



Hybridizer/Originator Profile

William Seidl

Wisconsin, USA

William Seidl was an American hybridizer of advanced generation herbaceous and woody peony hybrids and is often referred to as “Mr. Advanced Generation”. His interests spanned many plant genera, but peonies were certainly his focus. Much of his hybridizing work was done in anonymity on his 1-acre lot in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. During the 1970’s to early 2000’s there was little interest in peonies (especially woody peonies) by American gardeners and much of his hybridizing work was exported in the form of seed to New Zealand and Australia.

Like many hybridizers before him, he became friends with numerous other peony hybridizers and acquired as many hybrid plants with fertility he could. Hybridizers Bill had relationships with included: Chris Lanning, Roy Klehm, David Reath, Nassos Daphnis, Roy Perhson and later Nate Bremer (among many others).

‘Pastelegance’, an advanced generation herbaceous hybrid, is recognized as the pinnacle of his work and has received many accolades as a show flower and garden plant. Numerous other herbaceous hybrids were produced by Bill which incorporated diverse ancestries and are responsible for many of our newest advanced generation herbaceous hybrids.

His work with advanced generation lutea hybrids may be his finest work, with literally hundreds of registrations grown from his crosses. His ability to think “outside the box” proved valuable in making crosses others did not consider. His use of Saunders F1 lutea hybrids and Daphnis hybrids which were presumed to be sterile led to many fine advanced generation plants. Many advanced generation registrations arose from the seed he sent overseas to Derek Irvine, Jane and Trevor Sutherland, Bernard Chow and the McFarlanes. The seed was purchased from Bill and the above-mentioned growers then selected the best plants from the seedlings for registration. Many of these outstanding plants are just beginning to see distribution in Europe and North America.

Bill’s own registrations are of high quality as well and are valued by hybridizers, growers and enthusiasts. Since his hybridizing and selection were made in the rather cold climate of his Wisconsin garden, most are well adapted to more northern gardens than earlier hybrids.

His ambassadorship in the peony world is well recognized and many believe him to be the most influential hybridizer of the current era of peony hybridizing. Additional information can be found in the APS Member Portal archives concerning his life, interests, awards and relationships.

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

