



## SOCIETY OF THE HONOR GUARD, TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER

P.O. Box 1111, Hermitage, PA 16148

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# THE 'NEVER FORGET' ROSE IS HERE!

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Today we have the privilege and honor to announce the availability of the "NEVER FORGET" rose, dedicated to the Centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, from Fabien and Florence Ducher of Roseraie Ducher. This spring (2023), the Ducher rose was officially named 'Never Forget' by Fabien Ducher, and registered with the American Rose Society, the International Registration Authority for Roses. The 'Never Forget' rose was introduced in America and made available across the United States by the very fine rose nursery Heirloom Roses, located in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. [www.heirloomroses.com](http://www.heirloomroses.com).

Heirloom Roses has offered a generous 20% discount on purchases of the rose variety 'Never Forget.' The discount will be available to all Never Forget Gardens that have been created or gardens that are in the planning stages. Please contact Cathy Lowe, Outreach Coordinator for the Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier ([nfg@TombGuard.org](mailto:nfg@TombGuard.org)) and let her know about your Never Forget Garden. She will register your Garden and send the Heirloom Roses discount code to you right away.

Behind this announcement lies a story of love and devotion to America's sacred duty to never, ever forget all those that have served and sacrificed on behalf of America in times of war or armed conflict, their families and our Allies. This singular expression of love for our Country and our veterans is now embedded in the arc of America's history. This new rose is a gift to America by the Roseraie Ducher: Once again the rose speaks for us when our utterances fail: It gives elegant expression to and reveals the ancient and mystical bond of the people of France and America first formed and consecrated on the battlefields of the American Revolution.

With this announcement we give thanks to:

- Gavin McIlvenna, who under his leadership as President of the Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier set out to commemorate the Centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier a few years before its anniversary on November 11, 2021.

*"Soldiers never die until they are forgotten, Tomb Guards never forget."*

- Richard A. Azzaro, who in proposing and organizing the Never Forget Garden crafted the message: that in planning to commemorate the Centennial, we should provide diverse ways for Americans to express their love of Country and to honor and revere our Veterans. One important aspect of the commemoration was to encourage embracing the languages of ceremonies, literature, poetry, music and flowers. Out of that declaration came many historic renderings; the commission of an epic poem, “In Arlington;” the composition of a musical masterpiece, “Journey Home;” and the implementation of Never Forget Gardens featuring flowers that speak to us and for us, when our own utterances fail.
- The Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier who adopted the WHITE ROSE as the emblem of the Society, and subsequently the WHITE ROSE became the emblem of the Centennial.
- Marilyn Wellan, a former President of the American Rose Society, who was appointed by then ARS President Bob Martin to represent the Society on the planning team for the Commemoration of the Centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was Marilyn Wellan who suggested that it was possible a new white rose introduction might be named in commemoration of the selection of America’s Unknown Soldier of World War I. Calling upon her singular expertise she educated the Society about the history of roses, and how rose breeders have honored queens, presidents, and other people and events of note. She pressed the case that it was possible that we could find a rose breeder who would name a rose for the Society. Ms. Wellan built upon Bob Martin’s essay titled “The Rose of the Unknown Soldier” in which he concludes that the roses gathered into the Unknown Soldier’s bouquet were likely the popular, pure white hybrid tea rose grown in the rose greenhouses and gardens of third generation rose nurseryman Joseph Pernet-Ducher (1859-1928) of Lyon, France, Pernet-Ducher and his wife Marie. That rose was named ‘Niphetos’, translated from the Greek as “falling snow”. The Centennial Committee recommended this rose for Never Forget Gardens; it is still available in at least one nursery in the US, for planting in Never Forget Gardens.

Ms. Wellan’s research discovered an adoration of the rose ‘Niphetos written by a celebrated rosarian-author of Mississippi and Louisiana, Georgia Torrey Drennan. Her 1912 book, *Everblooming Roses for the Outdoor Garden of the Amateur: the Culture, Description and Care of Roses* is a classic. This phrase from the book captures the rose ‘Niphetos’ beautifully.

*“ . . . . poets and artists have made it (white roses) the symbol of their purest conceptions: ‘Soft as the memory of buried love, pure as the prayer which childhood wafts above.’ But foremost and best among white flowers of all kinds and the crowning gem of Roses, stand the exquisite, ever-blooming Tea Roses. They comprise a large class, all choice, all beautiful, but most conspicuous in the roseate maze, shining in*

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*the lovely train, there are 'the few, the immortal few that were not born to die,' and modestly wearing this crown of immortality stands Niphetos."*

This historical foundation served as a springboard for Ms. Wellan: with irresistible energy, people skills and powers of persuasion, she pressed the quest for a white rose variety that could be given a name that would specifically honor the Centennial. Very active in the world of roses, Ms. Wellan previously attended a conference in Texas where a sixth-generation descendant of the renown Ducher family rose nurserymen was a speaker. With the story of the Centennial burned into her vocabulary, she wrote Fabien to propose that he might name one of his new white rose creations in commemoration of the upcoming major event, which would be especially notable in both our homelands. Fabien responded that he and his wife Florence had just visited the beaches of Normandy and the hallowed ground of the Normandy American Cemetery at Omaha Beach while on vacation, and they were greatly moved by the experience. At the time, Fabien said to Florence: "we should name a rose for this place." Fabien and Florence now continue the great rose family legacy as owners of Roseraie Ducher, a rose nursery at Chabanieres near Lyon, France where they are still creating beautiful roses.

Ms. Wellan's request of Fabien went like this, in part:

Fabien, I am writing to *inform you of the American Rose Society's support for the Centennial of the Unknown Soldier. I find you have many personal connections to this project:*

Family - Your nursery and family connection to World War 1, the Pernet-Ducher family having lost two sons, Georges and Claudius, on the battlegrounds of France.

History – ARS President Robert Martin's research reveals that the roses for the bouquet for the Unknown Soldier's casket came from Pernet-Ducher Nurseries. And, I can see your love of history in your writing of your recent family visit to the beaches of Normandy and the American Cemetery.

And – you have a special relationship with America: we love and grow your roses; your family was asked in 1865 to create a rose named 'Abraham Lincoln' (impressive); we have many mutual rose friends.

You might want to name a rose for the Centennial that could be promoted by Roseraie Ducher during 2021.

His immediate response: "I would love to make a rose for this event." Further correspondence revealed Roseraie Ducher had previously created a rose with clusters of small white flowers that was being tested in the huge rose fields of Arizona, a step

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**in the path toward introduction of new roses. “Not many plants yet, but enough for a baptism next year.”**

**Ms. Wellan declared the verdict: “This was the one!”**

**It filled all our wishes for a beautiful white rose that would appeal to rosarians everywhere; one that exhibited the qualities we were looking for. The rose was described by Fabien as “very disease resistant and very reblooming; fragrant; showing very good results.... Fabien sealed this pivotal moment with: “This is a gift from the Roseaie Ducher to the American people.**

**The industry includes this statement with the introduction of the rose: “Created on request by the American Rose Society and the Society of the Honor Guard to celebrate the centennial of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arlington cemetery in USA.” ‘Never Forget’ will no doubt find its way into rose gardens for years to come, and especially in Never Forget Gardens throughout the United States and France.**

**In closing, on behalf of the Society of the Honor Guard, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and myself, we thank Fabien and Florence Ducher for their beautiful “Never Forget” rose, and their generous sharing of their love and profound respect for America’s sons and daughters that answered our Country’s call to stand with France as we shared the dangers and horrors of war.**

**We thank Heirloom Roses for making the rose available in America, and for offering a generous discount for all who have created or will create Never Forget Gardens.**



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