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June 1985

No. 254



# The American Peony Society Bulletin

Pennsylvania State

MAY 30 1985

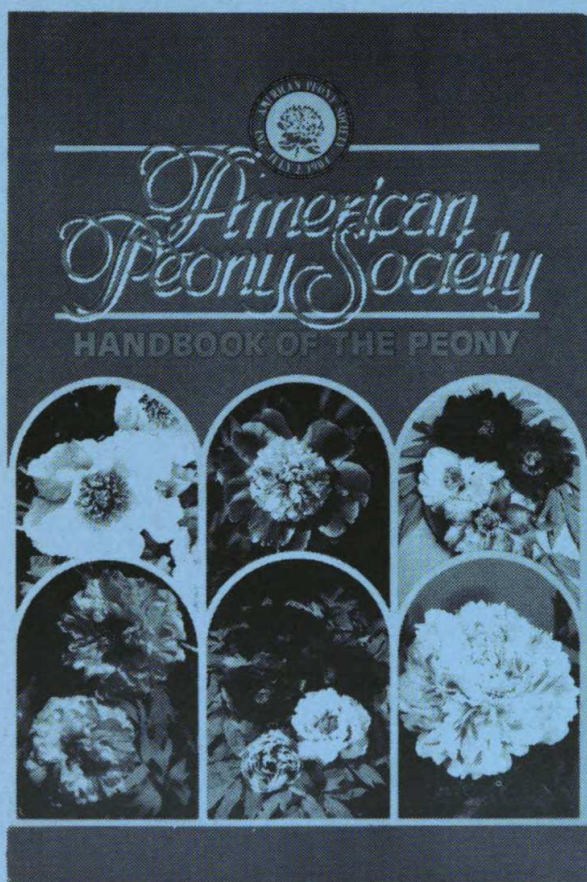
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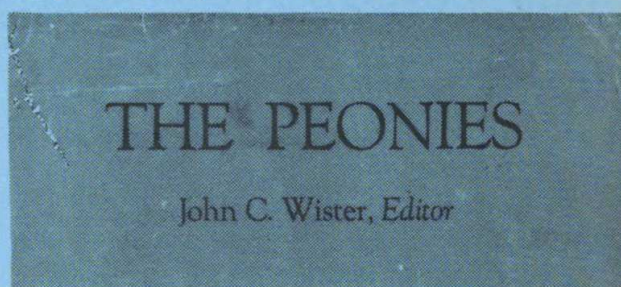
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*and*

*The 80th National Exhibition*

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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
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Contributing .....	\$25.00	Supporting .....	\$100.00
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# AMERICAN Peony Society Bulletin



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June 1985 — No. 254

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# FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

CHRIS LANING

## OF PEONIES AND PEOPLE

These are halcyon days for the American Peony Society! Membership is now higher than ever before; the balance on hand indicates that we are financially in excellent shape; much new material on peony culture and nomenclature is being made available and interest in our beloved peony is on the increase. Can all these blessings be attributed to the leadership of our Secretary-Treasurer? Inspiring as all these conditions may be, we will press onward! But what shall we do?

Just Suppose: I want to buy a peony of the newer variety. Where can I get it? Oh yes, and I want it now!! The routine answer is: go to a peony grower - pick out what you want - wait until fall to pick up your division of it - plant it and wait until spring for the first bloom - the second year will provide more and better blooms - the third year still better blooms - and the fourth year should be great for that root division which is now a bushy plant. It takes fortitude to garden under such conditions.

An answer to this unsatisfactory condition may be the developing of a container growing method affording the buyer instant success. A concerted effort by many people could make this project a success, a happy success.

My thought for this issue: It is in giving that you receive, maybe not in a pecuniary way, but in some way nonetheless. If you are like me, you can always find room for one more friend. Peony People make good friends.

---

Bulletin Cover; Peony "Schafe" - Krekler; Lavender Pink Jap.

Photo: Klehm Nursery



**MOVING NOTICE** - Roy Klehm reports that after 133 years in Arlington Heights, Illinois, the main office of Charles Klehm & Son Nursery has been moved to the farm at Barrington, Illinois. The new address is, Route 5, Box 197, South Barrington, Illinois 60010. The land in Arlington Heights was sold for redevelopment as the area has become intensely urbanized.

## **How Not To Bore Your Audience With Slides**

*Anthony De Blasi*

*West Newfield, Maine 04095*

"In late spring a peony lover's fancy turns to . . . taking pictures."

Following a recent slide-talk I gave at a retreat, a woman came forward with a confession. "I'll be honest," she said. "When I saw in the schedule that there was to be a flower slide show, I was going to skip it. But I'm glad I attended because **this** slide show was different." She meant it wasn't boring.

Those of us with **hundreds**, perhaps **thousands** of pet slides, face the **constant danger of boring our friends with them**. Few if any will **tell you that they watched out of politeness or loyalty, while secretly wishing at times that the projector lamp would blow out**. There is no subject you can name that doesn't bore somebody. Show me a 25-pound trout and I'll smile and walk away; show me a boat and I'll positively yawn.

No. You can't depend on the "subject matter" to carry a show. The problem is more basic. What spells the difference between putting an audience to sleep with a presentation of the Apollo moon landing or enchanting an audience with the making of toothpicks is **showmanship**.

Before you throw your arms up or sign up for a Dale Carnegie course, consider the following measures to keep your slide presentation alive:

1. **CHOOSE YOUR BEST SLIDES.** The best, only the best, and nothing but the best. The ones that do you proud. Those that elicit a deep current of satisfaction. You know which ones they are. Exclude all others.
2. **CUT-CUT-CUT.** A slide show longer than about 40 minutes is too long. If this time frame is inadequate for your intended purpose, then reconvene at a later date or – if that is not convenient – have an intermission. Don't fall into the trap that producers of television miniseries make, that of assuming that longer is better. **Hamlet** shows more and tells more in a few hours than "A.D." did in five evenings. **Psychological** time, not **chronological** time, is the fabric out of which a fine show is cut and tailored. You don't need to be an expert. Keep the program



short. Let every screen image count. Don't pick a slide because it's nice but because the show would suffer without it. Eliminate every slide that duplicates another by being similar. Eliminate every slide that is not directly related to your theme. Be ruthless in trimming your harvest of shots to the approximately 100 to 200 transparencies needed for one show.

3. **HAVE ONE THEME.** And stick to it. By theme I refer not to subject or topic but to the "story" you wish to tell, or idea you wish to convey, or aspect you want to highlight. For example, a series of garden scenes *per se* is not a show. But the fact possibly that they are views of a garden tour pulls them into one framework or theme. Within that framework you may allow your imagination to roam freely, provided that what you include is related to the theme. One or two shots of the locale or some well-known landmark of the town in which the garden is located – the host who met you at the airport – adds to the story. A picture of your host's grandchild – even if he or she is the most adorable baby you ever saw – subtracts from the story. And relatedness must not be stretched to a tour of the shop where the garden benches were made, even if the sculptor is a town celebrity. In arranging your "story," have an eye-catching beginning, the first few slides hinting of things to come; a middle that "takes you along the garden path" without distractions; and a conclusion that wraps everything together like the bow on a gift package.
4. **KEEP THE SEQUENCE LIVELY.** Visual appeal is highly dependent on contrast and variety. Move from broad view to closeups, from light to dark images, from bold, dramatic scenes to calm, reflective pictures. But not back and forth, see-saw fashion. Imagine each view as a differently shaped and colored bead. String them so as to allow their individual personalities to shine, while building a chain of images that smoothly leads the viewer through a nicely paced and varied landscape, with gradual rises and dips, occasional towering peaks, dramatic valleys. Aim for the middle ground between a fidgety, psychedelic flashing of light/color and an unrelieved monotone of similar images.
5. **MUSIC?** In general, no. Music in the background tends to be distracting. And constant music is boring, even in the background. If you insist on hypnotizing your audience or creating a special mood, then weave in the right style and amount of music. This is not as easy as it sounds. Even experts miss the mark at times. "Little House on the Prairie" would have moved up several dramatic notches if it didn't wallow in so much music. It's best to avoid it altogether.
6. **NOTES??** If you have a good memory and the gift of gab you may dispense with notes. Even so, it's good form to jot down names, places, quotes, and other data that should be presented or you might get questions about.

# HOW TO MAKE PEONY CROSSES

*By Don Hollingsworth*

**Note:** The practice and creative considerations in breeding peonies are discussed at length in several selections from articles in past Bulletins as part of the publication **The Best of 75 Years**, which can be obtained from the Editor as shown elsewhere in this Bulletin and in the Peony Manual (New Edition). The following article is offered as an introduction to the subject and is not meant to replace the larger discussion which is most relevant to a reasonably thorough understanding of the subject.

\*\*\*\*\*

Making peony crosses is not difficult and should be approached by newcomers as a relatively simple task. There are some necessary considerations and some considerations which are not especially necessary but will be found to be important helps.

Getting involved in making crosses requires recognition of the sexual anatomy of peony flowers. Most persons who grow peonies for flowers may have already noted the essential factors. However, if you are one of those persons who has always understood the most valuable peony varieties to be those which have absolutely full double flowers and neither pollen nor center carpels, then you will know the sexual parts as negative factors. But when you take on the mission of raising peony children, you then need varieties which have at least pollen or carpels, or both.

Carpels are the non-petal, center structures of the fertile flower and are most readily noticed in Single and Japanese form flowers, also in Semi-doubles. In the latter, these may be of poor form and not able to fully carry out their appointed function, which is to produce mature seeds after fertilization has taken place. Carpels also sometimes occur deeply imbedded in Double flowers, and as in Semi-doubles, these will not always be fertile.

The stigma, at the top of the carpel, is the receptive surface for the pollen. Many otherwise fertile carpels are incapable of fertilization because the stigma is partly transformed to the extent that there is little or no receptive area for the pollen. Thus, even among the Single and Japanese flower forms, not all varieties are equally fertile, and, some carpels produced on the same plant will be better formed than others. So, part of the skill of breeding is to become proficient in noting the anatomy of the carpels and choosing the better prospects for pollination. Another element of skill is in locating the receptive part of the stigma edge. Sometimes it is curled under; sometimes it is facing upward. Look for these differences while pollinating.



Pollen is produced in the anther portion of the stamens, the whitish or yellow sacs, which are connected to the flower by the stamen stem or filament. When a flower has become sufficiently open for the anthers to be exposed to the air, and the air is sufficiently dry, the sacs soon open and shrink with drying. This results in the pollen falling, called shedding of the pollen, when it can be seen as a yellow dust. This dust character of pollen is, of course, disliked in floral art and is one reason pollen-bearing peony varieties suffer a certain degree of unpopularity. However, some peony flowers which have stamens, and are therefore technically singles or Semi-doubles, have little or no pollen. Also, the Japanese flower type, which has staminodes in place of stamens, sometimes has pollen present. It has been suggested that one should divest a breeding collection of all pollen-breeding varieties in order to avoid the contamination of one's crosses, which occurs due to the natural agencies – insects, wind and gravity. However, there is a fallacy here, for many gardens, in that just as soon as the seedlings commence flowering there will likely be a new batch of singles to provide un-wanted pollen. Other strategies must be adopted for control of contaminating pollen.

While contamination from either self or un-related pollen is difficult to completely eliminate from peony crosses, there are some obvious steps to take. First, use flowers which have not quite opened for both your pollen source and for seed parent. When it is cold and bees are not active, you may also have good control of the crosses even with opened flowers. However, when bees are going to the peony flowers they soon learn to speed up flower opening by prying the petals apart! You can do the same thing. You can also visit the flowers for crossing purposes early in the morning, before the bees get going. On cool, humid days you will have more time in which to work, because the bees will get started more slowly, if at all, the self pollen which your seed parent flowers may carry will be slower to break loose and the stigmas may remain free of unwanted pollen for a longer time.

Later in the flowering season, by the time the Chinese peonies are opening, bees may find other plants to work and will be less of a problem. However, temperatures are higher and the humidity accordingly lower. Pollen will be released very quickly upon flower opening at that season and one will need to work with very fresh or forced-open flowers. Purists will say that all flowers to be used should be stripped of their petals and stamens before time to open, covered with a bag and then revisited at a later time to apply pollen. That is certainly an appropriate strategy for controlling un-wanted pollen but is also discouraging to one who wants the flowers primarily for their beauty. Most of us who are engaged at peony breeding on a more or less serious basis do a certain amount of stripping for control of our crosses, but we make a lot of compromises because common sense

tells us that only in the more infertile crosses does the degree of contamination make it worthwhile to destroy the flowers. Even though some of my seedlings prove to be not typical of the intended cross and therefore are thought to be from contamination, I get a great proportion of the seedlings showing they are from the intended cross while I have minimized the loss of flowers. When not stripping the flowers of your seed parent, be sure to get the stigmas heavily coated with your desired pollen before any other pollen reaches them.

The mechanics of making peony crosses work best if you will prepare the pollen in advance. Because the pollen needs to be collected from a newly opened or forced open flower, before it gets contaminated by unknown pollen from other plants, it is necessary to dry the anthers, whereupon the pollen will become dust-like. In this state it is easily transferred to the stigmas, by using a tiny artist brush, tip of the finger or any other convenient technique. Of course, it is necessary to clean your transfer tools between different pollens so that you do not cause contamination by your own efforts. A convenient way is to carry several brushes which have been previously washed and dried. Or, a moist cloth can be carried along to clean your finger tip between pollens, etc.

To dry newly collected anthers, it works well to spread them on a smooth paper (as notebook paper) and lay them near a gentle heat (as water heater) to help with the drying. Matters can be speeded with an electric bulb hung nearby, but avoid excessive heat. One hybrid reports using a commercial dessicant (as, **Flower-Dri**) in a covered plastic container with tight fitting lid, separating the different varieties of anthers in open envelopes, where the dessicant will cause them to dry and release their pollen. These may then be kept for storage in the same container and it becomes a handy package for carrying the prepared pollens to the field.

Others use film cans (35mm) to store pollen after drying it. These may also be held over dessicant in a closed container for storage.

Well-dried pollen, stored over dessicant and carefully sealed against re-humidification, can be stored from one year to the next in a freezer and may retain its fertility.

The other basic point on peony hybridization is to have a means of marking the stems so that when you collect the seeds next autumn you will still know what your cross was. This requires a marking system and a written record. Some breeders make a record on a tag by means which will survive the summer exposure. I use plastic covered, colored wires or twist-ties and record the cross in a separate file or notebook, by planting location and color of the marker to show particular pollen used.

Some of the most interesting crosses are also quite a challenge



due to unreliable degree of fertility and the consequent low rates of speed production and/or low germination rate of the seeds. It is probably a good approach to make some crosses of the commonly grown Chinese peonies at first be sure of gaining some results in the first year. In this way you are more certain of seeing the process of seed and pod development take place over the summer and will have some seeds which you will not worry about losing as your first experiment with seed germination. This is not to discourage using your hybrids for crossing from the very first however. Also, many persons interested in the possibility of obtaining seeds from the hybrids simply leave the pods alone when grooming the garden and check them in early autumn for any seeds which may have formed from natural pollination.

Seeds for germination practice may also be obtained through the Society's seed distribution program, usually announced in the September issue of this Bulletin each year.

Your seeds will ripen as the parent plant matures, anytime from mid- to late summer according to the habit of the individual variety. Watch for this so that you do not lose seeds or get them mixed on the ground. Timing of maturity is also affected by drought which will hasten opening of the pods, and by humid weather which will delay opening. Control fungus to reduce loss of seeding due to stem dieback during the early summer.

Obtain the books **Best of 75 Years** and the **Peony Manual** (New Edition) or read articles in back issues of the Bulletin for tips on seed germination. Peonies have a long and complex cycle of germination which in nature tends to assure that the little plants appear in early spring at the best time of the growing season for their probable survival. This complexity often causes the seeds to lay over a year before growing and the soil needs to be reasonably moist throughout the time. There are alternative approaches which tend to get them up the first spring after seed maturation, which may help to make germination more dependable as well as being a year sooner.

The hybridizing of peonies can be very satisfying pursuit and at this time there is little competition from commercial interests making it attractive for hobby growers.



**THE NEW PEONY MANUAL** answers questions on all major aspects of peony growing, showing and hybridizing. It contains new material which supplements and updates that of previous editions. This is a basic reference for new members and others who are expanding their peony activities, a valuable addition to any garden library.

# CULTURE OF PEONIES IN A DESERT LAND FOR CUT FLOWERS

*By Nicholas J. Friend  
Emerald Road, Route 1, Sunnyside, Washington*

...and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly  
Isaiah 35: 1-2

or as the writer learned in a song in his native Dutch and seems more revised, "the sand sea will look reborn and blossom, She Shall, like a rose. The peony is known as a Pioenrose there, my meaning here is: that particular type of rose.

No doubt there are growers that supplement rain with irrigation, but I think there are very few, where all moisture need be artificially supplied. Rainfall here is 7 inches and most of that is snow.

The Yakima Valley is famous for its apples, and hops as well as other fruits. It is also recognized for mint oil, and its fields of asparagus.

Due to no moisture in the air and few clouds, the sunlight is intense and already in the spring, our light units or growing degrees are longer, which benefits the growing of peonies. I am able to harvest 7 to 10 days before Memorial Day, which is a must since it takes that long to ship to the wholesaler and retailer. No late bloomers are grown here.

Some years, BARONESS SCHRODER and FELIX SUPREME are only half harvested. Recently a Broker was found who will buy them before and after Memorial Day. Only one year in 20 were they a total loss to late bloom. I should have had 20,000 bundles but only had 50, before Memorial Day.

Another year Mount St. Helens erupted May 18th, halfway through cutting season. Being only 80 miles down wind from it, one inch of dust got on the flowers. They were worthless, as well as 22,000 that were in cardboard boxes and all sold. The semi-trucks would not deliver for fear of engines sucking up ash along the roads. Even though some of the higher than average returns per acre crops are grown on this farm, like cherries, gladiolas, asparagus, peppermint oil, the peonies are the best crop dollarwise.

Just the old standby varieties, which are somewhat early and can stand coldroom storage, and only the doubles are considered for cultivation. In pinks- EDULIS SUPERBA, is perhaps the favorite as far as stems per plant sold, as well as its dark pink color. MONS JULES ELIE does not have as many stems but seems a better buy due to its large buds, stems and leaves. Most of the ladies reach for EDULIS SUPERBA, regardless. Beside five other pinks, the two



mentioned are the main line.

In whites, FESTIVA MAXIMA is tops here as well as BARONESS SHRODER. In reds, KANSAS is excellent. Due to less stems per plant, the returns are not as good as other varieties but the pride of selling such large buds and stems are exhilarating. SHAWNEE CHIEF and FELIX SUPREME do good. I grow ten other reds. The stems on FELIX CROUSSE are too short.

Contrary to recommendations, every flower is cut from the plant, with no degenerative effect on the plants in 20 years. A commercial grower from San Francisco area, saw flowers grown here in the wholesale houses in Portland, Oregon and was amazed at the size of the bundles. He wanted to see where they were grown and stated our bushes after cutting here were larger than his before cutting. He was talking about our desert grown peonies.

The soil is somewhat alkaline here classified as sagemore loam. Phosphate is used quite heavily, along with some nitrogen and potash, rarely any trace elements. Weeds are not tolerated, not even one inch. None goes to seed. Out big problem are wind blown seeds and tumbleweeds from the neighbors.

Peonies are planted three and one half feet square but fields are grown shut to the point where moving feet of the cutters is a problem, when harvesting.

Some spring, botrytis is a problem when plants are 4 to 8 inches high, but does not seem too serious. The rows are hilled up permanently. About Sept. 10th, the plants are still green. Then all stems are whipped off with the flailbeater then over once more to get the stubbs.

They had 100 days of growing under cloudless sky and cool nights. Enough to be amply replenished for next year. Summer temperature goes to 105°F, no humidity. Winters sometimes 25 below zero.

Sprinkling from riverwater is done every 10 to 14 days from permanent underground pipelines, no electricity or pump. Sprinklers run on gravity pressure. Not much water applied after August.

As in all farming, chemical weed control must be attempted or farmers will be forced to quit. This farm was weeded by hand until this past year. One trial row was sprayed for three years with good weed control and no adverse effects. All will have to go this route.

When side budding, the small buds that will not make a good sized flower are removed, so as not to confuse the cutters later.

No sorting is done here, bunches are tied in the field, then put in water for about one hour, then in the cardboard boxes and into cold storage. This is controlled atmosphere storage used for apples, which will be empty for that harvest.

Over the past 20 years, a clientele was built up who took all the

flowers. The shipping and delivery is a job all by itself but now a flower broker will take all that can be produced, pick them up in the cardboard boxes with large U Hall trucks, so all the other customers had to be dropped.

About 10,000 Allium Giganteum are grown here and they work in good with peonies. We put three bulbs in between peonies that are just planted and leave them for four or five years. They bloom one week after peonies and are sold to the same broker. Plants die off in ten days, they come up very early in the spring and the bulb split in half yearly. This is a very expensive bulb and some of them are sold. They pay off while waiting on the peony bush. If the flowers are not harvested, they seed and the field will look like a lawn the next spring.

Most of the peonies grown here, wind up in the south: Houston, Southern California, Hawaii, a few shipments went to Brooklyn, Chicago and Kentucky.

About ten rows of peonies are added every year, to where about four acres are grown. This is considered the largest Peony farm for cut flowers in Washington state.

It is said never to purchase roots from flower grown fields. This may be true for other regions with the shorter growing season. Roots are fully replenished here and no difference can be seen in old bush plant stock and those sold by the specialist after the root has been planted and the growth noted.

It would be interesting to see the natural habitat of the poeny in its native country which is a far cry from this desert grown peony.

And so the sun and good soil here, with water added and care, "the desert not only SHALL, but WILL bloom like a Pioenrose".



## **FIFTH DISTRICT PEONY EXHIBITION**

Milwaukee, Wisconsin will be the site for the 1985 Peony Exhibition of the 5th District of the American Peony Society. An invitation has been extended by the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory to hold the exhibition at the Domes on June 14, 15, 16.

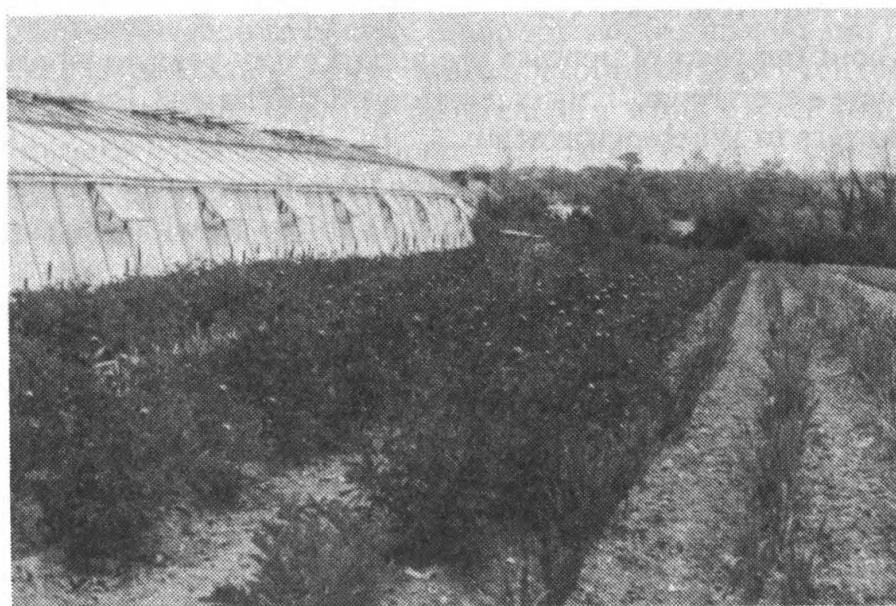
All area gardeners are urged to attend and show their flowers.

5th District President, Carroll Spangler.

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**WHEN YOU HAVE A QUESTION ON PEONIES** turn to the **NEW PEONY MANUAL**, a compact but packed-with-information ready reference for newcomers and veteran growers. A valuable addition to any garden reference collection.





# COMMERCIAL GROWING OF PEONIES FOR CUT FLOWERS, IN THE BRITISH ISLES

*Theodore Person, LaHouquette St. Lawrence,  
Jersey Channel Isle, Great Britain*

## *Picture #1*

I had a beautiful crop of peonies in 1984, perfect growing weather, although not quite as many blooms as previous years. This field is one half acre of variety SARAH BERNHARDT on a gradicut 1.2, 1.3. It is worked by hand or with a cable winch fitted on a tractor. While it faces south, the peonies do not bloom earlier than the flat fields as they come two or three weeks before them. Freesias are grown in the paths but in June the peonies are much taller. Freesias are harvested in April and May.

## *Picture #2*

Sarah Bernhardt with Eremurus planted in the paths can be seen against the white of the glasshouse. On the right are gladiolus. The young peony plants were planted three years ago. The Eremurus are mostly yellow, six to eight feet tall in the glasshouse. Freesias are grown for winter production, gladiolus have been retarded for September and October cutting.

## *Picture #3*

Some mixed varieties of peonies planted on double ridge and Watsonia on the third ridge, used as a path during harvest. Felix Supreme with buds just through the leaves, showing the Watsonia in full pick. They are white, a few can be seen, they look like giant freesias. This is a new flower in this part of the world.



**BECAUSE OF NAME DUPLICATION, PEONY MARTHA WASHINGTON BULLETIN #253, has been changed to MARTHA W.**

**Registered by Carroll F. Spangler, Jan. 8, 1985.**

# PLANTING PEONIES IN ALABAMA

*J. Lewis Underwood, Birmingham, Alabama*

*Bulletin # 136*

In this climate we cannot plant the eyes of the peony two inches deep as in the north. I would suggest that in planting that the hole be firmed well and the top eye or bud of the peony be planted even with the surface level of the ground. The root can then be covered with about an inch of soil. Use bone meal and wood ashes for fertilizing if you can get the wood ashes. Do not use manure unless you want to use sterilized sheep manure which is available in the stores. If you use this do not let it contact the peony root. Prepare the ground twenty to twenty-four inches deep and allow each root a space at least three by three feet, three by four would be better. One of the most essential points is good drainage, and I mean both top soil and subsoil.

The climate in Montgomery is somewhat warmer than ours, but I do not think that heat and sun interfere with the peony, certainly they would not thrive in the Middle West as they do if this were so, as their summers are usually considerably hotter than ours. My theory is that we are handicapped by not having enough continuous cold weather in the winter — the peony's rest period — so we plant the root high so it will get as much cold as possible. They should not be mulched in this climate.

The peony is a cold climate flower and we have to recognize that fact and make compromises if we hope to have any success.

There is the matter of what peonies to plant. This is quite important for many of them will not do well in the south and it is wise to try to pick the ones that have been tried and found more or less satisfactory. I say more or less, for there are some good ones that are not too reliable.

I would suggest that you start with the lower priced varieties — many of which are as good as the best and usually more dependable. You should avoid all late blooming varieties and avoid reds in the doubles and semi-doubles. The singles and Japs in all colors do well here as do many of the semi-double and loose double whites to fairly dark pinks. Some do better than others so I am listing a few below that have done well for me.

Singles: Krinkled White, Helen, Sea Shell.

Japs: Isani-Gidui, Ama-no-sode, Tokio, Nevada, Roberta, Plainsman.

Semi-doubles & doubles: Minnie Shaylor, Festiva, Maxima, Kelway's Glorious, Reine Hortense.

A few picked from the above list and well-planted should determine for you whether or not you can grow them successfully in the Montgomery climate. My guess would be that it will take two or three years for the peony to become well established.



# PEONIES IN CALIFORNIA

*A.R. MacDonald  
San Ramon, California*

The weather in my part of California has been very peculiar this winter. It was cool for over three months and the chills are back with us. It is just right for the peonies as the nights are in the 20° range and daytime 55 degrees. In prior years I have always had blooms in February, this is March and I have one herbaceous seedling in bloom. It will be two or three weeks before the tree peonies bloom. The tree peonies are now at a size where I am getting so anxious to see them bloom.

The largest SOURVENIR DE MAXIME CORNU has the most blooms. CHROMATELLA and ARGOSY are very rampant growers, quite unlike my other tree peonies. ARGOSY is a small flower, the blooms on it are hidden, although plenty of flowers. All the tree peonies do extremely well. I am now very careful about sealing the ends when any cutting or pruning is done to the tree peonies. It was an article in the Bulletin that put me wise.

Last fall I purchased ten plants of LORD CAVIN. When I was at the World Fair. Century of Progress, Chicago in 1933 and 1934, my Mother pointed it out in a floral display that was there. It was she that interested me in peonies. Some of the excellent growers of herbaceous peonies for me are: FEATHER TOP, ROYAL CHARTER, MOTHERS CHOICE, LUSTROUS, DEER CREEK, RED CHARM, WHITE CAP, PAINTED DESERT. Good growers, NEVADA, QUEEN OF HAMBURG, SINBAD, FAIRBANKS, RASHOONON. MARY E. NICHOLLS.

Last fall I built a cold frame, filled it with milled sphagnum and gathered all the seeds I could, which was about one half of a two pound coffee can. I was so busy that I forgot and let them set in the barn until December. They were so very dry but I planted all of them. To date about sixty are up. I have carefully taken them out and planted them in my baby bed. They are doing fine. I did think I would have so many but I guess it takes time and planting them before they are so dry.

This is an open invitation to visit us, see peonies as they grow in California, also my new barn, just built, which is for my garden equipment. Stop in and take a break, as we live only a few minutes from Hy. 680 and five minutes from Hy. 580 at San Ramon, 7470 Northland Ave. Telephone 415-828-3129.

## COLOR SLIDE COLLECTION

The American Peony Society maintains several groups of excellent sets of peony slides for the rental. Each set contains 80 slides. A complete set can be requested of all tree peonies, herbaceous hybrids, or lactifloras or a combination of these three types.

Return slides promptly. Return postage, including insurance, must be paid by the renter. Insurance \$50.00. Rental fee, \$7.50.

Send request and check to Greta M. Kessenich, Secretary, 250 Interlachen Road, Hopkins, Minnesota 55343.

# PEONIES IN SWEDEN

*Jan Rydberg, Box 112 82800 Edsbyn, Sweden*

Last summer was cold and we had so much bad weather, but one peony did show a really beautiful flower. It was MOONSTONE. In 1983 it flowered for the first time but the flower was very small and a white-grey. In 1984 it was something else. A big flower full double and a beautiful pink changing against white in the center. The American peonies are very unusual here in Sweden, we most generally have the very old type produced in Europe. MOONSTONE is the most beautiful I have ever seen here. I have many seedlings produced from seed from the Society but none have flowered.

One question, do you know if the Itoh hybrids are more tender than the lactiflora? I am living in a cold part of Sweden. Last winter I lost two species PEREGRINA and LOBATA. When I tell you that *P. tenuifolia* flowers in the beginning of July and PINK PARFAIT in the end of August, then you will understand the climate here.

## HOW I GOT HOOKED ON PEONIES

*Robert U. Redpath, C.L.U.*

*423 N. Ridgewood Road, So. Orange, New Jersey*

My scanty research, extending over half a century, indicates affection for peonies is best done with the help of others. More often than not, one other person, a thoughtful, caring person of either sex, may show and/or let you smell the fragrance of his garden when the plants are in bloom, and offer to send you a root or two "for planting next fall". (And, after a gentle hint or two, carry out his promise.)

To paraphrase the late Will Rogers' observation about never having met a man he didn't like, I've never met a person, man, woman or child, who loved the sight and/or smell of peonies whom I didn't like. And over nearly six decades of sharing my love for the plants, I've come to know hundreds of people who have become friends thru our love. It is a blessed disease, this "peony-itis" (as a doctor friend calls it) isn't it?

But you started to tell us how you got hooked, Grampa. So I did.

In July of 1928, after graduating from college, I was invited to visit my beloved great-aunt in her beautiful home in Los Angeles. Even more considerately she offered to pay my railroad fare to and from L.A., going by whatever road I chose. "But I strongly suggest, Robert," she wrote, "that you stop over for at least several nights in Kalamazoo, and visit your Upjohn uncles and aunts." I had known them from previous visits, both in Kalamazoo and Petoskey where my father took us for summer vacations with his father and mother. The latter

was one of 12 Upjohn brothers and sisters. I had also seen many of them when they came east, too infrequently to suit us.

So the itinerary was worked out and I reached "Brook Lodge" the beautiful farm-home that had been restored by my great-uncle, Dr. William E. Upjohn, at Gull Lake, Michigan, near his birthplace in Richland which in turn was even closer to Kalamazoo. It must have been at about the end of the first week of July when another uncle, Dr. Jim Upjohn, took me up his brother's driveway and delivered me (somewhat less gingerly than a hot potato). I went into the living-room where cool breezes wafted the window curtains in ways that Andrew Wyeth has painted with such realistic effects. We sat sipping our iced tea. I became conscious' that the breezes were transporting the aroma of peonies. I said to uncle Will, "Back in New Jersey our peonies (all herbaceous) were finished three weeks ago. How do you get yours to bloom so late?"

I could see that he was pleased by the opening my question gave him. "Robert" he said, "I love the sight and the fragrance of peonies. Outside that window are about four acres filled with them. Here in southern Michigan they bloom at about the same time as yours do in New Jersey. From mid-May thru the early part of June. I spend most of the fall and winter in Palm Desert, California, where the climate is too hot for them. So I come back to Kalamazoo for their bloomings. Now that I am in semi-retirement from active management of the Upjohn Company I can indulge my love for these flowers. So, about a year ago I had a meeting room built right out in that space between this house and the peonies. You can see it from this window." He took me over to a bright window in which a vase of fragrant peonies was standing.

"Underneath that meeting room, where my executives come to meet with me, instead of making it necessary for me to go into the main office in the hot days of summer, I have had a "climate" built. There we put thousands of peonies, picked just before they are ready to bloom. We keep that subterranean room at a temperature of about 36-7 degrees. Every day throughout the summer we bring up-stairs and into the house about a hundred buds and put them in vases around the rooms. What you smell now are blooms that were picked as buds in late May or early June. 'Brook Lodge' our home, is filled with this aroma all summer long, until we return to California. Do you like it?"

I assented, vigorously nodding my head, later in the afternoon he showed me some of the plants, now past their blooming phase. It was wonderful to see the man of science and success in business so charmed by these flowers. I thought, "When I get a home of my own I'll raise peonies, too." In 1928 I had never heard of tree peonies. I can find no living person who remembers whether Dr. W.E. Upjohn included tree peonies among his garden's plants. I cannot find out whether the office to which the Company moved its manufacturing

operation in nearby Portage has plantings around its handsomely functional buildings. Lacking such information I must assume that, probably, all of the plants in his garden in Gull Lake, Michigan, were what I have come to identify as herbaceous, not tree peonies. These latter ones have become my favorites, in spite of the fact that they aren't as fragrant as herbaceous ones. My friend, Louis Smirnow, is the only breeder whom I know who attempts, in his colorful catalogue, to indicate which of the tree peonies have any fragrance. I know of no relative ratings of fragrance in either herbaceous or tree peonies. I would appreciate getting further light on this subject, even though I haven't yet built me a "climate" such as Uncle Will's under the home where I have lived with my family for nearly 50 years.

I have tried to repay my Uncle for the infection-affection that he conveyed to me by trying to do the same for others. On our half-acre I have about 25 tree peonies and about 30 herbaceous ones. We enjoy inviting groups to join us in our blooming garden in mid-May, when the tree peonies are at their peak and the herbaceous ones coming in to full bloom. My devoted wife has high skill and taste in flower arranging. She was never won anything less than blue ribbons in her garden club's annual shows with our blooms. We have "converted" many friends to starting their own plants, often helping by giving them roots, acquired from Louis Smirnow, Orlando Houts, of State College, Pa. and others whose ads run in this estimable JOURNAL. I like to keep track of the plants I give away, noting their numbers of blooms and state of health. (So far, I haven't tried to talk to or with them!) In 1984 one of my "plant-children" had 48 blooms!

Some of my efforts to repay my catalytic great-uncle have been directed towards starting peonies in the gardens of the institutions to which I have been and/or am related. I have started gardens at Susquehanna University, of which I have been a trustee for nearly a quarter of a century. . . This beautiful campus, in central Pennsylvania, seems to be a place where some of the tree peonies may attain their full growth in the next 250 years, as I have seen them grow to be in the central part of China which we visited in 1979. These gardens are in honor of the late wife, of my friend Dr. Gustav Weber, president for two fruitful decades. I have also intended to honor the contributions of the many woman who have taught and otherwise worked for the University. Recently I have given some tree peonies to the superb gardens of the President's House, of my own university, Yale, in New Haven, Conn. We shall also give plants to the gardens of the church which I attended in my choir-boy days.

The vitality of tree peonies has impressed us when we have found plants in other countries. I discovered an 8-foot high plant in the studied randomness of Sissinghurst Gardens, in Kent, England. Very little sun shone on it. The head gardener didn't even know it was there. In the Imperial Gardens in Peking we saw strong plants that must have been 150 years old. In Japan we had less luck in being able to see any of their oldest plants. The Emperor's gardens are still quite



secret. Has anyone produced a catalogue showing the oldest known plants?

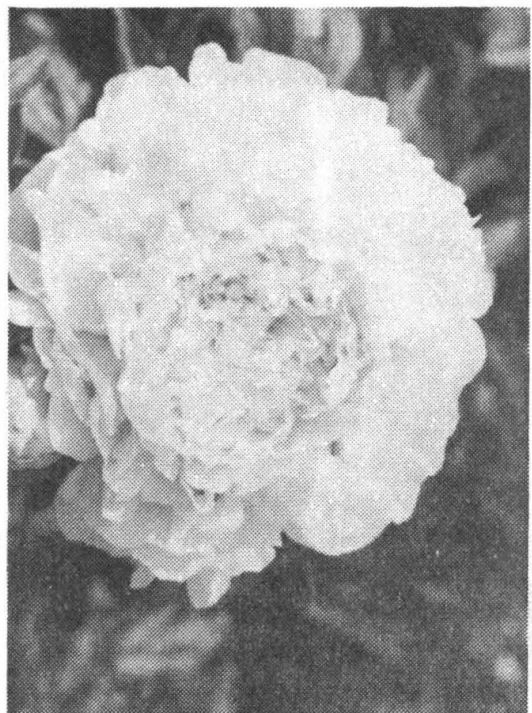
In any case I am grateful for the changes that 78 years of life have afforded for the enjoyment of the beautiful plants that have enabled me to join in friendship with so many vigorous, interested people. I hope to go on into the years when some of my plants may attain 75 years of age and I reach out for my own century mark.



**Garden Treasure #205 - Itoh hybrid**  
**Don Hollingsworth - Photo Edward Lee Michau**



**Raspberry Ice**  
**Klehms**



**Myra MacRae**  
**R.W. Tischler**

Myron D. Biggers Peonies.



**Comanche**



**Myron D. Bigger  
and P. Kansas.**



**Pink Derby**



**Gibraltar**



**Shawnee Chief.  
One of the best cemetery  
peonies.**



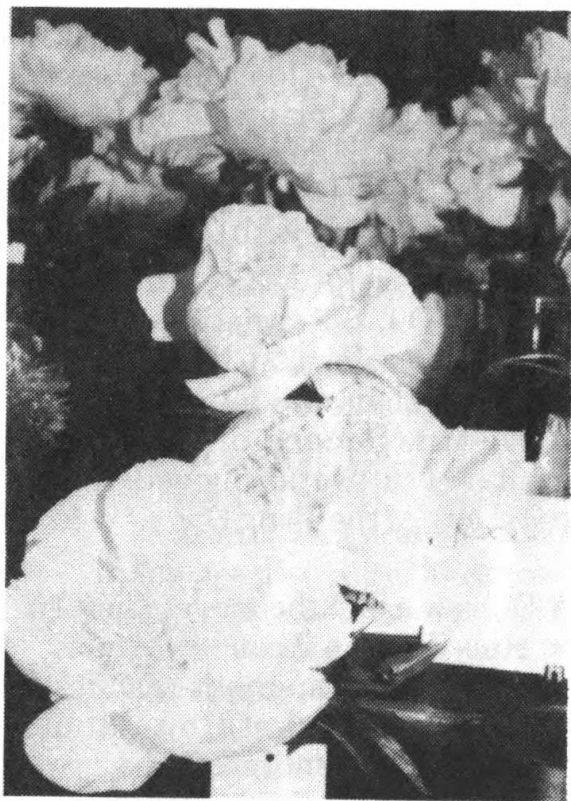
**Sparkling Star.**



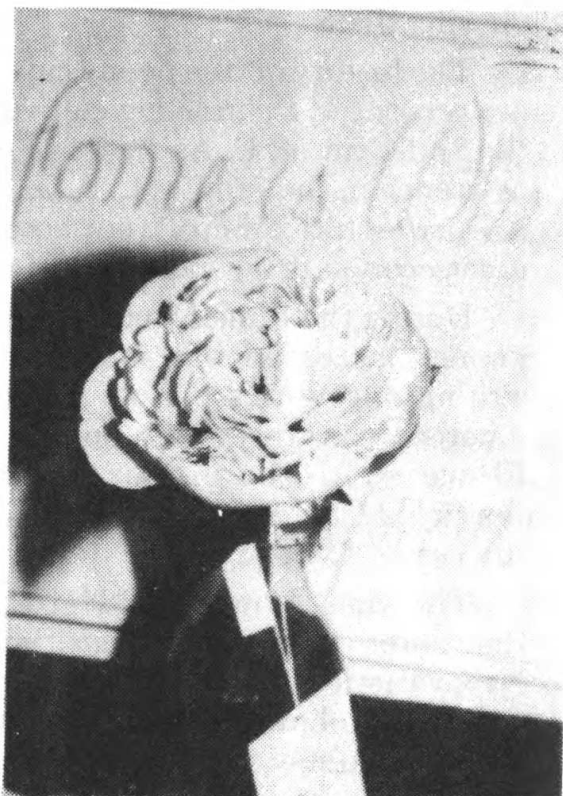
**Tree peony Howdai 9 inches  
across. Doll, 32 inches tall  
French, circa 1875.  
Photo - Helen Darnow  
Ardsley, New York**



**Grand Champion Mansfield  
Ohio. 'New England Heritage'  
Betty McKinney, Shelby, Ohio.**



**Isani Gidui  
Bill Uhde, Connecticut**



**Etched Salmon  
Roger Anderson, Wisconsin**

**Three photos - Edward Lee Michau**



# TREE PEONIES IN CHINA

by Zhou Jia-Qi

translated by Ron Ringdahl, Seattle, Washington

The Tree Peony (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) is a traditional flower of China, well-known from the ancient past as the "King of Flowers". The flowers are large and delicate, rich in variation of form and color. Native to the northwestern part of China, they are found widespread in the provinces of Kansu, Shensi, Honan and Anwei. Going to a height of two meters or more, the branches are thick and the leaves large and long-stalked. Generally one plant will bear from ten to one hundred flowers and in exceptional cases perhaps as many as one thousand.

From ancient times, the tree has been the symbol of nobility and prosperity and has come to be inseparably linked to the life of the people. The tree peony, or moutan, is highly valued aesthetically and has been popular as a theme of poetry, handicrafts, paintings and ornamental designs. Though well-known throughout the world, it is a flowering plant native to China and as such can be seen everywhere in China, planted in gardens, grown in rockeries or in lattice-work borders. In public parks are found tree peony gardens; and every year when the tree peonies bloom by the hundreds, competing for the greatest beauty, it has long been the custom to spend a day in spring viewing them.

The history of tree peony cultivation in China is a long one. There are records of them being cultivated as medicinal plants as early as the 2nd Cent., B.C. As an ornamental plant, we find records of their existence in the 7th Cent., A.D. During the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.), the cultivation of tree peonies prospered along with the general great economic development of the time.

During the Sung Dynasty (960-1,279 A.D.), the varieties of tree peonies increased, becoming richer and more colorful. Chang Hsun, writing during this period, described more than one hundred and nineteen varieties in his **Lo-Yang Hwa-Ru (Record of Lo-Yang Flowers)**. Also during this time the center of cultivation moved from the city of Chang-An, the glorious capital city of the Tang Dynasty, to the city of Lo-Yang.

The Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 A.D.) saw again the movement of the center of cultivation, this time to Hou-Zhou in Anwei Province. New varieties continually made their appearance; methods of cultivation also showed new development. In his **Record of Hou-Zhou Tree Peonies**, Bi Feng-Xiang described two hundred and sixty seven varieties of tree peonies and also went on to describe his experiences in tree peony cultivation in the book **Eight Writings of Tree Peonies**.



After the beginning of the Ching Dynasty, the center of cultivation again moved on to the city of Cao-Zhou, or He-Ze, as it is called today, in the province of Shandong. The following excerpt from the **Record of Cao-Zhou Tree Peonies** gives an indication of how the mou-tan flourished at this time: "The plantsmen of Cao-Zhou cultivate the mou-tan as if it were wheat. The land thus planted can be counted in the hundreds of acres; the flowers literally overflowing cover even the paths between the fields."

In modern-day China, with the support and encouragement of the government, hundreds upon hundreds of acres have been brought under cultivation in He-Ze, with large parcels of land devoted solely to the cultivation of new varieties. Seedlings are grown in great quantities every year for the purpose of bringing greenery and beauty to the parks and gardens of the country. With the coming of the warm rains of spring, the tree peony blooms fill the wide expanse of the fields, creating a world of dazzling color and attracting viewers from far and wide.

In recent years, efforts have been made to re-vitalize the formerly flourishing cultivation of tree peonies in the cities of Chang-An and Lo-Yang. And in Beijing (Peking), tree peonies thrive in Jangshan Park and Zhongshan Park, many of the plants being forty or fifty years of age, growing well under the scrupulous care of the grounds-keepers.

In China, tree peony varieties are quite numerous. In color we find yellows, whites, pinks, reds, purples, violets, greens, etc.; in form there are singles, semi-doubles, doubles, early to late bloomers, not to mention winter-blooming varieties. There are also differences in vigor, height, form and color of foliage and even in the root system. Speaking of the root system, the root of the tree peony is a large, fleshy tuber, and it is the surface tissue of the root which is used for medicinal purposes. After removing and processing, it is called "tan-pi" and is used as an ingredient in sedatives and is considered effective in treating various maladies.

In regard to cultivation, the tree peony is partial to a rich, deep soil, which is either somewhat sandy in nature or which otherwise can provide excellent drainage; it also prefers a location of sunny exposure. There are generally three common methods of propagation: growing from seed, division, and grafting. The sowing of seed should be initiated as soon as the seed is ripe. Division should be carried out in the autumn. Putting it off until spring can result in unsatisfactory growth. Grafting is also done in the autumn. Though tree peony rootstock can be used, usually that of the herbaceous peony is used.

As a source of tree peonies, China is by far the richest. In addition to the varieties cultivated for hundreds of years, there are also a small number of species and natural varieties. For example, in Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces, we find the yellow mou-tan (*Paeonia lutea*), which when used in breeding brings out a golden yellow color. In addition,

there is the purple mou-tan (*Paeonia delavayi*), found in Yunnan Province. The purple-mottled mou-tan (*Paeonia suffruticosa* var. *papaveracea*) is found on Tai-bai Mt. in Shensi Prov., in the southern part of Kansu Prov., and in the northern part of Sichuan Prov. The dwarf mou-tan (*Paeonia Suffruticosa* var. *spontanea*) is found in the region of Yan-An in Shensi Prov. These and others are all of the greatest value, fulfilling an important role in producing improvements in disease resistance and of course other valuable improvements in garden varieties.

#### Some Tree Peony Varieties of Modern-Day China:

1. “Yao-Huang” (lit. Yao Yellow) A variety originating in Lo-Yang, it derives its name from the fact that it was grown at the Yao family estate in the foothills of Mang-Shan Mt. of Lo-Yang. The flower is a large double, the central part of which protrudes conspicuously. Its color upon blooming is a light yellow, changing to a milky color when fully open. It is fragrant and its petals glow with a luster as if glazed with a coating of wax. The large outer petals are arranged in two or three layers; the narrow inner petals overlap one another in layers too numerous to count. The yellow stamens are scattered among the milky-colored petals. When fully open, the flowers will obtain a size of up to eight inches in diameter, protruding outward as much as six to seven inches. Most of the stamens appear transformed into petals; the pistils generally are atrophied, few being normal, some even taking on a petaloid shape. The flowers grow apically on the branches.

From ancient times, “Yao Huang” itself has been called King of Flowers, considered a rarity even among tree peonies. According to historical accounts, when it was in bloom, the people would vacate the city and go out to view the flowers.

2. “Wei-Zi” (lit. Wei Purple) A variety originating in Lo-Yang. According to the **Record of Lo-Yang Tree Peonies**, this name derives from that fact that it grew in the garden of the Wei family, during the Sung Dynasty. Further this document records that “the flower grows as large as a plate; in the center narrow petals overlap and protrude. When in bloom, it attains a size of nine inches.” The “Wei-Zi” of today, however, does not become quite the size of “Wei-Zi” of old and perhaps was grown from seed derived from the original.

This variety is a double with a protruding center of narrow petals. When the flower opens, it is of a violet or reddish color, thinning out when fully open, then to a pinkish or thinner violet color (dark at the base of the petals, lighter toward their extremities). The stamens are wholly or partially transformed into petals; and five or six pistils will usually be found. In the typical

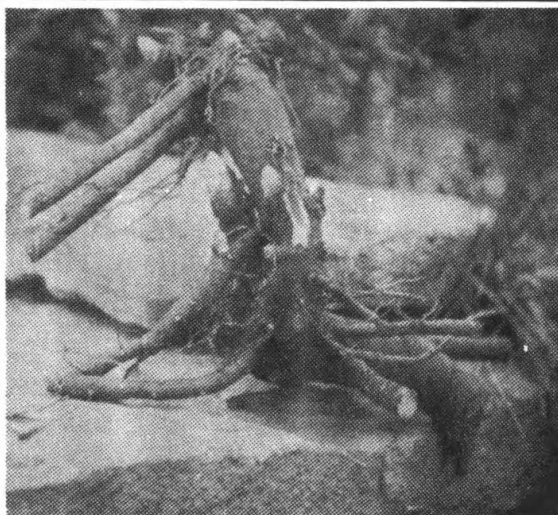
flower, the outer petals are large (in three or four layers), and the central petals are somewhat smaller protruding. The petals are lustrous and beautiful. The flowers themselves are large, reaching a diameter of seven to eight inches, protruding perhaps six inches or so. Flowers grow apically on the branches.

This variety does not produce a large number of blooms; even in a good year the number of flowers are few. There are in addition conspicuously good and bad years. Even so, this is counted among the highly treasured varieties of tree peonies.

The leaves are dark green and are quite wide, with a reddish bloom.

3. "Er-Chiao" (lit. Two Chiaos) A variety originating in Lo-Yang. According to accounts this variety has been in existence for in excess of nine hundred years. The flower is a double, the central portion of which is either flat or somewhat protruding. The outer petals are large, becoming smaller toward the center, where yellow stamens are exposed. This is a very unusual variety in that it produces two entirely different kinds of flowers of different color on the same plant and even on the same branch. One is a rich reddish-violet color and the other is a pink or light pink; at times even one flower will appear half one color and half the other. Generally, the pink flowers predominate with only a few of the reddish-violet ones. The ratio of the two, however, will differ from year to year.

This variety is of exceptional vigor, is very floriferous and easily propagated.



Peony root that was planted too deep. I have planted many of them too deep but they will take care of themselves in time. They will bloom but it will take longer. When they get a set of eyes established at the depth they like then they will bloom as if nothing was wrong in the beginning.

Myron D. Bigger

# CALL FROM KOSHKONONG

*(Place Where We Live)*

*C.F. Spangler, Ft. Atkinson, Wisconsin*

March is the time to get started in the yard and garden in preparation for the growing season. Yesterday as I was clearing the dead tops from my asparagus row a neighbor stopped by to chat. Seeing I had my grapes pruned and tied to the wires, he related the following story from a grape growing region in France. It happened many years ago.

Part of a farmer's vineyard bordered a public road in a remote location, so some individuals would proceed to help themselves to the ripening crop. In a move of desperation to protect the harvest from the hands of unscrupulous passers-by, the farmer put together a concoction and sprayed his grapes heavily with the mixture. He put up a sign stating that the fruit had been covered by a poison.

Of course there was no more theft. More than that, the man found that his spray seemed to give a control on such things as black rot, leaf hopper and powdery mildew. Fortunately he remembered what he had used in the spray mixture (water, lime, copper sulphate, etc.) and thus we have Bordeaux Mix., discovered by accident, but still a useful material in the spray program of some gardeners.

The farmer involved had a very small planting of grapes as judged by commercial standards, but his contribution to grape growing and horticulture in general has proven to be great over the intervening years.

Our Peony Society is not large either, as organizational standards go, but every member is important. By far the great majority of us are amateurs and have rather small plantings of peonies. But whether your garden has 100 plants or more, or only a dozen varieties, you too can make some contribution to the activity of the Society.

We wait anxiously for each quarter's bulletin to arrive in our mailbox so we can see what's going on in the peony world, what new thing is to be offered, or to discover some bit of information that might be of help to us in the garden. Would you write an article for the Bulletin? Would you share with others your thoughts, ideas, experiences? That's what it takes to make the Bulletin each quarter. No, it's not for pay, for no one in any position in the A.P.S. receives any fee, expense account or salary. It's all done for the love of the flower and the people.

If you've never been to a peony show, you should by all means try to attend one. That's where you'll see the things you've read about, things you've never seen before, and believe me, it's really exciting to see the new hybrid introductions, and especially the Itohs that are now coming before the public in greater variety and numbers as have never before seen in the horticultural world.

But it takes exhibitors and flowers to put on a peony show. Why



not try to take a few blooms, whether it be 100 or only a dozen, to the next show in your area. There is a class for you whether you be veteran or beginner. The **Handbook of the Peony** gives directions for growing, preparing, and showing exhibition blooms. Or, you can write to or call on some of the people who do show and they will be glad to give you help. You will also want to attend the banquet and annual meeting held in conjunction with the national show.

A show, like any other peony activity, is the result of the efforts of people. Would you be willing to serve on a committee to help plan a show, either on a district or the national level, to help set up and conduct a show? Your help is needed.

There are other areas of peony endeavor that can use the talents of you, the average member. Whether you show, serve on a committee, hold an office, write an article for the bulletin, or daub pollen at bloom time along with the rest of the hybridizers, your membership can be valuable for more than just a place on the alphabetized membership list. Let the secretary or someone know that you will contribute.



**Michel Riviere with some of his tree peonies.  
Riviere Nursery, Montuel France.**



**Tree peony - MME Andre Devillers, hybridized  
by Michel's father Antoine Riviere.**

# EXPLANATION OF FOUR SHOW SCHEDULES:

**1985, CONDENSED VERSIONS OF DIVISIONS I, IV, VI,  
AND PART OF V.**

**1986, PROPOSED REVISION**

**1986, SECOND PROPOSED REVISION,  
THIRD REVISION**

*By Bill Seidl, Manitowac, Wisconsin*

**1985 CONDENSED VERSION.** This is a one-page summary of the show schedule printed in the March bulletin. It should be easier to find the correct class number for three-bloom and one-bloom exhibits of the same variety since the numbers are side by side. Class 197a was added for any tree species (*P. lutea*) that might be entered. A few word changes were made: "Japanese (moutan)" was replaced by "**suffruticosa**"; reference to any "type" of bloom was changed to any "form" (i.e. flower form); "violet" was changed to "purple, lavender" for classes 173, 188; "European tree peony" was changed to "European, any color" and placed in the **suffruticosa** group.

**1986 PROPOSED REVISION.** The most obvious change is the class numbering in Division I. Each three-bloom exhibit is assigned as even number and the one-bloom exhibit of the same variety is assigned the next higher (odd) number. Thus, after you prepare your exhibits of, say, PAULA FAY and ascertain that the three-bloom exhibit is in class 164, the single-bloom exhibit is automatically in class 165 without your having to refer to the show schedule a second time. (Compare this with 158 and 169 in the present schedule.) The only time it doesn't work is for classes 126 and 146 if two or three colors of a particular flower-form are combined into one class for the three-bloom exhibits but not for the one-bloom exhibits.

The "European" tree class was eliminated. Japanese, European and, yes, American **suffruticosas** can go head-to-head in the same classes. The parallel in the *lutea* hybrid group is that the European *lutea* hybrids such as 'Alice Harding' do not compete in a class of their own. In the "Lutea Hybrid" group, the adjective "**lutea**" was dropped as being superfluous.

In Division VI the European tree class was eliminated and the gap filled by another representative from the hybrid tree (*lutea* hybrid) group. Thus, one class is reserved for a yellow hybrid tree and another for one of any other color (AOC). This change should reflect the growing popularity of this group. Two changes in the sequence of names were made: **suffruticosa** (Class 614) was followed by the

# CURRENT 1985 SHOW SCHEDULE

DIVISION I: OPEN TO ALL EXHIBITORS

HERBACEOUS

LACTIFLORA

	SAME VAR. ONE CONT'R	
	3	1
	BLOOMS	BLOOM
Dbl, white	110	130
Dbl, blush	111	131
Dbl, light pink	112	132
Dbl, dark pink	113	133
Dbl, red	114	134
Semi-dbl, white, blush	115	135
Semi-dbl, pink	116	136
Semi-dbl, red	117	137
Bomb, white, blush	118	138
Bomb, pink	118	139
Bomb, red	118	140
Japanese, white, blush	119	141
Japanese, pink	120	142
Japanese, red	121	143
Single, white, blush	122	144
Single, pink	123	145
Single, red	124	146

HYBRID OR SPECIES (NON-LACTIFLORA)

Dbl, S-D, yellow	150	160
Dbl, S-D, white, blush	150	161
Dbl, S-D, coral	151	162
Dbl, S-D, pink	152	163
Dbl, S-D, red	153	164
Japanese, any color	154	165
Single, yellow	155	166
Single, white, blush	156	167
Single, coral	157	168
Single, pink	158	169
Single, red	159	169A
ITOH, any color	159A	169B

LARGER EXHIBITS

ONE BLOOM OF EA. VAR. IN SEP. CONTAINERS.

25 var. HERBACEOUS / TREE	ANY FORM, COLOR	101
15 var. HERBACEOUS	APR. AWARD	102
10 var. HERBACEOUS HYBRID		103
10 var. TREE		104
5 var. LACTIFLORA, Jap. form, any color		105
5 var. LACTIFLORA, sgl. form, any color		106

TREE

SUFFRUTICOSA

		3	1
		SEP. CLASS EA. FORM	
	a = Single		
	b = Semi-dbl.		
	c = Double		
White	JAPANESE STYLE	170	185
Pink		171	186
Red		172	187
Purple, lavender		173	188
Maroon		174	189
EUROPEAN, any color		-	196
SPECIES (non-suffruticosa)		-	197
LUTEA HYBRID			
White, cream		175	190
Yellow		176	191
Blend		177	192
Pink		178	193
Red		179	194
Dark red		180	195

DIVN. VI: COURT OF HONOR CANDIDATE

ONE BLOOM PER CONTAINER; LIMIT TWO PER CLASS.  
JUDGES MAY SELECT 2 ADD'L BLOOMS FROM FLOOR.

LACTIFLORA

HERB'S HYBRID, SPECIES

Dbl, white	601	Double	ANY COLOR	610
Dbl, blush	602	Semi-Dbl.		611
Dbl, lt. pink	603	Single		612
Dbl, dk. pink	604	Japanese		613
Dbl, red	605	TREE		
Bomb	606	Lutea Hybrid	JAP. FORM, COL.	614
Semi-Dbl.	607	European		615
Japanese	608	Japanese		616
Single	609	ITCH HYBRID		617

SEEDLING, 3 BLOOMS, SAME VAR'Y, 1 CONT'R.

NEW VARIETY, INTRO'D < 5 YRS. AGO, 3/1

SEEDLING, 1 BLOOM (No awards)

MULTIPLE BLOOM, 1 STALK, 3+ OPEN FLWRS

NDM AWARD, 4 BLOOMS EACH IN SEP. CONT'RS

■ 1 EACH: LUTEA HYBRID & SUFF' A T.P.,  
DOUBLE & SINGLE HERB'S HYBRID

■ 1 EACH: LACTIFLORA DOUBLE, SEMI-DBL.  
JAPANESE & SINGLE

hybrid classes (615, 616) to reflect the same sequence in Division I; the Japanese form of herbaceous hybrid (Class 612) was put ahead of the single form (613) for similar reasons.

One of the goals of the condensed form of this revision is to emphasize (1) the two main types (sections) that the genus **Paeonia** is divided: herbaceous and tree (woody) or, according to Stern, paeon and moutan, and (2) the remarkably similar organization and parallel development within each type. Note that both types begin with a "dominant species" (**lactiflora** vs. **suffruticosa**), followed by an "other species" group, and ending with a hybrid group. Furthermore, each hybrid group has members becoming more and more like their respective dominant species. Hollingsworth describes some of his backcross herbaceous hybrids as "**lactiflora** type, hybrid origin" and some of the newer Daphnis tree hybrids are 75% **suffruticosa**, increasing to 87.5% if the next hybridizing goals are accomplished.

Classes 144 and 145 were reserved for non-lactiflora herbaceous species to suit the goal stated earlier and for educational purposes. If there are any entries in this group they will be easy to locate and pointed out to the general public as the "wild" ancestors of their usually showier and bigger descendants in the hybrid group. Likewise for the tree species in classes 184 and 185.

The **Itoh** group is given more prominence; classes 172 and 173 are reserved for future expansion. "Lavender, purple" classes (168, 169) were added to the herbaceous hybrid group to accommodate the new 'Wind Chimes' or the old Saunders' 'Lavender Strain' if any exhibitor ever popped up with it. "Lavender, purple" classes (198, 199) were also added to the tree hybrid group to accommodate the newer 'Zephyrus', and 'Anna Marie', the older 'Mystery', etc. Somebody with a good color sense should determine which are to be shown as blends, pinks, or lavenders. More hybridizing will produce purples and clearer lavenders. The "maroon" color classes (174, 189) and "dark red" (180, 195) have been changed to "black-red" (180 & 181, 198 & 199). In Wister's **The Peonies**, entries in these classes, such as THUNDERBOLT, BLACK PIRATE, UBA-TAMA (PITCH BLACK), and KURO-BUTAN (BLACK PEONY), are put in Color Class V: crimson. In the herbaceous hybrid group, the "white, blush" classes were placed ahead of the "yellow" class.

The two seedling classes, 401 and 403, were changed to 400 and 401 to conform to the numbering system in Division I: even numbers for three-bloom exhibits and odd numbers for one-bloom exhibits. In the "New Varieties" class (402, both schedules), entries were eligible for CM or HM awards, the implications being that they cannot compete for ribbons in the open classes. If this is so, I'd propose they be allowed to compete in the open classes **anytime** after being named and registered. If shown in class 402, it would be for display only.



33

In this proposed revised schedule the "Larger Exhibits" (Classes 101-106) are omitted for lack of space but no revision is proposed.

The proposed revision uses all the 100-series numbers. If one or two new classes must be added (e.g. an "orange" or "black-red" class in the herbaceous hybrid group), one could make space for them by cutting back elsewhere, say the lacti-bomb classes. But a greatly expanded **Itoh** class will eventually demand still more space. One solution would be to provide class numbers in the 90's for the "Larger Exhibits" group (still call it Division I), start the **lactiflora** classes at 100 and the **Itoh** classes at 160. This would take care of the problem for decades. There is another solution but it requires a completely new revision.

**1986 SECOND PROPOSED REVISION.** In the first proposed revision, the beauty of the revised class numbers is that they differ by the quantity "one" for the same variety shown as both a three- and one-bloom exhibit. How much better if they differed not at all!! At least in the last two digits! In the second revision then, the two exhibits of PAULA FAY would fall in classes 349 and 149, the 300-series being for three blooms of the same variety in one container. Division I would be split I and III. The present Division III (Novice), could be combined with II (Amateur) and called "Amatrice" or "Novateur" where amateurs and novices could slug it out against each other. This revision would double the class numbers available for the three- and one-bloom exhibits, would allow the "Larger Exhibits" to retain their present 100-series numbers, and would allow each group to start at a multiple of ten. The **Itoh** group is slightly restricted but only in comparison with other groups.

If habit, tradition, and inflexibility demand adherence to the 100-series numbers for a single open division, Division I, then one could simply attach "-3" after the three-bloom exhibit. Thus, the two entries of PAULA FAY could be labeled 149-3 and 149, the latter number with or without a "-1" attached.

The purpose of the class numbers is to identify the various exhibits as briefly and clearly as possible for both the exhibitor at showtime and for subsequent record-keeping by those reporting the exhibition results. The second revision does this the best, in my opinion. There is a **THIRD** (and **ULTIMATE**) revision that one ought to consider, one that would allow anyone to **memorize** all the class designations with relative ease.

Let the first digit vary from 1 thru 5 to represent the five major groups: 1-**lacti**, 2-herbaceous hybrid, 3-**Itoh** hybrid, 4-**suffruticosa**, 5-tree hybrid. Let the next two digits represent the color, say 44 for medium pink. Let the lower-case letters "a, b, c, j, m" represent the flower-forms "single, semi-double, double, Japanese, bomb" re-

DIVISIONS I & II: OPEN TO ALL EXHIBITORS

3

1

SEP. CLASS EA. FERM

a = Single  
b = Semi-dbl.  
c = Double

HERBACEOUS

SAME VAR.  
ONE CONT'R

3

BLOOMS

1

BLOOM

LACTIFLORA

Double, white	310	110
Double, blush	311	111
Double, light pink	312	112
Double, dark pink	313	113
Double, red	314	114
Semi-dbl, white, blush	315	115
Semi-dbl, pink	316	116
Semi-dbl, red	317	117
Bomb, white, blush	318	118
Bomb, pink	"	119
Bomb, red	"	120
Japanese, white, blush	321	121
Japanese, pink	322	122
Japanese, red	323	123
Single, white, blush	324	124
Single, pink	325	125
Single, red	326	126

SPECIES (NON-LACTIFLORA)

Officinalis, Lobata	330	130
Tenuifolia	331	131
Mloko & all others	332	132

HYBRID

Dbl, S-D, White, blush	340	140
Dbl, S-D, Yellow	"	141
Dbl, S-D, coral	342	142
Dbl, S-D, pink	343	143
Dbl, S-D, red	344	144
Japanese, any color	345	145
Single, white, blush	346	146
Single, yellow	347	147
Single, coral	348	148
Single, pink	349	149
Single, red	350	150
Single, lavender, purple	351	151

ITOH HYB. (HERBACEOUS-TREE HYB.)

Yellow	360	160
All other colors	361	161

↓

↓

TREE

SUFFRUTICOSA

White	370	170
Pink	371	171
Red	372	172
Black-red	373	173
Lavender, purple	374	174
SPECIES (NON-SUFF'A)	379	179

HYBRID

White, cream	380	180
Yellow	381	181
Blend	382	182
Pink	383	183
Red	384	184
Black-red	385	185
Lavender, purple	386	186

DIVN. VI: COURT OF HONOR CANDIDATE

LACTIFLORA

HERB'S HYBRID SPECIES

Dbl, white	601	Double	610
Dbl, blush	602	Semi-Dbl.	611
Dbl, lt. pink	603	Japanese	612
Dbl, dk. pink	604	Single	613
Dbl, red	605	TREE	
Bomb	606	Suffruticosa	614
Semi-Dbl.	607	Hybrid, yellow	615
Japanese	608	Hybrid, AOC	616
Single	609	ITOH HYBRID	617

LARGER  
EXHIBITS

ONE BLOOM OF EA. VAR. IN SEP. CONTAINERS.

25 var. HERBACEOUS / TREE	ANY FORM, COLOR	101
15 var. HERBACEOUS	AFS. AWARD	102
10 var. HERBACEOUS HYBRID		103
10 var. TREE		104
5 var. LACTIFLORA, Jap. form, any color		105
5 var. LACTIFLORA, sgl. form, any color		106

MULTIPLE BLOOM, 1 STALK, 3+ OPEN FLWRS  
NDM AWARD, 4 BLOOMS IN SEP. CONT'RS:

- SUFF'A, TREE HYB, HERB. HYB: DBL, SGL
- LACTIFLORA: DBL, S-D, JAP. & SGL.

503

504

505

spectively. Put them all together and PAULA FAY is 244a; EDULIS SUPERBA, 144m; LEDA, 544a; LAURA MAGNUSON, 244b; MARY JO LEGARE, 244c; HANA KISOI, 444c, etc. This idea was suggested by the show classification system used in gladiolus shows. When glad varieties are registered, they receive a three-digit classification number indicating the size of floret and color for exhibition purposes. If a similar system were adapted to peonies, it might prevent some confusion at showtime. In the 1982 Hamilton Show, for example, the variety BANQUET won three ribbons by three different exhibitors in three different color classes: blend, red, and dark red. Wister's appendix, p. 206 puts it in class X: yellow with reddish tones. Climate, soils, and PH could cause considerable variation in color but the experts should agree in which **one** class it should compete. This third proposed revision is the most radical departure from the present one; there is no Division I number for the classes, and a suffix "-3" would be needed to indicate entries in the three-bloom classes. It is, I believe, ultimately the easiest to learn.

### FURTHER EXPLANATION OF A FOURTH SHOW SCHEDULE (THIRD or ULTIMATE REVISION)

GLADIOLUS COLOR CLASSES FOR SHOW PURPOSES	YELLOW	ORANGE	SALMON	PINK	RED	ROSE	LAVENDER	VIOLET	
pale	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90 = tan
light	12	22	32	42	52	62	72	82	} smokey shades
medium	14	24	34	44	54	64	74	84	
deep	16	26	36	46	56	66	76	86	
-	-	-	-	-	58	68	78	-	98 = brown

00 = white

02 = light green

04 = mdm. green

10 = cream

20 = buff

58 = black red

68 = black rose

78 = purple

It seemed appropriate to continue my previous article with a detailed schedule of the third or "ultimate" proposed revision. This calls for adapting the gladiolus color classes (see table above) to peony shows so that varieties of the same color receive the same color-class number regardless of the type of peony, its flower form, or whether shown as a three- or one-bloom exhibit. In the table the right-hand digits (0, 2, 4, 6, 8) refer to the decreasing brilliance (high to low)

# THIRD REVISION

DIV'NS 1-5, S, L : OPEN TO ALL EXHIBITORS

HERBACEOUS		TREE	
LACTIFLORA - 1		SUFFRUTICOSA - 4	
Double, white	100C-3, -1	White	400A,B,C-3,-1
Double, blush	140C-3, -1	Pink	444A,B,C-3,-1
Double, light pink	142C-3, -1	Red	454 :
Double, dark pink	146C :	Black-red	458
Double, red	154C	Lavender, purple	474
Semi-dbl, white, blush	100B	SPECIES (NON-SUFF'A)-S TS-3, -1	
Semi-dbl, pink	144B	HYBRID - 5	
Semi-dbl, red	154B	White, cream	500A,B,C-3,-1
Bomb, white, blush	100M	Yellow	514 :
Bomb, pink	144M	Blend	594
Bomb, red	154M	Pink	544
Japanese, white, blush	100J	Red	554
Japanese, pink	144J	Black-red	558
Japanese, red	154J	Lavender, purple	574
Single, white, blush	100A	DIVN. C : COURT OF HONOR CANDIDATE	
Single, pink	144A	LACTIFLORA	
Single, red	154A	HERB'S HYBRID, SPECIES	
SPECIES (NON-LACTIFLORA) - S		Dbl, white C-100C	Double C-299C
Officinalis, Lobata	HS1-3, -1	Dbl, blush C-140C	Semi-Dbl. C-299B
Tenuifolia	HS2 :	Dbl, lt. pink C-142C	Japanese C-299A
Mloko & all others	HS3	Dbl, dk. pink C-144C	Single C-299J
HYBRID - 2		Dbl, red C-154C	TREE
Dbl, S-D, White, blush	200BC-3,-1	Bomb C-199M	Suffruticosa C-499
Dbl, S-D, cream, lt. yellow	212BC-3,-1	Semi-Dbl. C-199B	Hybrid, yellow C-514
Dbl, S-D, coral, salmon	234BC :	Japanese C-199J	Hybrid, AOC C-598
Dbl, S-D, pink	244BC	Single C-199A	ITOH HYBRID C-399
Dbl, S-D, red	254BC	DIV'N L LARGER EXHIBITS	
Japanese, any color	299J	ONE BLOOM OF EACH VARY IN SEPARATE CONTAINERS	
Single, white, blush	200A	25 var. HERBACEOUS / TREE	L-1
Single, cream, lt. yellow	212A	15 var. HERBACEOUS	L-2
Single, coral, salmon	234A	10 var. HERBACEOUS HYBRID	L-3
Single, pink	244A	10 var. TREE	L-4
Single, red	254A	5 var. LACTIFLORA, Jap. form, any color	L-5
Single, lavender, purple	274A	5 var. LACTIFLORA, sgl. form, any color	L-6
ITOH HYB. (HERBACEOUS-TREE HYB) - 3		MULTIPLE BLOOM, 1 STALK, 3+ OPEN FLWRS	
Yellow	314-3, -1	NDM AWARD, 4 BLOOMS IN SEP. CONT'RS:	
All other colors	398-3, -1	• SUFF'A, TREE HYB, HERB. HYB: DBL, SGL	604
		• LACTIFLORA: DBL, S-DBL, JAP. & SGL.	605



or light to dark shades of the eight base colors. ("Near-blues" appear in the violet shades. Where would they put "true blues" if they were originated?) Odd numbers represent glads with conspicuous markings; thus 45 could designate a medium pink with a large white throat blotch.

To adapt this system to peony shows one would omit the classes for orange, rose, and violet. Present classification does not call for many separate classes for different shades of a color; there are classes for three shades of pink (140, 142, 146) and two shades of red (454 & 484, 554 & 558). The middle numbers 14, 34, 44, 54, and 74 are used to represent a color class when different shades of the same color compete against each other. An exception is 212 (rather than 214) since the herbaceous yellows are, at best, of a light shade. The number 99 designates "any color" (299J and some Court of Honor classes), and the number 98, "any other color" (398 and C-598). Species entries have been aced out of the CH division but could be reinstated as a separate class.

Division VI was changed to Division C and the prefix "C-" used to designate the Court of Honor classes. Division S is for species entries; "L" for larger exhibits; and the Roman numeral designation for Division was dropped for the sake of clarity. Each peony type (lactiflora, herb's hybrid, etc.) forms its own division 1 thru 5, or I thru V if the Roman numeral system is retained. If it is, then Division VI classes could be preceded by "6-" (instead of "C-") and new division numbers assigned to species, larger exhibits, special entires, etc. Some divisions could be combined so that they do not exceed X (Artistic classes).

To sum up, this last revision permits the addition of classes for new colors and/or forms (or more classes for colors and forms already in existence) without disrupting the whole system. Odd numbered classes could be inserted if strongly picoteed, striped, or speckled color variations are introduced. The classification system is easily learned, calling for a two-digit number to designate flower color, a third digit to designate the plant type (lacti, herb's hybrid, etc.) a letter to designate the flower form, and fourth digit (mostly for record-keeping) to designate whether a three- or one-bloom exhibit. Except for this last digit, newly named varieties could be registered with this classification number and exhibited only in that class, unless duly appointed authorities decided the registrant erred in judgement and revise the classification.



Read the *AMERICAN HORTICULTURIST*, June issue  
Lutea Hybrids, by Anthony De Blasi

# HOW TO CUT PEONIES

*L. W. Lindgren, St. Paul, Minnesota*

*Bulletin # 124, 1952*

Peony show time approaches and many new exhibitors have questions in mind which they would like to have answered.

Setting dates for peony shows which would suit all gardens is obviously impossible. Some gardens are early and some are late. Some peonies are early and some are late. The best plan is therefore to hold the show late in the season so that early and late gardens as well as early and late peonies may be represented. In order to do this it becomes necessary to cut the peonies at the proper time and place them in cold storage. A temperature of thirty-six degrees is best but a temperature as high as fifty degrees is satisfactory if the blooms are to be stored for a week or less. Blooms can be kept for over a month when stored at thirty-six degrees. An important point to remember is that even blooms cut the day before the show will benefit from a chilling of several hours. Peonies are best stored with the stems in about eight inches of water.

Most new exhibitors are troubled determining at what stage of development buds should be cut. The following types may be cut when the bud is showing color or when the first petals begin to unfold: singles, Japanese, semi-doubles. The full double type such as **Hansina Brand** should not be cut until almost fully open. It is important to place in cold storage as soon as possible after cutting.

As the buds develop to near the cutting stage, paper bags should be placed over the buds and held in place with a rubber band. Be sure to make a couple of holes in the bag in order to provide ventilation. If this is not done the buds may be injured if the temperature is high. If the buds have not been bagged before cutting be sure to place the buds in bags before placing in storage. The procedure is this: cut a hole in the bottom of the bag and slip the stem thru the hole, the one end of the bag is then closed by twisting. The bag gives protection to the petals against bruising. The one-pound bag is about the right size for singles, Japs and semi-doubles while the two pound bag is more satisfactory for the larger and fuller blooms.

Cut stems about sixteen inches long and remove all foliage except the top leaf. However, the stems should be cut so that at least two leaves are left on the plant. When the buds are brought to the show room, cut off the ends of the stems about a half inch, place in water and carefully remove the paper bag. It's thrilling sight to see the buds unfold into beautiful blooms and it is even more thrilling to see a ribbon pinned on your exhibit.

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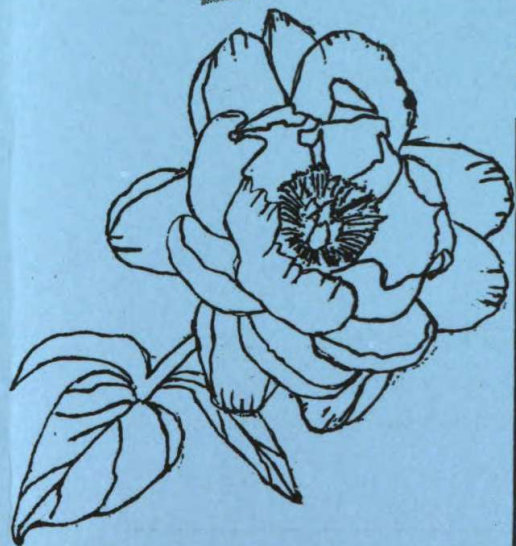
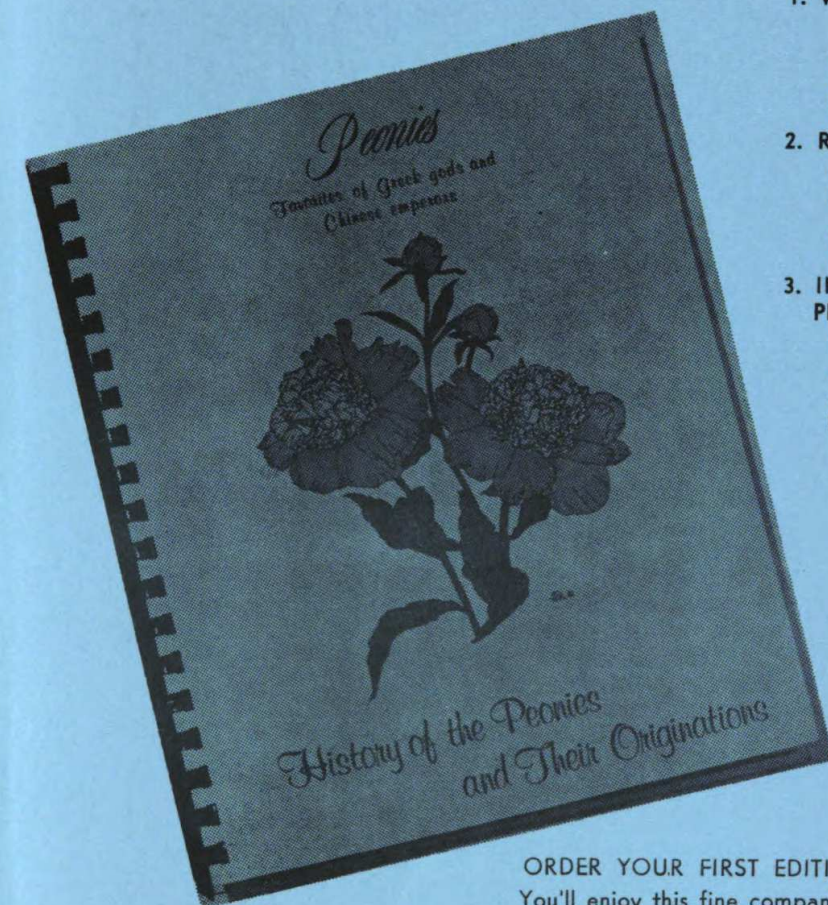
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