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Garden Notes

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The Des Moines Peony Show

June 21, 22, 23, 1924

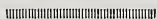
Lee R. Bonnewitz
Van Wert, Ohio



JUDGE J. E. MERSHON

One of the many Des Moines Amateurs whose efforts made
the Peony Show so memorably successful

The Des Moines National Peony Show



An Achievement of a Wide-a-woke Garden Club



The word "cooperation" has always pictured one of my ideals, and it is natural for me to admire the results of any undertaking that owes its success to the concurrent effort of interested parties, all working for a common cause. And what an added sense of appreciation it brings when this effort is made in the interest of my favorite flower, the Peony.

A year ago when the brain of some Peony enthusiast in Des Moines conceived the idea that his city might stage the next National Peony Show, there existed a doubt that a medium sized city could properly handle a National Show, especially following the splendid meeting at St. Paul in 1923, but I am glad that the Directors of the American Peony Society decided to give Des Moines an opportunity to display her ability, and I hope the results of her effort will encourage other cities to follow her example and derive the benefit obtained in entertaining an annual meeting of the American Peony Society. When the invitation was extended to hold the 1924 Show in Des Moines there were very few members of the Peony Society in Iowa; today, after a most successful Peony Show, there are more members of the American Peony Society in Iowa than in any other state. And it is indeed a satisfaction that this cooperative effort has also brought its reward to Des Moines and the west as well, for I have had several enthusiasts tell me that the efforts made to secure the Show, and to stage it successfully, have done more to foster and encourage the garden spirit than anything else which local effort could have attempted. The enthusiasts in Des Moines and vicinity have formed the "Midwest Peony and Iris Society," to foster interest in

these two flowers and to hold exhibitions every year. What better results could one hope for?

The members of the National Peony Show Committee, the members of the Des Moines Garden Club, and the enthusiasts in nearby cities who gave their loyal support, are all to be congratulated upon the splendid success of their efforts. The 1924 meeting will go down in history as a most successful one from every standpoint. The Coliseum, where the Show was held, is centrally located, and this advantage coupled with the splendid publicity given by the press and the friends of the Show, brought out the largest attendance of any annual meeting on record, and I am glad to say that I saw more note books in active use than at any other Show I have ever attended. Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Brainerd, Mr. DuMont, Mr. Sherlock, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Foglesong and Judge Mershom of the Show Committee came more directly in contact with exhibitors and visitors, and our recollection of the Show will always bring to mind our pleasant associations with them. The attractive premium list with its added classes, and the splendid financial report of the Show will mark the achievements of Mr. Wilson and Mrs. Orwig and their committees. The friendly entertainment extended by Miss Chamberlain and her committee at her beautiful home is also one of the outstanding features of this memory picture, and in order that every one interested may have a souvenir of that delightful evening, I am including in this booklet a copy of the group picture taken there. I know that all of the visiting members will be sorry to hear that a disastrous windstorm, the week after the Show, destroyed some of the native trees we so much admired in the Chamberlain grounds.

I am inclined to believe it was the active interest of amateurs which made the 1924 Show so successful, and this same interest was very much in evidence at the business meeting held the Saturday evening of the Show. The attendance here, too, was much greater than at any previous meeting, and amateurs took an active part in the proceedings. It was in no sense a cut and dried affair, as such meetings are sometimes prone to be, but matters of interest to amateurs were brought up and given the attention they deserved. It was the amateurs, remembering the four excellent bulletins published by Mr. Christman during the year he had charge of the Secretary's office, who insisted that he be elected Secretary of the Society with full charge

of the office, and with instructions that he issue at least four bulletins a year. Other officers elected were: W. H. Thurlow, president; A. M. Brand, vice-president; Henry S. Cooper, treasurer; Harry F. Little and W. G. DuMont, directors.

During the discussion over a motion to give two hundred dollars to the Lemoine Memorial fund at Nancy, France (which I am glad to say was adopted) it developed that Mr. Lemoine had been most anxious that his latest, most excellent Peony should bear the name *Amitie Americain* (Love of America) as permanently expressing the joy which he experienced when the Americans came to the help of the French army, in which all his sons were fighting, and due to a prize this Peony had been awarded, it had been given another name. It was the amateurs who wished to have the Peony Society immediately use its influence to have Mr. Lemoine's choice given preference in registering the variety for commerce, and thus carry out the ideal he had in mind, but realizing that Mrs. Harding had given it an American name superseding its original beautiful French name, they know that she alone is the person who can carry out Mr. Lemoine's wish. I very much admire the original French name, and as I purchased my stock before the name was changed to *Alice Harding*, I will feel no hesitancy in exhibiting it next year as *Amitie Americain*. It has bloomed for me the past two seasons, and I find it to have pure white blooms with Bayadere form, to have stems of *Bertrade* excellence, and petals of *Le Cygne* quality.

I do not believe any definite decision was reached as to the place of the next meeting. An invitation was received from Washington, D. C., but due to its extremely early blooming season, it seemed to be the opinion of those present that the 1925 Show should be held in some centrally located city if an invitation was received from it. Indianapolis, Indiana, and Springfield, Massachusetts, were suggested, and I do hope that some of our smaller cities will profit by Des Moines' example and invite the Society for the next meeting.

But returning to the Show again. For nearly ten years I have been anxious to have an opportunity to win the Gold Medal of the Society, which is each year awarded to the grower making the best display of one bloom each of one hundred different varieties. When I left home with between two and three thousand blooms from my garden, I had hopes that from this great quantity of bloom I might be

able to select one hundred which would win the prize for me, but when my friend, Mr. Harry F. Little, of Goodland, Indiana, began to unpack his blooms, and when I saw his wonderful Enchantresse, Milton Hill, Jubilee, Martha Bulloch, and Solange, I knew immediately that the Des Moines Show would go on record as a "Harry F. Little" and not a "Bonnewitz" Show. And so it proved, for he won, and deserved to win, more of the good prizes than all of the rest of the exhibitors combined. Thirteen firsts out of fourteen entries is a record to be proud of. His flowers were of good size, in splendid condition, and were excellently staged. He told me that he began cutting his blooms June first and held them in cold storage, which proves that successful shows can be held very late in the season.

On account of the date and the location of the Show, the greatest Peony growers of the country—Farr, Thurlow, and Brand, could not possibly make exhibits which would be, in any sense representative of their importance in the Peony world, and yet all of them had the true sportsman spirit, for each of them brought blooms from his garden. Mr. Cooper, Mr. Hubbard, Mr. Buechly, and Mr. Battey all came from a distance, and showed their interest in the success of the Show by bringing the best from their gardens. Mr. Farr has been in the game longer than the rest of us, and so he was the lion of the Show, as all exhibitors and visitors were anxious to have the pleasure and honor of meeting him.

My greatest enjoyment at any Show is visiting with friends and discussing with them the merits of the Peonies in the exhibits, but I find that this makes great inroads on the time required to take the necessary notes to write a good report of the Show, so I have endeavored to strike a happy medium for my own pleasure and your benefit. I would like to be able to make a full report of all exhibits, but I find that I never have the time necessary for taking enough notes to do that, and, as I realize that I cannot carry to you all the real enthusiasm, beauty, and fellowship of a National Show through a printed report, I hope that each one of my readers will attend the National Show when it is held in his vicinity. It is the finest kind of a vacation for Peony lovers, and I trust each year will see more and more members in attendance. While the following notes are not complete, they will cover the details in the principal exhibits.



The Chamberlain Garden Party Group, Des Moines Peony Show, 1924. Compliments of Lee R. Bonnewitz, Van Wert, Ohio.

CLASS ONE—Collection of not more than one hundred named varieties, double, one bloom of each.

Mr. Little won the Gold Medal and first prize in this class, I was awarded second, and the Brand Peony Farms third. In Mr. Little's exhibit the following varieties were outstanding: Jubilee, Sarah K. Thurlow, Pink Baroness Schroeder, M. Martin Cahuzac, Judge Berry, Raoul Desert, La Fee, Kelway's Queen, Mignon, Enchantresse, Le Cygne, and Brand Magnificent.

In my own exhibit I believe Jubilee, Solange, Lady Alexandra Duff, La France, William F. Turner, Martha Bulloch, Kelway's Glorious, Beauty's Mask, and Frances Shaylor were the outstanding varieties. The Solange in this class held up most excellently, and was in much better form the last day of the Show than at any other time.

CLASS TWO—Collection of ten named varieties, double three blooms each.

The competition in this class was keen and brought out some excellent exhibits. Mr. Little won first and Brand Peony Farms second. In my opinion Mr. Little's blooms of Milton Hill, La France, M. Martin Cahuzac, and Lillian Gumm were exceptionally good. In the Brand exhibit Therese, Lady Alexandra Duff, and Martha Bulloch were outstanding.

CLASS THREE—Twenty blooms, double, named, white or cream, one variety.

This class brought out good displays of Le Cygne, Grandiflora nivea plena, Madame de Verneville, and Festiva Maxima. The older varieties showed up excellently, but I was awarded first prize on the display of Le Cygne, which showed good form throughout the entire Show. Brand Peony Farm won second in this class, but I am not sure of the variety on which the award was made, although I believe it was Festive Maxima.

CLASS FOUR—Twenty blooms, double, named, light pink or pink and cream, one variety.

I was glad to see two western enthusiasts come to the front in this class. Madame Calot, exhibited by Emma V. Schooley of Indianola, Iowa, won first, and Florence McBeth, a new seedling exhibited by the Sass Brothers of Omaha, Nebraska, won second. The new seedling is extremely large, a delicate pink in color (somewhat lighter than Therese), and has exceptionally wide petals, presenting a bloom of great depth and good substance. I believe this newcomer has a future in the Peony world. The Riverview Gardens of St. Paul had a fine display of Lady Alexandra Duff in this class, but it had not opened well the first day of the Show, although it was in fine form Sunday and Monday. Madame Jules Dessert showed up excellently here, and an entry of Mignon was the best I have ever seen. It showed so much pink in its coloring that it was hard to convince Mr. Shimer it was really Mignon, for he was looking for the usual "peaches and cream" effect.



MAD JULES DESSERT

CLASS FIVE—Twenty blooms, double, named, dark pink, one variety.

M. Jules Elie keeps up its high standard by winning both first and second in this class. Mrs. W. G. DuMont was awarded first, and P. L. Battey, of Glencoe, Illinois, second. Walter Faxon showed its usual good coloring, and the display of Judge Berry in this class was particularly pleasing.

CLASS SIX—Twenty blooms, double, named, red or crimson, one variety.

The Brand Peony Farms was awarded first in this class for a fine display of Longfellow, and Mrs. W. G. DuMont was awarded second with Felix Crousse. Other varieties showing well were Brand's Magnificent, Ben Franklin, Philippe Rivoire, and Adolph Rosseau. The Riverview Gardens of St. Paul showed exceptionally fine Adolph Rosseau on tall stems with a fine display of foliage, but I understand the entry was disqualified because the exhibit contained twenty-one blooms.

CLASS SEVEN—Six specimen blooms, double, named, one variety.

Mr. Little won first in this class with a wonderful display of Enchantresse. Riverview Gardens won second with M. Martin Cahuzac. Good displays of Jubilee, Mary Brand, Therese, M. Jules Elie, Martha Bulloch, and Cherry Hill were shown in this competition.

CLASS EIGHT—One specimen bloom, double, named any variety, representing the best flower at the Show.

This class brought out a great number of blooms for the high honor of "the best bloom in the Show." Mr. Little won first with a good bloom of Milton Hill, and deservedly so, for it was the finest bloom of Milton Hill I have ever seen, measuring at least ten inches across. It showed fine color and form, and easily held up the high standard of Mr. Little's exhibits throughout the Show. Nancy Dolman, a new seedling of Judge Vories', of St. Joseph, Missouri, won second. This is a deeper pink than Phyllis Kelway, much larger and more compact in form. It will find a ready place in the landscape field due to its extreme stiff stems. Solange, Martha Bulloch, Jubilee, Therese, Candeur, and Nina Secor also were represented with fine blooms. The latter variety, exhibited by Miss Nina Secor, of Forest City, Iowa, showed up exceptionally well, holding up in fine form even to the last day of the Show. This large white bloom has somewhat the flat formation of Jubilee, with many of the fine characteristics of Enchantresse and Le Cygne. It is five or six days earlier than Enchantresse, and I believe it will fill the midseason gap for a good white.

CLASS NINE—Collection of Peonies best representing the various types of flower, single, Japanese, anemone, rose, semi-rose, crown and bomb, one bloom of each.

Mr. E. C. Auten, of Princeville, Illinois, made the only exhibit I have ever seen entered in this class at any Show, and it is needless to point out its educational value. A large bloom of Fuyajo was particularly noticeable.

CLASS TEN—Collection of Japanese varieties, one bloom of each.

W. W. Cook of Clinton, Iowa, was awarded first in this class, and E. C. Auten second. Some Ganoko, Fuyajo, Mikado, Amanosode, Tokio, Noonday, and Tamatbako were outstanding.

CLASS ELEVEN—Collection of singles, one bloom of each.

I was awarded first in this class with the following singles showing up well: Pride of Langport, Nellie, Marguerite Dessert, and L'Étincelante.

CLASS TWELVE—Collection of tree Peonies, single or double.

Mr. Farr exhibited a tree Peony bloom, Maxime Cornu, the first I have seen of this variety at any Show, and naturally the bloom was given a great deal of attention and comment.

CLASS THIRTEEN—No entries.

CLASS FOURTEEN—Collection of new varieties introduced since 1905, (not including varieties of date 1905).

Mr. Little made a fine display in this class, and would have been awarded first, but as his display included Jeanne Gaudichau (1902) and Rosa Bonheur (1905), the entry was disqualified, but in recognition of the splendid specimens shown in his entry, no first was awarded. I was awarded second. The outstanding varieties in Mr. Little's exhibit were William F. Turner, Brand's Magnificent, Mary P. King, Rosa Bonheur, Lora Dexheimer, Estafette, Strassburg, Judge Berry, Henry Avery, Raoul Dessert, Martha Bulloch, Mary Brand, E. B. Browning, Mignon, Clemenceau, Frances Shaylor, Mary W. Shaylor, Rose Shaylor. In my exhibit the following varieties showed up well: William F. Turner, E. C. Shaw, Phyllis Kelway, Lamartine (Lemoine), Lillian Gumm, Sarah Bernhardt, Thomas C. Thurlow, and Mrs. Shaylor Force.

CLASS FIFTEEN—Ten separate prizes of \$3.00 each for the best individual blooms of certain varieties.

Mr. Little took the majority of prizes in this class. Blooms of La France, Kelway's Queen (true), and Mont Blanc were especially noticeable.

CLASS SIXTEEN—Seedlings.

I have discussed in other classes the seedlings Florence McBeth and Nancy Dolman. Miss Secor, of Forest City, Iowa, had several seedlings entered in this class, and among the number I noted two that may show merit, one called Pink Lady, and another called Jap Fairy. The last named variety appeared to have some of the good qualities we admire in Amanosode, but as I did not see it until the third day of the Show, I would not want to make a positive decision, but I will be glad to give the variety a trial in my own garden. Mr. William Smiley, of Grinnell, Iowa,

AMBASSADEUR



See Special Quantity Quotations
Listed on Other Side.

LEE R. BONNEWITZ
VAN WERT, OHIO

IRISES

Quantity Quotations

<i>Variety</i>	<i>Price per Dozen</i>
Ambassadeur	\$18.00
Afterglow	9.00
Alcazar	4.00
Anna Farr	8.00
Archeveque	4.00
Armenian	8.00
Azure	8.00
Cluny	12.00
Corrida	8.00
Diadem	15.00
Edouard Michel	8.00
Gold Crest	8.00
Lent A. Williamson	12.00
Lord of June	9.00
Madame Chobaut	16.00
Madame Blanche Pion	4.00
Mlle. Schwartz	30.00
Mother of Pearl	90.00
Neptune	16.00
Opera	15.00
Parc de Neuilly	3.00
Pocahontas	4.00
Prospero	15.00
Queen Caterina	21.00
Queen Flavia	4.00
Savignian	6.00
Souv. de Mme. Gaudichau	24.00
Sunset-Ochracea Coerulea	27.00
Tregastel	3.00
White Queen-Queen Mary	21.00
Zua	8.00

(One half dozen of any variety will be sold at dozen rate.)

LEE R. BONNEWITZ
VAN WERT, OHIO

was given an award of merit on an entry in this class and I am sorry that my notes are not complete enough to give you a description. The Brand Peony Farms as usual, displayed several seedlings, but this year's exhibit did not compare at all favorably with their wonderful showing at St. Paul last year. The date of the Show was much too early for Mr. Brand, and I have no doubt that this season brought him some pleasant surprises in his seedling garden. Judge Vories with a seedling called Frankie Beach, won the J. A. Taylor one hundred dollar prize offered for a distinctive new seedling. My notes state that this variety is a white M. Jules Elie, although I am told it has a very faint pink coloring at the center. The bloom is bomb shape and very compact, and I know that the variety will find a ready place in our gardens.

The Amateur Classes, both Advanced and Novice, brought out some wonderful displays.

The first prize and Silver Medal offered for the best collection of not more than fifty varieties, double, was won by Mr. W. W. Cook, with Miss Chamberlain scoring second, and Edward Auten third. The outstanding varieties in this class were Solange, Milton Hill, Martha Bulloch, Phoebe Carey, Eucharis, Livingstone, Claire DuBois, Phyllis Kelway, Therese, Eugene Verdier and Exquisite.

Mr. Cook also won first prize in the class for a collection of ten named varieties, double, three blooms each, with Mr. Auten scoring second. Walter Faxon, Le Cygne, Martha Bulloch, Milton Hill, Philippe Rivoire, Avalanche, Madame Emile Lemoine, and Eugenie Verdier were outstanding here.

William Roe of Des Moines, won first in a class for the best display of six varieties, double, three blooms each, and my notes tell me that his showing of Solange, Eugene Verdier, and Sarah Bernhardt in this class was good.

Mr. Little had a wonderful display in the class for the largest and best collection of named varieties, not more than three in a vase. This was an excellent exhibit and proved to be a center of attraction during the entire Show. Varieties of special merit were Frances Shaylor, Therese, Madame Galhau, Judge Berry, Lady Alexandra Duff, Lamartine (Lemoine), La Fontaine, Mary Brand, Asa Gray, Cashmere, Prince of Darkness, and Le Cygne. Cashmere, with its peculiar markings of red on the white petals, was interesting as a novelty.

The various classes for handle baskets and vases brought out some well arranged and beautiful displays. I noticed that Mrs. G. B. Hippee and Margaret O'Donnell, both of Des Moines, were very successful in obtaining prizes in these classes. I recall one entry in these classes which brought

out the real beauty of Marie Jacquin, the "Water Lily" Peony. A small wooden bowl was painted black, and within, the three blooms of Marie Jacquin floating in the water among fine ferns and pinks presented a beautiful picture. I believe the display was made by Mrs. O. E. Brownell's daughter and, due to its clever originality, was one of which she can well be proud.

The Rose and Perrenial classes brought out some fine exhibits which were well staged, but I must confess that I did not give them the attention I did the Peonies.

This completes my notes on a most wonderful Show, and I believe that you will realize that a city blessed with an active Garden Club, need not feel that it is impossible to entertain the American Peony Society's annual show. I believe it was Napoleon who said, " 'Impossible' is not good French." and I believe the same statement applies to the English version as well.

*"There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you, one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you;
But just buckle in with a bit of a grin
Then take off your coat and go to it;
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing
That 'cannot be done,' and you'll do it."*