

American Peony Society Bulletin



June, 1973 – No. 206



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"Peonies Cut For The Big Show"
Donated by Dr. Peter D. Ascher



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OBJECTIVES

The Articles of Incorporation state: Section (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 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 exhibitions, and awarding or causing or procuring to be awarded, prizes therefore 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 for membership. Dues are as follows:

Single Annual	\$ 7.50	Sustaining, Annual	\$ 20.00
Single Triennial	20.00	Junior of member family	2.50
Family Annual	10.00	Junior non-member family	3.50
Family Triennial	27.50	Life	150.00

Family membership, any two related members in same household. One Bulletin.

Junior membership, any age thru completion of High School. Separate Bulletin.

Commercial Memberships are established for those members engaged in the sale of peonies, either plants or cut flowers. Dues are based on the extent of involvement, but do not apply to members selling locally and casually. A new schedule of rates will be announced shortly.

Dues are payable for the calendar year. Applications for membership should send remittance to the AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY at the address of the Secretary, above.

THE BULLETIN

The AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY BULLETIN is the official Society publication. It is mailed postpaid quarterly to all members in good standing. Additional copies or back issues at \$1.00 each to members, \$2.00 to non-members, as available. Communications regarding editorial content or Bulletin advertising should be addressed to the Editor, 100 N.E. 81st St., Kansas City, Mo. 64118.



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Our Cover

“Peonies, cut for the Big Show,” was donated by Dr. Peter D. Ascher, associate professor in the Dept. of Horticultural Science, University of Minnesota. Dr. Ascher is vice president of the Minnesota Horticultural Society, a member of the Society's publication committee for several years, and has made regular contributions in the form of art work and popular magazine articles.

His work in Horticultural Science involves teaching and also genetic research with the genus *Lilium*, *Chrysanthemum* and the *Nemesia*.

The PEONY is one of his favorite flowers.



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Peony Friends,

I can't help but bubble with enthusiasm over the increased interest and dedication which our society has enjoyed over the last 2 to 3 years. We are financially solvent. We owe no money. We have a tremendous hard working Secretary-Treasurer and an equally hard working talented Editor.

We have an unselfish group of intelligent peony breeders who are attacking their hobby with unprecedented vigor. We have many new people writing for the Bulletin, freely willing to share their lifelong accomplishments and knowledge. Our membership is growing internationally. We have some interesting and outstanding annual shows lined up for the next 3 to 4 years. We have an extremely diverse and talented Board of Directors. Above all, we have people who CARE and who are LOYAL. This is why I am so enthusiastic and have to personally thank all of you.

Again may I invite all to come to the Milwaukee Show. It is a great excuse for getting away and there is much to do and see in Milwaukee. Don't be afraid to cut some peony blossoms and enter the competition. Remember, we have three levels of competition: "Open Class," "Amateur" and "Novice."

See you all in Milwaukee. Everybody enjoy the May and June Peony blossoms.

Sincerely yours,
Roy Klehm
President

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*The American Peony Society
expresses appreciation and thanks
to the
Milwaukee Journal Company
and the
Mitchell Park Conservatory
for the courtesies and generosity
extended for this, our
68th National Exhibition
and
70th Annual Meeting*

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks, and I'm sure the thanks of the other directors and members of the Society, to Mr. Joe Glocka of the Milwaukee Journal for his interest and work he has done and will be doing in arranging the 68th Annual Peony Exhibition to be held in Milwaukee. This is not a job that is done in one or two days, but takes months to prepare, as some of us well know.

Not only does Joe raise and exhibit prize-winning peonies, but also through his efforts, he has excelled in the promotion of this flower. His enthusiasm is an inspiration to all. His work shows that you can raise peonies and not spend hour after hour in the garden taking care of these hardy plants. Thank you, Joe, our show chairman.

Program

(All times are C.D.S.)

Friday, June 15, 1973

12 Noon through Saturday, June 16, 11:30 a.m. Prepare and place exhibits.

Bring in flowers from rear of Domes. Work room will be open all night with police protection. Remember to obtain entry tags. These are available on request from A.P.S. office — Greta M. Kessenich, 250 Interlachen Road, Hopkins, Minnesota 55343. Also, available at secretary's desk on Friday, June 15. All exhibitors must register.

8 p.m. Board of Directors meeting at the Domes.

Saturday, June 16, 1973

12 Noon Judging begins — all judges and clerks will assemble immediately at close of entries for a half hour of instructions.

9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Photographers' period. All those wishing to take pictures will please register at the secretary's desk.

2 p.m. Hybridizers clinic — at the Pavilion — one block east of Domes in Park.

3:30 p.m. Auction of roots. At the Horticultural Pavilion.

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7 p.m. Cocktails at the Downtowner
7:30 p.m. Annual Banquet and awards — Downtowner Motor Inn. \$6.00 per person. Reservations may be made with Mr. Joe Glocka, Milwaukee Journal Square, 333 W. State St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53201, not later than June 14, 1973.

Sunday, June 17, 1973

9 a.m. Directors meeting at the Pavilion at the Domes.
10:30 a.m. Bus tour to Whitnall Park Arboretum, where, among other horticultural attractions, is a fine planting of herbaceous and tree peonies. At the Park there will be a conducted tour by a park guide. After the tour a catered luncheon will be served. The bus will bring all back to the show room at the Domes.

Once again the A.P.S. is coming to Milwaukee and the marvelous Horticultural Domes to hold its annual meeting and Show. This show promises to be one of the most unusual and comprehensive we have ever held.

Mr. Joseph Glocka, the co-chairman of the show, is in charge of special events for the Milwaukee Journal and is uniquely situated to give us the support and comprehensive publicity of one of the finest newspapers in the country. They are placing strong emphasis on local novice participation. They are planning various articles about peonies and the A.P.S. with colored pictures just prior to the show. There will be an art contest for junior and senior art students with cash prizes for the best paintings of peonies and peony arrangements. The winning paintings will become the property of the A.P.S. City and county officials are becoming involved. The Florist Association has offered their services in staging the show.

However, only peony flowers make a peony show. I want to urge all who grow peonies to bring in their flowers for exhibit. We invite all members to come see our show and our wonderful Horticultural Domes.

Marvin Karrels

Peony Selection

by Wilbert G. Sindt

The selection of peony varieties is always a perplexing problem, whether it be for the first one or for the hundredth addition to an extensive collection. It is well to determine to what use the peonies will be put. This use may be in a border, for landscape accent, for exhibition, for use in artistic arrangements, or just because Grandmother on the farm always had some.

Having determined their ultimate use, the buyer is now in a position to make the selection of peonies best suited for him. The most satisfactory way to select, regardless of eventual purpose, is to see the plants growing, either at the nursery of a peony specialist or in the garden of a friend or neighbor. Second best is to see the actual flowers in a show, and third is to look at pictures and descriptions in the catalog of a peony specialist.

If the plant is to be used for landscape effect or in the border, a great deal of thought should be given to the appearance of the plant without the

bloom. Most of the year it will be a shrub and as such, prime consideration should be given to the color, form and texture of the leaves. With some varieties the leaves are smooth and glossy green, others may appear coarse, some carry tinges of yellow or gold all year, and still others turn quite red in the Fall. Look at the growing plant when you select for use in the landscape.

If the purpose is primarily for exhibition, then the only consideration is its show qualities. Such varieties can be selected by attending shows and reading the reports of exhibitions held in various parts of the country. Here the appearance of the plant or reliability of bloom need not be a factor but just — can it produce a winner?

For use in artistic design, usually the smaller sized blooms are preferred. This is where the small doubles, Japanese, and the singles are a good choice, but for striking color it is the hybrids. Generally these smaller flowers also do quite well in the landscape, since their blooms are not too heavy to stand erect.

Whatever the purpose you have for getting peonies, it is most important that you buy them from a nurseryman who is a specialist in peonies. Variety selection is much greater with such a grower and, believe it or not, the price is generally lower, the quality higher.

Select with care, for the peony lasts a lifetime!

Peonies as Landscape Plants

*by Mr. Eldred Green, Horticulturist
Garden Editor, Chicago Sun Times, Chicago, Ill.*

My first real introduction to peonies was sudden and complete, much like learning to swim by jumping out of a boat. I became a show official at the Midwest Regional Peony Show sponsored jointly by the Midwest Horticultural Society and the American Peony Society.

Right away I was thrown into the company of such peony greats as W. F. Christman, secretary of the APS; Charles Klehm, a founder of APS; R. A. Napier, an outstanding hobbyist; Lyman Glasscock, who originated the great hybrids between *officinalis* and *chinensis*; the Sass brothers; Edward Auten, James Mason, and many more.

The regional show did not bring in many experts in the east or other parts of the country, so I did not get to know these as well as the ones in the central part of the country. However, there were more than enough experts right in the Chicago region.

My lasting impression of these peony experts was their marvelous consideration and congeniality. They were wonderful, helpful, unassuming folk. It was impossible not to catch their enthusiasm and to learn from them. As a young man this was like a starving man at a banquet. I absorbed as much as I could.

I determined to grow peonies and decided to start by listing the varieties in the show that appealed to me. These were the leading varieties being grown. I took my list of about fifty varieties and eliminated the ones that were still in the very expensive range. This still left a sizeable list.

One fall I took my list of varieties and went to Northbrook Gardens near Chicago where Bill Christman was a partner in an iris and peony firm. Bill took my list, commented that it was good and then proceeded to teach me about landscape use. LeCygne, not good because it was erratic in flowering, other varieties were likely to ball in wet weather, were too tall and made a poor background, had weak necks, floppy growth, discolored in wet weather and sun, faded, skinny stems, and so on. When Bill finished with my list it had shrunk almost to nothing. He agreed that from a show standpoint it was a good list but many show varieties were disappointing as garden plants. They needed care and the right handling to make them look fine on display.

Then after deflating my ego, Bill started in by listing the ones he rated as excellent for the garden. Among the ones he suggested were Duluth, just coming on the market, Mrs. John M. Kleitsch, Hansina Brand, and many more. I followed his advice and got plants of the ones he suggested. The following spring I went to see the Napier garden. This was the outstanding peony collection in the region. It was about a quarter acre, exclusively peonies with a few iris and bulbs along the border of the beds. Mr. Napier had open house during the height of the season and this was a gala occasion for the village of Blue Island. All the police were directing traffic, the roads were jammed for miles, and thousands came from all over. Many as far away as 50 to 60 miles, just to see the spectacle. I lived about 2 miles from the garden and was able to visit the garden and avoid the crowds. In the Napier garden, which had about 300 varieties, I saw what Bill Christman had told me. Many of the finest exhibit material were poor landscape plants. Mr. Napier was eager to share his knowledge and these visits were most enjoyable, and highly educational.

The war (World II) stopped the shows and gasoline rationing curtailed my excursions. I maintained my interest but lost contact with many friends.

After the war I found many changes. Northbrook Gardens was an airfield, Glasscock's gardens were part of an arsenal, etc. Many of the great people were no longer active or had passed away:

The resurgence of gardening after the war brought me into contact with the Charles Klehm Nursery, now in the capable hands of Carl. This rekindled my interest in peonies and visits to the magnificent fields in Arlington Heights certainly were inspiring.

I learned that the Klehms had become very much interested in garden or landscape varieties. Originally the Klehm nursery had been in cut flowers and roots. The plants grown were the ones most suitable for cutting and storing. This eliminated the sporadic flowering ones, the temperamental, and the slow growers. However, as the flowers were cut in the bud stage and long stems were desirable the varieties being grown were not necessarily the most desirable for garden use. Shorter plants with sturdier stems that could withstand a spring rain soaking the flowers and not burying them in the mud were needed. Charles and Carl Klehm searched their fields for the varieties with these characteristics. Then they started a breeding program to obtain even better plants and different colors.

The new originations became the Estate series of varieties. In addition to the Estate varieties, the Klehms, Carl with Lois, and sons Roy and Chuck, selected others that met the standards of excellent landscape value for the average gardener. These were added to their list and the other varieties dropped. Today the Klehm catalog lists only good landscape material.

What are the qualities that make a good landscape plant? First, the flower must be large, with good form and color. The bud must not ball or the colors fade. The stem must be sturdy, not necessarily thick but strong enough to hold the flower erect even when soaked with rain. The plant habit should be neat. After flowering the foliage should have compactness, good color, and remain erect so it makes an attractive mound in the garden. Disease resistance is important and so is good growth so a nice plant is formed in a few years. Fragrance is desirable but subordinate to the other qualities as these are primarily landscape plants, not cut flowers.

While the Klehm nursery has been one of the leaders in developing the modern landscape peony, others have also worked along the same lines. Today the peony fits into the compact, small gardens, that need a minimum of attention and only ordinary care.

What are some of the uses of peonies in the garden? The modern peony varieties such as the Estate series make excellent foundation plantings on modern houses such as ranch type and slab construction generally. The plants can be set about 2 feet from the foundation. They can be used in the perennial border either in the foreground or background. Space between the plants is excellent for planting tall, clump forming plants such as lilies, delphinium, lythrum and phlox. Any low perennial or annual can be planted in front of the peony plants.

Peonies work well as a facing for shrubs where they cover the lower, generally bare, stems. Boundary plantings of peonies will mark the property line and take the place of a hedge. Problem areas such as the narrow strip along a driveway can become spectacular when planted to one or two colors of peony varieties.

The great amount of work that was necessary to stake the old, leggy kinds has vanished. Then it was a real project to place metal rings or hoops around each plant in spring before growth became too long, to remove the hoops in fall and store them for the winter, and to check the plants to see that the stems grew up through the hoops. Some people used barrel hoops (wooden) and nailed them to stakes, others used thin lumber and made square cages to hold the stems. All of these just kept the stems off the ground. Frequently they would bunch up at one side and look like a mess. A few plants might be tied to stakes with string, strips of cloth, etc. In any case growing peonies posed some problems.

Through breeding and selection the peony is today a fine landscape plant that needs no coddling or special care. However, the old kinds with weak necks are still on the market. Perhaps the peony society should list the kinds that are best for landscape use as well as for color, season, etc.

Peonies for the Small City Garden

by Ken Sampson, Park Ridge, Illinois

The Peony in its own right is the finest true perennial in the flower world. Planted correctly, with good spacing, avoiding crowding by trees and shrubs, they will last for years, which cannot be said for many other perennials. I have had comments from other growers who maintain the best showing is from the eighth to the fifteenth year. I have seen plantings many years older and they produce a great number of blooms, though smaller, but very attractive for garden display and cutting.

Peonies grow in any soil that will produce garden crops. Good drainage and sunshine are important for the finest results. They will grow in climates that have a winter freeze that sets the flower buds for the following season. Our northern states and Canada have fine blooms, extending through July due to colder and later springs.

Here in Illinois the season starts late in May and lasts through most of June. Tree peonies, hybrids and then herbaceous varieties generally bloom in that sequence, so a longer bloom can be attained by selection of varieties.

Unfortunately some varieties do better in one climate than another, and it would be best to get information on this point from the growers that produce the plants.

Tree peonies have different colors and color arrangements than other species, but with shorter, weaker stems, producing not as good a cut flower.

Hybrid peonies with outstanding clear clean colors are not quite as strong in growing habits as the standard herbaceous varieties.

Standard herbaceous peonies, some very fine old varieties, as well as new varieties, are a pleasure to have in your garden.

There are so many good peonies available that I have discontinued growing weak-stemmed varieties. There is a choice of from short to tall stemmed varieties to fit your planting needs. Fragrance is also an item to be considered.

In planting there is only one season, Fall, for best results. Plant a minimum of 4' apart, using 5', if space is available. At first they will appear sparse and lonely, but as they develop you will see the need for the room. Fill in with plenty of annuals to cover the openings until the peonies develop. Plant the roots with the topmost eye 2" below the ground, and place a loose mound of soil 6" over the planting and leave until new shoots emerge in the spring. Then cultivate and level ground. Some hobbyists like mulching, both winter and summer, to hold moisture and control weeds. I have never done this, so I don't know if good results have been attained. I plant in rows, have weed problems, so cultivate clear ground as often as possible. I also have had good results hilling the plants in fall after tops have been removed.

As the buds appear on the stems pinch off the lateral buds, leaving only the terminal bud, creating a clean individual bloom.

You can cut the blooms in fairly tight buds, bunch and place in a cooler or refrigerator, dry, and hold for up to two weeks. Take them out, give a fresh cut to the stem and they will open in fine shape, extending your display of flowers for gifts or your own enjoyment.

The application of fertilizer is applied as time permits. Once a year has been enough for me. Sometimes as the buds are forming or after blooming season. I use 10-6-4 or 5-10-5 or 10-10-10, whichever is available, as they are gross feeders and seem to accept any of these.

Not much water is needed, as I cultivate, and we have enough rainfall.

The plants are checked closely in the spring and summer for botrytis or other problems, removing bad stems and drenching the plant with a fungicide if necessary. I am happy to say this is not too frequent.

There are very few diseases or insect pests that affect peonies.

If possible see plants in bloom and make your choice as you see the color, bloom and plant habit. They will grow exactly as you see them. You will be looking at them for years, so don't pick any that do not please you in all respects.

Select your plants at the right time, plant at the right time and in the right manner using them as a flower garden background, along a fence row or in clumps to your choice, have patience, and be rewarded with many years of cut flowers and displays in your garden. I do not believe there is a perennial grown that requires as little time to care for it and gives as great pleasure in its performance.

If You Cut Peonies —

by J. Franklin Styer, West Chester, Pennsylvania

Peonies as cut flowers can be handled in three ways, which begin with the flower in the bud, in the bag, or wide open. The great Harry F. Little, now becoming a legend, was practically never beaten on the show table. He bagged the largest buds with penny paper bags a few days before they would open. These were always from five year or older plants heavily manured and treated to extra phosphate. When the flower opened, it was confined in the bag with the petals still unspread. He made as many as three trips a day to a cold storage which was held at 32 degrees (Zero Centigrade); these flowers came out later in the identical condition in which they were cut. They opened fully in one night as a rule.

Harry's peonies were stored standing in about two inches of water. The same principle, which kept the storage room humidity from becoming too high, was practiced by Charles Klehm in storing thousands of dozens for rather long periods. This required an inordinately large space. The flowers were handled most carefully after removal from storage, because they remained stiff and brittle and the blooms opened speedily if not already open.

If this method is used, an ordinary refrigerator is inadequate because the temperature is too high and development is not stopped. Refrigerator storage at 38 to 40 will lengthen the life of peonies after opening, however, at least by a couple of days. The gardener who has peonies opening every day should use the second method, which is simply to cut the flowers after they open; and use no refrigeration. These look more natural, make better arrangements, and last longer than stored flowers. We find little is gained by crushing stems, and the opened flower usually contains such large amounts

of nutrients that chemical additions to the water do not help. Cultivars with the spectacular large rose type blooms may need to be conditioned to a dry room slowly. A cellar floor which is wet may be a good place for them the first two hours.

Some flowers, like the cultivar Therese, have wide, large, soft petalage, which is harder to keep in condition. It may be necessary in a dry place to spray them with water at intervals of about an hour.

The third method is a result of experience in marketing. It takes advantage of the fact that unfolding of the flower can be checked by wilting as easily as by refrigerating. For the best use of this method, the flowers are cut in the bud, then laid on a dry table for a few hours, after which they can be packed in the boxes without heating and will stand fairly rough handling. After up to 24 hours the stems can be cut afresh and placed in water, and the flowers recover fully and open normally. It helps to pull off a few leaves, especially when the leaf scars go under water.

This kind of treatment is not for the big peonies. They need too much time to open, which means they must open too far before cutting. But for many which are small enough to open freely from a tight bud, the dry handling works well. This method has been used almost by necessity in the handling of large quantities of peonies in the larger markets, where one sees them being sold out of boxes which have never been near water. The retail florists become rather expert in opening and using the flowers without the showers of falling petals they once experienced. Unfortunately there are not so many cultivars which can be shipped and sold this way, and we do need new ones for testing in this process.

The writer well remembers a cruise to Glasgow from New York in June of 1935. The ship took ten days for the trip; on arrival in Glasgow there were remnants of the flowers sent aboard in New York, here and there in the dining rooms. And every flower remaining was a Felix Crousse peony.

Flower Arranging for the Beginner — Part II

by Mrs. K. W. Fisher, St. Paul, Minn.

In the previous article in Bulletin No. 205, we discussed basic needs to get started. The bowl or container, a needlepoint, a sharp cutting tool, and some cut and hardened plant material, plus the desire to practice, and the project is under way.

The most frequent request when demonstrating flower arranging is for a centerpiece, because that seems to be the most popular use of flowers in the home. For the beginner, however, first we will make an arrangement which can be placed on any surface backed by a wall, or background. That could be the television, the buffet, the hall table, any place where the viewer would not see the back of the arrangement. (If there is a mirror involved, you have another problem, which makes an arrangement for that setting more like a table centerpiece.)

Assuming the arrangement will be viewed mostly from the front, let's start in this manner. Place the needlepoint just left of the center of a low bowl. (It may be secured with floral clay or placed on a piece of paper

toweling or newspaper so it does not slip.) Select a rather long piece of material (a branch, a bud on a long stem, etc.) and cut it about 2 to 2¼ times the longest dimension of the container. If the piece selected has a graceful curve, all the better. Place this stem toward the back of the needlepoint (about where the hour hand would be at 11 o'clock). If it has a curve, be sure the top of the piece is directly above the point where it is secured in the needlepoint. Tip it a little toward the back of the container so that in profile it is not directly upright.

Cut a second piece of the same material about two-thirds the length of the first piece. Place it slightly forward and to the right of the first placement (hour hand at 5 o'clock) tipping it toward your right elbow. Cut a third piece about half the length of the second piece and place it to the left side of the needlepoint (hour hand at 8 o'clock), pointing toward your left shoulder. You should now have a triangle. Now start adding flowers and foliage, following these basic measurements, and not permitting any of the additions to extend beyond the outline you have set. Do not add too much, and be sure that each addition you make is a different length, and placed at a slightly different angle.

If you use small forms and lighter colors toward the outside and concentrate the larger forms and darker colors near the center of the arrangement, it will appear more balanced. Foliage helps to set off the flower forms and give emphasis to the colors.

This basic triangular form can be adapted to a table centerpiece by placing the first branch upright rather than slanting to the back, and working both sides as you worked the one side. An isosceles triangle is probably more satisfactory in the center of the table, in which case, you would cut the second and third placements the same length (about 2-3 of the first placement) and insert them at the same angles to the right and left of the first placement. Continue to build out and forward from there, again not allowing anything to extend farther than the basic outline.

The preceding is a conventional triangle, the basis of the massed line design which combines the severe line design of the Orient and the over-full mass of the European manner. It is probably typically American. It is only a start, but a design we have found very successful in teaching beginners. It is easy to do, satisfying when completed, and an excellent place to start the practice of arranging flowers.

There are many books on flower arranging available to the interested reader. There is no harm in trying to copy the designs you see in these illustrations, but you will find copying harder than might be expected. For one thing, no two pieces of plant material ever seem to grow just alike, so no matter how hard you try, you will seldom get an exact copy. Use the illustrations as a springboard for your own interpretations. Study the color plans which appeal to you and try to analyze what makes them successful. The study of color alone is a most interesting facet of flower arranging. Design elements and principles enter into every successful arrangement. The same books will help you along the way.

Transplanting Herbaceous Peonies

by William H. Krekler, Somerville, Ohio

Nurserymen must divide peony clumps to increase their stock, but why disturb lawn peonies if they are doing fairly well. I know of three rather neglected peony clumps in a neighbor's lawn that have been there over seventy years and are doing well. Very rarely the farmer scatters a little stable manure around them. Rather than transplant such oldies, why not just dig a hole to one side (cutting smaller roots only) and fill this hole with a bushel of old (fairly well aged) stable manure. If manure is too fresh the roots can grow in the other three directions, until the manure cools down. After several years, when the flowers become smaller and scarce, dig a new hole on the other side and repeat as before. Never place any plant over fertilizer, as it is like setting it over a hot stove. Apply fertilizer only at the ends of small roots, where it cannot burn the crown.

If it becomes necessary to move an old peony clump because of too much shade or by robbing roots etc., then cut the clumps roots back about half way, thus it will have to grow new young roots from the cut ends. Young roots (like young people) are more vigorous, so the old clump will not sit and sulk (like some of we older folks) but will start producing quicker. If more plants are desired, hose the old clump clean of soil, so you can see better and not dull your knife on the soil. Younger roots are the most desirable. A few large old roots may be cut back hard if it can be done without damage. One can cut down through the old roots, as the cut part will form new barklike covering. Cut off all diseased parts, nematode nodules on ends of tiny rootlets, diseased bumps, rot that can be cut out easily, etc. Replant in dry area, which is very important.

I have seen men divide huge old clumps by whacking through it with a spade or big machete knife but they generally would end up with many buds on a few roots, and many roots having few, if any, buds. Most peony roots will not grow without buds. A few harder rooted hybrids (Dad, Bravura, Flame, etc.) often grow, sometimes, 'Officinalis' also. To be safe, throw such roots into a trench (wait and see).

If one wishes to give a friend a start from a clump without setting their peony back a few years by transplanting, soil can carefully be removed from one side of the crown, with a water hose and fingers, so as to see where the buds and roots are located. Then carefully spud off a section with a narrow spade. Fill the resulting hole with best available soil. Peonies prefer deep top soil that has much old humus in it to make it crumbly.

A big old clump will have large buds but very few. A two year old clump will have many buds but smaller ones. Thus a younger clump will make more divisions and be easier to divide, as well as being more vigorous. In our nursery, in order to get stock quicker, we try to divide peonies into two bud divisions, however, these take an extra year to produce flowers. In the gardens of today, most people wish to save time instead of money, so I recommend a small clump of six or more buds.

A regular three to five bud division will cost half and make a fine plant. Once I experimented with a new rare variety, to increase the stock, quickly, by taking off a single plump bud on about a five inch root and cutting down through the bud and root once or twice. These slivers all grew and took only an extra year to make flowering clumps. Never since, have I been enough of a gambler to risk my precious new promising seedlings.

A peony root must be long enough to nourish its top through a hot dry summer and to anchor it through a wet frost-heaving March. I have experimented with big buds with only an inch of root. They grew for a while, until hot dry weather started, then died. Perhaps if pampered they may have survived. Old established clumps have buds held back in reserve, so if tops are burned or cut off they will send up a second set of stems. These generally will have pistils and stamens, even if the first set did not. Young plants hoed off, generally die.

Peonies form their buds about two inches beneath the surface of the soil, so surely that is the ideal depth to re-plant. I do not believe this depth is nearly as important as most folks seem to believe, nor is it the usual reason peonies fail to bloom (as some sellers tell you). Disease and bud freezing are main reasons for this failure.

In my fields to save time and money, we make a furrow with a Gravelly rotary plow a few inches deep. We drop our two bud divisions into this furrow. Any plant out of line will be cultivated out, later. Plant a foot apart, if left for only a period of four years. The rotary plow then blows the loosely tilled soil back over the divisions, filling the trench. Some buds are only an inch under the soil, these will peep through first and may heave out and a shovel of soil must be placed over them in March. Those around four inches deep will be the last to peep through the soil and these seldom are frost heaved. All seem to grow very well. Mr. George Peyton told me that a large peony nursery used to plant the buds around a half foot under. In adjusting to their bud depth of two inches, as peonies always do, they would send out young roots from stems above the old plant. That is how they got such ideal undivided and many budded young plants to sell.

Tree Peonies do best in a filtered light shade but lactifloras do much better in a full sun, except in very hot southern locations. They do grow in shade but have small and very few flowers.

CONTINUED — SEPTEMBER BULLETIN

Spring Planting

by Clarence O. Lienau, Detroit, Michigan

I do not recommend spring planting to take the place of fall planting, however due to unusual circumstances, one may have to carry over divisions until early spring.

For the average gardener, with a small number of divisions, 4 to 6, the peony roots may be placed in a plastic bag, with damp sphagnum moss. Tie the bag tight and put in the refrigerator until early spring. For the individual having a large quantity or one who does not want to use cold storage, I would suggest heeling them in the soil. From experience, both methods have been very successful.

When it is necessary, my divisions are heeled in just before the ground freezes in late November or early December. They are planted two inches below ground level, very close together. Always mark the name of the variety on wire tree labels, with a grease pencil and attach on every division, also place a stake in between each variety, with name visible above the ground. Make a record of every planting.

Early in the spring when the frost is out of the ground, usually late March until the middle of April, in this area, planting may be prolonged a week or more by placing a heavy mulch on top of the rows of the heeled in peonies.

I always pot 50 to 100 divisions each spring in plastic pots. About ten percent of them bloom. It depends on the variety.

One must be careful with the eyes, in planting, especially when 1¼ to 2 inches of growth has started, on these divisions. In April 1961, I shipped twenty-five varieties to Hamburg, Germany for their World Wide 1963 exhibit. These plants proved to be very successful.

Mulching

by William P. Bringe, West Salem, Wisconsin

Mulching, recently discovered in its many uses in today's gardens, although an ancient practice, is of incomparable value as a soil builder, protector of plants and labor saver. Any individual that works the soil knows that neatness of bare soil is not a virtue. Mulch is of benefit to plant life, as it affects temperature of the soil, moisture content, fertility and texture. More and more people are putting wastes back on the land, Remarkable plant growth is unequalled in providing the most favorable environment for roots. Nature demands that we give back to the land the nutrients used each year in providing us with the pleasures of harvest.

Organic compost is perhaps the best mulching material. Instructions on making compost are readily available in most garden books, also published from time to time in gardening periodicals. There are several methods and all have the same results.

Some material that is not composted can also be used. Shredded corn stalks, ground corn cobs, shredded bark and cocoa bean hulls. Sawdust from the wood pile, does sour the soil. All of the mentioned materials should have nitrogen fertilizer added to hasten decomposition.

The mulching of peony plants is beneficial. Heavy mulching between the rows of field grown plants is a necessity. However, do not spread the mulch over the crown of the plants, especially where botrytis is a problem. The winter accumulation of wood ashes from the fireplace, which sweetens the soil, is used to topdress around the crowns. I have hauled wood ashes from the dump, where trees and prunings have been burnt. The result being very wonderful growth of the plants so treated.

In mulching the perennial border, the first thing is clean cultivation, removal of all weeds and loosening the soil. Then apply Treflan herbicide according to instructions on the label, ONE TABLESPOON PER THREE

GALLONS OF WATER. Wet all the soil, then water and soak down thoroughly. When it dries, spread the mulch and there will be no weed problem for that season and no more cultivation.

I often reflect on the long boyhood hours, spent in hoeing the onions and vegetable garden, and those golden hours which might have been spent in fishing and swimming, if herbicides had been invented then. So use these wonderful things, get more recreation and do not be a slave to your garden.

Botrytis and Benlate, Princep and Weeds

by W. A. Alexander

In a short article on page 10 of the last number of the Bulletin (Dec. 1972) by Roy Pehrson of Minnesota the question is raised of the use of the relatively new fungicide, Benlate (benomyl) on peonies to prevent leaf spot and botrytis. And on page 18, same issue, D. E. Archer of New Zealand asks about the use of weedicides for peony beds. I may be able to shed a bit of light on both these questions for the gentlemen who ask them and for others, as I have had a little experience.

My experience has been quite limited and quite brief. It would be a mistake to accept it as one would the results of a carefully controlled and well planned scientific experiment. Experience is sometimes misleading. But my experience is definite and positive, and is, I think, significant enough to be worth reporting.

As to leaf spot, I pay no attention to it. A few of my varieties get it, and every year the nursery inspector mentions it. But the plants grow and bloom as well as the ones that do not have it, and aside from spoiling the appearance the latter part of the summer, the disease seems to do no harm. The obvious explanation is that the plants have just about completed their season's growth before the disease develops.

Botrytis, however, is a different matter: It is devastating. There seems to be more than one form of the disease. The form that plagues me cuts down the young shoots soon after they emerge, and they rot clear down to the crown of the plant. It strikes a few mature stalks and terminal buds, but that phase is minor. The fruiting bodies of the fungus appear as a grayish-brown mold. In addition to the few dead stalks, there will be some "leaners," stalks in which the disease was arrested before it completely girdled the stem near the ground, leaving it weakened and leaning, but still green and healthy appearing. Most of my lactiflora varieties are either immune or highly resistant to the disease. Even so, the loss of only a few stalks might be hard for the backyard gardener with only a few plants to take.

With hybrids it is a different story. Many of them, about half of my varieties, are very susceptible. I have lost some completely and others have been reduced to three or four stalks per clump. And it gets worse by the year. Many of the lobata hybrids are extremely susceptible. I remember seeing big, fine clumps of several of the Saunders lobatas in the garden of the late Dr. Harold Tinapple that had dwindled to three or four stalks. Culprit: botrytis. The only way to save such severely infected plants is to dig them, cut away all diseased tissue, disinfect and replant in clean soil.

I have tried all manner of things to control botrytis: all the common fungicides such as Bordeaux mixture, Fermate, Captan, Phaltan, have removed soil from over and around the plants and filled in with clean sand; and I always cut and burn tops. Nothing seemed to help one bit. Then two years ago I got hold of a small sample of Benlate. I did not know how to use it, when or the strength; and I had no time to find out, if I was to use it that season. So I took a chance, used a tablespoon to the gallon of water and poured one to two cups per clump over the emerging shoots, repeating in ten days, that time pouring it on the foliage if any leaves had developed. I had enough material for only a few plants. so naturally chose the worst infected ones. The results were almost spectacular, near 100 percent prevention. Untreated plants were again badly infected.

Last spring I treated more plants, as many as my supply of material permitted. I was advised to increase the amount to two tablespoons per gallon. Again the results were near 100 percent positive, although it was a bad year for botrytis, much cold, damp weather which are the conditions under which it thrives. Even lactifloras had quite a little of the infection. To sum up my experience with Benlate: I am completely sold on it, and will use it regularly on my hybrids from now on, barring the unforeseen.

As to Mr. Archer's question about weedicides: Yes, there are several that can be used on peonies. I have used Princep for several years with very satisfactory results. It has proved completely harmless to daylilies, iris and several other perennials as well as peonies. But it is harmful to poppies, in fact deadly to young, newly planted poppies. It damages lilacs, and makes soil unfit for vegetables. It is nearly 100 percent effective in prevention of growth of summer grasses which were the bane of my life in wet seasons. It does not control quack grass, witch grass or Bermuda, nor is it effective on some of the hard-to-kill broadleaves: bindweed (morning glory), milkweed, Canada thistle; maybe a few others. But they were not my problem.

I applied it right after cultivation in early spring, broadcasting at about 30 lbs. per acre. No further cultivating was done. Other growers I know have used Treflan and Dacthal. There are probably others that are satisfactory, but be careful.

Thoughts and Suggestions

from Greta M. Kessenich

Do plant more peonies, not only for new interest, self enjoyment, different and new varieties, but also in this day and age, when we all are taking note of the ecology, extend your hobby. The peony with beautiful green leaves has a role, with other plants, in oxygen produced, so vital to our existence.

Do label every plant.

Do cultivate. Let your plants breathe.

Do spray. Check for botrytis. Ants love the sweet nectar of the bud, while they do no harm, good condition of the bloom without insects are necessary for enjoyment.

Do learn about weed control.

- Do improve your soil. Give back to the land that which is natural for it to produce. Generous amount of compost and humus. Good soil is a natural for growing good peonies.**
- Do plant some tall marigolds around and near your peonies. See what they will do to nematodes. Grandmothers teachings are becoming modern today.**
- Do disbud, one bud per stem, for larger bloom. A spray of flowers can be enjoyed by removing the terminal bud.**
- Do cut off the bud the first year. Let your plant grow and become strong. It will reward you with an abundance of bloom, in the future.**
- Do cut flowers with 12-16 inch stems.**
- Do leave at least two leaves on the remainder of the cut stem, on the plant.**
- Do bag some peonies, if only for the experience.**
- Do store some peonies in your refrigerator for future enjoyment.**
- Do plant some roots of the exotic Tree Peony.**
- Do plant some peony seed.**
- Do try to make some crosses.**
- Do register your seedlings that merit a place with the named varieties.**
- Do attend the National Exhibition, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. June 15-16-17. Assembled under one roof, a thousand peonies. New varieties, the wonderful tried and true old varieties. Colors so delicate, so vivid, so bold and then before you are the magnificent blossoms of the Tree peony. A paradise of many gardens on display, for your enjoyment.**
- Do see the artistic arrangements. Indescribable designs, with peonies. This is where the peony talks and tells of the category it represents.**
- Do attend the auction of peonies, Saturday, June 16, at 4:00 p.m. The best of varieties will be sold to the highest bidder and it may be you!**
- Do attend the Hybridizers Seminar at 1:30 p.m. Saturday. A MUST — hearing knowledgeable people in this field, discussing, teaching, and expressing ideas for the peony of the future.**
- Do take black and white pictures of your peonies. We want pictures of you, with your flowers, your special peony plant. We want subjects of interest, all to be used in the Bulletin.**
- Do give this your first consideration, as we are trying to give you an interesting and informative Bulletin.**
- Do write an article for the Bulletin. We all work in the garden, with the soil, enjoy the peony and have our problems, different experiences, successes and failures.**
- Do tell us, if only in letter form. We will gratefully acknowledge and will write it for readers of the Bulletin. With your cooperation, we can have every issue an interesting one.**
- Do order a set of peony slides to be viewed and enjoyed by yourself, friends or club.**
- Do come to Wonderful Milwaukee, enjoy the Exhibition. Our gratitude to both the Milwaukee Journal Company and the Mitchell Horticultural Conservatory Director and Personnel. The Annual Banquet — 7:30 p.m. at THE DOWNTOWNER, sixth and West Wisconsin, and LADIES wear a PEONY.**

*From the Desk of the Postmaster
At Kansas City, Missouri*

DESIDERATA

Go placidly amid the noise & haste, & remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly & clearly; & listen to others, even the dull & ignorant; they too have their story. ☸ Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain & bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. ☸ Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. ☸ Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. ☸ Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. ☸ You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. ☸ Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, & whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with yourself. ☸ With all its sham, drudgery & broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy. ☸ ☸

Found in Old St. Paul's Church, Baltimore; Dated 1692

Those Other Peonies

by Silvia Saunders

Reprinted from *Horticulture*, Sept., 1969,

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It's a pretty safe bet, dear Reader, or I should say three safe bets, that:

1. You grow peonies, or at least a peony.
2. Your peonies are our beautiful June-blooming ordinary big doubles, in white, lovely light pink or blush, deep pinks and deep handsome crimsons. And,
3. You almost surely have never seen, quite possibly have never heard of, any other kinds of peonies.

You probably love your peonies, or presumably you wouldn't be growing them. You love their lush June bloom (do you have perhaps ten plants, giving you two weeks of bloom?); you love the ease of taking care of them; you love their freedom from disease; you love their great old age (you may be proudly telling your garden visitors that they are "50 years old that we know of; maybe even older.") You love the nice glossy green foliage all summer long, and after bloom is over and gone.

Fine. I couldn't be happier. I feel just the same about my own June peonies.

But — there are other peonies. And very beautiful they are too. And it is these that I want to talk about with you now.

First let me say one or two things about peonies in general: The kind you and I have in our gardens are called lactifloras (or albifloras) because they derived originally from a wild peony with white flowers. Lactifloras belong to that large side of the Peony Kingdom: Herbaceous peonies. (You can cut their stems with ordinary scissors. And indeed in the fall you do cut them off to the ground, and throw away the old stems, which might harbor disease if left lying on the ground. In spring, the new buds come up like pointed pink finger-tips, right out of the earth.)

Herbaceous peonies make up about 99% of all the peonies grown in America, and lactifloras make up about 99% of all herbaceous peonies.

Now if Those Other Peonies were frightfully tricky to grow, or were tropical plants suitable only for greenhouses, or were as big as trees, or required a fancy soil, or took fifty years to mature or come into bloom, or cost \$50 apiece, there might be some excuse for you and me not growing them. But none of these is true. On the contrary, Those Other Peonies are just as easy to grow as our lactifloras. Or almost. They are equally hardy; they are about the same size; they like almost any ordinary soil; they cost only from \$2.50 up; and they start to bloom at about four years old (yours did too, only you weren't around to see their beginnings).

I think we may facilitate life for ourselves if we divide Those Other Peonies into three groups:

1. The new *Herbaceous Hybrids*. "New" means they began to be introduced in the 1920's. But they are new in other ways too: New colors: besides the whites and crimsons which we already had in our lacti's, the hybrids come in ivories and in a whole new range of dazzling pinks. Peach,

shrimp, salmon (funny isn't it how we inevitably come back to Culinary Terms) coral and cherry tones, plus flaming scarlets and reds; all entirely new colors to the Herbaceous peony world. New season: some of these (the whites and ivories) bloom as much as two weeks ahead of your earliest lacti's, so that your season of peony bloom is lengthened and you can have ivory-flowered hybrids in bloom with your poeticus narcissus and late daffodils. New parentages: we believe that the old lacti's are "one-species" plants; that the ancient Chinese who developed them did no crossing of species; there's no blood in them except that of the one wild Mongolian peony, *lactiflora*. Whereas the new hybrids contain, besides their lacti blood, the blood of their other parent species. The five most commonly used are: *macrophylla*, *Mlokosewitschi* and *tenuifolia*, from the Caucasus region; *officinalis* and *lobata* from Europe. It is these species that gave rise to the new colors, new foliages and the earlier blooming season.

2. The so-called "Japanese Tree Peonies" (though it was the Chinese who did all the early work on these fabulous plants). These are not trees, but shrubs. You cut them (if at all) with garden clippers. In winter the woody stems remain sticking up through the snow; on these are next spring's leaf- and flower-buds. You may bundle your Tree Peonies up in burlap for the winter if you'll feel happier doing so. In my zone they grow only to the same size as my lacti's, but in warmer climes like Wilmington, they attain to six or eight feet high. And oh! What colors! Shimmering whites, ethereal soft pinks; breathtaking coppery-reds; colors unmatched in any other plants I know of. And as if that weren't enough: their leaves and branches have an elegance and a grace that would justify their being grown as foliage plants alone, even if they never put forth a flower. You've seen them on ancient Chinese screens, their branches reaching for the sky, bearing aloft one or perhaps two large flowers of matchless form and unsurpassed color.

These really do look "tropical." And to think that they are practically as hardy and only a little bit fussier than our *lactifloras* (which, the more we talk about Tree Peonies, do seem more and more to deserve the term "ordinary"). Tree Peonies bloom ahead of the lacti's, by a week or two, thereby extending the blooming season for you.

3. And lastly there are Hybrids in the Tree Peony group as there are in the Herbaceous. Let me say that I use "hybrid" in its pure sense: I mean a plant whose two parents are of different species. In the Tree Peonies, there are the Japanese (this great family we've been talking about). You may call them *p. moutan*, or if you like longer words, *p. suffruticosa*; it means sub-shrub. They are one species. Then there is another species, with small flowers of very brilliant yellow, known as *p. lutea* (Latin for yellow). By crossing the Japanese with the luteas, a race of hybrids was obtained which we call Lutea Hybrids, with the larger flowers of their Japanese parent, and the brilliant yellow of their lutea parent.

Now this was particularly fortunate, for we have worked long and hard to procure yellow in the herbaceous peonies and been foiled at every step. Stay with me please while I explain: To begin with, there is only one herbaceous species with yellow flowers, and these are only a very pale, lemon-sherbert-ish tone of yellow. (I hate to say its name: **MLOKOSEWITSCHI**).

In the second place, Mloko is a terrible snob and is devilishly hard to make crosses with. It has, as we say, a "high degree of incompatibility." And if that weren't bad enough, she refuses (or I should say she has so far refused, for of course Breeders are working away at this cross every spring) to bequeath her yellow to her hybrid children. The nearest we've gotten thus far is "ivory." Not even pale yellow. And certainly nothing approaching the gay yellows in the Lutea Hybrids.

So you may now ask, or rather I'll ask you: Why is it that most of us grow only lactifloras, if Those Other Peonies are all so wonderful? Are we frightened of the Specialists with their Fancy Plants and their Fancy Latin Names? "Lutea hybrids" or even "lactifloras" shouldn't be harder than Gary Indiana or Natchez Mississippi, should they? We just haven't gotten them rolling under our tongues yet. Well then are we afraid they're more expensive? Yes, and they are. But not all that much more. You can get some of the new hybrid pinks for as little as \$2.50 if you hunt a bit; you can get Japanese Tree Peonies (I always spell them with capitals, thus rendering silent reverence to these beauties), and lutea hybrids too, for \$7.50 and up. After all, seven-fifty doesn't any longer buy two people dinner, much less a drink beforehand. Whereas, if invested (and that turns out to be a good word for it) in a Tree Peony or a lutea hybrid, it will last you for longer than you'll be here, and every June when it bursts into bloom you will have a cocktail party out in your garden that will put the best Martini head-down in the umbrella stand. Well then are we frightened because we feel they're too fussy for you and me, Mr. and Mrs. Average Gardener, to cope with? Possibly. They are a little more delicate and fussy than old Tried-and-True, Grown-for-Centuries, Originated-in-Outer-Mongolia lactifloras.

No. I think the reason is something other than any of these. I think it's because we simply haven't seen them. We don't know them. They aren't yet in our friends' gardens; they don't turn up in our local Art Center spring fairs; we haven't spotted them in any recent Flower Shows; we don't read about them because they aren't very much written-about, as yet. (Though more so, lately, I'm happy to report.) And only rarely do we see photographs of them. Too bad.

You see, lactifloras we might call the Peonies of Yesterday. A yesterday that lasted, say, about 1900 years; from the days of Ancient China up to Now. So they've had lots of time to become the famous plants they are, and to get into everybody's garden. But Those Other Peonies are the Peonies of Today. Today began only about 70 years ago, so we're just beginning to meet up with them socially and to make their acquaintance.

Dear Reader, if you are still with me, I am going to assume that you will at least *consider* the purchase of some new peonies. First, you might do well to come to a Peony Show. These exist. They are usually held in June. At the show you meet a Specialist. Frightening? Not at all. Just a human being like you or me. The only difference is that he gives a large part of his time, energy and attention to loving and growing peonies. Maybe only lactifloras, in which case he is only a little bit more specialized than you are. He probably, though,

has four weeks of lacti bloom, whereas you (with your ten plants) have two weeks.

But maybe you meet a Super-Specialist: one who has given a large part of his time, energy and attention to loving and growing *all* peonies. He grows not only the best lacti's, selected for early, mid-season and late, so that he too has four weeks of bloom. But he may grow two or three of the Herbaceous Species: *P. Mloko* (an early pale yellow of special quality); *officinalis* (the old crimson piney of grandmother's garden; our Memorial Day peony); and maybe little *P. tenuifolia* (narrow-leaf), the small, very early one with crimson flowers and almost asparagus-like foliage.

And then the hybrids. Yes, the Super-Specialist, and even the Specialist, is sure to have at least a half-dozen of the best hybrids: some of the fine reds of which there must be easily a hundred; some of the 30 or 40 dazzling pinks (in the culinary colors); and some of the early-blooming ivories and whites. (The ivories are called Quadruple Hybrids, The "Quads," because they have four species bloods in their veins).

Then the Specialist is practically bound to have some Tree Peonies, and he is bound to try to enrapture you, just as I am trying to do, by telling you and even showing you color slides of his varieties: the whites, blush pinks, deeper pinks; and then he'll move on into his lutea hybrids and discourse on the splendid burning yellows, the tea-rose, the subtle "strawberry" reds, and the crimsons and sombre "blacks."

So you come home, "hooked." Determined that before another year is out, you just must have some peonies that are worthy of the name. Now I will step in to that Specialist's shoes, and tell you what I would do if I were in your place. Let's say you have decided to invest in ten peony plants. You are first going to dig out your old lacti's. Your old ones are unworthy, we both feel, of the company you are about to bring into your garden. Then you must re-make those old beds or old holes. The better you do your holes the more beautiful and the faster your peonies will grow, and the happier will be their life with you. The growers all say "Put your five-dollar peony into a twenty-five-dollar hole and it will outlast you."

Your ten plants might well be something like these (and I am going to use the dates that would apply here in Central New York State):

Four lactifloras, selected especially for mid-season and late bloom, from June 15 to July 4 (your other new peonies will cover the first half of June). Whites, creamy, and blush pinks would be my choice, but the range is a wide one.

Two Herbaceous hybrids, chosen for color: one light pink, such as Janice or Flame; one deep bright pink such as Laura Magnuson or Nancy — there are many other beauties too (June 5-15).

Two Japanese Tree Peonies: maybe Tama-fuyo (luscious pink; early; hardy); and one glorious pure white. Gabisin, Renkaku and Gessakai are all tops (late May).

Two lutea hybrids: there are 25 or more good yellows, so let the Nursery select for you; and the same with "strawberry" reds, crimsons or "blacks" (June 5-15).

Oh, yes, your budget:

The 4 lacti's will cost from \$2 to \$3.50 each	\$8 — \$14.00
The 2 herbaceous hybrids (\$2.50 to \$6.25)	5 — 12.50
The 2 Tree Peonies, \$7.50 apiece	\$15.00
The 2 Lutea Hybrids, \$7.50 apiece	\$15.00
	<hr/> \$43 to \$56.50

"Fifty dollars!" I hear you exclaim in horror. Yes, fifty dollars. But look what you get: ten plants, ten best plants, selected for you by a specialist, for an average of five dollars apiece, and that will last you forever. So now, instead of only two short weeks of bloom of only one kind of peony, you're going to have, every spring, five weeks of varied bloom from four different kinds of peonies: tree peonies and their hybrids; herbaceous lacti's and their hybrids. Four different ranges of color; at least two different qualities of petal substance; at least two different shapes and colors of foliage and difference of plant habit. And — forever! And now your garden, whatever it may have been before, will become truly distinguished.

There is one big additional chapter to this story, too big and too long to go into here; it concerns propagation. Peony propagation is just as engrossing as the stock market, and a whole lot more reliable. In propagating money, you try to have ten dollars where before you had only five. The difficulty being that you just may end up losing your original five. In propagating peonies, while with bad treatment and worse luck you *could* lose your original ten plants, you aren't at all likely to. In both cases, you have to wait a few years. After all, nothing takes place immediately, either way.

After you've successfully propagated your peonies so that now instead of ten, you have twenty, you might decide to sell them, thus getting back your original investment (a holy and a pleasing thought, to some people), just in case you don't feel you've already gotten it back many times over in new interest and beauty in your garden and in your soul.

So I think that's enough for now. Please don't ask me about fertilizers, because I really cannot think how to advise for a climate, a locality, an exposure, a soil, a latitude and a gardener, that I know nothing about.

Tenuifolia Flora Plena — From Europe, Asia Minor

by R. W. Tischler, Brand Peony Farm, Faribault, Minnesota

The foliage of this outstanding and rare peony are finely dissected and from this appearance makes it entirely distinct. The brilliant red, double flowers seem to rest on the foliage, like jewels encrusted in a scepter. The blooming date here is approximately May 25th.

This is a very old type peony. The following is a quote from a letter written by Mr. A. M. Brand to Mr. R. F. Koby, dated March 25th, 1948. "One evening, the latter part of May, 1876 or 1877 (I think it was 1876) my mother was setting on the front step of the old home and my father was

puttering about among the trees and shrubs in the front yard. I, a little fellow of 5 or 6 was running barefooted around, when my mother called to me to come and sit beside her. I did so and asked my mother what made the air smell so sweet. She answered, 'You smell the lilacs. The lilacs are in bloom,' and she pointed out six big lilac bushes in the front yard which were in full bloom at the time. And then I noticed among the lilac bushes, several plants about two feet high, covered with great big, dark, red, blossoms and asked her what they were. She told me they were peonies, Peony Tenuifolia Flora Plena, the early fern leaf peony."

This variety of peony is called by many names. Some of the more common ones are the Fern Leaf Peony, Asparagus Peony, French Peony, Pine Peony, Cemetery Peony, Cosmos Peony and there are many others.

This peony interested me a few years ago, about 1957 or 1958 when I saw a fine planting at Mr. and Mrs. Loren Franklin's. We purchased this stock and from then on, they became my foremost hobby. I covered many a mile in Minnesota and Iowa looking for stock of this peony. Many of them were found in private gardens. Sometimes, I was able to purchase all the plants of Tenuifolia in the garden and then again, only a few but to me, every one helped. Many times one neighbor would tell another of my search and this preceded me in the purchase of these plants. Some would write or phone, telling what they had to offer. Usually a very satisfactory deal was made.

I would buy the complete clump, dig it in the fall of the year and return home to divide it for planting. Most of these purchases were put into planting stock for future sales.

Many interesting events happened on these buying trips, as you can well imagine. There was this one fine lady in Iowa, who had been writing for two years about the sale of her stock. Perhaps she was offering it to other nurseries, also. She wanted to sell her plants before she and her husband passed on, as they did not want the neighbors to get their hands on it. She had a large planting, all nicely growing under some plum trees. I do not think the plants had been weeded or cultivated for years, but they were many fine plants. We did not leave one root.

There was another lady, up north who lived by a lake. Her planting was across the highway, up a narrow grassy path to the top of a fairly high hill. Here among the weeds and brush, grew fine plants of Tenuifolia. This was also an old planting and as sometimes happens to the fern leaf, the roots throw out runners, like quack grass. Each runner turns into a plant. Again many fine roots were returned to the nursery for further growing. There were many other interesting events and enjoyment on these buying trips.

I have found this variety of peony growing in many out of the way places. Some have been in well kept lawns and other times, it was amazing to see how these plants survived under such adverse conditions. Small trees and shrubs did not seem to bother them. Most owners of this peony always planted them in spots where they could not be stolen too easily. We have reports that they have been taken off graves in cemeteries. Continual digging for a root to

plant from an established fern leaf, will in time, kill it. It is best to dig the complete plant if one wishes to start a new one.

This peony can be planted in the spring or fall. Plant the same as the regular peony. We like to mulch the roots the first winter after planting. While this peony has proven very hardy for us, we still prefer this protection.

The roots are very different from the standard peony. They are tuberous, more like a dahlia root. Each root is attached to the main body, by a thin root. Roots are easily broken off. Care must be taken in handling them. Very few times does a knife need to be used, in dividing.

This is the first variety that we dig in the fall, perhaps because they are all hand dug. Then too, the foliage of this plant is the first to die down in the fall. Every root is saved. Those that show eyes are quickly replanted. The others are packed in damp moss and put in a cool place. After a few weeks, these roots are inspected and those that have sprouted eyes are planted in the fields. The remainder, repacked in the moss. These are packed away for the winter, in a place where they will not freeze. In the spring, more will have sprouted eyes and are planted in the field. The "blind ones" are now planted in some well marked spot, out of the way from all other nursery work, some place where they can stay for a year or two and not be disturbed. You will be surprised at the number that will throw eyes and start growing.

The most common and the most wanted *Tenuifolia* is the double red. The plant does not grow tall. Much depends on where it is planted and the kind of soil. I like this flower best when it is still in bud form. They remind me of bright red rose buds. Just imagine 40 to 45 red rose buds on beautiful green, fern like foliage. It is a sight that you will long remember.

This peony does not grow as fast or as large as other peonies. The first year, the foliage does not grow very much and it dies back early. This does not hurt the plant as the next year, it will come back better than ever. You can be sure that this peony variety will be the talk of the neighborhood.

Historical Estate Purchased

THE NEWS AND VIEWS of the AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY reports that The American Horticultural Society has moved to their new headquarters. The Society purchased the beautiful Colonial estate, once owned by George Washington on 25 rolling acres along the Potomac River. The estate is just north of Mount Vernon, Va., 20 minutes from Washington. When George Washington purchased the 25 acres in 1760, it became part of his 3000 acre River Front Farm.

A 20 room, old three-story farm house, not only has charm and history but is ideal for the Society's new home and a National Center for Horticulture. A part of the 25 acre landscape will remain intact. The Boxwood garden, the Holly and the Magnolia trees are magnificent. Individual plant societies will be encouraged to participate, when landscape design is completed.

A Tribute to Mr. L. W. Cousins



Exhibit of Mr. Cousins Hybrids at the Mansfield show, 1972.

Mr. L. W. Cousins passed away in Key West, Florida, January 26, 1973, while visiting his son. He was born in London, Ontario, Canada, October 13, 1889.

Mr. Cousins was orphaned at 11 and went to live with his grandfather. Their home was on a fruit farm which had been assembled by a gentleman farmer of taste and means.

The trees and ornamental shrubs had been imported from the great hybridizers of France and England. The association with such fine plants and



Medal Presentation to Mr. Cousins, 1972: John Simkin, Mr. Cousins, Mrs. Cousins.



Mr. Cousins with his peonies, June, 1972.

the knowledge obtained working with his grandfather gave him a great start in learning the techniques and skills of growing and hybridizing.

After completing high school in London he studied art and lithography in the United States. He became a lithographic artist initially in New York, Coshocton, Ohio, and Winnipeg, Manitoba, returning to London in 1920. His enquiring mind and inventive ability led to the photographic method and many other improvements in lithography.

The early 1920's saw the beginning of his hybridizing work with iris leading to the registration of "Great Lakes" which won the Dykes medal in 1928. Many other fine iris seedlings are still in his garden.

The iris and peony were popular flowers and a dual iris and peony society flourished in London. Mr. Cousins became attracted to the peony. The artist by the colour and form of the flowers and the hybridizer by the challenge offered in its weak stems.

He assembled a stock of plants from the best growers in the world. Then began the lifetime search for strong stems, firm substance, large petals and true colours which is described so well by Father John L. Fiala in the A.P.S. bulletin No. 196 of March/April 1970.

During the blooming season all his leisure time was spent with his peonies. In the evening he talked over the next day's work with Mrs. Cousins. She drove him back and forth to work even at lunch time so the crosses could be made. The results of his work burst upon the peony works in 1969 at Mansfield when he and Mrs. Cousins arrived unheralded with pails of peonies. Miss Saunders was enthralled.

She arranged another display for the 1972 Mansfield Show when the Saunders medal was awarded to Mr. Cousins for "Hybrids achieved through a lifetime of highly complex breeding." The medal was given to Mr. Cousins in his garden among his peonies by John Simkins on behalf of the society. He was deeply moved and pleased with this recognition of his work, especially as the medal commemorated a man whom he admired so much.

Mr. Cousins was endowed with the artist's eye for colour and form, the gardener's touch for substance and the scientist's mind for perfection and order. All these talents were used with consummate patience for the benefit of mankind. His life was filled with a purpose for which we who remain and those who follow will be ever grateful.

We offer our condolences to Mrs. Cousins and the family.

— John Simkins

"The entire American Peony Society is deeply grieved. Those that know of his wonderful work will feel his loss deeply. He gave so much to floriculture and will especially be remembered for 'Inner Glow' in peonies.

"Our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Cousins. She can certainly be proud of the Cousins family contribution to human enjoyment."

Signed,

ROY KLEHM,

President, American Peony Society.

Peony Hybridists — Actual or Potential

by Silvia Saunders

I have for several years now compiled a list of Peony Hybridists, Actual or Potential. Names of those of my customers whom I estimated to be at least "potential" if not "actual," since they had ordered from my nursery either my "Hybridists' Headstart" Collection, or individual hybrid plants, which because of their bloodlines I reserved for Breeders Only, and placed in a separate listing.

I came to, in the fall of 1969, and suddenly realized that we had 50 Peony Breeders! They seemed to be spouting up out of every crack in the ground; or so it seemed, compared to the drought, up till then. So I made a list of their names and sent a copy to each one. Laboriously arranged, it started in Massachusetts and worked westward in a sort of zig zag fashion, clear to Oregon. This was done with a view to greater neighborliness. Each person could readily pick out the member living closest to himself, or herself, and perhaps exchange questions, findings, or even plants!

Then the idea of a Breeders' Newsletter was born. For the first year, the Kozaks ran it: Lois and her fine young husband, Don (now, alas, no longer with us). But this is a somewhat arduous task, and we felt that no one person should be too long burdened with it. After the Kozaks had inaugurated it and gotten out four excellent issues the first year, Chris Laning and his wife, also a Lois, took it over. They too are doing a splendid job, the Newsletter has been modestly named "PAEONIA." It runs articles really aimed for Breeders, elementary, intermediate and advanced. Technical problems are discussed, and the newcomers to breeding can listen in on the Old Pros as they tussle with the Ins and Outs of the Ito Cross — the peony world's latest dramatic break-through.

In 1970 and 1971 more people appeared, and in the Peony Bulletin for December 1971, a list of the eleven new members of that season was printed. Last year, ten more brought the total list to over 100! 102 to be exact. Of course some of these are more actual than others; some are even more potential than others. There may even be a few with No Interest At All. They will have to forgive this enthusiasm on my part. I trust that at any rate it has not brought them much Junk Mail.

Because my nursery was officially closed in November 1972, there will be no more names, actual or potential, from this corner of the peony world. And because the list was ever only typewritten, and like a private club, was issued only for the benefit of those in it, I am of the feeling that it should now be printed, certainly in "PAEONIA" and perhaps in the Society's Bulletin as well. The fact that not all are members of the Society is neither here nor there. Even though we do number 102, we are a long way from our nearest neighbor, and who knows, the name of someone, even in the next state, and even if only potentially interested, just might strike a spark of friendship and togetherness.

The task of arranging 102 names in neighborly fashion, as the first fifty were done, proved too great, however. So here we all are, simply in alphabetical order.

And what use is a list without accompanying statistics? Here are a few: 1 each from France, Switzerland, West Germany and New Zealand. 6 in Canada, from Ottawa to Saskatchewan.

All the rest are in the United States, from Massachusetts and New Hampshire to California, Oregon and Washington; from North Dakota and Minnesota to Natchez, Mississippi.

Twenty-six are women, including the Grafyn (Countess) von Zeppelin; but not including "hidden" women — that wife, mother, or even daughter, working beside a man, urging him on, and tidying up after him.

- * Adams, Mr. A. T.
600 Cumberland Ave.
Jellico, Tennessee 37762
and 1451 Gulf Blvd.
Bayside Gardens, Apt. 208
Clearwater, Fla. 33515
- * Anderson, Mr. Oscar W. B.
3 Braithwaite Street
Christchurch, New Zealand
- Armatys, Mr. Leo
Central City
Nebraska 68826
- Auten, Mr. Edward Jr.
2148 Horace Avenue
Abington, Pennsylvania 19001
- * Ballard, Mrs. Arlene
Route 4, Box 86-A
Easton, Maryland 21601
- Banziger, Mr. Richard
R. D. 2, Box 209
Catskill, New York 11414
- * Bartos, Mrs. Armand
778 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10021
(also Bridgehampton, N.Y.)
- * Bennetch, Mrs. Paul
303 West Maple
Langhorne, Pennsylvania 19047
- * Bennett, Mrs. E. L.
1933 West Lawn Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53711
- * Bock, Mrs. Claude V.
511 Conneaut Ave.
Bowling Green, Ohio 43402
- Briscoe, Mr. H. E.
Route 1
White Hall, Illinois 62092
- * Burkland, Mrs. Charles
1131 Woodland Drive
Newton, Iowa 50208
- * Cazal, Mr. Fred L., Jr.
Gurleyville, Route 3
Storrs, Connecticut 06268
- * Colmegna, Mrs. Valeria
6711 Ludiano, La Grillaia
Tessit, Switzerland
- Cooper, Mr. Fred
49 Crownhill Street
Ottawa 9, Canada
- Daphnis, Mr. Nassos
Gratwick Tree Peonies
Pavilion, New York 14525
- * Darrah, Mr. Stewart
R. R. 1
New Haven, Missouri 63068
- * Dattilo, Mrs. John E.
11612 N.E. 133
Kirkland, Washington 98033
- Dennis, Mr. George
415 West Robinson St.
Harrisburg, Illinois 62946
- * Denton, Mr. Howard L., Jr.
7903 Springway Road
Ruxton, Baltimore, Maryland 21204
- Drake, Miss Frances
Box 474
Minnetonka, Minnesota 55343
- * Dumanski, Dr. John S.
180 Lexington Avenue
Passaic, New Jersey 07055
- Emery, Mr. Dara
Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens
1212 Mission Canyon Road
Santa Barbara, California 93105

- * English, Mr. Cameron
41 Citation Drive
Willowdale, Ontario, Canada
- * Erling, Mr. Dan
1239 South 49th
West Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53214
- Fiala, Father John L.
7359 Branch Road
Medina, Ohio 44256
- Fischer, Mr. Hubert
Meadow Gardens, 63rd Street
Hinsdale, Illinois 60521
- Gilbertson, Mr. Ben
Kindred, North Dakota 58051
- * Goodrich, Mrs. Hunter
Cobb Isle, Water Mill
Long Island, New York 11976
(and Box 886
Natchez, Mississippi 39120)
- * Guest, Mrs. W. F. C.
245 Park Ave., 36th floor
New York, New York 10017
(also Old Westbury, New York)
- * Guy, Mr. W. C.
Box 173
Aiken, South Carolina 29801
- Harder, Mr. Larry
Ponca, Nebraska 68770
- Harper, Mr. Allen
Top O' the Ridge
100 N.E. 81st Street
Kansas City Missouri 64118
- Helmiling, Mr. Fred C.
8050 South Route 88
R. D. 2
Ravenna, Ohio 44266
- Hemphill, Mrs. Elva
1415 East Florida Street
Springfield, Missouri 65803
- Hertz, Mrs. Carl F.
R. R. 1
Nevada, Iowa 50201
- Hochstein, Mr. David J.
1114 East 48th
Brooklyn, New York 11234
- Hollingsworth, Mr. Don
5831 North Colrain
Kansas City, Missouri 64151
- Howard, Mrs. George C.
13511 Woodmore Road
Mitchellville, Maryland 20716
- * Hudson, Mr. David W.
P. O. Box 127
Amberg, Wisconsin 54102
- * Isek, Mr. Joseph
6127 North Monticello Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60659
- Jacobs, Mrs. Stuart
8950 Given Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243
- * Janson, Mrs. C. H.
1206 N.E. 84th Terrace
Kansas City, Missouri 64155
- * Keister, Mr. Edwin C.
514 Arthur Avenue
Scottsdale, Pennsylvania 15683
- * Kirchner, Mr. Elmer
(U.S.A.F. ret.)
Route 4, Box 136
Hillsboro, Oregon 97123
- Kivell, Mr. Ivan E.
Route 1
Greene, Iowa 50636
- Klehm, Mr. Roy G.
Charles Klehm & Sons
Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005
- Kostiuk, Mrs. Muryle
Route 2, Box 37
Harrah, Oklahoma 73045
- Kozak, Mrs. Lois
8215 Branch Road
Medina, Ohio 44256
- Krantz, Mrs. John
903 Fourth Ave., N.E.
Brainerd, Minnesota 56401
- Krupien, Mr. August
Bethmour Road
Bethany, Connecticut 06525
- * Kuesel, Mr. Harry
Old Brook Gardens
19 Mary Lane
Greenvale, New York 11548
- Laning, Mr. P. Chris
553 West "F" Avenue
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49001
- * Livingston, Mr. G. A.
Windswept Gardens
Route 2
Earlville, Illinois 60518
- Michau, Mr. Edward Lee
1412 North Georgie
Derby, Kansas 67037

- * Modderman, Mrs. George
Alexander, Iowa 50420
- * Moldovan, Mr. Steve
Moldovan's Gardens
38830 Detroit Road
Avon, Ohio 44011
- * Morel, Dr. George
C.N.R.A., Rte de St. Cyr
Versailles, France
- Morgan, Mr. Ian
22 Holton Avenue
Westmount, 217, P.Q., Canada
- * Mulligan, Mr. Brian
Univ. of Washington Arboretum
Seattle, Washington 98105
- * Muntz, Mr. A. Philip
8524 Overbrook Road
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
- Mysyk, Mr. Theodore
Box 482
Woodstock, Illinois 60098
- O'Donnell, Mr. G. E.
400 West Cleveland
Lafayette, Colorado 80026
- Pehrson, Mr. E. L. (Roy)
501 S. Victory
Mankato, Minnesota 56001
(also Lafayette, Minnesota 56054)
- * Pollard, Mr. William G.
191 Outer Drive
Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830
- Reath, Dr. David
Box 251
Vulcan, Michigan 49892
- Ricotta, Mr. George P.
95 Highland Avenue
Binghamton, New York 13905
- * Riley, Mr. R. J.
1239 Rhine, C-1,
Mankato, Minnesota 56001
- Rogers, Mr. Harold
20 Vernon Terrace
East Orange, New Jersey 07017
- Ruppert, Mr. Frank
857 West Bonnie Brae Court
Ontario, California 91762
- Saunders, Miss Silvia
Clinton, New York 13323
- Scheele, Dr. Raymond
Woods Road, Westbury
Long Island, New York 11590
- Schmidt, Mr. Robert F.
5320 Oakes Road
Brecksville, Ohio 44141
- * Schuster, Mr. Bernard
Schuster's Gardens
R.F.D. 5, West Main St.,
Platteville, Wisconsin 53818
- Gary Seaman
Gratwick Tree Peonies
Pavilion, New York 14525
- Seidl, Mr. William J.
732 South 19th Street
Manitowoc, Wisconsin 54220
- Simkins, Mr. John E.
1246 Donlea Crescent
Oakville, Ontario, Canada
- * Skarda, Mr. Philip
647 South Victoria
St. Paul, Minnesota 55102
- * Sloan, Mr. Richard J.
6450 Jonathan Lane
Gurnee, Illinois 60031
- Smirnow, Mr. Louis
85 Linden Lane
Brookville, New York 11545
- * Smith, Mr. C. R.
9 Shore Edge Lane
Short Hills, New Jersey 07078
- Smith, Willis J.
404 McCarroll Drive
Ottumwa, Iowa 52501
- Spangler, Mr. C. F.
Route 3, Box 43
Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin 53538
- * Stokes, Mrs. Robert
109 Benedict Road
Pittsford, New York 14534
- * Stribula, Mr. John L.
252-17 Elkmont Avenue
Bellerose, L.I., New York 11426
- * Stuart, Mr. Robert
Stuart's Farm
Box 88
Stratham, New Hampshire 03885
- Syrový, The Rev. Joseph L.
St. Mary's Church
Vining, Iowa 52348

* Tompkins, Miss Nyla
139 Parsons Avenue
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* Treganza, Mr. Howard L.
515 East Maple
Canton, South Dakota 57013

Trommer, Mr. Charles R.
Tranquil Lake Nursery
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Rehoboth, Massachusetts 02769

Vander Sall, Mr. Scott
118 Perry Street
Pemberville, Ohio 43450

* Van Zandt, Mr. John
9 LeMoyné Avenue Extension
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Box 393, 88 Coolidge Street
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Viette, Mr. Andre
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East Norwich, Long Island
New York 11732

von Zeppelin, Grafen
Laufen-Baden, Post Muhlheim
West Germany

Wadekamper, Mr. Julius
Maple Lake, Minnesota 55358

* Wakefield, Mrs. G. K.
1465 Brush Hill Road
Milton, Massachusetts 02186

* Weber, Mrs. Nelva
510 East 84th
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White, Mr. Herbert L.
Box 264
Woodbine, Iowa 51579

Wister, Mr. John C.
Harvard Avenue
Swarthmore, Pennsylvania 19081

* Wright, Mr. Percy H.
407 109th Street
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
Canada

* Currently non-A.P.S. MEMBERS. Those of you who live a close visiting distance from them should make every effort to convert them to membership.

"Hope Springs Eternal"

by William Bringe, West Salem, Wisconsin

The 72 peony season here is one that I hope soon to forget. It was not ideal.

Early spring was cold and wet. Rain, sleet and snow persisted into April, and it did not warm up until near the end of the month. And then it really warmed up. Midsummer temperatures in May. Iris and peony stems grew like asparagus and were just as brittle. High winds broke many of them. The blooms were small and soft and the colors were pale.

Felix Supreme was rose instead of red and so was Kansas. Mrs. Livingston Farrand was a ghost of what it should be, and even Marietta Sisson was sad. The tree peonies were almost a complete washout. The blooms were small and the substance poor and they blew in a few days. In early June it cooled off somewhat and some of the late bloomers were better, nothing to take to a show. But hope springs eternal and there is always next season and it surely will be better.

I look forward to the start of an early 1973 season with high hopes that maybe I'll have something to take to the Milwaukee show. I'll try again to hold the tree peonies in storage.

This winter has been mild. We had good snow cover during the coldest weather and the tree peony buds are fat and shiny and there seems to be no freeze back. Crocus are blooming and jonquils are peeping up. Iris Danfordiae are in bloom. What a pity they last only a few days. When I see the lovely little blossoms among the fallen leaves I lose my winter lassitude. Surely spring is on the way.

Another Picture



This one shows what a well-dressed peony seed parent should look like near the close of the pollinating season.

When work was being done on this plant all buds which had opened enough to expose the center were pulled off. Others not yet opened were pollinated with tree peony pollens and bagged immediately. A close look at this picture will reveal some lateral buds almost overdue for pollination. Don't worry about them. It was taken care of.

I have three good plants of this lacti jap (Vesper). I like it because it makes nice seeds, because it stands up well, because it has strong laterals, and because I already have not less than 8 "Ito" type seedlings from it.

This picture should illustrate better than words can do the sort of effort which is desirable when difficult crosses are attempted.

Roy Pehrson

Spring 1973 in Kansas

by Frank E. Moots, Newton, Kansas

The past winter in Kansas was unusually severe. The freezing and thawing which occurred several times, may have damaged some of the new plantings of peonies. The extra moisture received has provided excellent growing conditions. Cultivation has been delayed and weeds may become quite a problem in the cut flower fields.

On April 9th, the temperature dropped to the mid-twenties and damaged some tree peony buds and foliage and perhaps the buds on the herbaceous peonies as they were more than six to eight inches above the ground. It is usually ten days or two weeks after a freeze before the damage can be assessed.

For some reason, the herbaceous hybrids are never damaged by a freeze. Although the stems may appear limp, the following day they seem to be normal and will bloom as if nothing unusual had ever happened.

A matter of considerable concern to the cut flower growers, in this area is the change in the date of Memorial Day. Some years the best cuts come in

from the 22nd to 25th of May and they would miss this market, which is the principal one, when the date of Memorial Day may be as early as May 25th. While the change of calendar date may be of a pleasure holiday, it is detrimental to the business of those supplying the peony, the dependable flower that has always been in demand by the public.

Our Readers Write

"Please arrange so that we do not miss our first issue for 1973. The American Peony Society Bulletin is an important part of our periodicals collection."

Emilie Quast, Librarian
United States Department of Agriculture
United States National Arboretum
Washington, D.C.

Harold E. Wolfe has written that both Mrs. Wolfe and himself are in the very best of health and are more interested in the plant world, than ever.

NOTE: Mr. Wolfe served as President and also as a Director of the American Peony Society.

Mr. Arnold W. Messmahl, Sr., North Brunswick, New Jersey, writes:

"We have had so far this spring, one of the most unusual seasons in the last 65 years of my memory. No frost since February 28th. Temperature range 50-65 degrees. We live south of the New York foothills, in the lap of the New York and Raritan Bays, about 40 miles west of New York City.

"Have just finished transplanting 50 varieties of peonies. This was impossible to do last fall. Prospects are good so far this year, for a good season of bloom. It depends on the late April and May frost."

Mr. Messmahl has a complete file of the American Peony Society Bulletins from 1943 to date.

Mr. Willis J. Smith, Ottumwa, Iowa, writes that his copies of the American Peony Society Bulletins date back to the 1930's.

HELP! So far, *NO* lists of donations for the Milwaukee Auction have been received at this office. As you all may know, this auction not only provides a high note of interest at the annual meeting, but is the second greatest source of revenue for the Society.

PLEASE check your planting, and even tho you may have only one choice peony you feel able to divide, let us have your offer. It is obviously too late to publish a list, so will you please send your list directly to the Secretary, Greta M. Kessenich, 250 Interlachen Road, Hopkins, Minn. 55343. These lists should arrive no later than June 10 so that we can at least mimeograph complete lists for bidders' guidance. *Don't put this down till you have taken some action — this is critical.*

Publications

Handbook of The Peony — A 36 page booklet containing concise articles on why and when to plant, the care, culture and propagation of peonies of all kinds. Price: \$1.00 each. 25 to 49 copies, \$.75 each. 50 or more copies, \$.50 each. Revised and reprinted December 1969.

Back Bulletins. Current Issues, \$1.00 each, to members. \$2.00 to non-members.

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The Peonies, edited by John C. Wister (1962). Published by the American Horticultural Society, Wellington, Mt. Vernon, Va. 22121. 220 pages, packed with up-to-date information on Herbaceous, Tree and Hybrid Peonies. Profusely illustrated. Price to Members, Clothbound \$3.50, Paperbound \$2.50.

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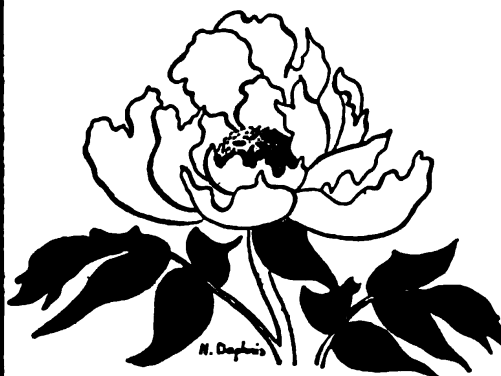
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