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DECEMBER 1990
NO. 276

The American Peony Society Bulletin



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Compiled and edited by
Greta M. Kessenich;
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Season's Greetings





AMERICAN Peony Society Bulletin

December 1990 — No. 276

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DEPT. OF REGISTRATION

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

Greta M. Kessenich, Secretary

OBJECTIVES

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

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

MEMBERSHIP

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

Single Annual.....	\$ 7.50	Junior or member family.....	\$ 2.50
Single Triennial.....	20.00	Life.....	150.00
Family Annual.....	10.00	Commercial membership.....	25.00
Family Triennial.....	27.50		

Family membership, any two related members in same household..... One Bulletin
Junior membership, any age through completion of high school..... Separate Bulletin

For those who wish to further support the Society, the following special memberships are available.

Contributing.....	\$25.00	Supporting.....	\$100.00
Sustaining.....	50.00	Patron.....	250.00

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT


Dear Friends,

Another year in the garden has ended. I am glad that I live in a climate in which the change of seasons is so dramatic. Somehow the arrival of Spring is much more of an event after a Minnesota winter!

Following a month or two of catching up with everything that has gone undone for the last two months, I expect to begin to plan a hybridizing effort for next year. This is a wonderful thing to do in mid-winter. More members of our Society need to work in this area.

If you have not purchased a copy of the Society's new book "*The American Hybrid Peony*," it is excellent reading for the winter months. Send a copy to a friend as a Christmas gift! We all owe Greta a huge 'thank you' for the tremendous effort that was needed to complete this excellent book.

Have a wonderful Holiday Season.


Kent Crossley

GARDEN TALK FROM PEONY PLACE

By Margaret Dexter, East Lyme, Connecticut

This year's blooms are photographs now. Summer's crisp spinach green hedges have turned to bronze and yellow; it's that time again to cut, clean up and clear away a small mountain of their leaves and stems.

In 1977, we began our habit of placing at curbside many, too many, plastic bags of them. Grass clippings and leaves were well mulched by the lawnmower; they presented no problem. Our concern for botrytis prevention made us believe that removing all traces of peonies from the premises was vital. Burning was not only polluting, it was not possible . . . yet as each passed we had more bags than the year before. We were increasingly aware of our contribution to a nearly full dump site.

I began wondering how Peony Society members were disposing of their garden refuse. I was certain peony debris should not be composted; dumps are filled up. What's the solution? What would Greta suggest? She has been my mentor from the beginning. I needed her advice.

I described our property: 3/4th of an acre, over 10,000 sq. ft. of lawn, the daylily and peony beds, the general setting, 9 large red oak trees semi-circling the back lawn, and a small but densely wooded area behind (not all of it our property). "Perfect," said Greta. "Haul all those clippings to your back woods, scatter them over a large area. With added grass clippings and leaves, time, earthworms, rain, and snow perform their magic. As the years pass, you will never know you put them there." And it's TRUE!

We soon realized we had been keeping the woods too clean (practicing mouse prevention). However, the nutrients from our garden waste have made the forest healthier than it's been in years. We are no longer timid to place all kinds of organic matter out there . . . corn husks, etc.; we have significantly reduced our curbside load. Now we fight mice in the garage!

We were notified this month that plastic bags with garden refuse would no longer be collected. Biodegradable bags are available for the job at our Town Hall, but now we are confident to care for our own, and are urging others to do the same. East Lyme has been a leader of recycling for the past 10 years. Garden trash was an unresolved issue until now. It's mandatory for all small home gardeners to be concerned and inventive with "all the stuff we blithely give to the collection truck." We have attended a compost seminar; that is next on our agenda. No need to buy topsoil when we can produce our own fabulous humus. It will take time and effort to get the project going, but we're determined to do it.

Sixteen years ago our property was about as dull and

uninteresting as could be imagined . . . except for the trees. It was a trip to New York the first week in June, soon after we moved in, that kindled the transformation. We had heard about a special exhibit; we were bedazzled by an unexpected one!

In the center of the foyer of the Metropolitan Museum and all the encircling niches stood enormous urns holding gigantic, magnificent floral arrangements . . . predominantly peonies in every shade of pink. The artistry was spellbinding. I remembered peonies from my childhood, but nothing to compare with THESE. Having lived and gardened in California for the past 28 years, we knew that day that we wanted to learn all about peonies!

Our new property in Connecticut was pathetically in need of tender, loving care. Its grass was basic brown; trees had been damaged by the builders' bulldozers. The space cried out for flowering shrubs, flower beds, a design . . . to be a garden! We were inspired!

Our first 24 were planted along the driveway. Drainage was tested in advance; they thrive in full sun from early morning until late afternoon. They have shown their health and happiness by vigorous growth and large blossoms by the dozen. Jackson and Perkins offered red, white and pink, that year. The pinks and reds are quite exceptional. That was our start!

Through the Hemerocallis Society I learned about the Peony Society; more selective planting began. Peony catalogs are intoxicating, as all peony lovers know. We have had to keep adding each year, for the joy of growing "THAT ONE!" Each peony root has been a thing of wonder to plant. We wanted to dig the hole "just right," to place it at its proper depth. Quite a reverent moment. These special considerations to start them according to all the expert instruction has paid off. Of all we have planted, only one has failed to keep its rendezvous with June.

I never fail to marvel that from this odd looking root emerges the Empress of all flowers, in my opinion. The short, but extravagantly, glorious blooming season makes it the rare treasure that it is. I do not long for the season to be extended or changed by scientific trickery. The PEONY is peerless, as is! What wonders and surprises we had in store when we planted our tree peonies. We had a perfect site for two. My mother and I pored over catalogs for weeks trying to decide. Triumphantly, we ordered Hana-Kisoi and Beautiful Lady. Our sons will never forget planting preparations. Each perfect spot had a mammoth boulder to remove . . . requiring strategy and several days of digging. They ended up being twice the size needed, but the struggle was worth it. Both, by their third season, had buds the size of a small child's fist. If I look at the blossoms before I look at the calendar, I can be almost positive it is May 16 . . . the day they decide to bloom in our garden.

Hana Kisoi, now three feet round, presented us with 38 master-

piece blooms this year. **Beautiful Lady**, recovering from wind damage displayed 10 breath-taking fragile beauties.

We were unprepared for the strange phenomenon of the blossoms being “cut me nots.” We had no idea that they would droop within the hour of being placed in water. That is her mystery. That was her surprise!

(To Be Continued!)

THE RAINS CAME

By Olin Frazier

The year 1990, was a year in Missouri when the hoses and sprinklers stayed in their storage places, because we were blessed with plenty of rain. Of course, the rains started during blooming season making it difficult to keep the plants off the ground. I was not successful, and as a result, had sprawling plants all season. Peonies do need water to put on their best show, and the show was good in spite of the rainy weather.

The frequent rains made spraying ineffective or impossible to get done, and as many of you have, no doubt, experienced, the foliage starts to turn black as the season progresses. With ample rain during the summer, the condition worsened as the summer progressed, and by late July and early August, some of the plants were almost completely black—only the stems remained green in most cases. The foliage of *P. tenuifolia rubra plena* is usually completely cured by August, and I remove and burn the foliage; however, I can't ever recall this happening to the majority of my plants before—I had many plants that had crisp blackened foliage.

Now, in mid-October, I have plants completely black, plants mixed with black and green, plants completely black with green stems, and some plants that seem to be unaffected. Since some of the plants were completely devoid of green, I started cutting them off and burning the spent foliage. Usually, when I cut off spent foliage, I notice small pink buds near the top of the ground for next year's growth. This year, I haven't seen one bud near the surface of the ground. Gardeners are eternally optimistic, and I am optimistic that these plants that blighted early will survive and bloom again.

Some interesting observations from this rainy year—plants in the same row are not all affected. Some are completely green, and their next door neighbor is completely black. Some plants surrounded by other perennials are completely blackened, even though several feet from other peonies. My neighbor's plants are affected, too. However, large plantings in nearby cemeteries don't seem to have been bothered much. (One can only wonder why.)

People in the community have asked me what to do for their

plants, and I have not been able to provide an intelligent answer, as my thinking is that by the time the blight appears, it is too late to do much about it, especially with frequent rains.

Do some peonies just have built-in resistance to blight? Early in the season I thought that the hybrids were not acutely affected, but **RED CHARM** was one of the first to blacken completely. Tree peonies are affected as well; in fact, I only have one that escaped—**HATSU HINODE**. The hybrid, **OLD FAITHFUL**, stands like a beacon of green amidst blackened neighbors. Several regular peonies seem to have escaped: **GENE WILD**, **MOTHER'S CHOICE**, **PINK PARFAIT**, **NORMA VOLZ**, **SANTE FE**, **CELEBRATION**, **CLEOPATRA**, **GLORY HALLELUJAH**, **RASPBERRY ICE**, and **MOON RIVER**.

Sun or part shade does not seem to make much difference as far as the plants are concerned. I do have five healthy plants in a row that get sun all day from about 10 a.m. on. And, I do have a row that gets morning sun, and sun until three or four in the afternoon, and they are all blighted but one in the middle.

What conclusions, if any, can one draw from those assorted observations?

1. Excess or frequent rain causes peony leaves to blight more than in a drier season.

2. The disease does not seem to be affected by sun or shade—some plants in both locations were affected.

3. All classes of peonies are affected.

4. Spraying would likely prevent the blight or at least reduce the incidence of it, but should be begun just after the plants are out of the ground.

Several questions come to mind also. Since Fall is the time to move peonies, what results can one expect from moving a plant where the foliage died in early August or before? Would two wet years in a row finish off the plants? Why don't cemetery plantings seem susceptible?

God controls the weather, so we can only thank Him for the abundant rains He blessed Missouri with this past summer, and hope He sees fit to let our beloved peonies live and bloom again next year.

* * * *

PEONIES IN LOUYANG CHINA

In April, the tree peonies will be blooming in Louyang China. A tour may be planned if there is enough interest by our members. Write directly to Mr. George Allen, 7617 Pittsburgh Ave. N.W., North Canton, Ohio 44720.

ON BOTRYTIS

Don Hollingsworth, Kansas City, Missouri

Botrytis prospers in cool, damp, cloudy weather, wherever both the ineffective spores and susceptible host plants are available. Of course, there must be a means for the two to come together. This is supplied by the wind and the rain. Spores on the ground splash onto the new shoots when it rains and the spores can be taken most anywhere by wind. The spores arise from the grey mold which appears on plant parts which were previously diseased, either dead parts of current season growth or on plant debris from the previous season.

When disease conditions are favorable as peony shoots emerge in spring, we see the stem phases of the disease, resulting in the girdling of shoots and of leaf stems, sometimes extending to the crown of the plant. During later favorable periods, when the plant is more advanced in growth, infection sites appear on other plant parts. These later episodes of infection may severely damage flowers, seed capsules or foliage, as has been reported from some regions in the current year. After the several recent dry seasons which were generally unfavorable for botrytis, it is easy to forget just how devastating this disease can be.

As with any disease, there is a limited array of strategies or circumstances available for the control of botrytis.

In addition to dry weather, there is another circumstance which tends to make one complacent about the disease. When the disease-producing organism and the plants are not present at the same time, disease cannot develop. Something like this happens when peonies are first introduced into an area where no susceptible plants have been growing nearby. The source of infection is so thinly distributed from having to move so far, that consequent infections are not much noticeable. The often recommended removal of all old stems and foliage at the end of each season takes its purpose from this principle. Remove the source.

Another strategy is to shield the susceptible plants from the botrytis spores. This is where sprays come in. To be most effective, the protective agent must be present before the spores germinate on the plant tissues. Thus the spray program must be started early and continued at appropriate intervals. The problem with this is that one is put into the position of spraying just in case conditions are going to be favorable for the disease. In some regions conditions are favorable almost every year, making it easier to decide to equip with a suitable sprayer and to keep up on the proper use of suitable fungicides.

The fact is, we all need to be prepared and do early spraying if we are going to get the best performance from our peonies. As specialty growers, we tend to have many peonies, which leads to a lot of infection pressure in any year following a serious outbreak of disease.

Failure to control, compounds the problem much more for us than for one who grows a few peonies in a mixed planting.

Spraying technique is important. One needs a means of applying the fungicide over all surfaces of the plant. For the most part the chemicals available are effective only as a barrier. If a chemical has a systemic benefit, meaning it enters the tissues and is distributed internally within the plant, this may somewhat offset poor coverage of plant surfaces.

Use of more than one fungicide, alternating them between applications, is commonly recommended. This helps offset the risk of a resistant strain of the disease emerging, as may happen when only one material is used over several seasons.

What to use is a question that must be decided upon the basis of what is available in your area. Seek information from suppliers and from educational resources, such as your state or local agricultural extension advisers.

REPORT FROM SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA

—*Brian Porter, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada*

“We had a fairly good peony season this year. The early and mid-season peonies did well. As usual, Red Charm was outstanding. Pink Lemonade, Firebelle, Smouthi were also excellent. After 6 years, I finally had a few blooms on Claire de Lune. Also blooming this year for the first time was Gratis. Peonies which did not open too well this year were Solange, Tourangelle and Linda k. Jack. Botrytis blight was nearly absent this year, although it showed up for the first time on Ludovica.

“In the past couple of years I have been adding some more old cultivars to my collection. Last year I obtained Livingstone, Asa Gray and Mme Jules Dessert. This year I hope to add Edulis Superba. For new ones, I am planting The Fawn, and the somewhat older, Glory Hallelujah. I have to eradicate more lawn in order to make room for them.

“This Spring I was forced to move my 13-year-old Age of Gold tree peony (which was also moved in 1984) because of the installation of an air conditioner unit. When I went to replant it, in April, the ground was still frozen in the location I had chosen. I placed the plant in a large plastic garbage bag, and set it in a shady location. Then I forgot about it for about a week, during which we had a severe frost, followed by snow. I expected to find a dead peony, but it survived unharmed. It even managed a few blooms in its new location.”

SOME REMARKS CONCERNING PEONIES

Charles Kroell, Troy, Michigan

This unimaginatively titled article is a loosely-knit collection of comments, thoughts and questions without any one central theme. It is the result of some gentle arm twisting to which I succumbed during a short visit with our remarkable secretary in Hopkins, MN, last July. I had previously communicated with Greta by letter and telephone, and had met her very briefly at last June's APS Convention in Mansfield, Ohio. I had also been greatly impressed by this good woman's dedication to the genus *paonia* and to its champion and advocate, the American Peony Society. It was not surprising then, that while enroute to the North American Lily Society Show and Convention in Winnipeg, and finding ourselves passing but a few miles from Hopkins, the temptation to chance a surprise visit was irresistible. Luck was with us. She was home; and as you might well imagine, my wife, Marijean, and I were received most graciously.

Of course, peony season was long gone, but it was easy to imagine the glorious sight which surely greets the visitor to Greta's garden each May and June. Though our visit was brief, it was indeed delightful. Before we left, however, the friendly persuasion was applied and a commitment given; and now it's time to put some words on paper.

Although *Lilium* is my favorite plant genus (a very special interest for over twenty years), *Paeonia* is but a gnat's whisker behind. By the end of this year's planting season, I will have some seventy varieties: thirty lactiflors, twenty-six herbaceous hybrids, a dozen tree peonies (eight suffruticosa, four lutea), one Itoh and one species. When beginning my collection a number of years ago, I was not a member of the APS and had never attended a peony show. Choosing and purchasing were mainly done on the basis of catalog description. In retrospect, after having become aware of the great variety within the genus and available in garden cultivars, and knowing what I do today, certainly some of the earlier choices would have been somewhat different. Nevertheless, it's been difficult so far to simply rouge and replace.

After attending the 1984 APS Show in Mansfield and seeing so many magnificent blooms firsthand, my tastes and preferences began to coalesce, and subsequent selections have been more satisfying. The Saunders herbaceous hybrids hold much appeal and fascination for me; and before the snow flies this year, the list will number thirteen. One favorite of these, and which I highly prize, was bought sight unseen but upon highly respected descriptive information from David Reath. It is *King's Ransom*, a rich, velvety red single, bowl shaped with a large cluster of golden anthers and having a superb plant habit. I have not been able to find reference to this splendid hybrid in any of my peony literature and would very much like to learn more of its history and origin.

Another, which has brought both joy and grief is 'Requiem'—joy when a perfect blossom, as it is crafted from the finest mother-of-pearl, mesmerizes the beholder with its beauty; and grief when, more often than not for me, this enchanting spell can never be cast because of black tipped anthers. I have noticed, especially with this hybrid, that even when in relatively tight bud, the petals typically do not overlap at the top, to enclose and protect the anther tips. I have seen such anther blemishes occasionally on other varieties as well, but 'Requiem' has been victimized the most. In discussing this problem with David Peath, he suggested that late freezes or hard frosts might be responsible. I plan to experiment next Spring with covered vs. uncovered buds when low temperatures are forecast. To be able to insure a plant full of perfect flowers each May would be an accomplishment, indeed.

A couple of other experiences also have been head scratchers. I have observed during the past two or three seasons that in a few cases on mature plants which have grown normally for several years, roots have begun to appear at ground level, partially buried and partially exposed, rather like an iris rhizome. I'm not sure what the reason for this is or what, if anything, should be done about it. A second phenomenon which occurred this season for the first time, but in two cases, is that vigorous, healthy vegetative growth was made but virtually no bloom. A *suffruticosa*, Hana Daijin, and a *lactiflora*, Martha Bullock, were involved. The former set tiny bud starts, none of which developed, whereas the latter had one or two buds advance normally. In both cases the plants were mature and had flowered well in the past. Other plants around them bloomed happily, while they sulked. Why?

This year, for the first time, I have experienced what I guess I will call a significant botrytis problem. I hope it turns out to be no worse than that. Most of the infection came late in the season, well after the blooming period. I loathe chemicals and avoid spraying to the extent possible, having done none this year. I'm convinced, however, that a program must be started as the new stems emerge next Spring. Most of the plants were only mildly affected, but three herbaceous hybrids (Bravura, Paula Fay and May Delight) and two luteas (Roman Gold and Golden Hind) were rather severely stricken. I just recently (late September) decided to remove and destroy all the foliage. What continues to concern me are the dark black/red spots and patches which remain on the surface of much of this season's green "wood" of the tree peonies and a few stems of the herbaceous plants which show discoloration all the way to the ground. Would a benomyl/captan spray (tree) and soil drench (herbaceous) at this stage for this condition be recommended?

Despite its falling victim to botrytis this year, one of the finest herbaceous peonies available, to my mind, is Paula Fay. It has practically every attribute which could be asked for—brilliantly colored, crepe textured flowers, carried by stiff stems bearing glossy deep

green foliage. When in full bloom, the entire plant is covered with flaming pink. Yet it is not perfect. There is one flaw, but serious only under special circumstances. I personally place a great premium upon the quality of fragrance, in anything that grows; and poor Paula Fay, endowed with so much else, has a most unpleasant smell. In the garden and in a mixed bouquet, this is really no problem, but this is not a flower you want to put your nose into, and then inhale deeply! Had it the scent of a Mrs. FDR, an Eastern Star, or a Sea Shell, one could indeed ask for nothing finer.

As I like to experiment occasionally, and just out of curiosity, this year I did not remove the spent blooms entirely but left the carpels to see what open pollination might bring in the way of seed set. Only two of the hybrids responded (barely), as I suppose might have been expected. Cytheria produced a single seed (which fell to the ground and was lost) and May Delight set three. I found one plump, bright red jewel on Golden Hind, the only seed on four luteas. Godaisu and Shintenchi each set a few. There was, of course, much variation among the lactifloras. The hands-down winner was Minnie Shaylor. I didn't make counts, but I believe practically every last stem bore a full complement of seed-laden carpels. Others which set well were Sea Shell, Bute, Gay Paree, Westerner and Butterball, plus just a few from Mons. Jules Elie. At present I have many of these "incubating" in slightly damp peat moss or coarse vermiculite (per Klehm's recommendation on p. 35 of the APS Handbook), having no idea what I'll do later on. Maybe I can find a place to plant them.

This article has rambled on for far too long. In closing, I'll simply note that any words of wisdom which can be offered from our readership concerning the several questions I'm wondering about at present, would be much appreciated.

* * * *

"Ours was a wonderful peony season this year. There was plenty of the right kind of weather at the right time. Rain in May and quite dry in June. Peonies were tall and blooms were large. I measured one stem of GEORGE NICHOLLS that looked like a record height for me. It was 50 inches long. It kept its huge blooms off the ground quite successfully, too.

"I am having wilt problems with one of my CASABLANCA. Any suggestions? Lin's MARCELLA is tough to beat in my garden."

—Les Wiley, Cobleskill, New York

* * * *

"I now have 60 tree peony seedlings that look great—in their second year. Seed gathered from my own plants. At present I have gathered about 100 seeds from my tree peonies, so far."

—Jean Stanton, Denton, Michigan

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

From Vernon Kidd, New York

Still under the spell of the glorious peonies in the show at Mansfield, Ohio's Kingwood Center, yesterday, I received my Fall order from Klehm's Nursery. Summer's beguiling days have been too short, and the war of the weeds was a draw—it had been rumored that the weeds might win. Now at harvest time, white peaches reminded again what we lose because they don't ship well, and how extraordinary peaches can taste. The flood of ripe juicy tomatoes and tender cucumbers (burpless), were followed by grapes, pears and apples, and now red raspberries 'til frost.

Trying to juggle a busy writing schedule, plus the beginning of the Opera/Concert season in Manhattan, makes for all-too-brief weekends in the garden on Fire Island. This is, of course, the time for planting Peony divisions—it took a while to realize that divisions DO develop better than whole plants—and this Fall we are adding one of your favorites, Raspberry Sundae, along with Mrs. Euclid Snow, Pillow Talk and Edulus Supreme and a miniature Daylily, Siloam Ethel Smith.

People are always surprised upon seeing our garden with dwarf fruit trees, flowers and vegetables growing on the second dune from the Atlantic Ocean, in the back yard of a beach cottage on what is the barrier island for Long Island. Returning in late March to see it bare of vegetation, I have my own doubts. Then the Daffodils pop up, followed by Peonies peeking out of their mounded soil. They are quickly followed by Tulips and Iris, then black and thirsty-looking Vinca Minor runners are suddenly covered with vivid purple flowers, and the "dead" rose bushes remind you that they have just been resting when their green shoots rush to greet the timid Spring sun.

I nearly missed the Peony show last June because of this reawakening spectacle. Our Peonies were extraordinary, and we hated missing a moment of them, in particular newly-planted varieties blooming for the first time: Pink Derby, Mrs. F.D.R., La Lorraine, Emma Klehm (didn't bloom) and Raspberry Parfait. A chance to see the collected beauty from other gardeners was what propelled us on our way for a too-quick visit to Mansfield.

There the Peony display in various rooms of Kingwood Center, some combined with new varieties of Iris from the previous week's show, were beautiful beyond description, and the choice of colors must have been a florist's dream. The show's wonderful collection of single and semi-double peonies firmly convinced me that there are no ugly peonies.

Having heretofore favored double and bomb-type peonies, I was surprised by a first-year bloom of a "gratis" peony sent with my order from Klehm's Nursery. A semi-double with the name Topeka

'something' on its tag, which has been sand-blasted into illegibility during the Winter, was exquisite, the color a radiant plum red.

Incidentally, a medium-sized double Peony of pale lemon yellow at the show called Sunny Girl, is the only double yellow I've ever seen, and none of my catalogs list a yellow double. Do you happen to know anything about this flower and how I might obtain a division? We have Cheddar Cheese, which just about everyone admires, a good-sized creamy white flower with a golden inner glow, but not yellow. Of course, there are many tree peonies in yellow shades.

I gave a bouquet of my favorite Red Grace to a friend just before leaving for the show, and she said it perfumed her house for over a week—another plus for this outstanding ruby red beauty, which was exceptional again this year. Other fragrant charmers in my garden include Vivid Rose, particularly large this year, Mrs. F.D.R. (new for me) and Myra MacRae. The latter has been very susceptible to fungus during our rainy Springs, so I moved it to a more elevated spot in direct sun, and enriched the soil. She was happy enough to reward with some delicate lavender blossoms of EXTREME SWEET FRAGRANCE, and a promise of more next year.

When we returned to New York from the island sanctuary, reality intruded on euphoria as visiting heads of state at the United Nations created a cacaphony of noise and grid-lock; then President Bush's motorcade closed 34th Street from the East River to the Hudson, bringing traffic to a noisy and impatient halt.

The christening of P & O's new cruise ship, the 70,000-ton CROWN PRINCESS, raised the pulse rate. She was the first big ship to be christened in New York in over 50 years. Along with an awful lot of people from all over the country, I was transported by a large catamaran commuter boat to the Brooklyn Pier, where film star, Sophia Loren, christened the huge, futuristic looking liner. As the Queen's Guard Band played, we were piped aboard the ship for a champagne buffet cruise through New York Harbor, past the Statue of Liberty and up the Hudson River to the cruise port just opposite the aircraft carrier Intrepid, now a naval museum.

As we glided majestically up the Hudson with Manhattan's skyscrapers providing a backdrop, my mind kept mulling over and over, "Where will the new Peonies fit?!"

And the days grow short—
I can hardly wait 'til Spring.

Best Regards, Vernon Kidd

WINTER AND SPRING, 1989-1990

Greta Kessenich

Gardeners here will not forget this last winter and gardening season, starting in December when the bitter cold blast came down from the Yukon with all its fury, and swept through the Midwest and southern states. No! that was not it—we can take the cold but it was the loss of perennials—not that either. I think it was the late hot-cold days of lingering Spring or perhaps it must have been the downpour of rain in some areas, with drought in others. So many large oaks and elms continue to die or it might have been the lush crop of weeds that came, which were uncontrollable due to the weather conditions.

However, we did have glorious peony blooms. They were large, beautiful, colorful, and the peony plant stood a rugged test of endurance.

Daffodils did not, and the tulips did make it through the ground with much effort. Many iris succumbed, and the roses only survived if they were tipped and completely underground; even then, some canes were blackened. There was a big rose loss. The hosta was a little late in showing but with a covering of leaves in the Fall, came up with their colorful foliage. There were nights that brought cold and frost, and many new plants were covered, so they could continue their growth.

The daylily—well, it just continues regardless of the weather, temperature or any malady that strikes the perennial gardens.

Now this sums up our year: Oh! No! Not quite! The following article was written ten years ago and published in the Bulletin. It holds good today even more so as it is now almost compulsory that we compost our own refuse and why not! . . . It all comes from the place on which we live. You take care of your place, and I will take care of mine. All so simple!

We read and talk about equality—here, we all can start by making a compost pile. Anyone can do it, and then continue on with your program of recycling as outlined by your civic leaders. It gives one a good patriotic feeling!

COMPOSTS CAN HELP A HEAP IN SAVING RESOURCES

by Chuck Slocum, of The Minneapolis Star's Board of Contributors

*Reprinted with permission of The Minneapolis Star,
in which the article first appeared August 21, 1980.*

COMPOST—A fertilizing mixture of rotted vegetable matter combined with animal manure and consisting of alternating layers of plant and animal substances piled upon one another and allowed to decay.

—Webster's Dictionary

It's hard to get excited about a compost heap. But Americans had better start getting seriously interested in these wood-framed, three-

sided outdoor boxes in which garbage decomposes, because if we don't we may all be neck-deep in rubbish.

You probably have heard that Americans represent about one person in 20 in the world, yet devour nearly a third of the planet's available resources every day. Our "throwaway" convenience society has become the lubricant for the American way of life, according to some critics, as the energy needed to turn a single person's yearly necessities into usable materials amounts to nearly three tons of coal, 1,300 gallons of gasoline, and 89 cubic feet of natural gas.

Now, a compost heap can't melt and recycle aluminum, copper, lead, steel, zinc or plastic. It doesn't even burn wastepaper or boxes. But if each of us had one in our backyard, perhaps we wouldn't need 500 new dumps this year to join the 14,000 existing ones. Perhaps we could hold the line on the nearly half-million acres of land being used to store the 2,000 pounds of garbage each of us will generate during the next 12 months.

I am hardly an expert in compost heaps. We used them in Boy Scouts to keep our campsites clean and smell-free, but we never hung around long enough to see them work. Just a few months ago, I started one which is now devouring our corn cobs, meat scraps, egg shells and potato peelings. You throw the stuff in the box, cover it with dirt or ash, and let Mother Nature do the rest. The garbage decomposes and turns into rich dirt, which can be used to fertilize gardens to grow more corn and potatoes. It usually takes between six months and a year to complete the process.

Other vegetable matter used to stimulate the decaying procedure consists of leaves, lawn cuttings, rotted hay or chopped cornstalks. The best composts have flat or sunken tops so that they can collect rain water. The materials should be stacked in tiers no more than a foot thick. Layers of animal waste are often part of a compost.

You can talk all you want about expensive recycling plants to melt down cars and other precious metals, sophisticated energy-conservation systems to construct into homes and buildings or streamlining the costly methods used to package our consumer goods.

Yet each of us can't personally do much about that right now.

But we each *can* build a compost heap. By doing so, we are contributing to the "Good Planet Earth." We must hold out hope that the fragile world America's astronauts fondly looked upon from the moon a decade ago will be around 100 years from now in the kind of condition that will reflect well on us.

All that, and it doesn't cost us a dollar. A compost heap is one of the few remaining bargains.

IN MEMORIAM

BERNICE CARR HOLLINGSWORTH (1919-1990), wife of Don Hollingsworth, was known to American Peony Society members through her visits to national exhibitions and annual meetings with her husband. She passed away September 20, 1990, after a long illness.

Born near Bill, Wyoming, where her parents homesteaded land, she grew up near Maryville in Northwest Missouri in a farm home originally built by her great grandfather.

Bernice was a professional home economist who taught sewing and needlecrafts in secondary and middle school. She also operated her own sewing and alterations service, which she continued until a few months ago. One of the main family projects during her retirement was the renovation of her girlhood home. The family peony collection and nursery plants breeding project have been re-located there from Kansas City during the past few years.

GARDEN TOUR

—Laurie Skrzenta, Downers Grove, Illinois

“The Morton Arboretum tour was scheduled for June 2nd. I was so worried when the hot 85° weather came in April. It was pushing the peonies too fast and there might not be any bloom when all the busloads of people would come.

“In May, cold weather came and some of the blooms froze on the early hybrids. ILLINI BELLE, ILLINI WARRIOR and ROSELETTE had only one or two blooms left untouched.

“All are now showing signs of stress and botrytis. Two are shorter and went into beautiful Fall color since July. DOUBLE FERN LEAF bloomed May 8th and was not affected. It was as striking as ever. No one ever believes that it is a peony. The foliage is so unique. MISS AMERICA was outstanding, just loaded with bloom as was SUSIE Q, VIVID ROSE, WESTERNER, SWEET 16, MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, TO KALON, DIXIE, GLORY HALLELUJAH, MONTEZUMA, NANCY NICHOLLS, PINK PARFAIT, and, of course, POSTILION, outstanding as usual.

“Fortunately, the cold weather slowed things down and the flowers lasted much longer. This was the longest blooming period from May 8 through about June 20th. Then the 85° days came and the flowers stopped opening. By that time the bloom was about over, anyway. Now to concentrating on getting very early and very late blooming varieties. It will be a challenge to see if I can get a bloom for the 4th of July in this area. I miss the beautiful flowers, but saved the good article on drying peonies in the March Bulletin. Hope to try that next year.

“The tour went well and as usual everyone was amazed that there are so many different beautiful varieties.”

SPECIES

From Trevor Nottle, Stirling, South Australia

In my seed beds, I have seeds sprouting of *Paeonia turcica*, a new species, I think. It comes from Turkey. We need these new lines so we can breed up very early varieties which will bloom before the first blasts of summer heat arrive. The old American and European cultivars open too late to beat the hot north winds and frequently "ball" and become bud-bound by their outer petals becoming dehydrated in the wind and holding the bloom shut.

Thanks to some early flowering hybrid seed sent years ago, I already have 3-4 good early hybrids. A lovely semi-double dark red with lacerated petals; a large creamy white bomb type Japanese with fine all-over red pin spots, and several nice pinks with anemone centers.

The following article is from the Stirling, South Australia newspaper '*Your Garden*.' This is the first article I have seen in many years. It was written by Peter DeWaart of Stirling, South Australia.

PEONIES ARE FOREVER

Bryan Tonkin has been growing herbaceous peonies commercially for more than 40 years. We asked him to share his experience and explain how he maintains such healthy plants at his flower farm at Kalorama, V. He said the first essential was to choose a sturdy crown with at least three eyes. Peonies love a deep, rich soil. So before planting, dig your soil to a depth of 45cm and beg, borrow or steal plenty of organic matter such as cow manure, leaf mould and well-rotted compost. Other nutrients to use are super-phosphate and blood and bone.

Once the soil and organic matter are mixed together, plant the crown so that the eyes are covered with 5cm of soil. Bryan is often asked why a peony won't flower. He says there are a number of reasons.

Peonies are cold climate plants. Like tulips and hyacinths, they need a set number of cold, frosty days to initiate flower bud development. But unlike tulips, the peony root system does not lend itself to being placed in the refrigerator as a substitute for hold weather.

If Queensland gardeners want to try growing peonies, they must find the coolest spot in the garden.

If a gardener has a plant which is known to flower well, but does not bloom, the problem usually is that the plant has been shifted to different parts of the garden to make it flower. Bryan implores: "Find a spot for the peony where it will stay and leave it alone."

Peonies need semi-shade. Morning sun is preferred because the hot afternoon sun will burn the flowers. Choose a position which faces south or east.

A happy peony is one that is left undisturbed in a shady spot. But

if really necessary it can quite easily be divided at this time of the year if you want to increase numbers, or if you are changing the layout of your garden.

There are two ways to divide a peony. The first method causes little or no disturbance and increases the chances of the plant flowering again the following year.

Scrape away the soil from the outside of the root mass and find a root with an eye. Remove this piece from the parent plant. If an eye cannot be found easily, use the second method. This involves lifting the whole plant. Use a sharp spade to dig outside the rootball to avoid unnecessary damage. Lift the plant out of the ground and you will find the crown has a number of new eyes. The top growth must be cut back to just above the eyes. Once this has been done, use a hose to wash the dirt away and expose the eyes. Be careful if you have high water-pressure. A strong jet can damage them.

It's quite easy to split the plant. Hold the plant in both hands and bend the crown outwards and then inwards. You will soon see the weakest joint of the woody root system. This is where the crown would break naturally and this is where to make the cut.

The crown can be split into a number of pieces, but each one should have at least three or four eyes. If you feel nervous about dividing, cut the plant into only two pieces. Trim the roots of each piece so they have a good clean cut.

Now it's time to replant. Bryan stresses: "Don't plant peonies with more than 5cm of soil over the eyes. Peonies planted too deeply will not flower.

"Be patient. It may be the second season before your divided plants will flower.

"Peonies are forever. You plant a healthy crown, remove the spent foliage in late autumn and winter and give a top dressing by scattering old manure and rotted leaves over the crown.

"Nature then washes all the nutrients into the ground and your plant will just keep on going and getting bigger every year."

Bryan says peonies can live for 80 years or more, but they are gross feeders and need annual applications of organic fertilizers.

You should not fertilize them in spring. This causes lush, soft leaf growth and makes the plant more susceptible to the fungus botrytis. Copper sprays such as bordeaux will control botrytis if it shows its ugly head.

Watering once a fortnight is enough during normal summers.

"You can pick the flowers as soon as the buds feel soft and begin to open," says Bryan. "Don't pick them when the buds are like hard, green marbles."

When picking, leave at least two or three leaves on the plant to supply the plant with food. If a plant has six flowering stems, don't

pick the lot. Peony stems have many leaves attached. Removing all the stems would reduce the plant's ability to manufacture food and therefore reduce its vigor for next season.

One of Bryan's favorites is 'Festiva Maxima,' introduced in France more than 100 years ago. It is a large early-flowering white with red flakes. It has good green foliage and stiff flowering stems.

But as Bryan says: "When you get rapt in these plants, you see the first of the season's blooms and say that flower is the best. Then the mid-season blooms arrive and you change your mind again. And again it changes with the last flowering varieties.

" 'Mrs. Roosevelt' is another nice variety. So are the pink 'Sarah Bernhardt' and pure white 'Mother's Day.' 'Inspector Lavergne' is popular red and 'Florence Nicholls' a lovely pink."

PEONIES FOR AUTUMN COLOR

By W. A. Alexander

Peonies are almost always planted for the flowers they produce. The more sophisticated gardeners may be rather fussy about the type of peony, or the exact shade of pink or red they are getting, and sometimes specify the season of bloom, but almost never ask about other characteristics which may add to, or subtract from, the overall satisfaction the plant will give. I refer to such things as vigor and ease of growing, abundance of bloom, height of plant, where the first leaves are found, strength of stems and color of foliage.

One characteristic I have become increasingly conscious of as I have gained experience is Autumn color of foliage. Varieties vary in this respect almost as much as trees and shrubs of different species. There is also great variation in color of new growth in the spring. So, many varieties of peonies give us three seasons of pleasure in addition to their blooming time; the intriguing color of their new foliage before it turns to the green of summer; the trim, neat bush which can function as a small shrub all summer long; and the attractive fall color which develops along with that of the maples, Euonymus, viburnums and other colorful trees and shrubs.

Few, if any, peonies develop the brilliant and flamboyant colors such as the red of the Euonymus, alata or flowering dogwood, and the bright yellow of the Norway maple. Peony foliage is generally softer shades, less striking and eye-catching perhaps, but none the less beautiful—and it persists longer than most trees and shrubs, often lasting until the foliage is killed by frost. The most common color among the varieties I have grown is a soft shade of medium red considerably diluted by yellow, producing a sort of pastel effect. The outstanding example of that color of foliage is Alice Harding—one more valuable characteristic of that grand variety. Mildred May is almost as attractive.

Not all varieties develop color. Many just stay green, a characteristic we can't object to; others turn brown and dry up before frost, which may detract considerably from the appearance of the garden during the fall season. Unfortunately, many of the hybrids have this fault, but not all of them; some of the lobata hybrids stay green up until the last. But I know of no hybrids that develop any color. Some years ago I planted a row of seedlings (lactifloras) which in due course gave me a riot of color in flowers of all types, some fairly good ones. And the variation in fall foliage color was almost as great as plant and flower variation. It ran the gamut from light, clear yellow through reds and pinks softened with yellow to dark red-purple such as we often see in sweet gum leaves or the leaves of *Viburnum carlcephalum*. I was tempted to propagate some because of their attractive fall foliage color even though the flowers were no good. There is variation in tree peony foliage also, but in my limited experience, fewer seedlings develop attractive color. However, I know that some named varieties do have good fall color. Perhaps some of our tree peony friends can give us authentic information about this matter.

Some kinds (lactifloras) develop only a hint of color on the top leaves which have the greatest exposure to the sun, usually a red-purple like that mentioned above. Such color contrasting with the dark green gives a most attractive effect, but one that may be missed unless one is fairly observant. *Mattie Lafuze* is a variety which develops such color. My observations have been rather casual and I have not taken careful notes, but I remember the following varieties as developing more or less attractive color in varying degrees: *Festiva Maxima*, *Victory*, *Myrtle Gentry*, *Lillian Wild*, *Nancy Nicholls*, *Moonstone* (not much color, but still another plus for this grand variety), *Cathy Ann*, *Pico*, *Phyllis Kelway*, *Alice Reed Bates*, *Break O' Day*, *Mighty Mo*, *Harry L. Smith* and *Lowell Thomas*. The last named has a fine flower and unique foliage, but grows poorly for me.

No doubt there are many others, probably others in my own planting which I cannot now recall. I intend to take precise notes in the future. I hope that other growers will give this matter serious attention so that we may build up a fund of exact information. No doubt there will be variations from one season to another in the development of fall color just as there is in trees and shrubs, caused by variations in temperatures and moisture. That we need to know more about. Attractive color in Autumn foliage is a bonus quality we get with some varieties. In my opinion, it is of sufficient value to be considered in choosing varieties, and to be a factor in any rating scheme we might develop.

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

TWO RUGGED PERENNIALS THAT ARE LONG ON BEAUTY AND ON LIFE

By Art Kozelka

Reprinted with permission on Sept. 16, 1990, from Chicago Tribune

Peonies and day lilies, unsurpassed for their enduring and endearing virtues, inevitably become the most rewarding herbaceous perennials in home gardens. Once established, their spectacular blooms appear unfailingly year after year with perhaps less care than any other plants.

The period from now until the ground freezes is the ideal planting time for both, with soil and weather usually just right.

Consider the peonies, which have been garden favorites for generations even before the day lilies. When properly planted, they are virtually trouble-free and require only minimal attention. It is not unusual to find healthy specimens with lavish blooms where they were planted more than half a century ago.

Unlike most perennials, they need not be divided every few years to sustain flowering potential. But if you want to share roots with garden friends or expand your own plantings, this is the time to divide them, just as it is for commercial growers to dig and provide field-grown plants for the market.

By this time, the plants have produced plump eyes (buds) below the ground from which will emerge the new growth in Spring.

When planting, dig holes deep enough to accommodate the entire fleshy root system, but the eyes must not set any deeper than 1½ to 2 inches below ground level. The latter is a critical planting point, as deeper placement of the eyes is one of the more common reasons that plants fail to flower. Plants should be spaced 3 to 4 feet apart.

Fill in around the roots with humus-rich topsoil, working it carefully with your fingers until no voids are left below the plant or among the roots. Then water thoroughly. As soil settles, add more to bring it to ground level, making sure the eyes remain at the proper depth.

Day lilies, notably the modern hybrids, are relative newcomers by horticultural standards. The once rugged roadside lilies assumed a glamor role when plant breeders discovered how readily they respond to hybridizing. Hundreds of new cultivars are introduced each year.

Colors that once simply reflected the orange and yellow hues of the species (*Hemerocallis*) now include vivid reds, pinks, near white and intermediate shades, some with contrasting centers. The lily-like flowers often are more than 5 inches across on standard varieties and a mere 2 inches across on dwarf or miniature varieties.

Each flower lasts but a day (hence day lily), but each flowering scape proliferates with buds that open in sequence over many days. Depending on variety, the flowering season can extend from may until

September, though the peak blooming period is July.

Like the peonies, day lilies are remarkably long-lived, forming substantial clumps after a few years. But these need not be divided for perhaps 10 or more years—and then only when blooms diminish in quality or quantity, or if one is sharing roots with friends.

The plants do best in full sun but tolerate considerable shade. Though autumn is the recommended time for setting out new plants and dividing overgrown clumps, this is not a hard-and-fast rule, because the plants are virtually indestructible. It is important, though, that they be set with their crowns about an inch below the soil surface.

Because peonies and day lilies tend to dominate garden displays when in bloom, they merit a highly visible planting site that offers full sun and adequately drained soil.

Both adapt well in any landscape situation. They can be used as showy specimens in beds and borders or to create spectacular effects in massed plantings. Foliage of both remains attractive until frost. That of peonies is tough enough to double as a summer hedge along walks and driveways, where, when cut to the ground in Fall, there is room for accumulations of snow to be piled safely over the dormant plants.

Fall mail-order nursery catalogs highlight an array of colorful peonies and day lilies and are helpful in making selections for Fall planting.

Widely featured peonies in nursery catalogs are those in the Estate Series, originated by the Charles Klehm & Son Nursery, Route 5, Box 197 Penny Rd., South Barrington, IL 60010, which has been growing and specializing in them since 1852. Klehm's own full-color catalog also includes outstanding day lilies as well as other fine perennials. It is available for \$4, which is refundable with an order.

ART KOZELKA, FIRST GARDEN WRITER TO RECEIVE GOLD MEDAL OF HONOR

Hodges, S.C.—The Wayside Gardens Company has chosen Arthur Frank “Art” Kozelka, as its first Gold Medal of Honor winner. Previous winners include nurserymen: William Flemer, III, of Princeton, New Jersey, and David G. Leach, of North Madison, Ohio.

William J. Park, Wayside's Chairman and CEO, presented Kozelka the 14-carat, three and three-quarter ounce gold piece at a luncheon for food and garden communicators this month in New York City. Wayside Gardens, established in 1916, has presented the Gold Medal annually to a person who has demonstrated horticultural achievement for an entire career. Park said the mail order nursery had selected Kozelka for the honor, which recognizes his career of achievement in horticultural journalism, because “Art motivates millions to

garden through the instruction and inspiration he provides to the regular readers of his column in *The Chicago Tribune* and syndicated in the Knight-Ridder newspapers across North America. He has spent most of his working life sharing experiences in gardening America's most widely practiced and enjoyed lesiure activity."

On his acceptance of the award, Kozelka said, "I am immensely pleased and certainly honored to be presented with the Gold Medal of Honor. Such recognition by one of America's most highly respected firms is indeed an enviable reward for my humble endeavors through the years on behalf of gardening." Not long after leaving the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, where he majored in botany and agricultural journalism, Kozelka went to work first for the Chicago City News Bureau before joining the *Chicago Tribune* in 1949.

There, he began writing articles on gardening along with other newspaper duties. In 1953, when the newspaper recognized the extent of reader interest in his horticultural pieces, Kozelka was made full-time garden editor, possibly the first on any North American newspaper. He did three columns a week on gardening and related stories, which often ran on the front page. After his "retirement" from the *Tribune* in 1976, he continued to write twice-weekly columns for the Chicago newspaper and its wire services.

No stranger to honors from a grateful industry, some of the citations Kozelka has received include:

In 1964, award for "outstanding writer in horticultural journalism," American Seed Trade Association.

In 1968, "outstanding horticultural writing," American Association of Nurserymen, and from the Keep Illinois Beautiful Commission for articles on conservation and beautification.

In 1975, the Hutchinson Gold Medal, The Chicago Horticultural Society, for spreading . . . "the gospel of good horticulture throughout mid-America by means of his perceptive, enthusiastic articles in the *Chicago Tribune*."

In 1977, "Fellow" and in 1988, inductee into the Hall of Fame, the Garden Writers Association of America and the annual Horticulturist Journalism Medal, the Men's Garden Club of America.

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**CONVENTION OF
THE AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY
THE 88th ANNUAL MEETING AND THE 86th
NATIONAL EXHIBITION
Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario,
Canada — JUNE 7-8-9, 1991**

— 26 —

PEONY SEED AVAILABLE

Peony seed available until Spring. There is no charge for the seed. For handling and mailing, please send \$2.00.

Tetraploid mix

Archangel x Nancy F3

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Suffruticosa (Tree Peony) from Domoto

Suffruticosa (Tree Peony), Al Rogers

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Macrophylla F3, Extra Big Plants

Lactiflora select

Hybrid herbaceous from California

Itoh Clones don't set seed, so seed from them will not be available now, and maybe never!

Order directly from: Chris Laning, 553 West F Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007.

FROST DAMAGE

Peony root heaved out by frost

Depending on the weather, sometimes roots are partially heaved by the freezing and thawing of the soil. Some of the root may be above the ground.

Old plants, as well as new plantings, can be heaved.

If too much damage has been done and roots exposed in the older plantings, it is advisable to replant in the Fall.

When peonies are planted in the Fall, a mulch of straw or hay should be applied as soon as the ground freezes. The mulch should be removed during the first part of April.



If I Could Grow Only 25 Peonies

by Marvin C. Karrels

Is it possible for one to limit himself to a list of 25 *Lactiflora* varieties after one has grown many times 25 for many years now? What criterion, what yardstick, what personal preferences or prejudices should be used to select but 25 from the many fine *Lactiflora* peonies we now have? I have kept a personal symposium (numerical values in box score form of plant and flower) since 1953, of more than 400 varieties and found more than 200 rating better than 90. Of the remainder none rate under 85. I think this indicates that we have many more fine choice peonies now that we have ever had in our history. The numerical values are my own and really have no sanction or standing by the A. P. S.

The following list is not in the order of my preference.

Nick Shaylor (96) Full double - good plant - choice quality flower. Will always rank with the best.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt (94) Full double - good plant - fine soft pink color that literally glows with some back light. Top quality flower.

Miss America (95) Semi-double. Strong robust plant. Flower of great charm and large size. Rates by far as best Semi-double in my book.

Nancy Nicholls (92) Full double. A bit above excellence in every respect.

Dr. J. H. Neely (95) Approaching perfection every point of appraisal. Finest fragrance. Near the top as my finest white double.

Mothers Choice (95) One of the newer fine peonies that should stay up there for many years to come. Bloom is a perfect rose form.

Marilla Beauty (90) The charm and beauty of this informal type is unique. Stem is a bit weak but heavy. I am willing to stake this one as it has everything else.

Pico (96) As a peony plant this one has no peer. Nearing perfection in the single type.

Red Splendor (88) Finest garden peony I know of. Foliage from the

ground up and grows like a bouquet out of the ground. Color - rose red. Jap.

West Hill (92) Early full double pink with lighter center. Strong plant. This flower has great refinement.

Largo (90) Big strong Jap. Many stems, very floriferous. It feathers some but those blooms that don't are perfect. Fine pink.

Blanche King (92) This is still the finest dark pink flower. The plant is sprawling though heavy stemmed. Finest fragrance.

Princess Margaret (92) My favorite dark pink double. This is the only flower that I ever exhibited that won as best in its class three years in succession.

Norma Volz (94) Creamy - pink double with some Solange coloring. Very strong plant. I have grown this new one now for eight years and divided it once. I rate it as very fine in all respects.

Nippon Beauty (92) Still the best red Jap in my garden.

Moonstone (95) Light pink with pearly tones. Fine form, good plant and some fragrance.

Annisquam (94) Large creamy pink double of perfect form. This one has the potential of being the finest flower in the show almost any year. Strong plant.

Ann Cousins (92) Large fine formed fragrant full double. If this one had a good plant under it it would rate 96. I'm willing to stake it.

Carrara (92) Pure white Jap. Even the thread like stamens are white. Stigmas white tipped. A real top quality Jap.

Ave Maria (94) Semi-double to full double. Large, well formed and early. Strong plant.

Alice Harding (94) I am unwilling to drop Alice Harding from my list of fine peonies. It is large, fine formed with an extra strong plant. It is still one of the finest colors in peonies. Unhealthy roots do not seem to affect the plant growth.

Noel (90) A fine double red. Medium to dark red. Seems to have a varnished coating. Good plant and fine flowers every year.

Sea Shell (90) Single pink. Very large and fine form. Best of the Pink singles.

Sir John Franklin (91) Full double. Red, no stamens. Medium red of varnished appearance. Not too large but good every year.

Kansas (91) Light red double. Very strong plant. Flowers are of fine form in a lighter tone of red. It has received some criticism as having too much of the blue influence. I'll keep it until something better comes

along. It still stands alone in its class.

This is my selected 25 for this year and it will undoubtedly receive some criticism as there probably never has been a list drawn up that didn't meet with some disapproval.

There are many of the newer varieties, a number of which I am growing which still need careful evaluation, but which could replace some of my current favorite 25 in time.

—*Bulletin #200*

PEONY DORMANCY

The late Fred C. Helmling, Ravenna, Ohio, 1976

When a peony plant ripens its seeds, it has completed its growth for the season and has matured. Usually dormancy takes place about this time.

Here in northeast Ohio most peony seeds are ripe enough to plant by September First. The roots of perennial plants continue to grow in the Fall and early Spring even though no top growth is visible above ground.

The hybrids come out of the ground two or three weeks earlier than the lactifloras and most of them bloom that much earlier, so the foliage ripens earlier in the season. By mid-July, they usually show signs of dormancy, and by mid-August many of them have dried foliage.

Some people complain about this early browning of the foliage on some of the hybrids, but the blooms are so much better, they are well worth growing. If it is only the foliage that is desired, shrubs will meet that need.

Many varieties of hybrids have been dug by Sept. 10 of this year and also last year, and I have found that the roots on the early ripening hybrids are in as good condition as hybrids and lacti's that have kept their foliage green for a longer time.

We start to dig and plant peonies the day after Labor Day, weather permitting.

Before I retired, five years ago, I had about 400 clumps of peonies that had annual summer grasses and weeds in them. I mowed this patch with a sickle bar mower on Sept. First, and burned everything to destroy the weed seeds. Peonies are tough enough to stand this lack of care; however, this is not the way to care for peonies. The following year they bloomed as good as ever.

Last year, we had the wettest August on record. In a normal year we have had fairly good results in controlling weeds by spraying with

Dacthal, but in 1975 we had so much rain that the Dacthal washed out, and we had many annual weeds. Both peonies and weeds were mowed off about Sept. First. We had good bloom on them this year.

This year, 1976, we perhaps had the wettest July on record, although we had very dry weather until the lactifloras bloomed. We mowed weeds and peony tops off on Sept. First. We do not recommend mowing off the tops until after frost.

NAME SOURCES OF KREKLER PEONIES

Names given to peonies are of much interest, especially as the peony is almost a permanent perennial. The name continues down through the years. Here are the sources of names given to the Krekler peonies.

A. KREKLER—Father of William. Had 17 stock farms in Indiana and Ohio. None of ten children became farmers. Only Bessie and William now alive.

ALAN EBY—Ohio schoolmate; later, an important bee man and old car collector.

ALICE ROBERTS—Married William Krekler (65 years). Piano graduate at Oxford. Mother of Norman, Bruce and Corinne. Grade school classmate of William.

ALLEN LEWIS—Friend.

ANNA MARY (Potinger)—Well-loved Krekler cook (helped raise Krekler kids).

ANN GOEMANS—Nice peony lady from England and Holland.

ASHIE and ATTIE—Names Alice Krekler's small youngsters called her when they could not pronounce Alice.

AVIS CULLEN—Lady printer of Oxford, Ohio, who helped with peony advertising.

BARBARA—A very able girl who helped raise Krekler peonies. Friend.

BECKY (Wersan-Gray)—William's daughter, Corrine's daughter, who, though a small child, helped pollinate peonies.

BESSIE (Schafer)—William's sister (2 years older). She helped several years to pack peony orders for shipment to buyers.

BETTY GROFF—Neighbor of Bessie's.

BETTY WARNER—An important lady in flower world, who liked this seedling.

BEV—Sister-in-law of Bessie Schafer, and schoolmate. William used this peony more than others for hybridizing; is tall and narrow grower; nice one.

BOB KREKLER—William's brother, and aid in nursery (2 years younger).

BRUCIE—William and Alice's second son's nickname. Farmed our farms in Ohio.

BUD (Taylor)—William's father's tenant, and his boarder.

BUTCH (Schafer)—Bessie's husband's brother's nickname. Farmer and ball player.

CAMDEN (Ohio)—Town 4 miles from peony nursery.

CAROLINE S. GAKER—Nice, lady flower lover—wife of doctor Gaker of Middletown.

CARVER—Famous able black person.

CHARLES BURGESS—Child who appreciated this seedling many years ago.

CINCINNATI—Ohio River town. Gateway to north for many southern folks.

CLARA VIVIAN—Appreciative customer.

CLINTON (Indiana)—Coal town on Wabash River, where William attended school.

CLYDE FOXBLOWER—Customer.

COLUMBUS (Ohio)—Capitol of versatile state.

COPLEY (Ohio)—Village a mile from William's general nursery, which was main source financing creation of William's peony farm, near Somerville, Ohio.

CORA STUBBS—Mother of Alice Krekler who bought farm where peonies were grown. Helped rear her grandchildren there.

CORA ROBERTS—See just above. Married name.

CORRINE WERSAN—Daughter of William and Alice Krekler. Now a retired school counselor. Mother of Becky and Jackie.

CORNELL (University in N.Y.)—William donated truckloads of flowers, roots.

CRAZY MYRTLE—Had a small nearby peony nursery. Friend.

CRODIE (Luther Reed)—Nickname of classmate at West Elkton, Ohio.

DAVID LEE—Efficient helper in peony nursery.

DAYTON (Ohio)—City of peony lovers.

DEBBIE (Krekler-Osborn)—Son Bruce's daughter, and helper with peonies.

DEBORA GRAY—William's granddaughter-in-law.

DON RICHARDSON—Boy who helped care for peonies at Krekler Farms.

EATON (Ohio)—County Seat of Preble County in which peony nursery was.

ED BOWMAN—Employee of father's when William was a youngster.

ELIZA LUNDY—Mother of William's father. Ancestors were Quakers. Lived 93 years.

ELLENE ALLEN—Nursery neighbor, and Alice's relative.

ELVINA—Son Bruce's wife. Had two daughters, Debbie and Susan. Quakers.

ERIC (Krekler)—Eldest son of Bruce and Elvina Krekler. Mexican Horticulturist.

EVELYN TIBBITTS—Ohio Quaker friend.

EVEREST—Asian mountain-snowcapped.

EVERET ROBERTS—Neighbor near nursery, friend and relative.

EXCELEE (Krekler)—William's daughter-in-law, Norman's wife. Professor.

FAIRVIEW (Indiana)—Indiana town by Krekler big farm on Wabash River.

FAMIE GAGE (Krekler)—Maiden name of William's mother. Had 7 children.

FLO SAYLOR—Sister-in-law of William's sister, Nellie Saylor. Friend.

FRANKLIN (Ohio)—Town a dozen miles from peony nursery (near Dayton).

FRED COUCH—California friend and day lily helper.

FRED HEFFRON—West Elkton schoolmate and friend.

GENTLEMAN JIM—Jim Lewis worker in Krekler peonies many years.

GERMANTOWN (Ohio)—Town midway between Dayton and peony nursery.

GERTRUDE COX—Dear California friend. Quaker lady.

GLADYS HODSON—College roommate of Alice Krekler. Great double white.

GLADYS TAYLOR—William's father's housekeeper (3 miles from peony nursery).

GRATIS (Ohio)—Village 8 miles north of peony nursery.

GRETA (Kessenich)—Valued operator of Peony Society. Dear friend.

HELEN MATTHEWS—William's mother-in-law from Clinton, Indiana. Great lady.

HENRIETA FLORY—Alice's Ohio cousin.

HOARY (Brooks)—Father's Indiana farms foreman. Race horse driver.

HOWARD TAYLOR—Owner of Rosedale Nursery, Tarrytown, N. Y. Close friend.

INNISWOOD (Ohio)—Park north of Columbus, Ohio. Display of peonies.

ISRAEL—William's grandmother's brother's first name.

JAMES LEWIS—Lived on our farm about half century. Peony helper. Friend.

JESSIE (Krekler-Emrick)—William's oldest sister. Lived in California.

JIM (Lewis)—Long-time peony helper.

JON—Grandson-in-law, Greenville, Ohio.

JOHN SAYLOR—Sister Nellie's husband—6 children.

JOHN WHITIS—Boy employee in peony nursery farm.

JOHN GROVE—Customer.

KAREN GRAY—Granddaughter-in-law. Nice person.

KEVIN—Peony nursery boy employee.
KING (Clyde King)—Long-time employee at Williams Peacock Nursery, Akron.
KINGWOOD IMP—Park, north of Columbus, Ohio.
LEE (Mendenhall)—Rented Alice's farms—her relative. Schoolmate.
LENORA—Customer.
LLOYD KENNEDY—State nursery peony inspector. Adviser and friend.
LOUIS B. GAKER M.D.—Appreciator of nature's beauties. Friend.
LUCY WILLIAMS—Whittier, California neighbor.
MARION (Krekler)—William's brother. HCJB Equador manager. Do-gooder!
MARTHA REED—Alice's employee and relative—at Preble County farm.
MARTHA WEBSTER—William's step-sister, schoolmate, Clinton, Indiana. Friend.
MARY HENDERSON—William's mother's mother (Scott). Lived by our school.
MARY SOMERVILLE—My step-sister. School teacher, Clinton, Indiana. Friend.
MIDDLETOWN (Ohio)—About a dozen miles from peony nursery. Lot customers.
MISS MARY—A very nice customer's name—she selected and named for herself.
MRS KUNZ—A good customer and friend.
MRS PEARL LONG—Customer.
MYRA—Customer.
MYRICK—Neighbor, schoolmate, tenant and friend.
MYRON BRANSON—Alice's cousin, neighbor. Quaker.
NELLIE SAYLOR—William's second oldest sister. California resident later.
NORMA LOU—Jim Lewis's granddaughter.
NORMIE (Krekler)—William's oldest son's nickname. Early tender variety.
ORLANDO ROBERTS—Alice's father, original owner of peony nursery farm.
ORV (Orval Wright)—Nickname of plane inventor. Aunt Adella's suitor.
OXFORD (Ohio)—Dozen miles from peony nursery. College town. Customers.
PAT VICTOR—Helped peony society.
PEACOCK PRIDE—William's Akron nursery was named **PEACOCK**.
PETE—An Akron nursery employee.
PHILIP KUNZ—Customer and friend.
PIQUA—An Ohio city.

PREBLE—County, Ohio.

QUEEN BEE—Nickname of Clara Eby of Westelkton, Ohio. Schoolmate.

RAY PAYTON—Employee in peony nursery.

REBA SHAW—Preble County lady, friend, peony appreciator.

RELLA (Cockran)—William's relative.

RENYKENS—William's only daughter's nickname. Retired school counselor, Ohio.

RICHMOND (Indiana)—A Quaker city not far from peony nursery.

ROBERTA SOUTHARD—Alice's relative near peony nursery, schoolmate.

RUSSELL EMRICK—William's brother-in-law—First peony Wm. named. Exciting.

RUTHIE—Child relative.

SCHAFE (Albert Schafer)—Bessie's husband, nickname. Fox hunter, etc.

SERI SCOUT—Seri are Mexican Indians that son, Norman, befriended a lot.

SHAWNEE—Are Ohio Indians that our school was named for.

SIoux—Are an Indian tribe.

SOMERVILLE (Ohio)—Town where peony nursery got its mail (and express).

SPRINGFIELD (Ohio)—Ohio city, east of Dayton.

STACY—Quaker preacher at West Elkton, Ohio, who liked peonies.

STEVE NICKELL—A boy that worked in peonies on vacation from school.

SUZANNE KREKLER—Bruce's younger daughter—works in court in Ohio.

TED—Preble Fair board member. Ted Furrey.

THELMA CAMPBELL—Alice's relative. Large farmers. Friends, near nursery.

TIMOTEO (Krekler)—Norman's Mexican son. In college there.

TOM ECKHARDT—Local boy chose this peony.

TROY (Ohio)—Town near Dayton.

ULYSSES—Not many names to select from near end of alphabet.

UNCLE BOB (Krekler)—William's brother, who helped at Peacock Nursery.

VICKY (Lewis)—Wife of Jim, who worked in peony nursery many years.

VOLGA—Just a name to get names starting with V.

WALTER (Price)—Worked for father many years. One of first names I used.

WARREN KREKLER—William's red-headed brother. California resident.

WARSAW—W's were scarce.

WASHINGTON ELITE—Capitol city.

WEST ELKTON (Ohio)—Town 2 miles north of peony nursery. Birthplace.

WESTINE—Alice's Quaker friend in California. Whittier church worker.

WHITTIER (California)—Whittier, and my Lundy relative started Civil War.

WILHELM KREKLER—William's father's father (from Germany). Krekler name from.

WILLIAM GAGE—William's mother's father, English, doctor.

WILMINGTON (Ohio)—Town east of Dayton.

XENIA (Ohio)—Town east of Dayton.

XERXES—Starts with an X.

XETARE—Starts with an X. A name William invented.

YALE—University.

YORK—Town starts with a Y.

ZED, ZELDA, ZEUS, ZION—Names starting with a Z (are scarce).

ZUNI—An Indian tribe.

ZUZU—Name William invented (to be last name on any list).

NAME SOURCES OF SPECIES

MKOLOSEWITSCH, EDWARD—(P. Mkolosewitshi named for him by Lomakin.) Was a forester in the Russian Caucasus near Lagodechi. His daughter traveled for Wilhelm Kesselring of Petersburg in 1908 and collected **GENTIANA LAGODECHINA** and other valuable plants. **PRIMULA JULIAE** introduced by her was named after her by Kusnezov.

WITTMANN (*Paeonia WITTMANNIANA* is named for him) German horticulturist who traveled on behalf of the Russian Government in the south of Russia. (Caucasus). In 1841 he returned with many seeds and plants—peonies as well as others—which were sent to Nikitz. There was a book published in 1804, in German, Wittmann's Travels in Turkey, Syria and Egypt. I do not know whether this was the same Wittmann.

The biographical data was sent to Professor A. P. Saunders from Mr. Steffen of Pillintz, near Dresden, Germany.—Bulletin #42

* * * *

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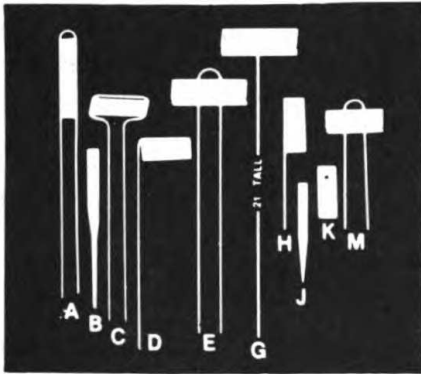
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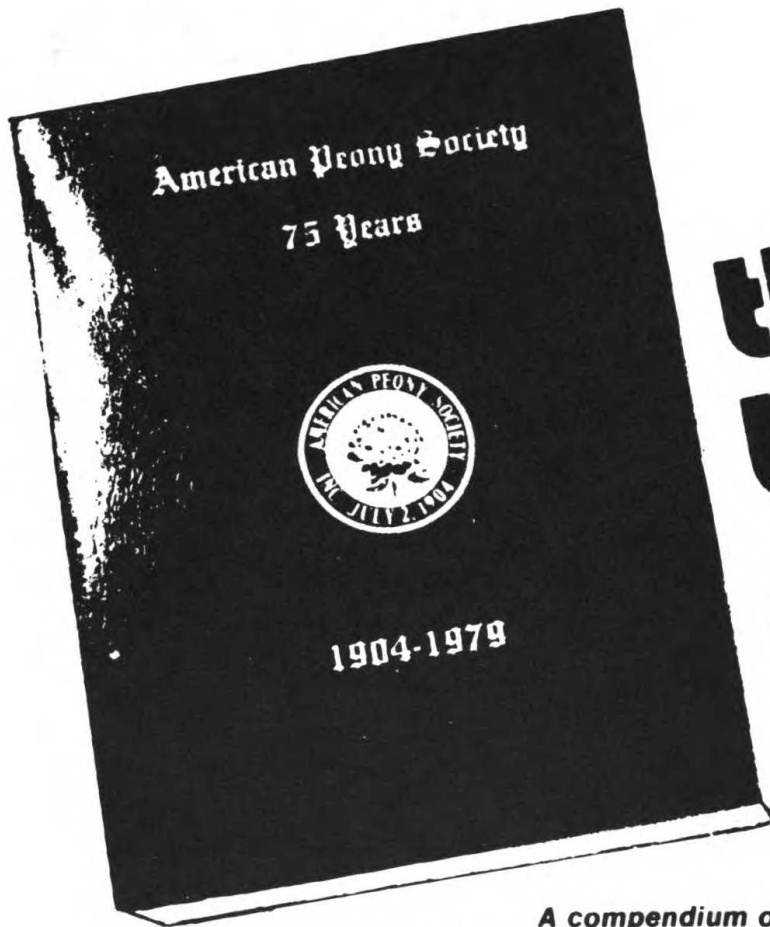
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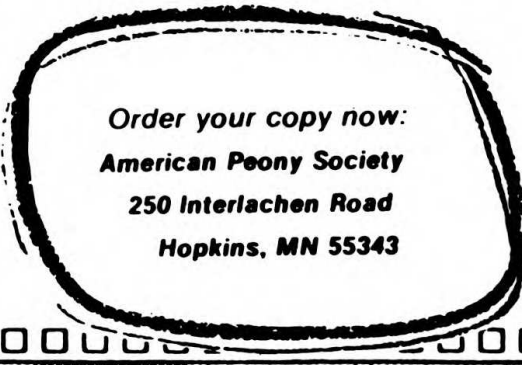
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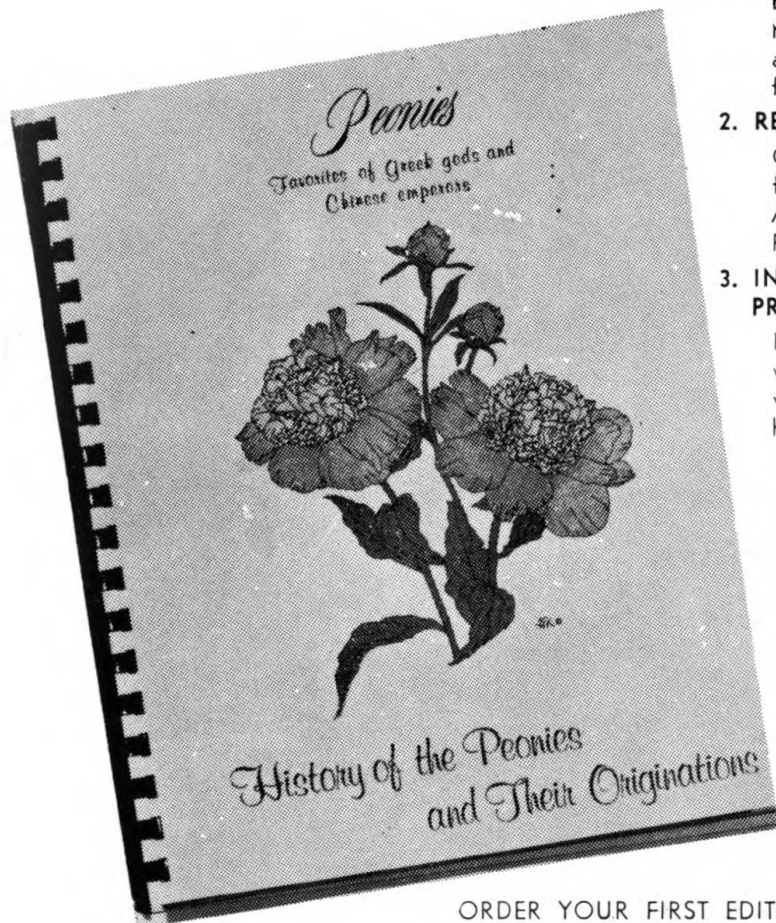
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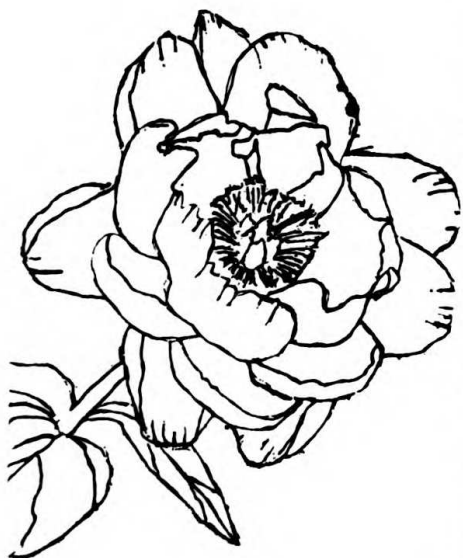
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