

# Plants of the Heritage Garden: Maiden's Blush Rose: *Rosa alba* 'Maiden's Blush'

by Friends of the Garden

Cultivated roses, especially sweet-scented shrub roses, have had a presence in Newfoundland gardens for well over a hundred years. Among the most popular is the rugosa rose, *Rosa rugosa*, encountered in old gardens across the province. This rose is freely suckering, enabling it to be easily passed from garden to garden.

Among the more refined heritage shrub roses is a selection of *Rosa alba* called 'Maiden's Blush'. When technically catalogued, this rose is often described as 'flesh-pink', which has given rise to the French name 'Cuisse de Nymphé' - 'Nymph's Thighs', but this was too immodest for the Victorians to use in casual gardening conversation; hence the English rendering of 'Maiden's Blush'.

The plant in the Heritage Garden was donated by Miss Blanche Leslie in 1981. She and her two sisters lived on Gambier Street in St. John's where this rose had earlier graced their beautiful garden. Its origins in Newfoundland, however, go back much further, to the 1800s, according

to the Garden's first curator, Bernard Jackson.

The Maiden's Blush rose grows to about 1.5m high and wide. In mid-summer it produces clusters of double, pale pink, fragrant flowers. Typical of all roses, this selection performs best when grown in full sun and well-drained fertile soil.

