

June 2015



MAPS Visits Eleanor's Peony Garden

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On a crisp evening in May Eleanor hosted a tour for the membership. It had rained earlier in the afternoon so there was droplets of rain on the petals which made the peony blossoms glisten.

The group had the opportunity to get acquainted and there was wine, cheese and hummus to fortify. The tour started along her driveway where she has several hundred plants.

As a frequent visitor, an observation could be made that there is a transformation occurring in this section as there is an increasing emphasis on intersectional. The good news for the group is that Eleanor can share her expertise on growing these plants and understands the differences in growth habits as she has the plants sitting next to each other for comparisons.

er for comparisons.

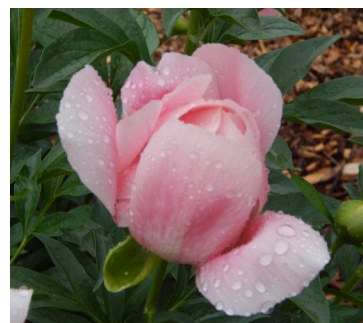
As we walked towards Route 352 there was an array of peonies in bloom. Many of them were identified by posts with plant names clearly printed and there were other plants that were not identified but would be considered classic, fragrant double flowering varieties. Eleanor's comment is that some of her best sellers are the plants not identified because many of her clients come to purchase peonies and want fragrance. (you could see many heads nodding in agreement)

The newest beds can be found in a field to the right of the house. This field was planted with over 200 peonies several years ago for the purpose of providing the public with fresh cut peony blooms. Varieties were selected that have strong

stems and good color.

The group appreciated the opportunity to spend an evening exploring and figuring out what will be the next variety to add to their own personal garden.

Thanks Eleanor!



Raindrops resting on a peony flower within Eleanor's collection of peonies.

Below: Members and guests on the tour with Eleanor.

Special points of interest:

- Upcoming issues will cover other MAPS events held this spring as well as topics related to plants that work well in the garden with peonies.
- Accepting photos taken at events to be used in future editions. Send to brmilleriii@yahoo.com



Selecting a site for planting peonies in the fall



Row of peonies for the cut floral trade.

We get lots of great ideas as we tour gardens and our list of plants we want to add to our collection grows.

We need to consider the location for the plants. A majority of peonies like at least 6 hours of sunlight each day. Tree peonies can get away with less sunlight or prefer a respite (dapple shade) in the middle of the day so that the blossoms last longer.

Look at the potential site and consider other factors such as

air flow around the plants. Good air circulation will help maintain a healthy plant.

Is the site near a building or wall? Remember buildings and walls reflect heat and absorb heat. The positive factor is that you can have peony blooms earlier because of the warmer temperatures. The negative factor is that if the plant pushes too quickly and there is a heavy frost it could damage the bud.

Consider the competition from

other plant roots and is there enough space for the plant in three years when it reaches maturity?

Don't forget to consider height factors/ Does the peony fit best in front, middle or in the back of the garden bed?

Should you be considering preparing the soil for the plant for an autumn arrival?

Lots to think about but your plants will thank you with years of blossoms.



Members and guests on tour at Eleanor's home.



Above: Many Happy Returns, herbaceous peony

Longwood Gardens Education Display Garden

Longwood Gardens always does an excellent job of labeling their plants so if you see something you like you can write it down or more commonly done now by taking a picture with your smart phone of the flower and then a photo of the name-tag. Here are two peonies that were blooming the last week of

May in their education display garden.

Right photo:
Buckeye Belle,
Herbaceous peony

