

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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A Centennial to Remember

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In late August, Monrovia held a week-long schedule of events at its Dayton, Oregon, location to commemorate the company's 100th year in business in conjunction with the Farwest show.

Monrovia has been growing finished shrubs and perennials for almost every segment of the horticulture industry over the decades, establishing themselves with their recognizable green pot with the gold band. Founded by Harry Rosedale in 1926, Monrovia has been slowly expanding over the years, with three

locations (Oregon, California and Georgia) that grow and ship out product across the country.

Harry was the one who came up with the signature green color you see on all of their branded pots and it's his incredible journey from Denmark to establishing his horticulture career in the United States that's the reason why those who work for Monrovia now get to celebrate that legacy.

"We wouldn't be here without the history; it's the craftsmen that came before us that's equally as important as looking forward," said Monrovia's President & CEO Jonathan Pedersen.



During the week, visitors were able to take tours throughout the 750-acre nursery (seen here from "Mount Monrovia"), get a peak at some new varieties and walk through their brand-new Breeder's Showcase area, where 15 breeder partners got to pick a couple of raised beds to display their plants and talk to attendees (inset photo).

On Thursday afternoon, I was invited to a special luncheon to honor those who Monrovia called "Landscape Legends." Renowned breeders Dr. Michael Dirr and Dan Hinkley, third-generation owner of Ball Horticultural (and fellow 100-plus-year-old company) Anna Ball, and home and food personality and entrepreneur Martha Stewart were all earning an award for their achievements and contributions to the plant industry. Unfortunately, Martha's trip to Oregon was canceled at the last minute because of logistical issues, but she did join us briefly via Zoom to say hi and talk about how plants play a role in her home in Maine.

Oh, and did I mention the really fun party they threw to cap it all off? Monrovia created a truly lovely atmosphere with their plants for people to mingle and chat, a delicious BBQ dinner, TWO Tillamook ice cream trucks and a Voodoo Donuts truck. They had a live band and then a DJ to keep the party going. About 900 people from all across the industry (and the world, even!) were there to celebrate and wish Monrovia a happy birthday.

“I want it to be all about appreciation for our customers that have been with us—some of them for many, many years,” said Jonathan. “We wouldn’t be who we are without the independent customer base that we’ve built over those decades. So I want it to be a celebration. I also wanted it to be educational and fun, but, really, a thank you to our customers.” **GT**