NO. 321

MARCH 2002

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Irene

Peter Waltz, 1999. Exeter, NH

A.P.S. Seedling X Salmon Dream

Announcing

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

AMERICAN

TREE PEONIES



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-pollenated 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.



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

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DEPT. OF REGISTRATION

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

Greta M. Kessenich, Secretary

St. Paul, MN 55118

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	Family Triennial27.50
Single Triennial	Life Membership300.00
Family Annual	Commercial membership25.00

Family membership, any two related members in same household......One Bulletin



Connecticut 06876



March 2002 - No. 321

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



President's Message

At this time of year there is not much plant-related activity, even here in the Southwest, except for watching a few forced hyacinth flowers begin peeking out of their bulbs. Thoughts turn to wondering how the peony plants back home have fared through the winter. The mild fall and winter with little snow cover in Minnesota causes apprehension for the survival of the hardy perennials that seem to enjoy more severe conditions.

This is the eighth winter we have spent in the Southwest, and we try to visit a few new places each winter. We just made a trip to California to tour the Hearst Castle at San Simeon, now owned and operated by the California State Park system. Some plants were still in bloom, but the special garden tour is not available during the winter months. However, we were fortunate to have a seasoned veteran guide for our "Experience" tour which led us through one of the guest houses, the outdoor and indoor pool areas and the assembly room, dining hall, morning room, billiard room and theater of the main house. The property is five miles up the hill from the coast highway and the view of the surrounding countryside is fabulous. What an experience it must have been, too, for Mr. Hearst's guests to visit "The Enchanted Hill."

After the tour we drove a few miles up the coast to see the elephant seals that come up on the beach to give birth. More and more seals arrive every year, as they are now protected and have found a safe haven for the month or two that they are on "maternity leave" and subsequently preparing the pups for life back in the ocean.

From San Simeon we headed back to Bakersfield and then east on a narrow, two-lane route that took us to Sequoia National Forest and Lake Isabella. The highway was built along the rock canyon of the Kern River, a route not recommended in the event of poor travel conditions. It is an area of several campgrounds and hot springs with some houses and cabins tucked in the hills here and there. Continuing east and then north out of the hills, we wound our way through some small towns, past several dry lake beds and on through Death Valley back home to the rocks and cactus of Nevada and the bright lights of Las Vegas.

The trip to the show this year at Madison, Wisconsin, will be much shorter for me, and hopefully the flowers will arrive in much better condition than those on the Canadian trip last year. We look forward to seeing everyone June 8th and 9th at the Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison.

Floyd Kimball



AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY CONVENTION & EXHIBITION JUNE 7, 8, 9, 2002

See pages 36-37 for map and directions to Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, June 7

2:00-9:00 p.m. — Prepare Show Entries. Preparation areas are behind the show rooms.

3:00 p.m. — Registration opens in preparation area.

SATURDAY, June 8

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

8:00 a.m. — Registration in lobby.

11:30 a.m. — Judging begins.

Lunch on your own.

1:30-9:00 p.m. — Show open to the Public.

2:00-4:00 p.m. — Seminars at Olbrich Botanical Gardens

Open the the public.

John Elsley, Director of Horticulture for Klehm Nurseries "Building Raised Buds for Peony Culture"

Renee Jeager, Sales Manager of Klehm & Song Sparrow Farm "Lovely Tree Peonies of Unsurpassed Beauty"

William Seidl of Manitowoc WI

"Breaking the Barriers of Peony Hybridization"

Roger Anderson, Callis Beaux Jardens in Fort Atkinson, WI
"The Wonderful World of Intersectional Peony Hybrids"
At the end of the session there will be a panel of peony experts to answer any peony garden questions. To be followed by a short presentation by Roy Klehm if time permits.

6:00-11:00 p.m. — Annual Banquet & Root auction.

SUNDAY, June 9

8:00-12:00 p.m. — Board of Directors Meeting 9:00-6:00 p.m. — Show open to the Public.

Hotel Headquarters for 2002 Show and Banquet

Please make reservations directly to the accommodation.

1. Sheraton Madison Hotel — 706 John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI 53713, phone: 608-251-2300, fax: 608-251-1189. Special rates for quest rooms for the evening of Friday, June 7th and Saturday, June 8th: \$87.00 + 13.5% tax. The cut off date for the special room rate is May 20th, 2002. Banquet will be held here on Saturday, June 8th from 6-11:00 pm. There are 60 places tentatively reserved. The Board of Directors Meeting will be held here on Sunday, June 9th, 2002 from 8-12 pm.



2. AmericInn—(near Olbrich garden) 101 W. Broadway, Monona, WI 53716, phone: 1-800-634-3444. \$62.00 + tax per night. Reserve early.

BANQUET RESERVATIONS

Contact Lori Palella, 1550 Dale Drive, Elgin, IL 60120, 847-551-3719. Banquet is \$20.95 per person at the Sheraton Madison Hotel, 706 John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI 53713. Make checks payable to Roy Klehm.







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 wood 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 the 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 in all classes.
- 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 to 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 Pages 11 and 12. Division VI COURT OF HONOR CANDIDATE CLASS.
- 14. The best seedling judged by the seedling committee will be displayed on the Court of Honor.



<u>DIVISION 1. Open to all Exhibitors</u> GROUP DISPLAYS.

One bloom of each variety in separate containers

OHE D	тоош от	each variety in separate containers
<u>Class</u>	101	American Peony Society Award
		Twenty-five varieties, any color or type
	102	American Peony Society Award
		Fifteen varieties, lactiflora double, bombs and semi-
		doubles, only, any color.
	103	American Peony Society Award
		Ten varieties, herbaceous hybrid only, any type or color
	104	American Peony Society Award
		Ten varieties, Tree peonies only, any type or color
	105	Five varieties, Japanese type lactiflora only, any color
	106	Five varieties, single type lactiflora only, any color

LACTIFLORA.

Three blooms of the same variety in one container.

\sim	1	_	_	_
U		и	В	8

110	Double white	118	Bomb
111	Double blush	118W-	White, 118P-Pink, 118R-Red
112	Double light pink	119	Japanese white or blush
113	Double dark pink	120	Japanese pink
114	Double red	121	Japanese red
115	Semi-double white or	122	Single white or blush
	blush	123	Single pink
116	Semi-double pink	124	Single red
117	Semi-double red		_

LACTIFLORA. One Bloom,

Class

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

HERBACEOUS HYBRID or SPECIES. Three blooms of the same variety in one container.

<u>Class</u>

Jouble or semi-double	155	Single white or blush
hite, blush or yellow	156	Single yellow
Oouble or semi-double coral	157	Single coral
Oouble or semi-double pink	158	Single pink
Oouble or semi-double red	159	Single red
apanese, any color		-
	white, blush or yellow Double or semi-double coral Double or semi-double pink Double or semi-double red	white, blush or yellow 156 Couble or semi-double coral 157 Couble or semi-double pink 158 Couble or semi-double red 159



HERBACEOUS HYBRID or SPECIES. One bloom. Class

160 I	Oouble (or se	mi-doı	uble	white	or	blush
-------	----------	-------	--------	------	-------	----	-------

- 161 Double or semi-double yellow
- 162 Double or semi-double coral
- 163 Double or semi-double pink
- 164 Double or semi-double red
- 165 Japanese, any color
- 166 Single white or blush 169P Single pink 167 Single yellow 169R Single red
- 168 Single coral

INTERSECTIONAL (HERBACEOUS X TREE) HYBRID. This includes the Itoh originations. Three blooms of the same variety in one container Class

- 170 Yellow, any form
- 171 Any color except yellow, any form

INTERSECTIONAL HYBRID. One bloom.

Class

- 172 Yellow, any form
- 173 Any color except yellow, any form.

TREE (SHRUB) PEONY. Any country of origin: China, Japan, France, USA.... Exhibitors should write a, b, or c after the class number to indicate, respectively, the flower form: single, semi-double, or double. (Ex. 174a, 174b, 174c).

Three blooms of the same variety in one container.
SHEFRITICOSA (MOLITAN) HYRRID T.P.

DOI:	ricollooda (moolaa)	TITDIME	T • T •
<u>Class</u>		<u>Class</u>	
174	White	179	White, Cream
175	Pink	180	Yellow
176	Red	181	Blend
177	Maroon	182	Pink
178	Lavender/Purple	183	Red
	-	184	Black-red
		185	Lavender/Purple

TREE PEONY. One bloom. SUFFRUTICOSA (MOUTAN) HYBRID T.P.

<u>Class</u>		<u>Class</u>	
186	White	191	White, Cream
187	Pink	192	Yellow
188	Red	193	Blend
189	Maroon	194	Pink
190	Lavender/Purple	195	Red
		196	Black-red
		197	Lavender/Purple



DELAVAYI GROUP. Includes lutea, potaninii, and crosses between them. One bloom.

198 Single, any color; also "b" and "c" if such form exist.

<u>DIVISION II: AMATEUR</u> 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.

LACTIFLORA (unless otherwise stated). Three blooms of the same variety in one container.

Cl	ass

205	Double White or Blush	210	Japanese, any color
206	Double pink	211	Single, any color
207	Double red	212	Herbaceous Hybrid
208	Semi-double, any color	213	Intersectional Hybrid
209	Bomb, any color	214	Tree, Moutan, or Hybrid

LACTIFLORA (unless stated otherwise). One bloom. Class

220	Double white	226	Bomb, any color
221	Double blush	227	Japanese, any color
222	Double light pink	228	Single, any color
223	Double dark pink	229	Herbaceous Hybrid
224	Double red	230	Intersectional Hybrid
225	Semi-double, any color	231	Tree, Moutan, or Hybrid

<u>DIVISION III: NOVICE</u> 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 One bloom each in separate container.

LACTIFLORA (unless otherwise stated). Three blooms of the same variety in one container. Class

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

LACTIFLORA (unless otherwise stated). One bloom. Class

315	Double, white or blush	320	Japanese, any color
316	Double, pink	321	Single, any color
317	Double, red	322	Herbaceous Hybrid
318	Semi-double, any color	323	Intersectional Hybrid
319	Bomb, any color	324	Tree, Moutan, or Hybrid



DIVISION IV: Seedlings and New Varieties. Class

401 <u>Seedlings:</u>

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.

Visitor from greatest distance.

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

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.

All exhibits are one-bloom-per-container.

LACTIFLORA.

Class

601	Double white		
602	Double blush	606	Bomb, any color
603	Double light pink	607	Semi-double, any color
604	Double dark pink	608	Japanese, any color
605	Double red	609	Single, any color

HERBACEOUS HYBRID or SPECIES.

Class 610 Double, any color

- 611 Semi-double, any color
- 612 Single, any color
- 613 Japanese, any color

INTERSECTIONAL HYBRID. Includes Itoh originations.

- Class 614 Yellow, any form
 - 615 Any other color, any form

TREE PEONY, SUFFRUTICOSA (MOUTAN).

Any origin, color, or form.

TREE PEONY, HYBRID

- French "Lutea Hybrids" (FLH)
- 618 Any origin (excl. FLH), yellow
- 619 Any origin (excl. FLH), any other color

Grand Champion

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







Composting at Merrill Farm

Howard J. Merrill-Ontario, CA

Merrill Farm, owned by brothers Bob and Don, is located near the Village of Waverly in the Southern Tier of New York State (Zone 5). The gardens are not a commercial operation. There are no sales. The subsoil is heavy clay hardpan overlaid by a thin layer of topsoil. Optimal soil conditions for daffodils can be achieved only by building raised beds which incorporate generous amounts of quality compost and coarse sand. Soil fertility, structure and texture are important considerations.



The primary objective is to create conditions which stimulate the bulbs to fully express their genetic potential. Organic practices are preferred. However, some chemical fertilizer ingredients are added to compost piles. Plantings consist of more than seven hundred different daffodils, plus many trees and miscellaneous plants.

Reinforced compost provides the core of the soil management and fertilization program. As this is written, there are piles of three-year-old completed compost ready for fall application in 2001 and 2002. It will be applied in one-inch layers on the surface of the raised beds.

A third compost pile of approximately one hundred tons is in process and scheduled for use in 2003, 2004, and 2005. Basic materials utilized for composting vary, depending upon cost and availability. Organic materials of opportunity, which have been utilized from time to time, include: green hay, leaves, lawn clippings, sawdust, wood chips, mushroom compost, paperpellet bedding from kennels, manure, cull eggs, dried whey, outdated wheat flour, peat moss, coarse sand, plus earthworms. Composting microbes are widely and lavishly dispersed in nature, therefore commercial activator inoculants are superfluous. A small amount of rich topsoil provides more than adequate inoculant. Piles should be kept damp, but not soggy.

Bedding pellets made from newspapers contain undesirable amounts of aluminum, therefore they should comprise no more than 25% of a compost pile. Wood chips and sawdust decomposition chemically ties up nitrogen temporarily. They should always be composted before soil application.

Nutritional power of compost is enhanced by inclusion of concentrated fertilizer amendments. Commercial materials added are: urea, 10-20-20 fertilizer, potassium sulfate, triple phosphate, preservative-free fishmeal and greensand from a marine deposit in New Jersey, which contains minute amounts of many trace elements. Small quantities of additional minor fertilizing constituents are provided through dispersion of Twenty Mule Team Borax (boron) and sulfate forms of iron, copper, magnesium, zinc, and manganese. High cost of desirable chelates precludes their large-scale use.

Billions of tiny living aerobic and anaerobic microscopic organisms reside in soil and compost. Chemical and bacteriological actions and reactions within a compost pile are fascinating and incredibly complex. The anaerobic method of composting requires much more time than aerobic operations.



The anaerobic plan is used here because of the difficulty of frequently turning and mixing the large volumes involved. Microbial decomposition activities cause compost pile temperatures to rise as high as 160°F. The process is not completed until internal pile temperatures drop below 100°F.

The piles are loaf-shaped. When the composting process is complete, after three or more years, approximately six inch vertical slices are cut by shovel and <u>thoroughly mixed</u>, using a Mantis Tiller, prior to being spread on the raised daffodil beds.

Limestone and gypsum are applied to the beds separately. These products are used to provide calcium and magnesium and maintain a soil pH of 6.0 to 7.0. Gypsum improves soil structure and drainage by causing clumping and breakup of clay subsoil.

The planting medium of daffodils should be low in nitrogen, medium in phosphorous, and high in potassium. A homemixed bulb food is used when planting. Ingredients have varied over the years. A good simple combination to use in conjunction with a reinforced compost program consists of two parts bonemeal and one part each of potassium sulfate, greensand, and kelpmeal. A handful should be thoroughly mixed into the planting hole two inches below the bulb, not in direct contact, and a like amount on the surface above the bulb, the latter to distract the attention of animals from the buried bonemeal.

The composting program described is a relatively large, ongoing, time-consuming, essentially anaerobic activity. Urban home gardeners with smaller landscaping space can utilize special equipment to convert easily composted grass clippings, leaves, and kitchen refuse at an accelerated pace by frequent mixing, which encourages rapid decomposition by aerobic organisms. It is possible to produce high quality compost in two weeks using this method.

Many veteran growers have not yet experienced the enjoyment which comes from handling a fresh batch of finished compost, and the exhibitantion derived from the resulting superior plant performance. To those who have been motivated to try the methods outlined herein, allow the author to be the first to welcome them to the pleasantly addictive world of *Brown Gold*.









Greetings,

And congratulations to all of us on a remarkable event: we are quickly approaching our 100th year as a society for the peony! It will have been a century of progress, with new varieties of peonies and increasing membership over the years. We have had our valleys as well as our peaks, certainly, but through it all we have become a strong and vibrant society because you, the membership, have been so stalwart in your support throughout.

Over the years we have written and published books on all aspects of the peony. The sales of these books to date have paid for all publishing costs. Their continued sale gives the society the needed revenue for various other activities. Our membership dues pay for the office and bulletin expenses. Through careful and prudent spending, we have accumulated assets that put us, financially, in a most satisfactory, solid position. Please let this letter be a reminder that dues for 2002 need to be paid if we are to continue in the coming year as we have the past 100. If you have already paid your dues for 2002 or have a lifetime membership, please disregard this. Do note, however, that we are always in need of articles for the bulletin, so let this serve also as a reminder to share your news, ideas, and activities with all of us in the four bulletins that will be forthcoming. We need articles for each of them.

Over the past 100 years, your commitment and dedication to the society have served to help the peony flourish throughout the world. In your creative efforts, some of you have crossed different varieties with pollen of other plants and species. Others of you have grafted the tree peonies and grown seedlings to maturity, then judged and analyzed the flowers for the market. Remember that the older varieties that you have grown in your garden are in demand, too, by someone who wants them for their collection. We hope that you will keep all your peonies as well as add new varieties.

Thank you for your membership dues and support in the past and your continued support as we look ahead to 2002 and our next century. We look forward to your letters, changes of address, news about your activities with peonies, and potential articles you wish to contribute to our four bulletins.

May this New Year be your best ever! Greta Kessenich, Secretary/Treasurer







Digitized by Google

New First Generation Peony Crosses

Galen Burrell-Ridgefield, WA

Of the 70 or so species, subspecies and varieties of the Genus <u>Paeonia</u> only a limited number of these wild plants have contributed genes to the hybrid peonies we grow in our gardens. This is primarily because, in the past and even now, it is difficult to obtain true plants of the Genus <u>Paeonia</u>. There are two reasons why true peony species have been so difficult to obtain. One, is that many peony species grow in areas that until recently have been inaccessible to the West. Second, wild peonies that are sold by nurseries are often hybrids rather than true species because when in cultivation they crosspollinate readily, if pollination is not controlled.

Professor A.P. Saunders was one of the few hybridizers who was able to obtain a limited number of true peony species. That's why most of the hybrids now available were produced by crosses made by Professor Saunders or came from plants he hybrided. (Please see <u>The Best of 75 Years</u>, published by APS, for some of the articles he has written about his crosses.)

Over the past 10-12 years I have accumulated, most from wild seed, nearly all species, subspecies and varieties of wild peonies. From these plants I try to produce true species seeds by crossing a plant of a particular species with a plant of the same species. I also cross-pollinate species to try and produce hybrids that look like the true species but are easier to grow than the true species (a good example is <u>Paeonia parnassica</u>). There is also a chance that hybrids produced in this manner could shed light on the evolution of some peony species.

The following is a list of some of the successful crosses that I have made and a description of the plants produced:

Paeonia steveniana (P. wittmanniana var nudicarpa)—I have not grown any crosses with P. steveniana to flowering but it does cross readily with many species. I have crossed it successfully with all subspecies and varieties of P. wittmanniana. I've also readily crossed it with P. parnassica, P. mlokosewitschii and P. mascula ssp. russoi.

Paeonia wittmanniana var. macrophylla—This variety also crosses readily with P. parnassica though I have not grown any of the progeny to flowering.

Paeonia cambessedesii—I have only attempted to cross P. cambessedesii with P. mlokosewitschii and P. mascula ssp.



<u>russoi</u>. Both crosses produced many viable seeds but I have only grow these crossed with <u>P. mlokosewitschii</u> to flowering. All plants that have flowered look intermediate between mlokosewitschii and cambessedesii. They have pale yellow to ivory flowers with reddish-pink veining. All are pretty but are nearly as difficult to grow as cambessedesii.

I also have two plants which came to me as seeds of <u>P. cambessedesii</u>. Both are obviously hybrids—one looks nearly identical to cambessedesii but has white flowers, the other is more than twice as large as cambessedesii but it has leaves and flowers that are similar to cambessedesii. Both plants produce viable seeds and both plants are easier for me to grow than cambessedesii. This year I backcrossed both plants with cambessedesii and they both produced viable seeds.

<u>Paeonia obovata</u>—This is a pink form of obovata that I grew from seed collected on Mt. Fuji in Japan. This year I successfully crossed it with <u>P. mairei</u>.

Paeonia obovata var. willmotiae—I have only successfully crossed this variety with two species, mlokosewitschii and parnassica. This cross with mlokosewitschii only produced one seed and the subsequent plant only survived for two years. The cross with parnassica produced many seeds but none of the plants have yet flowered. These hybrids all look primarily like obovata but appear to be easier for me to grow than either parnassica or obovata.

Paeonia japonica—I made many crosses with this species but the only successful cross I made was with P. mlokosewitschii and that cross only produced one viable seed. After 3 years the plant, from that seed, looks intermediate between the two species. Hopefully it will flower this year.

Paeonia mascula ssp. russoi—I have three forms of russoi, one from Sicily, one from Sardinia and one from Corsica. All cross readily with one another. I have also successfully crossed these forms of russoi with P. mascula ssp. hellenica and P. mairei, though none of the plants produced has as yet flowered.

<u>Paeonia potaninii var. trollioides</u>—I have crossed this plant successfully with <u>P. potaninii</u>, <u>P. lutea</u> and <u>P. potaninii</u> "alba." This year I also crossed it with <u>P. rockii ssp. linyanshanii</u>.



Paeonia mascula ssp. arietina—I have only tried to cross this subspecies, <u>P. parnassica</u>. It crosses as readily with parnassica as it does with other plants of its own species. I have great hopes that these hybrids will have flowers like parnassica but will be as easy to grow as arietina, but so far none of them have flowered.

<u>Paeonia emodi</u>—I primarily only try to cross emodi with other plants of the same species since true emodi seeds are often hard to find. This year I have seedlings from emodi x parnassica. The seedlings look intermediate between the two species.

<u>Paeonia brownii</u>—Of all the crosses Anne Oveson and I have made with brownii the only (known) successful cross was made by Anne on a brownii flower with <u>P. peregrina</u> pollen. The seedlings were intermediate between brownii and peregrina but they only survived for one year.

<u>Paeonia sinjinjangensis</u>—For the past two years I have crossed this plant successfully with <u>P. anomala</u>.

Paeonia peregrina—Since peregrina has often been used for peony hybridization I have only attempted to cross it with one other species, parnassica. This cross has produced many seeds and will hopefully one day produce a plant that is as easy to grow as peregrina but with flowers like parnassica.

<u>Paeonia parnassica</u>—This is a very difficult plant for me to grow and the seed pods often dry up shortly after the plant has flowered. This year I obtained one seed with a cross with <u>P. mascula ssp. arietina</u>.

I have also crossed a few species with some of my hybrid peonies. So far I have only had one plant bloom and that was from a cross I made between "Anika," my own P. mlokosewitschii hybrid and P. mascula ssp. russoi.

I have been sending species peony pollen to Peter Waltz for some years. He has had a great deal of success using this pollen to fertilize hybrid and lactiflora peonies. There is a good chance that from his efforts one day we will have genes from many more species peonies represented in our garden hybrids.









Own Root Tree Peonies by Grafting

Dr. Bernard Chow-Melbourne, Australia

Peony growing has spread to every corner of the world nowadays. It is necessary for different growers to modify other people's experiences to suit their own growing condition, such as difference in climate, in environment, in soil etc.

Living in the mild region of a sunny and dry continent, I have never had to deal with snow in my garden. Drought and hot wind in summer are my worries. I always find that large basketball size herbaceous rootstocks hinder the growth of my tree peonies. A few years after planting, if a grafted tree peony still had a large herbaceous root, it would not have so many own roots as one without an herbaceous root ball. The stems that grow above a large basketball size herbaceous root are usually more crowded and do not spread widely, consequently many young shoots may die before maturity. I find that tree peony roots which stretch deep and wide would help the plant to fight against drought and to avoid the hotter surface soil. Therefore, I remove the grafted herbaceous rootstocks whenever necessary to quicken the production of own roots from my grafted plants. To the contrary, an experienced grower, Mr. Scott Reath of Michigan pointed out that herbaceous rootstocks could actually help a tree peony. "There have been times in severe cold here that the roots of some varieties of tree peonies have frozen and die and the only thing that kept the plants alive was the herbaceous rootstock." (The Bulletin No. 314). We have very different climate and very different experiences indeed. Frequent asked questions by the local growers of herbaceous peonies are often like this: My peony looks very healthy year after year, why has it never produced any flower for more than 10 years of growing? The straightforward answer is: Winter in Melbourne is simply not cold enough for many herbaceous peonies.

There are many excellent articles on grafting procedures based on different personal preference. Recently in the Bulletin No. 314, Mr. Bill Seidl summarized many people's experiences and produced an up-to-date article with very good technical details. I shall only report the small different approaches that I made for the purpose of encouraging quicker own rooting development. I shall now repeat all similar procedures in detail.

To encourage quicker own root development, I take a hint suggested by Mr. Roy Gayle on the topic of root division. "The



moral is to cut back hard—starve it—and force it to get to work and build a sturdy root system." Mr. Gayle's article first appeared in the Bulletin No. 100, 1945, and was republished again recently in the Bulletin No. 319. His principle is applied to a graft method called "side graft" in Wister's book, "The Peony." The tree peony root is chosen as rootstock to save any future work needed on cutting the grafted root. The Scion is cut diagonally to form an elliptical shape surface with as long a cut as can the conveniently be made. A sliver of a matching length is then cut within the flesh of the root from the edge of the tree peony root used as rootstock. The cut sides of the scion and the rootstock are placed together in such a way so that the entire elliptical cambium-ring of the scion is in contact with the cut surface of the rootstock. Both pieces are tightly bound together



Photo 1

with a budding tape. With this method the cambiums of the scion and the rootstock are in good contact as long as the surfaces are flat and the bind is tight. Usually these are

easy to achieve. In comparing with the "wedge method" showed in a drawing by Mr. Bill Seidl in the Bulletin No. 315, my scion is not so well protected and its nutrient is not so well provided. Therefore this method may have a slightly lower rate of success compared with the "wedge method." Since its nutrient is not so well provided in this method, the scion is forced to go out to search for its own supply and to build its own root system. It is

not uncommon to find that own roots have already emerged from the scion in early spring about 10-15 weeks after grafting as showed in Photo 1. After a year of growth, some grafts already have a bundle of their own roots as showed in



Photo 2

Photo 2. This result is obtained without using any rooting hormone. On the other hand, I often find that a blooming graft that was produced by using herbaceous rootstock with "wedge method" has still only one single piece of herbaceous root like a sweet potato. There are no own roots at all even though the graft has already been three years old or older. I should say maybe this scion has been too well provided by the rootstock and there is no need to struggle to be independent.





The Irvine/Sutherland Registrations

Bill Seidl-Manitowoc, WI

Parentage

The APS Bulletin #318, June 2001, lists 264 registrations by Jane and Trevor Sutherland (Southern Charm Paeonies, Timaru, NZ) of varieties developed by Derek Irvine (see p. 7 of that Bulletin), also of Timaru, from seed annually purchased from me since 1986. This began as an outgrowth of my two years of charge of the APS seed program.

Most APS seed did not have parentage records, so in 1988 (Bul. #267, Sept.) I advertised "Pedigree Peony Seed" for sale, both herbaceous and t.p. (10/\$20 for hybrid t.p.), believing that most buyers would want to know the parentage and would maintain those records. This Mr. Irvine has done and so, using his key to seeds obtained from many sources, not just me, I am able to furnish that information for most of the Sutherland registrations.

However, to communicate the detailed ancestry of every cultivar is beyond the intent and scope of this article. That requires still more preparation on my part and, when finished, will consume fourteen pages, plus a few more to provide a key for my numbered seedlings that were used in making the crosses. After all, it won't make any sense to know **Cloth of Gold** is 33 x 91, or that **Afterglow** is 58 x **REF** without such a key.

For now, I am far enough along to say that of the 264 t.p. registrations, <u>39</u> are suffruticosa cultivars, <u>224</u> are hybrids, and <u>one</u> (**Meridian**, #528-3) is an intersectional hybrid out of **Minnie Shaylor** x **REF** (**Rosalind Elsie Franklin**), but is nevertheless included in the list of tree peonies. Perhaps it behaves that way in Timaru's relatively warmer climate.

Out of the 264 registrations, both parents are known in 191, one parent in 39, and neither in 34. "Neither" usually



refers to crosses where hand-pollinated seeds resulted, but so few in a cross that I put them in a mixture of, say, 20 different crosses. This is to simplify record keeping.

Of the 224 hybrids, half or more have **Zephyrus** in their family tree, mainly due to the fact that I relied heavily (79 selections) on a **Zephyrus** seedling, #158 or **REF**, as a pollen parent. From its very first bloom I valued it as a pollen parent, for its color, carriage, and earliness were more typical of a suffruticosa than a hybrid.

The most effective (high ratio of selections to seeds planted) cross seems to be #467 with **Afterglow** (467-6), **Asteroid** (467-10), **Nature's Banquet** (467-15), and others all being siblings out of 58 x **REF**. (#58 is also a **Zephyrus** seedling.) The largest group of half-siblings is from Cross #548, which is many mixed parents x **REF**.

Progress is intergenerational. The ancestry of these hybrids is derived from the works of Lemoine (Alice Harding) Saunders (Chinese Dragon, Age of Gold), Daphnis (Zephyrus), and Reath (Golden Era, Golden Experience). Prof. Saunders named about 77 varieties; yet I've used only two. So there are many more to exploit. Even so, the present genes are producing a full range of colors from white thru black-red.

The most effective suffruticosa has been #222: **Taiyo** x **Rock's Variety**. All 39 of the suffruticosa selections are derived from **RV** as a parent or grandparent.

I'm sure many consider 264 registrations at once to be excessive and many without the highest merit, but if only a quarter are the cream of the crop, that's an excellent array of new stuff available. Since I did not have the space, time, or energy to grow my own seed, I am gratified that others did so, including not only Derek Irvine but the McFarlanes (NZ), Bernard Chow (Aus.), and several others in NZ who have nursed along herbaceous hybrid selections.







TO BE REGISTERED

There are 36 name duplications in Bulletins #318 and #320 in the 300 peonies that are to be registered.

The initial stimulus for the APS's founding in 1904 was to bring order out of the chaos in varietal nomenclature. Therefore the Society is duty bound to reject the duplicate registrations.



Also, as the international authority for registering peonies, they cannot do otherwise. Of course registrants are free to still propagate and distribute these cultivars under the duplicate names, but the APS cannot permit itself to be used as a promotional vehicle for said varieties.

When Derek Irvine called me this past September I brought up the subject of name duplication. (At that time I was aware of only a few.) He said he was responsible for the name selections, that he had trouble researching tree-peony names, and that no duplications were made knowingly. He will make every effort to right the situation. After finding so many duplications of herbaceous peony names, it occurred to me that perhaps he thought names for one type of peony could be re-used for one of a different type. The most notorious example is that "Alice Harding" names both a lactiflora and a hybrid t.p. Somehow this became fixed in the literature and is now accepted more by virtue of squatter's rights than for any legitimate reason. Of course you can use names from other genera; I find old daylily checklists a good source for appropriate peony names.

-Bill Seidl







Memorial

Heinz Klose 1926-2001

It is with sadness that we published the Memorial of Heinz Klose of Lohfelden, Germany. As a long time APS member he was an enthusiast in peonies.

Born August 29th, 1926 in Waldenburg, Schlesien (today Poland) he had to run away with his family in 1945 for the Russian army and lost his home like many other people in that time. During many years of gardening education he got in contact with peonies in the nursery Goos & Koenemann (famous for many old peony varieties). From this time on he fell in love with in this flowers. In 1960 he settled down with his wife Rosi at Lohfelden where both founded a perennial nursery. They started with not much more than there both hands and a lot of debts. But with the enthusiastic work of both this nursery became famous very fast widely over the borders of Germany for its perfect assortment of many



different plants. It might be that this nursery has got the biggest collection of herbaceous peonies in whole Europe. More than 500 different varieties are grown in Lohfelden today. But not only collecting and propagating plants was his passion. Also interested in breeding he created more than 100 varieties in many many families like e.g. Achillea, Astilbe, Delphinium, Hosta, Paeonia.... The most famous varieties of his breedings are Astilbe chinensis "Veronica Klose" (even very well known and sold in the USA) or the peony varieties "Margarete Klose" or the marvelous purple "Waldenburg."

In the nineties he retired "officially" from the nursery which is ruled from this time on by his son Heinz-Richard. But as a full heart gardener who worked his whole life in this job he spent every free minute further on in the nursery and worked like all the years before.

But these hard and often troublesome years in his youth reflected upon the latter part of his life. He got more and more problems with his health. He died on August 4th, shortly before his 75th birthday.

He is survived by his wife Rosi, his four children and grandchildren.

-Stephan Tetzlaff, Duesseldorf, Germany

Remembering "Peony Sunday"

Jack Nordick-Ortonville, MN

Although we have had peonies growing in the garden for my entire life, I remember more the peonies from my childhood that were associated with special events. After all, the peonies that grew in our garden were just "ordinary peonies" while the flowers that made up these other bouquets were unlike any that I could pick at home. We had a dull purple, but fantastically fragrant double (Francoise Ortegat) and a soft chrysanthemum pink that was always covered with many blossoms but which also was always lying in the mud at the first sign of an approaching rain cloud (Mons. Jules Ellie). However, at these other times there were bouquets of a more true red (Kansas) and a big fluffy white double with red specks (Festiva Maxima). Oh, how I wished those would be growing in our garden. So I looked forward every year to the special peony festival during which these appeared.



Of course, it wasn't a peony festival at all, but the religious celebration of Corpus Christi, a European tradition that featured an outdoor procession that was so much a big part of many European religious celebrations. It still is celebrated as a National Holiday in some countries like Ecuador. I think it was popular in America because it took place in the summer, which is about the only time one can have an outdoor procession in the northern latitudes. But because it took place at the beginning of June (always on a Thursday exactly 60 days after Easter) it seems to always have coincided with the peak bloom time of Peonies. It is interesting that in Germany, Peonies are called Pfingsten Rosen or Pfingsten Blumen which literally translates as Pentecost Roses or Pentecost Flowers. Pentecost was celebrated 11 days before Corpus Christi, and so I suppose that in the slightly warmer German climate the peonies come into bloom about two weeks sooner than they do here in Minnesota.

But here the Peony Festival came 11 days later. In addition to the peony bouquets at the church, there were three stations set up along the road, and at each the procession came to a stop. Here too altars were set up and decorated with wonderful bouquets of peonies. In addition, young girls in colorful party dresses carried baskets of peony petals that they spread out on the road as the procession went along. So as the procession passed, the entire path they took was outlined in fragrant peony petals.

Even though time has passed and customs change, I still think of this time as the Peony Festival. The celebration for Corpus Christi is now held on the following Sunday, instead of on Thursday, and few churches still hold an outdoor procession. But it happened that in 1990 I was ordained on the day before Corpus Christi. So of course I had to make sure that for Sunday, the church was filled with bouquets of peonies, just as I remembered them. I suppose part of my passion for growing peonies is with this memory. Now I grow plenty of Festiva Maxima and Kansas, along with many of the best of the most recent introductions. Even though I have many bushes it seems that there is never enough for all of the flowers I want to pick. Of course when I am too aggressive the plants suffer, and they have a smaller crop the following year. I want flowers for fresh bouquets, flowers to hold over in cold storage, and flowers to dry. But always now I make sure that here are fresh bouquets for "Peony Sunday" which I celebrate as my anniversary.



Last year I was able to make several bouquets from a combination of Royal Charter and Coral Sunset. The large dark blossoms of Royal Charter make a wonderful contrast to the bright pink flowers of Coral Sunset. So many people commented about them. "Is that a peony?" they wanted to know or "What kind of peony is that?" Bringing these more recent introductions into the public eye is one way of promoting their use in gardens. Any of the coral pink varieties would provoke a similar reaction. Pink Hawaiian Coral is the APS medal winner, but Coral Charm and Coral N' Gold are also quite wonderful. Other unusual peonies will also catch the eye. Those with sharply contrasting staminodes like Heidi, Do-tell or Bouquet Perfect always stand out. Last fall. I planted a new bed at the entrance to my farm home with these and a few hot pink varieties, like Paula Fay and **Prairie Afire.** I expect it to be a shot-stopper. Last spring, when I saw **Seashell** for the first time I stopped in my tracks. Pictures have never done it justice. I looks more like a Cosmos on steroids than a peony. The very tall plant with long graceful stems and the exceptionally large single flowers of great substance simply begged to be noticed. Unfortunately, there are none growing in my own garden—yet. And of course, if you want to start a riot, get several divisions of Bartzella to full maturity and watch the fun. Most people have never seen a yellow peony, nor anything close. Whenever I have a few yellow peony blossoms on display, no matter what the type or variety, they always create a stir.

Perhaps there are other special events that would be nice to remember in flowers. Early peonies, especially **Tenuifolia**, are sometimes known as the "Memorial Day Flower." That may explain their common use at gravesites. One can always start a new tradition of a special "peony day." Of course, it might take some advance planning. To have flowers for a particular day, whether a wedding or any other, we shouldn't expect to be able to walk out in the garden the morning before and just take what we want. The plants really should be prepared a year ahead, so that they will be assured of having good blooms the following year. Good sanitation practices and disease prevention should be followed from the moment the first buds appear. To capture that absolute perfection of the flowers, it's a good idea to cover the growing buds with paper sacks. Cut off a good sized piece of a corner first to make sure

that hot air can escape. This not only protects the buds from the weather, but from insects as well. Cut the stems as soon as the buds begin to open, but do not take more than the top leaf, and no more than 25% of the stems from one plant. Remove all of the leaves and put the stems in water in a refrigerator where they will easily keep a couple of weeks, or even much longer if cut a bit earlier and held at temperatures near freezing. Again, setting a paper bag over a bunch of buds will help to keep them in top condition. We cannot expect that the flowers will open outdoors just when we want them to, and many, especially the coral pink varieties, begin to fade badly the minute they begin to open. After two days in the sun, Pink Hawaiian Coral changes from a magnificent princess to a ragged trchin. Although I have never tried to get a plant to bloom earlier than normal, it might be accomplished by using the kind of cloche or "wall of water" that is often used to keep tomato plants from freezing. A whole plant might be delayed in blooming by adding extra mulch, heaping a giant snow-bank on top, or pouring ice cubes on top after the snow has melted. Usually, however, it is just easier to keep the buds in cold storage at the time they begin to open.

Since Easter is early this year, "Peony Sunday" will also be early; on June third. If indeed, the peonies plan to bloom for this date, we should be blessed with many fine blossoms ready to take to the show the following week. (Ah yes, last year "Peony Sunday" was on June 17. No wonder there were so few peonies in peak display for the show the previous week.) And best of all, at the time of this Bulletin's release, it can only be three more months before peonies will once again grace our gardens and tables. I can hardly wait.







My Experience Importing Tree Peonies from Heze, China

Richard W. Rogers

When we wanted to diversify our Hybrid tree peony stock by importing Suffruticosa from Asia in the mid 70's, our choices were few. As I recall, our first big order was with a Dutch distributor. We bought about 50 each of 6 different cultivars. As two year grafts, we paid about \$7. The first



spring almost half did not grow out. Of the half that did grow, it took until the second year when most bloomed and only a few were the correct plants. It became quite clear that importing was not as easy or as inexpensive as it seemed. We felt that we paid almost retail for what we ended up with that were correct, and decided that we would sell only what we could propagate and graft here. This is also expensive, but I would be able to have better quality control.

By the mid 90's, I again wanted to diversify into the wealth of Chinese tree peonies that were becoming available. I was more impressed with the samples sent to me by Mr. Luo Shao Fang of Heze East Flowers Co. They were offering not only one and two year grafts, but also three year and older plants grown onto their own roots. Since then I have imported thousands of fine plants from them. The majority of these are brokered out but I have grown on thousands here. For the most part, the plants are robust, although a little dry from the trip. I rehydrate them in moist peat moss.

My biggest problem has not been on the foreign end, but with the transportation once they arrived in the United States. The airlines have forgotten to unload at the right stop, or the trucking company showed up with only 10 out of 30 boxes. It took them three days to find out that the other 20 boxes had gone 300 miles to the other side of the state. Again, all were fine after hydration. Another big problem, and one of the reasons you don't find a lot of older tree peonies on their own root in the retail nurseries, is the pot space they take. I use a five gallon deep container, compared to a one year graft that you can hide in your hand and fit hundreds in a bin that take up very little shelf space, with no labor. The other big problem is getting nurseries to go through all the steps it seems to take to get them growing. First, most nurseries want them in pots so they can be sold at any time. This media needs to be a potting soil with very little Nitrogen. I use nothing in the fall but a 0-10-10 (most bulb fertilizers are close to this) and just a little sea kelp the first spring. If you use too much Nitrogen, it will sometimes make them push out too soon. As soon as the plants are potted they need to go in a shade house or a white co-ply. I use the latter. Too many nurseries use the clear shade plastic tunnels. I feel that this heating in the day could start the tree peonies to start growing too soon. The white co-poly house stays much more even temperature and makes a better growth climate. In the

spring, I ventilate as needed. The first spring, resist the feeling that you should be feeding them to get them going. Feeding them too much will again push them too fast. I just use sea kelp. The growth will be sparse, the leaves small, and the flower buds should be pinched. As long as they show growth, they're ok. I recommend that you don't even try to sell them on the first year. The next spring I use a 5-10-10 and the sea kelp. The leaves will come out much bigger and most likely push bloom bud. Now you have a very nice plant with loads of new root that will make good foliage, push out that flower and sell very easily.

March — In Time

Harold Entsminger-Great Falls, MT

Cold and snowy is the winter of 2001-2002 in northern Montana. Soon I'll see a garden coming to life. Over there in the northwestern corner of the garden will be seen Ruba Plena, double fern-leaf peony. Bright shinning red petals on an 18" tall plant with pine-needle like foliage. This peony is so much prettier than its description, you have to see it to believe it. It is widely grown here in this northwestern area of Montana. Its price of \$35.00 for a 3-5 eye division is considered to be expensive by most people but year after year they do well here and grow and spread. After a few years of looking at them and loving them so, most everyone breaks down and buys one or two. As an elderly lady patron once told me, "Don't you know that when a lady really wants something, price is not an object?" She returns to the garden each June to have her wishes filled. I grow a few Lewisii Rividii, the Bitterroot of the state flower of Montana, just because most people have never seen one. Just across the stony pathway, the huge Shimane Chojuraku blossoms begin the second week in June. It's black flares offset the huge wondrous lavender blooms on bushy plants.

Then next to them are Bartzella Garden Treasure and Yellow Crown each in bloom about two weeks later. These plants are admired by all who see them in bloom. Then right down the line: Red Charm, Firelight, May Music, Little Dorrit, Frances, Nancy, Magnolia Flower Cyntherea, Ludovica, Lotus Bloom. How does one choose among the last three? Perhaps one can since my favorite peony is Ludovica, with its large lustrous blooms cup shaped. But



each of the others have their own unique beauty. Otto Froebel Feeré and Good Cheer are each a shade apart in color, but each individually outstanding. Eventide, Great Lady, Ensign Moriarty, Crystal Pink, Pillow Talk, Lady Orchid, Coral Sunset, Pink Hawaiian, Coral Superior, Raspberry Charm, Red Grace, Old Faithful, Douglas Brand, Henry Bockstoce, Postilion, Flame, Heritage, Requiem, Rose Noble, Whitelight, Sunlight, Nova, Molly Winkowitch, White Cap, Picotee, and so many more.... Look at those blue peonies over there and the silver ones. I have a peony that has not yet bloomed which could be genetically orange or pink. Perhaps I will know which by June 2002 or June 2003? It is all exciting. Filled with wonder. Wonder if ever there was a Johnny Peony Seed, should more city parks be donated Peonies? Should more churches be donated peonies, should there be more plantings in the mountains? How is you little corner garden doing? Is Our Lady of the Rockies ready to receive a circle of peonies? What of Crystal Park or Grant Springs? The planting in Sunriver Canyon is doing fair. The larger rooted plants have done well without help through two drought ridden summers and are now in their third winter. No bear or elk have eaten them. So far so good. I expect high mountain blossoms this The cold up there is frightening, but let it snow, let it snow, let is snow. Can summer be far behind?







Letters

This is in answer to Linda Sharp about fern-leaf peonies.

I have grown fern-leaf peonies for over 30 years. I received a small root with two eyes from my neighbor. It took about five years for it to get big enough to divide. My sister-in-law wanted a division. So that is how I started to divide it. Her plant never did get real nice, she lives in Tacoma and they get too much rain and not enough sunshine.

You talk about seed on your fern-leaf peony. As far as I know fern-leaf doesn't produce seed unless you cross it with a different peony. They do not have any pollen. They also bloom early and there isn't any other peonies blooming at the time. You have to save pollen from the last season. I have two crosses that I got from the Society. They are single and do produce



seed. I don't think they are as pretty as the original. I have never raised them in containers, so I can't tell you about that.

I raise my peonies in my garden. When they first start sticking thru in the Spring I loosen up the soil around them being careful not to break off the shoots. I don't do anything special just be sure that you don't plant the eyes deeper than 2 inches. I make a stick to lay across the hole because it is difficult to estimate 2 inches. I also do not put any fertilizer around peonies. If your soil is really low in fertility then you might have to add some. But keep it away from the roots.

I have noticed that you refer to the fern-leaf as dwarf, mine get a lot taller than 15 inches more like 30 inches. They are short when you first divide them, but they get taller each year. My old one had over 100 blossoms on it. (See back cover.)

Arlene Ballard, Lake Park, MN

(Do we have 2 varieties of fern-leaf peonies? Next Bulletin—comments by Harold Entsminger)

Peony Patience and Surprise

The autumn winds are blowing outside my window and serve as a reminder that few days remain in which to work in the gardens before winter takes control. This year 2001 autumn was a great season, with several days of ideal weather for dividing prized plants and for developing existing and new garden beds. One of the many desirable attributes of peonies is their ability to develop with age into real beauties. Like people, often times the slower to develop, surprise us all. This "ugly duckling" syndrome is thrilling to watch and very rewarding for the patient gardener.

Some peonies that have seemed average their first and second spring, have later surprised me with their beauty. For me, Coral Charm and White Cap are slow to grow, yet are outstanding given time to mature. A specific example of slow development was my Bartzella peony. The tiny division I received in the mail three years ago did not even attempt to bloom its first two springs in my garden.

My small **Bartzella** plant had clearly not lived up to the promise built into the exorbitant price. I was starting to think that my particular plant was a dud. Yes, the division that was less than half the size of my hand, should have arrived much larger. Had I planted it well enough? Was the planting site



ideal? Had I spoiled my weakling child with too much water and care and was the soil too rich? What was really happening under ground level, out of my sight and control? As a child I witnessed my father encourage his plants to grow (and the fish to bite) by speaking to them. His coaxing, spoken words seemed to give results—maybe talking to the plant would help? All these thoughts circled my mind as the snow melted this third spring.

With the spring sunshine my weakling plant did more than leap to life. As though a miracle faith healer had come to town, my **Bartzella** sent up three times as many stems as it had last year and threw no less than twenty-two blooms! From zero blooms the first two years, to twenty-two fully mature blossoms of a lovely sulfur yellow the third season. The blooms lasted long and were much admired by all who viewed them. My disappointment turned to joy and satisfaction.

Yes, many people varieties are priced quite high. My advice to those interested in expanding their collection to include the more expensive peonies is to carefully select one or two. Pay special attention to the site selection and dig a hole with amendments worthy of the plant you choose. In time, you will no doubt come to realize as I have that the prices of most peonies offered by professional growers, are justified. If one considers the skill, luck, time, and energy necessary to develop a new and improved peony variety, few concerns over price would arise.

It is my hope that you will attend an annual APS Show to view the many blooms from growers around the country and choose a choice variety or two that are right for your garden. Ask the advice of the growers at the show. Let your own eyes judge what is special and worthy. And remember, that growing peonies is not an experience in instant gratification. With patience and care, your plants will very likely thrill and surprise you with their beauty for many years to come.

Steve Johnson, Shorewood, MN

It is very good of you to republish some selected good old articles. They are gems to many new growers. To reread these articles also gives us inspiration. I would like to submit a small article to reprint what we can learn from other people's suggestions. Thank you for your work in the Society.

Bernard Chow



TREE PEONY BREEDING IN JAPAN

Ryoji Hashida, 1-2-11 Honcho, Tatebayashi, Gunma, Japan

History of Tree Peony Breeding

About 1300 years ago, seeds of tree peony were brought into Japan from China. Its flowers were appreciated, but for long long years it was cultivated to use its roots for medicine. In the classic literatures written about 100 years after its arrival, it was called "Boutan" and its flowers were appreciated in gardens of noble men and Buddhist temples. Cultivated varieties of chrysanthemum and rose also were brought into Japan from China about the same time.

For about 800 years after Boutan appeared in classics, the tree peony was not found in classical documents, although Buddhist priests brought back to Japan pictures of Chinese tree peony. It was cultivated as a shrub herb, but had not been an appreciated flower. Of course, plant breeding had not been carried out.

About 450 years ago, many tree peony varieties were imported from China. They were grown in temples near Osaka and Kyoto, and also in Hakata castle town in Kyushu. Then afterwards the way to arrange a tree peony flower was written, and it appeared in a flower arrangement book. In this book, tree peony was called "Botan," not "Boutan."

About 400 years ago in Japan warring state era ended, and all of Japan had been nationalized by Toyotomi and successively by Tokugawa Shogun. In this time, pictures of tree peony were drawn on sliding paper doors in Osaka castle and temples in Kyoto by notable painters. Two temples in Kyoto now preserve the pictures of this time. The flowers in these pictures are light, semi-double and pale pink. About the time when tree peony saplings were imported from China, there were in China many [and almost the same] varieties as in modern China. Japanese people like semi-double flowers blooming upward on upright stems. I think these flowers drawn on paper doors were breeded by Japanese by that time.

A peaceful period lasted for a long time under the rule of Tokugana Shogun, and consequently common people in great castle towns began to make a better living. They began to have their own culture. Their dresses became more beautiful, because techniques of weaving and dyeing had made progress. They enjoyed horticulture. Horticultural books were published for the first time in Edo (old Tokyo) and Kyoto. In the one book



published about 300 years ago, tree peony was printed on the top pages, and these pages were most of this book. Names of 333 varieties were listed, and their colors and distinctive features of flowers were explained.

At that time purplish black frocks at the bast of petals were disliked. Pure white flowers without flares were breeded already, and red flowers without flocks also. Round type pistil was liked (though it would split after petals fell off), and a flower with few stamen was liked because it was noble in comparison to a flower with much stamen. Ball type varieties had been imported already, but they were not used as parents of breeding. Ball type flower blooming downward was disliked, and a flower blooming upward on upright stem was preferred.

In Japan at that time, more and more pistils were not sought. Pure white flower with yellow stamen and deep red flower with yellow stamen or pink flower shading off at its petals top were sought as a target of improvement. Remontant varieties were breeded already at this time.

We've seen a picture book of cultivated flowers whose pictures were painted about 160 years ago. Tree peony flowers were painted on 31 sheets in this book. We could investigate colors and features of 31 varieties. There were beautiful flowers whose petals are wavy and somewhat twisted. Furthermore, we found three flowers whose names are "____jishi" (cf. APS Bulletin #293). The flowers in the book are light semi-double or heavy semi-double, and the flower whose petals are more than heavy semi-double is not found.

About 130 years ago, the era of Tokugawa Shogun ended. Japan began to trade with Europe and United States, and introduced western culture and production techniques. Many new garden plants were imported, and breeding of tree peonies was extensively carried out. Bright colors and many petals were desired, but in spite of more petals the flower blooming upward on upright stem was wanted. Almost all the variety remaining at present were breeded at this time and the following years. Among the 31 varieties in the old book, only one variety remains at present.

Credit and admiration is to be given to Ryoji Hashida of Japan for his excellent work in beginning to establish a correct nomenclature in modern Japan. He was a professional photographer, and used his talent to photograph the new



varieties of both herbaceous and tree peonies and accurate colors thus identifying the variety name in both Japanese and English. He was President of the Japanese Peony Society and because of his association, a book of "Tree Peony and Herbaceous Peonies in Modern Japan" with 306 varieties of tree peonies and 83 varieties of herbaceous peonies on 255 pages of 9 x 12 was published.

Mr. Hashida died on August 13, 2001.







REGISTRATIONS

Each plant has been successfully divided.

BALLARENA DE SAVAL (Tolomeo, Sonoma, CA) November 2001. Itoh. Pale lavender multi-petaled flower. Well defined darker flares. Lavender sheath. Strong stems, excellent foliage, medium-sized plant. Named in memory of my mother.

SONOMA AMETHYST (Tolomeo, Sonoma, CA) November 2001. Itoh. 20+ deep lavender petals and half sheath. Red stigmas, dark green carpels. Good foliage and strong stems on medium-sized plant.

SONOMA FLOOZY (Tolomeo, Sonoma, CA) November 2001. Itoh. Large very single flower. Petals, sheath, and stigmas pinkyellow blend. Laterals. Long strong stems, excellent plant habit.

SONOMA LAVENDER FANCY (Tolomeo, Sonoma, CA) November 2001. Itoh. Lavender flowers. Darker flares which may streak to petal edge. Partial sheath. Petals attractively laced. Excellent dark green foliage.

SONOMA KALEIDOSCOPE (Tolomeo, Sonoma, CA) November 2001. Itoh. Single flower, yellow-orange blend with wine infusion. Laterals. Flower matures different shades over an extended bloom period. Long cutter stems. Good foliage.

LAUREL HILL LAVENDAR PEARLS (Max Reehir, Ro-Ma-Ru Gardens) Seedling # LHQ. Single Suffruticosa. Parentage unknown. Seed collected by Mr. Reeher. First bloomed 1988. Flower is a bold lavender with darker flares. Single to semi-double with stamens, pollen and seeds. Fragrant. One bud per stem, reliable. Very good amount of bloom. Good stem strength, 4 to 4½ Early April 10-15 bloom. Thick foliage of dark green. The bloom fits on top of foliage all across the plant. Handsome and very vigorous plant. Pictured on page 47, Horticulture Magazine, May 2001. Registration, Richard Rogers, Sherwood, Oregon.



Registration Correction

Bulletin #320, pages 36-37. Spelling corrected to Professor Harald Fawkner not Harad Fawkner.







Tree Peonies

Excerpts from The Midas Touch-Anthony DeBlasi

Tree peonies are fully as hardy as herbaceous peonies, but a snowless Winter in the North may prune them to the roots. Unlike the Japanese tree peonies, which then require a season or two to build themselves up, the lutea hybrids are capable of blooming from buds below the ground.

Tree peonies would be worth growing for their exceptional beauty alone. But when you add to that the fact that their culture is simple, you have a gardener's dream come true. There is no need to prune, no need to divide, no need to spray. One feeding a year, after bloom, checking the weeds by either cultivating or mulching, and watering the plants in dry weather is all it takes to make them flourish.

Most of the gardener's attention comes at the time of planting. The price of a lutea hybrid tree peony generally insures that here is not just another perennial or bush to tinker with. You know ahead of time that it is an investment in lifetime floral grandeur *if* you plant it properly.

TIME: Fall.

LOCATION: In well-drained soil, well isolate from trees, shrubs, and encroaching perennials.

DISTANCE APART: Four feet

SUNSHINE: Full sun for best results. Some shade at midday protects the flowers.

SOIL: Good loam mixed with compost or peat moss (2:1 ratio). Add sand if clay. Thoroughly mix in two pounds of bonemeal per planting hole.

PLANTING HOLE: Three feet wide, two feet deep.

PLANTING DEPTH: Set crown five inches deep.

WATER: Copious initial watering.

Do not tamp the soil down during or after planting. Mulch the plant heavily before the first Winter sets in.



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From Downtown Madison

Travel outbound East Washington to Fair Oaks Avenue. Turn right. Continue on Fair Oaks to the second stoplight, Atwood Avenue. Turn left. Travel 1/4 mile. The Gardens are on the left side of the street.

• From Middleton

Take Hwy 12 & 18 East. Exit onto Monona Drive. Take Monona Drive around the lake to Olbrich Botanical Gardens; approximately 4 miles. (Monona Drive becomes Atwood Avenue as it curves around Lake Monona.)

Or, Take Hwy M eastbound. Turn right onto Hwy 113. Turn right onto Packers Avenue to Highway 30. Turn right onto Fair Oaks Avenue. Continue on Fair Oaks to the second stoplight, Atwood Avenue. Turn left. Travel 1/4 mile. The Gardens are on the left side of the street.

• From the Southeast Via 90 (Chicago, Beloit, Janesville):

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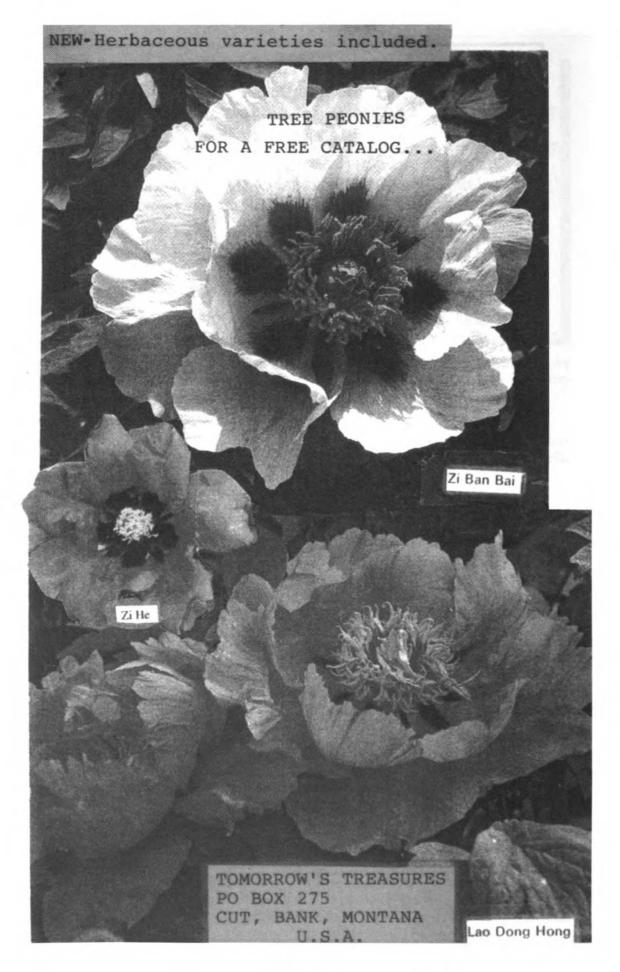


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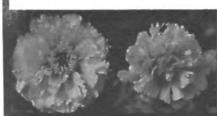
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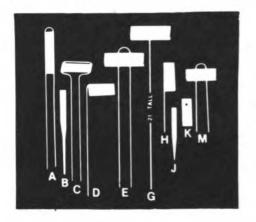
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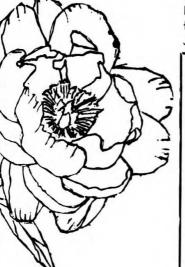
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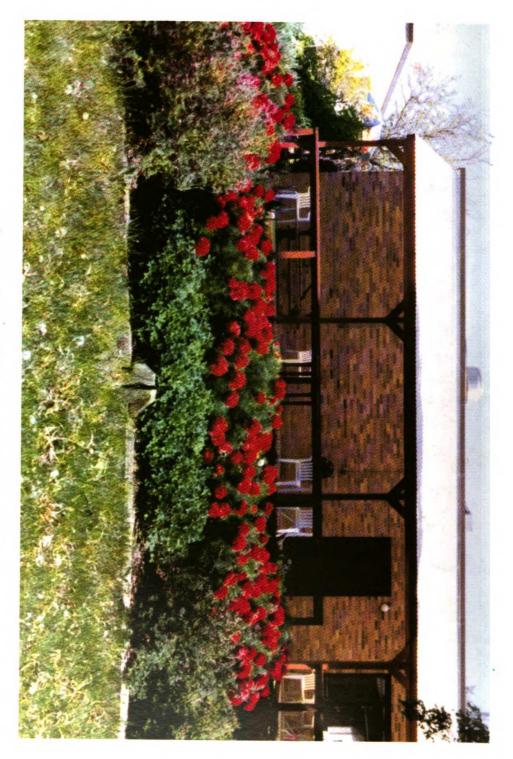


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Photo—Arlene Ballard, Lake Park, MN. Her fern leaf peony in front of Sunnyside Nursery home.