



A
Tyranny
of
Peonies

The Life of
A.P. Saunders

Lois Girton

Nephew Patrick Bergstrom hosts my website and niece Jessica Danielle drew the peony used in my logo.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my traveling companions on many of my journeys to discover Saunders peonies – my husband Jack, friends Kris Jurik and Nicki Wiederstein, and son Jeremy and his husband Reedy Swanson. Jack, Jeremy, and Reedy accompanied me on a fantastic trip to Bénédicte de Foucaud's Conservatoire de la Pivoine at the Château de Sourches where several of the photos were taken.



The Saunders peony plantings in the Conservatoire de la Pivoine at the Château de Sourches, France



Author in the Conservatoire de la Pivoine at the Château de Sourches (*Jeremy Girton*)

About the Author

Lois Girton is originally from Alberta, and earned degrees in Genetics at the University of Alberta before moving to the United States with her American husband Jack. She completed her PhD at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the Department of Plant Pathology where she learned more about diseases of corn and beans than about those affecting peonies.

After moving to Iowa, she served on the board of the Iowa Arboretum and Gardens, as president of her local garden club, and charter president of a regional hosta society. The Girton garden has been toured by hosta, iris, conifer, and peony societies.

Her previous publications include the *Student Solutions Manual for The Science of Genetics* (Harcourt College Publishers, 1999). She and her husband retired from Iowa State University in 2020.

Lois has been a director of the American Peony Society for the past five years and regularly contributes articles and editorial work to the *APS Bulletin*. She currently serves as APS president (2024–2026).