

# AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

## Bulletin

JUNE, 1957  
BULLETIN NO. 145

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

President's Message—Harold E. Wolfe .....	3
Secretary's Notes .....	4, 25
Fifty-Third Annual Exhibition Cancelled .....	7
Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting, Belleville, Illinois .....	7
Belleville, Illinois .....	8
Missouri Botanical Garden .....	10, 28
Most Popular Peonies—1957 .....	14
Starter Solutions—Dr. Taylor and Dr. Watson .....	15
Michigan State Nursery Notes .....	16
Re: Tree Peonies Forcing .....	17
Obituary: Mrs. Jesse C. Nicholls .....	18
Permanent Numbers for Peonies .....	19
albiflora OR lactiflora .....	21
Paeoniae Californica and Brownii .....	22
New Members .....	23
Treatment of Tree Peony Blooms—Harold E. Wolfe .....	23
News from Members .....	24
New Varieties .....	25
1957 Peony Season .....	26

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AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

George W. Peyton, Editor — Rapidan, Virginia

## AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

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Vice-President: Myron D. Bigger, 1147 Oakland Ave., Topeka, Kansas.

Treasurer: L. W. Lindgren, 1787 West Minnehaha Avenue, St. Paul, 4, Minnesota.

Secretary and Editor: George W. Peyton, Box No. 1, Rapidan, Virginia.

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Myron D. Bigger, 1147 Oakland Ave., Topeka, Kansas. (1959)

L. W. Cousins, 472 Tecumseh Avenue, London, Ontario, Canada. (1959)

Frank L. Howell, Lake Lenape, Rt. 1, Newton, New Jersey. (1959)

Dr. D. Sanford Hyde, 810 Bonnie Brae, River Forest, Illinois. (1959)

Marvin C. Karrels, 3272 South 43th St., Milwaukee 15, Wis. (1959)

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Allen J. Wild, Sarcoxie, Missouri. (1957).

Harold E. Wolfe, 24 South 86th Street, Belleville, Illinois. (1958).

Director on Board of American Horticultural Council: Dr. J. Franklin Styer, Concordville, Pennsylvania.

### DISTRICT V

President: Dr. D. Sanford Hyde, 810 Bonnie Brae, River Forest, Illinois.

Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. D. Sanford Hyde, 810 Bonnie Brae, River Forest, Illinois.

### OBJECTIVES

The Articles of Incorporation state: Sec. 2. That the particular objects for which the corporation is to be formed are as follows: To increase the general interest in the cultivation and use of the peony; to improve the standard of excellence of the flower; to improve the methods of its cultivation and methods of placing it upon the market; to increase its use as a decorative flower; to bring about a more thorough understanding between those interested in its culture; to properly supervise the nomenclature of the different varieties and kinds of peonies; to stimulate the growing and introduction of improved seedlings and crosses of such flower; and to promote any of the general objects herein specified by holding or causing to be held examinations, and awarding or causing or procuring to be awarded, prizes therefor, or in any other manner.

### MEMBERSHIP

The By-Laws state: All reputable persons, professional or amateur, who are interested in the peony, its propagation, culture, sale and development, are eligible to membership.

The annual dues are now \$5.00 a year. The year begins with January 1 and runs the calendar year. Applicants for membership should send a check or money order for five dollars payable to AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY to the Secretary. If cash is sent, the letter should be registered. The Society will not be responsible for any cash remittances made otherwise. Membership fee is \$5.00, \$3.00 of which is for a subscription to the American Peony Society Bulletin for one year. Subscription to the Bulletin to non-members, \$5.00 for one year.

### THE BULLETIN

The Bulletin is issued quarterly. Back numbers when available, will be charged at prices which will be furnished by the Editor. Current year back numbers will be fifty cents each to members.

### DEPARTMENT OF REGISTRATION

This department was formed "to properly supervise the nomenclature of the different varieties and kinds of peonies." Those who desire to register a new variety, and all new varieties should be registered to avoid duplication of names, should apply to George W. Peyton, Chairman, Nomenclature Committee. Registration fee is \$2.00 for each variety registered.



# AMERICAN Peony Society Bulletin



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JUNE, 1957 — NO. 145

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## *President's Message*

How pleasing and heartening it is to read the Bulletin just received, and note the growing interest in tree peonies and herbaceous hybrids. I felt complimented that Director Cousin's article should carry, as did my message, a plea for more attention to hybridizing. And he is right when he suggests that the Society will benefit from the interest created by the new things hybridizing will give us.

It isn't that there's anything wrong with albifloras. They're fine. They have their place. But the day of the hybrid is upon us. It can mean a bright, new day. And the blood of the albifloras will help make it so. It would seem too, that the day of the tree peony is dawning. It would be interesting to consider how many of these truly marvelous plants will be in this country twenty-five years from now, when still more will be known of their culture. It is quite possible that the tree peony will prove to be a major item in the forcing trade. What happened at the Boston Show gives

some idea of the possibilities along this line. The Japanese have been forcing them successfully (and profitably) for years. I would like to suggest that the ultimate in this will be portable forcing houses, erected over beds right out in the fields, saving handling costs, and producing more blooms at a much lower cost. The new plastics will make this possible.

But so much for the speculation. It will be difficult to realize that there will be no National Show this year, and that on May 18th and 19th we will be meeting right here in Belleville. We'll try to have fields full of beauty for you, and even on that date there should be some late blooming tree peonies in the Suffrutescens group. There will of course be hybrids, and herbaceous hybrids, and, believe it or not, some albifloras. And unless the rain lets up, we'll have plenty of weeds. Anyway, we're looking forward to seeing you, so, come on to Belleville!

Harold E. Wolfe, President

May 1, 1957

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# Secretary's Notes

During the fifty-four years of the Society's life, it has been necessary to cancel only two annual exhibitions. There was no exhibition held in connection with the first annual meeting. The first one was held in New York City in 1904 and one was held each year after that until 1945 when travel restrictions, imposed by the U. S. Government, forced us to cancel the show scheduled for Rockford that year. The annual meeting was also cancelled. All of you should know by now the sad story of this year, which was told you in the notices sent out dated April 19.

Enclosed with those notices were a copy of the Most Popular Peonies, 1956 list and for those who have not yet paid up their dues to date, a statement showing the amount due according to our books. If there was any mistake in these statements, please advise, giving full details. Many remittances have been received since the statements went out. We should appreciate your prompt reply to those notices and please also use the form sent to accompany your remittance, unless you have lost it.

In view of the fact that your Secretary may be absent from his home for several weeks beginning about May 15, it was decided to issue this June Bulletin at once, though it will be a small number. It gives much more information about the coming annual meeting in Belleville, Illinois, than we could give in the formal notice. While we shall not have the regular show, there will be no scarcity

of peonies. If all goes as planned, there will be thousands of blooms in Mr. Wolfe's garden and there are also other gardens in the neighborhood of St. Louis that may be visited. So plan to attend the meeting if it is at all possible. Mr. Wolfe hopes that many of his tree peonies will still be in bloom. (He has over a hundred thousand plants.) Also his large collection of herbaceous peonies, both hybrid and regular, should have many interesting things to see.

The forty or more acres of peonies grown by the late Dr. Trippel of O'Fallon are near by. Those who come by car, will pass many fine plantings and they should plan to stop and visit as many as they can. Also, we are sure that if any one has any blooms he is anxious for the members to see, he will be afforded the opportunity to display them. However, he cannot expect any awards to be made.

Everyone should plan to visit the Missouri Botanical Garden. It will be an opportunity that should not be passed up, to see one of the most complete botanical gardens in the world. But we do not think there is any large collection of peonies to be found in it. Maybe something can be done to remedy this situation.

If your Secretary decides to take a more extended trip than just to the annual meeting, the affairs of the Society will be in competent hands and all correspondence that can be answered without his personal attention, will be promptly attended to. Important

matters for his attention will probably be forwarded to him, but some replies may be delayed rather long.

We hope that there will be time enough at this meeting for our members and directors to give due attention to the many matters of importance to the Society that may be brought before it. Members and especially directors should plan to stay more than one or two days. If the revised By-Laws are considered, this item alone will take several hours, if it is properly considered. The matter of a scale of points to be used by judges in flower shows should also have due consideration. This matter should certainly be settled as soon as possible. Many think we have a scale already, but this is an error. We have none. Many letters come asking for such a scale. It is rather humiliating to have to reply that the Society has never considered it a matter of enough importance to adopt one, though many have been proposed since the Society was formed.

While we still have a number of Handbooks of the Peony on hand and can take care of ordinary mail orders for sometime, yet we do not have enough to push its sale as it should be, so we hope we can fully discuss this matter and decide on what changes should be made in its content without any increase in price, if possible. Several suggestions have been made in regard to it, some of which would increase the cost considerably. We think it would be a mistake to increase the price if it can possibly be avoided. But this will be a matter for the Society or Directors to decide.

Our color slide collection is lacking in some respects. We think that if we could get slides showing clearly the operations in plant-

ing, the different sizes of roots, the different types of peonies, preferably by line drawings, it would add greatly to its value to the garden clubs especially who wish to use them. Also possibly a short talk should accompany them so that it could be used if desired.

We also need some good pictures of the older varieties. We have few of these. We have only one or two slides of single peonies except of hybrids, almost none of Japanese varieties. We need them. Our loyal member, Mr. W. H. McComas of New Brunswick, New Jersey has offered to take as many pictures as he can, but he will probably not have the opportunity or time to do it all. So we hope some of our other members will come forward with help. For the past two months the collection has been on the road most of the time. We hope this demand will continue. Our members can easily help this along by mentioning the fact that we have this collection for rent for a fee of five dollars, to any of their local garden clubs. Not many know of the collection.

The September number of the Bulletin will contain as many accounts of shows as we can get. Please see that reports of any shows you may visit or know of, are sent us. Your Secretary will not be able to visit many shows this year, so he will have to depend on others to get in the reports. Please be sure to give the winning varieties as well as the names of the individuals as just names of persons are of little interest to the majority of our members. They want to know what varieties did the winning.

We shall need some black and white pictures of exceptionally good blooms for publication in the Bulletin. They should be glossy

prints and have good contrast in them. The flowers should show every petal and part distinctly. Light pinks, blushes and whites are hard to reproduce satisfactorily if at all blurred, and many are. We cannot use a blurred picture.

We have published some information on the use of starter solutions, antibiotics, gibberellic acid, etc. We hope any of our readers who have tried these experiments or who will do so this year, will not forget to send us a full report. We know that some experiments will be carried on this year with gibberellic acid and so maybe we shall see some results from its use. It is being offered to the public in full page ads in several of the garden magazines.

We have just received a request for a source of supply for a small flowered peony named Pink Bud, which is growing in the Hershey Rose Garden near Harrisburg, Pa. It is said to be only about the size of a quarter. If any one knows anything about this peony, please let us know at once. We have no record here of any such peony. We shall try to get some information from the Hershey Gardens.

No doubt many of our members will see many interesting varieties this year, either in their own gardens or in those of others. Please report all such to us. Reports of peony tours are always interesting reading to our friends. Let us have a report of your tour.

We hope to have enough material on hand early in July so that we can get the September number out in August and as early in that month as possible. So please send in whatever you have as soon after the season as you can. If you put it off, we are afraid we shall never get it.

It will help our publisher and your secretary if you will double space your paper. It saves many mistakes in setting the type. Paper is cheaper than time. The length of an article can be easily judged, if typed. An ordinary sized sheet of letter paper (8½ x 11) will fill a half page or one column of the Bulletin when you double space it. We like to have articles of full page units as the paging of the Bulletin is much simplified when articles fill full pages or half pages. The headings then will always be at the top of the page and it will not be necessary to have headings in the middle of the page or have to hunt for fillers to complete the page. Your Secretary abhors a vacuum and so likes to fill all available space and not have part of the page empty. If your article is written in long hand, please do not crowd it, write it legibly and with the lines far apart so that they can be easily deciphered.

The many friends of Colonel J. C. Nicholls will join in our expressions of sympathy in the loss of his wife last January, a notice of which is printed elsewhere in this Bulletin. We have just heard of the passing of Mrs. Martin A. Eliason last June. He has often been a well known figure at the Minneapolis shows. Our sincere sympathy is extended him.

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The Thirty-First Annual Show of the Peony Unit of Oklahoma, to have been held in Oklahoma City on May 11-12, has been cancelled for the same reason as the national show.

The tentative date of the Thirty-Eighth Annual Peony Show of the Duluth Peony and Iris Society is July 9-10 in the Northern Minnesota National Bank Duluth Minnesota.

## **53rd Annual Exhibition Cancelled**

Friday, the twelfth of April, was a day of disaster for the peony growers around Sarcoxie, Missouri.

Miss Gene Wild tells us that on Thursday the Weather Man predicted that the temperature would fall to twenty-five that night, but not a word was said about the five inches of snow that fell on Friday along with a low of 6 above. Saturday and Sunday the snow began to melt. By Sunday afternoon many of the early varieties were just mush and the stems lying on the ground.

The committees got together and decided to call off the show. Mr. Allen Wild called our President on Monday morning and he called your Secretary and told him the sad news and suggested a new program. Mr. Wolfe then called many of those most intimately concerned and it was decided to abandon all thought of holding an annual exhibition, but that it would be necessary to hold the directors' meetings and the annual meeting of the membership and Belleville, Illinois, was the place designated.

Mr. Wolfe then called your Sec-

retary on Monday evening and notified him of the arrangement, but said he would send a tentative program of arrangements as soon as possible. This he did and it was received by the Secretary on the morning of Friday the 19th. The publisher was then contacted and the notice along with several others was done by the late afternoon of that day. Mailing began on Saturday and was finished on Wednesday the 24th.

Please note carefully that there will be no annual exhibition this year, but that the Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting will be held on May 18, 1957, at 7 p.m. or as soon thereafter as possible at the Hotel Belleville, in Belleville, Illinois.

It is hoped that as many of the directors as possible will arrive at Belleville, early on Saturday morning so that a full directors' meeting may be held at 9:30 a.m. at the home of our President, 24 South 86th Street, Belleville, Illinois. Following the directors' meeting a tour of Mr. Wolfe's garden will be made. Any member who may care to see this garden is cordially invited to come and join in this tour.

## **54th Annual Meeting**

Here is the tentative program for the events:

May 18, 1957, 9:30 a.m.—Directors' meeting at the home of Harold E. Wolfe, 24 South 86th Street, Belleville, Illinois.

Tour of Mr. Wolfe's garden immediately following the directors' meeting.

Lunch.

The afternoon will be spent in a visit to the Missouri Botanical Gardens, 2315 Tower Grove Avenue. The annual show of the St.

Louis Horticultural Society will be holding its annual show there at this time. For full directions how to reach this garden see another article in this issue.

7:00 P. M.—Dinner at the Hotel Belleville, Illinois. Following the dinner, the Fifty-Fourth Annual Meeting will be held in the Hotel.

SUNDAY, May 19, 1957—It will probably be necessary to hold a second directors' meeting at some time and place to be designated at the annual meeting. Also it may

be necessary to hold other meetings. Please be sure to get full information about any such meetings at the dinner on Saturday night.

While no formal exhibition will be held, yet we are sure that if anyone would like to bring any extra fine flowers he may have, there will be no objection to this, as certainly there will be a place to show them to the dinner guests.

Possibly the St. Louis Horticultural Society would be glad to have some extra fine peonies at their show on Saturday, but we have no definite information about this. Mr. Wolfe may be able to inform you.

## BELLEVILLE, ILL.

Probably most of our members knew nothing about Belleville until Mr. Wolfe became President of our Society and maybe even now, some wonder where it is.

For the benefit of those who are interested, here is a thumb-nail sketch of the city.

Belleville is a city of 35,000 people situated in Southwestern Illinois, in St. Clair County, of which it is the county seat. It is about fifteen miles Southeast from the city of St. Louis.

Its altitude is from 420 to 630 feet above sea level. Its mean annual temperature is 56.3 degrees. The average rainfall is 37.2 inches.

It was incorporated as a village in 1819 and chartered as a city in 1850.

U. S. Route 460 runs through the city from St. Louis to Evansville, Indiana, Louisville, Kentucky, on to Radford, Roanoke, Lynchburg, Petersburg and Norfolk, Virginia.

It is served by State Routes 13, leading East, slightly South of

460; 15, North of 460; 158 running from Northeast to Southwest; 159 a North and South route intersecting all major routes from the East and Northeast, such as U. S. 66, 40 and 50, and Route 161 from Centralia to East St. Louis.

From the above it will be seen that those coming through St. Louis may reach Belleville by taking 460, 13 or 15 as they may prefer. Those from the East or who didn't come through St. Louis should take 159, 161, 13, 15 or 460 whichever is the one preferred.

Our President's residence is a few houses South of Route 15 on South 86th Street which is about six miles Northwest of the center of Belleville, and slightly farther from East St. Louis or St. Louis itself. Route 157 is about a mile and a half to the Northwest, and intersects No. 15 at the boundary line between East St. Louis and Belleville. It will be seen that those coming by car and crossing 86th Street, North of No. 15 would turn South on that street while those crossing it South of Route 15 should turn North. Just remember that State Route No. 15 is the only main highway within a mile of his place of abode, which is only a few feet off this route to the south, on 86th Street.

Those who use the railways and come direct to Belleville can only use the Illinois Central and the Louisville and Nashville from the South. No railway serves it directly from the East and North. As nearly all railways change schedules when Daylight Saving Time comes into use on the last Sunday in April, it will not be possible to give times of trains exactly until the new schedules are available. But there is a morning train from St. Louis over the I. C. and also an evening one, which are connections with the



### **BELLEVILLE — MINERAL and AGRICULTURAL CENTER**

Belleville has an unlimited supply of bituminous coal. There are more than 20 mines within a few miles of the city with a combined production of 1,000,000 tons a year. Most of the coal produced in St. Clair County comes from mines within a radius of 10 miles of Belleville. It is estimated that there are more than six and one-half billion tons of coal still in the ground in St. Clair and Madison Counties.

Wheat, corn, oats, soy beans, alfalfa, red clover, sweet clover, vegetables, pork, beef poultry and dairy products provide the agricultural output of St. Clair County, leading the state in the production of winter wheat with production in excess of one and one-half million bushels.

There is also a large quantity of limestone suitable for agricultural purposes as well as road material and concrete aggregate and large numbers of common brick have been made from the clay here.

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION**

There is daily bus service from St. Louis on a 24-hour basis, leaving approximately every 10 minutes to Belleville. Down Main Street in St. Louis to the Public Square in Belleville, passing enroute the home of our president, Mr. Wolfe.

592

City of New Orleans and the Panama Limited.

Airborne passengers who land at Ross Airport in North St. Louis are about 20 miles distant, Lambert St. Louis Municipal Airport is about 25 miles away. Gundlach Airport is on the outskirts of Belleville, Parks Municipal Airport is twelve or fifteen miles distant and Scott Air Force Base is about seven miles East.

There are two hotels in Belleville, the Hotel Belleville, which will be our headquarters, and the Lincoln a much smaller one. There are also several motels.

Those who may wish Mr. Wolfe to reserve accommodations, should notify him as far in advance as possible. He also would like to know as soon as possible who is planning to attend the dinner on Saturday evening, so that he can make suitable arrangements with the Hotel. Do not put it off, do it now.

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### THE MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDEN

It is quite probable that the majority of our members have never heard of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Strangely enough, this ignorance is shared with a large number of the inhabitants of St. Louis for if one of our members should stop a person on a street in that city and ask where this garden was and how it could be reached, the answer might be that there was no such garden in St. Louis. The reason is that it is far better known both at home and abroad as Shaw's Garden. It might be well not to forget that fact, if you wish to visit it and do not know the way.

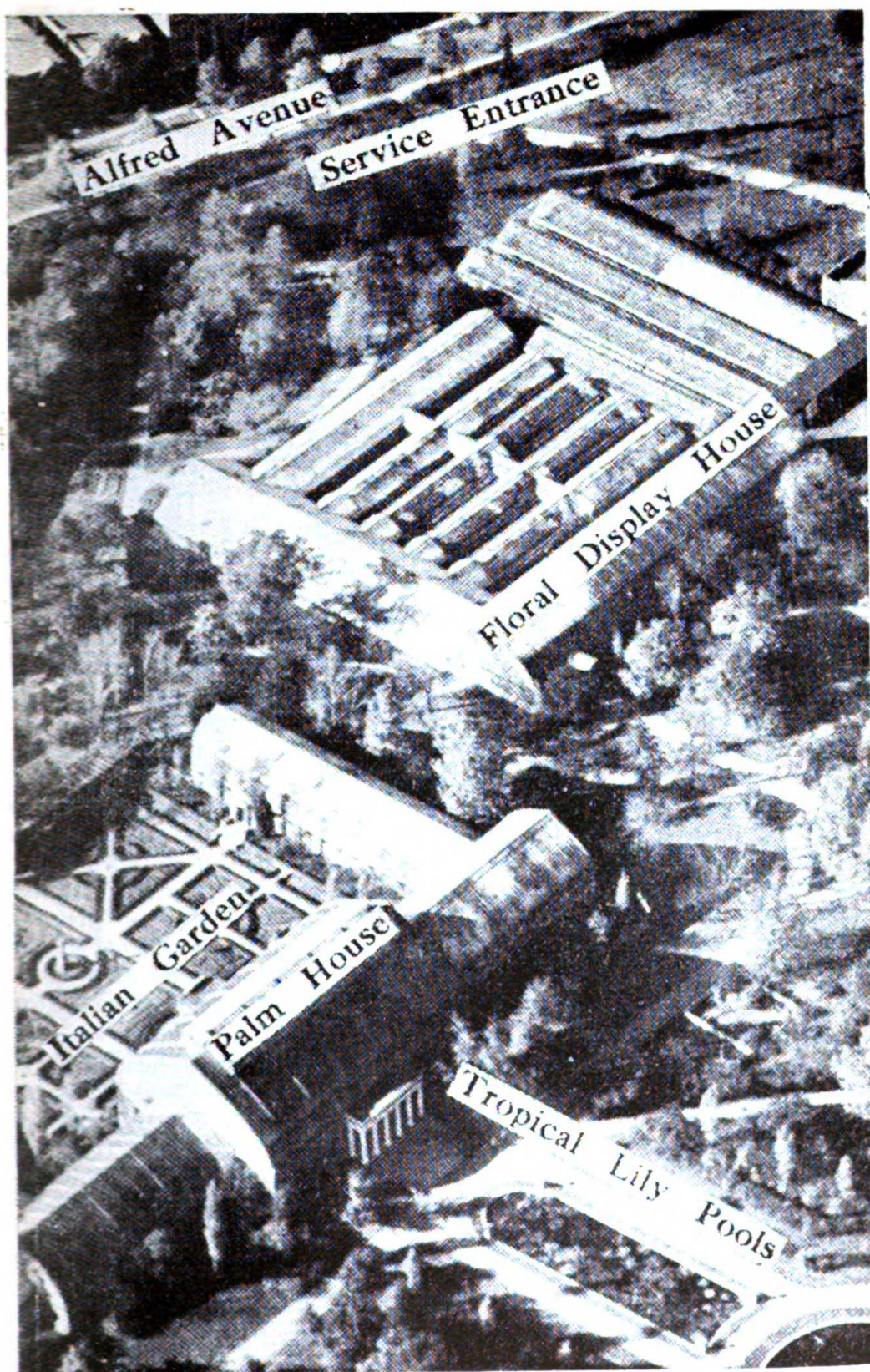
As a visit to this garden is scheduled for Saturday afternoon,

May 18, it may be well to tell you its location and how to reach it. The garden consists of 75 acres and is about three miles southwest of the business district of St. Louis. It is bounded on the north by Shaw Boulevard, on the east by Tower Grove Avenue, on the south by Magnolia Avenue which also marks its boundary with Tower Grove Park on the west by Alfred Avenue. It is about a mile long from north to south and less than half that from east to west. Its main entrance is at Tower Grove and Flora Place on the Sarah bus line (No. 42). The Park Southhampton buses, direct from downtown (No. 80), stop across the street from the Administration Building and there is another entrance, the step-in gate, at 2221 Tower Grove. The service entrance is on Alfred Avenue, one block south of Shaw Avenue.

While there are many ways to reach the Garden from downtown, probably it would be easier for the visitor, who is not familiar with the city to travel west on any of the main thoroughfares (City 50 or main 40) until they reach Vandeventer Avenue and turn south until they reach Tower Grove Avenue at Tower Grove Station of the Frisco or Missouri Pacific Roads and go south for about half a mile to the Main Entrance. Route 67 runs about half a mile west of the Garden.

While this garden is not a large one, it is one of the most famous in this country and has contributed much to gardening and horticulture in its existence of about a hundred years.

Early in the Nineteenth Century a young Englishman, Henry Shaw by name, with \$10,000 to invest, settled in St. Louis and made a



Aerial View — Missouri Botanical Garden

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small fortune. He early got an idea for making his home a benefit to the community as well as for his own delight. Year after year his close friend, Dr. George Engelmann, distinguished surgeon and one of the ablest botanists of his day, urged Mr. Shaw to establish a botanical garden and not just a public park. He was ably abetted by Sir Joseph Hooker, a director of the Royal Gardens at Kew, who paid a visit to St. Louis and added his efforts to those of Dr. Engelmann. From the time of Sir Joseph's visit to the day of his death, the first interest of Mr. Shaw was the establishment of this garden. He stipulated that the garden should be called the Missouri Botanical Garden, but the people of St. Louis called it Shaw's Garden and Shaw's Garden it has been to this day.

The various activities of the Garden may be grouped under five headings which are easy to remember from the initials P R I C E.

**PUBLICATION.** Two regular ones, the Bulletin issued eight times a year and the Annals four times. Other publications are issued when the need arises.

**RESEARCH.** As the resources of the Garden are limited, the activities of the Garden are confined principally to the first stages and when there is the necessity to carry on beyond pioneering work the project is turned over to some institution that has larger facilities. For instance no work on antibiotics is now done at the Garden, though it played a prominent part in their first development.

**INSTRUCTION.** This phase of the work of the Garden is largely in connection with Washington University. Graduate work is offered in the Henry Shaw School of Botany, one of the principal

courses being training herbarium administrators. Courses in practical plant breeding and forcing bulbs and others, as the need may arise, are offered the general public.

**COLLECTIONS.** These are of three sorts, plants, books and herbarium specimens. Almost any native of St. Louis will tell you that the Garden has a complete collection of all plants in existence, which manifestly is a large fabrication. At present the specialties are orchids, tropical water lilies, daffodils, bromeliads, Missouri wild flowers, snowdrops, hardy ivy, cacti and other succulents. Other smaller collections are found in the Rose Garden, the Linnean Garden and others on the place.

Its collection of books has become one of the largest botanical libraries in the world, which is so efficiently managed that any book they have may be had in a matter of minutes.

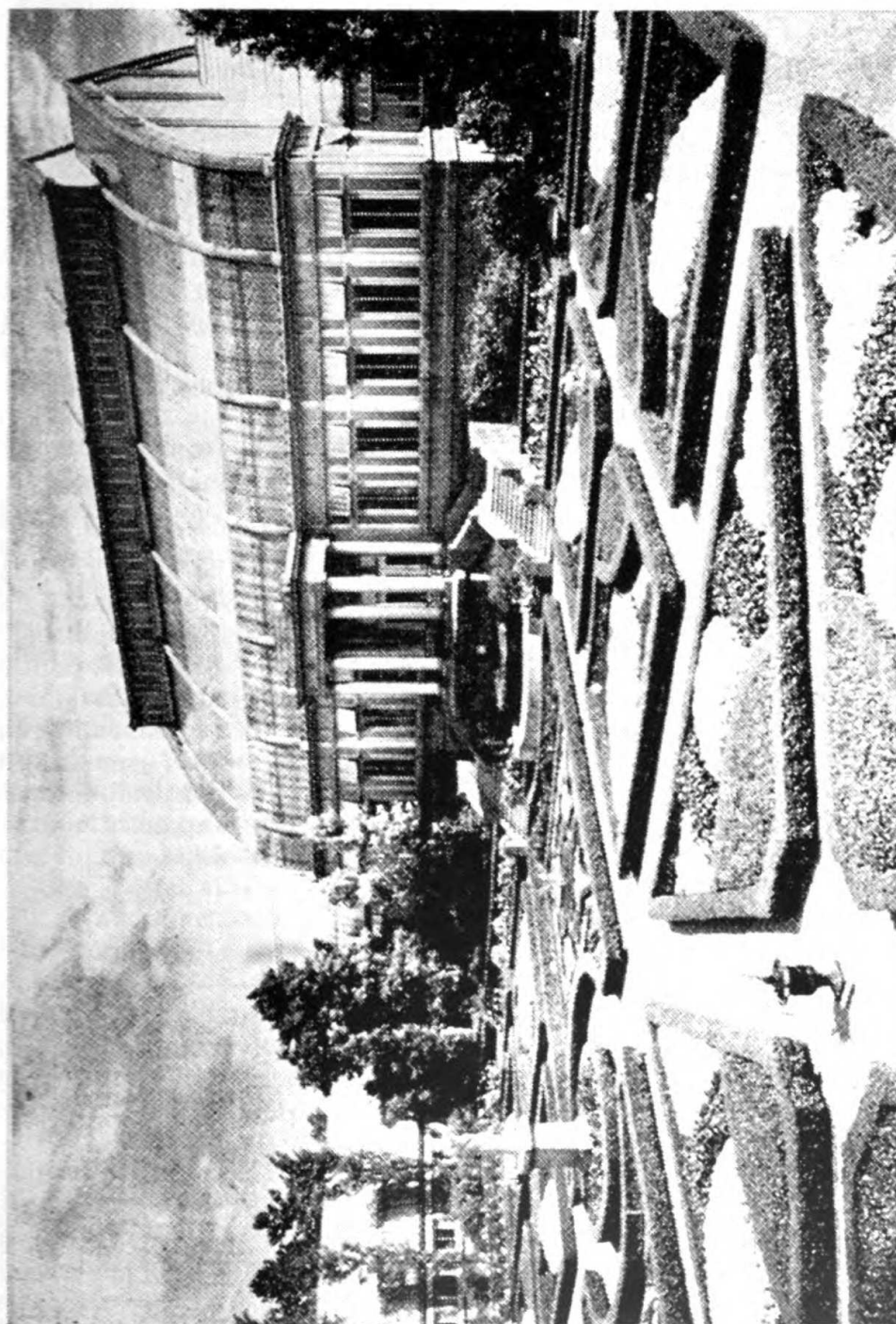
The Library contains a large number of old garden books worth many thousands of dollars.

Its collection of herbarium specimens is also one of the finest in the world. It occupies most of the space on the second and third floors of the Administration Building.

Due to the completeness of these collections the Garden is visited by an increasingly large number of students and others from all over the world who wish to consult books or examine specimens not easily found anywhere else.

**EXHIBITION.** This phase is the one best known to the public. The "Mum Show" has been held for over fifty years each fall and the winter Orchid Show is the next best known. Other exhibitions are held throughout the year.

The Garden's Arboretum, which



Italian Garden — Missouri Botanical Garden

is one of the best in the world, is located at Gray's Summit about 40 miles west on Routes 50 and 66. It has within its confines a wild flower trail and some of the orchid houses. Many of the Garden's activities are carried on there.

It is unlikely that the short time available for the Directors' Tour will permit one seeing all he would like to see. Those who can do so, should stay over or come early and visit it in a more leisurely manner.

Possibly one of the best known activities of the Garden has been the development of many new varieties of tropical water lilies under the direction of Mr. George Pring, who has been superintendent of the Garden for many years. He has made this his main occupation, orchids being next in order. Due to his tireless hunting two yellow water lilies were brought in from Africa, which had never been known in any other country. From them and the other better known species he has originated many new lilies for our gardens, the best known being Mrs. George Pring and St. Louis.

He has also originated a number of hybrid orchids.

Mr. Shaw's old residence is open to the public from one to four, admission 25c; the Garden from nine to seven, though the greenhouses close at five. The Arboretum is open daily. The opening and closing times were not given.

Our President, Mr. Harold E. Wolfe, is a member of the Horticultural Advisory Council of this garden, which is quite an honor in the horticultural world. Also another member, Julian A. Steyermark, is Honorary Research Associate.

## **MOST POPULAR PEONIES 1957**

In order to make this list as representative as possible, we hope every member will send just as soon as convenient, the following information:

First: List the one peony considered the best of all, taking into consideration every peony whether single, Japanese, double, hybrid, tree or herbaceous.

Second: List his favorite peony.

Third: List without regard to color, the best albiflora double, the best albiflora single, the best albiflora Japanese, the best albiflora semi-double. The best hybrid, the best tree peony, the most beautifully colored, the most charming.

Fourth: List in order of preference if possible, the twenty-five best peonies without regard to color or type.

Fifth: List the five best albiflora peonies—white double

- blush double
- light pink double
- red double
- white semi-double
- pink semi-double
- red semi-double
- Japanese white
- Japanese pink
- Japanese red
- single white
- single pink
- single red

Sixth: List the ten best herbaceous hybrids or more if you wish.

Seventh: List the best tree peonies by color, naming as many as you wish.

**PLEASE SEND US THESE LISTS OR AS MANY AS YOU CAN AS SOON AS YOUR SEASON IS OVER.**

The Twenty-Ninth Annual Peony Show of the Takoma Horticultural Club will be held in the Auditorium of the Takoma Elementary School, Washington, May 25-26.

# Starter Solutions Improve Peony Roots

By James L. Taylor and Donald P. Watson, Dept. of Horticulture, Michigan State University

Yield of roots on one-year old peony plants, size and number of buds were substantially improved as a result of the use of starter solutions. The foliage on all treated plants was darker green, larger,

had greater stem diameter, and at time of digging, weight of the roots, and the number of buds was increased as a result of the treatment. The effect of two starter solutions applied at the rate of one-half gallon per plant is summarized in the accompanying table.

TABLE I  
Effect of Starter Solutions on Yields of One Year Old Peonies (1956)  
Yields (10 plants)

Treatment	Ingredients per 50 gals. of water	Weight of tops	Weight of roots	Total number of buds	No. of buds above 6 mm.	No. of buds below 6 mm.
1	3.1 lbs. 19-6-15 ..... ½ gallon per plant	0.49 lbs.	2.02 lbs.	119	39	80
2	3.1 lbs. 11-5-30 ..... ½ gallon per plant	0.40 lbs.	1.89 lbs.	86	31	55
3	No treatment .....	0.28 lbs.	1.18 lbs.	49	12	37

Because starter solutions have given significant increases in early yields of cannery tomatoes, as well as cabbage, snapdragons and delphiniums, it seemed suitable to study the effect of the use of starter solutions on peony roots. Guided by previous work by Sayre (1), Rahn (2), Carrier and Snyder (3), and recommendations of (4), the following two solutions were tested at the rate of one ounce per gallon of water: (19-6-15) (11-5-30). Ten one-year-old peony plants were given one application of each solution and ten plants of each group were selected for comparison and left untreated. The application was made on May 1, 1956 when the new shoots of the peonies were approximately one inch above the soil. The untreated plants received no comparable application of water due to the high moisture content of the soil at the time of application.

Because of the large number of

commercial concentrated fertilizer formulations that are being used successfully as starter solutions on a variety of crops, a recommendation of one best formulation for peonies is not possible on the basis of the present limited results. The increases are so great, however, that these tests will be continued, using a larger number of different varieties of peonies.

## Literature Cited:

1. Sayre, C. B. 1943, Starter Solutions for Tomato Plants for 1943, N. Y. State Ag. Exp. B. 706: 1-18.
2. Rahn, E. M. 1942, A Summary of Starter Solution Experiments on Tomatoes and Cabbage at State College, Pennsylvania. Proc. Am. Soc. Hort. Sci. 41: 305-9.
3. Carrier, L. E., and Snyder, W. E. 1950. The Effect of a Starter Solution on Several Nursery and Florist Crops. Proc. Amer. Soc. Hort. Sci. 55:513-516.
4. Mich. St. Col. Ext. F. F-194. Starter Solutions.

# To The Readers of Michigan State Nursery Notes

From Donald P. Watson

Since we have been receiving many questions concerning the use of Gibberellins on nursery crops, here is a summary of the information that is available to date.

1. To stimulate some plants to grow four times faster.

2. To break dormancy of seeds earlier or without special temperature or over-ripening treatments.

3. To form flowers.

4. To set fruit and produce seeds more rapidly than normal.

5. To overcome dwarfism in some plants.

6. To produce substantial increases in yield and dry weights of some crops.

7. To cause some long day plants to flower when grown under short photo periods.

8. To cause fruit to set in the absence of pollination.

9. To promote earlier germination of seeds.

In the future, Gibberellins may be as important as DDT and 2,4-D, but as yet, only a small number of scientific tests and very little field testing have been performed. The Gibberellins are not hormones and not fertilizers. They are derived from a fungus which has been known for many years to affect the growth of rice in Japan. Commercial brands of Gibberellins are on the market and they no doubt will have a remarkable effect on nursery stock.

Naturally, the question which will be foremost in all of your minds is what use can be made of this material in your nursery. It should be stressed that it is still early to use it on any large scale. We have found that some plants respond quickly, while with others it takes large amounts and repeat-

ed applications. We have found, for instance, that it is very difficult to have the material penetrate the heavy cuticle on narrow-leaved evergreens. At the present time, in the Plant Science Greenhouse, we are using very high concentrations and certain solvents to attempt to speed up growth of Junipers. Young succulent plants seem to respond differently from older ones. It is important to know the sensitivity of the plant to Gibberellin at the stage in which it is applied. For instance, one could very easily miscalculate and either obtain no effect at all or use too much of the chemical and produce plants that are spindly, weak and poor. It is certain that the use of Gibberellin will not overcome the effects of poor growing conditions and it will not be of any great advantage on plants that are not already receiving a good supply of nutrients, sufficient light or are growing in poor soil.

We are using the material to try to speed up the germination of Merion blue grass.

In general, the results are spectacular and the tests are being conducted by many commercial manufacturers, investigators at many universities, agricultural experiment stations and the Department of Agriculture. We shall pass along all information as soon as it is available.

## ON ATTENDING SHOWS

All who expect to attend any of the peony shows this year should verify all dates before going as due to the rather unusual season, all of the dates as set at present are subject to change. See the March Bulletin for addresses of officials in charge.

5162

## Re Tree Peonies Forcing

Note: Mr. Harold E. Wolfe sent us this article which was sent him by one of his Japanese friends. We publish it without change.

We are very glad to note you are interested in Tree Peonies' forcing in the United States that may be expected to increase the business between us in future. It needs, of course, some technique to grow and control the plants for the purpose of the forcing but it is not so difficult.

In the first, we must choose carefully the variety of Tree Peonies suitable for forcing that they are very strong and free and early flowering. Those are:

1. Suigan, Light pink.
2. Yachiyo-Tsubaki, Pink.
3. Taisho-no-Hikari, Crimson.
4. Tamafuyo, Light pink.
5. Nissho, Crimson.
6. Benichidori, Pink.
7. Jitsugetsu-Nishiki, Purple red.
8. Nishiki-no-Tsuya, Carmine.
9. Godaishu, White.
10. Hodai, Pink.
11. Hanadaijin, Purple.
12. Higurashi, Crimson.
13. Imashojo, Purplish Crimson.
14. Hinode-Sekai, Crimson.
15. Gessekai, White.
16. Kumagaya, Purplish pink.
17. Taiyo, Crimson.
18. Taihei-Beni, Crimson.
19. Doun, Copper pink.
20. Terukuni, Crimson.
21. Yae-Zakura, Cerise.
22. Shintenchu, Cerise.
23. Suisho-Haku, White.
24. Tamasudare, White.
25. Hanakisoi, Pink.

The above varieties are suited to force the flower.

In the second, we have to select the grafts budded well with 2 or 3 eyes on the top. In other words, it is desirable to take 3 years or more old grafts with well buds.

Of course, 2 years old grafts shall be able to flower but liable to show a little smaller size and lighter color flowers in comparison with one in natural flower in full. We, therefore, can safely say that you do take the 2 years old grafts from Japan to be forced next year.

How to grow: In Japan, Tree Peonies have been forcing as follows:

I. To plant the Tree Peonies into a clay pot, some 10" across, in late September maturing thoroughly with oil-cake mixed leaf-mould etc., and to spread the roots sufficiently into the pot under control of the watering fully. The pot, of course, should be put in sunny place of outdoors.

II. In late November, it has frost, to lay down the pot perfectly in the ground and cover the part of roots with straw due to avoid any drying of roots. Of course, it must be set in very cold—not well lighted and degree under frost in the night—place with the object of a natural cold storing on them.

III. In the early or middle of January, to dig up the pot and put them into the green-house keeping some 15 to 18 degrees C. for a month.

IV. It, therefrom, shall be bloom in full on or about early or middle February without delay.

Item No. 1 and 2 of the above may be possible to shorten the time by artificial treatment and so surely to bloom Tree Peonies in the late December for Christmas sales. It is regrettable to say that in Japan, no Tree Peonies are forcing in the artificial treatment—cold storage—and no details of the data of artificial cold storage on Tree Peonies available without a natural cold storage mentioned the above. Our Hong Kong clients

## MRS. JESSE C. NICHOLLS

Not a great many of us were privileged to know Mrs. Nicholls personally, but those of us who did remember her as a most gracious lady of the Deep South well versed in all its traditions of personality and hospitality.

She will be missed a great deal in her circle of acquaintances and the sympathy of the Society is extended Col. Nicholls in his loss, and also to all members of her family.

The following account of her life is taken from the Ithaca Journal of January 22, 1957.

\* \* \*

A private prayer service for Mrs. Florence Z. E. Nicholls of 114 Overlook Rd., who died unexpectedly at her home Sunday evening,

are reporting to us some Tree Peonies with a pot from North China had used for Christmas sales but we did not ship any Tree Peonies for them as the transportation is so difficult for us.

At present, a flower of Tree Peonies forced are selling in flower market at some \$1.00 to \$1.40 each but we regret indeed to report to you that we are unable to take photo of them in a greenhouse because there are no flowers in the greenhouse due to cut them under state of bud for the market.

Our friend who is President of Flower Market in Tokyo had a good experience of Tree Peonies' forcing before the war and he had succeeded to bloom Tree Peonies in Christmas. We, therefore, would write you again a further information on Tree Peonies' forcing for Christmas in accordance with his experiences on same.

Jan. 20, 1957, after a heart attack, was held at Gilbert Memorial Home, 125 E. Buffalo St.

Mrs. Nicholls was the wife of Col. Jesse C. Nicholls, U.S.A. retired, former head of the Department of Military Science and Tactics at Cornell University. Colonel and Mrs. Nicholls came to Ithaca in 1919.

Born in Georgetown, D. C., July 11, 1879, she was the daughter of the late John and Mary Zacharie Ellis and a niece of the late Josephine Newcomb who founded the Sophie Newcomb College now affiliated with Tulane University, New Orleans, La. Mrs. Nicholls received an A.B. degree from Sophie Newcomb College in 1898.

Recognized as an authority on antiques she was also well known for her button collection and was the author of four handbooks on the subject.

She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Florence Nicholls Apostle of Richmond, Va., four sons, Jesse C. Nicholls Jr. of Murphy, N. C., Lt. Col. A. Barry C. Nicholls of Fort Campbell, Ky., George Nicholls of Ithaca and Augustus H. Nicholls of Manhattan Beach, Calif., and four grandchildren.

She was a member of the Church of the Immaculate Conception, the Collectors Club, Statler Club, National Button Collectors Society, Cooper Union Club of New York City, DeWitt Historical Society, Cornell Campus Club and Pi Beta Phi Sorority.

Burial was in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington, D. C.

Mrs. R. J. Wysocky, Secretary of the Minnesota Peony and Iris Society, has resigned and Mrs. Loren Franklin, 5 East 104th Street, Minneapolis 20, will serve her unexpired term.

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## Permanent Numbers For Peonies

In order to provide a sure means of identification of a peony, Mr. William H. Krekler proposed that each variety be assigned a permanent number when it is registered, in addition to its name.

Some will say that this is all nonsense as each variety has a name and why add a number also. We are sure that many will not agree with this opinion and others will heartily approve of the plan.

Those of us who are called upon to answer the many questions that arise about varieties know, that if each variety bore a permanent number in addition to its name, many difficulties about names would be avoided.

Often names are badly misspelled so that it is almost impossible to identify them. A permanent number given with the name would enable it to be far more easily identified. Part of the name is sometimes omitted, making it hard to know exactly what variety is meant. A permanent number would solve the problem.

There are still many duplications of names. This is especially true in tree and herbaceous peony lists. The Japanese are often guilty of this. Others are not free of the practice. When we get a letter asking where the variety Akashigata may be bought, we do not always know whether the tree peony or the herbaceous is meant. As each of these would have a different permanent number which would be given, we would know immediately which was meant.

There are some varieties that are sold under two different names. While it is a mistake for anyone to use any other name for a variety other than its true name, yet it is often done. Notably the

variety Reine Hortense is sold by many as President Taft. Many do not know that they are the same variety. As these two would have the same permanent number, it would be known at once that they were the same. Two other common instances of this are the listing of the well-known double red early, officinalis rubra plena, under many different names and giving the name Fern-leaved Peony to tenuifolia flore pleno. Permanent numbers for these two varieties would help a great deal in keeping the records straight.

Occasionally it has been necessary to change the name of a peony for some reason. Two instances will be given. Mr. Hans P. Sass registered a well known single as Imperial Pink. The name was immediately challenged as misleading as most people consider the color to be red. So he asked that the name be changed to Imperial Red. This was done, but a few still list the variety as Imperial Pink. The use of its permanent number, if it had one, in addition to its name, would identify these at the same variety as the permanent registration number would not change. Probably a worse mix-up was caused when Mr. Sass sold a few roots of a single pink under the name Pink Dawn. This name was not registered. Meanwhile, Dr. H. C. Cooper registered a double as Pink o'Dawn.

One of our prominent growers happened to have some of the stock of the single and some of the double. He had not listed the single, but had listed the double, so when his digging crew went into the field to dig the orders for the double, they made a mistake and dug almost all the stock of the single instead. The error was not

discovered until complaints of untruthfulness to name began to come in. So the grower had to replace all of those sent out and in addition may have lost most of his stock of the single variety. When application to register the single came in, its name was changed to Dawn Pink. As the probabilities are that the field book of the grower would have had only the permanent number of Pink o'Dawn in it, the diggers would have dug the correct variety and the considerable confusion and trouble caused by the error in digging avoided.

Incidentally it may be mentioned that the name Pink o'Dawn has been abandoned for that particular variety and it is now known as Alma Hansen. Yet, as it would still bear its original permanent number it would immediately be identified as the same variety with its name changed.

Growers usually use numbers instead of names when staking their fields. Often the same variety is planted in several different fields and so carried under as many different numbers as there are fields in which it is planted. If they had the permanent number that had been assigned and used for their stake number, much trouble could be avoided. The identity of valuable varieties has often been hard to establish just because some error was made in its listing in the different fields. The use of the permanent number of the variety in all plantings would have avoided this.

Visitors often wander through these fields and make lists of the numbers that appeal to them and do not know the names. They have to go back to the office and have the clerk look up the numbers in order to know the name. This often is a time consuming job that

the busy clerk just does not have time to do. If these numbers had been the permanent numbers of these varieties, a visitor would not have to bother the clerk for the name as any list would give it.

Visitors often go to see more than one planting. As growers use different systems of numbering, the visitor has a hard, time-consuming job identifying the number he jots down, with the names. With the permanent number system the visitor would know the variety from its permanent number no matter how many plantings he might visit.

Many more instances could be given of the advantage of each variety having a permanent number, but we think the above will be sufficient to show the plan could be of great help.

The details of the plan have, as yet, not been worked out. Mr. Krekler has proposed that to have the numbers as short as possible the check list of varieties, now being prepared, should be used as the basis from which to start and that each variety number should start with the the first letter of its name and that they should be numbered according to age. For example, if we take the listings under the letter F we find that *Fragrans* is the oldest one, having been the first variety brought to Europe from China, so it would bear the number F-1. *Festiva Maxima* is the fourth in age so it would be F-4. *Felix Crousse* would be F-6 and *Felix Supreme* F-75. The use of these permanent numbers to avoid confusion in names is well illustrated by the numbers for *Felix Crousse* and *Felix Supreme* which is not connected with *Felix Crousse*. However, a different situation exists in the case of *Solange* and *Solange*

Supreme. They are both the same variety and so would have the same permanent number, that of Solange, which would probably be S-9.

As the system has not been officially adopted, we hope none of our readers will jump to conclusions and begin to use these numbers now.

The system is capable of many variations. For instance if it were considered wise to do so, a second letter could be added to designate its type, say D for double; J for Japanese; S for single, etc.

Then Fragnans would be numbered F-1-D. To keep the system as simple as possible, it would be unwise to expand it too much.

Those of us who are familiar with railroads, know that many

of them use systems of numbering or naming to designate certain types of engines or cars. For instance, the word "River" ending the name of a car usually means it has 10 roomettes and 6 double bedrooms. Most railroads also use a number for each car. The letter A ending the number of a diesel locomotive generally means it has a cab and the controls for the use of the engineer while B signifies it is only a booster unit with no controls or cabs. Some roads use a system of numbering to denote the same thing. If such economy-minded businesses find it advisable to use such systems, it might be of benefit to us to follow suit to the extent it is deemed wise.

Please let us have your opinions. Think it over first.

## *albiflora OR lactiflora*

Several letters have recently come to your Secretary asking which of these is correct.

When the Handbook of the Peony was published in 1953, we investigated this as thoroughly as possible. Who is the final authority on what shall be the name of a particular species of paeonia (peony) we have never been able to determine. However, we suppose there must be one. We should like to have this information, if any readers have it.

For our purposes, we took the book recently published by Col. F. C. Stern, titled: "A Study of the Genus Paeonia" and issued by the Royal Horticultural Society of England, as our authority.

Col. Stern made a most exhaustive study of the genus from its earliest mention to the present day. He lists three main sections of the genus, First: MOUTAN, embracing the tree peony species, all

of which are shrubby in growth and are natives of China and Tibet. There are five species under this general name. However it may be well to point out that the species that Col. Stern names *suffructicosa* is also, maybe erroneously, often called just *moutan* or *arborea*.

*Suffructicosa*, as he uses it, is the correct name of the tree peonies from North-west China and are generally white, pink and red tree peonies while *lutea* is the species name of the yellow from a more southern location in China and Tibet. These are the two major species of tree peonies, but there are several others also, for which see the Handbook or Col. Stern's book.

The second section of the genus is ONAEPIA which has only two species in it, both native of western North America. The one named *Brownii* is found in California, Oregon and Washington, while *californica* is found only in Southern

California. They are both herbaceous.

The third section Col. Stern calls PAEON and it embraces all the species of herbaceous peonies found in Europe, Asia and Africa. This section is further divided into two subsections, twelve groups and 39 different species with subspecies. As we are concerned here primarily with only one species, we shall not go into the subject except as it concerns this one species, though we may say that the species *officinalis* is the one that has the well known old double red, found in so many old gardens and whose correct name is *officinalis rubra plena*, as a variety.

In establishing the name for a species, it is the rule to use as the correct name the first one used by writers or explorers. For this reason the names of many species have been changed as research discovered names used previously to the ones then used. This is the reason for the confusion that now exists in some names. The species we are discussing is native to China

and Siberia. It has been called by many names. In our Bulletins you will find it often mentioned in the older numbers as *sinensis* or *chinensis*. These names were then largely discarded and the name *albiflora* used instead. This is the name most commonly used today. However, Col. Stern discovered that it was first known as *lactiflora*, so he substituted this for *albiflora*. Supposing that this would be the name finally adopted, it was used generally in the Handbook of the Peony.

At the meeting of the Board of Directors of this Society at Dixon last June, a motion was made that this Society use *albiflora* as the official name. While this may prove to have been a mistake, yet until otherwise decreed, it is the official name so far as the Society is concerned.

My advice to those who wish to use the botanical name use either *albiflora* (*lactiflora*) or *lactiflora* (*albiflora*) thus showing both are the names of the same species.

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## *Paeonia Californica and Brownii*

We in the East know little about these two native species. They seem to be well known to our West Coast members. We are giving an account of the collecting of a plant of *Brownii* by Mr. Ph. Henry Hartwig of Salem, Oregon, for Mr. Krekler. This will give us some insight as to its native habitat. The letter to Mr. Krekler says in part:

Dear Mr. Krekler: Saturday I received your letter regarding *Brownii* peonies. The reason I have delayed sending them was we have a much longer season of growth here. (Letter dated Sept. 10, 1956). Peonies are just now

making their growth for next year. They are semi-dormant during the Summer, due to lack of moisture.

Well, this morning I drove up beyond the Cascade Pass, a little over a hundred miles, looking for some plants. They grow on the floor of the pine forests. The soil, no doubt is quite acid. The soil is also dry as dust with a layer of decomposing pine needles on top. They like to grow on a slope so that they may have very, very good drainage.

Hope you will be successful with these little roots. This is just the way I found them. Some of these

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roots are so fragile, one is almost afraid to handle them. I believe they had no rain during most of the Summer. The bud sets about  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 inch below the surface. The root seems to go down to a very scant source of moisture.

Sincerely,  
Ph. Henry Hartwig.

Mr. Krekler himself, collected a specimen of californica near his residence in Whittier, California. This one seems to live under similar conditions to the above, but at a lower altitude and in Southern California. The plant Mr. Krekler sent me is up, but looks a little the worse for wear for the several frosts that have hit it. It has quite finely cut foliage and looks as if it might make a beautiful plant for the garden. But we do not yet know whether it will successfully survive our conditions in the East.

We understand that little if any success has attended efforts to cross these species with other herbaceous peonies. But we doubt if a great many attempts have been made, due possibly to inability of some to get plants or pollen from these two varieties.

In this connection we have just received a letter from The Grant Merrill Orchards, Inc., Box 877, Red Bluff, California, in which they explain that they have done breeding work and hope to expand it in the future. They are anxious to know more about the possibility of developing varieties that would be successful in Southern California. Maybe they will undertake to make crosses of these two natives with other species and that their efforts will be attended with more success than others have been.

They also are anxious to know what varieties have been most successfully cultivated in the near frost free regions of this country.

We hope any who read this and who can add something that they think will assist this firm in their endeavors, will write them at the address given above.

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#### NEW MEMBERS

Clarence Barbre, 302 Hillside Avenue, Webster Groves, Missouri.

Mrs. Griffin Campbell, 5803 Hadley, Merriam, Kansas.

Mrs. Evelyn Dickason, 125 West Cherry Street, Bluffton, Indiana.

Mrs. William E. Levis, 77 Locust Street, Perrysburg, Ohio.

Ohio Association of Garden Clubs, Care Mrs. William Pavey, Country Club Road, Xenia, Ohio.

Kubon & Sagner, Schliesfach 64, Furth I, German. (8 memberships)

Mrs. Verne Radtke, Wisconsin Conservation Department, Merrill, Wisconsin.

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#### HOT WATER TREATMENT FOR TREE PEONY BLOOMS

Tree peonies hold up much better when cut if the stems are plunged in hot water as hot as 160 degrees. We use a 12 oz. "coke" bottle for specimens, cut stems so that bloom is not less than 6" from top of bottle. They are left in the bottle, not taken out. This means quite a few minutes at this high temperature. Treated like this they hold up perfectly, last well, foliage is excellent.

Last year a bloom of a suffruticosa variety was given the hot water treatment, cut just as it was opening. The container, while hot was placed in a florist's cooler, and eight days later the bloom was used by a person giving arrangement demonstrations—it was in perfect condition.

Do not give herbaceous peonies this treatment.

Harold E. Wolfe

## NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

Many of us have found, to our sorrow, that peonies do not grow well when planted in soil in which peonies have been grown before, even after several years of growing to other crops. Mrs. Gouverneur of the White Cloud Farm, Carthage, Missouri, offers the following suggestion which we hope may be carried out by some one who is so situated that it can be done. Maybe some of our members who have some connection with a college or university that does research work, can induce them to make experiments and research of this nature.

Mrs. Gouverneur says:

I'm sorry that we won't be able to see you this year. Our freeze was a dandy, but the plants do look better than it seemed possible at first. However, the flowers were badly hurt.

However, my real purpose in writing was an idea that keeps occurring to me, but I have never written about it. You know probably better than I, how difficult and sometimes impossible it is to replant peonies on the same ground where they have been grown before. The growth is always so slow and never normal. There is a reason of course for this as I know of no other crop that can't be replanted on the same ground, corn, wheat, tomatoes, glads (we've planted glads on the same ground for years.) Evidently the peonies use something out of the soil, it would seem to me, either superphosphate or potash but it could be one of the trace elements. I should think that this element could be found, if someone, perhaps a government soil or experimental station, they're generally the most elaborately equipped, would do the soil testing. I did discuss the matter with the county soil test offi-

cials here, but they cannot handle the idea, and it wouldn't be necessary to wait until they cropped peonies for several years to find it out. A soil sample could be taken from around the roots of the peony, then one from between the rows, and then one on adjacent ground where peonies had never been planted. That should be easy to get, as even we have soil samples of that type, and probably any one that has grown peonies for several years could provide the same samples. Elaborate soil tests would have to be run of course, and then the differences would show up. We have very few, if any, technical reports written up or tried, and I believe this would be of universal interest, to the amateur as well as the larger grower. What do you think of this idea?

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In regard to the question asked by many as to whether Mr. Lyman D. Glasscock the originator of Red Charm, ever fully realized the true value of that variety, his daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Glasscock Falk of Plainfield, Illinois, write us: "I have heard different ones say they wondered if my father realized what a peony he had created in Red Charm. I think he did, because long before Red Charm enjoyed its present popularity, I remember his telling me that it was a good one.

He also told me that if you have something that is really good, you do not have to brag, blow, and scream about it. Just sit back and wait and sooner or later the other fellow will do it for you, and it sounds better that way.

She also found the following statement among his notes: 'I have been more successful in creating new peony color and form by crossing the species, than I had anticipated, even in my wildest dreams'.

## New Varieties Offered This Year

Not a great number of catalogs have been received as we go to press. Among the new ones offered we find the following:

W. A. Alexander of Bowling Green, Ohio, is listing for the first time one of Mr. Walter Main's originations which was awarded a First Class Certificate last year, Walter Mains. It is a dark red hybrid of true Japanese type.

Edward Auten, Jr., Princeville, Illinois, will introduce the following:

Citation—pink single hybrid of a distinctive shade.

Fairyland—pale pink single hybrid, small to medium size, center stamens deep yellow, his nearest white hybrid.

Maestro—brilliant dark red semi-double, color exceptional.

Minstrel Boy—semi-double dark red albiflora, good size.

Satellite—small fiery black red Jap or anemone.

Brand Peony Farms, Faribault, Minnesota, has purchased Franklin Nursery and are offering their

originations this year. They have a number of almost new varieties, but none offered for the first time.

E. H. Lins, Cologne, Minnesota, is bringing out three new varieties of his origination. Blue Rose, said to be the nearest blue of any peony; Mauna Loa, a rosy red, and Paul Bunyan, deep flame rose — all doubles. The last named was awarded the American Home Achievement Medal in 1955.

Gilbert H. Wild and Son of Sarcxie, Missouri, are releasing 13 new ones. Twelve of these are from the seedlings of Col. J. C. Nicholls, now owned by the Wilds. They are Opal Hamilton, orchid pink Jap; Daisy B., Beryl Crockett, J. Beeny, and Pauline Henry, all white or blush doubles; W. W. Black, Sweet Refrain, Lettie, Elizabeth Price, Adele Sawyer, Gilbert H. Wild—all doubles and shades of pink.

Dresden Pink is their own origination and also a double.

Mr. R. H. Jones of Peru, Indiana, will probably have several good new ones for sale this year.

## Secretary's Notes (cont'd.)

Those who did not get their advertisements in this issue please remember that the September issue will be published, if it is possible to do so, early in August. It will be a good issue in which to offer your wares. Let us have your copy as soon as you can.

Those who expect to plant tree peonies should buy them from known reliable dealers. The following note from a correspondent tells what you might get unless you are careful:

He says: "Grafts received from Japan have no rootlets, nor show evidence of having same for some period of time. Is the graft grown out of soil for the first year—during period in which graft is taking? If so, what could it be grown in that would keep the graft viable without formation of rootlets?"

This looks to us as if the grafts had just been made and had not formed roots. Maybe some of our tree peony experts can enlighten

us. Of course such roots should not be sold, unless the buyer is fully aware of what he is getting. If the graft is still alive when received, there is some chance of the plant surviving, if properly treated, but unless the buyer is an experienced grower of tree peonies, we doubt if there would be much success with such grafts.

There has been some criticism of the Most Popular Peonies lists. The critics say that too many outmoded varieties occupy the high places. I wonder if this is really true. When does a peony get outmoded? Who decides when a peony is outmoded? The buyer or the grower? Personally I am sure it is the buyer, though I am well aware that many growers would like to be the judges. As long as a large proportion of the buyers continue to pick certain older varieties, whether fifty or a hundred years old in preference to newer ones which they see at the same times without even knowing the names of any, I would say these older ones are not yet on the outmoded list.

Maybe we should have a Hall of Fame as Mr. Smirnow suggested for tree peonies and which I believe some other flower societies already have.

While I heartily agree that a great future awaits the hybrids, yet so far, no one has originated any that will displace the great majority of the best albiflora varieties, because none of them bloom as late as the albifloras, nor have any number of doubles been introduced in any color except red and we surely do not want all doubles to be red and early. Sooner or later hybridists will succeed in originating varieties that will bloom as late as the albifloras or maybe even later, and of all colors, but no one has yet been able to do

this and from all indications it may be many a year before they do. Until then, we may expect the albifloras to be the ones most bought. We have no Christian Dior to rule the Peony World.

\* \* \*

#### THE 1957 PEONY SEASON

Reports from our members from various sections of the country tell many different stories about this season. All of us know how disastrous it has been at Sarcoxie. Here is what Mrs. J. E. Meador of Denison, Texas, which is not far from Dallas and Fort Worth, but slightly North of them, says:

"I can well imagine the results of the weather picture from Sarcoxie, because we have had nearly 12 inches of rain in Denison during this April, together with some quite cold weather and some very turbulent weather. Altogether it has literally ruined the blooming season of my peonies and fine iris. The last two weeks of April each year are just like being in Heaven to me as that is when my yard is fairly a riot of colors in these blossoms and I seem totally unconscious, those two weeks, of anything else in the world.

"Besides the rain, which is still in progress, we have had tornado winds which whip the flowers to the ground and ruin them. This immediate vicinity has experienced 36 tornadoes of varying velocity in the past three weeks, no lives lost, thank goodness."

In contrast to this, Mr. Clemmer of Waynesboro, Virginia, tells us he has never had better prospects for good bloom.

Mrs. Byron Gist of Amarillo, Texas, says: "We are having our usual Easter cold spell, with temperature down to 22 degrees last night (4/12). Had some buds on

Claire de Lune that were just about ready for bloom. Think they will be killed, for they are weighted down with ice right now."

Our President tells us that his tree peonies and others also, are loaded with buds, but that the rains have been continuous for some time and he fears his garden will be a weed patch when we visit him for the annual meeting. Well, many of us have weeds, so he need not be too greatly disturbed. In fact, peonies bloom beautifully in a weed patch as many may note who have seen old peony fields neglected for years, produce blooms that could compete with any in the show room. But this is not to advise that our peony gardens should be allowed to become weed patches.

Reports from our Northern members in Minnesota tell us that the season is now late, but that summer temperatures are bringing the plants along fast.

Some sections have had dry weather until recently, especially in Northern Illinois and Indiana. But they have had good rains in the last week or two. Peonies were just showing and they did not expect many to open before Memorial Day.

Mr. Les Foster of York, Nebraska, which is not far from Lincoln, says that a terrific hail storm of short duration reduced his 1½-acre field of peonies to one-half acre and that many of the plants set last fall were completely ground up. The tornado that razed 100 homes in Milford, Nebraska, did not reach him.

Mr. W. A. Alexander, of Bowling Green, Ohio, says they have been havng 80 degree weather and lots of rain and that he never saw such rapid growth. From an extremely backward season, they have caught up and are a little

ahead now. It was bad for the nursery business as the deciduous stock advanced too rapidly to dig.

He also reports that he visited the Kingwood Center project lately and that the peonies were just breaking ground and many of them had pretty husky stems. The Jap tree peonies were doing nicely.

Here in Rapidan, Virginia, we had some severe winter weather in January with a low of fifteen below zero one morning. But we have had a warmer April than ever before and the peonies are now coming into bloom. The first one to open was as usual, Smouthi, which was exactly a week ahead of last year opening on April 19. A similar hybrid from Mr. Auten opened a day later. No more opened until the three tree peonies Beatrix, white, Kuro-botan, black red, and Sagura-kagami one of the most beautifully colored flowers I ever saw, a light reddish pink on the order of Mrs. Livingston Farland, opened on the 28th. It was a pleasant surprise to have these survive the many frosts we have had since the buds showed. Many others, both herbaceous and tree were killed, but the season as a whole, will be fairly good. So far the blooms have been rather small. The finest flower to date has been a hybrid that Mr. W. H. Krekler bought from Dr. Saunders and named Helen Matthews. It came up about the end of February and I thought surely it would be killed, but it is now a husky plant and has opened four of its extra fine flowers. The bloom is not large. It has five or more rows of guard petals that reflex slightly, but hold their cup shape, and a center of yellow stamens with white carpels tipped a pale pink. The stems are extra strong, maybe somewhat too stiff for grace. But they certainly hold

the flowers up out of the mud. April 13 dropped two inches of snow on them and they never knew it, so far as being damaged was concerned. Its color is a glowing medium crimson. Only one or two albiflora varieties have opened. Helen and one or two others. I also had a small bloom on a small plant of Claire de Lune which is a charming flower. It is yellow, but a light one that many will say is not yellow. Place it on a white surface and you will see that it is distinctly yellow.

A number of inquiries come in for the Fern Leaved Peony. Not

many have it. But the Atha Gardens are offering both the red and pink forms. The true name is tenuifolia as we are sure most of our members know. Mr. Glasscock's variety Laddie is a hybrid of this and is a most brilliant scarlet red or as near a scarlet as we usually find. It has slightly coarser foliage than the tenuifolia varieties. It is early, opening just a few days after Smouthi with me. Smouthi is also a hybrid of tenuifolia and has somewhat coarser foliage and a decided pleasant fragrance.

It is worth noting that Helen Matthews has pollen.



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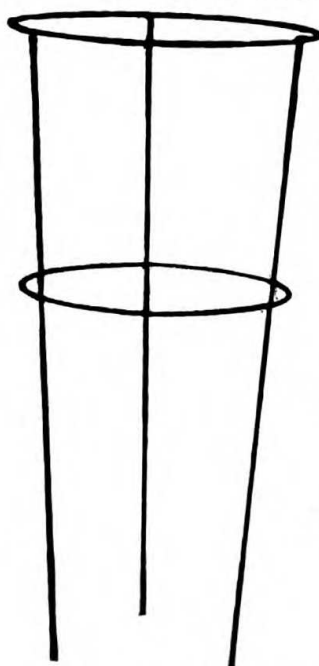


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