

# AMERICAN PEONY SOCIETY



## Bulletin

DECEMBER - 1950

Bulletin No. 119

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W. F. CHRISTMAN, Editor  
Northbrook, Ill.

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### CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the Society is open to both professional and amateur growers. Nomination is not necessary for those desiring admission, but a list of applicants for membership is presented to the Society at its annual meeting and the names are there voted upon.

Those who make application for membership at any time receive the current publications of the Society as they are issued.

The annual dues are \$3.00 which includes the bulletins. *All checks covering membership dues should be made to The American Peony Society and sent to the Secretary with application for membership.* Dues in future are to run from January 1st to January 1st of the following year.

Back BULLETINS of the Society will be charged for at the rate of 25 cents per copy and 50 cents for the Symposium Number (No. 14). To non-members these prices are doubled. No BULLETINS available prior to No. 13.



# AMERICAN Peony Society Bulletin

DECEMBER, 1950

## At The Wailing Wall

FRANCIS P. TIKALSKY, La Grange Park, Ill.

In the June issue of the Peony Bulletin, two stalwarts of our society, wailed away at the wailing wall. These two were Roy G. Gayle and Rev. Neal R. van Loon.

The reason for their lachrymal deluges was because of the relatively small membership and the lethargic and phlegmatic attitudes, and also the indifferent and waning interests of a good many of our active members. Both have reason for their wails. I see eye to eye with them, so will join them at the wailing wall.

Roy Gayle, in his fine article, "Suggested Basis for Rating," brings out most of the pertinent factors that enter into the rating of a peony. I don't see how anyone can quarrel with his proposal of values. There is one trait, however, that should be considered in the rating of any flower. That trait is one of floriferousness. I believe that most gardeners are concerned with a plethora of good blooms from a plant with reliability, that is, year after year. To the major number of us ordinary folk, we can overlook a nuance or two off in the desirable shade, or a few centimeters smaller than the customary big ones, if we get a large number of good flowers.

Experienced, seasoned gardeners, as a rule, are not moved to senselessness by a hopped up, babied, unreliable freak that copped the major gonfalon at the "Big Show."

The index of plant values or the rating given varieties, is not a cure all for a reliable overall appraisal by a long shot. For instance, the highly rated ones in the "Snooty Class" often prove perfect flops in our garden. Take, for instance, *Martha Bulloch*, *A. B. Franklin*, *Hansina Brand*, *Mrs. A. M. Brand* and *Hans P. Sass*, they are not worth a nickel in my locale, and my scoring of them would be a big zero with the rim knocked completely off. These same varieties grown in Northern Minnesota and Wisconsin way are unsurpassed, but from what information I have gathered, these same varieties are even bigger busts, or disappointments, when you go southward. Look at these high ratings these prima donnas have! Who was responsible for them? What about the poor sucker who took these ratings as the gospel truth? Is he, after his disappointing experience, a prospective candidate for membership into our Society? Maybe, but I'll say nix.

I second Roy Gayle's suggestion that a new symposium be prepared at once, but one with corrective measures applied, so that gross misrepresentations, as illustrated in the foregoing, will not creep in with such large numbers. A

good way to do this is to have each region have its own symposium, wherein only those experienced in actually growing a variety to be rated be allowed to vote on it. Take all of the ratings of the regions, total them and divide the sum by the number of regions included in the rating. More plainly, take the established ratings of a variety of Region One, Two, Three, etc. total them and divide by the number of regions totaled. In this manner you will get a more overall opinion of a very large geographic area. By all means, though, give each member a copy of his regional ratings. He or she are more interested in how certain varieties grow in their region rather than an average over the good old U.S.A.

It is suggested that Roy Gayle's ominous remark, to the effect that his interests are dying a slow death, be given serious thought. Hombres with tough fibers like Roy Gayle has, don't fold up and fade out so easily. If fellows like him are about ready to give up the ghost so easily, how about us ordinary fellows?

Now let's proceed to comment on Rev. Neal R. van Loon's article, "Out of the Doldrums," in which he makes a good analysis of the reasons for the low membership. No one will, or can disagree with him that we sponsor the Queen of the floral gems. Consequently, no other floral society has a better bill of goods to sell. But where do we stand in membership compared to other floral societies? We are like the drummers of a band,—last. According to Rev. van Loon, we have a paltry one thousand in our Society. (This can be raised to eleven hundred—Editor.) The American Rose Society has ten thousand or more and is shooting for twelve thousand. The American Iris Society's membership is climbing, and at its present rate of climb should soon exceed ten thousand. And we, the fountain from which major floral blessings flow are in a tail spin. Brother, if I were the "Queen of Flowers," I would seek some wicked witch and be transformed into a lowly burdock, so more people would stick to me.

The Reverend gentleman put his fingers on the pulse of our light spiral downward, when he listed the three most deadly sins; selfishness, laziness and forgetfulness, as being responsible. You just can't lay like a carp in a stream waiting for a grub to be washed into your gullet to proceed and advance. He also pointed out that the show place in New York's recent orchid and chrysanthemum exhibit was jammed, even though a tax of one iron man per schnozzle was assessed to see it. Then in contrast, a thin line witnessed an annual peony "Big Show" which was for free.

A year or two ago on Sunday, I saw Chicago's Annual Chrysanthemum Show. I waited long in line until I was sucked into a human mailstrom and was extruded through the exhibition hall. Through openings, here and there, in the human mass, I got a glimpse or two of a chrysanthemum. When I finally wiggled out, I was minus a few buttons and lost my Christianity. This spectacle was seen without a charge. This Spring I saw a good Regional Peony Show at Rockford, Ill., and you could have had room for a high school prom dance on the show room floor during the exhibit. Why should other floral exhibits draw so well while the peony shows attract only meager crowds? The answer is easy. Street cars in Chicago bore placards advertising the chrysanthemum show, important public places showed them, newspapers highlighted the coming event. By the way, who is delegated to handle publicity matters in the Peony Society? Good advertisements always bear fruit.

Our bulletin is good in its ways, but it doesn't weigh enough. Just think, the average size of it is some forty pages in contrast to the iris quarterly publication, which comprises on an average of a hundred plus pages. The Iris

Society's bulletin is more punctual too. This, I am informed, is because of the vital interests of their Regional leaders. They, somehow, extract material for their bulletins. No wonder, then, that the Iris Societies' membership is on the gain while ours is waning. We just have to have a fat, juicy, newsy bulletin, published on schedule if we want to hold, let alone increase our present membership.

The best solution that can be offered to insure a fine, fat, newsy bulletin, is to have each vice president of his respective region obtain material from his or her area. They should flood the editor with articles. Let them prompt the boys, whom they know have knowledge, information and experience. Maybe these practical fellows can't put their ideas clearly on paper fit to be published as is, but that is where the Vice President would come in. According to the June 1950 issue of the bulletin Vice Presidents are not shown for five regions. These vacancies should be filled at once with good, live wires.

Region No. 2, good old Gard-Em-Key has done a commendable job and put over a great performance. Let other regions vie with region two and emulate what they have done. Better still, strive to beat their accomplishments.

I had an odd experience when I joined the Society, and since it has an important bearing on membership, it should be commented on. After I joined the Society I would travel about four miles to chew the fat with a few Society members about peonies; and how I like to chew the fat about them! After two years of these frequent and long sojourns, I accidentally located two members, practically in my own back yard. This illustrates a pathetic state of affairs. The answer, of course, is to do what other progressive societies do, print a membership list and give each member a copy.

Our Society has resorted to the auctioning off roots of the Queen of Flowers to obtain revenue that normally should be available from membership dues. What a plight! Barter the Queen to run the Society! Shades of Shaylor, Rosenfield, Fewkes, Thurlow, Hollis, et al. What a new low! Rather than go bartering the Queen at bargain prices, it would be far better to donate roots of floral gems to those who contribute most to the welfare and progress of our Society. This should stimulate members to enter into the spirit of things and help pull us back to the high pinnacle that we formerly occupied. At least it's worth trying.

Summarizing the above, these are the things that should be considered to increase our membership.

- (1) Issue a new peony manual, preferably in loose leaf form, so that subsequent supplements can be conveniently filed.
- (2) A reliable symposium, once annually.
- (3) Issue membership lists.
- (4) Delegate Regional Vice Presidents to obtain material for the bulletin.
- (5) Award those members, (exclusive of officers), with donated peony stock, who contribute most to the Society's welfare.
- (6) Appoint a Publicity Chairman to advertise the Society's programs.  
Push over Roy and Rev. Neal, who's next?

\* \* \*

### More About the Dubuque Peony Trail

Thank you for your fine letter offering suggestions as to how we may be able to identify the peonies in our Trail. As you say, it is a difficult matter.

At the time they were planted, we, of course, prepared a chart, and still have it, of all known varieties. Our particular difficulty, however, was that, in many cases, peonies were contributed to us and, while these were beautiful flowers, yet, in many cases, the varieties were not known. Then later on we found it desirable to make some changes in our planting arrangements and this also caused some confusion. However, I think that we will be able to identify many of our varieties from these statistics and also in the manner that you have suggested.

This Trail was started in 1938 with the approval and support of our Dubuque Civic Garden Club. The idea came from the fact that my wife, not now living, and I had traveled rather extensively to various parts of the country and had seen many of the projects, such as the Azalea Trail in Mobile. She was fired with the idea of having something similar for our city and, although the Garden Club had only a small sum in cash, she was determined to see what could be done. Interest was aroused in the project locally by many newspaper articles and it was not long before contributions of cash and contributions from peony lovers came pouring in. We secured the approval of the Park Board and their active participation in permitting the Park Superintendent to use his men and time to plant and care for the Trail.

It will be of interest to you to know that, although this project was started during the summer, by late fall, in fact in some cases the ground was already frozen, we had secured, by gift and purchase, and there had been planted some 5,000 plants. These were not indiscriminately placed but were the result of careful analysis of our city and a study as to where the best route would be.

Dubuque, as you may know, is quite hilly. It has several colleges and many beautiful spots along the Mississippi Valley. The intention of the Trail was to conduct our visitors along this approximately 15-mile trip ending at the wonderfully planned and executed Rock Gardens in Eagle Point Park. The Gardens were constructed at a cost of approximately \$300,000.

Following the first year, efforts to extend the Trail were conducted and at the close of the planting season another 5,000 peonies had been secured and planted. It was the plan of the promoters of this project to make the entire city conscious of the flower and to induce them, wherever possible, to plant them in their own yard, particularly where they could be viewed from the street.

This phase of the project was going forward well until the war came on and not a great deal has been done since that time. Our main project now is to create a specimen peony bed in which as many as possible of the known varieties can be planted.

Yes, we have had some trouble from those who will dig up clumps out of the Trail and from mischievous boys who break down our peony direction markers, but, in the main, we have had the cooperation of our schools and police department.

One of our recent projects has been the preparation of some fifty colored slides. This was done by a photographer and myself this last summer and we are just now finishing up the details of it. Our idea is to present a colored-slide lecture on the Dubuque Peony Trail to the various organizations in our city and to the surrounding communities.

This photographer has some really fine pictures and it is because of this that we are anxious to be sure of their identity so that, when we are showing a single blossom and perhaps someone in the audience says what peony is that, we will be able to tell them. The blooming season is usually from June 1 to 15. As you say, we have both early and late bloomers.

Again, thank you for your interest and information.

Cordially yours,

E. B. LYONS

Chr., Dubuque Peony Trail.



## MEMORIES

**MRS. HARRY F. LITTLE, Camillus, N.Y.**

In the springtime of life we are ambitious and filled with hope. When autumn comes we relax and revel in beautiful memories.

Now as we wander down Memory Lane we will stop along the wayside and loiter in a certain back-yard and eventually arrive at a Special Garden.

This, truly, was a very Special Garden. In it one could find new things, identified only by the seedling numbers. These splendid varieties sent for approval, from all the best known hybridizers, were given study and infinite care. No other garden in the world harbored so many outstanding new peonies, not yet in commerce.

This above mentioned back-yard was located in Goodland, Indiana. There many fine peonies were grown. In this certain rear lot a spark of love for the Peony was kindled and set aflame. One root, *Alice Harding*, was imported. \$200.00 was paid for this root. Probably this back yard has a record of having had planted in it the most expensive 3-eyed root ever purchased.

Here is more! The first manilla bags to adorn the "just right" buds were placed on every plant, and not a worthwhile bloom was seen in that garden in May and June of 1924. As these buds responded to the sensitive touch of their master their long stems were cut, placed in pails of water in cold storage and held at a 40 to 45 degree temperature until time to pack them for their 500-mile journey. When these were packed in their paper-lined chilled containers they could have gone to California and been shown as well as at Des Moines, Iowa, where these gorgeous blooms won thirteen firsts out of fourteen entries. The other entry had to be disqualified because two mis-dated peonies were placed, unknown to the grower, in a class of new varieties. This display was so fine, in recognition of the splendid specimens shown in his entry, no first was awarded. That recognition meant as much as the coveted solid Gold Medal won.

Many of you were there. The writer was not, but she certainly basked in the glory of the aftermath and still enjoys reading Mr. Lee Bonnewitz's description of Harry F. Little's show.

Another Gold Medal was won when Mr. Little cut only 6 blooms from a plant in this Special Garden, boarded a plane at Syracuse, N.Y. airport and flew to Minneapolis in time for the judges to "look 'em over." Many Gold Medals, Bronze Medals, loving cups and honors were won, but the most precious one is the one for which he never could thank the American Peony Society. That one was voted to him in June, 1948, in memory of his tireless effort to make our National Peony Shows worthwhile.

Just another memory—at the aforementioned Peony Show in Des Moines, Iowa, just 26 years ago in June, our beloved Secretary was given full charge of the Society office. Des Moines and the wonderful Peony enthusiasts there hold an outstanding place in this memory trip.

When this Master Gardener was called to the Great Beyond, many of his ardent friends felt that Edgar Guest had written words fitting this Special Garden:

“I wonder how the flowers there  
Will get along without his care,  
And how the lilac bush will face  
The loneliness about the place.  
For every Spring and Summer he  
Had been the chum of plant and tree  
And every living thing has known  
A comradeship that's finer grown  
By having him from year to year.  
Now very soon they'll all be here  
And I am wondering what they'll say  
When they find that he has marched away.”

This Special Garden as a whole shows great neglect. However, the blooms in 1950 held up their heads and were more beautiful than ever before. As one wandered through this garden he could see the Spirits of the Great Peony Lovers who had stopped to caress the perfect blossoms and feel that electric thrill that vibrated between them and the Masterpieces. Only the Peony can respond to such depths of affection.

Even this Special Garden is doomed to be only a glorious Memory. In 1949 one hundred of Mr. Little's favorite varieties were planted in another Memory Garden. This is located in the center of Riverview Cemetery, on Wellesley Island, (one of the Thousand Island group in the majestic Saint Lawrence River,) the place he wanted never to leave. Here they will be cared for throughout their eternity.

All things can be taken from us, but Memories linger on.



### A Report From Minnesota

R. W. JONES, 731 Delaware Ave., St. Paul 7, Minn.

Answering your letter of the 2nd inst. and returning the three kodak pictures sent me, on the backs of which I have shown in pencil No. 1 — No. 2 — and No. 3—All of these pictures are ancient. No. 1 shows part of the back yard after digging out all the peonies I had at that time and putting in a pool, and that doesn't mean that I only had two peonies either. Some smarty pants at a Garden Club meeting got up one time and said “I don't grow peonies, I bought one, one time and went out and got the spade, shovel and pick axe and started to dig a hole to plant it, and after working a couple days I decided I had a big enough hole, then took another look at it, filled it half way and made a pool out of what was left.” Well everything except the pool has overgrown, the arborvitaes froze out a couple of times and are now about 20 feet high. The juniper besides the pool is 4 or 5 feet high and the small dolgo apple at the extreme right is a real tree which bore more than two bushels of fruit last year. The lombardies are way up in the air and a big head-ache to the telephone and power companies, and even to me. The whole thing should be done over but I just don't seem to get “ambish” enough to do it.





No. 1

Picture No. 2 was taken the second or third year after moving the peonies from our back yard to the present garden on the Highway and looking towards the highway. Some one's car is parked along side the road, and the house up on the hill is that of a neighbor who told me I was plumb crazy to plant anything in such soil as I had. "Why it was nothin' but a dump for old bottles, rocks, ashes and other trash"—well he was partly right, it had been a dump but I manage to make some peonies grow, and I did have some real nice reds too. Picture No. 3 is a close up of three rows of *Mme. Jules Dessert* and hundreds of dozen have been cut from this little block each year.

I wish I could give you a good picture showing the cabin and some good bloom along side of it. Some of the best peonies we have are located there. and why, oh why some one with a kodak don't get 'em I don't know. Now don't ask me, "Why don't you do it yourself, Jones?"—Me—I just can't learn to run an automobile or take pictures.

About that picture of Elsie Peyton, I thought I was doing a good thing in sending a colored one, I have a good black and white of her if you want it.



No. 2

Am not going to write anything about my garden, would rather some one else did it. Several years ago Mabel Franklin came over ,and just inside the gate were three *Madam Butterfly* that were planted so close together that they looked like one plant, and as the florists just won't buy Japs these three plants were full of bloom and when Mabel found out they were a Franklin origination



No. 3

she got busy with her pencil, but she never finished it; maybe she will some day. I had a hard time in getting some of the real Peony boys (and gals) to take a look, but after getting Mr. Peyton started, then Mr. Wild, then Mr. Murawska and the local authorities. I tried to get you, but without success. I started a new planting last Fall that should be worth looking at in about two years and then, if I am alive, am going to start after you again. Here is what I will want to show you:

Row 1. 2 plants *Marilla Beauty*; 1 plant *Alberta Kelsey*; 1 plant *Noel*. These are all four years old.

Row 2. 1 plant *To Kalon*; 1 *Mother's Day*; 1 *Laura Kelsey*; 1 *Charlene*; 1 *President F. D. Roosevelt*. Some of these last year—some 1946 and some 1945.

Row 3. 1 plant *Edith Snook*; 3 *E. F. Kelsey*; 2 *Donald*; 2 *Lights Out*; 2 *Pres. F. D. Roosevelt*.

Row 4. 3 plants *Lottie Dawson Rea*; 2 *Victory*; 1 *Alice Schneider*; 1 *Sensation*; 2 *Helen Hughes*; 1 *Edith Snook*; 1 *President F. D. Roosevelt*.

Row 5. 2 *Mattie Lafuze*; 2 *Burma*; 3 *Tondeleyo*; 1 *Geo. W. Peyton*; 1 *President F. D. Roosevelt*.

Row 6. 5 plants *King Midas*; 1 *Mark Twain*; 1 *Elsa Sass*.

Row 7. 2 plants *Dolorodell*; 2 *Mandaleen*; 2 *Lady of the Snows*.

Row 8. 2 plants *Mrs. Livingston Farrand*; 1 *Prairie Belle*; 1 *Evangeline Newhall*; 2 *Louise Lossing*; 2 *Victory*.

Row 9. 2 Plants *Shirley J.*; 2 *Dorothy J.*; (I hope they don't fight when they get big); 2 *Red Cloud*; 2 *Snow Mountain*; 1 *Mary E. Nicholls*.

Row 10. 2 plants, *Mary E. Nicholls*; 2 *Florence Bond*; 2 *Bonanza*; 1 *Anisquam*; 1 *Gardenia*; and 1 *Judy Becker*.

To get these in I had to steal part of Mrs. Jones' strawberry patch, she doesn't know, but I am very much afraid I will be more in the dog house than Kingfish George Stevens ever was.

Mrs. J. says—"Bob, I want you to go to the store for me," sooo if I want to have anything to eat for lunch, I better wind this up right here and now.

**The Great Outdoors****By FRANK R. OASTLER**

Oh, give me a bit of the great outdoors  
Is all that I ask of you,  
Where I may do whatever I like  
And like whatever I do.

Where the sky is the boundary up above  
And the earth is the measure below,  
And the trail starts on where the sun comes up  
And ends where the sun sinks low.

Where the wind blows sweet as a baby's breath,  
And the sun shines bright as its eyes,  
And the showers come and the showers go  
As the tears when the little one cries.

And the brook runs merrily through the glade,  
Singing its gladdening song,  
And the pine trees murmuring their soothing sighs.  
Still bearing that song along.

Yes, carry me back to the lake's white shores  
With its deer and its lily pad,  
Where the loon calls out to the moonbeams bright  
Through the mist on the waters sad.

Oh, let me hear the elk's far cry  
As it sweeps through the forest deep.  
Where the silence hangs as over the dead  
At rest in eternal sleep.

I'll pitch my tent by some lonesome pine.  
By the rippling water's edge,  
With the great outdoors as my garden,  
And the willows round as my hedge.

And surrounded by pretty flowers,  
That perfume the gentle breeze,  
I'll idle away the whole long day  
In the shade of my old pine trees.

And I'll watch on yonder mountain  
The colors change with the day,  
And I'll follow each shadow creeping  
So silently on its way.

And then I'll give thanks to God above  
And in gratitude I'll pause,  
And I'll love, not hate, each care that comes  
In that great big home—Outdoors.

From—*The Green Thumb*

**MR. & MRS. JOE E. WARNER MOVE TO TEXAS**

Mr. and Mrs. Warner of 2200 North Central Ave., Topeka, Kas., have moved to McAllen, Texas where they will reside in the future. They have disposed of their four acres of peonies to one of their Topeka neighbors, Mr. Ray Mitchell, who will take over at the former address of the Warner's.

Mr. and Mrs. Warner have lived in Topeka, Kas., since 1926. For the past several years he has specialized in the growing of peonies and gladiolus. At present Mr. Warner intends to retire from active business and as McAllen is located about twenty miles from the Gulf of Mexico, he should be in a position to enjoy a long season of pleasure to restore his health, which was the motivating factor in making the move to a warmer climate.

Mr. Warner was a commercial grower of flowers and realizes that he would not be able to grow peonies as successfully in his new location. Mr. Warner writes me that he wishes to retain his membership in the A.P.S. and he has also persuaded Mr. Mitchell to join our forces.

**Autumn Colors**

When your small son asks, "Daddy, where does the color in the fall leaves come from?" you need not feel as though he has asked where the snow goes when the snow melts, for there really is an answer to this one. It involves chlorophyll, sugar and frosty nights. Cool temperatures do have something to do with the colors that make up the autumn hillside display, for the degree of color for any given year will vary considerably according to the number of warm sunny days followed by frosty nights during the fall months. If there are no cool nights, or if the fall days are cloudy and rainy, the leaves may tend to be a rather unexciting yellow, but crisp nights after sunny days will turn them red. The reason for this is that all leaves contain green chlorophyll and a considerable amount of yellow pigment. A healthy leaf, in summer, will have so much chlorophyll in it that the yellow will not be visible; however, when fall comes, more chlorophyll is destroyed in the leaf than is manufactured and the dying leaf turns yellow. Many leaves contain something more than chlorophyll and yellow pigment; they contain sugar, which is being manufactured for storage in the trunk and roots of the tree. This sugar is made in the leaf and then passes down into the trunk and roots. But when the temperature drops below 45 degrees, the sugar can no longer leave the leaf and is trapped there, its presence in the leaf causing red pigment to be formed. Thus a stand of sugar maples, after a frost, will turn a flaming scarlet simply because the concentration of sugar in that tree is high, higher than that of the elm, whose leaves merely turn a ruddy yellow. The cold night has caught the sugar in the leaves and made them red.

. . . from *The American Nurseryman*

**A Report from Idaho's Magic Valley**

Last March I received a letter from one of our members, Mrs. Velma Lapray of Filer, Idaho, enclosing an interesting article by Hughette Winegar of Buhl, Idaho, covering a conversation with Mrs. Addie Wonacott, who spent many years in that particular location. Peonies, as well as all other flowers and farm crops seem to do unusually well in that section.

BULL. March 14—Looking back over the years, Mrs. Addie Wonacott is

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convinced that she and her husband, the late E. L. Wonacott, made no mistake when they chose Magic Valley to be their home back in the days when the new tract was still in its infancy. Says Mrs. Wonacott:

"My husband was a pioneer in every sense of the word. He came to Douglas county, Oregon, with his family in the 1800's. The trip was made by wagon train. His father was captain of the 125-wagon train that made the long trek from Illinois to Oregon. His brother, C. N. Wonacott, who later made trips with him to see this new tract, was born on that trip.

Horses, mules and oxen were used in the train. Although the oxen were much slower, they proved to be much better in the long run than horses for such a trip.

They needed less food, and could eat food the horses and mules wouldn't touch, could get by on less water and were not subject to the dust pneumonia that killed off so many of the horses and mules. The train had the usual number of hardships, including a skirmish with the Indians in the Boise valley.

"The new tract was widely advertised all over the United States," said Mrs. Wonacott, "I still have a sale bill of the original tract. People were very much excited over the possibilities offered in this new country and began coming here to see for themselves what the new tract had to offer."

Wonacott and his brother became ever more interested when the railroad and canals went through in 1900, so in 1904 they made a trip here. He was convinced that it was the coming country and bought land near Hazelton for \$9 an acre.

He continued to make trips through here selling real estate and nursery stock until 1911 when the entire family moved to land he had purchased near Kimberly. This land was bought for \$65 an acre and she added, "that same land sells now up in the hundreds. At one time Mr. Wonacott brought in 100,000 trees and shrubs which he sold to the new settlers.

"In his nursery stock he had crossed varieties of apples in order to produce an apple of a hardier nature which would be better suited to this climate. These trees were in great demand, and some of them are still used in the valley.

"Though he had built our home on the property near Kimberly we still had the land at Hazelton to look after, and we kept busy going back and forth working both places. Transportation meant a ride in the wagon.

"There were no cars, and even if there had of been they would have been of no use. The roads in those days were barely negotiable by horse and buggy. The trips between the two places were nothing to look forward to, although we had our choice of two routes to travel.

"We could either go by way of the Shoshone Falls ferry, or the Milner swinging bridge."

The trip by ferry was almost too much for the teams because of the deep sand, and the Milner bridge trip was enough to terrify the stoutest heart.

Mrs. Wonacott added:

"When the wind blew, which was most of the time, the swinging bridge rocked and rolled from side to side. The horses were in a state of near panic and I don't know how you would describe the feelings of the passengers.

"Walking over the bridge didn't lessen the terror any because with the hard usage boards were missing and the gaps showed nothing very reassuring below."

"On the Kimberly property we planted a 35-acre orchard entirely by hand; 20 acres were put in apples and 15 acres in pears, peaches, prunes and cherries," Mrs. Wonacott recalled. "This was no easy job, especially with the land in the process of clearing at the same time.

"We never experienced a complete crop failure in all our years of farming. There was a close call in 1916 when a sudden freezing snow storm occurred and we had to dig our beets out by hand."

Weather was always a worry, and they had to be on the alert the year around to protect the varied crops. In the early spring and fall there always the danger of the unexpected frost which could ruin the orchard crop.

"Our own family took care of the regular farm work," she explained. "The only time we hired outside labor was in the threshing season. We sold most of our produce directly from the farm. Sunday was a favorite day for buyers to make their selections.

"The market, as we have it today, was not common then, and this saved us a lot of headaches because the roads were bad and the trips consumed a lot of valuable time. We did send apples and potatoes to the Kansas City market every year. "A trip to Twin Falls from Kimberly with a produce load would take a full day. I've seen a double team of horses have all they could do to pull a wagon load of potatoes through the thick mud."

As a rule the farmer can look forward to a comparatively quiet winter after the busy summer and fall work is done, but this was not for Mrs. Wonacott with 10 children in school.

"They weren't always in school either," Mrs. Wonacott remarked. "In those days winter meant business and very often the north and south roads would be drifted closed for six weeks at a time making it necessary for the children to be taught at home."

Some mornings it was too cold for them to go to school even if the roads were open. Thirty degrees below zero was not an unusual temperature in that period.

"We had good times in those days though," Mrs. Wonacott recalled, "Even with 12 children to look after we found time for such social life as the church socials, school plays and neighborhood visiting. The children had a good time too."

There was no baby sitting then. The children went along with the grown people. The summer was the big season in their lives. They made a swimming hole in Perrine coulee by digging the mud from the bottom. It was there they spent most of their waking hours.

"Finding my children was no problem, all I had to do was step outside and listen for the noise that invariably came from the swimming hole," she chuckled.

When the first World war came three of her sons, Sylvester, George and Oscar, enlisted and saw active duty. Her daughter, Viola, was in nurses training and lacked only a few hours for completion of the course, after which she would go overseas, when the armistice was signed.

After 28 years of farming and orchard work Mr. and Mrs. Wonacott decided to retire and sold their holdings and moved to Buhl, where Mrs. Wonacott still makes her home with her daughter, Mrs. David Lovelady.

Mrs. Wonacott calls Buhl "home," but actually she spends most of her time traveling and looking after her varied business interests, which she does by herself and in an efficient manner.

Recently she celebrated her 75th birthday anniversary but as far as she was concerned the day was important because she could see some of her children who live at distant points.

"I like to see my children often," she said, "I have nine children living, I lost one child while we were still living in Oregon, and two boys and a girl when we lived in Kimberly. I'm very proud of my grandchildren and great-grandchildren too. I have 22 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren. The youngest great-grandchild is only 2 months old.

"I have to travel considerably to see all my children since they live rather widely apart. The winter of 1948 I spent with my daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Mead in Oregon. We were snowed in from Thanksgiving day until the middle of May. I have one son, Oscar, living in Long Beach, Calif.

"Another, George, lives in Twin Falls; S. A. Wonacott, in Boise; my daughter, Mrs. Faye Williams also lives there and two other daughters, Mrs. Katheryn Black in Columbus, Mont., and Mrs. Alberta Hollingsworth in Prescott, Ariz."

Mrs. Wonacott is in excellent health and sees no reason for any excitement about a 75th birthday anniversary. She dismissed it with an airy: "Lots of people have them. One must keep active and interested in the present or they'll find themselves getting old."



### A Report From Washington CLYDE MOORE, Chehalis, Wash.

We have been silent readers of the peony bulletin since joining the Society several years ago. Now we have decided to tell you a little about our experiences in growing peonies here near Chehalis, Wash.

Our first planting was set out in the fall of 1935, these being gift plants from Mr. & Mrs. William McGiri of Van Wert, Ohio, sent out by Mr. Lee R. Bonnewitz, (a brother of Mrs. McGiri), who was owner of the Bonnewitz Peony Gardens at Van Wert for many years, until his health failed and he passed away in 1947.

Mr. and Mrs. McGiri had visited our place the summer of 1935 to call on a friend of ours, whom they had met while all were touring in the south.

Previous to that time we had only four or five of the common varieties in our garden, but after setting out these fine specimens and seeing them bloom for the first time, (which nearly all did the first year), we became so enthused over these gorgeous blossoms from such plants as *Tamate-Boku*, *Kelway's Glorious*, *Laura Dessert*, *Isani-Gidui*, *Phyllis Kelway*, *James R. Mann*, *Phillippe Rivoire* and others that we decided to add to, with no thought at the time of raising peonies as a means of livelihood.

Our first order of peonies was sent to Mr. Bonnewitz the following fall. I guess it could hardly be called an order, for we sent him a sum of money, (all we could spare at the time), leaving the selection entirely up to him, as we knew so little about the varieties, since we had seen so few kinds blossoming and had never attended a peony show.

However, we realized as we learned more about them, that Mr. Bonnewitz sent us the finest varieties and roots and was always so generous with extras.

What a fine old gentleman he must have been. We are sorry we never had the pleasure of meeting him face to face. His honesty and square dealing and his warm, friendly, helpful letters were really an inspiration.

And now a little about our peonies and experiences as of now.

The following year we decided to put out a planting for propagation by sending Mr. Bonnewitz \$500.00, asking him to send us about 100 varieties which he thought were best in the various price ranges. Of course, there were several of a kind of some of the choicest.

Of all he sent, only a few did not do well in this soil and climate, *Le Cygne* being one of these and *Walter Faxon* another. Although *Walter Faxon* grew well, the blossoms were always small. Both have been discarded.

Some of our favorites in whites are, *Madonna*, *Kelway's Glorious*, *Alice Harding*, *Victory*, *Frankie Curtis*, *Baroness Schroeder*, *Elsa Sass*, *Matchless Beauty*, *John M. Good*, *Margaret Lough*, *New Era*, *Mme. Claude Tain* and a few others.

Among the best pinks I think I will list *Lottie Dawson Rea*, *Minuet*, *Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt*, *Mrs. J. H. Neeley*, *Mrs. Harry F. Little*, *Judge Snook*, *Lady Alexandra Duff*, *Marietta Sisson*, *Phyllis Kelway*, *Nick Shaylor*, *Therese*, *Victory Chateau Thierry*, *Mons. Jules Elie*, *Mrs. Livingston Farrand* and *Hermoine* are all among our favorites, all of which do exceptionally well here.

I think I should add *Frank E. Good*, *Cornelia Shaylor*, *Ella Christiansen* and *Martha Bulloch* to the above list of pinks, as these too are really outstanding.

In darker pinks, or rose color, we think *Mammoth Rose* and *Loren Franklin* are tops. *Hansina Brand* does not open well here some seasons when there is too much moisture.

All Japanese varieties we have raised here have done fine except *Prairie Ajire*. After trying a number of these plants for a number of years, we finally discarded it.

*Isani Gidui* and *Toro-no-maki* are favorites in Japanese whites while *Ama-no-sode*, *Tamate Boku*, and *Kukeni Jishi* head the list in Japanese pinks. and *Nippon Beauty*, *Hara-ai-nin* and *Japanese Beauty* considered best in Jap. reds.

In double reds I think we would choose *Mrs. Bryce Fontaine*, *Carolyn Mae Nelson*, *Captain Kidd*, *Mons. Martin Cahuzac*, *Shattuck*, *Rosabel*, *Mary Brand*. and *Fanny Lee*, with *Burma* getting top rating in double reds, as it stands sun best and has wonderful substance.

We grow our peonies two years and then offer them for sale. The root is young and nearly always blossoms the first year. We usually send out the whole plant unless it is an unusually large one. Our fields are always planted with one eye divisions.

We use a large amount of ground oyster shell to sweeten the soil. This being an evergreen state and our soil is a shot clay, we find the oyster shell has beneficial and lasting qualities. Peonies certainly thrive where it is used generously.

We are also liberal with bone meal, using no other fertilizer, except well rotted cow manure, which we apply before planting the cover crop which precedes soil preparation for the actual planting. The preparation includes plenty of rototilling.

Fresh chicken fertilizer is never used, although we have an abundance since we keep about twenty-two hundred White Leghorn laying hens.

Would like to have gone farther in explaining the merits of many more of the fine varieties, but I realize space is limited.

I do want to add that we grow over one hundred fifty varieties at least forty thousand plants and expect to add to these from year to year.





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**WHAT'S  
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**“OUT OF THE DOLDRUMS” (Continued)**

**NEAL R. VAN LOON**

It would be a calloused soul, indeed, who could suggest such a thing as that our Society is in such finely fettlesome condition as to preclude further expansion and improvement.

The membership situation alone is enough to set us soberly back on our heels to reflect whether or not we need a doctor in the house, or if only a tonic could be made to do.

Anybody can stomach-ache but let us take a look and see if something constructive can really be done.

Potential friends and members we no doubt have, and in great numbers, all over the country. They must number many, many thousands. Like ships passing, unseen, in the night, they are out there some place and some must be right close at hand. We have just not discovered them, that's all. Or maybe we have not looked carefully to see if we could locate some of them.

The suggestion has been made several times, by different persons, in the pages of the Bulletin, that the older established members of the Society should "cast their bread upon the waters" so to speak, by giving away surplus roots of the best varieties available, to interested parties.

Some of these recipients of peony roots would doubtless soon be ready to garner into the Society family.

Just look what our Milwaukee friend and past-president did by the use of this simple expedient—over a score of new members in the short space of weeks.

Any one of us has upwards of a dozen peony plants that could stand dividing and moving, and would likely be the better for it. By sharing our peony pleasures with a carefully chosen group of friends we would be able to intoxicate some of them permanently and land them for our rolls.

If we assume that three-fifths of our members just have no idea of helping out, or for various reasons, good and bad, cannot, the other two-fifths, with very little effort, could secure an average of five new recruits each and to no detriment whatsoever to themselves. This one effort alone would add to our roster two thousand new members. It absolutely can be done.

Personally, I intend, as long as I can push on a spade and wield a dividing knife, to give roots to every new member I can possibly swing for the Society. Let many others adopt a similar policy on a permanent basis.

Now let us take a look at the future of our Bulletin.

### THE BULLETIN

While visiting the library of the New York Horticultural Society for the first time, I was completely bewildered by the tremendous array of bulletins, journals, and pamphlets, dealing with matters of the flower and plant world. Man O Man, was I not proud to see a copy of our organ, attractive and dignified, as well as eloquently obvious, reposing in a prominent spot?

I would not care to go quite so far as to say it was the best looking affair there, but with all little prejudices aside, I thought it surely very close to the very top. The quality of the paper is high. The cover is done in the best of taste. The size is handy and popular, and the content is meaty and solid. Well, let us say that maybe the content is a bit too solid.

If only we could have more sketches and photos, I thought, and how badly we need numerous short bits of gossip and homey observations only a few sentences long, news items, and questions and answers would liven and lighten the thing up a lot. A letter section would do a world of good. Anyone who can write a letter to his mother could write things for the Bulletin every once in a while!

There are hundreds of people who ought, by all means, to contribute regularly to the Bulletin. They would not have to follow the style of our beloved clown of Rockford: indeed should not. This hombre with the George Washington brain took all of the superlative grade of clay anyhow when he was moulded. They would not have to scale the heights so gracefully reached by the sage of Milwaukee. They would not need to feel constrained to even try to match the deep stuff emanating from the noggins of the little giant of Topeka or the masterful mentor living down Old Dominion state way.

Let us all just be our own plain unvarnished selves, but our loyal, working, active selves.

The way it looks from here, the ideal set-up for our future printing program would be about as follows: starting with the May or June issue, call it whichever you will, we would have a Bulletin giving the schedules, with rules governing some, of our big annual show and of our regional shows. This much copy, along with regional reports, would be enough to satisfy anybody.

This number should be in our hands promptly by May the first. This would give us all plenty of time to make plans for exhibiting and for working our plantings and buds to that end.

Another point, and this is a big one; to have our Bulletin on time; with what greater pride could we not go out to win new subscribers? To have a May or June Bulletin reach us by May first would be the finest shot in the arm for our Society in a decade.

A mimeograph report of all the main shows would be all that we would need for the next quarter. This would not carry a serial number and could be of any size whatsoever. This should be mailed at the earliest moment possible after the latest show is reported. Why is this of such great importance? Well, in the first place it would surely be an acceptable and a considerate gesture toward our loyal advertisers who have stuck with us, at no great advantage to themselves, thru the years. How can these valued supporters possibly prepare any effective thunder to help disseminate their wares if they know nothing of the current results in the shows? The very same idea applies to your potential buyer and planter. Just supposing that *Elsa Sass* should win pretty consistently right across the board in any given season. Who would not want to play her up in his advertising matter if he had a good stock to spare? Then, if his advertisement could appear before proper planting time, would he not be likely to be considerably benefitted thereby?

All of this suggests that the Autumn number should reach us not later than October first. It would mean a real tight squeeze to be sure but it could be done.

This particular number is pointed especially at the potential root buyer large and small. It is plain to see how an advertisement in such a Bulletin at such a time as this would be a mighty fine thing for buyer and seller alike.

Now the pay off! The last of our quarterly Bulletins should be in our mail boxes February first. It should contain from two to three times the number of pages that the other two regular issues have. The money saved on the mimeo would cover the extra cost.

What a feast! One could put his clodhoppers up on a chair, with their piggy palms and buttons toward the fire, and wade through page after page of good, down-to-earth peony gossip, gaff and discussion. This last Bulletin would be something like issue number 100 and would be a one hundred per cent delight like that one was. It would constitute a veritable year book.

#### OUR SHOWS

Realization of a deep and abiding interest in the peony came first to me at the great show in Des Moines in the year 1924. It was not a case of hopeless love though, for me and my party, because we all came out of the Coliseum with nasty headaches. It was a hot day and the ventilation totally inadequate so the atmosphere of the great room became unbearable. We were in there long enough to see thousands of mediocre blooms, other hundreds of splendid blooms and also several hundred blooms of a superlative quality.

I recall now, that a very goodly proportion of the best were of that variety classic of all time: *Le Cygne*. It seemed to be almost omnipresent and of peak form and uniformly topnotch finish.

A year later, a Dutch uncle, approaching a century of full years, proudly brought out to me from his cold cellar a selection of his best *Mons. Jules Elie*. He had every bloom individually wrapped in newspapers. "Ya," I said. "dem is nice." But I did not really plump for the peony yet, altho I remember them now as the finest *Elie* it has been my privilege to ever look upon.

In the fateful year of 1932; a year which proved to be both an epochal and a jubilee one, I finally looked smack into the adorable face of a little cherubic *Tourangelle*. It was only a small one and scarcely three quarters full, but as fresh as heaven. Then, then, but until then, did my soul really catch fire.

Very soon a big clumsy Dutchman was buzzing about like a giant dragon fly and with the speed of light 'mongst the offspring of Pleiades of the Constellation Taurus!

At gloaming time when fluffy rose clouds bedeck a fading west, and when a soft afterglow plates all growing things with burnished gold, any flower takes on an otherworldly look.

A *Tourangelle* at such a time as that — a *Tourangelle* just aborning—well, it belongs only to the top story of Paradise, and to the top story, that is just exactly where it takes you.

This spell, never cloying, still holds after eighteen long years. It is good. Good!

I do wish I could sleep a bit though, during that week or so when things are at the zenith. I should like to be in better physical condition so I could handle my show blooms to better advantage, to say nothing of being able to visit more affably and more intelligently with the dear peony folk.

Speaking more pertinently, I do believe that just like I had my fundamental beginnings in peony love at the Shows, so most of the peony fans find themselves first captivated there.

Now for the practical side of our show activities. What a wonderful thing it would be if we could have a score or more of shows for everyone we now have. That would be something like it should be.

They would not have to be large shows ;in fact should not be. Every show, however, no matter how small, should be ever and always of highest quality. If a real sour season should come along in any given locale, no show should be attempted, even if all plans have already been made.

It should never be possible for any visitor to a show to say "Huh, I got stuff better'n that right in my own garden." We must always and always treat the proletariat to an eye full of such outstanding floral beauty as will sing in their minds day and night. Let it be that or nothing.

After all, if you think of it, is not a fine peony an overwhelming thing? You just cannot stand too much of her if you appreciate her! Who would want to listen to Beethoven or Wagner for five hours at a stretch?

A big show, even if of the topmost quality, can be fully digested by no one.

Even our International Show, which must of necessity be larger than the others, and more comprehensive, would be twice as good in most instances if only half as large.

It is of the utmost importance to keep the missionary potential of our shows constantly in mind. We must make it impossible for any visitor to view our shows stoically or with indifference. We must consider this one thing constantly, how can we pack into our shows the greatest possible wallop? It is our business to record for the flower loving public, what progress is being made in the evolution of the peony, and at the same time challenge and con-

strain as many gardeners as possible to take hold and jump into the game and broadcast peony beauty up and down the land.

When we display what the peony is, and what it can be by showing it off in its utmost refinement and versatility of form, we literally compel people to sup this veritable distillation of heavenly grace. Then the will as well as the mind and heart will begin to move.

I offer a few homely suggestions which I believe will be helpful. First—when we display the specimens, let us not ask any flower to be content with less than two square feet of space. Classes for two blooms, it seems to me, no schedule should ever call for the number “two” is not a pleasing one in any flower show. “Three” is a fine number for a peony show but each bloom should have a container of its own. Then all of the flowers will face the spectator. This is doubly important when the space for threes is adjacent to a wall.

Adequate lighting is of paramount importance. The light should fall on the flowers and not in the visitors eyes. The color of the light should simulate daylight, that is, its quality should be white or blue, rather than yellow. Many of our most delicately hued and most beautiful peonies go dead right away when placed under the wrong kind of light. They might just as well not contest the race, for they are beaten before they even start.

Several planes, not one, should be employed in staging a show, otherwise the general effect is monotonous and dull. I have visited and judged at so many flower shows of various kinds where it seemed that the committee in charge just could not grasp this idea, and, year after year, merely set up a row of tables. They did not realize that they were writing themselves an airtight guarantee that their show must prove dull. The Milwaukee and Guelph Committees made a good try at the use of several planes in staging, but I did not think they went far enough.

Textiles, if of pleasing texture, and if, of neutral color, can go far to make a good show better. I know of nothing that can come up to plain, natural color, new burlap. Black velvet cannot hold a candle to it. Paper should never be used. Its texture is not pleasing, even the best of it. It looks cheap even when fresh and clean. After one or two of the inevitable spills, it is a mess.

Mediocre blooms should never be entered in the open and advanced amateur classes. In the strictly Amateur classes we would naturally be much more lenient so that even the veriest beginner need not despair. The public will understand.

Committees should jealously reserve themselves the right to refuse blooms in poor condition, even if they have been shipped across the continent. Committees should also studiously act upon this right. Too, flowers already set up and judged should be removed if and when they deteriorate to such a condition as to spoil the beautiful effects of the show. Of course, we know it is possible for a whole show to go quickly to pot should the weather suddenly settle down to a spell of 100 degree temperature. Such things are always a possibility and should be sportingly taken in stride.

Judging should begin promptly at the appointed time, or very close to it, and every time, whether the show is completely set up or not.

This is no more than fair for the visitor and for the exhibitor. Everybody likes to see a nice clean race. The starter, at the appointed hour, fires his pistol and all contestants have an equal chance. Why penalize a thorough going exhibitor who has taken careful notice of the schedule and then has skillfully handled his buds with precision timing, to favor a man who is not on time and never

was? We make rules. Let us make them mean something.. To delay judging for so long as one hour is unforgivable and will hurt our show program greatly if frequently permitted. Careful selection, careful handling and careful timing are the successful exhibitors biggest ammunition.

Eliminate double judging. Except for the champ himself, once over the room is enough.

You have noticed several times, no doubt, that show rules say "two entries may be made in each class but no person may win more than one award in each class." Why not? Is it the prerogative of judges to divide spoils equitably, or is it their prerogative to select the winning blooms?

As I see it, I think it is the work of the judges to indicate to the clerks which flowers are best in their order and nothing else.

Again, Mr. Roy Gayle has suggested that it might be a good idea to allow a VARIETY only one win in any given class. I cannot agree. If a variety has the stuff to make a sweep in any show, by all means allow it to do so. I reiterate, let the judges select the best blooms and nothing more. To play with this principle or to compromise it, is to invite some very mischievous and hurtful temptations.

An official judging scale should be included in every schedule and should be followed as closely as possible by all shows. It would be instructive to the serious show visitor, it would help the exhibitor immeasurably, and it might prove to be an invaluable help to the judges when facing a class that is well filled and hotly contested. The judges in such a case could resort to pencils and pads and quickly arrive at a just decision. I have made use of this idea several times and it made speedily possible the dissolving of a virtual impasse.

The abridgment of our schedules the last few years has been a wholesome thing. Almost everybody, but especially your excitable and naturally discom-bobulated showman, can do a better job handling and staging, say—fifty blooms or so, than he could if he tried to use a couple of hundred. More important, he would get from his effort far greater enjoyment and fewer headaches.

Summing it all up: Let us do our very best by a couple of shows each year. Let us prepare our schedules in plenty of time. Let us forget about our mammoth shows and be determined to make them all more attractive—and prettier, reaching always for a more rounded perfection. Then our peony shows, blossoming forth all over the land, would be the handsomest and most thrilling as well as the most potent and reproductive to be found on the entire American flower show scene.

Our queen would then be rightly and permanently enthroned at last.



### Williamsburg Garden Symposium

The fifth annual Williamsburg Garden Symposium, continuing the popular events which each year have attracted garden enthusiasts from all parts of the nation to historic Williamsburg, Virginia—center of America's most famous restored colonial gardens, will be held in February 1951 with a completely new type of program.

The entire 1951 program will be devoted to a practical approach to gardening problems and design and planting trends. It will be held in two separate sessions, of three days each differing only in selection of speakers, scheduled on February 19 to 21 and February 26 to 28 respectively. The Symposium is open to all amateur gardeners, horticulturists and interested persons.

During the three-day sessions, nationally-known experts in a number of related fields will give illustrated talks on trends in American gardens, "How Williamsburg can Help Modern Garden Design," flower arrangements, plant photography, use of herbs in present day gardens, ways of keeping the small garden "healthy and happy," and discussions on annuals, perennials, evergreens and deciduous plants. Each afternoon during the discussion teas specific points brought up in the talks will be discussed with the opportunity of close exchange of ideas between the panel of experts and the registrants. The discussion teas will cover "Garden Design Trends," "Plant Materials," and a "Small Garden Clinic" on maintenance problems.

The more than 60 acres of restored colonial gardens in the the old city will serve as a laboratory for the Symposium and tours conducted by trained guides will be held each day along with tours of a special on-the-ground exhibit of maintenance equipment and procedures. Optional tours also have been arranged to the nearby James River Plantations. Also scheduled during each session of the 1951 Symposium is a reception by candlelight in the impressive colonial Governor's Palace.

Among the outstanding authorities who will participate in the Symposium will be Louise B. Fisher, Creator of Flower Arrangements for Colonial Williamsburg; Paul F. Frese, editor of Popular Gardening; Helen M. Fox, of the American Herb Society from Mount Kisco, New York; Gottlieb Hampfler, noted plant photographer of Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania; Alden Hopkins, landscape architect of Colonial Williamsburg; E. L. Kammerer, Arboriculturist of the Morton Arboretum at Lisle, Illinois; Helen Totty, flower expert of Madison, New Jersey; Elizabeth Van Brunt, expert on herbs from Kitchawan, New York; Freeman Weiss, Curator of the American Type Culture Collection in Washington, D. C.; John C. Wister, Director of the Arthur Hoyt Scott Horticultural Foundation at Swarthmore; Anne Wertsner Wood, lecturer and writer on gardens from Swarthmore; Harry Wood, Superintendent at Swarthmore College; and Donald Wyman, Horticulturist at the Arnold Arboretum.

An all-inclusive rate for Symposium registrants has been worked out by Colonial Williamsburg which covers registration, admission to the Exhibition Buildings, tours, lectures and room and meals at either the Williamsburg Inn or Williamsburg Lodge. The inclusive rate for each of the three-day sessions will be \$57.00 at Williamsburg Inn and \$42.00 at Williamsburg Lodge, two in a room. For single accommodations the rate is \$63.00 at the Inn and \$48.00 at the Lodge. Early registration is suggested and should be accompanied by check for \$15.00 for each person (to be applied against total payment). Registrations and inquiries should be directed to Mrs. A. L. Rowe, Registrar, Williamsburg Garden Symposium, Goodwin Building, Williamsburg, Virginia.



**NATIONAL PEONY SHOW**  
**CLEVELAND, O., JUNE 18th-19th, 1951**  
**By JAMES MASON, Chicago, Ill.**

The Higbee Company located on the Public Square in Cleveland, O., where the National Peony Show of 1951 will be held, opens at noon on Monday, June 18th. This gives exhibitors time to get set up, and judges through work before lunch. Judging *must* be completed by 12 o'clock noon.

That fact should be shouted. People in great numbers swarm in when the store opens. A slow judge will be trampled, his dignity ruffled, and his hair mussed.

Since the Higbee Company furnishes quantities of cracked ice, there is great wisdom in arriving at the Higbee store on Sunday, June 17th, with specimens near their peak. A last minute rush on Monday morning should be avoided by as many exhibitors as possible. Judging should start not later than 10 A.M.

The Prospect Avenue loading dock will be open all day Sunday and all night (Sunday). You can take a freight elevator at any hour to the tenth floor where everything will be ready for showmen and showwomen. You will find great activity and good fellowship there on Sunday.

Pennsylvania members of our society threaten to be very tough competition. Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Rockford, Ill., showmen had better have good stuff with them when they arrive in Cleveland. Canadian members can easily show in 1951.

Perfect refrigeration will be provided by Berthold-Griggsby Co., a very well equipped wholesale florist establishment. Their address is.

Berthold Griggsby Co.,  
2420 East Ninth Street,  
Cleveland, Ohio

Mark the package, or box, "FOR NATIONAL PEONY SHOW."

Ship to them any time and they will deliver your specimens to the show rooms on Sunday or Monday morning. Please tell them when you want delivery at the Higbee Co. Sunday delivery is best if you want the Show Committee to set up your entries.

If you feel inclined to cut a few extra specimens of single and Japanese varieties for arrangements, you will find a dozen or more Cleveland women on hand with containers and accessories, eager to make arrangements, and they will present floral pictures of great beauty. Those gals down there are really tops in the art of arrangement.

We think the Cleveland show will be one to remember. The show hours the first day are 12 noon to 9 P.M. and next day from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Attendance might easily be the largest ever at an indoor show of peonies.

The newspapers and radio stations in Cleveland, are anxious to push a National Flower Show of any kind in Cleveland, and we are confident they will go all out for their first big peony show in a generation.

The show rooms have carpeted floors, paneled walls, and a beautiful stage. Two huge show rooms are adjacent to adequate work rooms on the same floor. You'll find the arrangement classes filled with exquisite things.

Everyone will be delighted with the 1951 National Peony Show. Hotel Cleveland and Fred Harvey restaurant are under the same roof as the Higbee Company, who have a fine restaurant of their own; also the New York Central and Nickel Plate station. Hotel Statler, Hotel Hollenden, Hotel Carter and Allerton House are near by and all good. Make reservations early. DO IT NOW.



### The American Horticultural Council, Inc.

J. F. STYER, Secretary

The American Peony Society, along with other organizations of national scope, may soon be benefited if the progress made by The American Horticultural Council is continued. This is an embodiment of the idea of cooperation between all horticultural groups. After five years devoted to study of the best means to proceed, the Council has a program which merits the support of the leadership of all societies.



The first element of the program is a news letter containing information on the doings or organizations and leaders in horticulture. Besides being of value in broadening the busy horticulturists knowledge of what's going on, it will get the programs and activities of member societies more general attention. The newly organized Garden Writers Association is planning to help accumulate the news for the letter.

The second part of the Council program is a series of consultations between organizations on various matters. For this purpose the Council holds annual Congresses and publishes the proceedings thereof; also, it sets up special committees, and has a small number of permanent Commissions. The aim of all these activities is an increase in the membership, service, and public influence of the societies or groups concerned, and an increase in public appreciation of horticulture.

The Commission programs are partially described in the accompanying statement. It is the privilege of any organization participating in the Council to work with each Commission and to send members to meet with any Commission. The present projects which ought to interest the American Peony Society are the stabilizing of nomenclature, the color standard handbook, the comparison of registries, and the Specialized Plant Societies conferences.

#### SECRETARY'S REMARKS:—

In writing the above brief statement, J. F. Styer of Concordville, Pa., who is Secretary of the American Horticultural Council, Inc., has asked me to add to his statement, taking material from the folder sent me.

This Horticultural Council has been very active the past five years and is really accomplishing something for the future in horticultural endeavors. Anyone interested in this work should write to J. F. Styer, Secretary, American Horticultural Council, Inc., Concordville, Pa. for full details of the work this Council is doing.

One of the projects that appeals very strongly to me is standardizing color for American Horticulture. This work is well under way. Much advancement has been made in color work and it is now possible to get accurate color reproductions that has been sadly lacking in the past. Some of our outstanding horticultural printers have the art of color work pretty well in hand, but the process is very expensive. It is our understanding that the new process of color work will be considerably less expensive and more accurate.

Another feature of the work of this Council is the registration and Nomenclature endeavors to standardize and clarify work along this particular line.

Several Commissions, each under the head of a competent group of workers, is working out the problems that face their respective commissions, which follow:—Research, Testing and Reporting, Horticultural Education, Inter-Relation of Horticultural Organizations and Commissions, Conference of Single Plant Societies, Horticultural Awards, Registration and Nomenclature, Horticulture in Industry and Garden Writers Association.

It can be observed from the above that the American Horticultural Council, Inc., has a very ambitious program to carry out.

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### SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

At the annual meeting of the American Peony Society held in Sarcoxie, Mo., last May, the matter of raising membership dues was discussed at some length with various opinions expressed. Some expressed the idea that if the dues were raised 50c per year it would be sufficient at the present time. Others

suggested that the dues be raised to \$4.00, \$4.50 and \$5.00. After considerable discussion, the matter was put to a vote on a motion of \$5.00 per year. This motion carried. There has been so much disagreement on this matter that a letter was written by the secretary to each director of the Society asking for their reaction. Only one favored the \$5.00 raise. They were all in favor of a slight increase at the present time, notwithstanding the fact that prices have advanced considerably. The present dues are not sufficient to carry on the expenses of the Society but a 50c increase would help greatly.

It would be most pleasing to get a unanimous vote for a dollar or more raise.

Please mail us a post card or letter at once giving your views on this matter and we will act accordingly. The raise is to go into effect for the 1951 dues. Please do not overlook this matter as we want to definitely settle this matter of dues promptly.

Mail your communication to.

W. F. CHRISTMAN, Secretary  
Northbrook, Ill.

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### Information Wanted

In a recent bulletin issued you stated that you were receptive to having a question and answer column in the Peony Bulletin and inviting questions. Here goes.

Years ago a beautiful, large single pink peony came into the market. It was named *Saul*. One never hears of it now days. Who originated it and was it ever up to be rated?

A double deep pink, *W. F. Miller*, seems also to have disappeared from commerce. What happened to this one?

Yours truly,  
Francis P. Tikalsky  
312 N. Spring Ave.,  
La Grange, Ill.

Editor's note:

We surely welcome questions of this nature and will be glad to publish replies in the column of the bulletin. Some very interesting information can be learned in this manner. Send your replies to the editors office.

Further information is desired by Mr Tikalsky on the following named peonies. *Antwerpen* and *The Pearl*. He further states that the peony manual mentioned *Antwerpen* in a casual sort of way. Says *The Pearl* is a perfect stranger to him.

How good are these varieties?

Do counnoisseurs hold them in high regard?

I would appreciate any data you might have on these two Japs.

Your Secretary has grown *Antwerpen* for many years but has discarded it for better varieties.

Have not grown *The Pearl*. Anyone who has grown either one or both of these varieties will do us a favor in reporting on them in full.

At the present time they are not considered particularly desirable or we would see them more often displayed at our shows.



### Mr. Sisson Passes On

Wilbur A. Sisson of Rosendale, Wis., passed away Nov. 16th, at the age of 81 years. He was born in the town of Rosendale, June 24th, 1869, the son of Asa and Pamela Sisson and attended West Rosendale and Ripon, Wis., schools.

He was greatly interested in music and flowers and had a fine planting of peonies consisting of an acre that was the mecca of flower lovers for miles around during the month of June when they were in full bloom. He also handled a Typewriter Exchange.

The peony gardens were laid out carefully and were well planned, containing over five hundred varieties of his favorite flower. It has been under the management of Mr. J. H. Phillips who has carried on all details of the peony business, and will continue to do so in the future.

Mr. Sisson was a member of the American Peony Society for many years and was a great admirer of the peony.

He had never married and preceding him in death were his father, mother, four sisters and two brothers.

We are pleased to be able to present a good likeness of him in this issue of the bulletin.

Mr. Sisson was an accomplished musician and played pipe organ in various churches. He was a member of the Rosendale Congregational church.

For several years Mr. Sisson conducted a weekly column on gardening in the Find du Lac Commonwealth Reporter and also wrote for the Wisconsin State Horticultural Magazine and others.

His body was placed to rest in Hillside cemetery, Ripon, Wis.

In early life Mr. Sisson worked as a telegrapher in various sections of Wisconsin and Michigan. He spent fifteen years in this work and then decided to return to his native Rosendale.

# Secretary's Notes

The year 1950 is coming to a close, and with its closing we have passed a year of much conflict, uncertainty, complacency and disillusionment. To many, the conflict has brought sadness, heart breaks and sorrow, with the breaking of home ties, the loss of loved ones, and the uncertainty of the future.

Even the weather was the most freakish we have experienced in many years. In spite of these uncertainties, fraught with misgivings, we emerged with a feeling of satisfaction, for we have been privileged to see many new things in the floral kingdom, in which we are vitally interested, and look forward to the year 1951 with a keen sense of gratification and anticipation of better things yet to come. New peonies, new hemerocallis, new iris were thrilling and attained near perfection possibilities. Other varieties of flowers enjoyed the same highly desirable qualities.

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We have passed the fall months and now are approaching official winter. The fall months are lovely, and Clifford Raymond has beautifully expressed it as he gives his impression of November.

“The colors of Autumn are to the preceptions light giving. They are radiant to suggest that in themselves they have life. The maple, oak, sumac, birch and poplar seem to insist that they have effulgence within their own powers. It is the phosphorescent quality of this coloring which fascinates the attention and gratifies it. There is also the audible sign of the great Autumn movement. The woods are not silent, but full of crickling, rustling noises as acorns strike the fallen leaves and as the leaves themselves drop hesitantly. The good brown earth and the good gray sky-elements in every aspect of the greatest human joviality, jovial because they are not luxuriant; because they do not cannot if not impose conditions in which man lives by his own effort and not by a natural beneficence—all now asserted in the decay of things which have sprouted, bloomed, had their day and passed along. We love what we create. In the luxuriance of a benevolent nature which gave shelter by not giving inclemency, which gave food by making starvation impossible, which gave everything needed by making nothing needful absent, there would be for folk spiritualized, as our folk are, a complete deadening of life. The dead leaves are a carpet under foot and illusion walks over them as lightly as it walked over fields covered with fox grass at the end of an August day.”

Nature smiled upon us very beneficently and gave ample time to prepare and complete our work before the rigors of winter were experienced. Some of us were a little dilatory in completing our tasks for winter preparation and this delay has left us “holding the sack.”

Two days before Thanksgiving day old King Boreas arrived, bringing with him chilly blasts, driving snow and a blizzard that hampered transportation in many parts of the country. The winds finally subsided to a considerable extent: snow flurries continued to persist in an annoying fashion but the cold weather has remained in variable degrees of intensity and everything points to a good old fashioned winter. As we have learned in the past, even professional weather analysts have erred greatly in their predictions. We may be

entirely mistaken and a few days of warm sunshine may alter our views materially. We surely hope we will not experience another open, damaging season like the one we absorbed last winter. Heaving damage was terrific and costly.

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The past year has brought to the United States the entire stock of Ann Cousins peony, one of the most outstanding peonies of the century, and it will be offered in 1951 for \$100.00 per division, but divisions will not be available until 1952. The happy possessors are James and Gene Wild of Sarcoxie, Mo., their father, Allen J. Wild having bought the stock and presented it to them. To my knowledge, outside of the stockholders, there are slightly less than a half dozen possessors of this variety at present, in the United States and I am happy to be one. Doris Cooper will also be found in a number of plantings and should appear quite frequently at our local peony shows the coming year, or at least in 1952. Advertisement for the same has appeared in our bulletin.

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Several years ago Prof. A. P. Saunders of Clinton, N.Y., decided to devote his entire time to the hybridizing of hybrid and tree peonies. The results of his experiments have produced a large number of charming and most desirable varieties that will grace many fine peony plantings and will greatly arouse interest and enhance the beauty, as well as extend the period of bloom of the peony for two or three weeks. Many of these will appear at the Cleveland, O., show of the American Peony Society June 18th and 19th, 1951. Be on the lookout for them.

Lyman D. Glasscock of Elwood, Ill., R.F.D. 1, and Edward Auten, Jr., of Princeville, Ill., are both doing fine work with specie peonies, as well as herbaceous varieties. A few others are also on the road to success with hybrid peonies, and I am confident that within the next few years we will have several more new ones to glorify our gardens.

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I have room for several more articles covering experiences with peonies the past season and would gladly welcome contributions for our bulletin.

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This bulletin will doubtless reach you after the holidays have passed, but I want to thank you for the many kind expressions received and extend to each one of you my most cordial greetings and well wishes for the coming year. I find it impossible to write each one of you a personal letter expressing my greetings and am using this medium for the purpose. Each one of your officers and directors extend to you Seasons Greetings and well wishes for the year 1951 and all succeeding years. Here is hoping that 1951 will be a great peony year and that our annual exhibition in Cleveland, O., on June 18th and 19th, will be one long to remember.

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I most sincerely regret that the last bulletin was so greatly delayed through no fault of my own. So many unexpected and aggravating delays were experienced that we heaved a sigh of relief when the edition was finally deposited in the post office.

We are cutting down in the size of this issue hoping that it will facilitate completion of the work, but the holiday season is with us and I am sure some delay will be experienced, as usual. Bear with us for a short time longer and perhaps a new broom will sweep things clean and produce more prompt bulletins from the secretary's office. It might surprise you to know that insufficient funds in our treasury has had a great deal to do with dilatory publication of our bulletin. This can be eliminated by prompt remission of dues.

In the matter of dues, I wish to state that there is some uncertainty on this point. I have written each Director and find that only one favors the increase of dues to \$5.00 per annum. Most favor \$3.50 for the present. Printing costs, paper, etc. have all advanced. We do not feel that the rank and file of the members would favor the increase of \$5.00 per year as voted on at our annual meeting in Sarcoxie last June, and want to get a fuller view of this matter. Please note our request for expressions and a more general vote on the entire matter. The Directors feel that the members voting for this increase did not represent the opinion of the majority of members in our association. We know those voting for the increase did so with the best interests of the Society at heart, but not until the A. P. S. can offer more of an inducement in the way of larger bulletins, a new manual, etc. This Society has been in existence for nearly fifty years, and during those years much has been accomplished, and it is our earnest desire to have the Society continue to serve for many years to come. With an increase in our membership of several hundred members, our problem of dues will have been solved and much work could be accomplished which is not now possible. Won't you appoint yourself a committee of one to secure at least one member or more for the coming year. That would work wonders and help your officers in their work of service to you all.

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I wish it were possible for me to personally write each one of you who so kindly sent greetings for Christmas and New Years. As this is not possible, I will have to thank you through this medium and ask you to consider this a personal message to you and yours.

May everything good come to you this coming year and may Peace and Good Will remain with us throughout the year. We cannot visualize what the year 1951 will bring to us, but we can be hopeful and wish and pray for the best, and things may work out better than we think at present.

As we go through life we experience many uncertainties and find that life is sensation controlled by prudence; modified by experience; threatened by prospect and validated by illusion. Happiness is content in a comfortable and kindly mediocrity; unhappiness is the negation of life.

We can all feel that we are living in the greatest country on earth; where we are not under the hand of tyranny; where we can express our views without the fear of being sent to Siberia or some other despotic habitation; where nationality is a song, a grandiloquent expression, an heroic motive, a magnificent and defiant gesture; a land where all nationalities are joined together for one common purpose—the FREEDOM of life.

We will enter the New Year with considerable uncertainty and apprehension, which we sincerely hope will be clarified to a great degree with the passing of days. Our country was built by freedom loving subjects, who have been willing to lay down their lives for the freedom they enjoy in the United States. May the Great Leader of men guide us in the proper direction so that Peace and Good Will may be uppermost in our hearts and minds.

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## AFTER CHRISTMAS

The days that follow Christmas  
I like the best of all,  
The rushing then is over  
As friends drop in to call.  
Enjoy fruit cake and cookies  
And cups of tea to cheer.

There's time to read letters,  
 And cards from far and near.  
 The house is gay and festive  
 With tree and candlelight,  
 The crimson decorations  
 Make every room seem bright.  
 The memories of Santa  
 Are pleasant to recall,  
 The days which follow Christmas  
 I like best of all.

—Hilda Butler Farr

*H. J. Christman*

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### ANNO 1950

What kind of a peony season did we have in 1950? Bah! phooey, ?\*!X-.  
 etc.

It was the most peculiar season that is within the memory of us old timers. We had an open winter with frequent winds and rains, freezes and alternate thaws. The winter dragged three weeks longer than normal. Ordinarily elm trees leaf out, in this vicinity about mid-April. This year Ye Old Elms did not expose any verdure until May 5th.

The soil from early December until fringes of green were released, or rather extruded, from the buds, was either a boggy mess or frozen over solidly.

Spring finally slipped into place on the slip-stream of winter and we, at last, were able to go into our gardens sans a boat or boots. What we saw made our hearts sink. The havoc that was wrought by the unseasonable weather, was unbelievable. Three and four year peony plants were completely heaved out of ground and were "floating" on top of the soil. Part of the crowns were split and broken off. The sickly looking eyes revealed about how long these portions of the crown were exposed to the elements. That was only mayhem. What happened to the one and two year plants was just plain murder in the first degree.

Iris, it seemed, were hit harder than the peonies. Only those plants that had excellent drainage, or those that had good, secure root anchorage came through all right.

When the warm sun's rays of belated Spring dried the boggy soil, we were happy indeed, but not for long. His Satanic Majesty apparently could not bear to see heaven previewed on earth, so released some of the scorching blasts from the lower regions. We had weather in perfect cycles that undulated with mathematical precision until the blooming season ended. Each cycle had two or three days of Satan's brand then a day of pluvial weather followed by a day exposed to the stinging blasts from the Arctic.

Our gardens during the flowering season were a sad plight indeed. Few, if any blossoms, reached their peak in the field. Just as the buds began to unfurl, down came a torrent of rain and lethal H<sub>2</sub>O got into the buds and that was the final hope that that potential flower had of extracting an *ah* or *oh* from some passing mortal. And if the buds escaped damage in their first state of opening, they got a good soaking when damage would be most destructive.

As we saw many of the promising, sodden blossoms, drooping in the quagmire, we swore right there and then, that any future peony plant we acquire must have a grand stalk, one that would hold up a water tank if need be.

So all we can say is—that we got a sort of a Godiva peek at the few flowers that reached their perfection in the field, and that is about all.

To give an idea of what the gardeners in the Chicago's metropolitan area went through,—here it is June 1st, and the writers' garden has only been cultivated once. Ordinarily, it should have been cultivated four or five times ere now, but the soil rarely dried out and reached a texture where it could be worked safely.

The rainfall for the first half of June, in this vicinity, exceeds by two and one half inches, the normal rain fall for the entire month. If we get two more inches for the remaining fifteen days, we will have broken a fifty-seven year record for moistness during the month of June.

We visited a few of our grower friends in our vicinity and all of them had tremendous losses. It will take some time for them to recuperate from the havoc caused by nature in one of its most freakish moods. We feel sorry for these people and hope that all will be well with them before long.

The worst is most certainly beyond us and our dreams of heaven being temporarily transplanted in our gardens are blasted. We are going to redeem these same dreams and hope, beg, yea pray for a favorable peony season next year.

Francis P. Tikalsky,  
La Grange Park, Ill.

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## COMMENTS ON PEONY RATINGS

Mr. Marvin C. Karrels in the September, 1950 issue of the American Peony Society Bulletin writes an article entitled "A Method to Appraise and Rate Peony Varieties," and asks for comments from the members of the Society. He says that the use of a numerical or mathematical system "is just as *valid* today as it was 40 or 50 years ago." This is correct. The system is just as valid today as it ever was, just as confusing, and with the same unintelligent results.

I believe that the mathematical system is difficult if not impossible to apply; that it is applied differently by different people; that it is applied differently by the same people at different times; and that any system must be judged by its results; that the results of this system often are not helpful and that sometimes they are so misleading they are almost equivalent to misrepresentation.

For example, (using the old numerical system of rating,) the Society has the following ratings on the peonies listed:

|                        |      |                         |      |
|------------------------|------|-------------------------|------|
| Blanche King .....     | 8.9  | Mrs. J. V. Edlund ..... | 9.51 |
| Hansina Brand .....    | 9.04 | Martha Bulloch .....    | 9.10 |
| La Cygne .....         | 9.42 | Solange .....           | 9.27 |
| Mrs. A. M. Brand ..... | 9.04 |                         |      |

My understanding of the significance of the rating system is that any peony which rates 8.0 or over is very good and any peony which rates near 9.0 or better is a very fine peony to buy or grow. However, Mr. George W. Peyton, one of our Directors and a past president of our Society, a man who has written a great deal about peonies, said in 1950 that these varieties "are great exhibition flowers but some do not stand up well in the garden and some do not open well



every year." These flowers do not grow well for me. Why the high ratings if they are not good garden flowers? Mr. Karrels says on page 9 of his article, "The Show table can contribute to an appraiser's estimate, but it must be remembered that exhibition bloom are generally "the cream of the crop and not a gauge, or indication the variety seen produces show flowers consistently." He is aware of the problem but ignores it, for his change in the system would have little effect on the relative ratings.

I think all that our membership needs to have in order to know which flowers are good show flowers is an enumeration of the prize winners, according to color and type, and a list of the shows in which they were winners.

The difficulty, obviously, is due to the fact that an attempt is being made to cover too much ground in the appraisal. A good show flower is not necessarily a good garden flower. Each serves a different purpose. Let us first set up an appraisal plan for our garden peonies as most people use them for that purpose; in fact, only about 25 out of 1,000 members exhibit at our garden shows. The person who wishes to exhibit cannot do it very well from his garden unless he is willing to put sacks over the flowers so the weather won't beat them down and so they won't fade, and this certainly isn't conducive to a good looking garden. The exhibitor has to grow a large number of a particular flower so that he can select the most nearly perfect of the type because he is met with this kind of competition.

The principal objection to the old system and to Mr. Karrels' numerical method is that he would use addition, crediting a flower with so many points for each given characteristic of the flower. This produces a result that is impossible.

I think a completely wrong approach is made in this appraising. I would not add up points to appraise a plant. Remember, any appraisal is a comparison for a given purpose. The purpose in appraising, as set out above, is to use the plant for garden purposes. It is my contention that IF A FLOWER EMPHATICALLY LACKS ANY ONE IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC AFFECTING THE FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSE FOR WHICH IT IS TO BE USED, IT SHOULD NOT RECEIVE A HIGH SCORE. FOR EXAMPLE, IF IT LACKS HARDINESS, VIGOR, SUBSTANCE, CLARITY OF COLOR, FLORIFEROUSNESS, BRANCH BALANCE, OR FORM OF FLOWER OR PROPORTION, OR HAS BAD FOLIAGE, I THINK IT SHOULD BE RATED VERY, VERY LOW. Obviously, if a plant isn't hardy, it is of no value at all for my garden, and to deduct, say, 5% for lack of hardiness is rather fanciful. If it has a very poor color but is good otherwise, should I merely deduct 25 points, or add nothing, with 75 as the result? If it has a poor color, there is no reason to consider the plant further as a garden flower when we have so many good ones. I also would emphasize that one can have a perfect assembly of physical parts in a woman, a man, or a plant, and not have a beautiful or even an attractive person or plant.

If a hybridizer were to introduce a flower which lacked any important characteristic, such as color or hardiness, he soon would lose his standing with the membership. A hybridizer in introducing a flower is the same as saying, "This is a better flower than any other heretofore introduced in its color class and type, or, if not better, it has a differentness which makes it worth having as compared with prior introductions." I want to know what an introduction is similar to, how it is better or different. Can't the ratings help answer these questions?

What I think we should do is to divide our peonies into blooming periods, types of flowers, and colors, pick out the good ones in each class and watch the

new introductions, and if they are not improvements or distinctly different, they should be marked very low.

If it is too much trouble to use anything but the numerical system, Mr. Karrels' suggested division of the peony plant is not logical as the peony should be divided into four parts: flower, stem, foliage, and plant.

*The flower:* The flower is divided into color, form, substance, texture, fragrance, size, and distinctiveness. The size that would appeal to me as being appropriate is one that is customary for a given type of flower. Early Windflower, for example, has flowers that are very small. Nothing should be taken away from the flower for that reason. However, if the size of the flower is so large that the stem will not hold it up after a rain, it should be put down either as a defect of the flower because it is too big for the strain, or as a weakness of the stem in not being strong enough. The distinctiveness of a flower might be a virtue but it should be limited to the various parts of the flower, but Mr. Karrels, under the caption "Flower," covers not only the flower but the relation of the combined effect of the flower and the plant. Mr. Karrels also treats "Habit" here, whereas, it properly belongs to the plant.

*The stem:* The stem should be strong enough to hold the flower and be in good proportion to the flower and the foliage.

*The foliage:* The foliage should be the right height in relation to the flower, in proportion, attractive in color, and healthy.

*The plant:* As to the plant itself, we are interested in branch balance, proportion of the parts, vigor, health, growing habits, consistency in producing standard flowers and ability to open up its buds completely, floriferousness, and the distinctiveness of the plant as a peony in relation to the other peonies in the garden, having to do with its comparative general appearance.

ELMER A. CLAAR

\* \* \*

### Peony Appraisals

The excitement of the holiday season is buried with the past; the last installment on the income tax is paid; and here I sit in my favorite chair musing as inclement weather still hangs on. What am I musing about? Peonies, of course, and I am going back about five years, when I invested heavily in new varieties. So,—let's see how well we came out.

As you know, I love my peony blossoms in the garden, so my idea of great peonies perhaps don't jibe with others, and, I suppose, the reverse is also true.

In the last five years I acquired at least seven reds in the five buck class or over. Which red was the tops? *Kansas*, naturally. This great red just mows everything else down, which includes *Tempest*, and old *Philippe Rivoire*. I love its very fine garden and plant habits; its unusual coloring and blossom.

How about the deeper pinks? You probably know the answer,—*Marietta Sisson*. It too has fine garden and plant habits. It blooms with the first and hangs on 'til the last have revealed their best. The stems, like *Kansas*, are good. The blossom, when grown well, will give good competition for the elite. The variety is very much unappreciated.

Now to the light pinks, or blush. I have many of the so called very best in this class, but *Moonstone* is as close to a perfect peony as one could find. If it had fragrance I can see nothing that could eclipse it. The coloring is like its

name. the form perfect and plant and garden habits also perfect. Of all the peonies, new or old, that I grow, this one comes nearer my heart.

I am a little confused about the whites, in fact the supposedly great ones haven't bloomed typically.—*Mattie Lafuze, Victory, Blanche Elie, Ethel Mars* and *Dr. J. H. Neeley*, as the plants are too young. So of the newer crop, *Elsa Sass* is tops, but *Le Cygne* is still my favorite of the whites. In my garden it is very consistent and not one of the fussy kind that some say it is.

I have added to my garden over twenty-eight of the best Japs. in the last five years. I have grown to love them so much that I now prefer them to the doubles. Which is the best of the old or the new? Why, *Westerner*, of course. Everything about this variety is fine. Last Fall I noticed the beautiful colored foliage on this variety. It is a sort of a very glossy, purplish-maroon that is just wonderful. I became very excited when I saw this superb show that I tramped around to various gardens where I knew they grew, and I saw the same thing. If this is typical of *Westerner*, it is certainly worth growing for its foliage alone.

Now for the "busts" that I added to my garden during the last five years. Incidentally, all of these "busts" have very fine flowers, but, alas, weak stalks. *James Pillow*, with its fine form and peaches and cream color; *Marilla Beauty*, with individuality, charm and bewitching loveliness, and *Mrs. J. V. Edlund*, wonderful to look at,—all have weak stalks and how I hate weak stalks. Has this last named variety weak stalks? Is there a mixup?

There are many surprises that should come from these, which are two years old now.—*Ruth Elizabeth, Nancy Nicholls, Mother's Day, Burma, Harry F. Little, Mrs. Fern Lough, Mrs. J. H. Neeley, Angelus, Yosemite, Alice Reed Bates, Dr. F. G. Brethour, Cathy Ann* and *Kate Smith*, so there is much to hope for and see, in the few years ahead.

I visited Art Murawska today, it being his birthday. He was caught with about three thousand plants, unplanted last fall because of the very premature heavy freeze and uninterrupted spell of cold weather. When I visited you at Mission Gardens, a week before the freeze, extensive dividing of roots and plantings were under way. Did you also get caught with a large volume of unplanted stock?

Francis P. Tikalsky,  
La Grange Park, Ill.

Editor's Note: The matter of stiffness or rigidity of stem is greatly influenced by composition of the soil. Too heavily fertilized conditions will have a tendency to promote fast or abnormal growth, which, in turn, would result in a weakened resistance. Excessive water conditions would also have a somewhat similar result. There are also several other factors to be considered. Soil lacking any one of the three important factors of chemical fertilizer: nitrogen, phosphate and potash would have a tendency to weaken the stems of a plant, as well as any other part of the plant. An excess of any of these elements, particularly nitrogen, would have a like effect. We have not observed weakness in the stems of *James Pillow, Marilla Beauty* or *Mrs. J. V. Edlund*. The last named variety would be the most likely to show this defect due to the huge blossoms the plant produces.

Yes, the early freeze did catch us with several thousand unplanted peony roots but they are safely stored away in peat moss in an open shed where they will remain frozen until we are able to plant or ship them in early Spring. We will sustain no loss from this source and if we get sufficient snow, and a steady winter, we do not anticipate any loss from heaving like the past one, which is colorfully described in Mr. Tikalsky's article in this issue of the bulletin. —W.F.C.

\* \* \*

## Peony Prices and Appreciation

HARRY L. SMITH, Redkey, Indiana

Is there enough praise extended to the originators of new Peonies?

How many members of the American Peony Society would care to bother with pollenating bloom, gathering and planting seeds, endure the two years for

them to come up, cultivating and transplanting, another three or four years period before they bloom typically and may be awarded with one or two good ones from a hundred or more plants, and another period of waiting five or six years before having any to sell.

How many are willing to try grafting tree peony scions? I did, and I put in two and one half hours on eight grafts before I had them planted and mulched. You could not buy them from me for a buck each. One of the difficulties is to find plants developed enough for scions. I would not try it again only for the satisfaction of knowing how it is done.

So let us pay the price and be thankful we have a few peony Luther Burbanks among us.



### New Members Since Last Report Bulletin 118

Bonawitz, Henry, 14 Silver Court, Staten Island, N.Y.  
 Carroll, Mrs. C. R., 20 Pleasant St., Stoneham 80, Mass.  
 Cobbs, Mrs. Roy E., 321 W. Cherokee St., Nowata, Okla.  
 Collins, Mrs. Robert M., Hamill, S. Dak.  
 Dahl-Wolfe, Louise, 58 W. 57th St., New York City, N.Y.  
 Eberhart, Dr. R. O., S. & L. Bldg., Mankato, Minn.  
 Florida, Gilbert G., 870 Providence Ave., Webster Groves 19, Mo.  
 Flower Grower, 2049 Grand Central Terminal, New York 17, N.Y.  
 Gardner, Arthur, 410 Harding Ave., Cedar City, Utah.  
 Herr, J. F., Orchard Mesa Rt. 12, Grand Jct., Colorado.  
 Honaker, Mrs. A. L., 817 S. Kanawha, Beckley, W. Va.  
 Hruby, E. F., 5824 S. Whipple St., Chicago 29, Ill.  
 Horticultural Society of Davidson Co., Garden Center, c/o Cain Sloan Co.,  
 Nashville, Tenn.  
 Hliff, Charles C., Sr., 4 Linwood Ave., Newton, N.J.  
 Jack, Milton, c/o Ferncliffe Gardens, Matzic, British Columbia, Canada.  
 Jacoby, C. J., 21249 Schoolcraft, c/o Midwest Nursery Sales Co., Detroit, Mich.  
 Johnson, A. F., 10113 Medill Ave., Melrose Park, Ill.  
 Kelley, W. Lee, N. Forest Road, Getzville, N.Y.  
 Laird, Mrs. Geo. S., Sr., 125 Central Ave., Westfield, N.J.  
 Leeson, Mrs. Stanley R., 6906 Casa Loma, Dallas 14, Texas.  
 Lystad, Martin, 226 Conklin Ave., Grand Forks, N. Dak.  
 Lindbloom, Fred, 1312 S. 3rd St., Mt. Vernon, Wash.  
 McArn, D. G., 3617 Purdue St., Pittsburgh 12, Pa.  
 McGill, Daniel J., 1706 E. Carpenter, Springfield, Ill.  
 Mac Killopp, D. J., 11 Avondale Rd., Decatur, Ga.  
 McLaren, James, 103 Norman Lane, Oak Ridge, Tenn.  
 Marshall, Alexander, 4459 So. Burrell St., Milwaukee 7, Wis.  
 Miller, William J., Washington Depot, Conn.  
 Mitchell, Ray H., 2000 N. Central Ave., Topeka, Kas. (Mitchell's Peony Farm)  
 Mitchell, Mrs. L. J., Rt. 3, Hawkeye Nursery, Ft. Dodge, Iowa.  
 Moore, Stanley B., 2114 Lee Road at Cedar, Cleveland His. 13, Ohio.  
 Musgrove, Harry B., Canmore, Alberta, Canada.  
 Nielsen, Mrs. David, 604 N. 4th, Mankato, Minn.  
 Oates, Forest C., Jr., Cedartown, Ga.  
 Palmer, M., Drawer 10, Nanton, Alberta, Canada.  
 Parker Peony Farm, H. R. Parker, Mgr., Versailles, N.Y.

Patterson, R. R., 2023 N. Kansas Ave., Topeka, Kas.  
 Pope, Mrs. Guy, 741 Jeanette St., Abilene, Texas.  
 Renauer, Mrs. Leo, 4228 11th St., Ecorse 29, Mich.  
 Scott, E. T., Regina, Sask., Canada. P.O. Box 485.  
 Shigemasa, Mrs. N., 23 Lake St., Salinas, Calif.  
 Swanson, Arthur, 535 S. Taft St., Paxton, Ill.  
 Tacoma Public Library, Tacoma 3, Wash.  
 Tweedy, William R., 14 S. 76th St., Belleville, Ill.  
 Vaughn, C. W., Madison 15, Wis. R.F.D. 5.  
 Warner, W. J., 519 S. Oakdale Ave., Medford, Ore.  
 Zeestraten, C. Robert, Greenhurst, N.Y.

*Change of address.*

Knappman, Robert D., 918 7th St., Hermosa Beach, Cal., change to Littlerock  
 Cal., P.O. Box 151.

\* \* \*

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