



## Hybridizer/Originator Profile

A.P. Saunders

New York, USA

A.P. Saunders was a Canadian-born American and was known as “The Father of the Modern Peony Hybrid”. As a chemistry professor at Hamilton College he was suited to experimentation and record keeping involved in hybridizing. He made thousands of well documented crosses between any *Paeonia* species he was able to acquire and produced more than 12,000 herbaceous seedlings from these crosses. Saunders also did ground breaking work with the woody peonies, introducing numerous F1 crosses and at least three F2 generation lutea hybrids. The herbaceous hybrids and lutea hybrids served as the basis for most of our modern-day advanced generation hybrids. Hybridizers who recognized and used his plants extensively in their own programs included: Nassos Daphnis, William Seidl, David Reath, Nate Bremer and Don Hollingsworth (among others).

Today, both the woody and herbaceous hybrids created by A.P. Saunders remain popular and many have proven to be outstanding garden plants for collectors, hybridizers and enthusiasts. Projects to preserve both his records and plants have recently been undertaken by a collaboration of APS members, institutions and private parties. The breadth and detail of his work is peerless to date and his legacy is entrenched in peony history.

For further cultivar information visit the American Peony Society’s Peony Registry and search for Saunders. URL: <https://americanpeonysociety.org/cultivars/peony-registry/>