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June 1994

NO. 290

The American Peony Society Bulletin



*Garden
Treasure*

Cover Story
Page 3

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

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* *A.P. Saunders, William Gratwick, Nassos Daphnis,
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Don Hollingsworth and Roger Anderson*

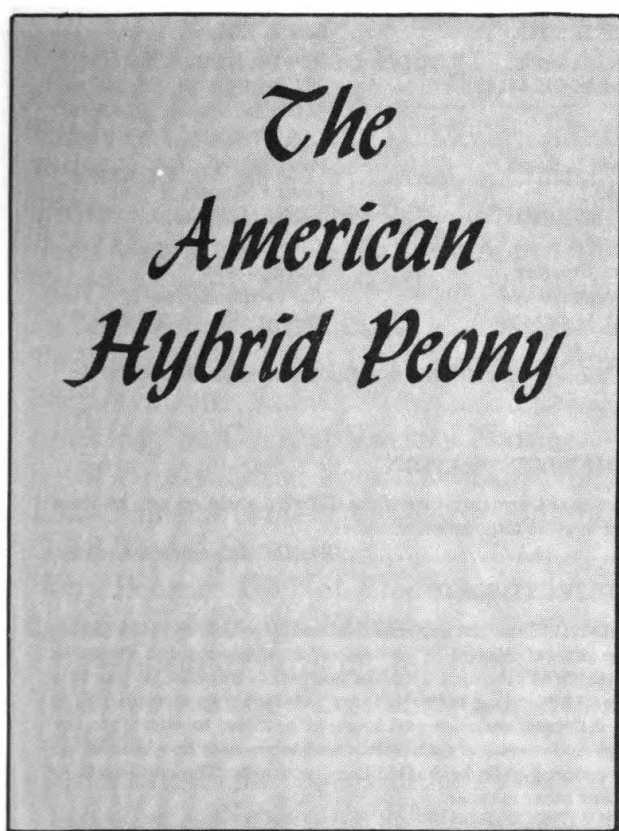
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DEPT. OF REGISTRATION

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 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 householdOne 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



June 1994 — NO. 290

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----------|
| The American Hybrid Peony..... | 1 |
| Officers and Directors | 2 |
| Table of Contents..... | 3 |
| President's Message | 4 |
| Chinese Peony Notes— <i>Dr. James W. Waddick</i> | 5-6 |
| Seed Germination— <i>Maurice Menard, Canada</i> | 7-8-9 |
| Storing Peony Flowers— <i>Don Hollingsworth</i> | 9-10 |
| In Memoriam | 11 |
| Tributes to Dr. Carl H. (Chuck) Klehm | 12-14 |
| Registrations..... | 14-15 |
| Seeking the Correct Variety Names of Unidentified Peonies— <i>Don Hollingsworth</i> | 16-17-18 |
| Late Announcement of the Passing of Marvin C. Karrels | 18 |
| Gold Medal Peonies | 19 |
| Why Peonies Do Not Bloom | 20 |
| Landscape Design Element— <i>Betty Jo Franklin,</i> Federated Garden Club, Mo. | 21-22 |
| The Nominating Committee Reports | 22 |
| Letters..... | 23-24 |
| Collecting Peonies—A Lifelong Adventure— <i>Walter Good,</i> Editor of Schweizer Staudengarten of Switzerland | 25-34 |
| Best of 75 Years | 35 |
| Advertising | 36-40 |

Peony (Itoh Hybrids Group) **GARDEN TREASURE**, Plant Patent No. 5718 (*originator D. Hollingsworth, introduced 1984*). Reliable, yellow-flowered herbaceous peonies were long sought. Toichi Itoh, Japan, found a three-species formula for success. In 1977 his discovery was memorialized by the American Peony Society through the variety group name.

HOLLINGSWORTH NURSERY RR3, Box 27 Maryville, MO 64468

President's Message

Dear Friends:

As I write in mid-April, the colorful emerging shoots of the peonies range from not even breaking the soil in the latest kinds to a foot or more tall in the earliest, spreading leaflets of some already expanding toward their broader mature form. Like children at the playground, they can be seen in many forms and sequences of growth. Every warm day brings noticeable change. Their shoot colors range from the rarer yellow-and-green with sharp reddish highlights through intermediate gradations to deepest red-purple, finished in waxy gloss, matte or fuzzy, in all forms a superb foil for the yellows and whites of the daffodils which are just commencing to flower.

Traditional commentary upon the ornamental values of peonies gives little attention to the contribution of their colorful emerging shoots. This is not to fault tradition! The peonies' capacity to dominate any floral display—indoors or out—certainly warrants the traditional focus upon their magnificent flowers. However, out-of-doors, for the mixed perennials borders which continue to attract renewed attention of gardeners and landscape designers, the spring shoots of peonies provide an additional season of color.

The fact is, variations in color and form of peony shoots has been substantially expanded in recent decades through the introduction of multiple-species hybrids (approximately 15 botanical species are represented in today's hybrids). It is becoming evident that this additional ornamental dimension ought to be considered for inclusion in the descriptions which accompany the publication of peony variety registrations.

By the time this is read, peonies will have emerged in even the northmost growing areas. But the annual meeting and exhibition of our Society are still ahead of us—June 4-5-6. We will undoubtedly be again treated to a magnificent floral display, the like of which cannot be seen anywhere else. All members are urged to take part as best they can—exhibitor, judge, viewer, participant in the annual meeting—and we hope there will be an especially large turn-out by Chicago region members.

A sobering note is the untimely passing of Carl H. (Chuck) Klehm, a long-time substantial supporter of this Society, and well known for the extensive peony exhibits by the Klehm Nurseries. Chuck was personally responsible for inviting the Society to the Chicago Botanic Garden for this year's event. Let us make every effort to have a fine show and associated activities, which may be in part a tribute to Chuck's memory, as well as to the memory of all the others who have helped bring this Society to its present place in gardening history.

Best wishes for a great Spring season!

Don Hollingsworth, Missouri

CHINESE PEONY NOTES, 1993

by Dr. James W. Waddick, Kansas City, Missouri

In April and May of 1993, I traveled around China looking for Iris primarily, but made some stops with a definite peony orientation. In late April, I visited the Third China Flower Expo at the Chinese Agricultural Museum in Beijing. This "expo" is a popular exhibit and open to the public. There were three large exhibits of tree peonies there. The largest display was from Luoyang (Henan Province) the traditional home of tree peony culture in China. Hundreds of plants in full bloom were on exhibit. It was a dazzling spectacle, but all the cultivars were fairly routine in typical reds and pinks. Most of the flowers were double or larger. The Chinese have developed flowers with extreme multiple petals with names of these forms such as **Silk Ball**, **Imperial Crown**, **Thousand Petal**, etc. Personally these seem like huge shapeless blobs lacking the delicacy and form of singles and semi-doubles. There were a few whites, fewer singles and none of the real rarities—"blue," "green," "black," etc.

The smallest exhibit was from Gansu Province. Here, too, a wide assortment of tree peony cultivars were shown for sale. Books, brochures and information were available from each exhibitor. As is typical, the methods of buying and selling are different in China from the U.S., so comparable prices can't be given.

I picked up a copy of a book called *Luoyang Peony* (not the one usually seen for sale with the title *The Peony in Luoyang*). This one is ninety-six pages and shows a wider range of cvs. including a few choice items—a lovely peach semi-double (**Tao hua chun**), a deep purple (**Qing long wo mo chi**), a few with green streaks over pink or white bases and some lovely yellows.

The book *Gansu Mudan* (Gansu [Province] Tree Peony) is smaller and of lower quality color printing. A few temptations include a picotee in pale pink with darker edges and another pink with huge dark flares in the center. The text is all in Chinese.

Later in my travels I was in Yunnan Province and met an associate who told me of *Paeonia lutea* as a common understory shrub in the area W. of Dali in N.W. Yunnan. Although I traveled there I saw none in the wild. Promises of wild collected seed are still waiting.

In Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu, I spoke with botanists and was given a list of species native to Gansu Province. These include:

Paeonia suffruticosa var. *papaveracea*

Paeonia mairei

Paeonia lactiflora

Paeonia obovata var. *willmottiae*

Paeonia veitchii

var. *woodwardii*

var. *leiocarpa*

var. *uniflora*

Planted in various spots on the grounds of Northwest Normal University in Lanzhou were plants identified as grown from wild collected seed of *P. suffruticosa papaveracea*. Some of these formed dense shrubs well over my height (6 ft.+) and all were remarkably uniform white or VERY faintly pink with deep red-purple blotches or 'flares.' It was difficult to determine the color because I saw them in mid-May when they were essentially done flowering and I had to look at last blooms and the remains of spent flowers. This is the most common peony in Gansu.

This peony has been subject to a lot of names. The most recent authorities call it *Paeonia rockii* which has much merit. The original *P. s. papaveracea* was introduced from a cultivated plant from Guangzhou, while *P. rockii* was collected several hundred miles to the northwest from wild growing plants. Further, the two species have quite distinct foliage (twice compound leaves with up to nine leaflets in *P. s. papvareacea* and thrice compound leaves with 19 to 31 leaflets in *P. rockii*), flowers (much larger in *P. rockii*) and numerous other less obvious characteristics. It seems just coincidental that both have white flowers with red-purple basal 'flares.'

It was only in Gansu that I saw plants of tree peonies grown in private gardens. Space in China is at a very strict premium so few plants are cultivated as ornamentals especially any as large as tree peonies. I also saw a number of tree peonies grown in street plantings and mixed shrub plantings in public areas and parks. Clearly tree peonies are used commonly in a variety of situations in and around Lanzhou. The situation was basically the same in Xining the capital of Qinghai Province about a hundred miles further west.

In all my travels I asked about local expertise and interest in peonies, and found none. Of course, the herbaceous peonies either as native species or cultivated hybrids are nearly completely disregarded. Only large botanical gardens provide even a modest amount of space for growing herbaceous peonies. I saw these in public botanical gardens in Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai and Hangzhou.

On a day-and-a-half train ride from Lanzhou to Nanjing on the east coast, we passed through the city of Luoyang. I carefully scanned the landscape, expecting tree peonies in abundance, but saw not a single plant.

Meanwhile back in the U.S., I found increased interest in Chinese peonies. A German firm and an American firm are both importing and selling Chinese tree peony cultivars by mail order. I think that more importers will be providing Chinese tree peony cultivars to western gardens and clearly the Chinese are more eager to do business with foreign nurserymen. Perhaps some enterprising new plantsmen can bring the species and herbaceous peonies to our shores soon, too.

★ ★ ★ ★

SEED GERMINATION

Maurice Menard, Canada

May I refer to the paper towel method of germinating peony seeds which I suggested in Bulletin No. 262, June 1987.

Article reprinted with added information.

Apart from direct sowing in the soil, each horticulturist, or gardener, seems to have his secret or preference as to the best medium for germinating peony seeds. After a few years of trial and error, I came to prefer a coarse washed sand made of crushed gneiss, rather than ordinary silicium builder's sand. This gives a satisfactory, but sometimes irregular, germination (of course every peony plant seed lot is more or less irregular). Each seed lot is placed with enough fresh sand to prevent dryness in a plastic bag, or any other waterproof container allowing air exchange.

Everyone knows that peony seeds require two moist stratification periods: a warm one (68°-75°F) and a cool one (38° to 45-50°), each during two to four months or more.

During the cool period when the root begins to swell and crook, it means that germination is nearly complete. The crook part will separate itself, and through the middle, the leaf germ will emanate from the seed. It is now time to plant the seeds outdoors if the soil is still ready, or indoors in small pots kept in good light, without direct sunlight, at a rather low temperature until the leaves appear and develop.

But it is troublesome to handle the small sand bags, and after the first 6 or 8 weeks examine them weekly to take out the seeds ready for the cool treatment, and make other sand bags to go to refrigeration.

Through the years I have found a germination method without the use of any medium or strata. It can be useful to any amateur gardener. It begins by harvesting the seed pods as soon as they begin to crack open. We force them open and place the seeds in a paper bag, preferably not more than to cover the bottom. The bag is left open and stored in a warm spot (from 70° to 85°F), never under sunlight, but in a well lighted and aerated place.

Some growers wash the seeds and treat them with fungicides. I feel there is no harm to do so, but personally I prefer not. But should the seeds have touched the soil or been gathered late when the pods are very much opened, then I treat them. Gathered in closed pods (only cracked) the seeds are still white or cream, or partly light brown or with brown or black spots. After 10 to 15 days in the paper bag they should have matured and be completely colored brown or black. It is time to begin the warm stratification.

A thick polyethylene bag is used, to avoid quick evaporation and allow sufficient aeration; in fact, a milk bag well washed and rinsed is used. I then take one sheet of a sponge paper towel and make two folds lengthwise. Then I make two folds side-wise from one-third of each

end. That gives me a small rectangle about 3 x 4 inches. I open it, place in the middle one seed lot, remake the folding, and slip it in the plastic bag. The paper towel is then moistened with one or two teaspoons of clean water; the plastic bag is given two folds and kept closed by a small piece of scotch tape. Before putting each bag in a warm place I had stuck on it a strip of masking tape on which is noted all information relative to the cross or lot of seeds. It is important that the paper towel be always kept moist. Normally, it is not necessary to add water before it is time to first inspect the seeds after 6 to 8 weeks.

After the roots have developed, each plastic bag may be placed as is in a home refrigerator to complete the cool stratification. Again, after 6 or 8 weeks, each bag should be examined, and every week or two thereafter as mentioned previously. Each seed should be planted as soon as possible after the leaf germ has developed.

I have not tried another method of cool treatment other than in a home refrigerator, so I cannot propose any other. However, depending on the climatic conditions where you live it may be possible to plant the rooted seeds outdoors, or they possibly may be placed to freeze in containers or flats in a protected area like a cold shed until very early spring when they could be taken from the median and sown outdoors.

There may be an inconvenience to the "paper towel" method. Should there be many seeds in a lot and the roots develop too long during the warm treatment, they will pass through the paper and get all entangled. The solution is to drop everything in a pail of water and when the paper has sufficiently disintegrated, pull out each seed and continue the stratification in sand, vermiculite, or whatever median you prefer.

Three years ago seeds received on the 8th of December from the Society seed committee were treated as described, and some were ready to plant from the following 6th of April (4 months), for a few—up to the 7th of June (7 months).

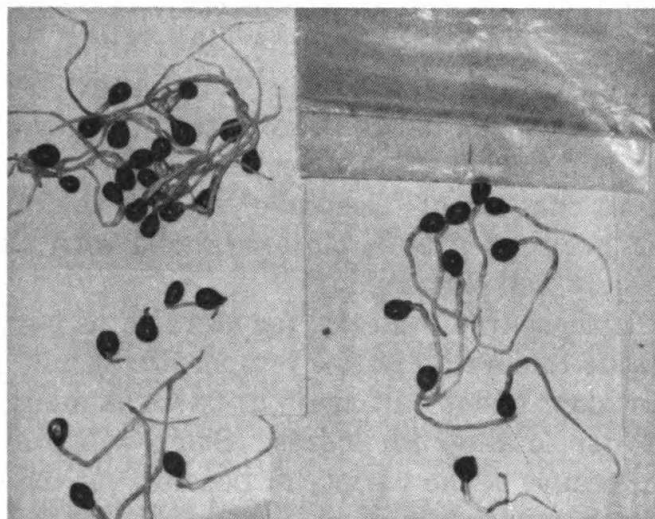
At that time I was working only with lactiflora seeds reacting well to the double phases of warm humid temperature followed by a cool environment at approximately 40-45°F (4-6°C).

But now that I have added herbaceous hybrids as well as luteas, I am happy having read the excellent Don Hollingworth's writings which specify a third phase at approximately 55-60°F (+15°C) "once a readiness for root development is reached."

In case some are interested in the method, I enclose a photo taken on the 4th of March 1993, showing the paper towel in the background, the milk plastic bag used (upper right corner), and lots of seeds at different stages of development. It will be noted that the process does not guarantee an identical progress of all seeds. All these began their germinating process on the 7th of October 1992, and some are only beginning to sprout while others are more developed, and some are even showing their plumule and are ready to be potted and grown under neon lights.

I recommend the method for those who have small lots or seeds of special crosses of which they want to follow the development closely. I was particularly grateful last year when a few lots of well rooted seeds having been cooled supposedly long enough did not send out their plumule. But with this method they could be kept at cool temperature (much longer than Spring could have permitted had the seeds rooted outdoors) in the refrigerator where they finally emitted their plumule on the 16th of July 1993. I, nevertheless, succeeded to grow some of them indoors, and no doubt it will be interesting to follow their progress.

One was an Itoh cross with an extraordinary model of germination; not the same as other Itoh crosses succeeded in 1990 with two albiflora seedlings, with **Festiva Maxima** and with **Monsieur Jules Elie**. But none has yet bloomed and now I wonder whether they have succeeded to survive the coldest winter in history.



STORING PEONY FLOWERS

Don Hollingsworth

Ready-to-open peony buds can be stored dry in a household refrigerator then taken out later and allowed to open for use in floral decoration. Storage time of up to a few weeks is readily attainable.

Ideal storage temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit (zero Celsius). However, a household refrigerator is not designed to control at that level. With a box that will control at around 35-40 degrees, suitably cut flowers will remain in good condition for 3-4 weeks and will only slowly diminish in quality for sometime afterward.

In 1991 buds of peony **LECHARME**, a Japanese type flower which opens very easily, remained good in the vase for several days when taken out after six weeks, although the flowers had opened in the refrigerator. Another bunch left ten weeks, until mid-August, had about half unblemished flowers, but looked stale in the vase.

In addition to storage temperature, the second key to good results

with storing peony buds is cutting at the proper stage. The general rule is to cut in the soft bud stage. This means that the unopened bud feels about like a fresh marshmallow when squeezed between fingers and thumb. In the case of a many petaled double peony, the outer petals may be partly unfurled before the center will meet the softness test. The stored buds do not go into a complete state of arrested development, but the slowdown will be maximized at the lowest temperature which will not damage the tissues.

Many peonies, predominantly kinds with fewer petals, will open from harder buds. One published experiment showed that buds cut when the bud covers were loose and the outer petal showed true color could be counted upon to open after four weeks of cold storage. These trials used only varieties known to be well adapted to needs of the florist trade. Some other varieties might need to be more advanced before cutting. I remember years ago seeing buds offered for sale in a "dime" store (for the Memorial Day market) which had been cut too hard and they never did open. On the other hand, had they been held in cold storage for a time, the results might have been better.

The really handy thing about peonies is that they can be stored dry in packages laid flat on the shelves of the refrigerator. It is better to have a unit that is not "frost-free" so that the humidity stays high. However, bunches of buds close-wrapped with newsprint and plastic will be fairly well protected.

Select only disease-free material for storage, as botrytis affected spots will continue to develop at low temperatures and will spoil the flowers. It is prudent to cut half again or twice as many buds as will be needed in order to allow for losses. Some will prove to fall too quickly, either because of the variety or because cut too advanced for the storage temperature available.

To open the buds held in storage, take them out and re-cut the dried stem-ends to fresh tissue. Stand in deep water in a cool area free of drafts for several hours or as needed to bring the flowers to the stage of opening desired.

Stored peony flowers should need no further conditioning before arranging. On the other hand, fresh cut flowers should be conditioned by holding them in a cool area in deep water for several hours (overnight) before being placed for viewing. When they are to be displayed in a warm, dry, or drafty area, it is best to hold even the arranged flowers in a sheltered place until just before they are needed. While many peonies can be brought directly from the garden to the vase and make a favorable presentation, any of them can be expected to last longer if given the benefit of conditioning.

Peony flowers cut for immediate use are best cut when only partly open. They will continue to develop while being conditioned. This gives the longest period of good display, often up to a week.

IN MEMORIAM

COMMUNITY BLOOMS IN PRAISE FOR NURSERY OWNER 'CHUCK' KLEHM

From Daily Herald

Northwest suburbanites and flower lovers around the country are mourning the loss of Carl H. "Chuck" Klehm, a Woodstock resident whose family has been in the nursery business here for nearly 140 years.

Klehm died last Friday at the University of California at San Diego Hospital. He was 55.

And while many friends and family members were remembering him during a service at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Arlington Heights Thursday, it was outside the church that his legacy, and the continuing legacy of his family, was most strikingly obvious.

"He did all our plantings here, and donated all our bushes and flowers," said Janet Fischer, a secretary at the church who had known Klehm for nearly 20 years. "He would drive in all the way from Woodstock to help take care of them. I'm going to miss him very much."

Klehm was a partner, with his mother and two brothers, in Charles Klehm & Son Nursery, with operations in Woodstock, Barrington and Champaign and formerly in Arlington Heights. The highly successful business, most famous for producing beautiful peony flowers, was founded by a green-thumbed brick-layer from Germany, John Klehm, in 1852.

Chuck Klehm was part of the fourth generation in a business that has prospered with real estate developments, but which remains rooted in the business of beautiful trees, shrubs and flowers.

"I don't know what to say about Chuck," said Greta M. Kessenich, secretary and treasurer of the Minnesota-based American Peony Society, of which Klehm was a director and past president.

"He loved flowers so and would always bring the most beautiful ones to any of our shows."

"He was a true gardener," said the Rev. Karl Schmidt, pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church in Arlington Heights. "He loved to work with flowers. He was a quiet but enjoyable person."

Klehm is survived by his wife Susan, his son Carl, and daughters Elizabeth and Carrie, as well as his mother, Lois, his brothers Roy Klehm of South Barrington, and Arnold Klehm of Dundee, and sister Kathleen Marinangel of McHenry.

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

TRIBUTE TO DR. CARL H. (CHUCK) KLEHM

He was a champion of the peonies. He loved to exhibit all types of peonies at the National Exhibitions of the American Peony Society. He showed in every designated class in the show schedule as he felt as though the public should see that flower since there was a place for it. So he filled the show tables with the Klehm peonies, wonderful, beautiful peonies of exceptional quality.

He was always at the yearly exhibitions, traveling long distances taking the Klehm peonies. They could be seen on all show tables from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, to the Royal Botanical Gardens in Canada, on to Ohio, Wisconsin, Illinois and Minnesota. They were always there. He won blue ribbons, and Court of Honor awards, and receiving Grand Champion was his special prize.

In 1986, the National convention and exhibition was held in St. Anthony, Minnesota, located midway between St. Paul and Minneapolis. The exhibition was to be in an exceptionally large Mall. It is always of deep concern to the show chairman as to the number of peonies that would be brought by the exhibitors, so as to make a good show with classes full. We needed more peony bloom, so I wrote Chuck a postal card and said: "Will you bring a bushel of peonies?" There was no reply. On Friday before the show, I went to the work room to check on the flowers and there I saw forklifts stacking crates very high one on top of the other.

Men and women were all over the place, getting water, in drums and buckets. I asked someone what was happening to the work room, and they said that it was the Klehm peonies and their staff of people. Amid all this activity, I located Chuck, knee deep in peonies. He looked up smiling and said, "You asked for them." After talking for a while I asked how many he cut. He said, "6000, and they all are here." This is a side light of a man that walked tall in the exhibition of peonies with a deep respect of all people. He was a quiet, gentle man with a special talent. With peonies, he was one of the great ones, in his work with, and in making every exhibit a success. It was his pleasure in so doing.

At the various shows when the Klehm truck was unloaded, all peonies were put in buckets of water immediately, and generally placed in one area of the work room. It was then Chuck was always seen walking among the peonies, first touching one and then another, with a look of satisfaction as he checked the condition of these show flowers. This was really his moment of solitude, in the reflection of their exquisite beauty.

He was president of the American Peony Society 1978-1980. Was on the Board of Directors continuously including the present time. He was a stalwart in the organization, participating in all programs. He received his Ph.D. in Ornamental Horticulture from the Universi-

ty of Illinois. He was an active leader in the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the 4H Club. He was a long-time member and active in field and track, attending and participating in the events.

It is with sadness that this Memorial was written, in recalling the exhibitions of the past.

Greta M. Kessenich



REMEMBERING CHUCK KLEHM

It was a sad day when we heard that Chuck Klehm had left us. We can remember so vividly his presence at the show last June in West St. Paul of the Minnesota Peony Society. Chuck was there with his whole "crew" and a refrigerated truck loaded with peonies of many varieties and types. We can still remember him walking through rows and rows of blooms, determining which were acceptable for showing. After their selection he continued to evaluate, deciding whether each bloom represented its type accurately and its true variety. He really was a perfectionist. More than that, he was always gracious to us who didn't have so many choices—and helpful to anyone with a question or concern.

Chuck Klehm, with the knowledge he had, was always eager and willing to learn. He would help others, of course, but eager to add to his own knowledge whatever he could glean. He was a "nice fellow," one with a slow smile and modest approach on his favorite subject to any of us, eager to learn.

Thank you, Chuck Klehm, for being among us for several years and imparting a personality to match the beauty of the peony!

Gus and Char Sindt,
Afton, Minnesota



We are saddened by the untimely passing of Chuck Klehm and want to extend our sincere condolences to his wife and family, and to his associates in the Klehm Nursery organization.

Chuck will be long known as one of the most ardent of exhibitors at the peony exhibitions. For a good many years his refrigerator truck loaded with many buckets of peony flowers had been a fixture at the big shows. In fact, the efforts which he led each year caused the exhibitions to be big! Nevertheless, it was his personal style to shun the limelight, seemingly preferring to remain in low profile, while letting the exhibits speak for his efforts and those of his associates who helped get the flowers to the show tables.

At the same time Chuck was a thoughtful and deliberate participant as a member of the Board of Directors for the American Peony Society. I deem it a privilege to have known him and to have been associated with him in the affairs of the Society.

Don Hollingsworth



★ ★ ★ ★

I certainly didn't know Chuck Klehm well. A few days together at the A.P.S. meeting and at the Minnesota Peony Society Show for most of the last six or eight years. That is all the contact we had.

Chuck was passionate—to a level that was hard to imagine—about the flower shows. He worked long hours quietly behind the scenes at these events. Once the judging was over, he usually was out of sight. He made the Minnesota show a wonderful event. Chuck, his mother, his crew, and the refrigerated truck brought an extraordinary gift to our local Society each year.

In his role as an A.P.S. director, it was obvious that he was devoted to the Society. He was thoughtful about our actions. He was helpful in discussions. He knew an incredible amount of information about peonies which he shared in his own quiet way.

The Society has lost a good friend and he will be missed very much.

Kent Crossley,
St. Paul, Minnesota

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REGISTRATIONS

Magenta Jensa (John F. Cote, Jr., Brooklyn, Connecticut), Jan. 20, 1994. Parentage unknown. First year bloomed 1984. This magenta colored double hybrid has pollen, seeds, and is fragrant. Good substance with very strong sturdy stems and average height 48-52 inches. Very floriferous, blooms in midseason, with flowers held high above the deep green foliage, which has always withstood the rain and wind of our Connecticut weather.

Named for my wife, Jeannette and granddaughter, Sarah.

* * * *

Ambrose Congreve, (Sir Peter Smithers, Switzerland), Feb. 7, 1994. Seedling #30351, tree peony. Parentage, *Paeonia Rockii*, open pollinated from a Japanese TP. First bloomed 1986. Blush flushed pink, red flares, single, white capsule. Good substance, pollen, stamens and seeds, no fragrance, no red line on leaf petiole. Very vigorous, foliage similar to *P. Rockii*. A strong growing plant with the habit of *P. Rockii* (*P. suffruticosa*, Rocks variety), and not subject to the die back disease.

* * * *

Luella, (Sir Peter Smithers, Switzerland), Feb. 7, 1994. Seedling number 30353. Open pollinated *P. Rockii*, probably by a Japanese purple T.P. First bloomed 1989. Mauve/purple, paler at the edges, dark almost black flares, capsule white. Single, good substance, stamens, pollen, seeds, reliable. Good stem strength, grows five feet, blooms midseason. A vigorous plant, no red line on the leaf petiole. A very attractive single bloom, fringed petals, and an unusual pretty color.

Missie's Blush (Leola [Missie] Bainum), March 14, 1994. Parentage thought to be close to **Queen Victoria**. First year bloomed 1940. Blush, passing to white, lactiflora full double, flat form with no stamens, no fragrance, reliable and prolific. Blooms late to midseason. Strong stems, 32 inches in height, somewhat large foliage. A good cut flower. Grown in the Hollingsworth Nursery since 1960, and distributed—now, this Registration to establish legitimate name.

Named for the hybridizer, a Northwest Missouri gardening leader.—Don Hollingsworth

* * * *

Golden Wings, (Roy Pehrson—grown by Don Hollingsworth), March 14, 1994. Parentage, **Dawn Glow** x unknown. Seedling #1428. First year bloomed before 1980. Hybrid, light golden yellow, single, early, very tall 42-44 inches. Large red stigmas and red filament base. Petals cupped, evenly presented over top of bush. A stately plant. Long lasting, medium large leaflets. Grown from germinated seed of **Dawn Glow**, sent out by Roy Pehrson. Presumed tetraploid. Has stamens, pollen and seeds, fertile both ways.

This plant is from the same seed lot as **Dearest**, Bulletin #281.

* * * *

Color Magnet, (Don Hollingsworth, Maryville, Missouri), March 14, 1994. Seedling #1820. Parentage, seed parent #278 (raised from Pehrson seeds). Pollen parent seedling #686 (sib. to **Summer Glow** [Lady Duff x Claire de Lune]). First year bloomed before 1985. Hybrid, red-violet pink, single, stigmas, red purple, yellow stamens, cup shaped, has stamens, pollen, seeds. Reliable, 44 inches in height, with strong erect stems, holding large flowers close to the bush. Large and dark green foliage, vigorous. The plant is fertile both ways.

Received AWARD of Merit at the National Exhibition 1993.

* * * *

Suzanne Riviere, (Sir Peter Smithers, Switzerland), Feb. 7, 1994. Seedling #31358, tree peony. Parentage, Japanese tree peony, a self-sown seedling. First bloomed 1988. Pure white double, no flare, of good substance, stamens, white capsule, pollen and seeds. No fragrance. The stem strength is very stout, rather short growth, freely branching, a vigorous plant. No red line on leaf petiole. Grows to four feet in height and blooms midseason. Probably pollinated by **Godaishu** or one of the several Japanese white doubles. The flower has an unusual V-shaped form and very prominent pale green petioles. A good ornamental plant when in full bloom.

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

SEEKING THE CORRECT VARIETY NAMES OF UNIDENTIFIED PEONIES

Don Hollingsworth

One of the most challenging quests which a peony enthusiast can face may be that of trying to re-establish the variety name of a favorite plant for which the identity is not a matter of record.

The longevity of peony plants and their wide acceptance as things to pass down through generations, for decades or even a century, even when grown by savvy gardeners, has resulted in plants which, although they may be cherished, have no variety name. When the variety name has been lost and the variety is no longer in the trade, then re-identification becomes an investigative challenge—essentially to find someone who grows the identical plant under name, hopefully the correct one.

Persons who are pursuing such a challenge often inquire what the Peony Society can do. The Society does have an information base, which can be shared in various ways. It is a repository of published descriptions, which includes generally reliable information in terms of the guiding rules and conventions of cultivated plants nomenclature—essentially what is needed to support the widely followed principle that precedence goes to the earliest published name which is accompanied by a usable description.

At the time the Society was formed in 1903, a major project was undertaken in cooperation with Cornell University in which growers and nurseries submitted plants under whatever names were in use at the time to be grown in the project collection in order to determine the synonymy. Plenty of it was found. The published findings of that project and the plants validated for correct variety name went back into the trade. That was the foundation of the American Peony Society's information base on varieties. Subsequently APS has been the primary publisher of authentic names of North American originations, and including many imported kinds.

Of course, written horticultural descriptions, when taken alone, are usually insufficient for variety diagnosis. In peonies, where slow propagation prevails (a congenial circumstance), the number of varieties has constantly multiplied from the time of the original European importations of plants from China and Japan. This multiplicity of varieties simply compounds the problem. Some varieties are very similar to others, few being sufficiently unique to be reliably identified when viewed in isolation by even the most experienced observers, especially so in the absence of reliably identified index plants to compare.

Ultimately, only the comparison of the unknown variety with valid index plants, using plants in a similar state of growth, gets us beyond tentative identification. Published information and illustra-

tions of peonies tend to be focused on the flower. To validate varietal comparability, the points of discrimination must extend to all viewable parts of anatomy, not just the flower, and to habit of growth throughout the season.

Having said that, I also recognize we have to start somewhere. Recovering and validating identities is essentially an investigative process. All descriptions deal with flower form and general color or including markings, less consistently so with other points of discrimination. The use of written descriptions and illustrations may enable formulating a conjecture(s) as to variety. Flowers can be compared "in the flesh" between interested parties for a more confident conjecture of comparability—or not. Beyond that, the challenges include where to find the index plants (and how to validate them) and how to reliably evaluate which differences between two subject plants may be attributed to state of growth as opposed to being evidence of non-comparability.

Once there are index plants accessible to interested participants in the project, it is feasible that descriptions which are more diagnostic in their content may be formulated. Therefore, it seems to me, a practical approach would be to work toward the establishment of one or more index collections. Where? Anywhere there is an opportunity to put together the necessary resources and there is reasonable chance of maintaining the long-term effort.

What role(s) can the Peony Society play? First, to share published information insofar as it is in the hands of the Society. Secondly, support the project through existing communications capabilities, especially the Society publications and the annual meeting/exhibition activities. Beyond that the onus of performance is upon those who want the information. The Society is not in a position as an organization to cause the establishment and maintenance of an index collection of peonies. On the other hand, it is quite within the experience of the Society to solicit cooperation through the contribution of plants and information by members and others.

One reason there exists significant plantings with unidentified peony varieties is that somewhere in the planting's history the identities were not kept up. Charts get lost. Markers disappear or become illegible. Seedlings come up in a clump and may merely share the planting location or, worse, dominate the planted variety. Even in on-going commercial plantings the removal of rogue plants (incorrectly- or un-identified) is a continuing chore. When staffing and other resources fall short, the best conceived projects can go awry.

A viable project will be one that is conceived such that there is reason to believe the purposes of the project will be maintained when those having a present interest are gone. It seems to me there is going to have to be a concerted effort on someone's part if a project

like this gets anywhere. APS cannot do that as an organization. But I feel keenly that interested persons, individually or collectively, can and will have benefit of such resources as are at this Society's disposal if the Board of Directors views what is proposed to be a productive and achievable effort.

A more achievable approach is to try to solve some of the identity problems by taking specimen flowers of the unknown plant to peony exhibitions where they may be compared with identified flowers there, perhaps eventually choosing varieties to bring into your collection anew in order to make more extensive comparisons. These measures can be pursued without mounting a major cooperative effort nor requiring major resources.

I personally have a couple of plants which I have wanted to identify for as long as I have been engaged in peony breeding. I also have a plant which I did get identified after about 15 years, one of the best of all the peonies that I grow, **Mahogany**. When I succeeded, it was because I saw it myself at an exhibition. All previous queries with experts in the absence of having a specimen flower "in the flesh" had come to no avail. What I saw unique about the flower is almost absolutely confirming, but seems to go unnoticed except by someone experienced with controlled crosses—**Mahogany** looks like a single, but has no pollen, the stubby little staminodes being entirely abortive.

Diagnosing the variety name of an identity-lost peony can range from the difficult to the impossible, but the reward of satisfaction may make it worth the effort. On the other hand, there are many fine varieties available in the trade, even from your friends, which are properly identified, so that should the unsolved mystery become more frustrating than it is fun, there is a good place to turn.

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It is with sadness that we write of the death of Marvin C. Karrels of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We have just been notified that he died April 9th and was buried April 13. The obituary will be in the *September Bulletin*. He was one of the peony Greats, of the American Peony Society, a dedicated member, giving many years of service, a strict advocate of the business policy, without modification. Affectionally, he was Mr. Peony.

★ ★ ★ ★

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 times 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 T.P.), Janesville, Wisconsin, 1989
SEA SHELL (Sass, 1937), Kingwood Center, Mansfield, Ohio, 1990
WHITE CAP (Winchell, 1956), Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, 1991
AMERICA (Rudolph, 1976), Des Plaines, Illinois, 1992

NONE—1993

* * * *

Presently under consideration for the Gold Medal are: **Moon River, Roselette, Hana Kisoi, Black Pirate, Schentenchi, Douglas Brand, Old Faithful, Princess Margaret. Mothers Choice** was presented, but not heard. It is now first on the agenda.

WHY PEONIES DO NOT BLOOM

Plants too young and immature. Let them develop.

Planted too deep. Examine and, if eyes are more than three inches under ground, raise to proper height, two inches.

Large clumps planted without proper division. Dig, divide into small or standard divisions and plant. Many failures due to this cause.

Buds killed by late frost. Hope for better luck next year.

Buds killed by disease. They turn black and die. Spray as directed.

Buds attacked by thrips. They open partially, turn brown and fall. Spray to prevent this.

Buds water logged, also turn brown and refuse to open. Bagging would help.

Plants undernourished. Buds show but do not develop. Fertilize to add strength to the plant.

Ground too dry. Water down to the bottom of the roots.

Roots infected with nematodes or root-knot or both. Destroy.

Plants undermined by moles.

Excessively hot weather. Late full doubles often fail from this cause. No remedy.

Planted too near trees and shrubs, or crowded by other plants.

Too much shade makes the plants tall and leafy. Move.

Moved and divided too often. When once planted, they should be left alone and never moved, unless absolutely necessary.

Too much nitrogen. Cut down on fertilizer rich in nitrogen.

* * * * *

This is the time to carefully select early, midseason and late variety of peonies for planting in the fall. Visit display gardens, shows and exhibitions to see the gorgeous varieties available. There is a fairy land of beauty in a large collection of peonies. The price of a peony root is very modest, taking into consideration that with care, the peony will last a lifetime. Follow planting directions closely and carefully. Transfer the name that is attached to the peony root to your marking on a permanent label. One that can be seen and then call that peony by its name. It is advisable to insert another label of lasting quality in the soil close to the peony root, having it level with the ground.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN ELEMENT - CONTRAST

Betty Jo Franklin, Landscape Design Critic

(From *The Garden Forum*, official publication of the Federated Garden Club of Missouri, May-June, 1993)

Like other art forms, garden design must follow the same principals of harmony and unity. If the design lacks unity, many of the plant materials in the garden compete for dominance initiating confusion. Harmony is most easily achieved by repeating the same plant material or elements throughout the design.

Once the rule of harmony has been observed, one can become concerned with the introduction of a little of something else. Thus the introduction of contrast.

All too frequently, our designs are one of monotony in the use of likeness of plant materials. This is especially true of perennial gardens. Our designers may also be introducing too many contrasts so as to create confusion.

Thus, the use of contrast is the underscoring of the predominate mood or texture of the garden. Virtually every garden suggests its own foil. Small leaves are contrasted to larger ones, broad leaves against finely dissected ones. Plants that grow in low mats are juxtaposed to those that grow upright in clumps, or horizontal masses demand an exclamation of a vertical accent.

The difficulty of introducing contrast lies not so much in identifying its need as introducing elements that, while employing a note of accent, do not become eccentric. Again the contrasting element selected depends on the personal taste or vision of the gardener.

However, the selected contrasting elements should possess some degree of kinship to what lies around them, whether leaf texture, shape, or even the same growing conditions.

This is not to say the contrasting element to be introduced should necessarily be a living plant. Perhaps an inanimate object can also provide contrast to growing plants. Stone is especially useful as a statuary. Wood is a wonderful contrast for an old shrub rose or as a pillar to train a clematis or annual vines. Nothing gives quite the same value in a garden as a fine clay pot, an old stone sink, or a lead urn set for accent in a strategic place to show off a rare plant.

In a shady woodland garden, contrast might be achieved by setting large-leaved hostas or perhaps the dark green borage leaved *Trachystemon orientalis* against the lacy foliage of maidenhair fern. Beyond the fact that all these plants revel in cool woodland soils, they assume, for all their contrast in texture, mounded shapes that are similar in height and general outline.

Most large perennial borders suffer from a rather undifferentiated texture since many of the plants we depend on for abundant flower color are similar in shape and fairly undistinguished in leaf. For this

reason the splendid leathery foliage of peonies has always been of value as excellent contrast, even when the flowers are long past. Also the fall coloring of peony leaves adds to the sometimes bleak perennial garden. The needle texture of some evergreens, particularly the Alberta spruce, might form a satisfying foil to many lax perennials.

Flower color can also be used for contrast in the perennial garden, and many a soft, misty mauve and pink planting scheme would benefit from a dash of yellow—the right yellow such as *Coreopsis verticilla*, "Moonbean." The value of silver—there is no perennial garden of whatever color—red, blues, oranges that will not benefit from the generous admixture of silver leaves. The dramatic introduction of purple can surely accent a garden or landscape—perhaps the shades offered by berberis.

Once again, I refer you to think of an all-season garden or landscape. By judiciously planning, the contrast can indeed result in an outstanding accomplishment.

Remember, nothing that is used for contrast in a garden should ever call so much attention to itself that it distracts from the whole. They are to be the spice of the dish!

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WHAT'S NEW TO US!

R. W. Tischler of Tischler Peony Gardens, Faribault, Minnesota sent a label from a soft drink sold here called Tianfu China Cola, Imported Herbs and Spices. Some of the ingredients on the label quote: "Our recipe: Purified Carbonated water, Oil of lemon, Lime and Orange, Licorice, Cloves, Nutmeg, Cardamom, Citrus peel and Szechuan Peony Root. Caffeine free. Bottled by authority—White Plains, New York."

The Nominating Committee reports:

Board of Directors having served their term of office, expiring in June, 1994 are, namely: Greta M. Kessenich, Joseph Glocka, Myron D. Bigger, Lois E. Klehm, Scott Reath, and C. F. Spangler.

Their names will be placed in nomination for another three-year term. Roy Klehm, Director Emeritus will fill the one vacancy on the Board pro tem.

* * * *

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

LETTERS

This letter is to answer Mr. Langhammer's article (Bulletin 289) regarding early bloom of a peony. I have **Daystar** which is my earliest every year in a collection of 70 cultivars. It bloomed April 4th in 1922, and in 1933—April 20. **Princess Margaret** was the last to bloom, 6 weeks after **Daystar**. Variations of bloom can be expected in our area. Winters vary as to severity and length. 1991-1992 very mild, 1992-1993 so much snow, and a late Spring. I have a single fern leaf, planted 1992. Will compare to **Daystar** later. As to success with doubles, 1993 was my best season. **Princess Margaret** was gorgeous, other years it has balled and not opened. I am now using a soaker hose for my peonies instead of overhead watering.

—**Dorothy Reid**, Buena, Washington

* * * *

This is the mildest Winter in a long time. Feb. 2, the daffodils are in full bloom in the fields—the camelias and snow drops are at their best in the garden. So far, we have not had any frost and many Summer plants are still in foliage. Our peonies are three and four inches above the ground. It is too early to tell if it's going to be an early season. Early blooms mean better prices and less work. We have 12 acres of strawberries to follow the peonies.

—**T. Person**, Jersey, Channel Isle, Great Britain

Note: Mr. Person is in the cut flower, etc. business.

* * * *

My peonies were just beautiful in the Spring of 1993. They grow more beautiful each year. I am proud to tell you that I have four small tree peony seedlings from seed I gathered and planted according to the directions of Mr. Hollingsworth in the American Peony Society Bulletin. They are two years old now and growing. They may bloom in 1994. I will plant more seed. Thanks for the Bulletin. I read it over and over and enjoy the letters of others' experiences. That is very helpful to me.

—**Ada Young**, North Carolina

* * * *

Enclosing money for the 75-year book. My garden is in northern Germany near the coast. This is a region where the great variety of peonies are still unknown by most people. Here are a few of my favorites: **Raspberry Sunde**, **White Cap**, **Paula Fay**, **Red Charm**.

—**Helmut Fischer**, Varel, Germany

* * * *

"My peonies speak not a word, yet they say so much to me."—**William H. Krekler**

* * *

I read with interest Mr. Ryoji Hashida's story on 'Striped Flowers' of the tree peony. We agree that **Shima Nishiki** is a rather unique flower. We bought one from Mr. Smirnow about ten years ago, and it does bloom as he states. We do disagree when he states that **Erquino** has only been in gardens since 1809. In the translation of Professor Marney in Bulletin #237, The History of the Tree Peony of Has Province, by Hsueh Ferg-Lsiang (1368-1344), states on page 39: "**Washed Face Charm** is the South Garden Crane Feather Red. There suddenly opens on the tip of a twig a single flower in two colors, divided across the middle between red and white. The red is like rouge, the white like [face] powder," etc. etc. You can see from this description, it is the same flower now called **Erquino** (**Twin Beauty**)—David M. Furman, Cricket Hill Garden, Connecticut
NOTE—The following is the full translation of the quote of Mr. Furman:

Washed Face Charm is the South Garden Crane Feather Red. There suddenly opens on the tip of a twig a single flower in two colors, divided across the middle between red and white. The red is like rouge, the white like [face] powder. At the time, the commandery grand officer, Lord Yen, created an award which he called the T'ai-chi t'u [Chart of the Great Absolute]. According to a Six Dynasty text [220-589 A.D.] which tells of taking a red flower and taking white snow and washing the faces of one's offspring bright and shiny, I changed its name.

* * * *

From Margaret Baber. Lydney. Gloucestershire. England. April 14

In spite of the howling north easternly wind for the part of three days, my Saunders hybrids are full of buds, after their second year in the garden. **Campagna**, **Nosegay**, **Lovely Rose** and **Early Windflower** will be blooming with **Mlokozewitchii**, and **Campagna**, for certain, as all buds are showing color. How I love these Saunders hybrid! I must have a few more before I'm much older. The flower is exquisite and the foliage an absolute joy all season. *P. anomala* "**Smouthii**" with charming ferny foliage, also close to flowering, usually blooms above a ground cover of forget-me-nots. The Spring tidy-up is way behind schedule due to plentiful Winter and Spring rain which has compacted the ground and encouraged weeds in spite of much work in an equally wet Autumn. Paeonies of all kind look very promising and have been sprayed once with a fungicide, to date. Our garden is like the Curates egg, "Good in parts."

COLLECTING PEONIES—A LIFELONG ADVENTURE

Mr. Walter Good, Editor of Schweizer Staudengarten of Switzerland

(The text was translated into the English language by Mrs. Gisela Schmiemann, a lady living in Koln in Germany. Mrs. Schmiemann has a good collection of wild species of peonies and she is a very enganged and successful hybridizer and cultivator of hellebores.)

I often wondered about the allure of peonies. Could it be the vigor and longevity of these plants and shrubs? Could it be the perfect structure of the harmonious leaves, the magnificent blossoms and bizarre roots? Or could there be possibly an intuitive fear and anxiety associated with this medicinal herb that once was used in Europe as a remedy against insanity and epilepsy? Whatever the answer may be, once you are captivated by the enchantment of this plant family, it will have an addictive effect on you. If you are a gardener, it will make you start collecting peonies.

The more peonies establish themselves in your garden, the more beautiful they become, and they will not require a lot of work from their owner if they are planted in the right site. This is especially important for older gardeners who might run into increasing difficulty over time taking care of their garden. Peonies are satisfied with a minimum of care. They actually do not want to be disturbed, and hate transplantation. As the gardener grows older in time, and takes care of his peonies, they become more beautiful and abundant in bloom.

Thoughts and reflections on how to build a collection of peonies

If you restart collecting peonies you must be aware that this can develop into an extensive, as well as expensive, passion requiring great patience. Many of the most beautiful hybrids and species are seldom available for sale, and if you want to bring such a beauty into your garden and raise it to bloom, you will have to take great care. Furthermore, it will take two to three years until a newly planted peony will show the real beauty of its blossoms.

Very little can be found about the peony in contemporary literature—at least within the German language—and the nomenclature continues to be in flux. New herbaceous, as well as tree, peonies are still discovered today, which have not been acknowledged as a species of their own as of this day.

The peony, an ancient cultivar, should be regarded comprehensively by garden enthusiasts

Many garden and flower enthusiasts appreciate the peony with reservation due to their relatively limited period of bloom. In contrast to the roses, which bloom more or less during the whole sum-

mer, the flower of the peony keeps only for one-and-a-half weeks. This flowering period can be prolonged by the gardener by planting early, medium, and late flowering types in his garden. He can thereby easily extend the period of bloom up to five or six weeks.

Peonies should be regarded as an entity and the gardener should therefore pay attention not only to the flowers, but to the plant as a whole—also to its structure and foliage, during and after blooming.

Being an old cultivar, the peony has accompanied mankind throughout more than 2000 years. Used as a medicinal plant at first, this marvelous plant was soon to be found as a decorative plant at entrances of gardens in the Far East as well as in Europe, and was often described and portrayed in literature and art.

There exists a wide range of historical literature on peonies and plenty of artistic representations. One can find in the libraries of botanical institutes herbal books from the end of the Middle Ages and the antiquity which deal with peonies. This is quite interesting to read the chapter about peonies in the book "Science and Civilization in China," by Joseph Needmann. It presents to the reader plenty of information about the significance of peonies in ancient China. In the publication of the APS, "*The American Peony Society: The Best of 75 years 1904-1979*," by G. Kessenich, translations of old Chinese sources on peonies were published. Here the "Report about the peonies in Luoyang:" by Ou Yang Hsiu (1007-1072) is of special interest. Modern literature presents the new texts of Prof. Hong Tao, who describes newly discovered tree peonies in China. These are published in the Bulletin of the APS and in the "Schweizer Staudengarten" in the German language. It is a very special pleasure for anyone who loves peonies to collect original prints, and at the same time to cultivate the original plants in one's own garden.

The beauty of the young shoots

The charm of the peonies can already be enjoyed in late Fall or early Spring, when the new shoots of the early flowering species and hybrids break through the soil. The variety of colors and shapes let you anticipate the charm of the flowering peonies. Lactiflore hybrids, in German called "Edelpaonien," usually have thin, dark red colored and shining shoots. All shades of colors exist from sparkling red of the *Paeonia wittmanniana macrophylla* to the reddish brown shoots of the 'Soft Salmon Saucer' and to the soft purple red shoot of the 'Ballerina,' a creation of Prof. Saunders. The shoots are especially beautiful when they are surrounded by yellow flowering *Eranthis hyemalis*. Not less showy are the buds of the tree peonies. They present to the observer, who knows to watch nature discerningly, an abundance of differently tinted and shaped buds which develop each in its own special way in early Spring.

The variety of foliage

The foliage of the peonies is at its prime shortly before the blos-

soms open. Each type and each specie has its own characteristic foliage. The family of the peonies presents leaves with an almost endless variety of shapes and shades of greens. The slender deeply cut leaves of the *Paeonia tenuifolia* is next to the broad leaves of the *Paeonia daurica*. 'Festiva maxima' unfolds its dark foliage next to the light green, tender leaflets of *Paeonia tenuifolia rosea*. The huge, slightly blue shining leaves of round outline of *Paeonia mlokosewitschi* contrasts the shiny almost-red varnished foliage of the *Paeonia mascula russii*. During the months of April and May the collection of peonies displays the manifold beauty of its foliage. This beauty is even more emphasized if white and yellow flowering narcissus and daffodils are planted between them. They give an alluring contrast to the vigorous colors of the young foliage of the peonies. If the peonies are planted close enough together, the leaves of the fading narcissus and daffodils will disappear among the growing leaves of peonies. Narcissus, however, should only be planted among the tall and wide growing peonies. The foliage also plays an important role in the identification of peonies. The leaves not only characterize the species, they also identify hybrids. Chinese experts are said to be able to define the different hybrids of their country according to their foliage only.

A garden with peonies during Summer and Autumn

Peonies keep—with the exception of a few—their beautiful decorative foliage throughout the Summer. Some develop a charming dark red tint in Autumn.

A garden should always reflect a part of nature, and nature, by far, didn't create just peonies, irises, lilies, or day lilies. Gardens representing just one type of plants are always boring. Furthermore, the time peonies flower is comparatively short. Each collection of peonies should therefore be accompanied by plants flowering in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Eranthis and narcissus have already been mentioned. Clematis, larkspur, hemerocallis (planted in proper distance) and different low growing shrubs like *Magnolia stellata* are well suitable. *Jasminum nudiflorum*, the yellow flowering Winter jasmine from China produces its smelly yellow blossoms during the Winter-time, together with the wonderful flowers of the hellebores even in cold climate. All these plants accompany peonies all throughout the year and emphasize their beauty.

How to establish and arrange a collection of peonies

How can a collection of peonies come into existence? Aside from peonies, which are just marked as white, pink or red blooming, only very few named or listed peonies are available in local Swiss garden centers. This is not surprising, since most of the owners of gardens are content to decorate their gardens with a few flowering peonies. The most popular species are available in nurseries. The question, however, remains, whether there are really true species or simply

seedlings which don't correspond to the original species.

There are two options for the collector of peonies

1. He may collect peonies which he likes and which he happens to come across over the years. This way he will obtain a colorful indiscriminate collection, which he will surely enjoy every year.

2. He can extensively study the exciting literature, and based on this study try to build a collection which will represent to the observer a survey of the world of the peonies.

Whoever starts to get involved with planting peonies will probably choose the first option initially, plant those peonies he likes, and will enjoy them. But once he starts he will look for very special varieties and species. This is what I myself experienced, and now I want to guide you through my small collection of peonies:

In my parents' garden, there were three peonies: one *Paeonia officinalis* 'rubra plena' (red), one 'Festiva Maxima' (white), and one 'Mons Jules Elie' (pink). They were not especially cared for: they got their mug in Autumn and had to be tied during the flowering season and they did excellently. We didn't know their names then; they simply were called the red one, the white one, and the pink one. They still are growing in my mother's garden. When I was a small boy I got a small plant of the *Paeonia officinalis* 'rubra plena,' which I took great care of. In the process I noticed that each year it produced an additional shoot, a fact that thirty years later I could read about in the "*New Kreutterbuch*" by Hieronimus Bock (one of the first German botanists). Later, I forgot about peonies and it was not before I possessed my own garden that I planted one cutting of each of these types in my parents' garden and I enjoyed their huge and partly scenting flowers. However, they didn't fascinate me particularly as my interest was mainly captured by irises, of which I started a small collection. Then again my attention was drawn to peonies, and this time I got deeply involved in them. I bought some herbaceous peonies and received some from friends. My first purchase was *Paeonia tenuifolia* 'flore pleno,' *Paeonia peregrina* 'Otto Froebel' and the Hybrid Peony 'Chocolate Soldier.' Since I had heard that tree peonies were difficult and expensive, I bought only one plant, which didn't even have a name in a garden center. It grew slowly and came to flower. The spell was broken. I started to buy more and more herbaceous—and tree peonies—and it got hard on my budget. At the same time, I studied the existing literature and reflected what a collection of peonies should consist of.

How should a collection of peonies be built up?

I think a collection of peonies should give a representative survey of the world of peonies. Species, as well as historical (the oldest ones are more than 800 years old) and modern cultivars deriving from the four regions of peonies of the world, should be represented. The range of the collection depends mainly on the size of the garden, the

activity of the collector, and partly upon the financial possibilities.

Peonies have been and are bred and raised within four different areas of the globe. The first and probably most skillful breeders lived in the ancient China. Soon it reached Japan, which is the second area of intensive culture. At the end of the 18th century the first peonies (lactiflora hybrids and tree peonies) reached Europe, and soon after, America. These two continents produced an abundance of marvelous hybrids and still do. I'm not yet much informed about the modern Chinese and Japanese cultivars, since the Chinese hybrids especially have been obtained in Europe just recently.

It had been the aim of the Chinese cultivators to produce sumptuous double flowers, whereas the Japanese breeder aimed for single or semi-double blooms with a pretty center. In France, where most of the European hybrids have been created, mainly double lactiflora hybrids were grown. The American breeders crossed the European lactiflora hybrids with species, and achieved with the herbaceous peonies, the beautiful "Peony Hybrids." The development of the tree peonies was about the same. The Chinese produced huge double varieties, the Japanese single and semi-double hybrids.

It is not difficult nowadays to build a collection with representatives of all the four kinds, since there is a large variety of peonies available due to the present boom of peonies. Among them are many of the old famous types like the famous 'Yao Huang' ('Yao's Yellow'), or the 'Wei Zi' ('Wei's Purple') which have been known in the occident only from literature. It is also no longer any problem to obtain rare Japanese types. One has to be aware, however, that, unfortunately, many of the Japanese varieties are sold with the wrong name. As far as I know, only the Chinese peonies are still missing.

During the past eight years, my collection has grown quickly. The following species now grow in my garden:

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Paeonia mlokoswitschii</i> | <i>Paeonia wittmaniana</i> |
| <i>Paeonia wittmaniana macrophylla</i> | <i>Paeonia mascula</i> |
| <i>Paeonia mascula russi</i> | <i>Paeonia japonica</i> |
| <i>Paeonia officinalis humilis</i> | <i>Paeonia tenuifolia</i> |
| <i>Paeonia tenuifolia rosea</i> | <i>Paeonia veitchi</i> |
| <i>Paeonia veitchi</i> var. <i>woodwardii</i> | <i>Paeonia peregrina</i> 'Otto Froebel' |
| <i>Paeonia officinalis</i> ssp. <i>banatica</i> | <i>Paeonia emodi</i> |
| <i>Paeonia sterniana</i> (not been identified so far) | |
| <i>Paeonia officinalis</i> (this is from Monte Generoso, the only place in Switzerland where peonies accure in the wild) | |

The three plants of my parents' garden—*Paeonia officinalis* '*rubra plena*,' 'Mons. Jules Elie' and 'Festiva Maxima' soon got company from some old French cultivars like 'Claire Dubois,' 'Felix Crousse,' 'Avalanche,' 'Mme. Dubois,' 'Edulis Superba,' 'Mme. Emilie Galle,' and 'Le Cygne.' I planted two plants of 'Sarah Bernhardt.' This late variety produced sumptuous flowers in a hot

summer, which—according to my taste—unfortunately, have a somewhat odd scent. 'Konigswinter' is one of the old historical types of the famous German hybridizer Goos & Koenemann. I received it from a German gardener friend, from whom I also got most of the other French varieties. There are more kinds growing in my garden which I received from different friends and couldn't identify so far. Soon I got to see the first American catalogue of peonies. There were beauties like 'Cheddar Cheese,' 'Illini Belle,' 'Buckey Belle,' 'Soft Salmon Saucer,' 'Big Red Boomer Sooner,' 'Cheddar Supreme,' 'Coral Supreme,' 'Dresden Pink,' which made me attack my bank account again. I belong to that species of human beings, who pay DM 100—for a creamy 'Ballerina' or sFr. 1000—for a true engraving of Redoute presenting a peony, without turning a hair. What is the difference? The most beautiful motorcar sooner or later will end up as a wreck on the car dump, while a peony accompanies you throughout life and becomes ever more beautiful. The first year 'Ballerina' didn't bloom at all, and there were two simple flowers the second year, and only in the third year could I enjoy two wonderful cream colored double flowers with sparkling red stigmas. Almost more striking than the flower are the beautiful red shoots in Spring.

There are few plants which sprout as beautiful as 'Ballerina.' Furthermore, it is a robust, well growing variety. In Spring of 1993 it produced three shoots. Now, in November 1993, there are already five buds popping through the ground. Next to it in the same bed grow the sparkling red 'Blaze' and the white flowering 'Requiem' side by side. 'Red Romance,' 'Smokey Joe,' as well as 'Lord Cavin,' 'Nell Shaylor,' 'Garden Peace,' 'Sanctus,' and 'Red Gem' are my newest purchases of herbaceous peonies of American descent, which have not been in bloom so far. I am especially curious about 'Lord Cavin.' It must be a fantastic flower, if it is only half as pretty as it is described in the catalogue.

The Japanese herbaceous peonies are represented with only one example so far: 'Ama-no-Sode.' So far it didn't really bloom. Perhaps it doesn't like the site where it grows. I still lack the historical Chinese herbaceous peonies within my collection. But this gap will be closed one day.

The soil in my garden consists of a heavy limy clay which the herbaceous peonies like. Tree peonies, however, don't appreciate this heavy soil. One part of my small garden consists of a small sunny slope. There I grew, at first, my Iris collection. During the last years I started to plant my tree peonies along the upper rim and towards the middle of the small slope where there is well drained soil.

The first plant, a nameless dark pink flowering tree peony, which I bought in a garden center, was followed by others. Soon, one of my friends presented me a small plant of the Japanese variety 'Renkaku.' It had a wonderful flower after two years. The soft pinkish lustre in the center of the blossom around the stamen and the

stigma are the most beautiful part of the '**Renkaku**.' My next purchases were the '**Kintei**' and *Paeonia lutea*. To me *Paeonia lutea* is the most impressive plant of the peony family. It only came to bloom this year—five years after it had been planted. Its scenting yellow flowers are small, and often hidden among the foliage. But what a plant it is! With its shining green huge leaves it develops into a big bush from which the new shoots gleam red. It needs plenty of space to be able to develop properly. In my small garden it has to be satisfied with less. A precious gift was given to me, *Paeonia suffruticosa* '**Rock's Variety**' (Arnolds Arboretum). It's justified to call it one of the most beautiful tree peonies. The splendor of its white, dark flamed, scenting flowers corresponds with a vigorous growth. It needs full sun. Without it the flowers won't open completely. This year I pollinated a just-opened blossom of '**Rock's Variety**' with the pollen of '**Renkaku**.' The result of this crossing will be known to me within some years, if the seeds will germinate.

Let's stay with the Japanese cultivars, which meanwhile grow in my garden: '**Renkaku**,' '**Godaishu**,' '**Taish-no-Hokori**,' '**Shimane-Hakugan**,' '**Shima-Dajin**,' '**Shintenchii**,' '**Gessekai**,' '**Yachiyo Tsubaki**,' '**Hana Kiso**' and '**Teni**.' Some of them are still small plants, which will flower in the year to come. I'm very much looking forward to the white flower of '**Shimane-Hakugan**,' which is decorated with a dark stigma and for the first huge pink tinted blossom of '**Shintenchii**,' which also present a dark stigma in the middle. I brought home a present from Roy Klehm from my first journey to the USA. It is a dark violet semi-double tree peony, with a stigma tinted dark violet as well. I carried it through several states to the mouth of the Mississippi. The first flower opened in the hotel in Atlanta, while I took part in the convention of the American Iris Society.

Not just Japanese tree peonies are to be found in my garden; there are also some American hybrids. Some years ago, I received the varieties '**Banquet**' and '**Roman Gold**' from America. They got well acclimated and flowered abundantly. Last year I received from a friend a small plant of '**Leda**.' This wonderful veined mauve colored flower was a special joy.

Europe gave to the world a lot of wonderful tree peonies. '**Illinois**,' a pinkish red flowering kind with dark tinted center, will bloom in one or two years in my garden. I bought it, together with '**Gessekai**,' in the nursery of the famous "Grafin Zeppelin." In a small village in the vineyards of Zurich I happened to discover a more than 100-year-old tree peony in the park of an old lady. We were able to identify it as '**Reine Elisabeth**,' a wonderful European cultivar of the last century. The big semi-double bowl-shaped flowers bloom in a vigorous pink which tends towards salmon. The rim of the petals are tinted silver to pink. As Reginal Farrer, a famous planthunter in China, points out, it must have been one of the most beautiful tree peonies of the early century but was then forgotten. It

is now available again. We took three cuttings and grafted them to a rootstock. One was a success and is growing in my garden. **'Reine Elizabeth'** is a vigorous, strong growing variety. I also got the traditional European variety **'Souvenir de Maxime Cornu,'** a yellow flowering double variety with red rims, and **'Mme. Andre Devillers,'** a huge double bordeaux red variety from 1895 from the French cultivar A. Riviere.

Chinese tree peonies are given very poetic names like **'Crane in red harmony,'** **'Dancing green lion,'** etc. Among the recently available Chinese tree peonies, there are also old traditional true varieties, which have already been grown in the Sung Dynasty (1100 A.D.). This opens up a tremendous field for new activities. All of a sudden numerous peonies are available, which have not been known so far in the western world. Furthermore, the shapes of the Chinese hybrids are very different from the well-known kinds of Japan and Europe. **'Yao Huang,'** **'Shouanhong,'** and **'Baiyu'** are full double like the well-known **'Mons. Jules Elie.'** It is a very great advantage, that the Chinese tree peonies imported from China are not grafted to the roots of the herbaceous peonies, as they grow on their own roots. I received the four varieties **'Yao Huang'** (**'Yao's Yellow'**—Yao was the name of a rich family in Luoyang in the Sung period), **'Wei Zi'** (**'Wei's Purple'**—Wei was a minister in the Sung period), **'Ruan ye wen xiang'** (**'Mild sweet scent from nephrite'**), and **'Ye guang bai'** (**'luminous White'**) from Mr. Linnemann, a nurseryman in Bonn (Germany) who imports Chinese tree peonies. It will be proven, whether they are true or not within the next years.

All the tree peony species are rare species in China. The less known ones like *Paeonia ostii*, *Paeonia yananensis*, *Paeonia jishnanensis*, *Paeonia rockii* as well as *Paeonia szechuanica* are rare species in China and will probably not be obtainable soon. *Paeonia delavayi* as well as *Paeonia lutea*, however, are no problem to obtain.

The last group is the Itoh hybrids. About forty years ago, the Japanese Itoh succeeded to make the difficult crossing between herbaceous, and tree peonies. In the Autumn of 1992 I planted the two varieties **'Yellow Heaven'** and **'Yellow Gem'** next to a big stone. This year they made good buds and they should bloom in 1994 for the first time. My small collection of peonies in my small garden still shows many gaps. One day I shall have the *Paeonia parnassica* and the *Paeonia szechuanica* in my garden in bloom. The modern European tree peonies **'Valse de Vienne,'** **'Ice Storm'** and **'Dojean'** will probably also be added to my collection.

It seems that there are just peonies growing and flowering in my garden, but this is not so. In the middle of my garden there grows a *Magnolia stellata* surrounded by peonies, hemerocallis and clematis. There are a lot of narcissus in flower in Spring scattered around the peonies. At the end of May, shortly before the peonies start to bloom, the irises open their buds. I prefer the old European type. They are

hardy and don't need to be cared for very much. In Summer hemerocallis and clematis open their buds. The most important plants, however, remain the peonies.

In conclusion, a collection of peonies (herbaceous—as well as tree peonies) should consist of a representative selection of peonies in which the following groups should be included:

1. Species of herbaceous—and tree—peonies
2. Chinese varieties (traditionals as well as modern ones)
3. Japanese varieties (traditional as well as modern ones)
4. European varieties (traditional as well as modern ones)
5. American hybrids
6. Itoh hybrids

This is a very demanding concept of a collection, but can be realized within some years—if you are engaged in it, spend some money and have lots of patience.

A collection of peonies can also be planned in other ways: a collector can also decide to gather species only, or he can concentrate on all the varieties of one outstanding cultivar and arrange these plants in his garden.

The love for peonies will last a lifetime—it really is an adventure to collect them. How joyful if the collector finally can plant a long-sought-for-specie or a rare hybrid in his garden.. The collector of peonies will continuously buy or exchange new plants or he will bring them home from a journey. Nevertheless, he is well aware that he will never be able to combine all the peonies in his garden, and this can't be the aim, for a good collection is always built up according to a conception and therefore concentrate on special selections.

In this article I didn't want to describe how peonies are planted in general. However, I want to explain my way of planting tree peonies. The instructions on how to plant tree peonies that accompany the plants when you buy them, always advise to plant the plants rather deep—which is correct—and vertical—which is incorrect. Hybrids of luteas may be planted vertically as they tend to make shoots from the ground and therefore become bushes by nature. The suffruticosa hybrids, however, scarcely make shoots from the ground. Therefore, they should be planted almost horizontally, as the figure of Mrs. K. Furrer in Russikon demonstrates.

The horizontal planting enables rootstock of the cutting (1) to produce roots of its own easily and out of dormant eyes (2) new shoots will develop. In case it should be necessary to remove the rootstock, it won't be necessary to dig the whole plant.

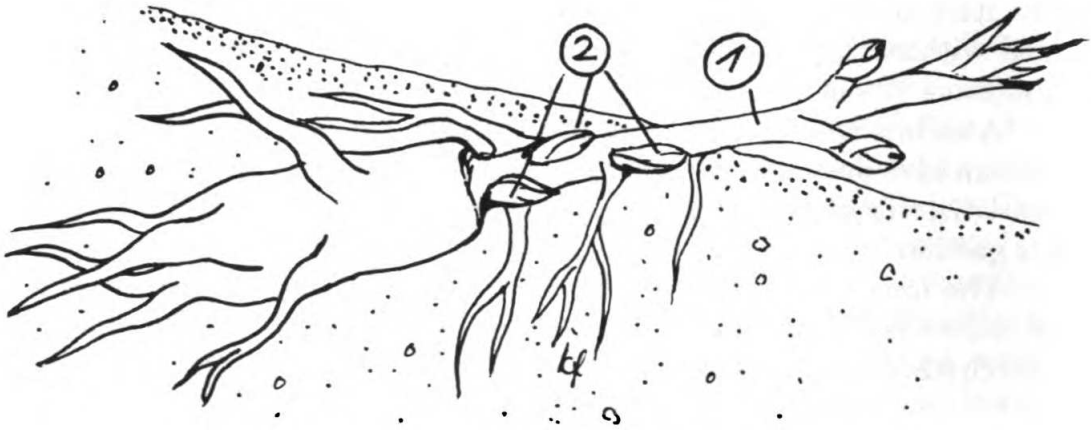
The horizontal planting of peonies is advisable for three reasons:

1. By covering as much of the cutting as possible with soil, the young plant will have the chance to produce many roots of its own.
2. The small buds on the cuttings, which will be brought into the soil as dormant buds, make shoots. Therefore, the plant will become

a bush-like peony. If the plant is planted vertically, it will develop into a slender woody peony.

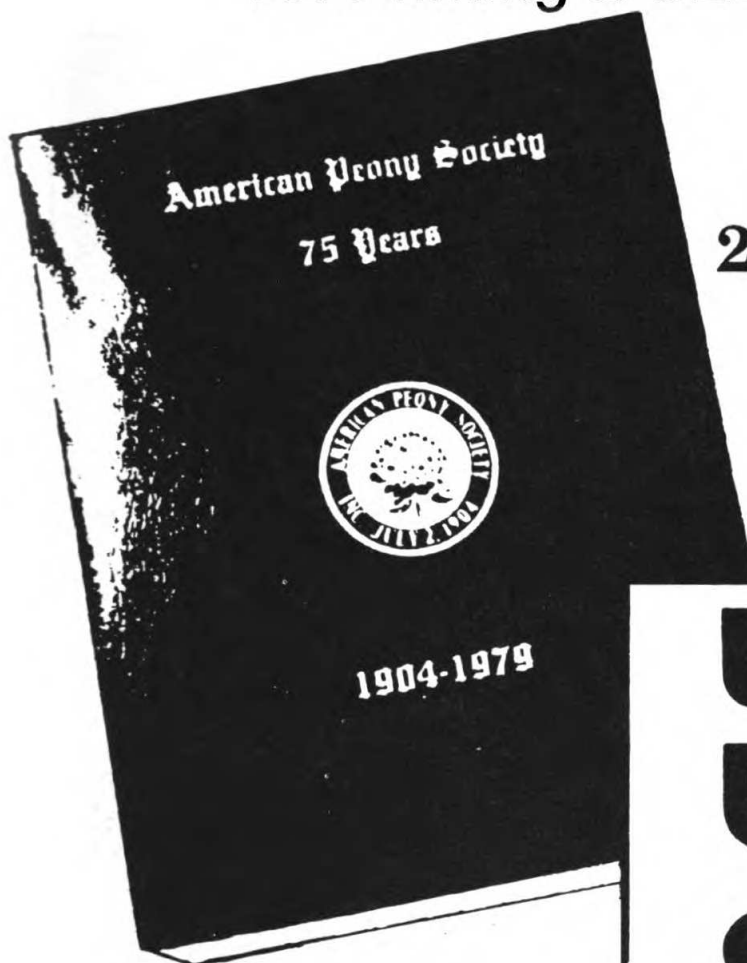
3. In case the cutting had been drafted to an old rootstock, the growth will be insufficient and the leaves will become chloride. In this case you must cut off the rootstock. This can easily be done when being planted horizontally as it won't be necessary to dig up the whole plant.

I can only recommend to everybody who loves peonies to start a collection. Even if it is a rather small one, it will become a constant pleasure for its owner. And it will continue to grow in time.





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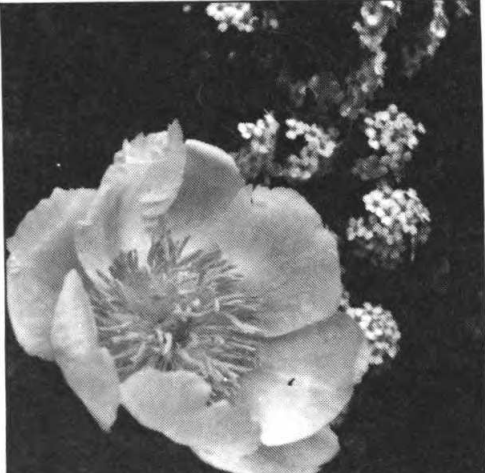
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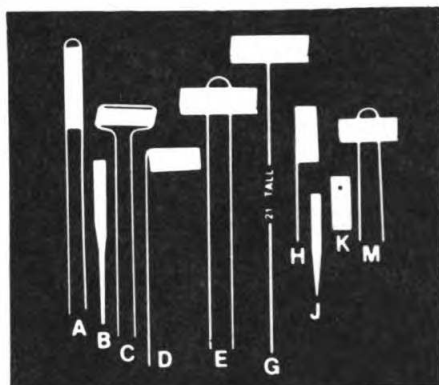
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2. REGISTERED PEONIES

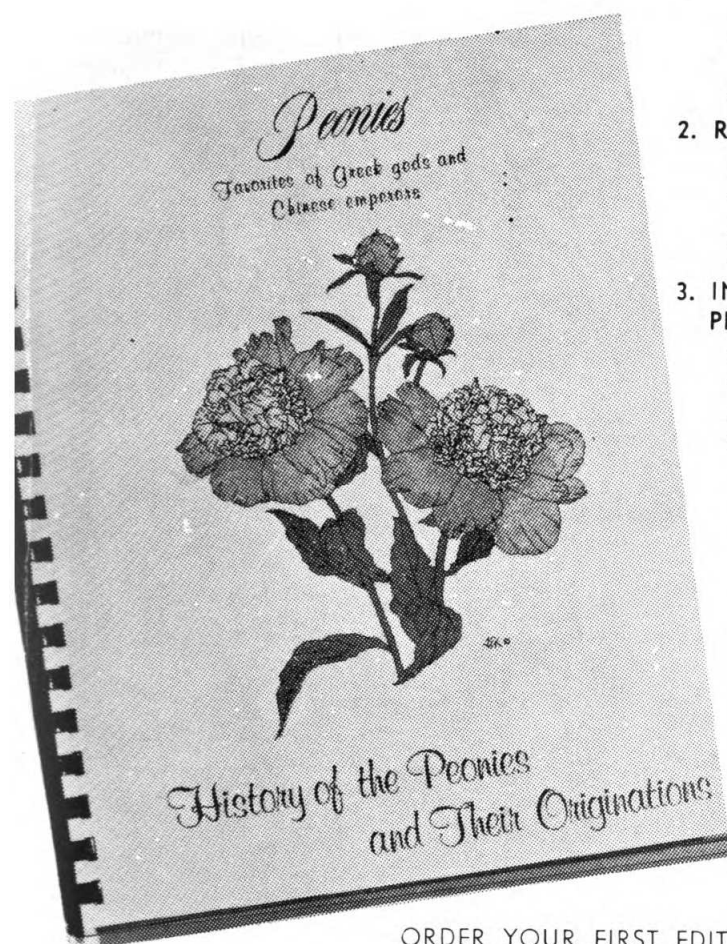
Compiled and edited by Greta M. Kessenich from bulletins of the American Peony Society. All varieties registered with the American Peony Society are listed.

3. INTRODUCERS OF PEONIES AND THEIR PRODUCTIONS

Peony varieties listed by growers and developers with emphasis on information provided by George W. Peyton during the years he was secretary and editor.

5,000 INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES

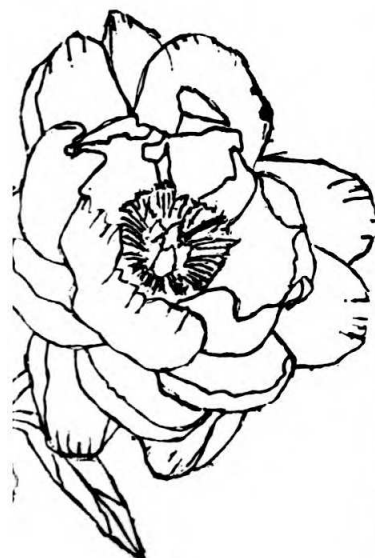
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