for those with less space on their hands. It will bloom from mid-June until late autumn.

‘Chelsea Pensioner’ will be available to purchase from roses.co.uk. For every rose sold, a donation of £2.50 goes to the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

The Royal Hospital Chelsea charity depends on the generosity of their supporters to provide the Chelsea Pensioners with the comradeship and care they deserve. By buying a Chelsea Pensioner rose, you can help to support former soldiers, who were prepared to sacrifice their lives, today and for generations to come.

About Harkness Roses 1879

Harkness Roses 1879 is a world-leading breeder and grower of exquisite roses. Founded in 1879 in Bedale, Yorkshire by brothers, John Harkness (1857-1933) and Robert Harkness (1851-1920), they began to grow roses to great success; Queen Victoria purchased her roses from Harkness and Sons in the 1890’s.

A move to Hitchin in the late 1800’s became the permanent home to Harkness Roses 1879 where, today, over 200 varieties are grown and bred from its dedicated breeding programme led by, Managing Director, Philip Harkness and his team.

Harkness Roses 1879 has won many awards over the years for their exquisite beauty, superb fragrance and award-winning quality. With a collection growing every year, welcoming new varieties, Harkness roses promise to captivate and endure.

For more information please contact:

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About the Royal Hospital Chelsea

Some 300 Army veterans live at the Royal Hospital today, including those who have served in Korea, the Falkland Islands, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, and World War II. Others may not have served in campaigns, but all understand what it means to be a soldier and the potential sacrifice that it entails.

The Royal Hospital is a Grade I and II listed site, a beautiful architectural legacy left by Charles II and Sir Christopher Wren. Maintenance of the site continues today with ongoing restoration work to ensure that this legacy lives on into the future.

With your help, we can ensure we are here for the next generation of veterans.

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Spark of Life Rose Press Release

New Rose recognising bravery will raise funds for the Royal Humane Society

About Spark of Life Rose

Spark of Life is a simple rose, proving the adage that less is more. A dusky pink rose, gentle in colour with an abundance of delicate petals exposing delicious pollen and nectar to our valuable bees.

There is a lovely bloom to Spark of Life possessing a true rose perfume. It is pure sweet traditional rose; strong, lingering and lovely.

The plant is strong, producing big dark green leaves, plenty of them with really good disease resistance. Growing no more than 80 cm or 90 cm tall, it is bushy, so it fills space well. Spark of Life is an ideal rose to enjoy in big planters or pots, beds, borders and as a cut bloom in the home, where you can savour the perfume all day.

The plant will flower from around mid-June on and off until November; producing clusters of blooms that extend the flowering life of each and every stem.

It is a great privilege for us at Harkness Roses to be able to name Spark of Life with the Royal Humane Society, celebrating their 250th anniversary. A charity recognizing and awarding medals for bravery to many people who go above and beyond the normal levels of caring to help others in a time of need and danger, often saving a life while risking their own. We truly hope that the Spark of Life rose will raise money for the Royal Humane Society and provide pleasure in the gardens of those who recognize it has so many understated but beautiful components that combine to make a stunning garden rose.

For every rose sold we are proud to donate £2.50 to the Royal Humane Society. The selling price is £19.99 for bare root or £24.99 for a 3-4 litre potted rose. 'Spark of Life' is available in the autumn at roses.co.uk or pre-order online.

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About Royal Humane Society

The Royal Humane Society is a charity that grants awards for acts of bravery in the saving of human life and for the restoration of life by resuscitation. Since its foundation in London in 1774 the Society has reviewed over 90,000 cases and made over 200,000 awards.

The Society is this year enjoying its 250th anniversary. Celebrations will include a service at St Paul's Cathedral, a reception at Guildhall in September, a project with the Times Newspaper and the publication of a book titled Bravery Beyond Belief, compiling its fifty most exceptional cases.

In addition, The Royal Humane Society is delighted to be in association with Harkness Roses who have most generously donated the development of a stunning new rose in support of the Society named Spark of Life, launched at the Chelsea Flower Show and relating to the Society's motto 'Perchance some small spark may lie concealed'.

The Society is one of Britain's oldest charities and has an extraordinary and prestigious history. Its royal patronage was first granted in 1783 by HM King George III. HM Queen Elizabeth II served as Patron for seventy years. Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra has been President since 1974. The Society is delighted that His Majesty The King has continued the Society's Royal Patronage.

The Society receives no public funding and finances its operations from a modest investment income, legacies, public and other donations and fundraising events.

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