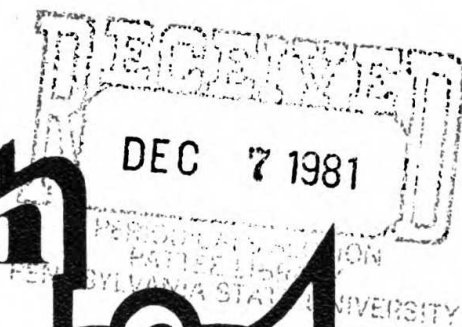


DECEMBER, 1981
NO. 240

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The American Peony Society Bulletin

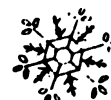


Season's
Greetings



Christmas Message

Gardener's Creed.



I've rested in the shade of many trees
And never knew what hand the seed had sown,
What man or bird or gusty wind had strewn—
Nor cared the singing birds, the wandering breeze.
"Joy to the world," we sang our simple creed.
The shade was grateful, though the planter gone.
The beauty and the joy he gave lives on,
Forgotten, though, the sower of the seed.
And so I plant, as life draws to its close.
The fruitage lies with nature and with God.
If flowers bloom along the path I've trod,
I shall not doubt the sweetness of repose.
Perennial beauty, smiling to the sky,
Confirms my faith that spirit cannot die.

—K. F. Stoke



Mr. Harvey F. Stoke, 1879-1977, of Roanoke, Virginia, was a life member of the American Peony Society. He wrote many articles for the Bulletin and also authored "Propagation of Tree Peonies" in the first and second editions of the Handbook.



AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

250 Interlachen Road (612) 938-4706 Hopkins, Minn. 55343

President.....Irvin Ewing Secretary-Treasurer.....Greta M. Kessenich
Vice President.....Edward Lee Michau Bulletin Editor.....Greta M. Kessenich

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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
Family Triennial.....	27.50		

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

In reflecting back over the year, I think we have had a good season. Three peony exhibitions were held with varieties of all types and colors displayed for the public, showing the advancement of the peony. The gardens produce many pleasant surprises when we see varieties that previously have not been on the show tables. My thanks and appreciation go to the peony enthusiast responsible for these shows and to the exhibitors that filled the tables with hundreds of their prize-winning flowers.

Our peonies performed very well this spring season, even with some unfavorable climatic conditions. Now that winter is here, we should give them some attention. By this time, the foliage has been cut down and all debris removed from the garden. In the very early spring, give each plant some fertilizer. Don't forget to use those wood ashes from your fireplace, as they are a valuable source of potash. Stronger stems, good foliage, and a healthy plant in general will be the result.

Find a sunny spot in your garden and make room for some extra peonies. Select varieties that you especially like, and plant them. For years they will give you enjoyment of exceptional beauty. In growing peonies, one must have patience. The first year you may get one or more stems; the second year, a few more. But the third year they come into their own, and every spring thereafter they will produce a number of big, beautiful peony blooms.

It will soon be Christmas, and a gift of a peony book would be most acceptable to the peony grower in the family. A gift certificate to purchase a choice peony root to be planted in season would be a lifetime remembrance—or a membership in the American Peony Society, which issues four quarterly Bulletins a year and is informative on all aspects of the peony.

We have come a long way in the progress of the Society and the peony. With 1982 at hand, let's make it a banner year, increasing the membership and with a message or article in the Bulletin from you.

With greetings of the season,
Irvin Ewing

TREE PEONY PHILOSOPHY

Anthony J. De Blasi, West Newfield, Maine

"Instant coffee," remarks Alan Watts, "is a well-deserved punishment for being in a hurry to reach the future." Our lifestyles seem fashioned out of efficiency; and the belief that "time is of the essence" drives most of us to take short cuts, skip steps, leave things out, and rush in order to meet life's deadlines, big and small. This focus on a future date or event—the frog-hopping to the next episode—has a way of cheating us out of the present, while cheapening it. There are industries based on this hustling habit. One could almost measure the haste by the amount of disposable products that wind up in a dump. Now, the enormous release of "time for other things" that such waste represents—what was it used for? When that party came, did we take the nice china out of the closet or lay out paper plates while planning our next thrill? When we reached our goal, did we know what to do with it—how to enjoy it—or was it a letdown that made us reach for the aspirin? Without practice living in each moment, no future moment can ever be satisfying.

In the dead of a northern winter—with plant life wound down to buds, seeds, and leafless branches; and cabin fever percolating in folk looking forward to spring—it should be counted as a luxury to trudge through the snow and calm the jitters by studying the buds on a tree peony. Actually, any buds will do, but there is a special fascination in the dull red buds of a Japanese tree peony perched with infinite patience on the brown stems. What a world of meaning seems wrapped in each elegant capsule of suspended animation!

Each bud is at one and the same time the end of a cycle and the beginning of the next—a tightly held program for the next episode in the plant's progress. "Be content with the dream," the bud seems to say, "the dream of last year's glory and next year's hopefully greater splendor," while at the same time it whispers, "The world is not going anywhere; why hurry?" And in the tree peony's slow, deliberate cadences—like *Gagaku*, that ancient "noble and elegant music" and dance of the Japanese Imperial Court—we receive an invitation to take in *this moment* as though it were the first and the last. *Then* every moment will be a celebration in a life in which the boredom of anticipation has been replaced with the beauty of having arrived.



Dr. Leslie Laking of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Canada, retired in June 1981. Allen Peter Paterson, curator of the Chelsea Garden, London, England, for eight years has been appointed to succeed him.

BEAUTY ON PARADE

Marvin Karrels, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Each year at these peony shows of ours, we literally see a panorama of beauty on parade. The finest in peonydom passes in review before the critical eyes of the judges and the adoring eyes of its sponsors. Each year a new Miss America and her court of honor are chosen. Yes, our peony shows run the gamut of emotions also. There is pathos, disappointment, and jubilation. Yes, the spirit of competition is part of every peony show. Grandpa said, "The man is not worth his salt if he doesn't have the will to excel and exceed." However, Grandpa never grew and exhibited peonies. He didn't know that merely a split petal could be the difference between excellence and failure. He didn't know that the vagaries of Mother Nature often spell the difference between first place and honorable mention.

However, our peony shows not only set up the finest specimens in each category and color class, but they also show a preview of the future—in the seedling classes. Many of the finest new varieties make their debut in these seedling classes under seedling numbers. They are then registered under given names and offered in the commercial catalog and find their way into our gardens and onto the show tables. Many of these new varieties should bear the epithet of sensation of the blooming season and the showroom. Here are some of them:

Coral Charm — A true color break in the salmon-coral shade, with perfection of form in the semidouble category. The plant is exceptionally vigorous; a hybrid.

Madylone — A full, very large double of white with a faint tint of pink and yellow emanating from the center of the bloom. The form of the flower approaches perfection. I have made the statement in all sincerity that Madylone is the finest peony—both flower and plant—I have ever grown in my more than 40 years of growing and exhibiting peonies.

Norma Volz and Annisquam — Only a step or two behind, Norma Volz is a full double of white with a tint of pink and yellow and faint hint of green in the center of the bloom. It brings high quality into the early lactifloras. Exceptionally fine fragrance. Strong stems and large, deep green foliage.

Annisquam — Whatever happened to this one since its introduction some 20 years ago? It has been one of the finest in my garden ever since I acquired it. It is a full double of creamy pink outer petals with a paler pink center. A very strong-growing plant, it unfurls its petals much like a rose.

Angel Cheeks — A bomb type; very large. The entire bloom, including the guard petals, is a blending of pink, yellow, and a hint of green. One of the strongest-growing plants in the garden. Unlike most bombs, the center bomb does not break up so early in its blooming cy-

cle. Like most bombs it opens from a tighter bud when cut.

Douglas Brand, Sir John Franklin, Erwin Altman, and Paul M. Wild — All four are medium-red, full doubles; no stamens. **Douglas Brand** is the finest form of all our reds.

Red Charm, Apache, and Athena — We have many fine hybrids. **Red Charm** is still at the top or close to it. However, of the newer ones I like **Apache**, a single to semidouble, clear, bright red hybrid. The plant is one of the finest among the hybrids. Each stem produces a specimen bloom. Another favorite hybrid of mine is **Athena**. It is a large (8 inches) single bloom, apricot in color with deep purple flares emanating from the center. It is always the first to bloom in my garden and is very choice. It is always too early for most of our shows, but with the dates of the Cornell show so early I was able to get it on the show table. It reached the court of honor.

Margaret Clarke — Here is another of the choice lactifloras that somehow got lost in the passing of Walter Mains, the originator. From Walter Mains it went to the garden of Walter Alexander. With his passing it seems to have disappeared. It's a full double of medium pink of fine form. It reached the court of honor this year at Mansfield. It is a very fine peony that deserves to be kept in commerce.

Undoubtedly, there are many choice peonies that I don't grow or haven't seen in our peony shows. Yes, our peony shows offer a panorama of beauty on parade. Only here will you see the finest selected specimens of each category and color set up in show style. I enjoy exhibiting peonies; but while the spirit reaches ethereal heights, the flesh is getting weak.



"In the Williamsburg Manor"
Grand Champion Arrangement, Ithaca, New York, 1980
Gay Uhde, Great Ring Road, Sandy Hook, Connecticut

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REDS—THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE PEONY GARDEN

W. G. Sindt, Afton, Minnesota

Well-grown peonies can be the highlight of any garden, and certainly the reds enhance its beauty. In a landscape setting peonies are lovely, and for home or show their beauty cannot be excelled. The reds of peonies cover a wide range—from orange or light to maroon or dark, through some very pure, almost spectrum, reds. In a short article such as this, only a few varieties can be named, and these will be my favorites.

For many years I have said that if I could grow only one variety, I would have no difficulty deciding what that one should be. (Five varieties would be more difficult to select.) That one would be **Red Charm**. This is the favorite peony of nearly everyone who sees it. **Red Charm** is a full double hybrid, early, with strong stems, and a very reliable, consistent performer. This is my number one choice of any type of peony, and it happens to be red in color. One advantage of **Red Charm** is that it is available from most growers, which is not true of many varieties, since each grower has to choose what he will propagate to sell.

Bonanza is a Minnesota-bred peony that is a dark red which does not burn in the sun. I have found this to be most satisfactory as a garden variety and also for the show table. **Kansas** I would rate comparable to **Bonanza** but in a light red. This peony has excellent form and has been best red at many national peony shows. **Shawnee Chief** I find to be a very free-flowering variety with blooms slightly smaller than some. It makes up for the size, however, by the number of blooms produced on a plant. A newcomer and probably the number one exhibition red is **Douglas Brand**. It is a huge flower of excellent form but is both expensive and difficult to acquire. Because it is new, it has not been around long enough to be widely propagated for distribution.

One of the most popular red double peonies is the species *tenuifolia* **Rubra Flora Plena**, the double fern leaf variety. This is very early and in Minnesota is usually in bloom on Memorial Day. For this reason, the double form is widely planted in cemeteries. The single form, while not as beautiful, is prized by hybridizers because it is fertile, whereas the double form is not.

In red singles I feel that **Florence Bruss** and **Topeka Garnet** are outstanding. Both are good growers and bloomers and excellent for exhibition; indeed, both have been best single at the national shows. The color of both varieties is dark red. Obtaining them could be a problem since they are not listed by many growers. **President Lincoln** and **Man O' War** are two other excellent red singles.

My choice for a red Japanese type is **White Cap**. This has red guard petals with a white center. It is a very spectacular flower that really gains one's attention by its color contrast. **Charm** is a beautiful

variety that is not as widely grown as it should be. **Dignity** and **Hari-ai-nin** are two other very good varieties.

In the hybrids I have mentioned **Red Charm** as being my number one peony of any type. There are many good red hybrids of different shades and forms, but most of the hybrids are single or semidouble. The shades run from coral-red through true bright red to very dark or maroon. **Carina**, a semidouble, is probably the clearest and truest red peony in existence. **Diana Parks** is a full double ruby-red, lighter in color than **Red Charm**.

Let me name just a few of the other good ones: **Alex Woolcott**, semidouble; **Chocolate Soldier**, very dark; **Flame**, glowing, early single; **Mahogany**, dark single; **Red Red Rose**, tall semidouble; **Walter Mains**, true Japanese type dark red; **Cardinal's Robe**, scarlet single; **Bright Knight**, cherry-red semidouble.

Most people, when considering peonies, think of doubles, singles, Japanese, and hybrids, all of which have been discussed in this article, but there is one other class that is gaining in popularity. This is the tree peony, which has a beauty all its own. Culture may be a bit different for most of us but well worth the special effort required. **Black Pirate** is a very deep red or maroon single with black flares. **Kronos** is a dark red which only recently has become available. **Banquet** is a strawberry red semidouble.

As stated earlier in this article, only a few varieties could be mentioned. There are indeed many more, and I'm sure that anyone else would name other varieties—and they would be good. To enjoy any of these or other peonies I urge you to plant some. Space and time available will determine how many to choose, but once you start growing them, you will find there is always another one you just "must have."

THE PERENNIAL PEONY: AN ENDURING BEAUTY

Art Kozelka, Garden Editor, Chicago Tribune
(Reprinted with permission of Art Kozelka, Garden Editor,
Chicago Tribune)

Lavish springtime blooms of the peonies are a memory by this time, but the weeks ahead through October are regarded as the traditional planting time for these extraordinary hardy perennials.

Few other perennials yield such magnificent, fluffy flowers, and even fewer are as dependable for repeat performances year after year—and with so little care. These are "perennials" in every sense of the word, regarded by many as "lifetime" plants.

They also are versatile, being adaptable to any landscape plan that will favor them with a place in the sun. Use them freely as showy specimen plants in mixed beds and borders, plant them in massed beds

for truly spectacular effects, or put them to work as a summer hedge along a walk or driveway.

With so much going for them, new homeowners and newly confirmed peony buffs would be amiss not to include them in their autumn planting plans so they can add to their garden enjoyment next spring. Peony lovers of long duration need no prompting to enhance their collection with some of the newer creations offered this fall.

Significant among 1981 introductions are six newcomers in the ever-expanding Klehm Estate Series, bringing the series total to 34. The peonies in this series reflect the breeding achievements of three generations of the Klehm family, now carried on by Roy Klehm in the tradition of his father, Carl, and grandfather, Charles. It was the latter who founded the Charles Klehm & Son Nursery more than a century ago.

The Estate peony introductions for 1981 are **Bridal Gown**, large white blooms with light cream shading; **Bridal Icing**, pure white; **Cheddar Gold**, white and yellow; **Cheddar Surprise**, white and gold; **Chiffon Parfait**, pale shell pink; and **Raspberry Ice**, raspberry red with silver highlights.

Previous Estate introductions that have been consistent award winners at peony exhibitions include **Dinner Plate**, huge, shell pink; **Bowl of Cream**, creamy white; **Honey Gold**, pure white with tufted golden tints; **Pillow Talk**, pink; and the new **Raspberry Ice's** predecessor, **Raspberry Sundae**, which is deep pink and cream with a raspberry-red topping. All are double-flowering types.

Selected varieties of Estate peonies are available from many mail-order firms, including Wayside Gardens, Hodges, South Carolina 29695, and Burpee Seed Co., Clinton, Iowa 52732. All varieties can be ordered through Klehm's catalog, available free by writing to the nursery at 2 E. Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005.

Because peonies will thrive indefinitely in the same location as long as conditions remain favorable, they deserve the best planting site you can provide. Such a site should offer full sunlight and a soil that drains well and should be easily visible so the flowers can be enjoyed at all times.

Unlike most other perennials, peonies need not be lifted and divided every few years, unless you decide to move them elsewhere, extend your own plantings, or share roots with gardening friends. Autumn is the favored time for this work, just as it is for specialist growers to dig roots for the market.

Plants dug now have developed plump new eyes [buds] for next season after their summer's growth, and when replanted before frost they will be ready to produce their magnificent blooms next spring. Soil and weather conditions in autumn are conducive to proper planting.

Planting holes should be dug deep enough to hold the entire fleshy root system, but care must be taken not to set the buds [or eyes] on the roots any deeper than 1½ to 2 inches below ground level. Deeper placement of the buds is one of the most common causes for failure to bloom.

Conversely, too shallow planting might result in winter-kill the first season, especially in areas where the temperatures get extremely low. Usually it is wise to protect newly set plants the first year with a light mulch of straw, leaves, or other similar material after the ground freezes. The mulch should be removed early in the spring. Once plants become established, no mulch is required.

Peony foliage continues to be attractive all through the summer and should not be cut down until after blackened by frost. Many plant varieties have beautiful, colored fall foliage. Apart from normal watering, weeding, and occasional application of a balanced plant food before and after flowering, the plants will demand little care.

REGISTRATIONS

SHEYENNE CHIEF (Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota, Sept. 15, 1981)

Seedling #6601; double lactiflora; parentage, seedling 5908 x open; first bloomed 1971.

Dark red ball, no stamens, pollen, or seeds; no fragrance. Good substance; 30 inches; good stems, vigorous grower with clean, dark green foliage. Late. A show peony in every way. It takes a long time to open but never fails.

ZELDA GILBERTSON (Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota, Sept. 15, 1981)

Seedling #7021; double lactiflora; parentage, seedling x open; first bloomed 1976.

Light pink ball, no stamens, seeds, or pollen; no fragrance. Good substance; 30 inches, very strong stems carry the heavy bloom well. Vigorous grower; rather large leaves are heavy-petaled and clean-looking. Late. The large and heavy-petaled blooms open nicely and keep well.

COLLEEN MARIE (Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota, Aug. 29, 1981)

Seedling #6602; double lactiflora; parentage, seedling #5908 x open; first bloomed 1971.

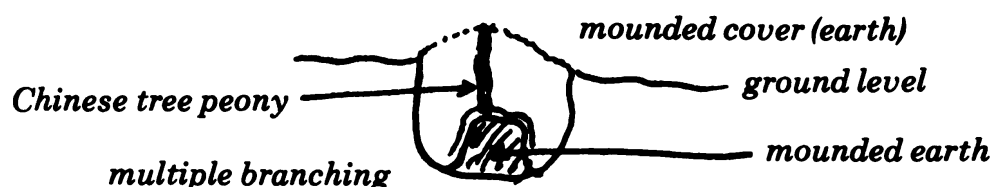
Dark red ball, no stamens, seeds, or pollen; no fragrance. Good substance; 30 inches, strong and wiry stems, good grower, good increase. Dark green foliage that lasts to end of the season. Midseason. Flowers on the strong, wiry stems droop some but hold up very well through the flowering season. A fine garden peony.

CHINESE PEONIES

Dr. Robert Smirnow, Huntington, New York

In maximizing the growth of the Chinese peonies, we have found that some extra care in the planting of the peony pays off handsomely. We like to dig holes deep enough so that the roots are placed downwards rather than bending them over and then covering them over with earth. While it certainly saves my back, alas, it doesn't do that much for really excellent growth.

Since the roots are so long, we like to mound up the earth in the middle of the hole, rest the woody part of the plant on the mound, and then permit the roots to dangle down. I personally like to use a mixture of two shovelfuls of humus and soil plus two handfuls of lime and 5-10-5. The growth is really remarkable.



In the division of the plant as the Chinese do it, select a good-sized peony and sever a branch with a large root—at least a quarter of an inch in diameter. This should then be planted in the usual way and permitted to grow.

To obtain particularly lovely plants with multiple branching close to the ground, take a two- to three-year-old peony and cut off all except two to three inches of the woody stalk. Then mound over that stalk. The next year at least two stalks will develop. This will take a minimum of two years to occur. * * *

The tenuifolias would be particularly beautiful to work with because of their slender foliage. As a bonsai, to carry it to extremes, it would be without peer.

THE PEONY SEASON 1981 IN CONNECTICUT

John E. Cote, Jr., Brooklyn, Connecticut, located in the northeast corner of the state, where Massachusetts and Rhode Island come together

With the lack of a good snow covering in the area, below zero temperatures for some time and deep frost penetration were exceptionally hard on the first-year planting of peonies, as well as other perennials. This, together with the drought that scorched the region in the fall, certainly gave us cause for deep concern.

I planted 131 peonies in the heirloom patch in August and September using plenty of water and hoping for the best. Only one plant was lost, and that was a trial to see if a very small inferior root

would grow. Four tree peonies were planted with very special care and daily watering. No mulching was done, as I feel that if a plant is to survive in this region, it will have to do so on its own. At present I have 164 plants.

The frost depth exceeded three feet this past winter. We always have a good snow cover, which modifies the depth of frost, but not this year. It really was an easier winter than normal, even with the deep-freeze periods.

Spring started early in 1981, with the drought still prevailing. Some of the varieties were a month late in showing. All the plants have made excellent growth, and some two-year-old plants flowered. All of them were sprayed with Captan twice and have not have any disease of any kind.

From the 164 plants, of which 131 were planted last fall, about 34 plants came into bloom, of which three are old, established peonies. So for me it is considered a tremendous year.

Hana-Jadin bloomed for the first time with four outstanding blooms almost nine inches across. The **Yuki-Zaza** had three beautiful blooms. The tree peonies started the spring with a burst of beauty, and for the first time in three years they showed me why tree peonies are called "King of the Flowers."

My heirloom garden is one of great pleasure because all the plants are from collections of many people that remember my parents and grandparents. They have asked that I move a peony or peonies from their yard or field that they have had for years and are no longer able to care for. The peonies are not named, as over the years names have been lost—or perhaps in the early days names were not important.

In the present and in years to come, these peonies will always continue to radiate their beauty and, for me, fond memories.



Nicholas Cote enjoying the peony that once grew on the family farm planted in the early years by his great-grandfather.

—  —
**If you cut a tree, plant a tree.
It is nature's replaceable energy.**

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Mansfield, Ohio, June 1981



Silvia Saunders Chris Laning Mrs. Louis (Anna) Smirnow
Silvia presenting the A. P. Saunders Medal to Chris Laning



President Irvin Ewing presenting the B. H. Farr Memorial Medal to
W. G. Sindt for the Grand Champion of the show, Douglas Brand



Ron R. Ringdahl, Seattle, Washington Mitsura Saeki, Tokyo, Japan
Court of Honor display with Grand Champion peony, Douglas Brand,
lower center

Photographs, Robert F. Schmidt, Cleveland, Ohio

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ABOVE-GROUND "EYES" OF HERBACEOUS PEONIES

Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri

Nature, it appears, has determined that peonies of the herbaceous type have no use for shoot buds above ground. Since these plants make only one flush of growth, which takes care of the plants' needs for the entire growing season, and afterwards the stems die to the ground, to put raw materials into the formation of large buds above ground would be a waste.

Tree peonies, having persistent woody stems, are programmed appropriately also. They produce large buds in the axials of at least some of the leaves, just as is seen in other woody plants. In the Itoh hybrids, which are man-made of a cross between woody species and herbaceous species, this efficiency is lost. We see the wasteful production of fat buds above ground which are then destroyed when the deciduous stems of these hybrids die in the autumn.

One common-sense conclusion is that herbaceous peonies have, through evolution, lost the genetic ability to form buds in the leaf axials. Yet, this is contrary to an almost universal characteristic of higher plants; that, as the shoot tip grows and initiates leaf primordia, a meristem is laid down in the leaf axial. This meristem provides a growth point, which ordinarily grows and produces a shoot when given appropriate stimulus. In fact, however, it is widely known that when stalks of herbaceous peonies have been damaged, the secondary stems which they often produce come from below ground. When examined closely, these have been found to originate from the axials of bud scales at the base of the damaged shoot, in the same area where large buds form for the next season's shoots.

Recently, however, I came across a reference to the successful propagation of the Chinese peony **Mons. Jules Elie** and some others from softwood cuttings (of green shoots). The report appeared in an Illinois florist newspaper about twenty-five years ago. The work appears to have been done by a graduate student. A professor's name was also referenced as a joint author, the work possibly done at the University of Illinois. This means that there are viable shoot meristems present in the leaf axials, even though they are not ordinarily visible to the unaided eye.

How all this may be put to practical use remains to be seen. It does, however, enlarge our understanding of the genetic potential of the peony. I have a photo of the reference, which is in the nature of a news release, and will hunt it up to share with interested parties upon their request.

Catharine Pennell, 78, Dies

From Times-Bulletin, Van Wert, Ohio, Thursday, August 20, 1981

A former Republican state central committeewoman and well-known civic leader, Catharine P. Pennell, 78, died at 4:30 P.M. (EST) Wednesday in Lutheran Hospital, Fort Wayne. She resided at 947 Elm Street and had been ill since March. She was the wife of former long-time mayor and acting postmaster C. Dan Pennell, who survives.

In addition to her political affiliations, Mrs. Pennell was extremely active in various community functions. She assisted her husband in the establishment of the first peony festival here in 1932. She was well known in the American Peony Society and helped write the Society's national bulletin.

She was associated with the Camp Fire organization and had been highly honored by them. In addition, she was a former regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution and active with that organization.

Mrs. Pennell was also highly active in the Wassenberg Art Center and County Art Club, YWCA, Van Wert County Hospital groups, Garden Club, Youth Safety Council and was an adviser to the Junior Fair Board.

She was a lifetime member and recognized for 50 years of membership in the first United Presbyterian Church.

She was born September 21, 1902, in Lebanon, Indiana, the daughter of Clayton and Gertrude Parkhurst. When she first came to Van Wert, she was associated with the Marsh Foundation as girls' recreation director and in charge of children's social activities. Her husband is now one of the trustees.

They were united in marriage October 12, 1929, in Lebanon and are the parents of a daughter, Mrs. Jerry A. (Jane) McIntosh, of Bloomington, Indiana, who survives along with two grandchildren.

Funeral services will be at 11:00 A.M. Saturday in the Presbyterian Church with the Rev. Martin Griffith officiating. Private burial services will be in Lebanon.

PEONY DISEASES

C. E. F. Guterman, from Cornell Extension Bulletin 321, 1935

Although many people still believe that peonies are free from disease, the fact remains that these plants are susceptible to a number of troubles, some of which are of minor and others of major importance. These diseases are of various types, including blights, stem rot, wilt, root-knot, leaf-spots, and virus troubles. In the following discussion an attempt has been made to provide those interested in these plants with the latest information on the symptoms, the cause, and the control of the more common or important diseases.

BOTRYTIS BLIGHT

Of the several diseases to which peonies are susceptible, *Botrytis* blight should receive first consideration as the most common and generally destructive. Various reports in the literature would indicate that the disease occurs in practically all regions in temperate North America and Europe where peonies are grown. The chief losses from *Botrytis* blight are the destruction of young shoots early in the spring and the blighting or rotting of the buds and flowers. In addition, the foliage may be blighted, thus serving to reduce the vigor of the plants as well as to detract from their ornamental value.

Symptoms

Early in the spring, the causal fungus attacks the young succulent shoots and causes them to wilt suddenly and to topple. Shoots in all stages of growth, up to and including those showing buds, are susceptible to this type of injury, which is characterized by a soft brown rot of the stem that extends above and below the surface of the soil. In rare instances, the rot may extend down into the roots. Small buds, when attacked, cease growth and turn black. A bud blast similar in appearance to that produced by *Botrytis* blight can result from other causes, such as *Phytophthora* blight, poor vigor of the plants, and too deep planting. When older buds are affected, the petals become watery and matted, turn brown, and die. In later stages, the rot may extend down the flower stem for a considerable distance. Open flowers, when attacked, turn brown, droop, and become a rotted mass of petals. Infected leaves exhibit circular or triangular lesions with zonations of dark and light brown. The lesions vary considerably in size and in some instances may involve an entire leaflet. The fungus may grow down through an infected leaf into the stem where a typical brown canker is formed.

Cause

Botrytis blight is caused by the fungus *Botrytis paeoniae* Oud. which overwinters both as dormant mycelium or small, brown to black sclerotia on infested stems and other plant debris. With the advent of rains and warm weather in early spring, large numbers of microscopic spores or seeds are developed in grape-like clusters. Splashing rain, air currents, or insects serve to carry these spores to the young peony shoots, where they germinate and cause the primary infections. As the young shoots wilt and rot, additional spores are formed on the diseased areas, and these in turn are carried to leaves, buds, and stems which have subsequently developed. In this connection, the role played by ants in carrying spores to the buds should be emphasized. The sugary exudate which commonly covers the developing peony buds is a great attraction to ants. While climbing the stems to obtain this sweet liquid, the ants may become dusted with large numbers of spores which adhere to the sticky buds, produce infection, and cause the typical bud-blast condition.

Control

Measures for the control of Botrytis blight should begin with a thorough clean-up each fall. As soon as the tops have died down, all stems, leaves, and other plant debris should be carefully gathered and burned. Many of the better growers go to the extent of pulling the soil away from the crowns thus to cut off the stems as close as possible to the roots. Experience has proved that sanitation of this sort will serve to destroy the overwintering pathogene and materially reduce, if not completely eliminate, infection the following season. The effective control to be gained from this practice for Botrytis blight and many other diseases of the peony cannot be emphasized too much.

The following spring, all rotted or wilting shoots should be removed and destroyed as soon as detected. It is also advisable to remove infected leaves and buds in the same manner. If a mulch has been used for winter protection, the covering should be removed early in the spring, to prevent damp conditions around the young shoots. One or two applications of bordeaux spray early in the season have been suggested by some workers. In general, however, the results obtained with sprays or dusts have not been satisfactory for the control of Botrytis blight.

Certain cultural practices will also prove beneficial. Thus, when making new plantings, the clumps should be given adequate space in order to prevent the development of large dense clusters, which serve to promote conditions favorable to attacks of the fungus. For the same reason, old established plantings should be dug and divided when necessary. The use of sunny, open exposures will aid considerably in preventing serious epidemics of the Botrytis blight disease.

Field observations indicate that peony varieties vary widely with regard to relative susceptibility to the disease.

PHYTOPHTHORA BLIGHT

Phytophthora blight, while more virulent than Botrytis blight, is fortunately not so widespread or prevalent. It is only during periods of prolonged wet weather that Phytophthora blight becomes generally and seriously destructive.

Symptoms

In many respects, the symptoms characteristic of this disease are similar to those of Botrytis blight. Stems, leaves, and buds are affected, and in some cases the infection may extend down into the crowns of the plants. In general, the diseased tissues resulting from Phytophthora blight are dark brown to black in color and develop a tough or leathery texture in contrast with the lighter brown and softer rot which is typical of Botrytis blight. With Phytophthora blight, infection frequently starts at the tips of the branches and extends downward. On the leaves, the lesions are black in color with concentric markings.

Cause

Phytophthora blight is caused by the fungus *Phytophthora paeoniae* Cooper and Porter. Although but little is known about the life history of this fungus, it seems probable that the pathogene overwinters on infested plant parts and is disseminated from plant to plant in the growing season by means of spores which are splashed or washed about during the course of heavy rains.

Control

The measures suggested above for the control of Botrytis blight are equally effective for Phytophthora blight. The use of bordeaux spray offers more promise for Phytophthora than for Botrytis blight. Applications should be started early in the spring and in the event of a wet season should be continued until the flower buds are well formed.

ROOT-KNOT

During the past few years, a disease known as root-knot has apparently become increasingly severe and prevalent on peonies. The disease is by no means confined solely to the peony. It has been reported on the roots of a large number of other plants, including weeds, food crops, and ornamentals. Although widely distributed in the eastern United States, the disease is more severe in those regions having warm growing seasons and mild winters.

Symptoms

When affected with root-knot, peonies are markedly stunted, produce spindly short stems with small, light-colored leaves, and form few or no flower buds. When removed from the soil it will be observed that the large fleshy roots are short and irregularly knotted or swollen. Numerous small galls of varying size and shape will be found on the feeding rootlets.

Cause

Root-knot is caused by a microscopic, soil-inhabiting nematode (eelworm) known as *Heterodera marioni* (Cornu) Goodey. The nematodes gain entrance into the peony roots by piercing the tissues with the small spears in their head. The presence of nematodes within the roots excite the cells to abnormal enlargement, and the typical knots or galls result. Such roots are unable to transfer water and nutrients from the soil, and thus the vital physiological processes of the plants are seriously interfered with. Once introduced into an area on infected plant parts, the eelworms multiply rapidly and are disseminated by their own movements or by cultivation, running water, and other similar means. Eelworms overwinter in the soil or within infected roots.

Control

Although various methods have been suggested for the control of

root-knot, it should be pointed out that the disease is a difficult problem with which to cope. For a small gardener, the simplest procedure is to destroy all infected peonies. Healthy plants should then be obtained and set out in nematode-free soil.

The reduction in nematode population can be hastened by leaving the land fallow or by growing non-susceptible crops in such areas. Among the crops suitable for this purpose are the Iron varieties of cowpeas, the broad beans, the coarse grasses, and most varieties of wheat. Since root-knot is always more abundant on light, sandy soils than on heavy clays, peonies should be planted in the heavier soils.

STEM ROT

Stem rot is one of the less common diseases to which the peony is susceptible. With optimum environmental conditions, however, the disease can become exceedingly destructive, particularly after the plants attain full growth.

Symptoms

While peonies affected with stem rot exhibit many of the symptoms described for the Botrytis or Phytophthora blights, the disease can be distinguished by the presence under some conditions of a white moldy growth on the affected plant parts and more particularly by the large black sclerotia which are formed in the centers of the diseased stems.

Cause

Stem rot is caused by the soil-inhabiting fungus *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (Lib.) DeBary. This fungus attacks a considerable number of plants, vegetables as well as ornamentals, and is therefore likely to be introduced into a garden through the practice of mulching with various kinds of litter.

Control

Sanitation should receive special attention in the control of stem rot. The removal and destruction of all plant debris will aid materially in reducing the number of sclerotia by means of which the fungus overwinters or is disseminated from place to place. In severe infections, the affected plants should be dug up and burned. When the infection is less severe, it will sometimes pay the grower to cut away the diseased portions and reset the plants in a new location in soil free from the causal fungus. In gardens where stem rot has been a problem, it is always advisable to keep manure away from the crowns of the plants.

VERTICILLIUM WILT

Generally speaking, Verticillium wilt is not a common disease of the peony. Reports of its presence, however, are received from time to time, and at least two species of fungi belonging to the genus Verticillium have been obtained from infected plants. Plants attacked by the causal fungus gradually wilt and then die. External symptoms in

the form of lesions and the like are lacking with this disease. In cross or longitudinal section, however, the infected stems or roots exhibit a characteristic discoloration of the water-conducting tissues.

Since the fungus is perennial in the roots, any attempt to save infected plants is useless. Diseased individuals should be removed promptly and destroyed by burning. Before replanting the same area with healthy peonies, it would also be advisable to change the soil.

BLOTCH, ANTHRACNOSE, AND LEAFSPOTS

Peonies are commonly attacked by various fungi that cause blotch, anthracnose, leafspot, and similar diseases. Since control measures are the same for all, these maladies are treated in one group.

Symptoms

The diseases are characterized in general by foliage lesions that vary in size, shape, and color, depending upon the causal organism involved. In some of these maladies, definite lesions similar in appearance to those on the leaves may occur on the stems as well. With most of these troubles, the lesions are round in shape and vary in color from gray-white to reddish brown or purple. Although infections do not kill the plants, continued attacks cause a general weakening of the peonies with a consequent reduction in flower production. The presence of numerous lesions on the leaves also detracts from the ornamental value of the plants or flowers.

Cause

Blotch, anthracnose, and the various leafspots are caused by fungi belonging to the genera *Cladosporium*, *Septoria*, *Cercospora*, *Phyllosticta*, and *Alternaria*. These pathogenes overwinter on the stems and leaves of peonies infected during the previous growing season. Spores produced on affected plant parts are disseminated to nearby healthy plants by splashing rain or air currents.

Control

All of these diseases can usually be kept under control by the removal and destruction of dead plant debris in the fall. This practice aids in preventing the fungus from overwintering and serves to reduce the amount of inoculum available for infection the following season. If, during wet seasons, the disease becomes too prevalent or serious, additional control can be obtained by several applications of bordeaux spray. Wider spacing of the plants to promote free circulation of the air and avoidance of shady situations will aid considerably in preventing further trouble.

VIRUS DISEASES

In addition to the various fungous diseases described, peonies are also subject to a number of troubles characterized by poor vigor, visible stunting of the plants, and a marked reduction in flower produc-

tion. Some and possibly all of these maladies are caused by unknown entities termed *viruses*. Certain of the more common maladies have been the subjects of brief investigations, while others have hardly been described.

Thus, mosaic is a virus disease distinct from the others in that the foliage of affected plants exhibits distinct chlorotic areas which occur in concentric rings. Spread of the disease is relatively slow, and the mode of dissemination is unknown.

Crown elongation is another disease of the peony which, because of its symptoms and seasonal development under field conditions, is caused probably by a virus. Marked elongation and proliferation of the crowns with weak shoots, dwarfed foliage, and no buds are symptoms characteristic of the trouble.

The Lemoine disease, for want of a better place, can also be included with the possible virus diseases. The symptoms are rather similar to those described for root-knot, but nematodes have never been found in the root galls. In consideration of the symptoms and with definite evidence that the disease is infectious, it is probable that here also the pathogene may be an unknown virus.

With all of these diseases, there are no cases on record in which it has been proved that affected plants have been cured or have recovered naturally. For this reason, and until further information is forthcoming, the safest course to pursue would be to remove and destroy infected plants as soon as they are detected, thus to avoid further spread of the troubles through divisions or possible insect vectors.



Dear Peony Society:

Can anybody help me with my problem? I have a number of tree peonies which I have grown successfully for many years, in addition to a number of different aged young seedlings, grown from my own seeds. Most of them are planted in full sun. I try to parasol them from the hot sun when in bloom. They have good drainage. This very dry year they have been watered. My problem is that most plants have papery brown patches on them now, with brown along edges of many leaves.

I cannot find any solution in any of my books. Could this problem be caused from watering in the hot sun? Perhaps some water might have been splashed on them? Three old ones in part shade have no such markings. I have sprayed with Benlate. Any suggestions?

With many thanks,
Mrs. John E. Lockwood
St. Mary's Church Road
R.D. 2, Box 192
Bedford, New York 10506

SEEDS

We are especially pleased to list the seed that has been sent to us this year. Our peony growers have sent us a fine selection from their gardens and we are now ready to fill any requests.

Our thanks to Mr. Domoto of California for sending seeds from his tree peonies. He has been hybridizing for years and has also developed a strain of fragrant tree peonies. His seed selection is prized by us and we urge that you take advantage of his generosity and plant some of these tree peony seed.

All seed is free for the asking. Do send \$1.50 for postage.

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

From Mr. Toichi Domoto: Tree peony seed

From Gus Sindt:

1. Dawn Pink — pink single
2. Florence Bruss — red single
3. Gay Paree — pink Jap
4. Krinkled White — white single
5. Miss America — white semi-double
6. Owatonva — blush single
7. Pico — white single
8. Rose Bowl — single pink
9. Seashell — pink single

From Stan Zubrowski:
(Canada)

1. Mrs. B. Fontaine — open pollinated
2. Virjilus — open pollinated (original plant from Lithuania)
3. Dark Red Seedling — red Jap
4. Seed mixture from named varieties of lactiflora

Miscellaneous

Quad F3
Quad F4
Quad F3 x Silver Dawn F3
Serenade F2
Moonrise F2 x Archangel F2
Lactiflora mix
Lactiflora — Minnie Shaylor
Lactiflora — Nippon Gold
Tetraploid mix



**If you cut a tree, plant a tree.
It is nature's replaceable energy.**

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MEMOIR ON THE TREE PEONIES OF CH'EN-CHOU

by Chang Pang-chi (fl. 1131)

*An original and complete translation by John Marney,
Associate Professor of Chinese, Oakland University*

[Translator's Note: Not much is known about Chang, except that he was a great collector of books. Ch'en-chou is in modern Honan province.]

Varieties of Loyang tree peonies appear in catalogues of flowers. However, they do not compare with those of Ch'en-chou in their flourishing proliferation. Horticulturists plant these flowers as if growing millet and maize, moving me to record this memoir.

In the spring of the *jen-ch'en* year of the Cheng-ho reign period [of Emperor Hui-tsung of Sung, i.e., 1112] when I was in attendance on my parents in this commandery, the Niu family horticulturists suddenly produced a spray [of tree peonies] whose color was like that of a gosling [i.e., soft yellow], but paler. The face was one foot three or four inches, and more than a foot high. The tender corolla was doubled in folds, approximately a thousand-hundred petals. It originated from the Yao Yellow, but at the tip of the corolla-flower there was a halo of gold dust threading it. The heart was purple, and the stamen were also threaded with gold dust. Mr. Nui therefore called it Gold-thread Yellow, and constructed a bamboo-wicker structure to enclose and screen it.

Again, Chang Ch'ing-luan [a relative of Chang's?] put some in a porchway to protect them, and sent men to detain passersby, who formed a crowd. It cost a thousand cash before anyone could go in and view them, and in ten days, the household had gained several hundreds of thousands of cash. I too was able to see them. The commandery magistrate heard of them, and wished to cut some and send them to the provincial office. But all the horticulturists said that it could not be done: "These flowers easily mutate, and are not stable. At another time when they come again, if we have exhausted this variety, how will we ever match them?" The man again wanted to send some roots, but these too were refused him. And when the flowers bloomed the following year, they were indeed the variety as of old. This too is the wonder of grasses and trees.

[A colophon follows this text]:

Su chang-kung [i.e., Su Shih, or Su Tung-p'o, whose poems on the tree peony appear in this and the previous issues of *BAPS*] recorded an old custom of Tung-wu [identified as located in modern Shantung province]: "Every year in the fourth month, a great assembly gathers at the two temples Southern Ch'an and Tzu-fu [Wealth and Blessings]. Herbaceous peonies [shao-yueh] are offered to Buddha." But this year

it was most flourishing. All of seven thousand and more bouquets were heaped together in most beautiful profusion and fruitful ripeness. Among them there was a white flower, completely round like an overturned basin. Underneath there were a dozen or so rather large petals/leaves holding it like a bowl. Its beauty and character were entirely extraordinary, alone standing out above the seven thousand bouquets. It was said that the flower came from north of the city wall, in Mr. Su's garden, on Premier Chou and Mr. Lu's property. This too is a rare variety, and is worth transmitting as a wonder together with the Niu household tree peony.

ANOTHER LEAF QUESTION

Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri

A reader from Connecticut has sent peony leaves and drawings which contrast a "normal" leaf of Chinese peony with that of Miss America and with a conspicuously different leaf of another plant. The leaflets of Miss America are distinctive because they are smaller than average for the Chinese peonies. The other plant is different in that the leaves show unbalanced lobing.

John Simkins has recently given this Bulletin a discussion of the typical leaf forms in tree peonies (June 1981). John's ingenious reproductions of leaf silhouettes clearly show the five-part pattern which is characteristic of larger leaves of most woody peonies. In most tree peonies there are five primary branches of the leaf (the divisions go all the way to the midline), then most of the resulting leaflets are deeply cleft into five major lobes. The lobes are then further notched and some of them also reflect a tendency toward the five-part pattern. John also illustrates leaves of the Itoh hybrids which are the result of crossing woody peonies with Chinese peonies and do not have the five-part pattern of division.

Herbaceous peonies typically have a three-part pattern. The plant anatomy term for this is *ternate*. In fact, there is a species name *triter-nata*, reflecting that three levels of ternate division may usually be found in the larger leaves of these plants—nine distinct leaflets. Most of the herbaceous peonies display a twice-ternate pattern of leaf divisions in the larger leaves of mature plants.

The odd-leaved Connecticut plant shows a tendency toward a mitten shape—the leaf deeply lobed on one side of the mid-rib with the blade wider and only slightly lobed or not at all on the other side. Additional information furnished was that there were only three stems on the plant and a color print showing lush, dark green leaves.

It will be interesting to have a report whether this plant retains the tendency to form unbalanced leaf divisions when it reaches mature proportions. Leaf differences among mature plants are an aid in the identification of varieties and are especially important in identifying the natural species. When one is observing a single specimen, however,

it is not certain whether what you have includes a leaf or leaves that are typical of the plant or species. The rule is to use the larger (lower) leaves of stalks which reached an average or better height and produced a fully developed flower.

Young plants from division may produce leaves that are akin to juvenile leaves. The leaf forms of young seedling peonies are representative of the juvenile state. These forms change a great deal over a two or three year period during the transition from the juvenile state to the mature, flowering state.

GROWING TREE PEONIES "DOWN UNDER"

Patricia Plunkett, Mt. Waverley, Victoria, Australia

The tree peonies from America received in 1979, released from quarantine in December 1981, were planted in my garden at the beginning of summer (December), although they had not had a period of real dormancy. Due to the upside down seasons, they arrived just as they were settling down for their usual winter dormancy, just to be rudely awakened immediately by our hot summer. Also due to the fact the quarantine has not yet a temperature-controlled "cool room," they made growth of a sort over summer. So they had two summers in a row. In the winter, starting May, they became dormant, then the following August they put forth new leaves. By December 1980, leaves were very healthy, and they were released from quarantine (after more than a year) with the exception of 12, which arrived in a weak state. They did not make the grade and were destroyed by an order from quarantine.

So I received 12 peonies, and after the end of summer only one was lost through my own fault. Although I planted them in the garden facing east and getting filtered light and shade from a silver birch tree, the morning sun was just too hot. Two plants were left in their pots in a much shadier situation, and they survived. My first lesson: Do not plant tree peonies out in the open garden the first summer. The rest were covered with teepees of shade cloth.

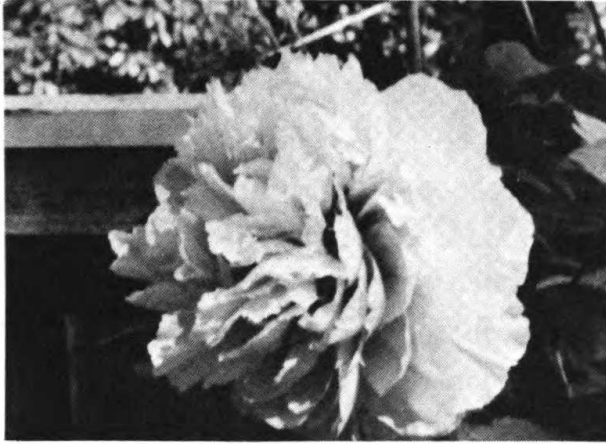
The following winter (May to July), I moved practically all the peonies to a better place, getting more shade from a camphor laurel and a few feet from some hardy cymbidium orchids that live outside. I don't suppose there are many people growing orchids and tree peonies in one garden.

In the meantime, I gave the only tree peony that has been around in Melbourne since the days of sailing ships, *Etienne de France*, and all the new "immigrants" duck eggs mixed with a little water, plus Benlate around the root areas, as at this time of year we get a lot of rain and conditions are cool and humid.

My second lesson: Plant tree peonies in Melbourne just deep enough for soil to cover the graft union. They all grew much better than some of the deeper planting. They all received plenty of mulch in

the summer.

It may seem unorthodox to plant tree peonies alongside the azaleas at a slightly acid pH, about 6.7. They do not seem to mind the acidity as long as they get filtered shade. They are not going to behave over here as they do in any of your climate zones, as there is no equivalent zone here.



Tree peony, Etienne de France, Mt. Waverley, Melbourne, Australia. Flowering the last two weeks of September. Color, mauve pink with 10-inch fringed blossoms, with raspberry blotches toward the center.

Mt. Waverley, where I live, is a suburb of Melbourne, about 20 miles away, and our winters are more moderate than any equivalent in the U.S.A., due to the influence of the southern ocean, which is more marked in winter than in summer. We would not have more than five days of frost a year. The influence of the southern ocean is not so marked in summer, when the prevailing, frequent hot north winds in December to the end of February are coming from the desert, arid areas of the outback and the interior of this continent, which is virtually all desert. Tasmania, further south, surrounded by the southern ocean, does have a much cooler climate and is suitable for growing tree peonies. It is far enough away to miss the devastatingly hot winds from the interior.

The main problem to overcome in importing tree peonies is the ability to continue the already-started dormancy of the tree peonies by artificial means instead of exposing them before any real dormancy to the oncoming very hot summer. This problem can be solved, and I am glad to say it will be solved, by the addition of a "cool room" to quarantine, or rather a "cold room" where temperatures can be artificially lowered to about five degrees. It will be artificially lighted to the correct amount of light; thus the newly arrived tree peonies will be able to have a few months of real dormancy. Probably they would be able to stand a very short growing period in our not very cold fall, then develop dormancy again over winter under normal outdoor conditions. Then the following August they could start to shoot and from then on be back in a normal cycle.

This would mean that plants like tree peonies that are imported from the northern hemisphere would not be subjected to the stress of our very hot, dry summer without a real dormancy period. It will also

help more tree peonies survive in the year they spend in quarantine even if they arrive in poor condition. The latter problem seems unsolvable at the moment. No doubt they try to pack them in the U.S.A. as well as they can, yet for some reason unknown they take from five days to three weeks to arrive, as if they were held up in some parcel post on the way—although they are always sent airmail. The addition of the projected cold room to quarantine will certainly improve the chances of survival of plants arriving in weakened condition.

You all are doing wonders over there, and how lucky you are to have such a choice and selection of all kinds of peonies.

EXCESSIVE STEM PRODUCTION IN PEONIES

Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri

An unusual incidence of winter kill has been reported by Minnesota peony growers after the very mild winter of 1980-81. Lack of snow cover, which normally mulches the buds and roots against the growth-stimulating effects of unseasonal warm temperatures, has been suspected—in the absence of protection plants may have been released from dormancy and made vulnerable to later episodes of severe cold.

Now, the question arises whether surviving plants may also have been severely affected. In particular, plants have been observed which have produced an excess of short, thin stems. When dug, these have been found to have an unusual number of buds on the crowns, which predicts another season of excessive shoot production.

Veteran peony growers tend to advise that such aberrant plants should be discarded. As a practical matter this may be the least troublesome solution, and the decision is easy to make if one is growing many peonies. To an amateur grower, however, it is likely to be more painful to give up the possibility of salvaging a rare plant which seems costly to replace. How one might go about trying to retrieve such a plant is not a matter of formula, but to try may be an instructive experience.

First, don't be too quick to conclude that the symptoms are actually a consequence of winter damage. There is a disease of peonies described in the standard references that is called crown elongation, or witches broom. The described symptoms sound similar to what has been reported. I once had a plant which fit this description. When I dug it the root system was a mass of knots, presumably root-knot nematode galls. Whether the nematodes caused the symptoms or just happened to be especially successful at parasitizing a plant weakened already by a virus remains unknown. The plant and the soil around it went out with the garbage. Later, I saw some plants in the fields of a large grower which seemed similar to mine, and when I asked about them I received the response, "Oh, I should have had those out of here already," and we went on to other subjects.

My idea of how to approach a salvage trial is to find a spot which is isolated from other peonies (against the possibility that a virus is involved) that can be made hospitable to weakened, small divisions. This means good aeration, good drainage, shelter from hot winds, and perhaps a thin shade. Since you're trying to reduce growth points so that normal, strong stems can be produced, a logical approach is to make divisions with a fair amount of storage root (finger-sized to larger) and only one or two eyes. One way to reduce the number of eyes is simply to shave off the excess with a sharp blade that is clean. You might let the wounds dry for a while or even give them time to skin over with callus tissue (in slightly moist packing, held warm) before replanting. Disinfect your tools before using them on other plants as a precaution against transmitting a virus.

CH-6911 VICO MORCOTE, SWITZERLAND

Sir Peter Smithers

I read with interest and agreement Mr. Harrop's note on tree peony nomenclature. My own experience has been somewhat like his. Plants under English names from a well-known English nursery turned out to be merely renamed Japanese. In view of this disreputable proceeding, I never ordered any plant from that nursery again. Plants from Japan coming under name are sometimes correct, but it is increasingly difficult to get them, and the names certainly cannot be relied upon.

There are two problems there. The first is that of the grower, who is himself confronted with the problem of naming his stock. Japanese suppliers do not attach great importance to a correct name, and growing on young stock to verify the bloom is beyond the possibilities of any ordinary nursery. But the second problem is fundamental. Where are we to find an authoritative source of reference?

I myself know of only one substantial reference authority. It is *The Picture Book of Peonies: Niigata Prefecture, Japan*, which was published in Japan in the thirties in album form. It contains 54 admirable coloured drawings of individual varieties, reproduced by what is apparently a lithograph process. Unfortunately, when it came to the foliage the artist wearied of his task and gave all the flowers the same leaves. There is a brief English translation of the descriptive text of each flower, but the English description does not correspond well with the pictures. This is probably because of the great difficulty of translating Japanese descriptions of colour into English. I recently received some new Japanese wistarias described as "red" by Japanese friends, though the reddest of them was a strong dark pink. A discussion of the problem with my Japanese horticulture friends—of great eminence, I should say—failed to resolve this baffling lack of correspondence between the two languages. It is therefore unsafe to rely on Japanese colour descriptions, and discrepancies are not the outcome of deception

by the supplier but of linguistic problems. The conclusion is that we must fall back on pictures as authority.

It may be that those more learned than I am know of some other illustrated text besides the Niigata book, but I am only aware of a little booklet by the distinguished Japanese authority Takahiro Somei, in which there are a few coloured photographs and some black-and-white, the latter being of no help. I am therefore obliged to fall back on the 54 pictures in the Niigata book, which enable me to positively identify a number of plants in my collection of about 250 clones.

What to do about the others? Personally, I make it a practice to find in the Niigata book the nearest equivalent and then to identify them as being somewhat similar to that plant, with a note as to the distinguishing differences. This is not very satisfactory, but I can think of nothing better.

It is therefore apparent that so far as Japanese tree peonies are concerned, what is required is a comprehensive collection of coloured photographs, with the names of the Niigata varieties attached to those to which they apply and with an American Peony Society number attached to the others. We would then at least have a common and available source of reference in English. If Takahiro Somei could be persuaded to attach his suggested names to the numbered pictures, this would advance matters a little further. Alternatively, perhaps it might be possible to obtain from Japan a series of pictures taken there and similarly identified.

Meanwhile the Niigata book is virtually unobtainable—my own copy is destined for the Lindley Library of the Royal Horticultural Society—so no immediate solution seems to be in sight for the Japanese tree peony grower.

There remains the more manageable problem of the Saunders hybrids and Daphnis. These are, of course, far fewer in number.

I should think that the Japanese counterpart of our Society might be interested in a joint venture, in which the Saunders and Daphnis hybrids could be included. The production of an illustrated booklet with short descriptive text in English and Japanese would be expensive, but it would be a real and permanent contribution to knowledge and would serve to arrest the growing confusion which surrounds the question of naming of tree peonies. An appeal to members of both societies and to horticultural institutions, if properly conducted, would certainly raise a substantial sum of money in advance of the project.



American Peony Society National Convention
June 11-13, 1982
Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

SOME NOTES ON THE 1981 AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION

L. J. Dewey, Richmond, Virginia

For those who have never had a chance to visit the Kingwood Center where the National Convention and Annual Peony Exhibition of the American Peony Society are held periodically, a brief description and history of the Center may be of interest. The Center was established as a private educational institution with special interests in gardening, horticulture, bird study, and related subjects by the late Charles Kelley King. It is located on 47 acres of land in the city of Mansfield, Ohio, and consists of the original mansion, Kingwood Hall, and several outbuildings. The former poultry house is now the exhibit hall, the stable is the workshop, and the meeting hall was originally a storage building. Greenhouses and a service building have been added more recently. Kingwood Hall is a 27-room mansion built in 1926 in the French Provincial or Norman architectural style. Much of the furniture and furnishings in the mansion are original and remind us of the elegant life of a bygone era.

The library in the mansion contains an excellent basic collection of books which includes many rare and important volumes. New publications on gardening, horticulture, landscaping, flower arranging, bird lore, and nature are continually being added. Marjorie Dickson is the very capable librarian. Her willingness to assist convention members with any of their problems was very much appreciated. At one point she was seen carrying specimen blooms into the showroom for some exhibitor.

Surrounding the buildings are about twelve gardens, a number of which are formal. These formal gardens were started about the time the house was built and are now continually being rehabilitated and improved. A distressing example of this rehabilitation is the peony garden. At the last meeting here in 1978, one of the formal gardens was devoted to peonies, both herbaceous and tree. At the time, most of the plants appeared to be prospering, and the garden showed promise of developing into a peony fancier's dream come true. In the interim, however, drainage problems apparently developed. The plants sulked and had to be moved to another area on the grounds. There was a considerable loss of plants with only enough remaining for a small garden, which is now located in a much less prominent place. So where once the peonies bloomed, a rose garden is now flourishing.

A tour through the test gardens is a fascinating trip. There the latest varieties of annuals as well as a large collection of daylilies for the Ohio Hemerocallis Society can be seen. The rose garden serves as both a display and a test garden.

In a low, moist area across the driveway from the duck pond is a flourishing collection of Japanese iris with special emphasis on the

Payne introductions. Unfortunately, it was too early for blooms, but there were many plump flower buds with some showing color. The Center has an extensive collection of irises with many types represented. The Spurias were in full bloom in a small garden near the Upper Trellis Garden. The flowers have an exquisite form reminiscent of the popular Dutch irises. Immediately, it was decided the Spurias had to be tested in the Richmond climate.

Those members who found some free time to wander through the greenhouses at the Center were well rewarded. One house in particular contains an extensive collection of orchids, many of which were in bloom. Most of the plants are well labeled, which is a great aid for beginners and those who are shopping around for new varieties to add to their collections. There were numerous varieties of other tender plants, including a collection of amaryllis which were putting on a splendid show. It is a pleasure touring well-tended greenhouses where the exotic grows alongside the more mundane.

Activity on the Annual Peony Exhibition began Friday afternoon as exhibitors arrived with loads of blooms. By Saturday morning the exhibition tables were nearly filled with flowers, but new specimens kept arriving up to lunch time as exhibitors reviewed their entries to make certain their best blooms were on display.

Also sometime Saturday morning a giant wreath, certainly six feet across, was hung on the wall at the entrance to the showroom. Using natural greenery and dozens of peony blooms, Charles Applegate of the Kingwood Center staff had created the wreath especially for the peony show. It was a much-admired artistic achievement, and as they say in the theater, it was a real show-stopper.

As the showroom closed for the judging of the entries, members wandered through the beautiful grounds to Kingwood Hall. There on the second floor of the mansion a delightful buffet luncheon was served. Guests were seated in the magnificent dining room overlooking the well-manicured lawn stretching into the distance. It was a pleasant time for camaraderie and peony talk.

After lunch it was time to go back to the showroom and check the blue ribbon winners. As usual, the judges had done an excellent job, and the Court of Honor was filled with superb blooms. Mr. Sindt's **Douglas Brand** entry, the Grand Champion, was a standout for color, size, and perfection of bloom. Not many tree peonies made the Court, but a beautiful specimen of the Itoh hybrid **Yellow Symphony** was there. Another bloom which caused a good deal of excitement was a huge specimen of **Madylone**. The peony fever generated by this entry carried over into the root auction, as we shall see later.

The seedling table had a number of interesting entries which were brought in by Chris Laning. Among these was a collection of three peony blooms from seedlings raised from seed collected by Toichi Domoto off his Japanese varieties. A particularly good example of the

type of flower obtained by this approach was a large, double, pinkish bloom with dark flares and with the crinkled petals and fine form expected in the Japanese varieties. Nearby was a bloom from the *Daphnis lutea* hybrid seedling #286. It has about two rows of blush petals which deepen to dark reddish flares in the center and have the heavier substance so often seen in the lutea hybrids. The contrast between this heavier substance and the finer texture so admired in the Japanese varieties was quite evident. There was also a fine example of the progeny to be obtained in the Itoh cross in the bloom from the Hollingsworth seedling #206. This must be one of the most double and largest Itohs bred to date. This yellow, well-formed bloom with small reddish flares will doubtlessly be seen (and should be) again in future shows. Turning to the herbaceous types, there was a bright red double seedling with some white flecks near the petal edges from one of Laning's crosses (albiflora x lobata #2). Hopefully, Chris has more seedlings from this promising cross growing in his beds. If the Roy Pehrson seedling from the Mikado x Good Cheer cross is any indication of the progeny to be expected from this parentage, it is quite evident why Pehrson recommends this cross so highly. The flower is a bright red double with conspicuous yellow markings on the edges of some of the inner petals.

Tree peony fanciers found many fine examples of the Saunders lutea hybrids at the show to admire but very few, if any, of the *Daphnis*-Gratwick hybrids. They were also disappointed if they looked for Japanese tree peony varieties. It may be that the season was too early this year and blooms of the latter were just not available at show time.

One section of the show which attracted large groups of visitors was the display of artistic arrangements. The entries were particularly numerous and exceptionally well done this year. This may be a reflection of the many active garden clubs which seem to flourish in the Mansfield area. In fact, the Grand Champion, *June Wedding*, a masterful creation of all white blooms, was entered by a member from a local garden club, Mrs. Martha Beal.

Saturday afternoon Chris Laning's seminar attracted a large crowd of enthusiastic members in a basement room of Kingwood Hall. Chris had just barely begun a discussion on the deficiencies of tree peonies (ephemeral, cost too much, slow growing, poor nomenclature) when a tornado hit the area, devastating a small town about 20 miles away. Although the lights went out, Chris heroically carried on with a flashlight as tree peony fanciers, realizing Chris might have his tongue in his cheek, rose to good-naturedly defend the object of their affections. With the lights out, it was impossible to take notes, and each participant was left to rely on his own memory to reconstruct the course of the discussion from that point on.

Emerging from the basement, members now had a chance to assess the extent of the damage caused by the storm. Fortunately, the

buildings at the Center appeared to have come through unscathed, but the destruction visited on the trees and shrubs was heartbreaking. Limbs from age-old trees were lying all about the grounds, sometimes having fallen on valuable specimens beneath. The Center has a very fine collection of trees and shrubs, and it will certainly take days, perhaps years, to heal up the wounds inflicted in just a few minutes by this violent storm.

However, as the Bard observed long ago, "Ill blows the wind that profits nobody." The power failure provided the perfect excuse to have a cocktail party by candlelight. Guests met in a large room on the main floor of Kingwood Hall to renew old acquaintances, meet new friends, indulge in peony talk, and coincidentally imbibe a little. The candlelight added a beguiling touch to the festive mood, and guests left for the grand dining room on the second floor in jolly spirits.

In the dining room candles were everywhere, creating an elegant atmosphere for the delicious banquet to follow. Old conversations continued and new ones were struck up. The highlight of the evening came as Miss Silvia Saunders presented each of our good friends Louis Smirnow and Chris Laning with Gold Medals (named after her father) for their long years of devotion to the peony. It was obvious from the reaction of the guests that this was a most popular recognition of the many contributions these two gentlemen have made to the peony and our Society.

As is customary, the root auction was once again held after the banquet. Many valuable varieties were offered, and several rounds of friendly, competitive bidding ensued. The climax came as the Madylone fever, mentioned earlier, surfaced, and one division of this variety was actually sold for \$130. This auction again demonstrated the popularity of this event with members and guests. Everyone is pleased—the Society benefits and the bidders walk away with divisions of valuable and, in some cases, rare varieties.

The lights were still not back on as members returned to the showroom Sunday morning for a last look. The dim light made focusing extremely difficult for photographers but left them free to compare notes with fellow members on their favorite entries. Later in the morning, a generator was brought in so that lighting could be restored at least in the showroom. The flowers were no longer as fresh and perfect as on Saturday, partly because the air conditioning had been off since the power failure began Saturday afternoon. Nevertheless, the zealous photographers made do with the material at hand, searching for the best remaining specimens.

With the exhilaration of a very successful Convention and Exhibition still fresh in their minds, members said their good-byes to acquaintances, old and new, even as they made plans to meet again in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, next June.

POEMS ON THE TREE PEONY BY SU SHIH (1037-1101)

*Original Translations from the Chinese by John Marney,
Associate Professor of Chinese, Oakland University*

Continued from Bulletin #239

Pitying the Flowers

In Chi-hsiang Temple, embroidery in a thousand tiers.
In former years I enjoyed the flowers when they were truly in their
glory.

A Taoist urged me to come at the Ch'ing-ming [festival],
When the waist-drums—a hundred faces—resembled springtime
thunder.

By the time I'd reached Liang province, the flowers were already in
bloom,

And on the banks of the Sandy River, we brought flowers back in
our hair.

Drunk, I fell unconscious and gave way to savage snores.
How'd I know that to this very day the hair on my head presses
urgent!

To the west of the wall an ancient temple lies lost in jungled
weeds,

And there a monk has closed the gates, and with his own hands
does some trimming.

A thousand twigs, ten thousand leaves, he skillfully scissors and
tailors.

I entered within one thicket—what place did it resemble!
Cornelian agate in interlaced splendor; gold embroidered goblets;
But I was abstaining and ate clean vegetarian foods.

Facing the flowers I did not drink, and the flowers in response
were curious.

Night came, and the rain and hail were the size of plums;
The reds were ruined, the greens eclipsed. Alas! so pitiable!

*Translator's Note: The Ch'ing-ming "Clear and Bright" festival was to
sweep the graves of one's ancestors, held in early April. Liang province
is in modern Kansu province.*

At T'ai-p'ing Temple in Ch'ang-chou Viewing the Tree Peonies

At Wu-lin, thousand-petaled, they appear shining in the air.
After we parted, from Mount Hu arose slight northeast winds.
From laughing my eyes became blurred [lit. flowered], the reds and
greens confused;
And I turn my whitened head to see the T'ing Red.

*Translator's Note: Lin Yu-tang notes that Su journeyed to Ch'ang-
chou (Changchow) between April 1084 and March 1085; and on his
return to the mainland after exile on the island of Hainan, he was en-*

route there between July 1100 and June 1101. He died on July 28 that year. The city lies in modern Kiangsu province. T'ai-p'ing means "Great Peace." Actually, there is a little pun in the title, whether intentional or not: kuan "to view" in ssu-kuan means "temple." Mt. Hu, "Lake Mountain," is in modern Kiangsu province, some ten miles south of Chiang-ning district; it lies above a lake.

The T'ing Red is described in Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-1072) (yet another of the Eight Masters) "Record of the Tree Peonies of Loyang" (trans. J. Marney, BAPS #229, March 1979, pp. 34-41): "The T'ing Red has single petals and deep red flowers. It comes from Ch'ing province, and is also called Ch'ing province Red. In the past the pu-yeh officer Chang Ch'i-hsien had a residence in the Hsien-hsiang (worthy ministers) district of the Western Capital (Loyang). He transported this species by camel-back from Ch'ing province. Thereafter it spread throughout the Lo area. Its color is like the stiff t'ing waistband and so it is called the T'ing Red.

**Going to the Pure Land Courtyard of the T'ai-p'ing Temple to
See an Extremely Rare Tan Huang [Pale Yellow] Among the
Tree Peonies There**

I

I was drunk and my eyes were skeined and mottled;
Rain falling on the Mandalas glistened in the [dew-catcher] pans.
A bouquet of Kuan-huang [Official Yellow] gently waved and
brushed.

T'ing Reds and Wei Purples—no need to look at them!

II

By a little fence to and fro as the sun begins to slant.
I'm only sad that spring has gone and they're consigned to the mud
and sand.

I'll like to depict in colors their "beauty to o'erturn cities."
In all the world today we lack the [Concubine] Yang's Splendor.

Translator's Note: Pure Land was a sect of Buddhism whose origins stemmed from the third century, and focused on the merciful Kuan-yin and the Buddhist Paradise of the Pure Land. (See Kenneth Ch'en, Buddhism in China, Princeton University Press, 1964.) The Wei Flower is also mentioned in Ou-yang's "Record." We met the imperial concubine Yang Kuei-fei (d. 756) in Hsueh Feng-hsiang's catalogue of the tree peonies of Hao province (trans. J. Marney, BAPS #236, 237, December 1980, March 1981), the beautiful but tragic subject of the T'ang poet Po Chu-i (772-846) long poem "Song of Everlasting Regret" (see my note, BAPS #238, June 1981, p. 26). The poem begins with a line about her beauty, which could "o'erturn cities." (See note, ibid.)

Preface to Viewing the Tree Peonies at Chi-hsiang Temple

On the 23rd day of the 3rd month of the 5th year of Hsi-ning [April 14, 1072], together with the Magistrate Mr. Shen, I went to view the flowers at Chi-hsiang Temple. In the Monk Shou-lin's garden there

were a thousand plants in a hundred varieties. Merry with wine and entertainments, the people of the district gathered in a great throng. Gilded trays and varicolored baskets plied their trade among those seated there, some fifty-three personages, who drank wine and enjoyed themselves to the utmost. Even those who did not normally drink [the monks?] became intoxicated. From coachmen and menials to gendarmes and lictors, several tens of thousands of peoples, all stuck flowers in their hair and followed in the train of the flower-viewers.

Next day, Mr. [Shen] brought out a collectanea of writings he had compiled under the title "Record of Tree Peonies" in ten folii [no longer extant], which he showed his guests. Wherever he had observed mention of the tree peony in records and transcripts, or methods of cutting, planting, banking up and nourishing, pruning, and curing, whether they be in elegies, songs, poems, or rhymeprose of former men, down to records of curiosities and fiction, all were there. Having seen the flowers at the height of their glory, enjoyed the outing with the local people, and further had the chance to see the high quality and thorough and comprehensive compilation of this book, I felt that these three events were worth recording. And then Mr. [Shen] further begged me to write something to crown his compilation. This flower has been prized throughout the world for more than three centuries, fully indulging its charms and exhausting its glories to usurp the taste for beauty in all the empire. But particularly in recent years, a hundred transformations have been produced, and people have concentrated on creating novel curiosities, one coming close upon another so that even the *au-courant* cannot keep track of them. The wisdom in respect of these herbs and shrubs has become mere glib eloquence. [In the next few lines, Su recalls various personalities and overblown literary styles of former times, particularly the Hsu-Yu style, i.e., of Hsu Ling, 507-583, and Yu Hsin, 513-581, two exalted writers whose literary effusions became known as "palace-style." See J. Marney, *Liang Chien-wen Ti*, 503-551. Boston: G.K. Hall/Twayne, 1976. "Vulgar and stupid, deluding the world; how can they be believed!" says Su. He concludes:] Although I am not such a person, I exhorted Mr. [Shen] to record them. Mr. [Shen's] family library runs to twenty thousand folii. He is widely read and strenuous of memory. Encountering some circumstance he writes it down, and his writings are not limited to the tree peony.

To the Tune: "In the Rain the Flowers are Languid." (Tree Peonies in the Ninth Month at Michou)

Translator's Note: Su was transferred to this district, in northerly Shantung province, close to the modern city of Tsingtao, to be near his brother, on his own request. He was magistrate of this impoverished area from 1074-1076. This poem is in the irregular lyric tz'u form, i.e., original words to an existing song pattern.

This year during the flower season, in a deep courtyard at the close of day;

An easterly breeze in rippling waves, tea and [incense] smoke.
Nought else but green moss, fragrant grass, willow catkins, and elm seeds.

I heard it said that west of the city, by long verandahs, in ancient temples, at mansions, and in famous gardens there are national glories.

I took along some wine, and heavenly perfumes staining my sleeves made me dally there.

Now Ching-ming's [grave-clearing festival] over and done, and their relict reds no more;

Faced with this my tears flow free before my goblet.

As autumn tends to eventide, how can a single twig serve me as before!

In lofty convocation pursuing brief canicular days and limpid Fall, ne'er at leave from their lingering charms.

But better capture the full essence of spring and consign it to the coming year.

When the Tree Peonies at Hang-chou Bloomed, Intendant Chou Composed Verses Which He Sent Me to Read; I Adopted His Rhymes

I'm ashamed that on my return to the call of the flower season, They'd already formed [leafy] shadows, and were then producing seeds.

If with things I've little sympathy, then pity my old age;
But I sent off springtime with no regrets, trusting to your poems.
On a jade terrace no more I appear for a morning's merry tipping;
In gilded broidery still I sing of emptily breaking a bough.
Hereafter year by year we must arrange to meet,
And have the ancient gardener teach us about Fan Ch'ih.

Translator's Note: Lin Yu-tang, Gay Genius, p. 162, provides a rather free paraphrase of this poem. He offers evidence that it was not written to Ch'en Hsiang, but rather indicates a secret love for his cousin, Liu Chung-huan. Clearly Lin did not have access to the title identifying the Intendant Chou as the recipient. However, Lin notes the reference to the "gilded broidery" of youthful opportunity, and to "plucking an empty bough," which since T'ang poetic usage had come to mean "missing the courtship of youth." "Producing seeds," says Lin, is also a common expression for siring, or mothering, children: the character "seeds" is synonymous with "sons."

Fan Ch'ih was a disciple of Confucius (6th century B.C.). Arthur Waley, Analects of Confucius (London: Allen & Unwin, 1938) 13.4 reads: "Fan Ch'ih asked the Master to teach him about farming. The Master said, You had better consult some old farmer. He asked to be taught about gardening. The Master said, You had better go to some old vegetable-gardener." Lin translates the line: "While I learn the fine art of the spade and the plough." Lin observes that Su indeed bought a house and a farm at Ch'ang-chou, and it was here that he died.

GROWING AND SHOWING BLOOMS

Clarence O. Lienau, from Bulletin #180

After the soil dries out enough—in late April in this vicinity (earlier south of here)—so it is workable and the little red shoots protrude out of the ground about two inches, I start to cultivate the soil around each plant.

In about a week I go over the planting again, as some of the later varieties now are coming through the soil and want to be cultivated also. I cultivate my plants about three more times before blooming time. Care should be taken not to cultivate too deeply. It is my opinion that the first cultivation is the most important of all. One will notice the shoots will practically jump out of the ground two or three inches overnight after the first cultivation.

When the plants are 12 to 14 inches tall, or better still when the buds are as large as peas, one should start to disbud, leaving just one bud on the center of the stalk, which is called the terminal bud. By using the thumbnail and the nail of the second finger, one will find it easy to pinch out the side buds. One should pinch close to stem, but care should be taken so as not to break off the finest potential bloom. I go over the planting again in about six or seven days, doing the same chore, as I find I have missed some, and the later varieties now need attention.

When the buds grow to about one inch in diameter, I go over all potential varieties and select the buds that are the tallest and have the thickest stems; these will be the finest blooms. Now I attach a tree label about four inches below the bud. I usually select three or four blooms of each variety to make sure I will have one good one. One should use a weatherproof pencil for marking. Be sure to write the proper name plainly on the label. I also write the name on top of my bags; I find this very helpful. After the buds start to show color, I start to bag them. The reason for bagging is first to keep the hot sun off the blooms so as not to discolor or fade them; second, for storing, carrying, and shipping purposes. I use one-pound brown Manila bags for most single, Japanese, small hybrid, and small double varieties. However, for such large single and Japanese varieties as Imperial Red, Pico, Largo, Westerner, and Red Charm, be sure to use two-pound bags, as too small of a bag may distort the blooms. Write the proper name on top of the bag, then place the opening on top of the bud and bring it down about halfway. Then pinch both sides together at the bottom and staple. Care should be taken to leave enough space above the bud so the bloom can expand. One may purchase an inexpensive stapler at almost any dime store. I find this is a must.

Wood tree labels 3 5/8 inches long by 5/8 inch wide with a wire twisted around them can be purchased from a nursery, or a florist can purchase them for one from his florist supply house. I suggest purchasing these early, about March or April.

The bags should have a small corner torn off in order to let out the hot air that generates from the hot sun; this prevents cooking the blooms. Each day the plants should be watched; whenever the single and Japanese feel soft to the touch, cut them. It is easy for them to open. I believe it is better to cut these a little too tight than too far open. This also applies to single and Japanese hybrids. In regard to the double varieties, one may wait until the bag feels full before cutting the bloom. I would suggest cutting 16- to 18-inch stems, removing all leaves except two, and then placing in clear water in a cool place for about one hour before placing in a refrigerator or walk-in box. If, after cutting the bloom for any reason, one wants to bag or rebag, this may be done.

The best way is to cut a small hole in the center of the bottom of the bag and insert the stem first; then pull the stem through the bag. Then fold the open end of the bag twice and staple it at the top two places. With regard to refrigeration, for a novice with 5 to 25 blooms, one could put them in one's own home refrigerator. The best temperature would be 34 to 36 degrees. For an amateur with 35 to 50 blooms, it would be advisable to contact a storekeeper, dairy, or florist who has a walk-in box. Two five-gallon cans would hold 50 blooms. I prefer to store my blooms in water, for the all-out peony nut like me. I am sure you open class boys will find refrigeration of some kind.

With regard to placing the blooms in the proper classes, I do not select the class I want to enter until after I have them unpacked and they are sitting in water bottles for two hours or more. By then it is a lot easier to make a decision.

With regard to getting the blooms to the site of the show, I use army foot lockers. One locker will hold about 50 blooms. If one is not too far from the show or wants to ship by air, one may secure, usually for the asking, a large used wholesale flower box from a florist. They hold about 50 blooms. By packing six or eight sheets of newspaper loosely all around inside the box, one will have fairly good insulation.

Now for varieties, for the novice and amateur, I would say to use whatever one has to start with. Three- and four-year-old plants will grow the largest and finest blooms; however, I have won first prizes with eight- and ten-year-old plants, so one can see that this is not always the case.

By showing and attending a show or shows, one will discover by experience what the best varieties are for exhibition. One may also look back in the last several American Peony Society Bulletins, September issues, and see the former winners.



**If you cut a tree, plant a tree.
It is nature's replaceable energy.**

We have acquired the famous tree peony collection of the late Leo Armatys. We are offering several for sale, all specimen plants of the highest quality. Send for our list.

Ask for our list of Chinese Conquest herbaceous peonies.

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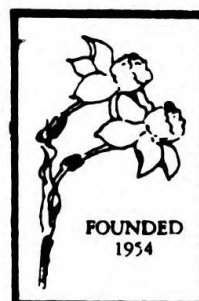
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