

Life Sci.



MARCH 1992
NO. 281

The American Peony Society Bulletin

RECEIVED
FEB 27 92



Red Grace, yellow bearded iris, and Heuchera growing in the Fire Island Garden, a sandy soil, 1991. (see page 16)

Announcing

The limited
publication of
a "TABLE TOP"
edition devoted
exclusively to

AMERICAN TREE PEONIES



Appended cultural notes cover:

- *Tree Peony history*
- *Planting and general culture*
- *Propagation by root grafting of scions*
- *Pruning, fertilization, winter protection, etc.*

Compiled and edited by
Greta M. Kessenich;
photos by Roy Klehm
and David Reath



63 BRILLIANT FULL COLOR PHOTOS

True, tree peonies with their 1400 year history are not native to America. But a class of exceptional HYBRID tree peonies are. Efforts by seven world renowned American hybridizers* who successfully cross-pollinated *P. Lutea* with *P. Suffructicosa* are covered in this limited edition. Photos are razor sharp in detail and reflect all the brilliance and subtle hues of these native Americans, including the new generation of ITOH's.

* *A.P. Saunders, William Gratwick, Nassos Daphnis,
David Reath, Toichi Domoto,
Don Hollingsworth and Roger Anderson*

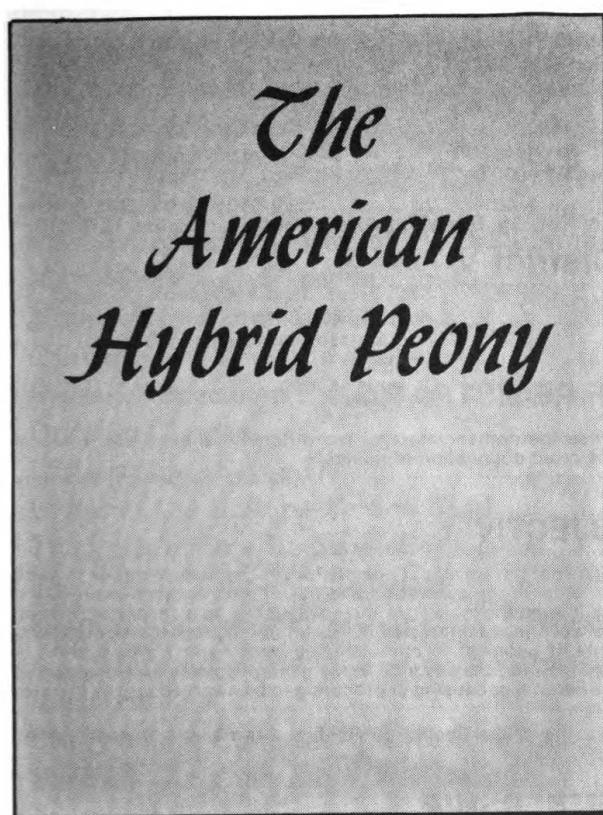
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AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY
250 Interlachen Road, Hopkins, MN 55343

**Just Out . . . ANOTHER VALUABLE PEONY
REFERENCE VOLUME HIGHLIGHTING**

HYBRID PEONIES



**Herbaceous
Peonies in
FULL
COLOR!**

- **Photos—
130 Herbaceous
Hybrids
32 Species**
- **All Named**
- **Biographical Data**
- **208 Pages**
- **6 5/8" x 9 1/4"**
- **Hard Cover —
Embossed in Gold**

*Devised and
Compiled by
Greta M. Kessenich,
Don Hollingsworth
Hybridizing and
Bibliography*

Ever since contemporary hybridizers unraveled the mysteries of cross pollinating peony species, hybrid crosses have received spellbound attention. This long-awaited effort adds to the excitement of growing peonies. Photos permit comparing your hybrids with those authenticated by the hybrid committee plus scores of sideline notes and general information. Be one of the first **\$25.00** to own this premiere edition, just Postpaid

Send check or money order to—

AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY
250 Interlachen Road, Hopkins, MN 55343

AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY

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DEPT. OF REGISTRATION

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

Greta M. Kessenich, Secretary

OBJECTIVES

The Articles of Incorporation state: Section (2) That the particular objects for which the corporation is to be formed are as follows: To increase the general interest in the cultivation and use of the Peony; to improve the methods of its cultivation and methods of placing it upon the market; to increase its use as a decorative flower; to bring about a more thorough understanding between those interested in its culture; to properly supervise the nomenclature of the different varieties and kinds of peonies; to stimulate the growing and introduction of improved seedlings and crosses of such flower; and to promote any kind of the general objects herein specified by holding or causing to be held exhibitions, and awarding or causing or procuring to be awarded, prizes therefor or in any other manner.

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

MEMBERSHIP

The By-Laws state: All reputable persons, professional or amateur, who are interested in the Peony; its propagation, culture, sale and development are eligible for membership. Dues are as follows:

Single Annual.....	\$ 7.50	Junior or member family.....	\$ 2.50
Single Triennial.....	20.00	Life.....	150.00
Family Annual.....	10.00	Commercial membership.....	25.00
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



MARCH 1992 • No. 281

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Finally, the long intermission between Fall planting, Act I, and Spring sprouting, Act II, is coming to an end for peony lovers. Every year, I don't know how it can last so long, and every year as I grow older it doesn't get any shorter—and it doesn't help that there are so many sombre, gray days in the interim.

But it does end, and the Second Act does begin. We can begin to think about spray schedules and hope for an early dry, warm spell that might permit an early cultivation. And as the days grow longer, we can begin to think of the annual Peony Exhibition which will be held this year in Mt. Prospect, Illinois, on May 29-30-31, 1992, and make plans to attend and participate.

I feel very strongly that this is a most important, if not the most important, event of the year. It is our one chance to see what can be achieved in the way of size, color, texture and form in the new and old varieties of our favorite flower, a wonderful chance for friendly, stimulating competition with growers from other areas. And most important, a wonderful opportunity to exchange information, learn new methods of producing ever better blooms, and to see what our hybridizer members have in store for us in the future, Act III.

I feel that entering the Exhibition competition is one of the most important obligations a Member of the American Peony Society has. It is the best way to attract large crowds of attendees and to expose them to a flower many are totally unfamiliar with, to create the desire to grow some of the prize-winning varieties in their own garden, and then, hopefully to join the Society and in due course to become future exhibitors. To me there is no acceptable excuse for anyone living within a 2-3 hour's drive not leaving early Saturday morning, no matter if with only 3-4 blossoms picked that same morning that he is proud of, arriving and finding all the help he needs to prepare his entries for judging, if this is his first experience.

It is an exhilarating experience not only the first time, but every time, and I urge all who can possibly do so to share it with us.

Hope to see you at the Show!

Robert F. Schmidt,
President

**CONVENTION OF
THE AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY
THE 89TH ANNUAL MEETING & THE 87TH
NATIONAL EXHIBITION
Friendship Park Conservatory, May 29-30-31, 1992**

FRIENDSHIP PARK CONSERVATORY MOUNT PROSPECT PARK DISTRICT 395 ALGONQUIN ROAD, DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS

Friendship Park Conservatory, a facility of the Mount Prospect Park District located at 395 Algonquin Road, Des Plaines, Illinois, will be the site of the 1992 American Peony Society national exhibition. It is a fairly new facility, having held its grand opening September 30, 1988.

It is located on the site of a former wholesale greenhouse operation. This nine-acre site and an adjoining twenty-acre truck farm were acquired by the Mount Prospect Park District in 1970. While most of the land was quickly developed for tennis courts, baseball diamonds and jogging and bicycle paths, the greenhouses were allowed to remain and continued to be operated as a private production facility by the former owner's son on a rental basis for several years.

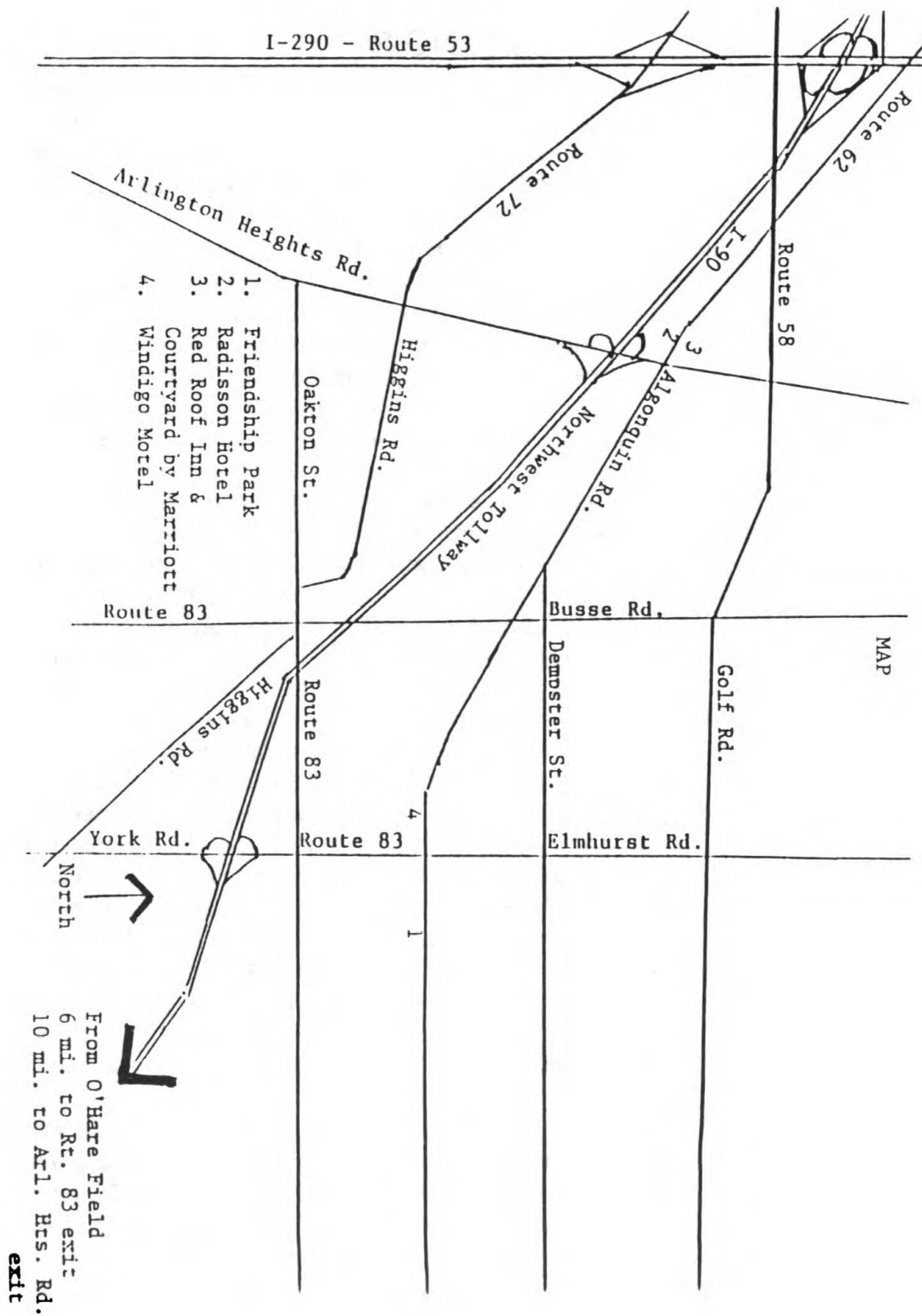
When the park district took over operation of the greenhouses, small changes were made, including replacing the glass in the side walls with fiberglass to discourage vandalism. The greenhouses were used to grow bedding plants for the various parks within the district. In the late 80's the utility buildings and a small attached residence were razed and a new building was erected which contains a 2,400 sq. ft. atrium, courtyard area, meeting rooms, work room, office, kitchen, utility rooms, large foyer and private apartment.

The atrium is given a complete transformation once each year with four to six seasonal shows per year. It is a popular place for wedding photos and ceremonies. The meeting rooms are used for horticulture classes and are rented out for wedding receptions and banquets. Full catering and bar services are available. The meeting rooms have folding walls between them and may be opened into one large room. This will be the site of the open division of the peony show. The main foyer will be utilized for the artistic division and the novice and amateur divisions. A work room with running water and two refrigerators is just across the hall from the exhibition room, with lavatory facilities adjoining. The hall may also be used as a work area, if needed.

The greenhouses are still used to grow bedding plants for the various parks within the district and for plants for the atrium and courtyard. The conservatory has a small full-time staff, about 15 part-time workers, added summer help and about 50 volunteers. The volunteers work two to three hours per week, either as inside growers or as outside gardeners. They get no pay but are given bench space in the greenhouse to grow their own plants. They are also rewarded

with appreciation lunches. Future plans call for outdoor gardens.
An herb garden has been designed and will be planted this Spring.

* * * * *



HOTELS — MOTELS

RADISSON HOTEL—A block of twenty rooms has been reserved at the Radisson Hotel, 75 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005. Rates are \$49.00 per room, single or double (1 king or 2 double beds). Call before May 8th. Phone 800/333-3333 or 708/364-7600 and mention the American Peony Society.

COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT — A block of twenty rooms has been reserved at the Courtyard by Marriott, 100 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005. Rates are \$59.00 per room, one to four persons. Call before May 8th. Phone 800/321-2211 or 708/437-3344, Ext. 609, and ask for Taraina and mention the American Peony Society.

RED ROOF INN — Located at the corner of Arlington Heights Road and Algonquin Road. Rates \$45.99, 2 beds, 2 persons; \$34.00, 1 person, double bed; \$43.00, 1 person, king-size bed. Phone 708/228-6650.

WINDIGO MOTEL — Located at 303 West Algonquin Road, Mount Prospect, Illinois 60056. Rates are \$31.50 for a single and \$35.50 for a double. Phone 708/956-1060.

DIRECTIONS

Visitors coming from the east or flying in to O'Hare Field should exit the Northwest Tollway (I-90) at Route 83 for Friendship Conservatory and the Windigo Motel or exit at Arlington Heights Road North for the Radisson Hotel, Courtyard by Marriott and Red Roof Inn. From the O'Hare terminal to the Route 83 exit is approximately 6 miles and 10 miles to the Arlington Heights Road exit. Those coming from the west should exit I-90 at Route 53 and go north to Algonquin Road, then east on Algonquin to Arlington Heights Road for the Radisson Hotel, Courtyard by Marriott and Red Roof Inn or continue on Algonquin Road to nearly Route 83 for the Windigo Motel or another one-half mile beyond Route 83 for Friendship Conservatory.

* * * * *

**THE 89TH ANNUAL MEETING &
87TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF
THE AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY
NORTHWEST SUBURBS OF CHICAGO,
ILLINOIS, MAY 29, 30, 31, 1992**

All events, except the Annual Banquet and ensuing Annual Meeting will be held at Friendship Park Conservatory of the Mount Prospect Park District, located at 395 Algonquin Road, Des Plaines, Illinois. The Annual Banquet will be held at the Radisson Hotel, 75 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Friday, May 29

2:00-9:00 p.m. — Prepare Show entries

Saturday, May 30

7:00-11:30 a.m. — Set up and enter exhibits

11:30 a.m. — Judging begins

Lunch on your own. Many restaurants along Route 83, one-half mile west of conservatory

1:30-5:00 p.m. — Show open to public

1:30 p.m. — Seminar for growers and hybridizers chaired by Roy Klehm
Visitors welcome.

7:00 p.m. — Annual banquet at Radisson Hotel, Arlington Heights

9:00 p.m. — Annual meeting following banquet

10:00 p.m. — Root auction

Sunday, May 31

8:00 a.m. — Board of Directors meeting at Conservatory

10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. — Show open to public

BANQUET

The banquet will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Saturday evening, May 30th, at the Radisson Hotel, Arlington Heights. The cost is \$20.00 per person, tax and gratuity included. Please send reservations and payment before May 15th to Charles Klehm & Son Nursery, Route 5, Box 197, South Barrington, Illinois 60010. Attention: Alice Hacker. No reservations will be taken on day of banquet, as hotel must have a fixed count ahead of time to assign an adequately sized room. Be sure to give your choice of entrees, (1) fish or (2) chicken, when sending reservations.

MENU

Cream of Broccoli Soup

(1) Broiled Scrod or (2) Boneless Breast of Chicken Nicoise

Sage's Salad

Rice Pilaf

Vegetable of the Day

Parfait

Coffee

Tea

Milk

RULES FOR SPECIMEN EXHIBITS

1. All entries must be completed and in place by 11:30 a.m. on opening day.
2. All entries must have been grown by exhibitors.
3. Entry tags supplied by the Society must be filled out completely as to class, variety, and name and address of exhibitor. In addition, each variety must be identified with a small wooden tag with the variety name legibly printed thereon. Entry tags may be obtained in advance from the secretary of the American Peony Society. The exhibitor or his agent shall be responsible for proper completion of the entry tags.
4. Stems should be approximately 12" long (tree peonies excepted).
5. Exhibitors are limited to one entry each in classes 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 201 and 301. In all other classes, up to two entries of each variety are permitted. However, any number of different varieties may be entered.
6. The show committee may combine or divide classes if the number of entries warrants it.
7. Correct varietal labeling is mandatory in the Open and Amateur classes. It is recommended in the Novice classes but no entry shall be disqualified for failure to identify.
8. Standard containers will be furnished by the show committee and must be used in all classes, quart bottles for herbaceous poenies, and pint bottles for tree peonies.
9. The American Peony Society Handbook will govern bloom types and color.
10. Anemone types such as Gay Paree shall be shown as Japanese.
11. Awards need not be given for unworthy exhibits.
12. Flowers are to remain as placed on the show tables by the exhibitor, moved only when necessary, and then the exhibits must be kept in the same position.
13. The decision of the judges is final—Note: See Page 14. Division VI—COURT OF HONOR CANDIDATE CLASS.
14. The best seedling judged by the seedling committee will be displayed on the Court of Honor.

* * * * *

**IF YOU CUT A TREE, PLANT A TREE
IT IS NATURE'S REPLACEABLE ENERGY.**

DIVISION 1. Open to all Exhibitors.

- Class**
- 101 American Peony Society Award**
Twenty-five varieties, any color or type.
One bloom each in separate containers.
 - 102 American Peony Society Award**
Fifteen varieties, herbaceous only, any type or color
One bloom each in separate containers.
 - 103 American Peony Society Award**
Ten varieties, herbaceous hybrid only, any type or color
One bloom each in separate containers.
 - 104 American Peony Society Award**
Ten varieties, Tree peonies only, any type or color
One bloom each in separate containers.
 - 105 Five varieties, Japanese Type lactiflora only, any color**
One bloom each in separate containers.
 - 106 Five varieties, single type lactiflora only, any color**
One bloom each in separate containers.

Three Blooms, one variety lactiflora only, in one container.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Class | 117 Semi-double red |
| 110 Double white | 118 Bomb any color |
| 111 Double blush | 119 Japanese white or blush |
| 112 Double light pink | 120 Japanese pink |
| 113 Double dark pink | 121 Japanese red |
| 114 Double red | 122 Single white or blush |
| 115 Semi-double white or blush | 123 Single pink |
| 116 Semi-double pink | 124 Single red |

One Bloom Lactiflora Only

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Class | 138 Bomb white or blush |
| 130 Double white | 139 Bomb pink |
| 131 Double blush | 140 Bomb red |
| 132 Double light pink | 141 Japanese white or blush |
| 133 Double dark pink | 142 Japanese pink |
| 134 Double red | 143 Japanese red |
| 135 Semi-double white or blush | 144 Single white or blush |
| 136 Semi-double pink | 145 Single pink |
| 137 Semi-double red | 146 Single red |

Three blooms, one variety Herbaceous Hybrids or Species in one container.

Class

- | | | | |
|-----|--|------|------------------------|
| 150 | Double or semi-double white, blush or yellow | | |
| 151 | Double or semi-double coral | 155 | Single yellow |
| 152 | Double or semi-double pink | 156 | Single white or blush |
| 153 | Double or semi-double red | 157 | Single coral |
| | | 158 | Single pink |
| | | 159 | Single red |
| 154 | Japanese, any color | 159A | Itob, hybrid any color |

One bloom Herbaceous Hybrid or Species

Class

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| 160 | Double or semi-double yellow | | |
| 161 | Double or semi-double white or blush | | |
| 162 | Double or semi-double coral | | |
| 163 | Double or semi-double pink | | |
| 164 | Double or semi-double red | | |
| 165 | Japanese, any color | | |
| 166 | Single yellow | 169 | Single pink |
| 167 | Single white or blush | 169A. | Single red |
| 168 | Single coral | 169B. | Itoh hybrid, any color |

Three blooms, one variety, tree peonies only, in one container.

Class

- | | | | |
|------|--|------|--------|
| 170a | Japanese (Moutan) White, Single | | |
| | 170b semi-double | 170c | double |
| 171a | Japanese (Moutan) Pink, Single | | |
| | 171b semi-double | 171c | double |
| 172a | Japanese (Moutan) Red, single | | |
| | 172b semi-double | 172c | double |
| 173a | Japanese (Moutan) Violet single
(Really purple lavenders) | 173b | double |
| | 173b semi-double | 173c | double |
| 174a | Japanese (Moutan) Maroon single | | |
| | 174b semi-double | 174c | double |
| 175a | Lutea Hybrid, white to cream, single | | |
| | 175b semi-double | 175c | double |
| 176a | Lutea Hybrid, yellow, single | | |
| | 176b semi-double | 176c | double |
| 177a | Lutea Hybrid, blend, single | | |
| | 177b semi-double | 177c | double |
| 178a | Lutea Hybrid, pink, single | | |
| | 178b semi-double | 178c | double |
| 179a | Lutea Hybrid, red, single | | |
| | 179b semi-double | 179c | double |
| 180a | Lutea Hybrid, dark red, single | | |
| | 180b semi-double | 180c | double |

One bloom tree peony only.

Class

185a Japanese (Moutan) white, single
185b semi-double 185c double

186a Japanese (Moutan) pink, single
186b semi-double 186c double

187a Japanese (Moutan) red, single
187b semi-double 187c double

188a Japanese (Moutan) violet, single
188b semi-double 188c double

189a Japanese (Moutan) maroon, single
189b semi-double 189c double

190a Lutea Hybrid, white to cream, single
190b semi-double 190c double

191a Lutea Hybrid, yellow, single
191b semi-double 191c double

192a Lutea Hybrid, blend, single
192b semi-double 192c double

193a Lutea Hybrid, pink, single
193b semi-double 193c double

194a Lutea Hybrid, red, single
194b semi-double 194c double

195a Lutea Hybrid, dark red, single
195b semi-double 195c double

196c European tree peony

DIVISION II AMATEUR: Open to exhibitors who raise peonies chiefly for pleasure, sell plants or cut flowers only casually, and do not grow more than 200 plants.

Class 201 American Peony Society Award
Ten varieties, any type or color
One bloom each in separate containers.

Three blooms, one variety lactiflora only, unless otherwise stated, in one container.

Class 205 Double white or blush
206 Double pink 210 Japanese any color
207 Double red 211 Single any color
208 Semi-double any color 212 Hybrid any color
209 Bomb any color 213 Tree any type or color

One bloom lactiflora unless stated otherwise.

Class 220 Double white 225 Semi-double any color
221 Double blush 226 Bomb any color
222 Double light pink 227 Japanese any color
223 Double dark pink 228 Single any color
224 Double red 229 Hybrid any type or color

DIVISION III NOVICE: Open to all amateur gardeners who exhibit peonies only at local shows.

Class 301 American Peony Society Award
Five varieties any type or color in separate containers.

Three blooms one variety lactiflora, unless otherwise stated, in one container.

Class 305 Double any color
306 Semi-double, any color **308 Single, any color**
307 Japanese, any color **309 Hybrid, any color**

One bloom lactiflora, unless otherwise stated, in one container.

Class 315 Double white or blush
316 Double pink **320 Japanese any color**
317 Double red **321 Single any color**
318 Semi-double any color **322 Hybrid any color**
319 Bomb any color **323 Tree any color**

DIVISION IV: Seedlings and New Varieties.

Class 401 Seedlings.
Three blooms, one variety in one container, not currently introduced.
Variety must have been divided at least once.
Must be shown under name or seedling number.

402 New Varieties:
Three blooms, one variety in one container. Limited to varieties named and registered with the American Peony Society and introduced no earlier than five years prior to show date.
Awards given in the two preceding classes may be Certificates of Merit or Honorable Mention at the discretion of the judges, but no ribbon awards. Varieties having won either award in previous competition may not be shown again in that class, except that varieties shown in class 401 may be shown again in class 402 regardless of awards.

403 Seedlings:
One bloom. This class is for display only.
No awards will be given and any seedling entered in class 401 is ineligible.

DIVISION V: Special Entries.

Class 501 Commercial Exhibit.

Collection by commercial grower of 25 to 50 varieties in separate containers. A placard approximately 9" x 14" may be furnished by the exhibitor to identify his display.

502 Visitor from greatest distance.

Five different varieties any type. Mileage verified on entry tag.

503 Multiple bloom.

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

Class 504 North Dakota Memorial Award

Five full doubles, named varieties, any color.

One bloom each separate container.

One entry per family.

This class not considered for Class VI.

DIVISION VI: Court of Honor Candidate Class

Court of Honor blooms will be selected from this Division.

Exhibitors are urged to enter their best bloom and are limited to two in each class.

Judges may select two blooms from the floor in addition to placements, for consideration of Grand Champion on the Court of Honor.

One bloom Lactiflora

Class 601 Double white

602 Double blush

603 Double light pink

604 Double dark pink

605 Double red

606 Bomb any color

607 Semi-double any color

608 Japanese any color

609 Single any color

One bloom Hybrid or Species

Class 610 Double any color

611 Semi-double any color

612 Single any color

613 Japanese any color

One bloom Tree

Class 614 Lutea any type or color

615 European any type or color

616 Japanese any type or color

Class 617 One bloom Itoh Hybrid any color.

Grand Champion

The best flower in the show will be selected from all named entries in the show.

DIVISION VI. ARTISTIC DIVISION

THEME: LAND OF LINCOLN

All artistic designs will be placed on round tables 60" in diameter. Space for each exhibit will be one quarter of the table. Background will be white and will be 40" high at the 90 degree angle in the center, tapering toward the edge of the table.

Each exhibitor may furnish an underlay or base if desired, and may also use a background or draped fabric fitting to the space provided. Table tops are brown.

CLASS 1. Welcome to the Land of Lincoln: An exhibition table. This is a table not related to actual food service. The exhibit is artistically designed to provide a creative concept showing the coordination of all components; floral design, napkin, plate and table covering or underlay. A table exhibit must display a unified whole.

CLASS 2. Michigan Shores: A naturalistic design emphasizing water-viewing and for water reflection—using a minimum of plant material.

CLASS 3. Happy Hunting Grounds: A creative design to honor the prairie Indians. Accessories would be appropriate, but plant material must dominate.

CLASS 4. Chicago's Distant Skyline: A creative vertical design—a single skyscraper or an entire skyline. Reach! (Amusing note: "Chicago" in "Indian" means "wild onion-smelly swamp.")

ARTISTIC DIVISION RULES

1. An exhibitor may make only one entry per class. All must be the work of the exhibitor.

2. Peonies should be featured in all arrangements. Peonies need not be grown by the exhibitor, and some will be available from the committee.

3. Accessories and/or bases may be used in all classes.

4. No artificial flowers or foliage are permitted.

5. A minimum of treated plant material is permissible.

6. Entries must be placed from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, May 29th and from 7 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 30th, in the conservatory.

7. While the show management will exercise due caution in safeguarding exhibits, it cannot assume responsibility for injury or loss.

8. Personally owned properties must be claimed immediately after the show closes at 5 p.m., Sunday, May 31st.

9. Each class is restricted to four entries. Advance reservations are required by May 23rd to Janet Thelander, 2024 N. Brighton Place, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60004; phone: 708/253-7696.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Vernon Kidd, New York, NY 10036

GROWING PEONIES ON FIRE ISLAND

Fall fell with no new Peonies on order. Hurricane Bob, which devastated parts of the East Coast, roared past Fire Island just forty miles offshore, leaving us relatively unscathed, although without electricity for a couple of days. Sitting through that awesome "Sound and Light Show" was a sobering revelation; yet the calm which followed was serenely beautiful, and what a sunset!

Sandy soil is the drawback in growing Peonies on Fire Island, and whatever success I have had with them has hinged on the amount of good top soil worked into the planting holes. This, plus generous amounts of bonemeal, both facts learned from an article by Clarence Lienau in "*The American Hybrid Peony*," has accounted for the most spectacular display of peony blooms to date.

I did order David Reath's 1990 introduction, **Pink Pearl**, which I had seen in "*The American Hybrid Peony*," but it was sold out for the season. The color in the photograph on page 64 is lovely and is similar to one I had seen awhile back in a bouquet from a supplier in the New York City area. It is a shame that florists don't bother to name their peonies as they do roses. Simply calling them red, pink or white is a disservice to such extraordinary flowers.

The unusually warm Spring, which produced August weather in June, and the earliest fruit harvest on Long Island in thirty years, also resulted in the most prolific Peony year in our garden. First to bloom was the eagerly awaited herbaceous hybrid from Chris Laning, "**Sunny Girl**." The healthy division he sent, with enormous eyes, produced four large light-yellow blooms with two almost as large side buds, which bloomed after the others had finished.

Receiving it too late to plant in the Fire Island garden, as we had closed the house for the season, I planted it in a large plastic container (following assurances from you that it would work). This **Sunny Girl** peony, mulched from spare Christmas tree branches from a local tree distributor, spent the Winter on a cold sunny terrace, 41 stories above the streets of Manhattan. One day in early March, we took it to the Island, and without disturbing the root system, placed it into a prepared hole, adding more humus, topsoil and bonemeal. It was the first to bloom, a week earlier than the heretofore first—**Red Grace**—as usual stunning in its impact.

One enormous **Red Grace** perfumed an entire room for over a week. I remain grateful to Klehm's Nursery for sending a color brochure back in 1978, showing a **Red Grace**, along with pictures of their gorgeous Estate Peonies. I never thought they would grow in the sandy soil of the Island, but finally ordered three or four divisions. In spite of my clumsy first attempts, **Red Grace** produced three large flowers the following season and has continued to make the Spring a joy. All of those first Estate peonies did well, and I added **Pillow Talk** just last year.

Other enchanters were **Myrtle Tischler**, **Myra MacRae** (a delicate

fragrant beauty), **Cheddar Cheese**, **Red Charm** (which gets enough attention and is stunning like its sibling), **Mrs. F.D.R.** (bloomed generously the first time last year), **My Pal Rudy**, **Charlie's White**, **Whopper** (why don't they rename this lovely flower?), **Moon River**, **Coral Charm**, **Raspberry Ice**, **Vivid Rose**, **Elsa Sass**, **Pink Derby**, **Bridal Icing**, **Emma Klehm**, and back in bloom after a severe set-back, **Pink Jazz**. Another outstanding Peony, which I have come to take for granted is **Douglas Brand**, faithfully gracing the garden with its large blooms.

Walking into the Royal Botanical Gardens exhibition room last June in Hamilton, Ontario, and observing others respond as they entered, I realized that we were all experiencing a special sense of wonder, which words cannot adequately describe, at the beauty on display. One of my New Year's resolutions will be to attend next year's convention and exhibition.

During a California trip in October, I visited Filoli Garden, mentioned in the September *Bulletin*. It is an interesting tour, but, of course, Spring is the best time to enjoy it. As my sister lives in nearby San Mateo, Calif., I will ask her to check out Filoli's Peony treasures when in bloom.

We also visited Yosemite; a trip to California seems incomplete without stopping at the Ahwahnee Hotel there, and for the first time I also went to Sequoia. The latter visit was curtailed by an early snowfall, which, though beautiful, made driving hazardous without snow tires or chains. Just a few miles backtracking returned us to warm sunny weather in the San Joaquin Valley. I enjoyed reading Robert Schmidt's message in the December *Bulletin*, referring to both places so recently visited.

One year I joined a group of friends for the special Old English Christmas dinner at the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite. The trees were blanketed with snow, and there was a hushed magical spell over the valley. On our recent visit, there was evidence of the long California drought and subsequent fires, which had left scars on Yosemite's forest. It is heartbreaking to me, particularly when you realize it will take hundreds of years for the trees to be replaced.

Driving up the California coast from Carmel on our final day, we detoured through the narrow band of Coastal Redwoods north of Santa Cruz and between the Pacific Coast and Palo Alto. On entering this stately forest, a hushed spell again took over. The rustic community of Woodside is just inside this forest's eastern boundary and is near Filoli Gardens. A few turns later on the two-lane road, all of a sudden trucks and cars, hurtling along the freeways to Silicone Valley, bring the hustle and bustle of today intruding upon the magic.

Add my congratulations and thanks for your twenty-year service to the American Peony Society. Also thank you for sharing the lovely corner view of your garden on the cover of the September *Bulletin*.

Wishing you and all the Society members outstanding bloom in 1992.

Best regards,
Vernon Kidd

THOUGHTS OF ORVILLE FAY

by Roy Klehm

I stood in awe in front of a small display table in Orville Fay's Northbrook, Illinois, living room. Two Stout Medals and three Dykes Awards were there in front of me. Wow! These were awarded to this one remarkable person. This is like winning five gold medals in Olympic Speed Skating. Quite extraordinary and most likely not possible today.

Stout Medals, of course, are only given once each year to a variety, through a difficult long-term evaluation and elimination process. To win one is exciting, but to win two is exceptional. The Dykes Awards are also given singly and annually in this country to a deserving Iris variety. To win three of these . . . well, it's almost unthinkable!

Orville also hybridized very fine world-class herbaceous peony hybrids. **Blaze, Prairie Moon, Paula Fay and Coral Fay** are his introductions. A peony specialist grower could almost make his entire living from raising these four varieties—they are that good.

Orville worked as a color and taste expert for a large candy manufacturer in Chicago. His then "country" retreat on Pfingsten Road in Northbrook (I have a relative named Pfingsten) was about 7 or 8 acres and enjoyed extensively by he and his wife for a wide range of gardening and hybridizing. Orville's eye for candy colors helped him well as he used this eye for flower color as well.

He had a reputation for being ornery and very opinionated but I never found him this way. Maybe as a then-young man I expected older, successful gardening people to be slightly eccentric. If they were, I reasoned, they earned this right.

Orville was free with his information and taught me much. He also allowed me to obtain starting propagation stock of many of his newer and rarer hemerocallis and peony introductions. He was genuine . . . as a person and as a plantsman.

His better Hemerocallis varieties still popular today are: **Mary Todd, Irish Limerick, Northbrook Star, Erin Prairie, and Green Fringe.**

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BLAZE—Single bright red hybrid

Coral Fay—Semi-double radiant pink hybrid

PAULA FAY—Semi-double radiant rose pink hybrid.

Gold Medal Peony.

PRAIRIE MOON—Semi-double creamy yellow hybrid.

TREE PEONY TALK

N. J. Harrop, 17 Auvergne Ave., New Town (Hobart) Tasmania

It's been years since I last wrote, but silence does not imply inattention to all that is written in the *A.P.S. Bulletins*. They have been arriving every quarter without a miss for well nigh 20 years.

Nomenclature has always been a drum I've thumped to, so I'd like to express my thanks to Greta for all her hard work in compiling the books, and the Nomenclature Committee for now having the American lutea hybrids' names well documented.

I am delighted to find that the Japanese have finally, after 1400 years, started the mammoth task of standardizing their nomenclature. This has been documented in a wonderful book compiled and issued by the Japanese Peony Society, which, thanks to Greta's advice, I purchased. This book is the Japanese Peony Grower's bible for all countries. Although all named Japanese varieties have not been covered, over 300 have, with colored photos of them all. No doubt, as the years go by, the Japanese, with their penchant for thoroughness, will cover them all, and probably add an internationally-accepted color code to each flower to compensate for the inability of any known photographic process to faithfully reproducing the subtleties of pink/blue shadings. NOTE: all names and vital information are given in English.

What I forgot to mention is that a PEONY (as opposed to a tree peony or a herbaceous peony) automatically means a tree peony and not a HERBACEOUS peony, as generally appears accepted in America. These have been my love for more years than I care to remember. It is most interesting and gratifying to find they are receiving more and more attention in the *Bulletin* since the early 70's, and acquiring more and more ardent disciples.

Having now grafted and sold many thousand (all done by me, not assistants), it was no comfort to read of late in a letter of mine published in a 1975 *A.P.S. Bulletin* that I was claiming a 50% success rate in grafting (i.e. from initial grafting to 21/2-year-old plants), and at that time was disappointed with the results. Now, after copious record-keeping experiments and searching for a common ability in failures, I'm still only about 55% successful. This is a miserable improvement.

All commercial propagation of tree peonies I've spoken to are extremely coy when asked the direct question: 'What is your success rate from grafting to sale?' I can well remember when in America posing this question to a propagator who cautiously said, 'about 70%.' When expressing my surprise and intrigue saying that mine were about 50% and only under freak conditions, which I'd never been able to capture, did I achieve 70%, he rather sheepishly admitted that the same figure would be more applicable to his results also. Was he being kind to me? Was he being fair? I'll never know!

The main purpose of writing this time is to pass along a warning to the unwary. For about the past five or six years I've been concerned about my mother stock plants being less than robust in the Spring when

starting to flower, but recovering over the next three months. Initially, I thought that it might have been from using Radiata pine bark as a mulch for so long which was altering the balance in the soil, so I gave up using it. I also had the soil analyzed to no avail. Then last Spring 1990, the growth really worried me with sclerotic and deformed leaves and ragged flowers, on about 40% of the plants, indicating some dreaded but unknown virus. So I sought the help of the Federal Plant Pathologist who, upon inspection, agreed that it looked like a virus or a fungus. After several visits to obtain roots, leaves, stems, and flower samples, he grew unpregnated cucumber plants, inspected under electro-nucroscopl and heaven knows what!! The final conclusions were "No pathogens evident."

One of several possibilites discussed was weedicides. I pointed out that each Winter while the plant was dormant I sprayed the Winter weeds, right up to the buffs of the trees, but used a wand and cowl to minimize drift.

This possibility was discarded particularly as the trees were dormant and covered in brown bark which are reputedly safe from 'Roundup' (a Glyphosate product).

As a desperate last throw of the dice, it was decided to get the State weed expert in, who, as soon as he saw the sickly plant, said "Glyphosis! A classic case. You have been using 'Roundup' or 'Zero.'" "Yes, but only in Winter, when they are dormant," I replied. "It doesn't matter," he said, "the more we experiment with the chemical glyphosate, the more species we find susceptible to it. Even if they have brown bark and are reputedly dormant, they still have buds which are affected when Spring growth starts, some species and even some varieties more than others."

It has become so prevalent that the word "Glyphosis" has been coined to cover the symptoms of Glyphosate poisoning. So be warned! This Spring (Aug. 10th) they are clawing their way back to health and apart, for about 5% are now looking healthier than in years.

I wonder if my grafting rate will improve!

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Disbudding Peonies

Removing the side buds from a stem will make the center or terminal bud a larger, better flower. This should be done when they are about the size of a pea. Take the bud between the thumb and forefinger and give it a quick outward twist and it will break off with no damage to the stem. If the main stem is damaged in the process it may cause the center bud to die.

Usually the terminal bud will open before the side buds do which often open all at once.

So, to get a fine bouquet of blooms, remove the terminal bud and you will have from three to five, or more flowers only slightly smaller than the center bud would have made, all on the same stem. The blooming period is often prolonged for a particular plant for from one to two weeks by not disbudding.

PEONIES & CEMETERIES

Andrew J. Ward, Washington

Experience of my own, combined with comments of associates, have revealed several observations of interest about peonies in cemeteries. With this, I'll suggest some answers to Olin Frazier's question in the Dec. 1990 *Bulletin*, pg. 9, "Why don't cemetery plantings seem susceptible [to disease]?" After addressing his question, several comments about plantings are offered.

Internment sites are usually in isolated locations. The peonies are rarely seen in large concentrations as found within nurseries, in solid-stand field culture, or even as in our own crowded gardens, which concentration intensifies disease. Also, these memorial areas tend to approach the peonies' natural habitat of higher ground and well drained soil.

My observations have been in the dry Summer and cold Winter climate of Eastern Oregon, although the principles noted would apply elsewhere. The plants almost never have their dead foliage removed. They are never mulched, cultivated, fertilized or watered. Their growing season is after the late Fall rains and in the Spring through mid-June when dry weather begins. During Summer, the plants go dormant. Even with these conditions they do quite well. Incidentally, this may answer another of Mr. Frazier's questions in the same Dec. article. I'm told that divisions can be made with good results from plants that die down in August or earlier under the dry Eastern Oregon conditions. His question, no doubt, was with reference to die down because of wet or diseased conditions. If the plant has died back, and gone dormant and has not been totally killed by disease, division should be possible.

When looking at these plants, memory needs to serve us. Most of them were set out from 1910 through the 1930's, and a few even pre-date these years. We are observing plants 50 to 80-plus years old. The divisions planted were originally taken from well established species peonies, mostly *Officinalis rubra*, and a few *rosa* and *alba*. This brings us to a final, not so obvious factor. Any weaker or unadapted specimens have long ago disappeared leaving the best for our generation to observe. Then we wonder why our plantings of a few years in crowded gardens, show all the challenges in the book.

Now, a few comments about the old country graveyards. They have been partially maintained in a manner that required the least work and expense. In recent years various soil sterilants and herbicides have been indiscriminately applied. Most of the iris and all the wild flowers, bulbs, lilacs, junipers, and all other flowers, and shrubs have disappeared. Many of the locust trees have also died. Only the peonies remain. Apparently they have a high tolerance for herbicides. No new seedlings have been observed. The herbicides may inhibit their growth and establishment. References have not been found on herbicides and peonies. No new plants have been found in

the abandoned portions of this habitat either, where herbicidal chemicals have not been directly applied. However, spray drift from adjacent fields could have an affect. Although root divisions establish new plants, the seedlings may not withstand the rigorous weather and soil treatment conditions.

In these areas of herbicide application, I have set peony roots into holes with new soil and most are doing quite well. The only plantings showing stress are located in a cemetery almost totally covered by pine trees. Pitch and resin from the needles and bark seem to inhibit growth. Only the trial of time will determine establishment.

Here are a few notes for those planting into country locations. Recommendations of standard fertilizers, bonemeal, fish meal, compost and various commercial formulations present some challenges. Country cemeteries are traversed and inhabited by squirrels, raccoon, badger, skunks, etc. These critters dig toward the odor of animal products. Commercial fertilizers formulated from salts of various elements add more species to the list. Deer, elk, and cattle are attracted. They lick the ground for salt. I've seen salt licks in the timber land two feet in diameter and over a foot deep. Compost, manure, and cottonseed meal presents yet another attraction for digging rodents. It would be understated to say, these animal activities may destroy a planting.

Only a narrow spectrum of products is left to feed peonies in this type of location. Work is being done with various materials in the hope of results of a later report.

I never use animal products or seed meals in rural locations. Care is exercised to bury other types of material. No information on the relative merits of various formulations including trace elements has been found with reference to these perennials.

Little data seems available on varieties other than the *Officinalis* group. Myron Bigger suggests *Shawnee Chief* as the best for cemeteries, however its bloom may be a bit late for Memorial Day in Eastern Oregon. I'd like to hear from someone who has successfully used other varieties. Let's set out more of these hardy, easy to keep plants for our ancestors to enjoy, or is it for their posterity to enjoy?

Hopefully these observations will be of value to someone. I've not seen cemetery plantings in the literature to any extent. Here's suggesting another use of peonies, and wishing you an exciting project with a few hints for memorial beautification.

I would like information on the following. Has anyone tried varieties for this use in Eastern Oregon, Washington, and Idaho other than the *Officinalis* species? What is the peonies' reaction to various herbicides and soil sterilants? Is there information on fertilizer formulation, rates, use, etc.?

—A Pacific Northwest peony grower,
Andrew J. Ward
4104 Arbordale W., Tacoma, Washington 98466

A CONCERN ABOUT BENLATE

by Charlie Kroell, Troy, Michigan

In-between lily shows, bulb sales and special occasions, my friend, Bill Craig, and I communicate by letter and telephone. Bill's letters are always especially welcome, not only because they are invariably filled with interesting lily talk but also because of the enclosures. In season these can conclude seeds or pollen, but **always** there are gems of the printed word which Bill has clipped from his beloved Wall Street Journal. In any given collection these can cover a broad spectrum of subject matter, although rarely, if ever, is some aspect of horticulture not represented.

In a recent missive from Bill there was included one rather lengthy article which caught my attention immediately and which became and remains the source of no little consternation as the new growing season approaches. I feel it is important that the APS membership be apprised of this report. For those who may not already be aware of it, following is a brief synopsis:

The article concerns a problem—a very significant problem—with the fungicide Benlate in its new dispersible granule, or "dry flowable," form. This formulation (not the wettable powder which most of us have used for two decades) was pulled from the market by Dupont last March after it had been convincingly linked to major nursery crop damage and associated large financial losses around the country—in forty states, with Florida being hardest hit. Numerous lawsuits (over 1000 in Florida alone) and a major countersuit have been filed, and University of Florida research scientists have been searching for an explanation. Apparently the major adverse effect upon plants has been growth inhibition, although yellowing and death of young plants and "stunted roots" were specifically mentioned also. The toxic effect is reported to be exacerbated by heat, light and humidity. One theory is that "inert" ingredients used in the formulation may be to blame. The article refers to this "Benlate poisoning" as "one of the most mysterious, and potentially most costly, pesticide debacles the U.S. has seen."

What strikes *fear* in my heart is the concern which was expressed for the possibility of "residual problems"—in effect, lingering contamination which could affect future growth cycles or plantings. This appears to be somewhat more than speculation at this point (i.e., at the time of the article) and is troubling.

Last season I used dispersible granular Benlate for the first time, primarily in a mix with Captan and Maneb as a spray for my many peonies—at least three applications. I observed no growth stunting (the plants were probably pretty well up at the time of the first application, though, if I remember correctly); but many of the plants did demonstrate an unsightly chlorosis to varying degrees. Since I had

experienced this with the peonies to a *limited* degree in recent years and also have been struggling with a mysterious yellowing of many of my lilies since 1985, I had assumed (and guess I really still do) that my "Yellow Plague," as I 'affectionately' call it, was now rising to smite the peonies as well. So I'm not pointing a finger at the Benlate . . . but can't help wondering.

In any event, I'd assume that the new formulation probably won't be available again in the foreseeable future; but it would seem prudent to avoid use of any leftover supplies—that is, unless your own personal experience has been positive and hasn't suggested any trace of a problem. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.

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REGISTRATIONS

STEVE VARNER (D. Steve Varner, Monticello, Illinois)—Dec. 13, 1991

Seedling #V2085 herbaceous hybrid, double

Parentage (Arcturus x Hollingsworth #95, little red x sib.)

First year bloomed 1982

"Hot pink" red double ball, good substance, reliable, stamens and pollen

Height 32" midseason bloom, foliage, August deciduous

This bright red double hybrid is a classic, in that it has garden value that gives it individuality

This peony is named after my father, Steve Varner.

ILLINI POM POM (D. Steve Varner, Monticello, Illinois)—Dec. 13, 1991

Seedling #V8406, double lactiflora, first bloomed 1978

This rose pink, double, ball form has good substance, no stamens, most reliable. 34" in height, good stem strength which carried flowers like rose popcorn balls. Dark green foliage, late season for bloom.

BERTHA VARNER (D. Steve Varner, Monticello, Illinois)—Dec. 13, 1991

Seedling #8021, semi-double tree peony, parentage, (Domoto's hybrid x self)

First bloomed in 1988. Lilac lavender, ruffled semi-double tree peony has a deeper flare of rose that radiates well into the bloom. It blooms above the foliage, low dense branching. After four years, it grows 30 inches in height, vigorous, has pollen, seeds, stamens. Early to mid season bloom.

Named after my mother, Bertha Varner.

PRAIRIE CHARM (Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Jan. 17, 1992). Seedling number Hollingsworth 816, herbaceous, woody (tree peony) Itoh Hybrid, parentage **Miss America** x **Lutea Hybrid Alice Harding** — first bloomed before 1980.

This Itoh Hybrid is semi-double, light yellow with prominent red-purple flames, stigmas, sheath and filaments creamy white, carpels green, anthers yellow with small amount of pollen. Medium size flower with 20-30 petals. Sometimes irregularly toothed at petal ends. 26-30 inches in height with excellent stem strength.

EARLY GLOW (Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 17, 1992).

Seedling #945, single hybrid.

Parentage, Saunders seedling of **Roselette's Child** x **Cream Delight**.

First year bloomed, before 1980.

This early pastel buffy ivory, single, hybrid has crimson stigmas with large flowers set close to the foliage. Sidebuds which extend flowering into midseason. Broad bush, good substance, fertile excellent in the landscape. Height to 30 inches.

DEAREST (E.L. Roy Pehrson/Don Hollingsworth, Jan. 17, 1992).

Seedling number Hollingsworth 1423, single hybrid.

Parentage, Hybrid **Dawn Glow** x unknown. First bloomed before 1980.

Early Pastel's Hybrid, single very early to early, patterned with cream white petals edged and veined cool sharp pink, lighter at center, medium tall, broad bush, large leaflets, unique colored flower. Fertile both ways, presumed tetraploid. This seedling #1423 grown from seed produced by E.L. Roy Pehrson. Seed parent **Dawn Glow** (Bulletin #257), pollen parent not known. Very strong stems, 30-34 inches in height.

SUPER GLOW (Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri, Jan. 17, 1992)

Seedling number 685, parentage *Paeonia lactiflora* **Lady Alexandria Duff** x **Clair de Lune**. First bloomed before 1980.

Full double hybrid, RHS color chart: overall 18D yellow orange (pale) with variable suffusion of 51D, peace.

Strong stems, 30-36 height, large dark green foliage, disease tolerant, large flower, reliable. No stamens or carpels found. This hybrid, backcross to *lactiflora*, looks *lactiflora* except the yellow color which remains distinct to petal fall. Certificate of Merit, 1991.

STUDY ON THE CHINESE WILD WOODY PEONIES (I) *NEW TAXA OF PAEONIA L.* *SECT. MOUTAN DC.*

Hong Tao, Zhang Jia-Xun, Li Jia-Jue, Zhao Wen-Zhong, Li Ming-Rui

ABSTRACT

Woody Peony is a kind of precious flower and medicinal tree endemic to China, which has had a cultivation history of over 1500 years. So far, there are over 500 cultivars in China.

Most of the research on the classification of woody peony and the description and identification of peony species was conducted by scientists of the western countries on the basis of the peony plants and specimens introduced into England, USA and France, etc. from China during the 18-19th century.

In recent years, the author has conducted a series of investigation and study on Chinese wild woody peonies in Anhui, Henan, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces of China.

The present paper proposes 3 new species and 1 new status of Chinese wild woody peonies. This achievement leads to provide the scientific and theoretical basis for the study on the origin and natural classification of peony cultivars and exploitation, protection, utilization of Chinese precious, rare and endangered gene resources of wild woody peonies as well as the hybridization of new cultivars and expansion of peony cultivated area, etc.

Osti's Peony (*Paeonia ostii* T. Hong et J. X. Zhang sp. nov.)

The species name *ostii* is dedicated to Dr. Gian Lupo Osti, the Italian Vice President of International Dendrology Society. We do appreciate his friendly, valuable and precious help to promote the scientific research of Chinese wild woody peonies!

Osti's Peony differs from **Rock's Peony** and its congeners are in more or less lanceolate leaflets with entire margin, glabrous beneath and 4-7 pairs of veins, the terminal leaflets 1-3 lobed; petals white or slightly tinged with dilutely reddish color, but without purple basal blotch; filaments, disks and styles dark purplish red all together.

Jishan Peony (*Paeonia jishanensis* T. Hong et M. R. Li sp. nov.)

It differs from *P. suffruticosa* Andr. subsp. *spontanea* (Rehd.) Haw & Lauener in its white flowers and without petaloid stamens.

A. Rehder, an American dendrologist, identified and nominated it as a new variety (*P. suffruticosa* Andr. var. *spontanea* Rehd.) in 1920, based on the specimen No. 338 collected by A. Purdom in 1910 at a place located at 25 kilometers away from the west of Yanan. The original Latin description of its main characteristics is: "floribus roseis, interdum staminibus petaloideis praeditis" (flowers roseate, sometimes presence of petaloid stamens).

In 1990, S. G. Haw & L. A. Lauener changed Rehder's variety into subspecies (*P. suffruticosa* subsp. *spontanea*) and identified the white-flowered wild peony which is distributed over Majiagou Jishan County in Shanxi Province at the alt. 1450 m to the same subspecies. [*in Edinburgh Journal of Botany* 47 (3): 278-279 (1990)]

The author thinks that the petaloid stamens is one of the most important characteristics of Peony Cultivars originating from wild species after cultivation. It shouldn't be confused with wild peony. Therefore, Haw's subspecies should be lowered and changed to cultivar. The Jishan Peony is an undoubted wild woody peony species.

Yanan Peony (*Paeonia yananensis* T. Hong et M. R. Li sp. nov.).

It's a rare and endangered wild woody peony species which has a superficial resemblance to Rock's Peony being dark purplish blotched at the base of petals, but is easily distinguished by few leaflets (up to 11), smaller and dilutely purplish roseate petals, reddish purple stigma and disk, etc.

Rock's Peony (*Paeonia rockii* [Haw & Lauener] T. Hong et J. J. Li stat. nov.).

It's identified and nominated by S. G. Haw & L. A. Lauener as a new subspecies (*P. suffruticosa* Andr. subsp. *rockii*) based on **Rock's Variety** which was bred from seeds collected by an American Geographer, Joseph Rock in 1925-1926 from a peony with big white flower and dark purple basal blotch in a lamasery of Choni County in the south of Gansu Province. [*in Edinb. J. Bot.* 47 (3) 279-280 (1990)]

The author of Genus *Paeonia* of Fl. Reip. Pop. Sin. was mistaken to identify the peony with white flower and dark purple basal blotch which is distributed over the south of Gansu and Mt. Taibai of Shaanxi Provines, etc. as *Paeonia suffruticosa* Andr. *papaveracea* (Andr.) Kerner.

H. C. Andrews, a British plant taxonomist, studied a peony plant with white flower and dark purple basal blotch, which was introduced to England from Guangzhou, China, and cultivated in the garden of Sir Abraham Hume, and identified and nominated it as a new species, *Paeonia papaveracea* Andr. in 1806. After that, Kerner changed it as a variety, *P. suffruticosa* Andr. var. *papaveracea* (Andr.) Kerner in 1816.

Bean, a British scientist, studied the peony planted in the Sir Abraham Hume Garden. He thought it was neither a species nor a variety and reduced it as a cultivar, *P. suffruticosa* Andr. cv. 'Papaveracea.'

The author thinks that *Paeonia suffruticosa* Andr. is a name for a big group of various cultivars while **Rock's Peony** is a wild woody peony species, from which originated a series of cultivars. So the author raised Haw's subspecies to species grade, *Paeonia rockii* (Haw & Lauener) T. Hong et J. J. Li stat. nov.

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SPECIES—Dott. Gian Lupo Osti, Italy

"Ten days ago I was in Sardinia making a long trek in the mountains and I was really enchanted. It is very difficult (for not saying impossible) to find in Western Europe so large an area of complete wilderness. I saw many peonies always *Paeonia mascula ssp. russii* (in Sardinia *P. mascula mascula* is found just in a very limited area). But the extraordinary thing is that I found a plant, a very vigorous one, with dark crimson flowers, stems and leaf veins, which had a very strong scent of clove: I took a flower and it perfumed all of my hotel room! Do you know if anybody found previously such a perfumed peony? I have taken some pictures but I don't have them back yet from Kodak. I will send you some and if you think they are worth to publish, please do it. I found the perfumed peony on the southern slopes of Mt. Bruncu Spina, in the Gennargentu Range, in the center of Sardinia, at an altitude of approx. 1500 m.

"Anyway, I will keep you informed how my book is progressing. Best wishes and many thanks also for your moral support."

P. officinalis Mollis

—*Irmtraud Rieck, Bad Rappenau-Babstadt, Germany*

"I have never read about *P. officinalis Mollis* in American literature. I've bought this plant at the same nursery Klose where I bought *P. tenuifolia Rosea*. Have you ever heard of this plant? I suppose it is not the species *P. Mollis*, but I'm not sure about that fact. It is extremely worth growing and everybody should have it. Since I got this plant, it is always the first blooming peony in our garden; it blooms before the *tenuifolias* and all *suffruticosas*. It is a rose colored single, about 50cm high, has stiff stems, and needs no stalks to hold it. That's important to me as a lazy person. In my garden it always blooms around the end of April or beginning of May. It increases well and got some shoots from the end of its roots, easy to dig without disturbing the mother plant. All young plants I gave away as a gift but should keep one to bring in another part of the garden because nearby trees seem to stress by their roots. It sets seeds freely, but I never tried to sow the seeds but gave them all away.

"My problem with peonies is I would like to grow some very late ones, but do not like the filled ones that lie down because of their weight. We do more prefer the single hybrids or the Japanese ones. Are there very late attractive singles or Japanese hybrids?

We were so lucky to hear that finally peony *White Cap* got a gold medal. It is so worth the prize! As I first saw the plant I fell in love with it and was anxious to get it. It's a perfect peony, healthy, a real beauty, and besides, a wonderful smell. I wished some of the

very pretty hybrids would smell too! (To say the truth, some of them smell horrible). But human beings are never satisfied. It's a shame.

"Just to tell quickly how our season was this year—not the best! We had a warm Winter and then an extreme frost in late April, where all orchard blossoms were killed. It even destroyed the buds of my *P. suff. Rock's Variety* (I do hope it's the true one because it comes true from seeds and this is another story to chat about in my next letter) where I have lists of people waiting for seeds. In Summer, we had a drought for more than 8 weeks with unusual hot days. The newspaper said it was the hottest Summer since 1947. Let's hope we will not get the same Winter like in 47/48.

My husband and I wish you all the best—a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

* * * * *

**Sevald Nursery, from:
Staffan Lindqvist Ostersund, Sweden**

*—Submitted by Mr. Sevald for the Bulletin,
Minneapolis, Minnesota*

"Thank you for the letter and peony catalogs. It was interesting to read about your weather this past Autumn. I live in a cold and snowy area myself. Ostersund is the administrative center of Jemtland, a county in northern Sweden. Before 1645, Jemtland was a part of the united Denmark-Norway. There are many Norwegians living in Ostersund and every weekend they come here from Trondheim, and from other places in Norway for shopping.

"Jemtland is a Swedish 'upland.' The air is clean and dry. The Winter begins in the end of October. The Summer is short and very intensive. June and July give many hours of sunlight per day. In June, there is almost midnight sun. Everything in the garden is growing fast, and so it must, because the Autumn comes early. It is strange that peonies can thrive here, but they do. However, they must have a place in full sun, well sheltered from the northwest winds.

"The *P. officinalis rubra plena* opens its flowers the first days of July. About the 10th of July, the *lactiflora* varieties begin their flowering season. Some late varieties can be seen in full bloom in the middle of August. I don't know why, but the peony is not as popular a flower in Europe as it is in the U.S. Many garden owners here in Sweden say: 'Well, peonies are beautiful flowers, but they don't keep very long.' Therefore, the nurseries have very few varieties to offer. **Festiva Maxima, Sarah Bernhard, Edulis Superba, Felix Crousse, Karl Rosenfield, Marie Lemoine and Mons. Jules Elie** are the most common varieties that you can buy here. And, of course, the old *Officinalis Rubra Plena* which is called '**Farmers Peony**' in Sweden. Since a year ago, I am a member of The American Peony

Society. It's really interesting to read the *Bulletin*, and I have also bought some of their books and variety Checklists.

"In southern Sweden, there is a nursery which offers some American hybrids and lactiflora varieties. Two years ago I bought some varieties from that nursery. They are yet too young to be at their best, but **Burma Ruby** and **Bowl of Cream** seem to be very promising. This year, in September, I planted a **Paul M. Wild**. I hope it will be a good one.

"Last Summer I saw **Westerner**, **Gay Paree** and **White Cap** in the south of Sweden. They were doing well, but the owner said that **Westerner** was a very slow grower. I think that different climates make the flowers look somewhat different. In your 1991 Catalog, there is a picture of **Gay Paree**. The one I saw in the Swedish garden had darker guard petals in a warm color tone with less cerise-lavender than in your picture. The center was more creamy white with a very distinctive rose color in the very middle. Guard petals on **White Cap** were not dark pink (as described in the APS Checklists)—they were a crimson with some blue in it. Besides, **White Cap** had a strong fragrance of rose and *Convallaria*, not mentioned in the Checklist.

"Regarding the Colorado beetle, I don't know anything about the Swedish regulations. The Swedish central government agricultural authorities are very scared of everything that is 'foreign': foreign insects, foreign plant diseases, foreign plants. To speak the truth, the Colorado potato beetle isn't a big problem in this country. They will hardly survive the Winters here.

"I send you two picture postcards from my hometown. You can see the church, the town hall, and the medieval church at the Isle of Froso, just outside the town. The flower on the other card is the orchid *Nigritella nigra*. It's our 'province flower' here in Jemtland. Unfortunately, it is very rare. I hope you get a nice Winter with lots of snow to cover your peony fields!"

* * * * *

PEONIES IN 1991

"We had a very good year for bloom but not so good for the plants. I've been plagued for the last three years with much freezing and thawing, too warm winters (as I write this Jan. 14, it is thundering) and all too little snow. Consequently, we are getting a lot of plant heaving and root and crown rot. Oh! for a real 'old fashion' winter in the northeast.

"As to varieties, I'm a fan of the biggies that have stems strong enough to keep the heavy bloom off the ground barring a rain storm. **Oklahoma**, **Madylone**, **First Lady**, **Princess Margaret**, **Highlight** and all the hybrids that grow in my garden qualify. So do **Dolorodell** and **Rose Marie Lins**. Three with lovely bloom that must be picked before they open at all are: **Dinner Plate**, **Mrs. J. V. Edlund**, and **Ann Cousins**. I'm keeping them all!"

THE 1991 PEONY SEASON IN MISSOURI

by Don Hollingsworth

Peony flowering in 1991 was the best it has been for us in six to eight years. Of course, for about six of those years we were moving plants to the new "farm" location (near Maryville in Northwest Missouri). Understandably, some of the current improvement has to do with the attained age of the plants, as well as better care. There was more, however. We had a much better growing season the year before, compared to several previous years. Better growth means more stored food, with better growth and flowering next year.

Many blossoms were cut and stored for later use. While some were used for Memorial Day and for this Society's annual exhibition, others were used at home over the next month and into August. Flowers of **Many Returns**, a homebred bomb double hybrid, overlooked when packing for the exhibition, when taken out in late June (cut mid-May) lasted for six days. Flowers of **LeCharme**, opened in late July, were quite typical. So, starting in late April we had peonies from the garden for almost six weeks, then peonies from the refrigerator for another several weeks.

Peony flowers from the refrigerator were carried dry to Hamilton, Ontario, for exhibition, my first time using no ice or other cold aids. The flowers were removed from refrigeration about 3 a.m. The packages of flowers were placed in a plastic bag for additional humidity control and packed in a "carry-on" size carton to be kept with me. Sometime after noon I disembarked with my box of flowers at the Toronto Airport, and boarded a mini-bus for the warm ride to Hamilton, eventually getting to the exhibition hall work room after 5 p.m.

The flowers came out of the box in good condition. With stems recut and into bottles of water, it was the first water in three weeks for some of them. Next morning, while selecting blossoms for the entries, a **Garden Treasure** specimen was discovered sitting in an empty bottle, still dry after another 16 hours and apparently no worse for the wear. The superior durability of some peonies is well known but this was to me, nevertheless, a startling observation.

While I overlooked taking my flowers of **Many Returns**, the small number of entries which I did stage resulted in two seedling Certificate of Merit awards, while a blossom of **Garden Treasure** was selected to the Court of Honor. In addition, two others of my homebred varieties, **Show Girl** and **Border Charm** were selected first in class for Carl Klehm.

The 1991 season was good to me for hybridizing, too. Numerous clones kept for my breeding program had returned to usable flowering. Many more crosses were made than in any of the past several years, using both proven pollens, and some being tried for the first time.

A sturdy lutea hybrid seedling, flowering for the first time seems to have been an effective pollinator for both the Itoh cross and with other advanced generation lutea hybrids, as was the introduced lutea hybrid **Zephyrus**.

Among the early pastels tetraploid hybrids, a first flowering seedling proved to be not only a striking novelty but fertile for breeding as well. It has wide petals, decidedly flounced and ruffled, enhanced by a wash of the dusky violet color associated with **May Music** and some others of the Saunders Quads hybrids.

Two effective pollinators in the early hybrids group were two of the introduced Quads, **Athena** and **Winged Victory**, although both are triploids, a condition generally believed to impose comparatively unfavorable breeding results. I also had several seeds of both, those of the latter germinating especially well.

Other much used and effective pollinators were tetraploids with some flower doubling. These are unnamed clones of Laning, Pehrson and Seidl origin, all bred from plants descended from Saunders originations.

As of late December, there were more than 1100 root-germinated seeds from about 140 different seed lots (each lot being a different parent mating). If half of these make it to viable planthood, 1991 might prove to be my most successful breeding year yet, owing to the relatively high incidence of wanted qualities represented among the parents.

A great source of personal satisfaction in the 1991 peony season was a 5-day visit at Chris and Lois Laning's in Michigan studying his peony originations while many of them were in flower. While the pastel colored, early flowering, tetraploid herbaceous peonies dominate this collection, that's not all there is. For example, there was a warm rose colored Itoh hybrid with plum colored flares, a modest sized flower and plant, all parts in scale, that makes quite a finished presentation. There was a stately herbaceous hybrid having large, intense red flowers of matte finish which can stand out in competition. And there was the advanced generation lutea hybrid seedling with a very large, orange blend flower of many petals. Then there was the bi-color rose and yellow flowered herbaceous peony like nothing I have ever seen. Quite a treat.

On the flip side of the record, we have had some unusually wet seasons at inconvenient times and two years of extreme cold much earlier than normal in Autumn. Early December 1990, the temperature went to 20 degrees with no snow cover. Losses of late planted propagation pieces and some regular divisions was considerable. Established plants of several varieties were also lost. It wasn't just damage to peonies. Southwest Iowa tree and shrub growers suffered undue losses, as did many hemerocallis collections.

Early November of 1991 another unseasonable cold wave dumped

below zero temperatures on us with little snow cover. Fortunately, or not to some extent, I had done little replant, having been getting out plants to fulfill local demand to the end of October. The good news was, there should not be a repeat of the 1990 replant losses, the stored up pieces having remained stacked in a cellar way. The bad news was that it rained three inches the last of October, plus more precipitation in November and the field remained too wet to plant.

This was a big year for additions and for propagation, an older planting having been scheduled for digging. By mid-November it had become clear there would be no more field planting. Then some old raised beds, intended for renovation, were covered with plastic against further wetting. After, during periodic thawed periods, plants were close set in these beds, with "weep" irrigation hose under so they could be watered next Summer and have half a chance to grow. The work was completed December 13.

The reason I am so impressed with this is there was in excess of 1200 pieces thusly planted, ranging from standard divisions to small scraps. Not more than 50 replants could be accommodated in existing raised rows, using open spots between other plants. Now, we get to dig the beds next Summer in order to row out the crowded plants. Next year "fall" work is going to start much earlier!

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LETTERS

"We have had ample rain this year, so the blooms next year should be lovely. This year I continued planting peonies in our cemetery, also planted three in a cemetery near Langford. Some are on graves of relatives and some on graves of old friends. Sometimes the relatives helped me. Peonies are planted near the stone, either on the ends or side, so there is no extra mowing. When planting, I put in a barrier to keep the grass from creeping in the roots. Our cemetery had less than ten peonies when I started this project. The six plants planted in 1989 and 1990 are growing very good, and three have bloomed. I ordered eighteen new roots this year. The roots from a year ago, **Mme Butterfly**, **Largo**, and **Crusader** are most beautiful."

—**Irdene Bonger**, Hecia, South Dakota

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"I had three champion blooms in my garden this year. They were **Better Times**, **Westerner** and **Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt**. I have never seen any flower more beautiful than these three. I had some problems this year, due to weather. We had rain from December to April 15th."

—**Roosevelt Turner**, Reform, Alabama

"We had a very good peony year, except for a few very early and a few very late varieties, the first of which froze, and the latter of which blasted due to heat.

"Probably our prize variety this year was **Diana Parks**, with 14 blooms out at one time. It's a brighter red than **Red Charm**, and the bush doesn't turn brown and die so early.

"**Garden Treasure** was lovely as usual. **Red Red Rose** was lovely, with a dozen or more blooms. We like **Pink Derby** very well, but the description of a pink and white tennis ball on a darker pink plate, should have said pink and white soft ball instead. Our bush of **Burning Bright**, three or four years down, was very beautiful, with more than a dozen red and gold flowers, somewhat similar to **Carina** which has a smaller gold center and is one of our top favorites.

"We like **The Fawn** which we think will improve with the years—this was the first year. **Claudia**, a sort-of deep coral red, holds promise. Some are still too new to evaluate, but we like **Mrs. Euclid Snow**.

"**Sylver, Bowl of Cream, Moonstone, and Mother's Choice** are very good. **Old Faithful** is sturdy, vigorous and excellent substance. I think we have finally the real **Alexander Woolcott**, a deep semi-double. **Kansas, Mrs. F.D. Roosevelt, Mary Brand and Paul M. Wild**, all are very fine.

"**Douglas Brand** one of my top varieties, **Myrtle Tischler**, and **Princess Margaret**, are great deep pinks. **Gay Paree** and **White Cap** are exciting.

"**Martha Bullock** was probably our largest this year—about 8 1/2 inches.

"With about 125 plants, it is hard to pick just a few favorites."

—**Harold A. Toms**, Tazewell, Virginia

* * * * *

"I don't know how many years I've been a member but I do know you folks are doing a fine job. I've been interested in peonies for at least 60 years. Some of your members are still around that remember **Cherry Hill Nurseries** in **West Newberry, Massachusetts**. Your 75-year history contains so many names of eastern **Massachusetts** people. When I first received my copy I was quite surprised to see so many charter members of the Society lived in my area. I had always thought of the Society as a midwestern organization. When I was about 10 years old, my folks always took me to the **Massachusetts Horticulture Society** shows, and to **Thurlows** in **West Newbury**. I recently found a 1965 catalog among my keepsakes and about 64 have been rated by numbers. In the catalog, there is the listing for **Ama-no-sode 9.2** which I still have in my garden. At that time, most of the peonies were from \$1.75 and \$2.00. I paid \$3.00 for **Ama-no-sode**. Those were certainly valuable and hard-earned dollars in those days. Thank you for the fine work you are doing."

—**Edwin L. Palmer**, **Winchester, Massachusetts**

"We had a very wet Fall which certainly was welcome after a dry hot summer and dry winter last year. These wet muddy conditions kept me from moving a peony that I really wanted to save. Last Summer gophers burrowed quite close to it. They had already caused damage to rose roots in the area. Trying to prevent the gophers from getting to this peony, I dug a trench around it about one foot beyond where I thought the roots were, intending to move it this Fall. This peony was a seedling which had bloomed for the first time the year before. I had pink, white and red *P. officinalis* in this area where this peony was growing. Early in the Spring I thought, by the foliage, that it was an *officinalis*. The bud was blush pink; it opened white. On fading, it exposed green carpels. On Dec. 8th, I prepared a hole for this plant in an area where I had never been bothered with gophers. The ground was soft and moist, so I moved the plant without any damage. When we moved here about 30 years ago, gopher hills and runs were all through the peony bed. It was suggested that we attach a hose to the lawn mower and then to the gopher holes and let it run, and the exhaust fumes would get rid of them. Smoke came up in all the holes and even out in the pasture. This was unsuccessful, so we used other methods and were rid of them until last Spring."

—Bess Koehler, Boise, Idaho

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"In 1991, on the west coast of Sweden, we had a wonderful year for peonies. I now have about forty kinds of peonies in bloom; also many that I have grown from seed. Sending you some pictures, especially the semi-double, a red-pink, is from seed. It blooms very early in the Spring. Normally peony flowering is the end of April and the beginning of May. Peonies are easy to grow from seed."

—Bengt Lundqvist, Sweden

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"Although we had a rather dry year, the peonies did well. The only tree peony that I have had 8 blossoms. I do not know the name of it because I received it as a gift in 1988, so I hope that it will survive these cold Minnesota winters. I also had a peony bloom from seed that I received from the seed counter in 1987. So I'm hoping that some more of them will bloom this year.

"After reading the article about the southeast Georgia Tree Peony, I decided to have a tree peony shipped to my daughter in Marietta, Georgia. I thought a tree peony would maybe do better there than one of my *P. tenuifolia ruba plena* peonies.

—Arlene Ballard, Lake Park, Minnesota

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"I am sure my dues have expired so I am renewing for another three years. Have gone back and re-read all my previous journals and found answers to some questions. One very fragrant peony is **Big Ben**—one bloom perfumes the whole house. It is the most fragrant of the 80-some peonies that have bloomed for me. I thought **Mother's Choice** was the most soul-satisfying I had. It was such a pleasure to stand and look down at it. My sister, who has about the same number with only twenty or so duplicates of mine, said that she had trouble deciding between **Myra MacRae** and **Painted Desert**. **Myra MacRae** is such a lovely pastel pink and **Painted Desert** was gorgeous. **Raspberry Sundae** did very well for her also.

"We have been to Caprices three times, almost 400 miles. It has poured rain every time we have been there, but we did see peonies. They were cut and inside their shed. We also went to Don Pinyerds after seeing the note in the Journal. He must have 200 plants; it was most enjoyable. We plan to go to Willamette Valley next Summer to see a private collection. Reaths and the New Peony Farm send lovely roots, including orders from Klehm, Wilds, Hildenbrandts, also Myron Bigger. From another place, I received very small roots, some with two eyes. **Ella Christiansen**, **Myrtle Gentry**, **Henry Potin** are still very small and I bought them in 1989. **Red Charm** was gorgeous; frost has damaged it. **Requiem**, **Raspberry Sundae**, **Charlies White** and some others in previous years.

"**Pink Hawaiian Coral**, **Wind Chimes**, **Coral Charm**, **Heidi**, **Lustrious**, **Lois Kelsey**, **Mrs. F.D.R.**, **Pink Derby**, and **Ellen Cowley** have done well. **Legion of Honor** was very pretty at my sister's. The first to bloom for me was **Wind Chimes** on May 21. On July 20, there were still blooms on **Mother's Choice**, **Pink Parfait** and **Mrs. Frank Beach**. I do not disbud, so some of these were side blooms. Most of my peonies start blooming about the first week of June.

"Again, I really enjoy the Journal and use it to help select my purchases. Got 15 new ones this past Fall."

—**Anne Oveson**, Wallowa, Oregon

* * * * *

"I started a new bed last Fall and most of them bloomed. It all turned out so nice that I added another row of plants. The new row was started with a plant from Klehms, followed by **Festiva Maxima**, **Krinkled White**, **Red Charm**, **Christophers**, **Coral**, and **Sarah Bernhardt**. I also have about ten tree peony plants. Planted them three years ago. We have had such crazy weather—freezing one week and in the 70's the next!"

—**Ron Chinnock**, Virginia Beach, Virginia

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THE GOLD MEDAL PEONIES

MRS. A. M. BRAND (Brand, 1925), St. Paul, 1923

A. B. FRANKLIN (Franklin, 1928), Chicago, 1933

MRS. J. V. EDLUND (Edlund, 1929), Chicago, 1933

HARRY F. LITTLE (Nicholls, 1933), St. Paul, 1934

NICK SHAYLOR (Allison, 1931), Syracuse, 1941

ELSA SASS (Sass, H. P., 1930), Minneapolis, 1943

HANSINA BRAND (Brand, 1925), Rockford, 1946

GOLDEN GLOW (Glasscock, 1935), Rockford, 1946

MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT (Franklin, 1933), Guelph, 1948

DORIS COOPER (Cooper, 1946), Milwaukee, 1949

These ten varieties were the ones listed by Mr. Peyton up to the time of his search of records. Since then the following have been added to the list:

RED CHARM (Glasscock, 1944), Dixon, Illinois, 1956

MISS AMERICA (J. R. Mann-Van Steen, 1936), Dixon, IL, 1956

KANSAS (Bigger, 1940), Grand Forks, North Dakota, 1957

MOONSTONE (Murawska, 1943), Minneapolis, 1959

MISS AMERICA (J. R. Mann-Van Steen, 1936), Minneapolis, 1971

NICK SHAYLOR (Allison, 1931), Kingwood Center, Mansfield, OH, 1972

AGE OF GOLD T.P. (Saunders), Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1973

WALTER MAINS (Mains, 1957), Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 1974

BU-TE (Wassenberg, 1954), Kingwood Center, Mansfield, Ohio, 1975

Both **MISS AMERICA** and **NICK SHAYLOR** were awarded a second time because no one remembered they were already among the elite, which emphasizes their excellence.

No Gold Medal awarded from 1975 until 1980.

CYTHEREA (Saunders, 1953), Ithaca, New York, 1980

BOWL OF CREAM (Klehms, 1963), Kingwood Center, 1981

WESTERNER (Bigger, 1942), Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 1982

CHINESE DRAGON (Saunders), Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1983

DOLORODELL (Lins, 1942), Kingwood Center, 1984

BURMA RUBY (Glasscock, 1951), Mahomet, IL, 1985

CORAL CHARM (Wissing, 1964), Minneapolis, 1986

NORMA VOLZ (A. L. Volz, 1968), Kingwood Center, 1987

PAULA FAY (Fay, 1962), Chicago Botanical Gardens, 1988

HIGH NOON (Saunders, 1952 TP.), Janesville, Wisconsin, 1989

SEA SHELL (Sass, 1937), Kingwood Center, Mansfield, Ohio, 1990

WHITE CAP (Winchell, 1956), Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 1991

HEIRLOOM PEONIES

The Winston dictionary defines "Heirloom": as "personal property handed down in a family for generations." We usually think of heirlooms as being artifacts, china, jewelry and a period furniture. I like to think of KELWAY'S GLORIOUS in comparison to a beautiful piece of Heppelwhite or Chippendale.

The life of a peony plant is of such duration that it can and often does outlive the one who planted it. It lends itself to passing on from generation to generation. It is often found growing in front of headstones in cemeteries, planted by loving daughters and sons or grandchildren to keep alive the memory of their dear departed. Many times these peonies were taken from the garden of their loved ones.

What a beautiful way to perpetuate a memory. My interest was piqued a few years ago with this thought. So one day I visited the "Pilgrims Rest Cemetery," the oldest cemetery in Milwaukee, to find out how many peony plants I could find growing at the headstones. In about an hour, I found fourteen. One in particular, had a death date of 1881. Could this peony have been planted at that time? I inquired at the cemetery office and was told there were no known descendants on record. The plant was a double white which I identified as FESTIVA MAXIMA.

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PEONY GARDEN FEATURED IN MIDWEST GARDEN BOOK

Laurie Skrzenta, a long time member of the American Peony Society, has had her garden of peonies featured in the recently released "Midwest Gardens" book by Pamela Wolfe.

This Illinois garden has over 150 varieties of peonies, plus hostas and daffodils as well as other perennials, shrubs and trees. Taking care of 2 1/2 acres can be overwhelming for most but by growing these carefree plants, tedious chores are eliminated. By getting rid of more lawn and including perennials and groundcovers, something she has been doing for years to cut down on her husband's mowing, is how the gardens kept growing. Each fall at least ten new peony varieties are usually added.

Her love affair with peonies began when she received her first bouquet as a child for her Communion from her godfather. It was an impression that lasted a lifetime.

Working part-time as a guide doing Landscape and Bus Tours at Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois provides plenty of opportunity to learn about new and unusual plants, which she likes to add to her garden annually.

In addition to being a member of the American Peony Society, she is also active in 3 Hosta Societies, the Midwest Daffodil Society and is

Arboriculture Chairman for the Garden Clubs of Illinois, plus a local garden club keeps her busy the rest of the year.

Laurie believes gardening should be something you like to do, not have to do and advocates making gardening easier for yourself. After all, summers in Illinois and the Midwest are just too short to spend behind a lawnmower.

* * * * *

FIGHTING PEONY DISEASE

Root decay can be caused by insufficient soil drainage, mulches which hold too much moisture, and from giving poor air circulation about them by too close planting. This last factor increases the damage from poor drainage. There is great variation among different kinds in their resistance to root decay. Red kinds seem to be the most susceptible, but there is wide variation among reds, also. In the new hybrids, where an officinalis (red) x lactiflora (red) is made, it is only natural that some resulting hybrids should be extremely susceptible to root decay. On the other hand, some hybrids, many of them, have a high degree of resistance and great root vigor.

Blight that descends on stems and gets established underground will cause root decay, besides damaging leaves, stems and buds. Hand picking diseased parts and burning them, will often head off an infection at the start. But preventative measures are necessary for control. Spraying is effective, if done before infection has arrived. Bordeaux mixture was standard long ago and is still good, but it and Fermate, which we used next, both clogged the sprayer and made trouble. We then changed to Captan, and it seems to work perfectly. There may be other preparations that are just as good.

A second spray, maybe a week to five days before blooming, supplementing the earlier spray, is usually all that is necessary. But spraying can be done through the summer if needed, and one can console himself with the thought that he is no worse off than the good rose grower, who sprays weekly through most of the summer.

From the writings of Edward Auten, Jr.

* * * * *

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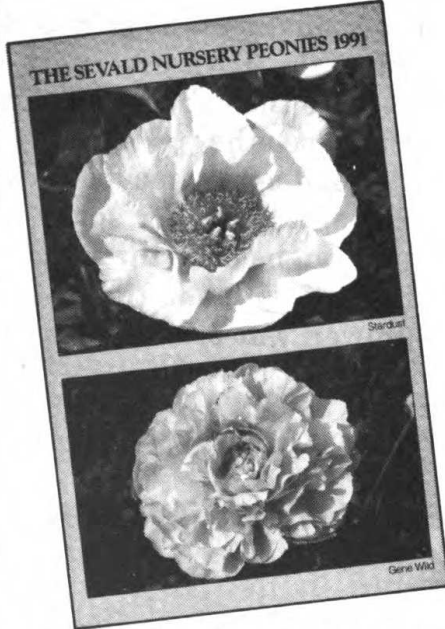


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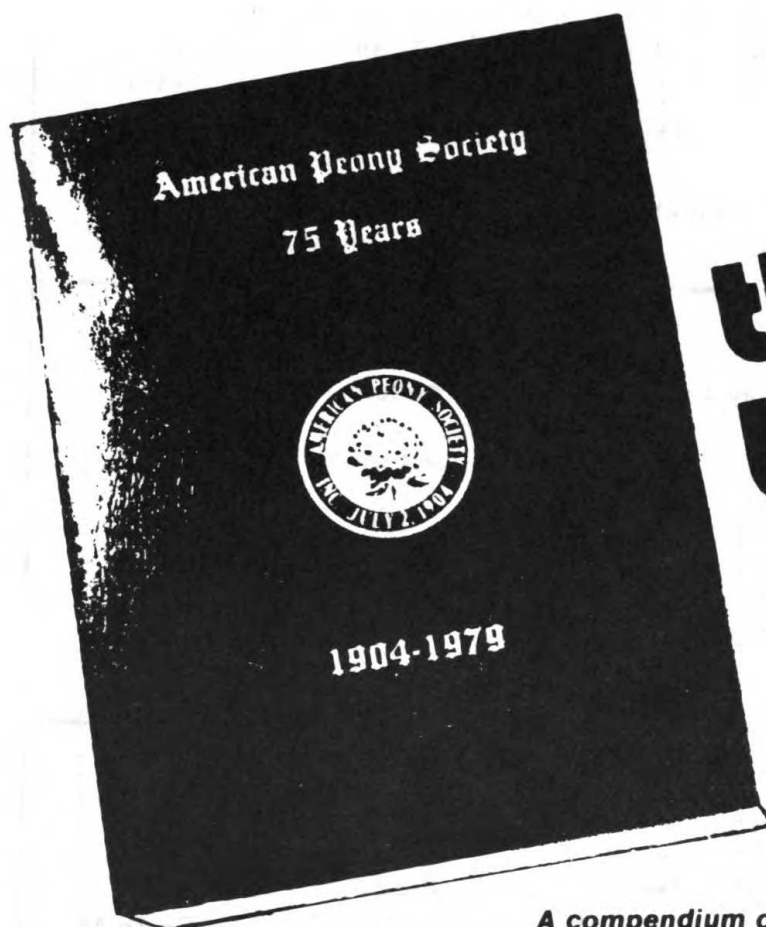
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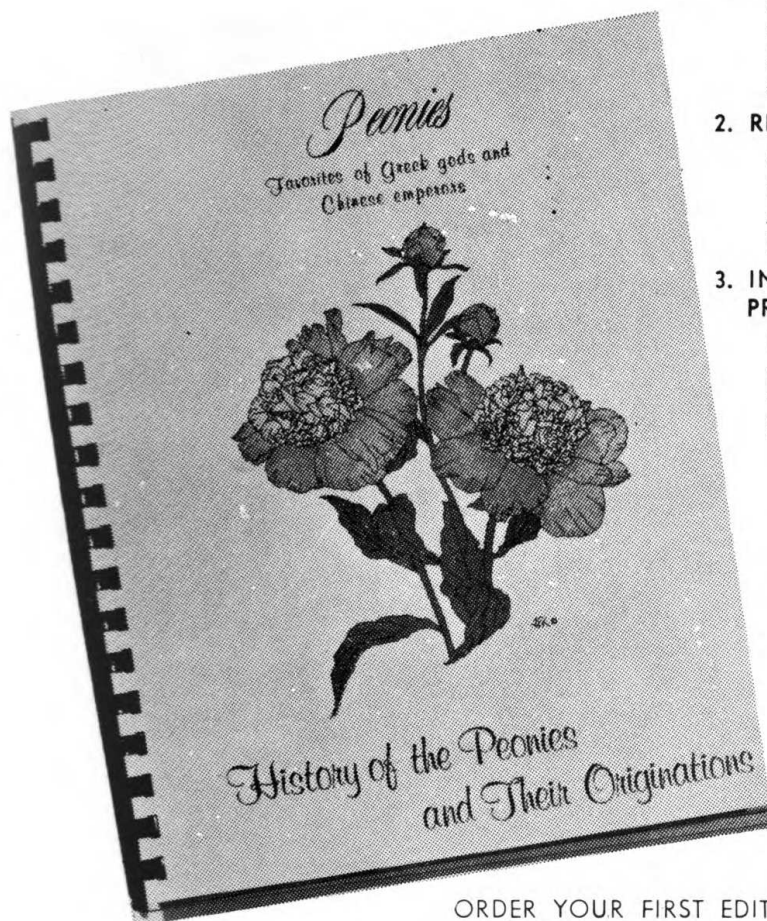
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