

American Peony Society Bulletin

MAR 8 - 1974



March, 1974 — No. 209



AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

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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.

The AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY BULLETIN is the official Society publication. It is mailed postpaid quarterly to all members in good standing.

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	Junior of member family	2.50
Single Triennial	20.00	Junior non-member family	3.50
Family Annual	10.00	Life	150.00
Family Triennial	27.50	Commercial membership	25.00

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

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

For those who wish to further support the Society, the following special memberships are available.

Contributing	\$ 25.00	Supporting	\$100.00
Sustaining	50.00	Patron	250.00



AMERICAN Peony Society Bulletin



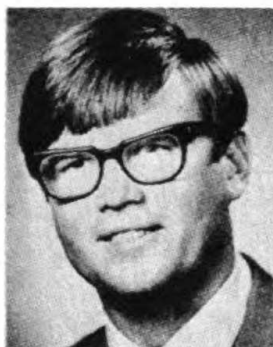
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COVER: TREE PEONIES

Spring Garden Entrance, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario Canada



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Peony Friends,

It certainly is gratifying to have such a high percentage of our membership renew their dues for the coming year. Speaking for the Board of Directors and our Secretary-Treasurer-Editor we are all dedicated to giving the best possible service and most interesting Bulletin for our members.

The highlight of every year is the National Show and the yearly National Meeting. This year we are taking on an international flavor, so to speak, in having our Meeting in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, June 15 to 16. This should be prime bloom time in this area. Our Vice President and Show Co-ordinator, John Simkins, promises a very eventful and interesting Show and Program. Please **do** plan to attend — remember a nice side trip would be a short visit to Niagara Falls, which is only a short distance away.

I would also like to encourage anybody interested in showing their prize flowers, to please do so since I sincerely believe anyone has a chance to win, even the most experienced showmen of today can be beaten — remember it only takes one flower.

Ken Sampson and I will spend one whole day at the Plant Society Booth during the World Flower Show in Chicago during the last week of March. We will of course represent the American Peony Society. I am personally forcing 15 or 20 Peonies in large containers to decorate the booth, and help create interest. If any commercial or other members would like their catalogues or lists handed out Ken and I would certainly do this in an unbiased way.

Spring is coming and I am sure everyone is anxious to see their Peonies popping from the ground. Remember to give them a little cultivation and fertilization to improve this year's blooms.

Sincerely yours,

ROY KLEHM, President

PEONY GROWING IN ICELAND

Kristinn Gudsteinsson, P.O. Box 652. Reykjavik, Iceland

Members of the American Peony Society will probably be surprised when they hear that a person living in Iceland has become a fellow. Last year an American friend of mine sent me a copy of Gilbert H. Wild and Son's Plant catalogue, which describes some of the new peony hybrids that are grown in the U.S.A. When I read that most of these new hybrids are extremely early flowering, and that among the parents, are species such as *P. officinalis*, *P. anomala* and *P. tenuifolia*, I became so interested, that I felt that I had to learn something more about these plants. Fortunately the address of the American Peony Society was given in the above mentioned catalogue. Also information on the two books on peonies, that you all know. (The Peonies, edited by John C. Wister and Peonies Outdoors and In, by Arno and Irene Nehrling.) I did not hesitate to send in an application for a membership to the Society, and to order the books. Having received several of the Societies Bulletins and the two peony books, I have spent many pleasant hours reading them, in addition to the catalogues of peony growers.

Last autumn, I decided to send an order for several of the hybrid peonies, that I find so interesting. The plants arrived here in excellent condition, and I now look forward with great excitement to see the results. To explain why I find these early flowering hybrids so interesting, I have to tell you something about the climate here in Iceland and growing conditions in general.

The following table shows the average temperatures of each month of the year during the last 10 years, here in Reykjavik:

AVERAGE TEMPERATURE & RAINFALL, EVERY 24 HOURS

January	-0,8 (°C)	1,7 (mm)	July	10,8	1,7
February	-0,1	2,2	August	10,6	1,9
March	-0,5	2,7	September	8,0	2,5
April	2,9	1,9	October	4,3	2,7
May	6,5	1,4	November	0,9	2,3
June	9,5	1,8	December	0,0	3,0

According to this table, the summers here are rather cool. The winters, on the other hand, can be said to be fairly mild. This we can thank the Gulf Stream, that brings warmth to us from the Gulf of Mexico.

Owing to the cool summers, it is rather limited what we can grow here. Fruit trees do not thrive, and experiments to grow some of the cereals (Rye and barley) have now ceased. Fortunately we get in most years, fairly good crops of potatoes. Some of the vegetables also thrive here, such as early ripening varieties of white cabbage and cauliflower. Several of the berry fruits are cultivated with rather good results, and there is an increasing interest in growing them, to find out which varieties are most suitable. A considerable number of perennial flowering plants are cultivated in the gardens. Some late flowering plants, such as the Phlox, Asters and Chrysanthemums cannot be grown here. Alpines or the so called rock garden plants

thrive well. Some of the Icelandic native plants are the same as can be found at great altitudes (2000 to 3000 meters) in the Alps of Europe. Here they grow at sea level.

Peonies are much admired here, in Iceland. In a ballot, last year, the Peony was voted the most beautiful flower, by members of the Horticultural Society of Iceland. This society was established in 1885 and has now over 2,000 members.

In the past, the only peonies that have been grown here to any extent, are the varieties of *Paeonia officinalis*, because they have been considered the only peonies that thrive and flower really well in our climate. Plants of the *P. lactiflora* varieties are sometimes seen in gardens, but unfortunately very seldom in flower. The plants seem to be equally winter hardy as the *P. officinalis* varieties and flower buds are often seen, but these seldom mature into flowers, probably owing to a lack of sufficient warmth at the flowering time. But there may also be some other reasons, such as wrong planting depth etc. I also think that careful experiments have to be made to find out which varieties are most suitable for us.

I have not grown the *P. Lactiflora* varieties in my garden for a number of years. However, since I have interest in these plants again, I have decided to obtain plants of the *lactifloras*, in as many varieties as possible, with the hope of finding some that are suitable for cultivation, here in Iceland. I am sure that such varieties exist, as I had a plant in my garden many years ago that flowered regularly and as easily as *P. officinalis*. I purchased this plant with approximately twenty other plants, when visiting a nursery near Copenhagen, in Denmark, about twenty years ago. I think that I gave this plant to someone, as it was not clear to me then, that I had a valuable plant. This plant had flowers of the Japanese type. The other twenty never bore flowers and were thrown away. I think that the exceptional plants that can flower in the Icelandic climate, will be found among the earliest flowering varieties. I will concentrate on them in the future.

I have grown several of the *Paeonia* species from seed and found some of them good garden plants, especially *P. ANOMALA*, *P. VEITCHII* and its variety 'WOODWARDII'. These plants are very free flowering and the plants need no staking. They flower earlier than the *P. OFFICINALIS*. (*P. OFFICINALIS* flowers the beginning of July.)

The seeds of *P. ANOMALA* was obtained from an Arctic Botanic Garden, which the Russians have on the Kola peninsula in Murmansk district. I am therefore sure of having the true species. The origin of the seed was said to be the Altai mountains and also a place near Lake Beloje in N.V. Russia. (Murmansk).

For about twenty years, I have grown a plant of *P. SUFFRUTICOSA*, in my garden, which was given to me as a small seedling. The plant was not in a good place but gradually it attained a height of about one and one-half meters. It had many stems but had flowered only once, with one single pink blossom with dark blotches in the center. Last winter, I decided to

move the plant to a location with more sun. I divided the large plant into ten divisions which was planted in various places in my garden. With two or three exceptions, the divisions are surviving this treatment. Several of the divisions are being grown in large plastic containers, in my unheated greenhouse, as I have in mind to use them as seed mother plants.

I am experimenting with the tree peonies, of the several named varieties that I obtained from Holland, that are of the Japanese origin. They are also kept in pots in my cool greenhouse. I do not know of anyone else growing tree peonies, here in Iceland. It will be very interesting to see the results.

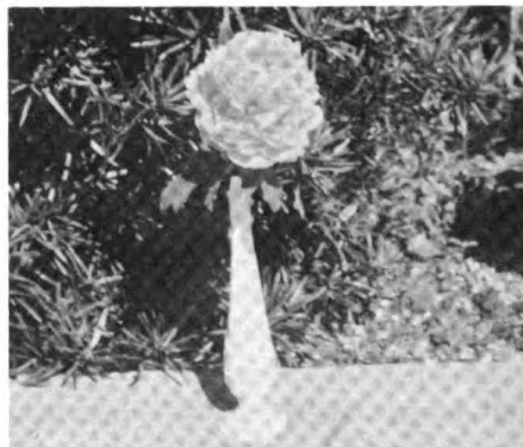
My great hope now is in the American Hybrid Peonies. If they prove to be successful here, I will gradually build up a collection of them and also do some hybridizing so as to have seedlings of my own crosses.

PEONIES IN THE SOUTH

Glen Monday, Monroe, Louisiana



*Peonies blooming in Louisiana.
Garden of Glen Monday.*



*Bloom of Lutea Tree Peony, ALICE
HARDING. From the garden of
Glen Monday.*

Will Peonies grow in the South? Many people will tell you that they will not. We have had people visit our garden, admire the beautiful blooms, and say, "Isn't it a shame they won't grow down here?" My only honest answer would be to tell you of my twenty years experience (good and bad) in the deep South. Our home is in Monroe, in northern Louisiana, about two hundred fifty miles from the Gulf coast. Contrary to popular belief we do not have balmy winters. Our winters usually last from November to mid March and temperatures have been down to ten above zero. We have occasional snow but it is such a rare event the schools close and the kids have a holiday throwing snow balls. The Peonies seem to have enough cold for dormancy.

We fell in love with Peonies in the spring of 1954 while working in Illinois and decided we must grow some in our garden at home. We visited Mr. Edward Auten, the famous hybridizer in Illinois and asked his advice. He was very kind but very discouraging and reluctantly sold us six roots to be shipped in the fall. We were constant visitors of Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Rhodes

of Assumption, Illinois who had a beautiful Peony garden. We thought perhaps there was some magic in the Illinois soil and at our insistence Mrs. Rhodes potted twenty plants in buckets of Illinois soil. These were brought home and planted (buckets and all) in our garden in December, the idea being that the buckets would rot. You Peony gardeners won't believe it but we had one or two blooms on every plant the next spring and were so excited. Needless to say, the bucket plan didn't work very well. The buckets didn't rot, the roots grew to the sides and then came straight up! The wonder is that they survived the summer and were replanted (minus buckets) in the fall. Of course, in the meantime we really had the bug and ordered more roots. We were learning the hard way. We got brave and entered nine blooms in a big flower show and came home with eight blue ribbons. It was our first flower show of any kind and we were very ignorant — just went out that morning, cut the nine blooms, put them in a pitcher of water and away we went. However, we did know all the names and looking at an old scrap book I found six of these ribbons. They were for Sword Dance, Le Cygne, Christine, Ruth Clay, Nancy Nichols and Kelway's Glorious. Since that first flower show we have received many blue ribbons on our Peonies.

After that our garden grew like topsy. Every fall we planted more roots and had some of the new hybrids and a few tree Peonies. People came from all over the area to look at the blooms. I remember one lady who had moved from Pennsylvania who stopped and asked if she could just come in and smell a Peony. We had programs on local TV and even planted a root outside the studio on one of our programs. People began calling us the Peony Man and Lady and it was all a lot of fun. We also joined the American Peony Society and have only missed one meeting in the last eight years. Meeting all the fine folks in Peony world has been one of the best experiences of my life.

There is no magic about growing Peonies in the south but culture is somewhat different than in colder climates. Most of this we found by trial and error. We found that early and mid-season blooming varieties and more satisfactory as they open before our weather gets too hot. Our son in Nashville, Tennessee, has a number of our late "errors" in his yard and they open well. Bloom time in our area begins about April 15th and lasts a month.

Talking of varieties brings up the question of where to obtain good roots. It takes labor and good soil to plant a Peony — or anything else — so it is a good investment to buy the best roots possible. As of now, the only place to buy freshly dug named varieties is from a commercial grower. You can order their catalog, order your plants, and they will be shipped in the fall at the proper planting time. Peony roots planted in the Spring in the South are almost guaranteed to die. I believe the cause of most failures in this area is due to planting unnamed varieties in the spring.

Select your planting site and try to have it prepared before your roots arrive. Peonies do better here when they get a half day shade as our hot May sun can be murder to blooms. Do not plant too near trees, large shrubs, or hedge. They should be spaced at least two feet apart.

I hesitate to name varieties but will list a number which we have grown and bloomed for several years. Three plants of *Le Cygne* have never failed to bloom well in fifteen years. *Minnie Shaylor* is tall, vigorous, and a good bloomer. My list would include *Nick Shaylor*, *Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt*, *Krinkled White*, *LeJour*, *Dawn Pink*, *Sea Shell*, *Red Red Rose*, *Bute*, *Prairie Moon*, *Rosy Cheeks*, *Lovely Rose*, and *Exotic*. One plant of *Exotic* had forty seven blooms one year. My advice would be to start with five or six medium priced roots, plant them well, and take care of them. I'm sure if you do you will be hooked for life and will want more and more.

We now come to the place that separates the gardeners from the coffee drinkers — digging the holes! Dig the hole two feet in diameter and two feet deep. Save the top soil but discard the sub soil and the hard pan, if encountered, I've heard people say they have no hard pan. Either they are very fortunate or they haven't dug deep enough. After a well earned rest, fill the hole to within eight inches of the top with good friable garden soil mixed with a pound of bone meal. The next step is one of the most important in your planting. Tamp this soil firmly in the hole. We find that tramping with our feet gives the best results. After tramping you will find that more soil is needed to fill the hole. Repeat this process until the soil is firmly packed and will not settle after our winter rains. This is not the spot to skimp on soil. Make a mound of good soil in the center of the hole. Have the mound high enough that when the root is set on it the crown or eyes are one or two inches above the ground level. This seems high but no matter how well you have packed the soil there will be some settling. Cover the roots well with soil. Grasp the top of the plant and shake gently to get soil all around the roots and fill in any voids. Water well and after all the water has drained away fill in the entire hole, covering the eyes with about an inch of soil. So label your plants or make a chart of your planting. You are hoping the plant will be around a long time and you don't want to say "It" or "Them" for that long.

The after care of Peonies is simple. A mulch of pine straw, bark, etc. around the roots in the summer will keep down weeds and conserve moisture. In case of drought a good soaking every week is important. The mulch should be removed in the fall and the dead stalks cut and removed. We have used bone meal or low nitrogen fertilizer lightly dug around the roots after bloom time.

POSTSCRIPT: DEAR EDITOR:

In 1969 due to the expansion of our University I had to move. By that time the garden was surrounded by a Coliseum, an eleven story dormitory, and five fraternity houses. Due to major surgery and lack of help I could only move a few plants to a new location. I have about twenty five plants and three Tree Peonies. Thanks to Roy Klehm I have some of his new varieties and had blooms on them this past spring. The soil in my new garden is very porous and drought is a series problem but I am working on it. Hope to see you in Canada June 1974.

— "this lovely flower" — THE PEONY

Dr. Julian L. Janus Sleeping Beauty Gardens, Chicago, Ill.

Our first planting was of exactly 400 seeds, picked at random and planted just for curiosity's sake — that was 25 years ago.

The next planting was almost all hand-crossed and carefully labeled. Not knowing what other breeders used for their bloodlines, seeds were selected from peony varieties of 21 different breeders in order to have a wide blanket representation and thus expose the hidden genotypes that lay hidden in the souls of these famous beauties. All peony types and colors of lactiflora were represented plus 4 species or their hybrids.

Over the years I had acquired about 400 different peony varieties including 40 hybrids and 12 species. So when my own crosses began to appear I was better able to judge them by comparing them to these champions. However when our own first peony bloomed, although it was just a pretty, little pink single, we were ecstatic and thought it the most beautiful peony we had ever seen (love is blind) and ran through a gamut of names to pick one to crown it with. Can one ever forget the pristine loveliness of that first bloom? All the years of waiting are compensated for, in that one ecstatic moment. Then came the real beauties and we gave them names they deserved: Lovely, massive *Mable Merrifield*, a Japanese type with a 4 inch heart; *Fire Dragon* and *Gay Dragon* dressed in deep, dark red; delicate *Bon Bon Pink*; aristocratic *Endymion*; beautiful *Golden Dolphin* and *Cho Cho San* and a strange little, purple dwarf, that we called *Imp*; and then there's *Fantine*, *Pollyanna*, *Monica Marie*, *Russell Alger* (a brighter Red Bird) *Julia Catherine* and many others. These are all lactifloras.

The next step was to try various crosses between different species and hybrids; and carefully gather what seed, although sparse, that these hybrids produced, which was really a random harvest.

Many combinations of crosses were made but the following surprised me with the seed produced: (*Laddie* X *Saunders'* #4992); (*Saunders'* #4992 X *Peregrina*). The cross (*lactiflora* X *lobata Sunbeam*) X (*lactiflora* X *Lobata*) produced a most vigorous plant and my best hybrid to date, named for my daughter *Dianne Janus*.

Bonus— in 1967 one of the 5 plants of *Tokio*, which is a famous Japanese type peony mutated into a full double. The beautiful soft rose-pink flowers rise high above a most robust plant. Since the flower first bloomed as a double on Father's Day I named it in memory of my Dad—*Damian Janus*. How to account for the mutation? I can't, except to note that it is growing under the tannic acid drip of my Canadian Hemlock and I can't find anywhere that tannic acid was used to induce mutations. But I thank the "Gentle Giftie" for the gift, and the many years spent in finding new beauty are not in vain, and who could ask for more? We have searched the veiled mysteries buried deep within the genes and chromosomes and exposed this slumbering beauty in lovely phenotypes. Mysteries more enigmatic than Sherlock Holmes ever discovered my dear Watson!

A SEA OF COLOR

The Daily Journal, Fergus Falls, Minnesota



For 25 years peonies have been a hobby for the Rev. Floyd Miller whose plot in Fergus Falls, Minnesota this year had 130 varieties in bloom. Some of his 315 plants have been blooming for 13 years. Blooms are white, pink and shades of red, single, double and Japanese types. The doubles are the most colorful. The season for blossoms is from about May 25 to June 25 in this area.

Photo By—Harley Oyløe

Mr. Miller has won a number of prizes at the National Peony Show when it was held in Minneapolis twice in recent years. He is a member of the National Peony Society and the Minnesota Peony Society. Peony plants produce blooms for 50 years or more, Mr. Miller, the vicar of St. James Episcopal Church, points out. They need no winter protection. They are subject to few troublesome diseases or problems of growth.



THE NEGLECTED TREE PEONY

John E. Simkins, Oakville Ontario, Canada

I would think that every member of the Society would grow a few tree peonies. They take a year or two longer to really produce but when they do watch out!

Contrary to popular belief most tree peonies in North America are sold in spring, in little boxes. By the time many are planted they have been on the relatives shelf and have formed one half to three inches of top growth. As this has taken place in the box, it is weak and dies off when the plant is set out.

I bought a box of twenty-four from a local wholesaler six years ago. As they came right from the refrigerator they had very little growth. I sold off eighteen and kept six myself. The directions on the box said to plant them about three inches deep so the graft was level with the ground.

Having read a little about tree peonies I planted mine six inches deep so the tip just showed above the soil line. Three were planted in a fairly heavy dark clay and three in sandy soil.

The next year the three in clay looked quite healthy, the three in sand looked sickly, so that fall I put them in the clay too. All six plants are still thriving. They were transplanted last year and the herbaceous stock cut off.

The eighteen I sold did not fare too well. Only two are now surviving.

From this experience I am sure that few of the boxed plants survive. So the tree peony has the reputation of being hard to grow and people are loathe to spend from \$3.95 to \$4.95 to try another one.

Since then I have planted about 15 other tree peonies mostly obtained from specialist growers. These have all been planted in the fall and have done well. The cost has ranged from \$10.00 to \$25.00 each.

Spring planting of tree peonies is possible but it must be done early before growth starts. Boxed grafts must be obtained right after they come out of cold storage. Specialist growers only deliver in the fall but some have potted grafts at the nursery in the spring. These should do well but cannot be mailed.

Planting Notes.

Tree peonies must have good drainage. In most areas of North America there is a rainy period in the fall. Should the water stand around the roots they will rot before they can start growing.

The other major consideration is not to plant them where peonies have grown before unless a three foot hole is made and filled with soil from another area. They seem to grow best in a neutral slightly alkaline soil. In England I have seen them growing with rhododendrons but I think this is the exception.

They can be planted just about in any exposure. I have them on the front lawn in a northern exposure, against a south wall and in an east facing shrub border. They do not need protection in fact a windy location seems to lower the prevalence of fungus disease.

Varieties

The two major types are the Japanese and the Lutea hybrids. Suppose you wanted to try a tree peony or two, what should you select? Louis Smirnow, Leo Armatys and Silvia Saunders have made some recommendations in previous bulletins, the exact selection is a personal one, but there are a few guide lines.

The Japanese tree peony will range in height from eighteen to forty-eight inches at maturity. In all sizes it has a distinct canopy form. At the base there are several bare stems that grow larger and more gnarled with age. The leaves form an umbrella over head. The flowers ride above the leaves. This type of bush is much admired by the Japanese who plant it where the stems can be seen. Like their bonzai the stem structure is important. This form is not too prevalent in shrubs and trees. Aralia, Kolreutaria and some forms of Japanese maple are the three that come to mind. The Japanese tree peony has a larger more ethereal flower than the luteas. It also blooms two or three weeks earlier than the luteas.

The lutea hybrids grow from twelve to thirty-six inches high. They have leaves right to the ground and form solid blobs on the landscape. They lack the airiness of the Japanese.

The lutea hybrids seems less susceptible to disease than the Japanese.

Last summer I visited eight major plantings of tree peonies in the Eastern United States. In all these gardens but one, the luteas had noticeably less die back than the Japanese. It was easy to pick them out from a distance by the more vibrant, lush foliage. This experience was confirmed in a recent visit to England where a great many of the Japanese tree peonies have been lost in the past four or five years. So with little trepidation I recommend starting with a lutea hybrid especially if you are less than a meticulous gardener. It won't be quite as spectacular as the Japanese but will mature a year sooner and require less care. If you are a careful gardener and can keep the peony bed clean and spray with a fungicide a few times a year try the Japanese.

I would suggest that you do not include Alice Harding or Souvenir deMaxine Cornu (Luteas) in your firstplanting. These produce magnificent invisible double flowers hanging down on short weak stems under the leaves. They are usually sold at somewhat higher prices than the Japanese tree peonies; I don't know why.

Don't neglect the tree peony any longer. Buy one early this spring. White or pinks are the best colors, stay away from yellow unless you want Alice Harding.

I like to put newly purchased grafts in the cut flower or vegetable garden for two or three years then transplant them to their final place removing the herbaceous root at that time.

TREE PEONY TOPICS

Louis Smirnow

Some tree peony enthusiasts have asked if there were any varieties which have variegated foliage. Other than *Tai hei beni*, which always has variegated foliage, I know of no other variety. There are several that have a few variegated leaves— They are *Senjin no soko*, *Kinutajow*, *Hana no nishiki*, *Howmei*, and *Asahi no sora*. The variety *Chowraku* recently had a few variegated leaves but is usually shows dark green foliage. Most of the varieties mentioned above are no longer in commerce.



Weather plays an important part in the size of blooms. During a rainy season, *Shujakumon* flowers will grow as much as fourteen inches. *Shintenchi*, twelve inches — *Gekkyuden*, twelve — *Kokko no tsukasa*, thirteen inches. Other twelve inch flowers and even larger are; *Stolen Heaven*, *High Noon*, *Eldorado*, *Hanakisoi*, *Tsukumo Jishi*, *Red Moon*, *Akashi gata*, *Beni chidori* and occasionally, *Rimpow*.



I have been asked to mention unusual features of some varieties.

Ubatama, that satiny maroon beauty, will occasionally grow over four feet tall although most plants will not exceed thirty inches.

Sang Lorain, famous French velvety red beauty, has three flowers on every stem, very close together, an unusual feature. It is the earliest bloomer among the hybrids and is extremely fragrant.

Mme. Louis Henry, another French beauty, small flowers, color most unusual, buff shaded salmon, salmon shaded yellow, occasionally mixed shades of above colors, suffused white.

Tenny no hagoromo, unusual lilac color heavily shaded rose-cerise. Last year a plant had four lilac blossoms and two purple cerise.

Hana no nishiki, a large cream colored blossom, cactus shaped, a most unusual flower of great beauty.



We urge deep holes when planting young tree peonies, minimum depth should be eighteen inches. We have, by experimenting, found that young plants will develop faster if planted in deep holes.



If you dig or receive a young tree peony showing rot on the roots, do not feel that the plant is deteriorating. It is merely an indication that the understock is decaying and that new roots are beginning to form at the union of the scion and the understock.



To be repetitious, watch the new growth from the root system in the spring. Be sure that this new growth will have tree peony foliage and not herbaceous. Should the latter show, be sure and remove the entire stem down to the roots. Occasionally the herbaceous understock will show growth.



Some little known tree peonies, old varieties of great beauty seen in various gardens: Eldorado, Seidai, Iwata kagura, Tsukuma Jishi, Suigan, Taisho no hokori, Shuchiuka, Kamada nishiki, Yuki zasa, Hino maru and Ruriban.

AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY COLOR SLIDES

Richard Edblom, 6917 45th Ave. North, Minneapolis Minnesota 55428

Because of recent contributions by Allen Harper, Roy Klehm, and Louis Smirnow, the slide collection of the American Peony Society is now larger than ever.

If you are seeking material for a club program or just wish to study different varieties of peonies, I know you will find it rewarding to rent one of the many sets of color slides now available. You can select a set of 80 slides from among the following: 54 different varieties of Japanese tree peonies, 35 lutea hybrids, 70 herbaceous hybrids, and 80 lactifloras.

Allen Harper and Roy Klehm have contributed slides of most of their recent introductions. Louis Smirnow's contributions include four of the Itoh-Smirnow hybrids: YELLOW CROWN, YELLOW DREAM, YELLOW EMPEROR, and YELLOW HEAVEN. In addition he has sent many tree peony slides and has had duplicates made for the Society of more than 100 of the most popular slides. The duplicates, which are of excellent quality, will permit greater flexibility in meeting rental requests.

If the number of different slides of the same variety is an indication of popularity, HANA KISOI and SHINTENCHI are the most popular Japanese

tree peonies, SAVAGE SPLENDOR heads the list of lutea hybrids, ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT, CARINA, and RED CHARM top the herbaceous hybrids and MOONSTONE is the number one lactiflora.

Despite the large number of slides in the collection, there are still many well-known varieties not represented. For example, there are no slides of the following: HINODE SEKAI, JITSU GETSU NISHIKI, KINKADEN, TAIYO and YAE ZAKURA among the Japanese tree peonies; and BANQUET, CHINESE DRAGON, HIGH NOON, MARCHIONESS, and THUNDERBOLT in the lutea hybrid group. There is a good selection of slides of hybrids resulting from the crosses of lactiflora with the lobata and officinalis species, but only five slides of other herbaceous hybrids. Even the lactiflora class is far from complete.

As I analyze the collection, by far the most significant gap is in the new variety class. With the exception of the contributions mentioned at the beginning of this report, there are no slides of any varieties introduced in the last few years. Slides of recent introductions I know would be in great demand if they were available. These slides could come either from those who introduce new varieties or from those who purchase them.

Our peonies will be blooming in just a few weeks. I urge all members to take many pictures this spring, both for themselves and for the Society. With slides, you can enjoy your peonies the year around.



A set of 80 35mm. color slides may be rented for a two-week period by sending a check for \$7.50 payable to the American Peony Society to Richard Edblom, 6917 - 45th Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55428. The types of slides desired should be specified and orders should be made at least four weeks in advance. A list of names accompanies each set. The renter must pay the return postage and insure the slides for \$50. A charge of \$2 is made for every slide missing upon return.



MY GARDEN IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

John E. Marquis

Nelson, British Columbia, Canada is about one hundred miles west of the Rocky Mountains. Located on the shore of Kootenay Lake. As this is being written, on January 5th, 1974 our temperature is twenty above zero. Our coldest was last night when the thermometer went down to zero, the coldest we have had to date. The air is clear, clean and fresh. The peonies enjoy it. There is about a foot of snow here, at Nelson but I have my peony planting, ten miles east. It seems to be in a snow belt, with about two feet and no frost in the ground. A good protection for any garden.

My garden consists of many varieties of plants. A good sized planting of peonies, lilies, daffodils, clematis, rhododendrons, azaleas, of course they are a variety of rhododendrons. Primulas of many varieties. Dozens of alpines of various varieties. Many shrubs. The easiest to care for are the PEONIES and shrubs.

PEONIES, IN THE STAN HYWET GARDENS

Z. R. Prentiss, 1799 Highview Ave., Akron, Ohio

Stan Hywet was the home of Mr. F. A. Seiberling, Akron, Ohio the founder of the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. He built the mansion and stables about 1908-1909 on a plot of 60 some acres. The mansion contains 63 rooms including a large music room, and a swimming pool in the lower level. The plan of the house was a copy of English Tudor.

The furnishings are, as they were when the Seiberlings lived there. They were gathered from many parts of the world and rate today as antiques.

The other buildings on the estate include a 'gate house', another house where the caretaker lived, the stables and the carriage house. The stables have been remodeled and are now a gift shop and a meeting room. The carriage house has been remodeled to serve as a beautiful auditorium. There is a kitchen and two smaller rooms that are suitable for small meetings.

The manor house stands near the center of the estate. Nearly half of the estate is covered with virgin timber. The entire estate is beautifully landscaped.

The landscaping includes plantings of, tulips, mums, hemerocallis, iris, annuals and peonies.

I am guilty of planning and planting the iris and the peony beds. In the larger bed there are eight rows about eighty feet long. These rows are planted in 'pairs', that is two rows four feet apart then a grass path of five feet then two more rows of peonies and a grass walk. Then repeat for the rest of the bed.

There is another bed of three rows about 100 feet long. In all of the planting, the plants are spaced three feet in the row.

All of the plants are labeled and the labels placed so that the names can be seen from the grass paths. Each bed is plotted and a record kept in the office.

A history of the soil — it is a heavy loam containing much humus. A few years ago all the leaves, grass clippings and other vegetable matter was placed on this soil and plowed under. This process was repeated for many years. The space was used for a garden plot. With the children leaving home there was a lack of desire for the garden so the area was seeded to grass.

To get ready for the peonies the area was roto-tilled many times. Some times grass is very difficult to eliminate! When we finally considered the soil nearly ready I used the Stan Hywet truck and journeyed to the farm of Mr. Krekler for the peonies. Mr. Krekler dug the tubers right then and there and we took them to Stan Hywet for planting.

Holes were dug large enough to accommodate the tubers but before planting a large double handful of bonemeal was thoroughly mixed in the soil in the bottom of the hole. They were covered then so that the 'eyes' were about two inches below the surface.

To keep the grass and weeds under control and conserve moisture we covered the beds with the heavy (.004) black polyethelene and to hold that in place it was covered with shredded sugar cain (Serval). This is the story of the fertility of the soil and the 'fertilizer' used. No other fertilizer has been used, to date.

In excess of 60% of the plants bloomed the first year and now all have shown their beauty except three or four that died. Out of a planting of more than 400 the percentage is very good. Our thanks must go to Mr. Krekler for the quality of the plants supplied.

This spring the management placed wire fencing with square meshes of four inches horizontally over the beds to support the weight of the heavy flowers. The wire was placed about 30 inches above the ground. There were arm loads of ten inch flowers on five foot stems. One would go many miles to see a more beautiful sight.

T R E E P E O N I E S

Leo J. Armatys

We live in truly amazing times. *P. suffruticosa*, the Moutan tree peony, long recognized as royalty of the garden, has suddenly provided us with new and exotic cultivars to supplement the stalwarts of the past. And more people each year are finding the patience to wait for Moutan to make its proper showing in their gardens.



Visitors from Afar I firmly believe that sooner or later Silvia Saunders will see and do everything that she has the slightest interest in seeing or doing; and she is interested in a multitude of things. Late last July she visited us in Central City, Nebraska. It so happens that she was able to land at a small airport 25 miles away, but had there been no such facilities she would no doubt have dropped in by parachute. Like mose experienced travelers she travels light, with luggage comparable in size to my wife's purse.

It is difficult to identify most Moutan or lutea hybrid cultivars out of bloom, but Silvia spotted *Rock's variety* clear across the garden, and had no trouble recognizing tall, proud *Guardian of the Monastery*.

We sat and visited on benches installed in my yard a few years ago when some of my friends started growing older. When I mentioned that we might replace a weatherbeaten pine board fence with Redwood, Silvia said, "Young man," (her eyesight is less than perfect) "there goes another Redwood tree." I did get the impression that she was mildly disappointed with what must have seemed to her to be the low-powered, rustic nature of our people and places, but from the standpoint of the Armatyses her short visit was a big success and something we will never forget.

We are looking forward to a promised visit from Roy Pehrson at pollen-harvesting time. Now that Roy is retired he will no doubt intensify his already extensive peony breeding program. He doesn't know it yet, but I am planning to get a quick lesson in hybridizing during his visit.

Want a Definitive List? There is some demand for a definitive listing of major varieties of tree peonies, giving information that may be missing, garbled or downright erroneous in catalog descriptions. For example, a prospective buyer should know that the dark maroon blossoms of KOKOMON have a fine, strong fragrance; that AGE OF GOLD opens like a rose; that DARK OF THE MOON is almost as hard to get started in the garden as the Saunders hybrid CORONAL; that the big white blooms of FLORA embody all the attributes of airy grace present in so many of the Japanese type singles, although in exaggerated form. My start on a listing of this sort struck an immediate snag—my SILVER SAILS is a strong growing plant that qualifies as one of the better garden varieties, and its cup-shaped blooms of pale, silvery yellow are nicely held on strong stems. But when I compare notes with Dr. Reath I find that his SILVER SAILS has rather faint flushes or flares, whereas mine has none. Problems, problems. Any volunteers to take on this task?

Early blooms, Late blooms With tree peonies as with most flowers, bloom is what it is all about. Here most blooms come in May and into June. A number of established lutea hybrids rebloom into the summer and fall. We set a record here on October 23rd when a good bud on AMBER MOON started to open. It was brought inside where it floated serenely for five days. These fall blooms are a much appreciated bonus.

Last summer I added to my collection of bowls for floating tree peonies. In addition to a big depression-glass bowl I picked up a 12-inch pottery bowl 2 inches deep, sea-green interior glaze which will handle the biggest blossom or a grouping of three of the smaller luteas; also a 2½ x 9-inch glass compote on 5-inch stem.

Meanwhile, back in Pavilion, New York, a tradition of growing, breeding and displaying the world's newest and finest was continuing apace. The House of Gratwick has long used crystal bowls and assorted fountains and pools for floating tree peony blossoms. Last spring a few lucky people were privileged to see their living mural of a hundred or more jewel-toned tree peonies, each in its own little vase, hooked into a tennis-net draped on an outside wall in the shade of a porch roof!

BETTER TOOLS

William H. Krekler

Last September I found a much better way to divide peonies than by using a finger-nicking knife.

The A. M. Leonard Company of Piqua, Ohio, who are the foremost dealers in tools for gardeners and nurserymen, sells a low cost grape pruner. (They also sell excellent spades, etc.)

This grape pruner has long and very narrow cutting blades. It has proved ideal for trimming and dividing (saves time and cut fingers). Only a very few of the large old peony clumps had to be cut in half with a knife.

The straight blade (not curved blade) grape pruners proved ideal for all the other peonies.

A few random thoughts on a beautiful and rewarding flower—

THE PEONY

Allen J. Wild

Since botrytis is such a severe danger to the peony bush, it should never be handled or cultivated while there is dew or raindrops on the foliage. Also in mid September, after the stalks have been cut off at ground level, I believe it wise to put about one inch of dry straw on top of the plant and set fire to the straw.

For best results the following year, peonies should be well cultivated in September and October. As to feeding the plants, fertilize in early November, never in the spring.

A large percentage of the membership of the American Peony Society, plus as many outsiders as possible should be interested in the hybridizing of this flower. New varieties and colors should be developed. This is absolutely necessary for the future of the peony. This work or hobby does not produce instant results. Hybridizing takes patience. It is a four to six year wait after planting the seed, to see the flower they have developed. It is rewarding and affords much pleasure.

Peony Bulletin #206 of June 1973 has many fine articles but two of these impressed me as being extra good. I refer to pages 18-19 "Thoughts and Suggestions" and pages 21-25, "Those other peonies". If you have read these two articles then may I suggest you read them again. I think they are well worth while.

The following ten varieties of peonies are my favorites, *RED CHARM*, *CYTHERIA*, *PAUL M. WILD*, *JUDY ANN*, *DORIS COOPER*, *ANN COUSINS*, *MOTHERS CHOICE*, *HENRY BOCKSTOCE*, *GENE WILD*, *JAN VAN LEEUWEN*.

THE AIMS OF PEONY HYBRIDIZATION

J. Franklin Styer

It is unfortunate that many members who were in Milwaukee were unable to attend the hybridizers session. These people hold the future of the peony in their hands. We should hear and try to understand what they are doing — even more, what they hope to do in the next years. Having heard, those of us who can't get in this fascinating act can at least encourage them. And while doing so, we may help by suggesting what seems to us the more useful directions of the work.

Incidentally, when these people offer new hybrids for sale, we can help in a very practical way by buying some of their things, even if not named.

With tongue a little in cheek, here are a few things we might ask for: herbaceous hybrids with straight stems; double pinks and double whites; hybrid season extended two weeks longer; crown and root less of the officinalis type; herbaceous peonies for the South, easy-opening and heat adjusted; tree peonies we can divide; double tree peonies in all the colors but not mixed colors; double tree peonies that look up, not down; in general, Botrytis resistance; blue peonies.

**THE 71st ANNUAL MEETING
69th ANNUAL EXHIBITION
and
2nd INTERNATIONAL SHOW
of**

THE AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

Hamilton, Ontario CANADA June 14, 15, 16, 1974

All events except the Annual Banquet at the
Royal Botanical Headquarters
Meeting Headquarters and Annual Banquet at
Holiday Inn, 150 King Street East

Schedule of Events

Friday, June 14th

2:00-9:00 p.m. Prepare Show Entries
8:00 p.m. Board of Directors meeting in the library

Saturday, June 15th

7:00-11:30 a.m. Set up and enter exhibits.
8:00 p.m. Registration for meeting. Banquet
10:00 a.m. Show open to the public.
11:30 a.m. Judging begins.
12:30 a.m. Lunch: \$2.50.
2:00- 9:00 p.m. Show open to the public.
1:30- 3:30 p.m. Growers and Hybridizers Seminar.
4:00 p.m. Root Mini Auction - Lobby.
7:30 p.m. Annual Banquet and Presentation of
Prizes, Members and visitors welcome. \$8.00
9:00 p.m. Annual Meeting.
10:00 p.m. Exotic root auction.

Sunday, June 16th

9:00 a.m. Board of Directors Meeting.
10:00- 6:00 p.m. Show open to Public

Members may visit the Arboretum, Spring Gardens, Rock Gardens,
Rose and Trial Gardens during daylight hours. There is no charge.
Registration for the Show, lunch and banquet is \$10.00 Canadian and
should be sent to J. E. Simkins, 1246 Donlea Cres. Oakville Ontario.
L6J 1V7 by June 1.

WELCOME TO HAMILTON, ONTARIO CANADA

Hamilton is situated on Hamilton Bay which is on the north-west
tip of Lake Ontario. Access from the United States is through Lewiston,
Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Detroit or Port Huron. From the east it may be
advantageous to come through Watertown into Canada and proceed
down Highway 401 to Hamilton.

There is no gasoline shortage along these routes and all except the
Port Huron to London highway are four lane no-toll highways. Hamilton
is served by Nordair airline to Hamilton Airport and by all the major
airlines to Toronto International Airport. The latter is about 35 miles
from Hamilton. Buses, taxis and rental cars are available at the airport.

We expect a large number of visitors to Ontario this summer so
making hotel reservations early is a wise move. A block of 20 rooms
has been reserved at Holiday Inn, Hamilton for the American Peony
Society. These will be available until mid-May. When reserving advise

Holiday Inn you are coming to the Peony Society show. You will be given preference and the special rate.

There are several motels in the area. The two noted below are both AAA approved. Please make room reservations directly with hotel or motels.

Hotels

Downtown Holiday Inn. 150 King St. East, Hamilton, Ontario. Single \$20.50; Double with twin beds \$28. T.V., air conditioned, restaurant and all the features of a modern hotel. Telephone (416) 528-3451. This is the Headquarters Hotel where the banquet will be held. It is about six miles from the Royal Botanical Gardens H.Q. show room.

Motels

Coach and Four Motel, 1400 Plains Road West, Hamilton, Ontario. Single \$14.00 with kitchenette \$16. Double \$16.00 with kitchenette \$18. T.V., air conditioned. This motel is situated about one half mile from the Royal Botanical H.Q. Showroom. Phone (416) 522-2483.

Town and Country Motel, 517 Plains Road East, Burlington, Ontario. Single \$10-\$14.00, Double \$12-\$18.00, T.V., Air conditioned, swimming pool. It is about three miles from the Showroom, nine miles to the downtown Holiday Inn Show H.Q. Hotel. Phone (416) 634-2383.

RULES

1. All entries must be completed and in place by 11:30 a.m. Saturday, June 15.
2. All entries except those in Division VI must have been grown by the exhibitor.
3. Entry tags supplied by the Society must be filled out completely as to class, variety and name and address of exhibitor, both on top and bottom sections. In addition, each separate variety must be identified with a small wood or plastic tag attached to the stem with the variety name printed legibly on both sides. In collection classes, all varieties must be labeled and the entry tag attached to one of the stems. Entry tags may be obtained at the Royal Botanical Headquarters prior to show time or at the Show registration desk. The exhibitor or his agent shall be responsible for complete at correct filling out of entry tags.
4. Stems in specimen classes should be approximately 14" long.
5. Exhibitors are limited to one entry in each of the following classes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 44, 72 and all classes in Division VI. Up to three entries are permitted in all other classes, but there can be no duplication of varieties.
6. The show committee may combine or further separate any classes wherever the number of entries warrants such action.
7. Correct varietal labeling is mandatory in Open classes, strongly urged in Amateur classes and optional in Novice classes. In the latter two classes, no entry shall be disqualified for failure to identify, but points may be deducted for such omission. Varieties need not be named in the Artistic Design classes.
8. Standard containers will be furnished by the Show Committee and must be used in all classes except for arrangements.
9. The American Peony Society Handbook will govern bloom types and color.
10. The Show Committee reserves the right to reject entries whose quality is obviously not suitable for exhibition purposes. Judges may, at their discretion withhold ribbons or awards in any class and their decision shall be final.
11. Utmost care will be exercised by the committee in placing or moving entries during the staging of the show, but it cannot be held responsible for damage or loss.
12. Only the judges, clerks and other necessary personnel will be permitted on the show room floor during the judging.

Show entries by air-express.

Any member who wishes to send blooms for the show may do so at anytime prior to the Show. Address them to J. E. Simkins, 1246 Donlea Cres., Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6J 1V7. I will place them in cold storage and enter them in the show. You will be advised later. Blooms should just show colour when cut. Send blooms air-express prepaid.

DIVISION I — Open to any exhibitor.

Section A. Certificate Collections

Class 1. Twenty-five varieties herbaceous only, any type or color.
One bloom each in separate containers, each labeled as to name.

Gold Medal Certificate

Class 2. Fifteen varieties as above.

Silver Medal Certificate

Class 3. Ten varieties, herbaceous hybrid only, any type or color.
One bloom each in separate containers, each labeled as to name.

Silver Medal Certificate

Class 4. Ten varieties, tree peonies only, any type or color. One
bloom each in separate containers, each labeled as to name.

Silver Medal Certificate

Section B. Three blooms, lactiflora only, in one container.

Class 5. Double, white or blush, one variety.

Class 6. Double, light pink, one variety.

Class 7. Double, deep pink, one variety.

Class 8. Double, light red, one variety.

Class 9. Double, dark red, one variety.

Class 10. Semi-double, white or blush, one variety.

Class 11. Semi-double, pink, one variety.

Class 12. Semi-double, red, one variety.

Class 13. Japanese, white or blush, one variety.

Class 14. Japanese, pink, one variety.

Class 15. Japanese, red, one variety.

Class 16. Single, any color, one variety.

Class 17. Double, one each red, white, pink.

Class 18. Semi-double, any three different varieties.

Class 19. Japanese, any three different varieties.

Class 20. Single, any three different varieties.

Class 21. Bomb, any three different varieties.

Section C. One bloom, lactiflora only.

Class 22. Double, white or blush.

Class 23. Double, light pink.

Class 24. Double, deep pink.

Class 25. Double, light red.

Class 26. Double, dark red.

Class 27. Semi-double, white or blush.

Class 28. Semi-double, pink.

Class 29. Semi-double, red.

Class 30. Japanese, white or blush.

Class 31. Japanese, pink.

Class 32. Japanese, red.

Class 33. Single, white or blush.

Class 34. Single, pink.

Class 35. Single, red.

Class 36. Bomb, white or blush.

Class 37. Bomb, pink.

Class 38. Bomb, red.

Section D. One bloom, herbaceous hybrid or species.

Class 39. Double or semi-double white or blush.

Class 40. Double or semi-double pink.

Class 41. Double or semi-double red.

Class 42. Single white or blush.

Class 43. Single, pink.

Class 44. Single, red.

Class 45. Japanese, any color.

Class 46. Yellow, any type or color.

Section E. Collection classes, each variety labeled, but in a single container.

Class 47. Five varieties, lactiflora double, any color.

Class 48. Five varieties, lactiflora semi-double, any color.

Class 49. Five varieties, lactiflora Japanese, any color.

Class 50. Five varieties, lactiflora single, any color.

Class 51. Five varieties, herbaceous hybrid or species, any type or color.

Section F. Tree peonies.

Class 52. Three varieties, any type, any color in separate containers.

Class 53. Specimen bloom, Japanese or Moutan, white.

Class 54. Specimen bloom, Japanese or Moutan, pink.

Class 55. Specimen bloom, Japanese or Moutan, red.

Class 56. Specimen bloom, Japanese or Moutan, violet or purple.

Class 57. Specimen bloom, European or lutea hybrid, white.

Class 58. Specimen bloom, European or lutea hybrid, pink.

Class 59. Specimen bloom, European or lutea hybrid, red.

Class 60. Specimen bloom, European or lutea hybrid, yellow.

Class 61. Specimen bloom, European or lutea hybrid, blend or bicolor.

DIVISION II — Amateur. Open to exhibitors who raise peonies chiefly for pleasure, sell plants or cut flowers only casually, and do not grow more than 200 plants. Labeling urged but not mandatory.

Section G.

Class 62. Ten varieties, one bloom each, herbaceous only, any type or color, in separate containers. Bronze Medal Certificate.

Class 63. Three double varieties, lactiflora only, any color, in separate containers.

Class 64. Three semi double varieties, lactiflora only, any color, in separate containers.

Class 65. Three Japanese varieties, lactiflora only, any color, in separate containers.

Class 66. Three single varieties, lactiflora only, any color, in separate containers.

Class 67. Three varieties, hybrid or species, any type or color, in separate containers.

Class 68. Specimen bloom, lactiflora double, white or blush.

Class 69. Specimen bloom, lactiflora double, light pink.

Class 70. Specimen bloom, lactiflora double, deep pink.

Class 71. Specimen bloom, lactiflora double, red.

Class 72. Specimen bloom, lactiflora semi-double, any color.

Class 73. Specimen bloom, lactiflora Japanese, any color.

Class 74. Specimen bloom, lactiflora single, any color.

Class 75. Specimen bloom, hybrid or species, any type or color.

DIVISION III — Novice. Open only to amateur exhibitors who have never won an award at a nationally accredited Peony Show. Labeling of varieties desirable but not required.

Section H.

Class 76. Five varieties, one bloom each, any type or color, in separate containers.

- Class 77.** One bloom, lactiflora double, white or blush.
- Class 78.** One bloom, lactiflora double, pink.
- Class 79.** One bloom, lactiflora double, red.
- Class 80.** One bloom, lactiflora semi-double, any color.
- Class 81.** One bloom, lactiflora Japanese, any color.
- Class 82.** One bloom, lactiflora single, any color.
- Class 83.** One bloom, herbaceous hybrid, any type or color.
- Class 84.** One bloom, tree, any type or color.

DIVISION IV — Seedlings and New Varieties.

Section J. Seedlings.

Class 85. Three blooms, one variety in one container, not currently introduced. Variety must have been divided at least once. Must be shown under name or seedling number.

Section K. New Varieties.

Class 86. Three blooms, one variety in one container. Limited to varieties named and registered with the American Peony Society and introduced no earlier than five years prior to show date.

Awards in the two preceding classes may be given Certificates of Merit or Honorable Mention at the discretion of the judges, but no ribbon awards. Varieties having won either award in previous competition may not be shown again in that class, except that varieties shown previously in Class 85 may be shown again in Class 86, regardless of awards.

DIVISION V — Special Entries.

Class 87. Commercial Exhibit.

Collection, by commercial grower, of twenty-five to fifty varieties, any type or color, name labeled, in separate containers. Exhibit may be identified by a placard of not more than 9" x 14" in size, to be furnished by the exhibitor.

Class 88. Visitors from greatest distance

(Mileage verified on entry tag)

Collection of five different varieties, any type or color, in separate containers, each labeled as to name.

Class 89. Multiple bloom.

Single stalk, not disbudded. Must show at least three open blooms.

DIVISION VI — Artistic Design

Theme "THE CANADIAN SCENE"

- A. Pacific Forests** — a design to include decorative wood.
- B. Western Prairies** — an interpretive design emphasizing space.
- C. Niagara Peninsula** — a design to include grapes.
- D. La Belle Provence** — your own interpretation.
- E. Martimes** — a water viewing design.
- F. Snow in Summer** — your interpretation.

Rules for section VI.

1. All artistic work must be the origination of the exhibitor.
2. Peonies must be the dominant flower. Blooms need not be grown by the exhibitor, and some peony blooms will be available on request.
3. Other flowers, foliage, grasses and accessories are permitted in all classes.
4. Artificial flowers or foliage is not permitted in any class.
5. Entries may be placed from 7:00 P.M. Friday, June 14 to 11:00 A.M. Saturday, June 15.
6. Personally owned properties must be claimed immediately after the show closes at 6:00 P.M. Sunday, June 16.

7. There will be a limit of five entries per class.
8. Pre-registration should be made to: J. E. Simkins
1246 Donlea Crescent
Oakville, Ontario.
Canada. L6J 1V7
9. Entries will be accepted without pre-registration if the classes are not filled.

COURT OF HONOR

Specifics entries are not required for this division. Participation is attained by excellence and merit of entries. It is composed of the best flowers in the show of the various types and colors, as follows:

Doubles — White, blush, light pink, dark pink, red.

Semi-Double — White, pink and red.

Japanese — White, pink and red.

Single — White, pink and red.

Hybrid — White, pink and red.

Tree — White, pink and red.

Arrangement

Champion of the show: The finest flower in the Court of Honor.

Note: Court of Honor candidates will not be limited to specimen classes. It shall be the duty of the judges to search the collections for outstanding flowers for the court of Honor.

AWARDS

American Peony Society Awards

- A. Class 1 — Gold Medal Certificate.
- B. Classes 2, 3 and 4 — Silver Medal Certificates
- C. Classes 62 and 86 — Bronze Medal Certificate.
- D. Classes 52 and 76, Grand and Reserve Champion, from division VI, and all selections for the Court of Honor, Rosettes.
- E. Peony roots will be awarded to all blue ribbon winners in Divisions II, III and VI, to be delivered in the fall at proper planting time.
- F. First, second and third place ribbons will be given in all classes where quality warrants. Honorable Mention ribbons will be given in any class at the judges' discretion.

Special Awards

- G. B. H. Farr Memorial Medal for best lactiflora specimen in show.
- H. Clargreen Bowl for the best specimen in the Novice class.
- I. Top O' The Ridge Plaque for best specimen bloom, classes 63-75 (amateur). This is a "traveling" trophy to be returned to the Show committee for the following show in exchange for a permanent medal.

AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY EXHIBITION JUNE 14-15-16, HAMILTON, ONTARIO, CANADA

It takes many many peony blooms to make a peony show. When your peonies are in bud, watch for a specimen stalk. A strong, straight and tall stem and one that has been carefully disbudded. At the proper time, cut many varieties, store them in a temperature between 36 and 40 degrees. When ready to leave for the Royal Botanical Gardens, pack them carefully in large boxes. Upon arrival, place them in water, first cutting the stems. This enables the flowers to be refreshed.

Irwin Ewing

The main purpose for which the American Peony Society was founded, was to keep our Nomenclature accurate. To this end, our ultimate aim.

The Society does appeal to all those that introduce peonies, to register the variety. Allen Harper has been appointed Registrar.

PEONY ROOT AUCTION

Greta M. Kessenich, Secretary

The American Peony Society is privileged to have an exhibition every year, showing the beauty of the peony, newer varieties and seedlings, to the viewing public.

This year we look forward to the exhibition in Hamilton, Ontario, meeting members and friends. Indications are that peony people from various areas of the United States and Canada will be there.

One of the events that has become a tradition, is the peony root auction. Most interesting and very exciting because of the variety of peony roots donated and the lively bidding for one of these superior roots.

This auction does serve two distinct purposes. It affords many people an opportunity to purchase new peony roots.

It affords added revenue for the Society. It is a donation that is appreciated. This year, the number of pages in the Bulletin were increased and pictures of interest inserted with some articles. This program is one service, we feel that all members can enjoy. Proceeds from the root auction, added to the yearly income, helps to make this possible.

At this time, we again ask for donations of peony roots and any material of interest. As to the kind of roots, that is your decision. All will be sold and we extend thanks and appreciation to you for your consideration. This is your Society.

It will be a pleasure to hear from you.

1973 PEONY SEASON, SOUTHWESTERN OHIO

William Krekler

What a disastrous year, the past twelve months have been peonywise, at least in southwestern Ohio. Until September, our fertile clay-loam soil never dried enough to permit cultivating, spraying or hoeing. We were only able to mow weeds (occasionally). Then at the end of August when rains were ended, the ten inches of packed top soil was baked into rock hard adobe. When one finally got a sharp spade through this, with much effort, nearly a yard wide slab of concrete like soil was pried up which was too firm to stomp apart. At least we had no mud to hose off the roots. Somehow, in September the four husky high school lads and I got an acre of the best surviving varieties transplanted into well tilled land, as well as digging local orders and among others, a free truck load for Cornell University and also two free loads of big daylilly clumps for Ohio State University. The soil had been constantly wet all winter, so over two hundred varieties of heavy four year old clumps just rotted away in the ground and never grew. Also as usual, when too wet many other big clumps were heaved out of the soil by March freezes and were dried up in the sun and winds and perished.

The following varieties were some of those most harmed by the constant wet condition of the soil, ROSELETTE, EDWARD STEICHEN, GAY CAVELIER, CAMPAGNA, TEMPEST, A KREKLER, DAYSTAR, LUDOVICA, RED RED ROSE, ROSE NOBLE. etc.

Many big clumps of formerly sturdy dependable varieties barely grew and made miserable runts. In time most of these should revive. A few of these were BRAVURA, MLOKOSWITCHII, WEST ELKTON, JOSEPH CHRISTIE, JAMES LEWIS, LOUIS JOLIET, NOSEGAY, ROSE CRYSTAL, WESTERNER, BUCKEYE BELLE, QUEEN OF SHEBA, ETC.

The season was nearly a week late and many varieties (as RED CHARM) that made nice big bushes had their pea-sized flower buds frozen off. Cut flowers for Memorial Day trade were very scarce. The one peony that best withstood all that Mother Nature gone berserk could produce, was MONTEZUMA. It grew well and gave its generous harvest of superb brilliant fiery-red blooms.

As always, in very wet weather botrytis blight was bad. It is always much worse in the hybrids and several died. This, however is the only disease that seems to effect hybrids. It was just too muddy to get our power sprayer down the peony rows.

Other varieties beside lovely MONTEZUMA that withstood all and grew as always were: ILLINI WARRIOR, VIRGINIA LEE, MAESTRO, CINCINNATI, MARTHA REED, MISS AMERICA, FLORENCE NICHOLLS, AUTENS RED SPORT, POSTILLION, DUTCH DWARF, BEV, BURMA RUBY, FLAME, LE JOUR, MISS MARY, TOM ECKHARDT, HARRY L. SMITH, SPRINGFIELD, WALLFLOWER, BECKY, EARLY BIRD, ANN COUSINS, ANN GOEMANS, LADDIE, RAY PAYTON. ETC.

The years many dark clouds had three good results. First, the constant wet and packed soil smothered and drowned out any stray nematodes. Second, the roots, other than those that turned bluish from too much water and perished were free of usual interior crown and root-bark rots. (Don't ask me why, unless it was magic or no air in the soil). Third, we are now rid of the fair weather friends that just could not take excessive punishment and those stalwarts remaining will breed more dependable seedlings, a blessing in disguise. Despite everything, I produced a few more very promising seedlings (early hybrids mostly) Come and see them.



DISEASES OF PEONIES IN TEXAS

By Benny J. Simpson, Farm Manager

Texas Agricultural Experiment Station — Dallas Texas

The disease *Anthraco*se, genus *Colletotrichm*, was first observed on various peonies in the North Texas area (Dallas) in mid-summer 1972. Almost complete defoliation and some stem die-back had occurred in July-August 1972, with the Saunders' hybrid *Hesperus* leafing out again in late September.

The disease organism was observed on peony leaves by Dr. Norman McCoy, Area Plant Pathologist of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service at Dallas. The disease was so evident and pronounced that a culture was not incubated.

The fungicide *Benlate*¹ was recommended for control. The problem with trying to control *Anthracnose* is that you have only approximately 5 to 9 days in the timing of your application as the spray must go on just as the leaf buds begin to unfold. This was further complicated by the failure of the peonies to leaf out at the same time. However, during a two-week period all peonies were treated.

Except for *Hesperus* and *Wings of the Morning*, the Daphnis hybrid *Gaugin*, and the Japanese Herbaceous hybrid *Westerner*, the rest of the peony colony are still in the juvenile stage (although a few did have single blooms).

It is interesting to compare the flowering in the spring of 1973 of *Hesperus*, which leafed out again in September of 1972, with *Gaugin* which did not leaf out. *Hesperus* had not a single bloom, while two *Gaugin* trees were literally covered (about 15 each) with magnificent blooms. Therefore, it would appear that the second flush of vegetative growth sustained by *Hesperus* in September was detrimental and precluded the setting of flower buds for the next spring. This can be checked again in the spring of 1974, as once again *Hesperus* was defoliated and experienced a second flush of vegetative growth in September — as did the Saunders' hybrid *Corsair*.

From the above statement you have already guessed control of *Anthracnose* was not achieved. This may or may not be true. The entire peony colony once again was completely defoliated in July-August. However, examination of the leaves showed no evidence of *Anthracnose* so either it was controlled or simply did not reoccur.

The fungus *Alternaria* was isolated by culture in the plant pathology laboratory by Dr. McCoy. This disease evidently was present in 1972, with the *Anthracnose* being of only secondary importance. The disease syndrome causes a blighted leaf, and dead secondary branches which give the appearance of being scorched. The leaves then become very persistent, refusing to fall from the plant.

A mixture of Manzate 200 at two tablespoons per gallon, and Benlate at 1½ teaspoons per gallon is suggested. Some *Alternaria* species have been observed to possess a resistance to Benlate in this area of Texas. The use of Benlate in this case is to prevent the *Anthracnose* disease, as observed in 1972, and will be used only in one or two sprayings at leaf bud unfolding. The Manzate 200 will be used in conjunction with Benlate at bud unfold, and then will be used singly for weekly applications beginning about June 15 — July 1, for control of the *Alternaria* disease.

The above disease syndrome appears to be the primary limiting factor to growing tree peonies in the area immediately north of Dallas. Below are listed the varieties on hand during the growing season of 1973 and new plantings in the fall of 1973. (It must be pointed out that there are a few full doubles in this list, in the Japanese varieties, which definitely have trouble opening in this climate). The tree peonies open almost two weeks before the Saunders' herbaceous hybrids, and up to three weeks before *Westerner*.

VARIETIES ON HAND DURING 1973 SEASON

Japanese Herbaceous Hybrid: *Westerner*

Saunders' Herbaceous Hybrids: *Cytherea, Lovely Rose, Queen Rose*

Saunders' Lutea Hybrids: *Hesperus, Marchioness, Corsair, Narcissus, Savage Splendor, Rose Flame, Thunderbolt, Wings of the Morning*

Daphnis Hybrid: *Gauguin*

Japanese: *Howdai, Shunkow Den, Taisho No Hokori, Horakumon, Rimpow, Renkaku, Guardian of the Monastery*

FALL 1973 PLANTINGS

Saunders' Lutea Hybrids: *Spring Carnival, Regent, Black Panther, Phoenix, Countess, Daredevil, Conquest, Red Currant, Coronal, Harvest Mystery, Golden Isles, Silver Sails, Chinese Dragon*

Japanese: *Kamada-fuji, Hinode Sekai, Companion of Serenity*

¹Product names are not intended as endorsement of the product of a specific manufacturer. Product names are included solely to aid in locating and identifying the fungicides recommended.



THE PEONY PATCH IN '73

Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota

'73 was not a year to be remembered because of its fine bloom but rather because of its near failure of most of the very early varieties to bloom at all.

Tenuifolia, *Macrophylla* and their hybrids and *Claire de Lune* were almost bare of flowers but had plenty of blasted dry buds to show that the plants had had good intentions.

One morning in early May we had a temperature of 23 degrees and the following morning, 22 degrees and many of the earlier varieties were up six to eight inches and it was much too cold for the flower buds to survive. There were many deformed flowers where bloom was produced but no permanent injury to any plant that I could see.

The seedling rows which were to bloom for the first time this year were near failures. Of the few that managed to produce good bloom were many full double *Lactifloras* of various shades of red, and several of these had no stamens or pollen but a good set of carpels. Incidentally this line now goes back several generations where both seed and pollen parent were full doubles, not very often found in full doubles, good carpels and in the seed parent and a few scattered stamens with good pollen in the pollen parent. Ideal breeding stock.

We also had a few good double pinks that were dug and replanted for further evaluation, but nothing spectacular in this color. In white we had one very large single and possibly the best white single that I have ever seen, but bear in mind that I have not seen very many of that type. The *Claire de Lune* that had the semi-double bloom last year had only pea sized dried buds to show us, this season. The variegated foliaged plant had no sign of a bud and this fall had to be moved to clear the row so most likely will not bloom next year either. The lighter color leaf veining in this plant is very distinctive.

The highlight of the season was perhaps the receipt of four Peony roots from my correspondent in Leningrad U S S R listed as follows; 1—*Chinensis* 'Novostj Altai. 1—*Chinensis* 'Poceda. 1—*Anomala* L. 1—*Hybrida* 'Pall.

The first two listed as *Chinensis* appear to be *Lactifloras*. No. 3 is, I hope, the species Peony *Anomala* and No. 4 the Hybrid Pall which I have heard mention of in Peony literature, but have no knowledge of what it is like, but the root appears to be closely related to the *Tenuifolia* species. It is going to be immensely interesting to see these plants bloom.

The 200 seeds of *Anomala* that I received from this same source a year ago, December 4, 1972—were placed in moist sand and stored over winter in around 40 degrees and planted out in the nursery row in early spring and are now well rooted and ready to do their push-ups when spring comes.

We did however, sort of hit the jack pot in seed production this year when we used Early Scout pollen on the few bloom we had on Laddie. 104 good looking seeds were gathered and I hope that at least some of them will grow. A few years ago I used Laddie pollen on my seedling 5908 which was a good seed and seedling producer and harvested over 140 seeds and have only two plants which show no sign of being hybrids. Similarly, I have produced hundreds of seeds from various *Lactifloras* with Alice Harding pollen, which gave me a few seedlings but never a hybrid.

We did not register any new varieties this past year but hope to have several again next year.

The 'Patch as of today, December 26, 1973 has a cover of some 6-8 inches of rather loose snow and all our plants are in shape to survive any weather that is likely to come along.



Mr. Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota has been breeding peonies since 1955. His Nursery circular lists his stock as Hybrid, Rare, Common, and Tree Peonies. Peonies are a native of cold climates and in the fertile soil of the Red River Valley of North Dakota, they grow and develop to their utmost perfection. Not only are his peonies large and beautiful but as the picture shows, the squash that he grew this year, weighed 216½ pounds and 207 pounds respectively. The third, not shown, weighed 221 pounds.

TREE PEONY PROPAGATION — FIRST ATTEMPT

C. Graham Jones, 'Redgarth' The Piece.

Churchdown, Gloucester, England

Being a comparative novice at the noble art of Peony culture, I decided it was time to try grafting. A friend had just taken over an old garden in which, to quote: "There are many large clumps of herbaceous peonies". This was my clue to suggest that if he would lift one, I would divide it for him and we share the divisions. This was done, the clump producing ten healthy divisions, giving five each. The remainder being burnt, as diseased.

The period was autumn 1972. Mine were duly planted, with all of them sending up growth, in the spring. One even produced a small insignificant white bloom. However, the object was root stock.

The article on grafting had been read, in the book by John C. Wister, "The Peonies" and the required equipment was listed. The period was July and my tree peony variety, YATIYO-TUBAKI, which I had decided to use was examined and found to have suitable growth.

The next week end brought the vital day, so on Saturday I requested my son to go to the nearest timber merchant and obtain a bag of sawdust. This commodity is used very little in horticulture, in this area but John C. Wister said it was required, so it was obtained.

The herbaceous root was dug, which was marked as being suitable, when planted the previous autumn. A nice piece about six inches long was cut off which had white feeder roots showing down the tapered surface. Here is where I stopped. I had never done any grafting, although much experience in budding, so I thought it best to have a trial run!

On the rubbish heap, near the garden, I had thrown surplus roots of the Cardoon Artichoke (*Cynara-Cardunculus*) and decided the carrot like root would represent the understock. This was fine but what about the scion! After a good look around, an elderberry (*Samoucus-Nigra*) was found in the boundry hedge. It had nice mature growth about three eights of an inch in diameter, the stems were hard on the outside with a pith center. That would do. Using my budding knife, I produced a nice taper for a wedge graft. The root stock was split and the wedge inserted and bound with raffia. What confidence, I had gained at this stage. (However, it is yet to come.) Now for a try at the real graft!

I cut a section of my tree peony about six inches long, with four nice leaf joint buds and decided that I would try one graft and two of section cuttings under the mist propagator, as I have seen this method used commercially. I unwrapped the moss from the root (understock) and produced a nice clean cut across the diameter, about one inch in depth and rewrapped it in the moss. Then three inches were cut from the peony stem, I had previously cut, returning the remainder to the water. Now here is my problem. With my budding knife, which is quite sharp, I attempted to cut a taper to make a wedge in the scion but my knife would not touch it. It was sharpened and with the second attempt, I did manage to cut in a fashion, only the wedge

looked more like a fir tree. There was no turning back and with a struggle I produced something like a wedge and fitted it into the understock, binding the joint with raffia to retain but as I laid it down, the scion jumped out of the understock. I stood for a moment, realizing what had happened was correct, so I cut a V into the understock slit and with a few more attempts managed to hold the graft together. It is still a puzzle as to how it is expected to stay there. I found a nice shaded spot and made a trough which I filled with sawdust and laid my first graft gently down, covering it over with additional sawdust, completing the operation with label and date. Covered it with wire netting, to keep the blackbirds and hedgehogs away.

The next experiment was to make two cuttings from the remaining stock. This was done and placed under the mist propagator, the operation being complete but in three weeks the leaves had fallen and the stock had gone black. I examined the graft after eight weeks and this had also gone black, so unless a miracle happens in Churchdown, I will have 100% failure in 1973 and look forward to 1974.

We have an old saying here "It is a poor workman who blames his tools", but I am sure my graft failure results from my budding knife. If one can recognize our faults, it is a great help.

~

Some defeats are only installments of victory. — Jacob A. Riis.

~

DU PONT ADVISORY ON BENLATE

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A letter from E. I. du Pont de Nemours & Co. (Wilmington, DE 19898) concerning disease problems associated with misuse and overuse of Benlate (benomyl) systemic fungicide Dr. W. C. Reische of the Biochemicals Department writes:

"We are aware that there are tolerant strains that exist in natural populations of several fungi. It appears that some compounds may have the capacity for modifying strain patterns in the population and in some cases these tolerant strains have become dominant in the population.

"The powdery mildew fungi and the fungus *Botrytis cinerea* are two of the fungi that apparently have these tolerant strains in their natural populations. There are reports of tolerant strains of these fungi to benzimidazole fungicides in Europe. I know of *no* confirmed reports of tolerant strains of these fungi in ornamentals in the *United States*. We do have a confirmed report of a tolerant strain of powdery mildew on cucurbits in New York. We also have a confirmed tolerant strain of *Sclerotinia* on turf in the U.S.

In keeping with sound pest management programs, we suggest that the exclusive use of Benlate on given crop and disease should be avoided. Other effective non-benzimidazole fungicides should be used in combination with Benlate or in intermittent spray schedules with Benlate. This type of disease control program has proven effective in Europe where tolerant strains have been encountered . . ."

BILL SEIDL EDITS . . .



Mr. Seidl, not only is an ardent hybridizer but grows prize winning peonies, as well. The picture shows him receiving an award for **YELLOW CROWN**, which was on the **COURT OF HONOR**, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. 1973 His **YELLOW EMPEROR** and **YELLOW HEAVEN**, also received awards.

He has edited for reprint, a number of interesting summarized articles from the Newsletter, *Paeonia* published by Chris and Lois Laning, that may be of interest to members in their current hybridizing efforts.

Lois Laning

American Peony Society President, Roy Klehm urges hybridizers to clear the names of their future introductions with the Society's nomenclature department. This is necessary to prevent a recurrence of the chaos in nomenclature that existed before the inception of the society in 1904 when a variety like **JULES ELIE** was known under 32 different names.

Roy Pehrson analyzes the contribution *P. MLOKOSSEWITCHII* can make in producing a yellow herbaceous hybrid. He believes the use of its progeny — **ROSELETTE**, **RUSHLIGHT**, **NOVA**, the Quads, **NANCY**, **NOSEGAY**, **GWENDA**, and unnamed seedlings — and those of *P. MACROPHYLLA* and **LOBATA** may, together, eventually yield good yellow seedlings. (**SUNGLINT**, **MOONRISE**, and **CREAM DELIGHT** are in the forefront of this line of breeding.) Roy also observes that when pollen of **NOVA** and **NANCY** is used the quantity and/or quality of the seed crop is rather poor.

In a separate article, **LOBATA** comes under Roy's scrutiny and he speculates that history may prove it to be, next to *lactiflora*, the most valuable species used in the development of herbaceous hybrids. He gives special attention to the *lobata* of Amos Perry, England, that Dr. Saunders used in many crosses with *lactiflora* and *officinalis*. A list is given of two dozen *lobata* crosses by Dr. Saunders, along with the number of seedlings in each cross and the names of selections made from same. Thus, **LUSTROUS** and **RED RED ROSE** were selected from only five seedlings of **ADOLPHE ROUSSEAU** x **LOBATA** (PERRY); **CLAUDIA** and **SKYLARK** from 214 seedlings of #441 x **LOBATA** (PERRY); **MOONRISE** from 14 seedlings of F₂ *lacti-lobata*.

Roy favors *VESPER*, a *lacti jap*, as a seed parent for several reasons, not the least of which being that it had already produced at least eight genuine Ito hybrids for him.

To encourage hybridizers to contribute writings of their activities Roy

offers seeds, sprouted seeds, or 1 to 2-year old seedlings. Chris Laning describes the varied parentages of seed he has received: BATTLE FLAG x RED RED ROSE, CHALICE x LOBATA, ARCHANGEL x NANCY, SABLE x LOBATA, LACTI x CALIFORNICA, WINDFLOWER F₂ x NOVA, and others.

Century-old MONS. JULES ELIE is praised by Chris as he points out that it is still popular and still a valuable parent with some of its progeny being ATTAR OF ROSES, CLAIRE DE LUNE, and some of the recent Klehm introductions.

Chris also observes that (1) very young tree peony seedlings do not take kindly to transplanting, (2) hungry, undernourished plants are likely to yield more and better seeds than plants not under stress, and (3) styrofoam boards used to insulate young seedlings against winter-freezing could benefit from a 2-inch layer of vermiculite sandwiched between boards and soil to prevent etiolation and mold.

Bill Seidl relates how hybridizing with gladiolus and the loss of many good seedlings to disease lead him to start pollen-dabbing with daylilies and then peonies. He reiterates the desirability of what Don Hollingsworth called the "landscape gardener's cross": since certain largely-sterile varieties are not likely to self-pollinate or produce seed anyway, why not enjoy the natural unemasculated blossoms but still cover the pistils with fertile pollen? Any seed that results is very likely to be from use of the chosen pollen. Using this method, Bill reports SPRITE, HALCYON, and E. WINDFLOWER have produced a few seeds. But CHALICE, PAGEANT, and LADDIE produced such larger quantities of seed that they should be considered candidates for controlled crosses.

C. Graham Jones, England, describes an interesting experience in germinating *P. SUFFRUTICOSA* seed. The seed arrived airmail in a cannister of vermiculite and was dormant. It was stored in a cupboard (room temperature was 68-70° F.). After a week the seed was removed for planting and, surprisingly, nearly 50 had inch-long roots, others were just starting to root, and others remained dormant. It is speculated that a drop in temperature in flight and then a rise to room temperature excited certain strains into growth.

PEONY DORMANCY

J. Franklin Styer

This sounds like a dry and unlikely subject for discussion, yet to growers in the south it may be quite helpful, if it could be taken up at a meeting and perhaps produce some scientific research. Contrary to the general idea, dormancy is a complex phenomenon with fascinating angles. Researchers have shown us how to bloom chrysanthemums any day of the year, how to dwarf various plants, how to remove the leaves from shrubs for early digging and many other techniques.

The direct bearing of this kind of research on our peony culture will be upon the vigor of the plant grown, in warmer places, where probably four fifths of the American people live.

Animals can run and hide from winter storms but plants cannot. Instead, most plants prepare for cold weather long ahead of time. Temperate or arctic zone trees make rapid growth in a very short period before July 1. Their growth, if continued could result in death at the first frost, but miraculously stops in the very warmest part of summer.

The end of growth and the formation of winter buds is the results of a chemical, one or more of the "auxins," produced at night in the leaves. The "auxin" is dissipated by day but as nights lengthen it increases until it inhibits stem activity and the functions shift to the storage of food, for the next year.

The leaf functions and root growth of the trees are not affected by the inhibitor and cease only when the temperature falls. Roots usually grow all winter. But once stems go dormant, it requires rough treatment to wake them again; and spring cannot do it. The auxin is only destroyed by long periods of cold, which is absolutely the only natural cure for auxin dormancy. This explains the fact that most northern trees, for instance peaches can not be grown in Florida. Peach orchards in Georgia have been known to die after a persistently warm winter.

There are more auxins than just one and many complications of plant reactions. Roses for example, usually go right on growing until frost kills the growing tips. The auxin problem in herbaceous perennials is quite interesting. They usually have the entire summer growth of stem, including the terminal flowers fully formed in the bud during the previous fall. All the plants has to do in spring is to expand this structure. No "growth" in the technical sense occurs until the stem tissues at the base put forth the eyes for the following year. These eyes form on the new herbaceous stem and this area becomes part of the crown. The eyes can be seen growing through the fall. It is possible that physiological research on the causes and influences affecting this growth can lead to knowledge useful to the grower.

The connection between this branch of science and peony culture in the south is suggested by several facts. Generally speaking, the length of stem of any peony is less in the south and since the growing season is longer the opposite would be expected. The increase in size of the whole plant is less and the opposite would be expected. The health and vigor of plants in the south is inferior and experiments have proved that heat and drought cannot be the main reasons. If study shows that auxin is working here, slowing the plants functions and normally in the north is removed by cold weather, then a way may be found to remove it artificially. The writer can cite an observation bearing on this matter. *M. Jules Elie* is always a late cultivar to emerge in spring. But in western New York it catches up and blooms early along with *Richard Carvel*, in southeastern Pennsylvania it is two days later than *Richard Carvel*. In eastern Virginia it blooms six days later, and in North Carolina it is often the latest lactiflora to bloom. *M. Jules Elie* has a dormancy problem. It would seem that this subject would be appropriate to discussion and research prompted by the Society.

— R O O T S —
THE HIDDEN KEY TO PEONY SUCCESS

From the files of Marvin Karrels.

Peony growers, in general, are disposed to blame soil-conditions for plant and flower failures. The use of the word "failure" is construed to mean weak plants and mediocre flowers.

My personal opinion is that, by far, the majority of failures can be attributed to improper preparation of root-divisions and careless planting.

The dividing of peony-roots is, to me, the most interesting and the most important phase of peony culture. It is as essential to successful results as skilled surgery is to human welfare, and skilled tree-surgery is to horticultural operations.

Tree-surgery is the science of removing unnecessary surplus wood, interfering or injured limbs, or such limbs and branches which in later years will interfere, or produce an unbalanced pattern. Anybody can saw a limb from a tree, or prune a branch from a shrub, but to do this properly requires an understanding of the habits of the tree or plant, and knowledge of the proper balancing of the root-system to the plant superstructure, in order to obtain a strong vigorous plant. The same fundamental principles if applied to peony-roots will pay big dividends.

It is a difficult task to attempt to treat, in words, the subject of root-surgery. If this were like a surgical clinic, wherein the victim is exposed to observation, then the task would be quite simple and no doubt much more interesting and instructive.

On several occasions I have been invited to address Garden Clubs on the subject of peonies. Fortunately — these assignments have occurred at the normal peony dividing time so I took advantage of the opportunity by digging a plant and dividing it in the presence of the audience. I consider this method of "talking" to be far more instructive than debating the uncontested fact that the peony is the monarch of the flower kingdom.

An eminent peony authority once stated that a root-division should never exceed the size of the hand with outstretched fingers. That is a good general guide and quite generous. However, size alone is not the key as other details are far more important.

A new division is comparable to a lazy man, give either plenty of food and they refuse to work. A large division with a surplus of food stored in its roots is not disposed to start working to make new roots the first year. It simply gets lazy and only bothers to assimilate the over-supply of stored-up food. The first year the eyes develop into many fine strong looking stems — and the gullable owner thinks he sure hit the jack-pot on his purchase. But lo — the second year! Having expended its resources the proceeding year, by not having been forced to work to send out new roots, the multiple of eyes that developed finds the food supply to be insufficient and the plant becomes devitalized and never again seems to regain sufficient stamina to produce

fine flowers. The moral is to cut-back hard — starve it — and force it to get to work and build a sturdy root-system.

If a properly divided 3 to 5 eye division produces but one or two stems the first year, which do not even appear to be strong, do not let this alarm you for you can place your bets that those “weaklings” will ultimately produce grand flowers. By severe dividing a plant will be a bit slower in arriving but it is well worth the sacrifice of the first-year bloom (which is sub-normal anyway) to gain the thrill of many succeeding years of flowers which will cause your friends to regard you as a successor to Luther Burbank.

Keep in mind that you are aiming at a first-year root-system. A third-year sized plant the first year will most likely produce a first-year flower the third year.

Just what is a perfect root-division? My idea of a perfect division is in fact *not* a division but is the complete two-year development of an original small division. It's roots “star” out in all directions from the crown like the spokes of a wagon-wheel. A division of that type does not require shock surgery. By simply severing the original planting-stock root a perfect pattern results with fresh, clean, healthy, vigorous roots — capable of supporting a self-balanced group of plump eyes.

But to acquire a perfect division is another thing! Why? Well — if a commercial grower took the time to first properly divide propagation stock, then plant, grow, cultivate, dig, clean, trim, label, pack, and ship this “perfect” division at the prevailing market price, he would develop a permanent case of mal-nutrition.

Propagation-stock with roots in excess of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch in diameter seldom produces a first-class, well-balanced division. A small propagation division will in two years produce one perfect division; in three years: one perfect and one semi-perfect, plus some suitable stock for continued propagation. After three years the grower has developed a commercially profitable plant — from which the purchaser acquires perfectly abominable merchandise.

A heavy plant divided through the crown does not make a good division as it requires a heavy-draft on its vitality to heal the wound and also results in a lopsided, unbalanced system.

Even viciously man-handled and mutilated roots are endowed with the will to live and grow regardless of the brutal treatment given to them. There is, however, no secret known which will change the destiny of an improperly trimmed and carelessly planted peony. The problem is;— what to do about it! And that forces out the purpose of this discourse. The first step in dividing or re-trimming roots is to clean off all fibre and secondary roots. Then start eliminating the surplus roots, and cut off volunteer eyes that may have developed too low down or underneath the crown provided there are sufficient upper eyes.

As previously stated — the root-pattern should be shaped like the spokes of a wagon-wheel. If the roots are tight together, like the fingers of the hand with the fingers held together, then take a narrow-bladed sharp knife and

cut out alternating roots so the remaining roots will have room to expand. Be careful and do not cut into or damage the adjoining roots, and leave a clean-cut smooth surface which will heal quickly.

The cleaning off of all small rootlets is the most important detail of all. Then let Nature take the initiative and you will find that she's too smart to grow new roots all tangled up and girdling each other, thus choking off the food supply. The mess and mass of gnarled and twisted roots we usually find is the result of negligence of this detail.

Some varieties develop abnormally large sized roots (Reine Hortense for example) and if large roots are cut off square at the ends the result will ultimately be a mass group of small roots forming around the cut, similar to what is known as a "witches-broom" formed on improperly pruned tree limbs. Cut the root on an angle of 45 to 60 degrees and slightly round the sharp edges of the cut. Make the cut on the under-surface of the root except where two heavy roots are quite close together, in which case make the cuts on the outer sides, (not top or bottom) leaving the pointed tips to the inside. This is the reverse of tree-trimming principles wherein cuts are made so the terminal buds will branch in opposite directions. But peony roots do not have buds like trees and shrubs and the new roots, instead of forming at the terminal, will form at the heel and thus are directed away from the two roots. This is probably due to the fact that the base of the cut is closer to the crown, but we are probably more interested in the fact than in the theory. Our scientific members could very likely make this a highly controversial subject and convict me as being incorrect. My defense is that all I know about it is the result of many years of observance of this feature.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

In most of the peony world it is still too early to do anything in the garden but it is a good time to remember! Remember to plan ahead — and mark specific things on the calendar: gardens to visit to see how others grow peonies, shows to attend to see beautiful blooms, crosses to make and thus compete with our present hybridizers. (Hybridizers were all beginners at one time!) Now is the time to plan and make notes, and then next May or June the calendar will remind us of the things we now have time to remember.

— W. G. Sindt



What are things a person interested in artistic arrangements remembers when the snow is a foot deep? Continue that interest even now. Surely the holiday season is characterized by arrangements of all kinds — dried, ever-green, and fresh flowers. Granted — the use of fresh flowers are limited now, so make use of this time to look at your books on arranging and the pictures that are in them. Many special calendars have beautiful illustrations of artistic designs. Study, evaluate, and plan arrangements to be done when your own flowers are available. Then when the peonies put on their fantastic display in the garden, pluck a few treasured blooms and create a thing of beauty for your home.

— Charlotte E. Sindt

IN MEMORIAM

J. ARTHUR NELSON

Dr. J. Arthur Nelson, Editor of the Bulletin of the American Iris Society, passed away Christmas morning after a lingering illness. Dr. Nelson had been the editor of the iris bulletin beginning with the October 1964 issue until the present time. He served the society long and well, having been elected a director in 1958. He was Exhibitions Chairman and spent many long hours working out a color classification system. He is survived by his wife Irene, who interested him in the world of irises, five daughters, and fourteen grandchildren. Daughter Kay (Negus) is Registrar-Recorder for the American Iris Society.

Dr. Nelson had college majors in English and chemistry and for some years was debate and oratory coach and a language arts department head. After three consecutive Nebraska state championships in debate and oratory he was transferred to school administration. At the time of his death he was retired from his profession in Education.

GAS SHORTAGE AND GARDENING

Joseph Glocka

Those of us who are of the vintage that can recall the slow, meandering pace of the 30's are beginning to regard the energy crunch as somewhat of a 'plus.' For many this Spring will mean a return to the basics . . . a slowdown in the tempo of living to a point where more leisurely pursuits can be assimilated.

Emphasis on the Sunday drive or weekend trips will be conditioned by the amount of gasoline one has access to for 'luxury runs'. This will mean more stay-at-home time on weekends.

What a blessing!

What a perfect opportunity to revert to the simple pleasures of the soil . . . tilling, gardening and pampering our prized collections of peonies to a degree that befits the dignity of these fine plants.

No more haphazard rototilling or weeding! Each plant can now be given its own full measure of attention. Performance data on each variety can now be updated. For some of us perhaps, this will fulfill a long awaited time to undertake a program of hybridizing.

Those who still haven't surrendered all their available garden space to peonies can now re-institute vegetable gardens and re-live the feeling of pride that emerges when one can pluck one of Mother Nature's tidbits from the soil or off the vine.

Those of us who garden regularly know there's a heap o' peace that comes when working with the soil — especially with the culture of peonies. There's a thrill in watching the first red stems break through the ground in early Spring as old friends emerge right on schedule. Anxious hybrids are followed by the mid-season set which bow to those varieties ordained to share the final glories of the season late in June.

If the fuel pinch should ease, let's hope that it's in the area of mid-June so that many, can make it to the 1974 peony exhibition in Hamilton.

—39—

The proper time to divide peonies is after August 15 and until the ground freezes. Early dividing is the best. In dividing a rare and expensive variety, when more divisions are desired, cut one or two eye divisions or even a piece of crown with three or more eyes. These divisions take an extra year or two, in growing a nice plant.

Hybrids — Two eyes are considered a good division for most hybrids.

Clarence O. Lienau

SOIL IMPROVEMENT

Ben Vance, extension horticulturist

Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa

A good garden soil is high in organic matter. As crops are grown, the organic matter level of the soil becomes progressively lower unless organic materials are applied. Remember that commercial fertilizers are not a substitute for organic matter. Both are needed for a fertile, productive garden soil.

Organic matter improves the structure of the soil and makes it easier to till. This is especially true in soils that tend to pack badly and crust over. Organic matter increases the water-holding capacity of the soil, and it is essential to the development of beneficial micro-organisms that are so important in plant nutrition. The organic matter also is a storehouse for certain plant nutrients. Leaves from trees are excellent as are lawn clippings, peat, sawdust, straw and spoiled hay and silage. Coarse, fibrous materials may occasionally cause a temporary lowering of the nitrogen level. It is advisable to apply a nitrogen-carrying fertilizer before turning under refuse of this kind. Apply 10-10-10, 12-12-12 or other similar complete commercial fertilizers at the rate of 15 or 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet to prevent any deficiency. Ammonium nitrate at 3 pounds, or 6 pounds of ammonium sulfate for each 1,000 square feet can be used instead of the mixed fertilizer. Fall is the preferred time to plow or spade under organic matter. This allows partial decomposition of the material, and it is quickly available the following growing season.

Green manure crops are excellent soil builders, too, and will supply satisfactory amounts of organic matter. Rye seeded at the rate of 3 to 5 pounds per 1,000 square feet or annual ryegrass at 2 to 4 pounds may be used. Seed sown near the middle of August will normally make sufficient growth before cold weather. If soil erosion is a problem, rye could serve as a winter cover crop and be turned under the following spring.

Commercial fertilizers are effective and economical materials to supply some of the mineral elements used by plants. A "complete" fertilizer contains nitrogen, phosphorus and potash. For example, a 5-10-5 fertilizer contains 5 percent available nitrogen, 10 percent available phosphoric acid and 5 percent available potash.

Several other elements are necessary for plant growth. These are called the trace or minor elements. Iron, boron, manganese and sulfur as well as others are in this class. Many of the commonly used commercial fertilizers contain the trace elements as impurities. Animal manures also contain a number of trace elements.

PEONY REGISTRATION

Allen Harper, Registrar

PILLOW TALK

(Charles Klehm & Son, 1973)

Lactiflora Double.

Reregistration of varietal, FRIENDLY FEDERAL — Name change, only. Reported in American Peony Society Bulletin #188. March 1973. U.S. Plant Patent awarded 1973. #2953.

ORIENTAL GOLD

(Louis Smirnow)

Species double

Parentage unknown, bloomed first 1959.

Yellow, ball form. No stamens, good substance, one bud per stem, pollen no fragrance. 33-36 inches in height, bright green foliage, blooms midseason. Good stem strength and vigorous. I brought this in, from Japan in 1960. As seedling, there it was known as Yokihi, also as Aurea. Have since introduced plant here and countries in Asia, Europe, South America, Australia and New Zealand. Registered by Louis Smirnow, Jan. 16, 1974.

YELLOW HEAVEN

(Mr. Itoh in Japan. Itoh-Smirnow hybrid)

First bloomed 1964

Parentage. Alice Harding (tree peony) - Kakoden. (Semi-double herbaceous)

Yellow, with red blotches in center. Ball form, stamens, good substance, reliable, has pollen, seeds and fragrant. 24-36 inches in height. Excellent vigor blooms midseason. Has tree peony foliage, herbaceous plant habits. Purchased by me in 1966 for my exclusive use. Now known as ITOH-SMIRNOW Hybrid. Introduced in this country and other countries by Louis Smirnow. Registered by Louis Smirnow, Jan. 16, 1974.

YELLOW CROWN

(Mr. Itoh in Japan. Itoh-Smirnow hybrid)

First bloomed 1964

Parentage. Alice Harding (tree peony) - Kakoden (Semi-double herbaceous)

Yellow, with red blotches in center. Ball form, stamens, good substance, reliable, has pollen seed and fragrant. 24-36 inches in height, blooms midseason. Excellent vigor. Has tree peony foliage, herbaceous plant habits. Purchased by me in 1966 for exclusive use. Now known as ITOH-SMIRNOW HYBRID. Introduced in this country and other countries by Louis Smirnow. Registered by Louis Smirnow, Jan. 16, 1974.

YELLOW DREAM

(Mr. Itoh in Japan. Itoh-Smirnow hybrid)

First bloomed 1964

Parentage. Alice Harding (tree peony) - Kakoden (Semi-double herbaceous).

Yellow with light red blotches in center. Ball form, good substance, stamens, pollen, seeds, reliable and fragrant. 24-36 inches in height, excellent vigor, blooms midseason. Tree peony foliage, with herbaceous plant habits. Purchased by me in 1966 for my exclusive use. Now known as ITOH-Smirnow HYBRID. Introduced in this country and other countries by Louis Smirnow. Registered by Louis Smirnow, Jan. 16, 1974.

YELLOW EMPEROR

(Mr. Itoh in Japan. Itoh-Smirnow hybrid).

First bloomed 1964.

Parentage Alice Harding (tree peony) - Kakoden. (Semi-double herbaceous)

Yellow, occasionally slight red blotches in center. Ball form, good substance, stamens, pollen, seeds, reliable and fragrant. Height 24-36 inches, excellent vigor, blooms midseason. Tree peony foliage, with herbaceous plant habits. Purchased by me in 1966 for my exclusive use. Now known as ITOH-SMIRNOW HYBRID. Introduced in this country and other countries by Louis Smirnow. Registered by Louis Smirnow, Jan. 16, 1974.

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