

JUNE, 1979  
NO. 230

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# The American Peony Society Bulletin







*The 76th Annual Meeting*

*and*

*The 74th National Exhibition*

May 24, 25, 26, 1979

Champaign - Urbana, Illinois

*Klehm Peony Farm*

Peony Exhibition

THE MARKET PLACE



## AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

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### DEPT. OF REGISTRATION

The department was formed to properly supervise the nomenclature of the different varieties and kinds of peonies. All new varieties should be registered to avoid duplication of names.  
Greta M. Kessenich, Secretary

### 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 kind of the general objects herein specified by holding or causing to be held exhibitions, and awarding or causing or procuring to be awarded, prizes therefor 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 or member family	_____ 2.50
Single Triennial	_____ 20.00	Life	_____ 150.00
Family Annual	_____ 10.00	Commercial membership	_____ 25.00
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Family membership, any two related members in same household — One Bulletin.

Junior membership, any age through 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



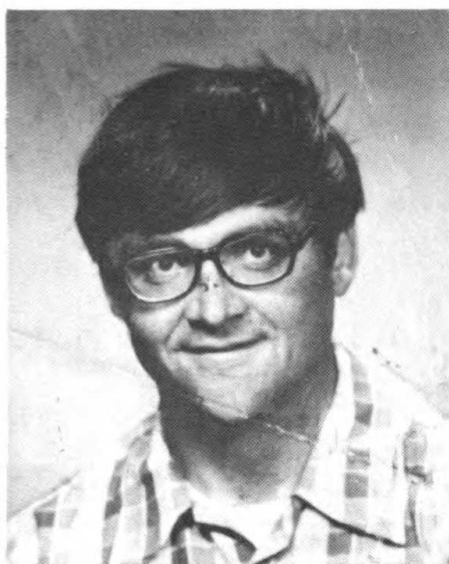
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## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

I wish to thank all those who attended and participated in the American Peony Society show in Urbana. The good times and fellowship were evident throughout the entire program.

On behalf of the American Peony Society and all who attended the convention in Champaign, I would like to thank Mary Ellen Landen for a job well done. Her efforts in preparing the program and the banquet were appreciated by all.

Tree peonies budded in late March this year because of the deep snow cover throughout the United States. The buds were then exposed to temperatures of 10 degrees Fahrenheit during the weekend of March 24th and 25th, yet the tree peonies performed very nicely from a growing and blooming standpoint.

Our hard working secretary, Greta Kessenich, has her book featuring 75 years of the American Peony Society underway. This book should definitely be a must for all peony lovers. We express our gratitude that such information has been made available in the compiling of authentic material of the Society and the peony.

Members of the American Peony Society had a chance to see several hundred new Krekler varieties on exhibit in Champaign. These will undergo further evaluation and testing during the next few years.

Sincerely,  
Chuck Klehm

# PEONIES

*By Henry Mitchell, Garden Editor—Washington Post*

The fattest and most scrumptious of all flowers, a rare fusion of fluff and majesty, the peony is now coming into bloom to mark the highest of high spring.

Most of my scruples against ponderous shapes in flowers are swept away in the general confusion of the peony season. I say confusion only because I have never been able to settle down with a handful of varieties I consider the best.

It is gradually becoming clear to me that if I had space for 200, there would still be a few hundred more to be desired, and worst of all, I have never had the chance to grow a few hundred.

When I was a boy, there was an old man who sold peonies and opened his garden once a year for the town to admire. There you placed orders and in due time, late in September or October, he showed up to deliver the roots. His favorite was LE CYGNE, a swan of a flower indeed, though not as hearty a grower as one might wish. As far as I know, he had no other plants but peonies, and when they were over, he estivated.

When he was in his 90's, he dropped by unexpectedly—since I had not ordered anything in the spring—and said he wanted me to have three roots, FESTIVA MAXIMA, MONSIEUR JULES ELIE, and I think (for I did not grow it), EDULIS SUPERBA.

He died a few days after that, and I suspect he thought the time had come to go around and make sure plenty of people here were growing peonies, and that he had better start them off right with a few that would grow and bloom well for anybody. I never see those varieties but I think of him.

FESTIVA MAXIMA is the fat, double, early white with occasional crimson flecks that you see everywhere. It was bred and put on the market in 1851.

The second, which is one of those rare flowers of which gardeners manage to get the entire name right, M. JULES ELIE, is a huge medium pink, the petals curving up somewhat like a chrysanthemum, and the color somewhat veiled by silver-gray. But do not imagine it is a dull color—it is flawless and as luscious as strawberries in cream.

The third, which came out in the 1820's, as I remember it, is a sort of rose pink, a trifle too blue to suit many gardeners, and round and not too large. But like the other two, it blooms early in the peony season and is, of the three, the most perfumed. It used to be a great cutflower variety, and once or twice I have seen it at flower stalls in Washington.

To bring some sort of order to the peony tribe, for gardeners who may not be familiar with them, let me mention the general types. First, there are the full doubles, very much like dahlias that have gone to



heaven and been transformed. These are the tremendous sorts that girls used to carry in bouquets for graduation day at high schools in the North. Many of these doubles are as big as a cantaloupe. When the petals fill with rain, most of them bend down on their stems and never quite stand up straight again. Needless to say, it is prudent to provide wire rings or stakes for them.

Second, there are the semi-doubles, with fewer petals. The anemone-flowered kinds have a row or two of flat outer petals—not always flat—come to think of it—and thinner petalodes, like shredded petals, in the middle. Sometimes they have yellow stamens showing, sometimes not.

The Japanese peonies are somewhat similar, only with the stamens transformed into floral parts. That is, there is a great flat saucer of petals and a grand sunburst of stamens looking like yellow confetti in the middle.

Sometimes the Japanese sorts have the middle the same color as the petals, which is very handsome, and sometimes there is a contrast. These great single flowers, once quite expensive, are now as cheap as any other sort of peony.

Some are red with yellow centers; some white with tawny gold; some pink with red centers; some rose with whitish centers; some vaguely lavender; and in some the pink petals are edged with lighter color.

Having only the single row of petals, they do not get waterlogged as badly as the massive doubles, and they stand up better in rain. It is not true, however, that you need not stake them. Last year my LARGO, a deep rose with yellow centers, flopped about in the rain and covered a circle five feet in diameter. It is merely one of many spectacular varieties, and I also grow CHRISTINE, a white; WESTERNER, a rich, wonderful pink; PLAINSMAN, blush; SITKA, another white; and CHOCOLATE SOLDIER, a glossy red with occasional yellow dots on the petals, one of the earliest kinds.

GAY PAREE is pink with red centers; DOREEN has several tints of pink in it; SWORD DANCE is a late-flowering red and yellow; ISANI GIDUI and TORO-NO-MAKI are whites with yellow centers. There are dozens of others, all of which I would grow if I could.

This may be the place to say that lists of the best varieties are inherently absurd, since if you dislike deep red with yellow centers, you clearly should not grow reds with yellow centers, no matter what list they appear on. Likewise, if you think the whites with yellow are too elegant, and want something flashier, like pink and yellow—then clearly you should grow the pinks.

Most lists provide a wide assortment of types and colors, and I dearly love lists of the best this and the best that, but I never follow them very closely in my own selection. I do not think a gardener can go wrong with peonies, except in two ways:

First, he can wind up with so many of the massive doubles that the effect is heavier, when they are in flower, than he intended. Second, he may not be prepared for the staking that the heavy kinds require. Apart from that, I don't see how anyone can go wrong.

Some of the very double kinds, especially the late-season ones, will fail to open properly in hot weather. They are a gamble, and to begin with the gardener should perhaps concentrate on earlier-season sorts.

I have not mentioned the singles. These have a row of petals, like the Japanese, but lack the big central tuft. Such varieties as DAWN PINK, SEA SHELL, KRINKLED WHITE, PICO, and LE JOUR are among the esteemed sorts.

## TO CAPTURE A PEONY

*Anthony J. De Blasi*

*RD 198A*

*E. Wakefield, N. H. 03830*

The peony excels in many ways but we may fault it for teasing the memory after the last petals drop. In one moment it floods your consciousness with the dramatic poetry of creation—in the next, it vanishes, leaving you gasping for breath!

“All human joys are swift of wing,  
For heaven doth so allot it,  
That when you get an easy thing,  
You find you haven't got it.” (Eugene Field, *Ways of Life*.)

When the blossoms go, we try in vain to reconstruct in the mind's eye the various forms, the substance, textures, colors, waves, folds, sheens, and hundreds of other details that combine to delight the eye. A week, a month, a year later, we utterly fail to comprehend what we faintly remember having seen during those glorious flashes of floral eternity.

Though we may not be able to recapture the scene, we could settle for some aids to memory. At the very least, we could take notes as we examine our prized subject. If we are gifted, we could write poetry or paint them. An inspired, impressionistic painting of a peony comes closest to any possible “capture” of their visual reality.

Somewhere in-between lies the photograph. If you like to take pictures, the peony is an excellent subject. Beautiful it is, and it is large and it stays put. But don't be a snap-and-go photographer. Today many professionals use their cameras like rapid-fire weapons against their subjects, exposing dozens—perhaps even hundreds—of frames of film to get one or two good shots! To me that is careless, wasteful, and unprofessional. The amateur should not ape this “technique.” After all, an accidentally good photograph could be taken by a chimpanzee! How far better to have mastered your skill to the point where you can, with confidence, take one or two shots that count!

Even if you don't enjoy the feeling of proud accomplishment

(which I suppose is possible in today's world of crowd mentality, unisex, and robot obedience to the cult of glittering mediocrity)—think of the savings!

Lest I stray too far on a tangent, let me direct your attention to a few considerations that can make your picture-taking more rewarding. To begin with, know your camera. Though you should never take the mechanics of picture-taking for granted (slip-ups cost pictures), the feel, the settings, the operations of your camera should become second-nature. If they aren't, practice the chain of steps—setting lens and shutter, viewing, focusing, snapping, winding, etc.—until it comes out smoothly and trippingly on the fingers. If your camera is automatic and does most of the work for you, you are missing half the fun of picture-taking.

Your subject should be well lit for the proper registration of color and detail on film. But the most attractive and true-to-color photographs are not taken in direct sunshine. A hazy day or a bright-but-cloudy one gives you the best colors, free of harsh, distracting shadows. If it is sunny, avoid shooting during the middle of the day. The peonies will likely not be at their best then, anyway. Between 9 and 11 A.M. and after 4 P.M. are good hours.

Study your subject from every angle, noting how the oblique rays of sunlight strike and splash or filter through the leaves and petals. You will observe that light striking the blossoms from the side or the rear will partially or wholly light up the flowers like lanterns. You may well take advantage of this effect for some creative, poetic flower portraits. If you do, be sure to expose for the shaded areas or your photograph will be underexposed.

Frame your subject so that the subject's center does not coincide with the frame center. Many an otherwise exiting photograph is dulled by this common mistake. Before you snap the shutter decide **just what is your subject**. Is it a group of plants, a group of blossoms, a single bloom, a few petals, a bee in the center? Then **move in as close as you must to exclude everything that is not your subject**.

If you wish to convey an idea of the size of the subject, put a person in your picture. Pose him or her unobtrusively, looking at the subject, not at the camera. Be sure the person's clothing is not distracting in color or design.

If your camera does not produce square images, vary your shooting between vertical and horizontal frames. Having them all horizontal or all vertical is disconcerting to the viewer during a showing of your photographs.

When you photograph a single blossom, as a rule it is best to avoid a direct shot, straight at the face of the flower. This mug-shot style is all right for identification purposes but is usually dull and unflattering to flowers as well as people. Aim at an angle—a slight angle if you wish to emphasize the center, somewhat more of an angle if you want to reveal the overall form of the blossom, or an extreme angle if you are

after a special effect.

Keep the background neutral and simple. The subject should command attention. It cannot do this if it must compete with distracting forms and colors around it that are potential subjects in their own right. If a plain, uncluttered background does not present itself, it is not necessary to resort to the parlor trick of rigging up a backdrop of suitable cloth or other material. An easier, quicker, and more natural "trick" is to open your lens wide, focus very carefully, and shoot at a correspondingly faster shutter speed. This will blur the background, giving you an indefinite, undifferentiated foil for your crisp subject, an effect that is quite pleasant and often stunning. If your camera is a Single-Lens Reflex type, you may study the effect and create just the amount of background blurring you want before taking the picture.

If you are not using a tripod, shoot at not less than 1/100 second. At the close distances associated with flower photography, the movements of the subject and photographer add up to a lack of definition in the photograph. Even with a tripod, a breeze may dictate relatively fast shutter speeds.

If you find the light tricky or you are uncertain of the correct exposure, take three shots of the same subject—one at the assumed proper exposure, one a half-stop less, and one a half-stop more. Your chances of having the right exposure are now 1 in 3.

You may have a peculiar problem with purple or lavender subjects, even some blue ones. Modern color films render these hues well most of the time, but sometimes—and especially with flowers—blues may become lavender, purples may change to reddish, and lavender may turn pink! If you have never photographed "Heavenly Blue" morning glory—only to get "Ghastly Mauve"—or an ageratum that went pink—you haven't hit all the bumps in flower photography! The tree peony **Kamada Fuji** is notoriously camera-shy when it comes to revealing its true color. If you have experienced this problem, or suspect that you might, take at least one exposure through a light blue filter. Move in as close to the subject as you dare, so as to reduce the amount of bluish background visible. The color of your problem subject, however, will be improved. Follow the manufacturer's recommended increase in exposure with your particular light blue filter.

After you have refined your skill in photographing flowers, put a little daring and adventure into your picture taking. Let your imagination be your guide but remember that your object is not to be "different" but to portray your favorite flowers in a "moment of truth."

Here are some possibilities to stir your shutter fever. Put the camera on the ground and make it look up at the subject. (How lucky you are if your camera has a provision for top-of-camera viewing!) Have you ever seen a low-angle shot of a cluster of fern-leaf peonies spreading their charm against a blue sky?

If your subject is at the edge of a shadowed area—but is itself in sunlight—aim your camera so that the background is the shadowed



area. The sparkling contrast between sunlit subject and dark background of deep shade is dramatic and beautiful.

Put your camera on a tripod and proceed to your picture-hunting grounds before sunrise or after sunset. If you have no light meter you will have to experiment with the longer-than-normal exposure times required in dim light. Try 1/10 sec., 1/5 sec., 1/2 sec., 1 second, or longer. The resulting subdued tones will impart a special mood of serenity to your subject. Be sure the air is calm when you take these outdoor time exposures. You may find the elusive **Kamada Fuji** easier to "capture" in such light.

Wherever your camera hunt leads you, remember that your own mood is reflected in subtle ways in your photographs. The pictures you take are in a way as much portraits of yourself as of your subjects. If you are in a bad mood, distracted, or just not feeling with it, take a break and return to your photography later. And be careful that you do not become such a slave to your camera that you can't relax and enjoy your surroundings. Be prepared to miss a shot, now and then, in favor of not missing out on the pleasures of being out among friends and peonies during this annual show of shows.

## SELECTING PEONIES

*W. G. Sindt, Afton, Minnesota*

The time to select new peonies for planting this fall is now. May and June are the months when selections should be made because it is the time when the plants are in bloom. Seeing the actual flower on a plant is by far the best means to help one make decisions on what varieties to obtain. If one cannot go to nurseries or gardens where the peonies are growing, the next best choice is to attend shows where the blooms can be seen and talk to the exhibitors to learn something about the characteristics of the plant. Failing either of these two methods, the method of peony catalogs can be pursued. The descriptions given are accurate but words and pictures are never as good as seeing the real growing plant.

In making selections, one should keep in mind the ultimate use or purpose desired for the plant. If the peonies are being selected primarily for landscape, the appearance of the plant becomes very important. The blooms are open two weeks but the shrub is there for six months. There is a great difference in plant habit. Some are very tall, some have coarse leaves, some turn color in the fall. By seeing the actual plant growing, a selection can be made of an attractive shrub with the flowers as a bonus. If the use is cut flowers for the home, one should look for the smaller sized doubles, singles and Japanese. For this purpose hybrids are very popular because of their different and brilliant colors. For show or exhibit one selects for perfection of bloom only. It matters little if the plant is not attractive or if the stems are too long

to support the huge blooms. The show floor is the place to select this type. Look to the Court of Honor and blue ribbons at shows and talk to the successful exhibitors. Whatever the intended use, it is interesting to try a tree peony or two. Here one can get true yellow color which is not available in any of the other types yet.

Any discussion on selection of peonies should include some varieties that have special merit. Any list of varieties, which always omits many excellent ones, is the author's favorites which have done well for him. The varieties presented here fall into that category and while they are suggested for one of the three purposes mentioned before, they generally are acceptable in more than just one. **Vanity**, a blush Japanese, has very bright green shiny foliage and is a beautiful shrub during off-season. With **Wilford Johnson**, a full double deep pink, the top of the bush is covered with bloom, a beautiful shrub. **Fern leaf** (*P. tenuifolia*) has finely divided foliage that is unusual with very early bloom.

There is a single and double form of *P. tenuifolia* with the double a very showy plant early in the season. Most of the singles, Japanese and hybrids stand up well and are very acceptable for landscape work. Used as cut flowers in the home or in artistic exhibits, the color of hybrids is outstanding. **Cytherea**, a semi-double shell pink hybrid; **Flame**, a bright red hybrid; **Camellia**, a blush-white hybrid formed like a camellia flower; **John Harvard**, a very dark red hybrid; **Krinkled White**, a white single; **Walter Faxon**, medium pink double; **Ruth Elizabeth**, a bright red medium-sized double; **John Gardener**, a red Japanese with gold edge are a few good choices for arrangers. Varieties selected for show should be large ones with good form that have the potential to be consistent winners. Some good varieties are: **Douglas Brand**, red double; **Red Charm**, full double red hybrid; **Princess Margaret**, dark pink double; **Pico**, white single; **Dinner Plate**, pink double; **Miss America**, semi-double white; **Frances Mains**, light pink double; **Kansas**, double light red; and many, many more. For a real stopper try a yellow tree peony such as **Age of Gold** or **Roman Gold**.

The preceding selection of varieties is very limited. The cost will be in the range of \$5.00 to \$15.00 with perhaps one exception. While this may seem high to some people, it compares very favorably with the cost of annual bedding plants. Packs of petunias now are about a dollar for eight or ten plants. Several packs are needed and they must be replaced each year, while the peony lasts a lifetime.

The annual show at Champaign-Urbana will be an excellent opportunity to see the plants as they are growing in the field and as they are shown on the exhibit table. Other shows will probably be held in Wisconsin and Minnesota, further opportunities to see good peonies.

When peonies are purchased, they should be obtained from a specialist, one who knows and grows hundreds of varieties. A peony plant lasts a lifetime so select carefully.

## TIME OF BLOOM

*Henry S. Cooper 1858-1924 — Bulletin #21, July 1923*

*Mr. Cooper of Kenosha, Wisconsin, was an authority on peonies. He knew his subject through practical experience and years of study. He was Treasurer of the American Peony Society.*

I have been wondering whether some of the questions in the minds of some gardeners as to the seasons of bloom of peonies might not be due to failure to understand or to consider certain things which influence the early or late blooming every year. I know there exists more or less confusion as to season of bloom both relative and positive.

First of all, the age of the plant has to do with the bloom, both as to size and season. The first year the blossom is about one week later. The second year two or three days, and the third year, nearly normal.

Second, location in the garden also has much to do with the question of a few days earlier or later. On my own place those peonies which are in my formal garden and are surrounded with hedges, shrubbery, and trees, thus being protected from cold spring winds, but at the same time fully exposed to sunshine, are a week earlier than those of the same varieties located in the open field where they have the same sun, but no protection from wind.

Third, here is the most interesting condition of all. Kenosha is on the shore of Lake Michigan, and my home, Dunmavin, is five miles back from the lake and one hundred and fifteen feet above the lake level. The west part of Kenosha is about three miles from the lake and some sixty feet above it. Now peonies in gardens in Western Kenosha being protected by fences, houses, etc., from cold spring winds will bloom nearly a week earlier than my own two miles west of them. Then again, plants which are on the lake shore where they are near the cold lake, which in spring is usually full of ice and at least of ice water, are held back by the chilly air of the immediate lake shore so as to be nearly a week later than my own. So within five miles we have a variation of about two weeks in season. West Kenosha is a week earlier and the lake shore about a week later than my own.

Now, we will suppose someone near the lake had FESTIVA MAXIMA or other early varieties, and West Kenosha three miles away had MARIE LEMOINE, GRANDIFLORA, or some late variety, and they both blossomed at the same time—what a glorious chance for confusion and discussion as to blooming season, particularly if one happened to be new in peony growing. Chicago only fifty miles from Kenosha is ten days earlier. Lilacs are gone in Chicago when they begin to blossom in Kenosha.

I know these things are understood by old gardeners, but are very liable to cause perplexity to the young peony fan especially when we couple dates with the blossoming of any variety. If we should say that FESTIVA MAXIMA blooms June tenth in Wisconsin, as it does in Kenosha at my place, we must remember that it blooms about the first

week in July in the northern end of the state. I have seen peonies in their prime in Northern Wisconsin after July 4th.

All this means that when we talk of the date of bloom of any variety, we need to state also many modifying conditions. We can, however, always state the relative time of bloom with close accuracy for any exact location.

## TREE PEONY TOPICS

*By Louis Smirnow, Brookville, New York*

The few days of warm weather that we had in the east caused many of the young tree peonies to be forced up from the ground, further proof that young plants should be planted deep enough to prevent heaving when weather changes.

Tree peonies are being used more often by landscape architects than ever before. Recently we attended a meeting of landscape architects who showed pictures of tree peonies planted among azaleas, rhododendrons and other plants used in landscaping. One particular photo showed several three foot tall white tree peonies planted with several pinks. It was a beautiful picture.

We constantly get letters asking what to do about young shoots that wilt and some that turn black. Spray the plant with Bordeaux mixture or some other fungicide.

So many of the old European varieties are disappearing from commerce. Quite a few European nurseries have disappeared and others have stopped growing peonies. They have found it more profitable to grow other popular plants, hence their decision to cut down or eliminate the handling of peonies. Peony people will find it increasingly difficult to obtain those beautiful old varieties, *Satin Rouge*, *Sang Lorain*, *Surprise*, *Flambeau*, *Jeanne D'Arc*, *Byou de Chusan* and others. If you have any of these, you would do well to graft a few plants.

We again suggest to those who want a longer period of blooms for tree peonies, *Tamafuyo*, first to bloom in most areas followed by *Nissho*, *Hakiso Jishi*, *Haku Banryu*, *Gumpowden* and all Japanese varieties. Then *Luteas* will follow with the singles first, then the semi-doubles and doubles.

Several letters have been received requesting names of beautiful varieties not easily obtained from our suppliers in this country and difficult to obtain in Japan. They are *Shintenchu*, *Akashi Gata*, *Yuki Zasa*, *Monoyama*, *Hyakkasen*, *Gumpoden*, *Horei Seidai* (great favorite in Japanese gardens), *Yomeimon*, *Kagura Jishi*, *Yo Yo No Homare*, *Howdai*, *Dantenmon* and *Shugyokuden*.

Regarding a long blooming period of peonies, herbaceous peonies bloom a few days after the *Lutea* hybrid tree peonies. In most parts of the country, if one has both tree peonies and herbaceous peonies it is possible to get a six-week blooming period for peonies.



## SELECT PEONIES FOR FALL PLANTING NOW



Photograph — Robert F. Schmidt, Brecksville, Ohio

*June 1978, Kingwood Center, Ohio*

*National Peony Show*

*Clarence O. Lienau*

*Lienau Peony Gardens, Detroit, Michigan*

This is the time to plan your peony garden. The location is most important as it must be in full sun, with good drainage. Peonies will grow in partial shade but they will have sparse bloom and the plant will not be strong and robust. Consider the perimeter of your lawn, with your planting two feet from the fence or edge of the location. A design artistically planned in your lawn would be added beautification to your home, or plant a long row along your driveway.

The peony plant makes beautiful, attractive bushes after blooming. With the coming of cool weather, the foliage is colorful with red and bronze until heavy frost. It is then the entire plant should be cut to the ground.

In planting leave three feet between each plant, measuring from the crown. If space is no problem, four feet would be better.

Soil is the secret for good peonies. A good garden loam that is suitable for vegetables will also grow good peonies. If soil is sandy or full of heavy excavation clay and debris such as most builders leave in the ground, it is imperative that a hole be dug 2 feet in diameter and one and one-half feet deep; then replace with clay loam (heavy fertile top soil) for each plant. This work will repay you many times, with abundance of bloom and a strong, healthy bush. Prepare the holes or planting area several weeks in advance, so the ground will be settled before planting time.

We advise planting in September, October and November or up to the time the ground freezes. Directions for planting are always included with your order by the commercial growers.

If at all possible, try to visit a commercial garden at blooming time and select your plants. There are early, midseason and late blooming varieties in all types. The blooming period can be extended by selecting the correct varieties. In a normal season, blooms will usually last three or four full weeks.

For your convenience, I have prepared a list of peonies that have proven outstanding for me over the years. Almost all of them have won many ribbons at the national shows. The descriptions of the peonies are my own as the characteristic of each flower and plant have been observed. All of the peonies listed are available from the commercial growers.

### **Singles**

#### **White**

**PICO** — Large pure white cupped petals, full center of yellow stamens. Tall blooms at midseason.

**SPELLBINDER** — A medium size cup, yellow center, medium height, blooms late.

**LEJOUR** — Very large flower of cup form, medium height. Early.

#### **Pink**

**SEA SHELL** — A clear medium pink, best in its class. Tall medium to late bloom.

**SPARKLING STAR** — Tall, large, dark, deep pink. Very early. Long lasting bloom. Very nice.

**MR. THIM** — Very sturdy upright plant with large dark pink flowers, medium height.

#### **Red**

**IMPERIAL RED** — Somewhat like a large poinsettia, thick stems, large light red, many blooms. Very worthwhile.

**PRESIDENT LINCOLN** — Best in its class. Late, tall, large deep, dark red.

### **Japanese**

#### **White**

**BU-TE** — Very large, tall, late, long yellow staminodes. The finest white Japanese. Cup shape.

**LOTUS QUEEN** — Good plant, many blooms, medium to tall, staminodes long, golden yellow.

**POLAR STAR** — A very lovely flower, late, strong stems, yellow staminodes. Tall.

#### **Pink**

**WESTERNER** — Large and beautiful shade of medium pink. Center is filled with golden yellow staminodes that are firm and erect.

**KAY TISCHLER** — Bright pink and cream, many large formed flowers. Tall, large plant. Bright pink staminodes, tipped golden yellow.

**NEON** — Medium size, late to midseason, bright color of rose and gold.

#### **Red**

**DIGNITY** — Medium height, dark red and gold, a very beautiful flower, having more gold in its staminodes than any other Japanese variety.

**NIPPON BRILLIANT** — A tall brilliant red with light gold staminodes, medium size. Midseason.

**CHARM** — A dark red and gold, medium to tall, medium size, many blooms. A fine plant. Late.

#### **Semi-Double**

##### **White**

**MISS AMERICA** — Best of all. Large, early, medium height.

**MINNIE SHAYLOR** — Unusual, medium size, like a large white zinnia, many petals, a beauty.

**MARGARET LOUGH** — Low grower, beautiful form, excellent.

##### **Pink**

**SPRING BEAUTY** — Early, large bloom, medium height, light pink.

**AVE MARIA** — Light pink, medium height, beautiful flower and nice plant. Turns to white.

##### **Red**

**HARRY L. SMITH** — Large dark red, fine form, midseason.

**THE MIGHTY MO** — Medium to large light red with many blooms. Large nice plant.

#### **Double**

##### **Blush**

**MOONSTONE** — Color, grey-pink when first opening, then goes into white in a few days. Holds its shape and color a long period. A GOLD MEDAL PEONY.

**NANCY NICHOLLS** — Beautiful form and admired by all that grow it.

**LA LORRAINE** — Large beautiful blush, color remains blush. Late, medium height.

##### **White**

**BOWL OF CREAM** — Very fine, large, medium bloomer. Opens cream, goes into pure white almost immediately. Profuse bloomer, nice plant. Medium height.

**GARDENIA** — Large, beautiful gardenia form, medium height.

**MARCELLA** — Pure white, medium height, loads of bloom.

**DR. J. H. NEELEY** — A gorgeous, large, beautifully formed, medium

height, late white.

**FLORENCE NICHOLLS** — Late, large beautiful peony. Long stems, good bloomer.

#### **Light Pink**

**MRS. F. D. R.** — Beautifully formed with long loose petals of cream pink. Size, form and color make it most attractive. A **GOLD MEDAL PEONY**.

**DOLORODEL** — Late, large well-formed flower. Strong stems, tall, many times an outstanding show winner.

**NICK SHAYLOR** — Late light pink, very large. Occasional red marking, strong stems. **GOLD MEDAL PEONY**.

**TRULY YOURS** — A large soft medium pink, medium blooming period, medium height, stiff stems. Long lasting when cut.

#### **Dark Pink**

**PRINCESS MARGARET** — Midseason. Large cup form, strong stem, medium height. Won best flower at the National shows in 1970 and 1978, also many other awards.

**EMMA KLEHM** — Late, medium height, fine form.

**EDULIS SUPREME** — Medium tall, strong growing plant, fine flower.

**ENSIGN MORIARTY** — A late midseason beauty, very large strong stems. Holds a very large bloom perfectly erect. May be hard to locate.

**WILFORD JOHNSON** — Midseason, bright rose pink. Blooms lie flat on top of bush. When looking down on top of plant, only flowers will be seen, no foliage. Completely different from all other blooms. 6-8 inches in size, strong stems, medium height.

**ROSE GLORY** — Early double rose with some deep lavender in it. Strong stems, medium height. Excellent flower of deepest rose that I know.

#### **Red**

**KANSAS** — An early light red, sturdy, tall with strong stems, large blooms. Best in its class. Second highest award winner of all peonies. Awarded the **GOLD MEDAL**.

**BONANZA** — Dark red, blooming at midseason, medium height, dark green leathery foliage.

**PAUL M. WILD** — Brilliant medium dark red. Very late, always opens, medium height, fine form.

**HIGHLIGHT** — Best of the dark, dark reds. Midseason bloom, medium height, good grower.

#### **White Bomb Type**

**SNOW MOUNTAIN** — Large, midseason, medium height and a fine grower.

#### **Pink Bomb Type**



**MONS. JULES ELIE** — Large rose pink bloom, early. The most extensively grown of all peonies. Very good cut flower, does well for everyone. Should be in every garden.

**BIG BEN** — Tall midseason, strong stems, medium to dark red. Good cut flower.

#### **Four unusual varieties**

**GAY PAREE** — Beautiful rose and white Japanese. Tall, midseason, medium size bloom, strong growing large plant. Stamens turn to snow white.

**WHITE CAP** — Very unusual large red and white blooms. Stamens turn to snow white. Midseason, large, strong growing plant. Beautiful.

The two above plants make a fine pair.

**DO TELL** — A very unusual combination of pink on pink. Medium size Japanese. Outside petals medium pink, narrow center petals much darker.

**VIRGINIA DARE** — Beautiful small midseason daisy type, single, medium height. Thin whipcord strong stems. Excellent for all types of floral arrangements and centerpieces.

#### **HYBRIDS**

This new type of peony has added enjoyment to the peony world. The colors are vivid and exciting. Every garden should have these beautiful plants. The peony season is prolonged because of their early blooming period.

##### **Red**

**RED CHARM** — The best of all hybrids. Strong grower, medium height, free bloomer, straight heavy strong stems. Bomb type, very unusual red color. Good keeper, makes a fine cut flower. This peony has won more medals than any other variety. A GOLD MEDAL PEONY.

**WALTER MAINS** — The finest Japanese hybrid. Large, tall, strong grower with stiff stems. Deep red with very large gold staminodes, cup form. A GOLD MEDAL PEONY.

**CARINA** — A very large semi-double. Many consider this the finest brilliant red of any peony.

**CYTHERIA** — Peach pink, some call it coral pink (a controversial subject). A very beautiful semi-double hybrid, large ball type, medium height, thick stem, long lasting bloom. Scarce and in big demand.

**PAULA FAY** — Radiant deep rose pink, semi-double with five rows of petals. Good grower, thick stems, medium height, fine bloomer.

**FLAME** — A bright coral pink, semi-double, a vigorous medium height grower. Many blooms.

##### **Pale Yellow**

**PRAIRIE MOON** — Large clear cream yellow. Semi-double strong grower, medium height.

## IN MEMORIAM

*Keith Goldsmith, Edmonds, Washington, died December 10, 1978.*

*Written by Alfred Mantegna, 6808-180th S.E.*

*Snohomish, Washington 98290*

Keith Goldsmith took over the peony business in 1952 and devoted his care to the collection, adding to the hybrids and continuing to increase varieties. For the last thirteen years he was in ill health and in the fall of 1978 he knew he could no longer take care of his peonies. It was then that he asked me if I would become custodian of the collection.

I planted one of each of his varieties. He sold as many as he could and I took the remainder of his plants, about 1100.

We had a very early freezing winter which prevented planting in December, so all were planted in February. Keith passed away December 10.

All the varieties of the Goldsmith Nursery will continue to be available. For the present, on a limited supply for a year or two.

The Goldsmith tradition of sending out viewing invitations of the garden in May through July 4th will be followed.

This year only 900 invitations will be mailed.

## **Francis P. Tikalsky, La Grange, Illinois January 7, 1889 — August 18, 1978**

*Marvin C. Karrels*

Once again we of the American Peony Society bow our heads in silent tribute to one of the Greats of our Society.

Francis is survived by his wife, daughter Margaret, and a brother, Frank. He held a degree in mechanical engineering. He was head of this department at Western Electric for 43 years and was highly regarded in his profession.

Francis was a member of the American Peony Society for more than 30 years. He was the first secretary of the 5th District, also a prolific writer of interesting articles for the Bulletin. During his active years, he contributed an article for almost every issue. Will Christman told me that when he needed an article for the Bulletin, Francis never failed to honor his request. He was a keen student of the peony and had a deep love for both the peony and the American Peony Society.

His was a most interesting life. He had an extensive collection of rare etchings, stamps and old, rare violins. During the last 20 years of his life he became interested in garden photography. He assembled an impressive collection of colored slides that reflected the four seasons in the garden. He showed these slides to dozens of garden clubs, church groups and senior citizens clubs, in the Chicago and Rockford area. One of the last projects of his life was writing a biography of the artist

Alfred Juergens. It was not quite complete at the time of his death, so his daughter Margaret will finish the biography.

The history of the American Peony Society has been enriched because of Francis P. Tikalsky.

**Crossing the Bar—**

*Sunset and evening Star  
And one clear call for me  
And may there be no sadness at the bar  
When I put out to sea.*

—Alfred Tennyson

**Mr. O. L. Brandenburger, McLean, Virginia, died Dec. 22, 1978.**

Mr. Brandenburger excelled in growing peonies in Virginia. He was a member of the American Peony Society for many years.

## **THE BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION OF PEONIES HAS CHANGED**

*by Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri*

Contemporary plant taxonomists generally agree that the peonies belong in a family of their own, the **Paeonaceae**, and not in the **Ranunculaceae** as was long held. For many years the peonies had been thought to be more nearly related to such genera as the anemones, buttercups, clematis, columbines, delphiniums and helleborus than to other genera and they were thus included together. The old association has been a "nice" one for gardeners, of course, as it put together so many familiar border plants. However, botanical classification is concerned with the question of hereditary relationships. As research methods and accumulated knowledge advanced during the last century there has been enabled a great deal of refinement of older conclusions. The peonies are now understood to be clearly distinct from the **Ranunculaceae**.

Appropriately, American Peony Society literature has already begun to reflect the change. Dr. John Wister, writing in **The Peonies** (1962), gave the modern classification. In 1971, the APS Bulletin reprinted a selection from Arthur J. Eames' **Morphology of the Angiosperms**. The latter article summarizes the technical basis of the revision. Eames also pointed out that the change to family status was proposed in 1830 and again about 1900, which reveals just how gradually such matters may develop.

The current taxonomical treatment of the peonies has yet to be widely adopted by garden writers, however. As recently as 1978, for example, two articles appeared in popular publications on gardening in which the writers found occasion to mention the botanical affiliations of the peonies. Both writers repeated the obsolete reference to the **Ranunculaceae**. Reflecting upon this awkward situation, one quickly realizes that, having stood for so long, the old classification became oft

repeated as horticultural reference publications were successively issued over the years. It eventually became incorporated into most of the gardening references now commonly in use. This situation will gradually change as new references come into wider distribution. Meanwhile, however, writers are vulnerable to being caught using out of date references. For the most part this is not a problem for the garden press in general, for the slip will make little difference to the overwhelming majority of their readers.

For the American Peony Society, however, the demands are different than for garden writers. As the scientific base of knowledge changes, it behooves us to keep up with the changes and reflect them upon appropriate occasions in our own publications. There is only one alternative that can be acceptable for the Society's continuing credibility with a knowledgeable constituency. That would be to join in the scientific debate and refute proposed changes in that arena. This sort of activity, while appropriate to competent individual members, is clearly beyond the declared scope of the Society, and there is no reasonable basis for presuming that we are expected to enter into such debate. All that is needed is that we, as avowed spokesmen for peony interests, reflect an up-to-date knowledge base.

I am reminded of the fact that regrets were rather strongly expressed in print upon the publication of Col. F. C. Stern's findings that the long used species name *Paeonia albiflora* must be superseded by the name *P. lactiflora* in accordance with the established rules of botanical naming. While the vocabulary of those who often need to use species names was disrupted for a time, I note that we now seem to be having very little problem in using the newer term.

With respect to adoption of the *Paeonaceae* concept for general use and dropping the now obsolete reference to *Ranunculaceae*, there seems to be but one course for the Society to follow—take a leadership stance. We should seize whatever opportunities may be presented to encourage awareness of this change in botanical classification and to urge its adoption by people who speak and write about peonies.

Some Taxonomical References on the *Paeonaceae*:

1968 Cronquist, Arthur, *The Evolution and Classification of Flowering Plants*. Houghton Mifflin Co.

1966 Davis, Gwenda L., *Systematic Embryology of the Angiosperms*. John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

1961 Eames, Arthur J., *Morphology of the Angiosperms*. McGraw-Hill, Inc.

1963 Maheshwari, P., *Recent Advances in the Embryology of the Angiosperms*.

# Register of the Tree Peonies of T'ien-p'eng by Lu Yu (1125-1210)

The first, and complete translation from the original Chinese by John Marney, Associate Professor of Chinese,  
Oakland University.

## Translator's Introduction—

Lu Yu (1125-1210) was a master of lyric shih poetry during the Southern Sung regime (1125-1279). At this time, North China was dominated by the Chin (Mongol) tribes. Much of Lu's vast corpus of ten thousand poems touches on this national crisis, and for this reason, rightly or wrongly, he is known as a "patriotic" poet.

He was placed Highest Candidate in the imperial examinations of the year 1153, but was disqualified from the lists because of the enmity of a powerful courtier. Nevertheless, he served in various official capacities, and in 1170, he was commissioned to a post in the southwestern province of Ssuchuan. He remained here until 1189, most of which time he spent in the provincial capital Ch'eng-tu.

His "Register of the Tree Peonies of T'ien-p'eng" represents an aspect of his interested observations in this area. This text is the second earliest extant record of peonies in China, preceded only by Ouyang Hsiu's "Record of the Tree Peonies of Loyang," (translated for American Peony Society Bulletin, No. 229), to which Lu makes frequent reference.

A biography of Lu Yu has been published by Professor Michael S. Duke, *Lu Yu* (Twayne World Authors Series, G. K. Hall, Boston, 1977).

## Preface to the Classification of Flowers. 1.

In the central area (i.e., Honan province), the Loyang peonies rank first; in Shu, T'ien-p'eng (i.e., N.W. Ssuchuan) ranks first. The origin of the T'ien-p'eng flowers is not certain. Local people say that in the old days, monks at the Yung-ning temple planted these flowers, and when they were in full bloom, the place was popularly called "Tree Peony Temple." In springtime, crowds would gather here to enjoy the flowers. Later, when the flowers withered and declined, no one went there anymore. During the Ch'ung-ning era (1102-1106), persons of this province, the Sung family, the Chang family, and the Ts'ai family, and in the Hsuan-ho era (1119-1125) (i.e., during the reign of Emperor Hui-tsung of the Sung dynasty, r. 1101-1125), and the Yang family from Shih-tzu t'an, bought some fresh flowers from Lo and took them home. From this time onwards, the Lo flower spread among the people. For the first time, florists began to flourish, all making their living by grafting flowers. Everyone who liked to be au-courant with affairs gave all their efforts to cultivating flowers. The T'ien-p'eng flowers subsequently crowned those of the Two Rivers area. Nowadays, only the flowers of the Li family of San-ching (a village in Ssuchuan province), the Wu family of Liu Village, the Su family in the city, and the

Li family at the west-end are especially flourishing. Furthermore, by engaging their extra energies to keep up pavilions and lodges (by cultivating flower beds) they much enhanced their reputations. As to the florists, their fields extend as far as the eye can see; however, their names are not known.

The three municipalities of T'ien-p'eng all have flowers, but the superlative flowers are found above and below Sand Bridge to the west of the city. From Sand Bridge to the district between P'eng-k'ou and Ch'ung-ning there are also many splendid varieties. The fewest are found from the east of the city to Meng-yang. As a rule, only some forty percent of those planted blossom. Red flowers are most common; there are only a few varieties of purple, yellow, and white flowers. Jade-green flowers number only one or two.

Now, for those who are interested, I categorize and rank the flowers from the Highest Candidate Red to the Ou Jade Green. The unspecified varieties I list at the end by name.

**21 Varieties of Red Flower:**

Highest Candidate Red  
Shao-hsing Springtime  
Jade-waist Tower  
Rich and Honored Red  
Double-headed Red  
Duke Wen Red  
Tipsy Hsi-shih  
Colored Red-clouds  
Better-than-Layered Silk-gauze  
Propitious Clouds  
Rouge Tower  
Golden-waist Tower  
One Foot-length Red  
Deer-womb (Shallot) Red  
Cheng-ho Springtime  
Greeting-the-Day Red  
Layered Silk-gauze  
Auspicious-dew Cicada  
Dried Flower  
Small Thousand-petal  
Big Thousand-petal

**5 Varieties of Purple (Deep Red) Flower:**

Purple Embroidered Ball  
Sprinkled Ink Purple  
Prosperous and Majestic Purple  
Ch'ien-tao Purple  
Hemp-cloth Purple

**4 Varieties of Yellow Flower:**

Forbidden Garden Yellow  
Black Heart Yellow

Blessed Clouds Yellow  
Yellow-spirit Ball

**3 Varieties of White Flower:**

Jade Tower  
Jade Overturned Bowl  
Song of Liu-shih

**1 Variety of Jade-green Flower:**

Ou Jade Green

**31 Varieties Not Yet Specified:**

Revolving-branch Red  
Sprinkled Gold Red  
Shou-yang Red  
Ice-bundle Red  
Oil Red  
Red Goose-feather  
Crinkled-Gold Ball  
Silver-Thread Tower  
Lo-yang Springtime  
Glossy Jade Red  
Morning Clouds Red  
Auspicious Cloud Red  
Plucked in Spring Ball  
Prosperous and Victorious Red  
Black-silk Red  
Pink Goose-feather  
Interspersed-Green Tower  
Six Paired Cicadas  
Ocean Lotus  
Wifely Charms  
Dawning Sky Purple  
Yuan Family Purple

Bridle Yellow  
Better-Than Carnelian  
Green Jade Dish  
Tower Red  
Ch'en Province Purple

Imperial Robes Purple  
Jade Robed Belly  
White Jade Dish  
Bordered Gold Tower

## Explanations of Flower Names. 2.

Many of the flowers recorded by Mr. Ou-yang are found in T'ien-p'eng. These I will not discuss; rather I will discuss those which are special to T'ien-p'eng.

The P'eng people call flowers with multiple petals "Metropolitan Flowers," and those with single petals "(Ssu)-ch'uan Flowers." In recent years, there has been a scarcity of (Ssu)-ch'uan flowers; once sold they are not resold. The oldest cutting of a flower is called the "ancestor flower." In the first or second springtime flowers of the new (grafts) are few, but rich. By the third springtime, the number of flowers increases and they become treelike. However, in spite of the increase in number, the flower petals decrease.

The HIGHEST CANDIDATE RED is double-petalled and has deep red flowers. Its color is like the dark red of the t'ing-hung (red silk sash). Its natural endowment is rich and noble. The P'eng people consider it the crown of all grades of flowers. Those with the most petals are said to be in the first rank. Those whose petals are few and are rather light in color are ranked second. Since it transcends all other flowers, it is called the Highest Candidate Red (i.e., the first place candidate in the triennial imperial examinations). Another explanation is that under the old system, the top candidate in the (Chin-shih, Advanced Scholar) imperial examination was awarded a madder-plant colored robe and so this flower was named because of its color.

PROFITIOUS CLOUDS has a thousand petals and light red flowers. It is bewitchingly beautiful, with many shapes, and the flower petals are most proliferous. A florist named Wang said that this flower had the shape of clouds, and named it PROFITIOUS CLOUDS.

SHAO HSING SPRINGTIME is a hybrid (flower from the seed) of the PROFITIOUS CLOUDS. Its color is pale or deep and its flowers are especially rich. Large ones are a foot across. They were first transmitted during the Shao-hsing era (1031-1063). For the most part, florists plant these (flower seeds) hybrids to observe their mutations, which are not always to PROFITIOUS CLOUDS.

ROUGE TOWER ranges from deep to pale, like rouge. Its layered calyx is shaped like a tower. The pale ones originated with the Kou family of Hsin-fan (near modern Ch'eng-tu in Ssichuan), and the deep colored ones come from the florist Sung family. There is yet another variety of color which is slightly inferior. Only the Kou family flower is the crown.

The GOLDEN-WAIST TOWER and the JADE-WAIST TOWER both have pinched red flowers, but the rising "towers" vary from



yellow to white, like the colors of gold and jade. They are of the same variety as the ROUGE TOWER.

DOUBLE-HEADED RED has double calyx on the same stem. Its color is especially fresh and bright. It originates from the florist Sung family. At first it was kept secret, but a Secretary Hsieh first obtained some specimens, and these days many florists have it. However, in cultivating it, if the ground is right then it will be double every year; if not, then they will occur only every other year. This is the special peculiarity of this flower.

RICH AND HONORED RED's flower petals are perfectly round and thick, and the color is like fresh makeup. When other flowers have all fallen, this one withers on the branch. This too is a special characteristic of this flower.

The ONE FOOT-LENGTH RED is deep red, coming close to purple. The face of the flower is almost a foot across, and so it is called ONE FOOT-LENGTH FLOWER.

DEER-WOMB (SHALLOT) RED is crane's-neck red. The young flower is red with a little yellow, and the tip has white spots like a deer's belly. It goes to the very limits of the miracles of the workings of Nature. Mr. Ou-yang's *Classification of Flowers* mentions the DEERWOMB FLOWER. However, the PURPLE FLOWER is somewhat different from this.

DUKE WEN RED originated in Mr. Lu's garden in the Western Capital (Loyang), and is furthermore the most beautiful of flowers. He brought this variety to Ssuehuan and so they bear his name (i.e., Wen Ch'an-po, 1006-1097, an important minister of Sung, was enfeoffed as Duke of Lo).

CHENG-HO SPRINGTIME is pale pink, and the flower has a silk-floss head. It first appeared during the Cheng-ho reign-period (1111-1117).

TIPSY HSI-SHIH has powder-white flowers interspersed with red bloom like a face flushed with wine. (Note: Hsi-shih was the famous beauty of 5th century B.C. Chou times, who looked most charming when she frowned. Other, less attractive women would imitate her knitted brows, hoping thereby to achieve her beauty, but usually with disastrous effect.)

GREETING-THE-DAY RED is of the same variety as the TIPSY HSI-SHIH. It has pale red flowers, with the center particularly putting forth deep red. Its flowers are the earliest to open and its bewitching beauty is most eye-catching. Thus it is called GREETING-THE-DAY RED.

COLORRED RED-CLOUDS have a brilliant beauty, fiery like sunset clouds.

LAYERED SILK-GAUZE has creases in the middle like the wrinkles in folded silk-gauze.

BETTER-THAN-LAYERED SILK-GAUZE is slightly larger

than the LAYERED SILK-GAUZE. These last three varieties derive their names from their shapes.

AUSPICIOUS-DEW CICADA also has light pink flowers, with a jade-green center shaped like paired cicadas.

The DRIED FLOWER has pale pink flowers, divided like a locust spinning. Its flowers are also very large.

The BIG THOUSAND-PETAL and the SMALL THOUSAND-PETAL are both the best of the pink flowers. The BIG THOUSAND-PETAL has no "fragrant" flowers; the flowers of the SMALL THOUSAND-PETAL are creased about the calyx—this is how the Big and Small are differentiated.

These twenty-one varieties are the best of the red flowers.

The PURPLE EMBROIDERED BALL is also called FRESH PURPLE FLOWER, and is another variety of the Wei Flower. Interspersed among its blossoms it is exactly like an embroidered ball and it also has raised "towers." It is the crown of T'ien-p'eng's purple flowers.

CH'IEN-TAO PURPLE is light in color with misty red. It has been out less than a decade.

SPRINKLED INK PURPLE is the offspring of the PURPLE FLOWER. It has single petals of deep black, like ink. It is close to the PETAL-BASE PURPLE recorded by Mr. Ou (-yang Hsiu).

HEMP-CLOTH PURPLE's flowers are perfectly round and richly beautiful. They are like the cloth scarves people of fashion wear on their heads.

PROSPEROUS AND MAJESTIC PURPLE is also double-petalled with purple flowers. The petals are smaller than the PURPLE EMBROIDERED BALL, and no one has detailed how it received its name. According to Mr. Ou (-yang's) records, there was a JADE TABLET WHITE which originated in the Prosperous and Majestic Temple (Fu-yen Yuan). Local people say that this flower is also from the Western Capital (at Loyang), and call it the OLD PURPLE FLOWER. Perhaps it came from the Prosperous and Majestic Temple?

The FORBIDDEN GARDEN YELLOW is a variant of the YAO YELLOW. The flowers are quietly pale and nobly elegant, and can subordinate the YAO YELLOW.

The flower petals of the BLESSED CLOUDS YELLOW are doubled and spiral most elegantly, by which it derives its name.

The heart of the BLACK HEART YELLOW flower is black. A single stem of the flower frequently bears two varieties. Some may be perfectly spherical like a ball; others rise in stories, like a tower. All very strange!

YELLOW-SPIRIT BALL has a pale yellow sandalwood-heart flower. The petals are perfectly round, curving toward the back,

numerous and sleek, and most delightful.

**JADE TOWER** has white flowers forming towers, far excelling the ordinary, and of extraordinarily good taste. Indeed, it is beyond this dusty world!

**SONG OF LIU-SHIH** has white flowers with a touch of faint red. Often it has as many as several hundreds of petals. It is slender and delicate and most delightful. No one knows from whence it derived its name.

The **JADE OVERTURNED BOWL** is also named **JADE STEAMED BUN** because of its round head and white flowers.

There is only one variety of **JADE-GREEN FLOWER**, called the **OU JADE GREEN**. Its flowers are pale jade green and are the latest to bloom. It originated solely with the Ou family and so received this surname.

Generally speaking, in the Lo area, of the old varieties only the Yao and Wei are the crown. In T'ien-p'eng, of the red colors, the first is the **HIGHEST CANDIDATE RED**; of the purple flowers, the **PURPLE EMBROIDERED BALL** is the first; of the yellow flowers, the **FORBIDDEN GARDEN YELLOW** is the first; of the white flowers, the **JADE TOWER** is the first.

However, this might be so, florists year after year increasingly cultivate cuttings (grafts), and new curiosities occasionally appear. But for now I do not make a special feature of them, that's all. Those who take an interest in such things frequently write about them.

Records of Customs. 3.

T'ien-p'eng is called the Little Western Capital, and the common love of flowers there is a custom handed on from Loyang. When all the thousand flowers are in bloom, everyone from the prefectural magistrate down goes to the places where the flowers are most flourishing to spread out their mats and drink, drive their horse-carriages, sing songs, play flutes and congregate. The flowers are at their best during the Ch'ing-ming (Clear and Bright—grave visiting festival, approximately at the Western Eastertime, in April) and Han-shih (the day before the Ch'ing-ming festival, when cold provisions only are eaten, hence "Cold Provisions") festivals. Those which bloom before the Han-shih festival are called "Before the Fire Flowers," and those which open later are called "After the Fire." These soon fall. Most delightful are times when there is some cloud and some clear sky; these are called "cultivating flowers days." Pruning (cutting), grafting, splicing (scraping), and curing (or regulating) all have their methods, which are called "playing the flowers." A common saying goes, "Play the flowers for a year; view the flowers for ten days."

Everyone generally much cares that flowers can be viewed, and dares not lightly cull them. When the flowers are culled, the following year the blossoms are far fewer. Only florists extensively plant flowers for profit. When the **DOUBLE-HEADED RED** first came out, a

single stem could cost as much as thirty thousand cash; when the AUSPICIOUS CLOUDS first came out, this was worth seven or eight thousand cash. Nowadays, they are still two thousand cash. The provincial families yearly presented flowers to the various high officials, so that in the neighboring commanderies, their waxed roots in bamboo panniers criss-crossed multifariously on the roads. I stayed in Ch'eng-tu for six years, and every year received such presentations. However, they had faded and were not particularly splendid.

In the year 1177, the marshall of Ch'eng-tu privately sold his flowers to a florist for a good price. They take several hundred sedge-reeds (to wrap the flowers) and send them by fast horsemen so that they reach Ch'eng-tu before the dew on them has dried. The large ones are nearly a foot across. At nighttime banquets beneath the Western Tower, the candle-flames and the flowers interchanged their light and shadows, swaying in the wine, resplendent and beautiful—a most moving sight!

Hey-ho! That the T'ien-p'eng flowers cannot be viewed in the Lo area though their resplendence be like this! As in other times, again in the Two Capitals the princes, dukes, generals and ministers construct gardens and mansions and boast about them among themselves. I was fortunate enough to be invited to see them, and how can I describe how they stirred my heart and eye!

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*The term chieh in the Chinese text means "join" "graft." Another word, also pronounced chieh means "cutting for planting." However, contexts seem to indicate that on occasion the words were interchangeable, or confused—the authors, were not horticulturists. It also seems that different varieties of the peony were produced from the seeds of a parent variety—hybrids.*



## **PEONY SEED — SEED — SEED — SEED**

**Save and send to**

**Chris Laning, 553 West F. Ave., Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007**

**Hybrid — Herbaceous — Species — Tree Peonies  
FOR YOU—**

**Plant seed, write for them. No charge.**

**Enclose \$1.00 for postage.**

# SOME HYBRID PEONY SEEDS GERMINATE MORE SLOWLY

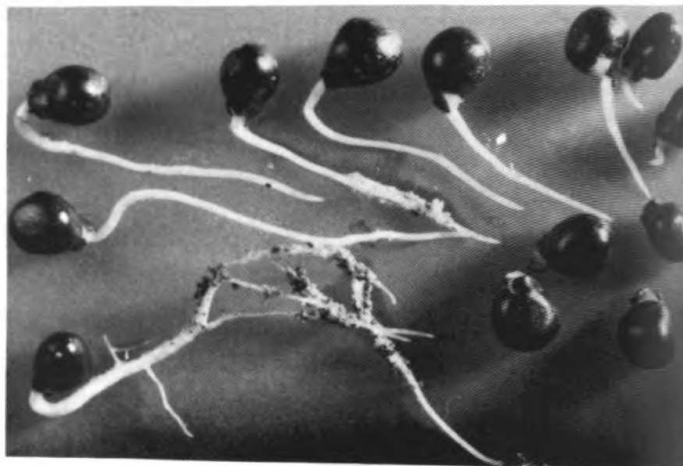
*Don Hollingsworth*

Among the germinating seeds of Itoh Hybrid cross there is seen a substantial variation in the rate of root development. Contrast this variation with the greater vigor and uniform advancement seen in the non-hybrid seeds from Chinese peony parents. Some of the latter group were slower than those selected for this photo, but, as a whole, the entire group was more advanced than the non-hybrid seedlings, which had been handled exactly the same up to this stage of development.

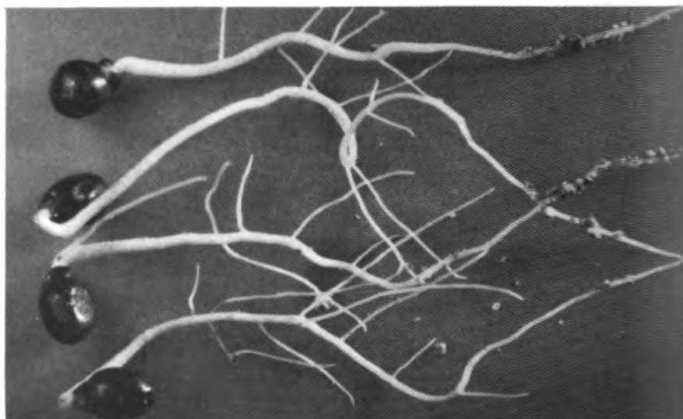
Many of the hybrid seeds were very slow, similar to those in the lower right of the picture, having little or no root development.

When species are interbred, forming hybrid progeny, new combinations of genetic material are obtained that are different than the distribution of genes occurring in either parent species. These new combinations may or may not be more successful as a given stage of development than one of both of the parents. In this case one of the legacies of the hybrid cross appears to be a prevalence of slow germination among the seedlings.

These seeds are being germinated under contrived conditions which enable me to monitor their progress. They are in a refrigerator for cold period development at this stage and will remain there until the small plumule can be seen emerging at the thick area next to the seed. In the photo of non-hybrid seeds a plumule can barely be seen on the second seedling from the righthand side. Most of the hybrid seeds are weeks away from the plumule stage of development. It is believed that most of them will be ready to plant by early June, however. The photographs were taken in early February.



**Itoh Hybrid Seeds:** *Gertrude Allen x Age of Gold*



**Chinese Peony Seeds:** *Gertrude Allen x Dawn Pink*

A very significant implication of this information is that, planted out of doors under the natural cycle of the seasons, the slower seedlings would have a high risk of germination failure due to onset of warm weather before the cold requirement has been met.

## PEONY PROPAGATION BY ROOT CUTTINGS

*Don Hollingsworth*

Peony root pieces may give rise to adventitious shoot buds after being separated from influence of the crown buds of the plant, as illustrated in the photo. The buds are dormant at first and require a cold period of substantial length before they will produce a shoot. Adventitious means having come from a source



apart from the ordinary one. When roots form on stem cuttings they are said to be adventitious roots.

While it seems no one had described the mechanism of adventitious bud formation in peony roots, something is known of the environmental conditions under which it takes place. A warm, moist situation is required for several weeks. Externally, the buds are first seen as a smooth, whitish dome emerging through a cluster of callus tissue. They may occur most anywhere over the surface of the root, but I have never seen them coming from the callus which forms over the cross-section wounds at either end.

The ability to form adventitious buds on root pieces is rarely reported in Chinese peonies or tree peonies. However, it is common among species of the *officinalis*, *peregrina* and *tenuifolia* groups and their hybrid descendants.

## REGISTRATION

Because of name duplication, peony **Mary Jo**, Bulletin #228, has been changed to **Mary Jo Legare**.

Registered by E. Leroy Pehrson, 1978.

## FIFTH DISTRICT PEONY SHOW

The Fifth District Peony Show will be held June 16 and 17, 1979.

Write to Mr. Marvin Karrels, 3272 S. 46th, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53219, for the show schedule.

## THE LURE OF THE PEONY

This delightful article reminisces about names of our peonies of both past and present, as to why some proper names were used. The peony with its long life and its many divisions being transplanted is passed on to countless gardens perpetuating both the name and the flower for a century or more.

In this modern day, beautiful names that are pleasing to sound, meaningful associations, charm of magic fascination and those that allure the imagination have been given to many of our peonies.

Alluring named varieties that are growing in the gardens today, along with the names aristocrats mentioned in the article are:

RASPBERRY SUNDAE, PILLOW TALK, LOVING CUP, MOONLIT SNOW, CREAM DELIGHT, PRAIRIE MOON, POWDER PUFF, CANDY HEART, LIEBCHEN, WHITE CAP, DINNER PLATE, REQUIEM, STARLIGHT, LULLABY, YOUR MAJESTY, SNOW MOUNTAIN, GARDENIA, CHOCOLATE SOLDIER, RED MONARCH, FRIENDSHIP, MOONRISE, RED CHARM, SEA SHELL, NIPPON BEAUTY, GOLDEN GLOW, DAINTY LASS, BU-TE, MOONSTONE, FAIRIES PETTICOAT, MOON RIVER, PINK LEMONADE, BLAZE, CORALIE, FLAME, OLD FAITHFUL, PLAYMATE, BRIDES DREAM, LORD OF SPRING.

*Editor*

## THE LURE OF THE PEONY

*By Geo. W. Veditz*

*Bulletin No. 23, Febr. 1925*

June is becoming in many gardens more and more the month of the peony, and in more and more gardens is the peony becoming the undisputed queen of the early summer.

In thousands of gardens peonies have become established sojourners, and in hundreds more where plants were set out for the first time last fall, anxiously expected blooms are for the first time, likewise, greeting the eye of the gardener as his very own.

The vogue of the peony as the flower of late spring and just marking the entry of summer is increasing with each passing year, and the delight and pleasure that is the dividend of the space, time and care



given the plants is among the most enviable and cherished of the entire garden cycle.

It is not merely the appeal to the eye of the harmony of color and beauty of form of the individual blooms, but the peony more than any other flower seems to lend itself to the play of fancy and imagination. Probably no more extravagantly fulsome word picture of any flower was ever written than the description of **Monsieur Jules Elie** that appeared in some catalogs a few seasons back, and even now some peony growers attempt to paint the lily and refine pure gold in their word-pictures of their favorite creations.

With most peony lovers the names of the different varieties have no special significance beyond that each calls to mind and represents a certain peony of more or less individuality and excellence. But nevertheless these names recall during eleven months of the year haunting visions of beauty, or white, pink, or red perfection, and more, perhaps, than any other names give a negative answer to the poet's query, "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

But the great majority bear names bestowed upon them as a mark of esteem for some member of the family, or a friend, or some patron of the originator; and to this originator and his friends the name of any such variety immediately conjures before the mind's eye the sponsor in his habit, or in her beauty, as they lived, and brings a train of associations out of memory's jewel box.

But the average peony lover not having this advantage merely associates the name with the flower and seldom goes further unless some incident or association more or less personal gives the variety an individuality not possessed by the other plants in the garden.

It is this possibility of associating the fanciful and imaginative with so many of its varieties that gives the peony a distinctiveness possessed by no other of our garden flowers, whether roses, iris, gladioli, or dahlias. Many of the fine old standard varieties we have had for generations, so long, in fact, that they have become household friends. Once established, they stay with us through the heat of the summer sun and the furious winter's rages, nor do they, like the dahlia and gladiolus, ask for wages in that they should be dug up in the fall and safely bestowed during the long period of dormancy.

Even where the peony bed may contain only one plant, or two or three, this flower receives a consideration and loving attention that is bestowed on no others, and this is why our grandmothers and great-grandmothers gave their "pineys," despite their short season of bloom, first place in their affections.

Every peony lover will find the beauty of his garden enhanced manyfold if he will allow his fancy free rein and weave a nimbus of the romantic around this or the other of these flowers of his heart of hearts, connecting it with some personal experience which he alone may know.

It was the writer's good fortune to see, some dozen years back, a photoplay starring Madame Bernhardt as Queen Elizabeth. Those who have seen this picture play may recall Madame Bernhardt's rendition of this role as perhaps the most truly regal impersonation ever given of any queen either upon the screen or upon the stage, nor can the writer recall a more vivid representation of this, one of the most dramatic periods in the world's history. Unconsciously he transferred the majesty of the make-believe queen to the peony Sarah Bernhardt as described in the various catalogs, and ever since he acquired a plant of this Lemoine peony he has associated the royally beautiful blooms with the great tragedienne. As often as not when making his morning or evening rounds among his peonies he would stop before this plant and make mental obeisance, "Sarah Bernhardt, I salute you!" To him this flower had acquired a splendor extraneous of itself and beyond its mere appellation.

Another such peony is Lady Alexandra Duff. What owner of this Kelway peony may not have asked, "Who was this Lady Alexandra? If this flower is the most beautiful of all English peonies, was not its fair sponsor possessed of a loveliness in keeping with that of the bloom? Who was this charming and elusive personality? Was she the most glorious of all English women, the Lady Diana Manners of a score of years back?

Most peony lovers are familiar with the tradition connected with this peony; how it was loved long since, then lost awhile to become even nameless except as the "Lost Peony"; to be searched for in unavailing quest here and there, and to be finally found again in the garden of the veteran peony lover, Walter L. Gumm, of Remington, Indiana.

It always jars the writer's sensibilities to see the name of this glorious peony hacked down to "Lady Duff," or to be given even a masculine form, "Lady Alexander Duff." He has always insisted upon giving it its full sonorous name, and has always associated the flower, entrancingly attractive in the fullness of its bloom, with some fair English beauty, that for all he knew never existed.

And reciprocally, no matter who or what the original Lady Alexandra may have been, her peony namesake invests her with a glamour and fancy for those who have never seen or heard of her, and this, after all, is the finest tribute to beauty in the abstract, as it is based entirely on the imagination. Were this lady to visit our next national peony show in person, it is not difficult to picture the consideration and homage that would be paid her by every peony connoisseur there as godmother to one of the loveliest flowers in existence.

In this connection it is quite possible that Lemoine might have invested his greatest creation with more distinctive individual attributes—in the minds of its possessors, of course—had he named it for Madame Recamier, loveliest woman of the First Empire, and claiming a place in history for no other reason than her charm and the sweetness

of her disposition. Le Cygne must inevitably, then, possess a fascination additional to and apart from its swan-like purity and grace for all those, and there must be many, familiar with the story of this lovely blind French woman of the long ago.

Who were Monsieur Martin Cahuzac, Philippe Rivoire, and Solange? Few of us know. But invest the last with a title, make him the Comte de Solange, and the imaginative peony lover immediately has a trio that may have been contemporary with d'Artagnan, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis, and that with these four might give him a sweeping salute as they stepped out of the pages of some sequel to *Les Trois Mousquetaires* or *Vingt Ans Apres*. Solange and Monsieur Martin have a place in the writer's affections that measures up to the reality he has tried to give the unknown, and as for Philippe, instead of being a scion of the modern house of Riviere, he has been moved back three centuries and made into a cavalier of the d'Artagnan type. The blooms themselves have become personal friends and have been invested with an interest additional to their intrinsic beauty.

The writer's *La Fee* is not merely a beautiful peony. She is a fairy, she is a *Morgain la Fee*, the *Fata Morgana* of King Arthur's days, the fay of the mirage and of enchantment, of good fortune and great beneficence, the fay of the fairy tales of wondering childhood, and as such her blooms have become visitors from fairy land.

The loveliest of all June flowers is simply *Therese*. *Therese*? Who was she? Dessert's inamorata? Dessert knew, if we do not. *Therese* what? Affix or substitute the name of any friend that you hold dear, and your garden will have a poesy and glamour it could not have were *Therese* to continue merely a lovely peony with no attribute or association beyond its beauty and fragrance.

The writer has a weakness for *Elizabeth Barrett Browning* that he does not feel for *Martha Bulloch* because of the mere name. He can claim personal friendship and acquaintance with the former through her verses, and *Richard Carvel* is for the same reason more interesting to him than *Judge Berry*, even though the latter may be a real personage while the former is a mythical emanation of *Winston Churchill's* fancy.

Our oldest peony but one, now exactly one hundred years old,\* has the oddest of all peony names, but just why *Lemon* should have called it *Edulis Superba* must be a puzzle, unless he regarded its petals as food fit for the gods. *Edulis Superba*! How many countless gardens has it not graced with its presence during its long life of a century! What is the long, long line of ancestry of your own particular plant, what ghosts of peony lovers of yesteryear may not revisit our gardens to enjoy anew the fragrant exhalations of this herald of spring glory? Through what scores of hands may it not have passed in the process of division and transplanting, making it a more frequent household guest than all others, with the possible exception of *Fragrans* and *Festiva Maxima*?

**\*EDULIS SUPERBA (Lemon 1824).**

The writer has a friend owning a rare collection of peonies and who, moreover, knows how to make them bud and bloom with a master-gardener's skill who dislikes to cut his flowers, but prefers to let them live, die, and wither on the stem, and who, when he does cut them for vases in the house, accords them the same homage that the priests may have done to votive offerings in some ancient temple of Flora or Ceres. To receive a long-stemmed bouquet of peonies from this gentleman is a true token of appreciation and regard. There are doubtless many others with the same reluctance to remove their flowers from the garden. This attitude is another form of sentiment that made the ancient Greeks refrain from stripping leaves or cutting twigs, or otherwise mutilating the trees and flowers of certain groves under the belief that they were dryads or wood nymphs transformed for the day, to resume their fairy form and hold their elfin revels on moonlight or starlit nights, a pretty superstition that had its counterpart in the stories of our pagan ancestors, that the circling fairy rings that clean-hearted children might see in the moonlight on the meadows, became field flowers when the gambols were over.

Where imagination and romance do not play a leading part in the annual drama of the garden, a drama with its entrances and its exits, the gardener misses a large share of the pleasure that should be the gift of every garden. The peony lover, perhaps more than any other specialist, if one may use this term, by reason of the long-established tenure of his tenants, may enshrine them in his memory and visualize their coming again, and even if he lives but for and in the present, he may quote Emerson's *Rhodora*:

“If the sages ask thee why  
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,  
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,  
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being:  
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!  
I never thought to ask, I never knew;  
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose  
The self-same Power that brought me there brought you.”

## **NEWSLETTER: PAEONIA**

*Editors: The Lanings. Summarized by Bill Seidl*

SEPTEMBER 1978, Volume 9, No. 3. Don Hollingsworth believes peony breeders may find it interesting to read certain portions of *The World of Irises* (published by the American Iris Society), especially the chapters on iris pigmentation, genetics, and the tall bearded. In another article Don reports his discovery of some unexpectedly good pollen fertility in two F1 hybrids that are ordinarily classed as nearly sterile. One of them is the lutea hybrid *Age of Gold*. Although a stingy

producer of pollen, its pollen germination tested as very good. The other hybrid, **Tecumseh**, an introduction of Dr. E. B. White, is of the same type of cross as the SLP (Saunders Lobata of Perry) hybrids, generally nearly sterile. **Tecumseh** pollen produced pollen tubes at a remarkably higher proportion than other SLP hybrids. Its pod parent is **Marie Crousse**, a parent of many fine-colored pink lactis.

The "Little Reds" is a group name given to the Saunders hybrids between double officinalis clones and lobata clones, incl. lobata of Perry. They are sought primarily for their breeding potential, says Don Hollingsworth, who describes his results from using two of them: **Good Cheer** and an unidentified clone received from Silvia Saunders and called **Little Red** for records purposes. Don crossed **Good Cheer** onto lacti Japs, bombs, and certain full doubles, estimating that one-fourth of the triploid seedlings should be Japs or bombs. [Bill Seidl: Following is how I'd explain Don's reasoning. Assume a single gene controls stamen transformation, i.e. doubleness or singleness. Let the recessive allele or expression for doubleness be represented by "d" and the opposing dominant wild type allele for singleness or normal stamens by "S." For the trait in question, the genotype of **Good Cheer**, a tetraploid from *P. officinalis alba plena* (dddd) x *P. lobata* (SSSS), is ddSS. At meiosis the genes segregate as dd, dS, Sd, SS. When crossed with a diploid lacti of genotype dd (a double or Jap type), the triploid progeny will have the genotypes ddd, dSd, Sdd, and SSd. The first genotype listed represents the one out of four that would be double.] Although double seedlings did occur they were fewer in number than the 1:4 ratio. Don also writes that Dick Edblom obtained two out of six double seedlings from crosses of **Moon of Nippon** and **Le Charme x Scarlet Tanager**. Using the unidentified clone **Little Red** on double, semi-double, and Jap lactis, Don obtained all singles of consistently good quality and uniform size and growth. He believes a seed-grown strain of garden hybrids could be raised in large numbers with such a cross. The results indicate that **Little Red** may be of an inbred line, a generation beyond the other named clones in the Little Red class.

Roy Pehrson also contributes some information on use of the Little Reds. He notes that Silvia Saunders in her recent summary of her father's work states that **Good Cheer** and **Little Dorritt** are derived from the Perry clone of *P. lobata* whereas the other two, **Scarlet Tanager** and **Ladybird**, are derived from a different lobata clone. Roy recalls that he once raised 200 seedlings using pollen of **Ladybird**. All were single; none showed that good lobata color and none were saved. Roy doubts **S. Tanager** would be any better but admits having little experience with it and acknowledges it does have a desirable color. **Good Cheer** receives lavish praise for its potential to produce many doubles in excellent shades of red. Because of its unimpressive growth in his garden, Roy used **Little Dorritt** only a few times the first year it bloomed but it has produced his most pleasing hybrid, **Mary Jo**. Now highly regarded, all of LD's potent pollen was used this past season.

As for lobata itself, Roy says the species is variable in color. Lobata pollen sent by Sam Wissing was used on lactis and produced 500 seedlings, none of which was saved. Self-set seed of Sam's plant produced two crimson-colored seedlings with coarser foliage than Roy's own plant. Engrossed in making Itoh crosses, Roy neglected to use his own lobata plant, obtained from Silvia Saunders, although a paper chromatography test had shown a yellow component in its scarlet color, indicating perhaps an affinity to the superior Perry clone. (The Perry clone is believed to be lost.)

Some favored seedlings from various crosses are described by Roy. (1) **Lacti x Little Dorritt** has produced his best hybrid, registered as **Mary Jo** (See APS Bulletin #228, p. 26). Neglected after sowing, it bloomed one flower in the seedbed in 1976, one in 1977 despite transplanting, and six in 1978. (2) An Itoh hybrid. Very strong vigorous growth, very light yellow ten-petaled flower with attractive large flares. There seemed to be a modest amount of pollen. (3) Out of **Good Cheer**, a loosely built full double of unbelievable brilliance. (4) A single-stem plant with a massive high-built red hybrid bloom fading to light pink on aging. (5) A red Jap seedling out of **Garden Glory** equal or superior to any of those in commerce. (6) A full double medium pink, dubbed **Junior Miss**, an accidental lacti seedling out of **Laura Dessert**. (7) A big single pink-white seedling from a big pink bomb **Lacti x Archangel**. Superior to **Archangel**, it's a triploid but has produced a few seeds. (8) A cluster-flowered seedling with double flowers; has held seven open at once on a single stem. (9) Two Itoh hybrids with dark red complete flowers.

DECEMBER 1978, Volume 9, No. 4. L. J. Dewey (Richmond, Va.) writes of his initial attempts to induce tetraploidy in tree peony seedling by colchicine treatment. Other workers in this field have discovered that the colchicine level is just about right if 50% of the seedlings survive the treatment; so the main purpose of the experiment was to determine this level for tree peonies. Four batches of germinating seeds (epicotyls very immature or not visible but the cleavage between the cotyledonary petioles was) were treated with colchicine concentrations ranging from 1% to 0.5%. The survival rate ranged from nearly 0% to 40% respectively. Assuming a 50% survival rate as the most reasonable target, a colchicine level somewhat below (weaker than) 0.5% should be the most practical. Due to late treatment and subsequent immaturity, most of the plants surviving the treatment did not survive the winter. The treatment technique was that described by Dr. Reath (APS Bulletin, March 1972, p. 13) except that extra light was not supplied during treatment and the duration of the water-rinse afterwards was shortened.

From N. Dakota, Ben Gilbertson sends an interesting report on his seedlings and some imported varieties. The European peony "Pall," received from the USSR in 1973, produced several single pur-

ple flowers and five seeds. Its pollen on double tenuifolia produced nothing. "Pall" is a rather coarse-leaved fern-leaf plant with a tenui-like root system. *Anomala* plants grown from seeds produced a few flowers similar to "Pall" in color and also yielded five seeds. Two other imports, *Poceda* and *Novestj*, were discarded. Two registered seedlings, *Dakota Princess* and *Goldilocks*, put on excellent shows. The former, sdlg. 6414, produced 9-inch full double medium to light pink flowers. *Goldilocks*, a seedling of *Oriental Gold*, produced very large and full ball-shaped pale yellow flowers compared to the medium-size rather flat flowers of previous seasons. The primary flowers had malformed carpels or none at all but three lateral blooms had functional carpels, yielding five good seeds from pollen of *Oriental Gold* which had been forced into earlier bloom. Ben believes a good real yellow herbaceous peony can eventually be obtained from an *O. Gold* base. Other seedlings of interest were (1) two *lactiflora* plants similar to *Laura Dessert* but larger and with a more brilliant yellow center tuft, (2) a full bomb-type red double from *Laddie* x *Early Scout*, vigorous and upright grower, no seeds from open pollination, (3) an off-white bomb-type double from *Claire De Lune* x open, produced 28 good seeds from its only bloom using *T. P. Alice Harding* pollen (but the cross was unprotected), (4) several third-generation *tenuifolia* plants from *Double Tenui* x *Single Tenui*, in each generation using pollen from the previous generation; one of these plants was a six-year-old vigorous semi-double with an enormous root system weighing over two pounds and capable of yielding 12-15 standard divisions.

From the Saunders Notebooks Chris Laning extracts information on the cross *Lactiflora* x *Ozieri Alba*. Seven similar seedlings were eventually introduced as the strain *Halcyon*. Some plants of the strain will occasionally produce a seed and Chris reports on an F2 from such a seed, a plant sent to him by Silvia Saunders. It grows straight and tall, has dark green leaves with prominent white veins; the bloom is heavily textured and three or four silver-dollar size lateral blooms are produced. It sets seed with fair ease and some of them had already started rooting.

Chris extols the virtues of the "quads" but hastens to explain his use of the term. The real quads are the Saunders hybrids having four species in their parentage—*Lactiflora* x (*Officinalis* x (*Mlokozewitschi* x *Macrophylla*))—but the F2's, F3's, etc. could well contain five or six species since the original quads, largely sterile, usually produced their occasional seed on open pollination. These advanced generation hybrids are highly fertile tetraploids, still called quads for lack of a better name, and are producing a wide range of pastel-colored seedlings with more and more doubles appearing. They are early, broad-leaved, vigorous, having massive root structures that divide easily. The seeds germinate readily and are available. Don Hollingsworth describes one of these quads, Laning's Best Yellow, as a two-stage double of heavy



substance, soft yellow with red flares, with foliage holding up quite well compared to other hybrids with early-ripening foliage.

MARCH 1979, Volume 10, No. 1. Roger Anderson (Ft. Atkinson, WI) writes that he made many crosses using Good Cheer pollen on tets and lactis. From 35 pollinations of Age of Gold x Reath's #199 he obtained 21 seeds, 16 of them germinating.

Synthetic tetraploids (syn-tets) is Roy Pehrson's term for such varieties as Moonrise, Archangel, Quad F2's, etc. Their tetraploid condition derives from two steps: (1) tetraploid species x lacti (diploid) and (2) the resulting almost sterile triploids x open (self?). These tets form a strain which in general are inter-fertile, easy-growing, and will, Roy believes, become the dominant influence in peony breeding. When backcrossed to their lacti grandparents, however, only an occasional seed occurs among many hollow seeds. This subject is further explored by Don Hollingsworth.

Don points out that in the process of making crosses and selecting primarily for a spectacular flower, other characteristics, often negative, go unnoticed or at least unmentioned in descriptions of a particular cross. Some of these are (1) few seeds per cross, (2) poor germination, (3) seedlings of weak constitution, (4) high percentage of "soft" or hollow seeds. The latter phenomenon is most often encountered when crossing advanced generation tetraploids (Roy's "syn-tets") onto the diploid Chinese peonies (*P. lactiflora*). Only a few hard viable seeds occur among a large number of soft seeds. In contrast, pollen from a nonhybrid tetraploid such as *P. peregrina* on the Chinese peonies produces mostly viable seed.



*New third generation Tenuifolia root. Common single Tenuifolia on the left.*

# PEONIES AT KINGWOOD CENTER MANSFIELD, OHIO

*Frederick E. Roberts, Director, Kingwood Center*

Kingwood Center has been appreciative of the many contributions from the American Peony Society. The plants received for the garden and the American Peony Society show at Kingwood every three years have been invaluable in helping us to promote peonies as garden plants. The peony garden at Kingwood is in an ideal location next to the rose garden and near the chrysanthemum garden. It is a very pleasant location and can be viewed in its entirety from the rose garden gazebo. There is more than adequate moisture and good air circulation through the area. The large oaks and the natural area to the north provide a background for the peony display.

Over the years there have been several problems with the culture of peonies at Kingwood. An unusual percentage of the plants, especially new plants, would not establish and grow well in the garden. Many experts from all over the country have studied the problem and have given a variety of opinions. Unfortunately, Kingwood is situated on a very heavy clay soil, so this was thought to be a problem since drainage was not at an optimum. The water table in the area is rather high, although it is below the major portion of the root system of the plants in the garden. Most people who looked at the plants that were not doing well thought that they had botrytis, or some other disease, and that the combination of poor soil and poor drainage was causing the peonies to die back.

In 1973, the garden was redesigned and reconstructed to allow for better traffic flow through the garden and particularly to improve drainage. The beds were thoroughly tilled, and several of the beds were raised to as much as two feet in a mound formation to make sure that there would be adequate drainage for the plants. During the past five years, it has been apparent that there is no appreciable difference in the quality of the plants between the raised and unraised beds. Another experiment was the use of mulches. We have always had a problem in not having enough labor to adequately weed all areas. It was thought that mulches might possibly help with this problem. A black plastic mulch covered by wood chip mulch was used on the mounds to suppress weed development. The mulch worked very well to suppress the weeds, but it did cause a great deal of consternation among peony growers. However, it did not seem to adversely affect the quality of the peonies.

Regardless of what was done in the garden in terms of pest control, mulching, drainage control, etc., there continued to be a problem with certain peonies dying back. It was noted that the highest percentage of peonies that died back were those that were newly planted. It was observed that a newly planted peony root would persist for two or three years in a very mediocre condition and finally die. When large,

mature peony plants were transplanted into the garden, they did very well. After a great deal of observation and investigation, it was found that slugs and snails were the real problem with the peonies. The slugs and snails actually established colonies in the crown of the plants. They feed on newly developed roots as well as scar tissue forming where prior damage had occurred. Whenever the new roots would start to grow and develop from the main root, the slugs would eat the root off, thereby starving the new plant to the point where it could not develop and maintain itself. The larger plants have enough strength that they are capable of growing and developing faster than the slugs can destroy them.

As a result of finding that slugs were the problem with the peonies, we are now embarking on a thorough program of slug control. There are a number of chemical compounds on the market that are excellent in controlling slugs. Anyone interested in applying a slug control material should check with the local county agricultural extension agent to find materials labeled for use on peonies in the area.

We look forward to expanding our peony collections as well as upgrading the quality of our display. Hopefully at some later date we will again rework the peony garden to include more varieties as well as to integrate other plant materials that will help to accent the peony display.

## **“DUNDER AND BLITZEN—BUT NOT A DROP OF RAIN”**

**Neal R. Van Loon, Newton, N. J.—1946**

*Rev. Neal R. Van Loon, past President 1951-1952*

The telephone sounded with portentous whine. “Hello! is thees the Mistah van Lohn what grows the lovely pineys?” “Yes, this is van Loon.” “I wonder if it would be all right if I bring out a couple of car loads of friends, who are visiting me, to see the flowers.” I replied, “I am terribly busy, but you are welcome, come ahead.” “Oh, yes! and we will bring the children along, they are just crazy for the country.”

My heart came up out of my throat and started to slide down one of my suspenders. I pushed it back with one hand and put the other one, to serve as a balm, upon my conscience, for here I had just broken the ninth commandment and now felt an overwhelming desire to break also the sixth.

Well, I had always boasted of my resourcefulness so I prepared for the ordeal. My face was livid, my eyes were bloodshot, my nostrils were widely distended as I donned an old pair of heavily patched, lickory striped overalls. I put on one white oxford and one brown plow

shoe. I put on my battered pith helmet. I put on an old discarded preacher coat of the broadcloth split-behavior vintage. Finally I wound around my waist for an ample sash, 175 yards of richly brocaded satin in the Dutch national colors. I stuck a U. S. flag in one lapel, buckled on my favorite shoulder holster with the trusty .45 and polished off my dress with two long scabbards, each loaded with a medieval rapier. I spat hard and then sat down sullenly on a stone to await my guests.

They were not long in putting in their appearance. The tender heart that had climbed out of my throat a half hour before now plummeted down until it almost wrecked the bony framework at the base of my abdomen, for out of that car and the one behind it climbed eight chattering women decked out in war paint and saturated with some vile perfume that would route a hyena from a garbage can. After the women came six impudent savages ranging in age from about four to nine winters.

The women went down one row and up another squealing and exclaiming. The head of the party cried out—"Porcella, Mrs. Hagenhofer, Mrs. Snizzlebaumer—come here and see this one, it is so perfect it looks just like paper flowers." All this time three of the kids had been racing down the rows with hands outstretched, making the peony plants and blooms look like a grain field in a high gale. Two of them had thrown surely close to a truck load of stones into what was to become the pride of my life—a large reflecting pool. The other child, who had seemed a little reticent at first, now displayed that which nature had so amply provided him with—a primeval spirit of sadism that would make a Jap Colonel look like a Sunday school scholar, for he had stoned Kerchog, the pet frog in the pool, into oblivion. These dribble-pusses had not wasted much time in warming up to their work.

I spat violently again a couple of times and weakly said, "Come, let us take a squint at the vegetable garden."

The worst was yet to come. Mrs. Snizzlebaumer said, "My uncle's brother has a friend in Connecticut who grows pineys just as you do only I think they are larger and taller. He has one very new and expensive one. It is pure white. I think the name of it is **Elupla Suderba**. No, I guess the name was **Elubis Suburbis**." "Yes," said Mrs. Hagenhofer, "over in Pennsylvania I know a man who grows all colors pineys. He has one very expensive beautiful one, all red, the name of it is **Merrima Faxiva**."

"Wait a minute," I said. "I have a very sensitive nature. Before you can talk peonies to me I want you to know their right names and colors. You are as bad as a merchant I know in Hoboken. He is a sleek old phansee of the tribe of Noptholi. His clerks asked him one day, 'How many doors do you have in your house, Izzy?' 'Vy two,' he replied. 'Ve liff modestly. Our house is small. Der is only der front door and der back door.' 'Wrong,' said one of the clerks. 'You have four doors: the front door, the back door, Isadore and the cuspidor.' 'Haw! Haw! Haw! you wait until I tells Rebecca, how she vill laff.'"

"Rebecca, come here kvick! How many doors we haff?" "Vy Isadore, you dumb-koff, you know we haff only two doors." "You are wrong Rebecca, we haff four doors: der front door, der back door; der spittoon and me."

The ladies honored me with a sickly laugh and were a little more quiet for a bit. I discovered that it was impossible to best them though, for when I thought to slay them by bringing a super-duper Solange out of the house, one of them came through magnificently. "I bought a piney at a variety store several years ago for thirty-nine cents. It is just like this one, but I think it has a nicer color."

I was just ready to faint when the young fry came running to us howling like a whole string of calliopes all out of tune. One of them had stepped on a black snake and it had, in self-defense, taken a swipe at him.

Very soon, but not too soon, the dust of their cars was settling upon the weeds of the driveway. "Never," I said to myself, "did I realize how beautiful was the back end of a Buick."



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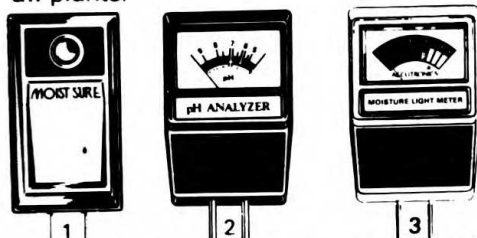
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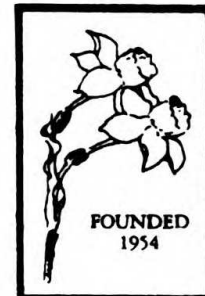
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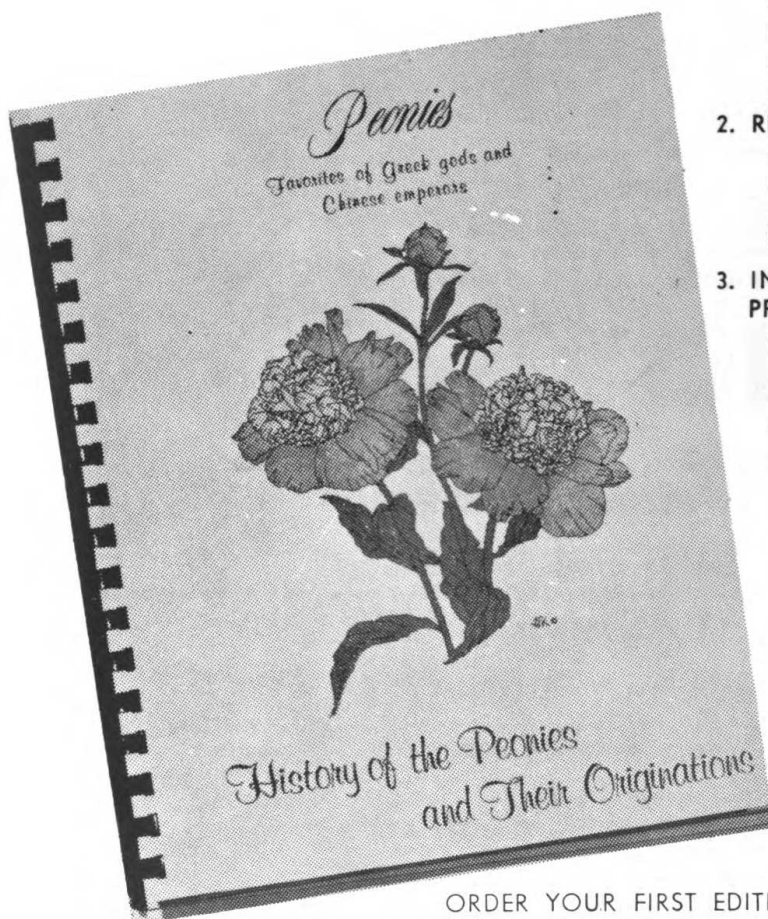
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