

***The***

**JULY 1967**

# **Boxwood Bulletin**

**A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL**



*From the cover of OM EEN STRUIK DIE PALM WERD*

*By Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers.*

*(Article begins on Page 2)*

Edited Under The Direction Of  
**THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY**

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# The Boxwood Bulletin

July 1967

Vol. 7, No. 1

EDITOR — MRS. EDGAR M. WHITING

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## ADDENDA TO THE REGISTRATION LISTS OF CULTIVAR NAMES IN BUXUS L.

By DR. BURDETTE L. WAGENKNECHT  
Norwich University

The following cultivar names are to be added to the cultivar names cited in the Registration Lists published in this journal (*The Boxwood Bulletin* 4(3): 35-41. 1965).

*Buxus microphylla* Sieb. & Zucc. var. *microphylla*

'Grace Hendrick Phillips' (Registered by Dr. Henry T. Skinner, National Arboretum, Washington, D. C. March 14, 1967). "A fine dwarf growing *Buxus microphylla* which was started as a mutation from *Buxus microphylla* var. *compacta* in 1953. Named in honor of Mrs. Phillips, late wife of Admiral Neill Phillips, President of the Boxwood Society." Originated by Henry Hohman, Kingsville Nurseries, Kingsville, Maryland.

*Buxus microphylla* var. *koreana* Nakai ex Wilson.

'Cushion' (Registered by Sheridan Nurseries, Oakville, Ontario, November 2, 1966) "A dwarf, globular form, round leaved."

'Winter Beauty' (Registered by Sheridan Nurseries, Oakville, Ontario, November 2, 1966) "Round bush, full and compact with better winter colour than most korean box."

'Tall Boy' (Registered by Sheridan Nurseries, Oakville, Ontario, November 2, 1966) "A selection from 100 korean box received from Holland in 1946. Upright, fast growing, somewhat loose, very hardy."

The following three cultivars are cited by their originator as putative hybrids between *B. sempervirens* L. 'Suffruticosa' and *B. microphylla* var. *koreana*.

'Green Gem' (Registered by Sheridan Nurseries, Oakville, Ontario, November 2, 1966) "A slow growing, very dense and compact small leaved type- Excellent for permanent edgings or parterres."

'Green Velvet' (Registered by Sheridan Nurseries, Oakville, Ontario, November, 1966) "A full body compact bush. Excellent hedge plant."

'Green Mountain' (Registered by Sheridan Nurseries, Oakville, Ontario, November 2, 1966) "Upright growing type. Useful for clipped pyramids." *Buxus sempervirens* L.

'Henrich Bruns' (F. G. Meyer, New Cultivars of Woody Ornamentals from Europe. F. G. Meyer, *Baleya* 9(4): 129. 1961) "From nursery of Heinrich Bruns, Westerstede, Oldenberg, West Germany. Introduced by USDA as P. I. 260383. "Branches strict, stiff, the new twigs tannish to light rusty-brown. Leaves thick-coriaceous, 1.5-2.5 cm. long, cuneate at the base, rounded to emarginate at the tip. Plants require little or no pruning when grown as a hedge."

'Semperaurea' (Registered by Hugo Reinold, Dortmund, West Germany March 12, 1965). Originated in Nursery of Hugo Reinold in 1932. "This form has the qualities of *B. sempervirens* 'Argenteo-varietata'. The leaf is completely bright yellow. It produces no green leaves at all."

## THE MAIL BOX

NEW DWARF BUXUS  
NAMED FOR MRS. PHILLIPS

In the President's Report at the Annual Meeting (see minutes) Admiral Phillips refers to a new *buxus* mutation recently received from Mr. Henry Hohman. The following correspondence, relating to this will be of interest to our members.

Rear Admiral Neill Phillips, January 10th, 1967  
Heronwood, Upperville, Virginia  
Dear Admiral Phillips:

In my collection of *buxus* I have a mutation that I removed from *Buxus microphylla*, var. *compacta*, about 1952. Ten plants were rooted and grown through these years so that it could be learned, growth and form, to know definitely its worth for naming and more extensive propagation.

I have had this "dwarf *Buxus*" in mind for some time and have been wanting to write to you. The ten plants are in pots and have been carried along out of doors with no protection, and the past Monday I had my boys bring these plants into the greenhouse so they would be right at hand for repropagation;

To come directly to the point in mind, I want to send one of these plants to you, and then after you have rated its worth to be named,

*Buxus microphylla*, 'Grace Hendrick Phillips'

with your permission, and if you feel that it is worthy of the name, I will send a plant to Arnold Arboretum for additional hardiness tests, and registration — naming the plant; *Buxus microphylla*, 'Grace Hendrick Phillips'.

Sincerely,

Henry J. Hohman

Mr. Henry J. Hohman Jan. 16, 1967  
Kingsville Nurseries,  
Kingsville, Maryland 21087

Dear Mr. Hohman,

Your kind letter of January 10 has been received. I and all our family are deeply touched by your offer to name the new boxwood mutation:

*Buxus microphylla* 'Grace Hendrick Phillips'

We accept your offer with gratitude.

Can you arrange for National Arboretum to send me a copy of their registration and hardiness report, when available?

When this has been done I wish to put a notice in the Boxwood Bulletin. I intend to add this plant to the *buxus*-collection you already have given me in my wife's memory. As I believe I have told you, I plan to set out the Hohman Collection of *buxus* in a special Memory Garden this spring.

Yours sincerely and gratefully,  
Neill Phillips

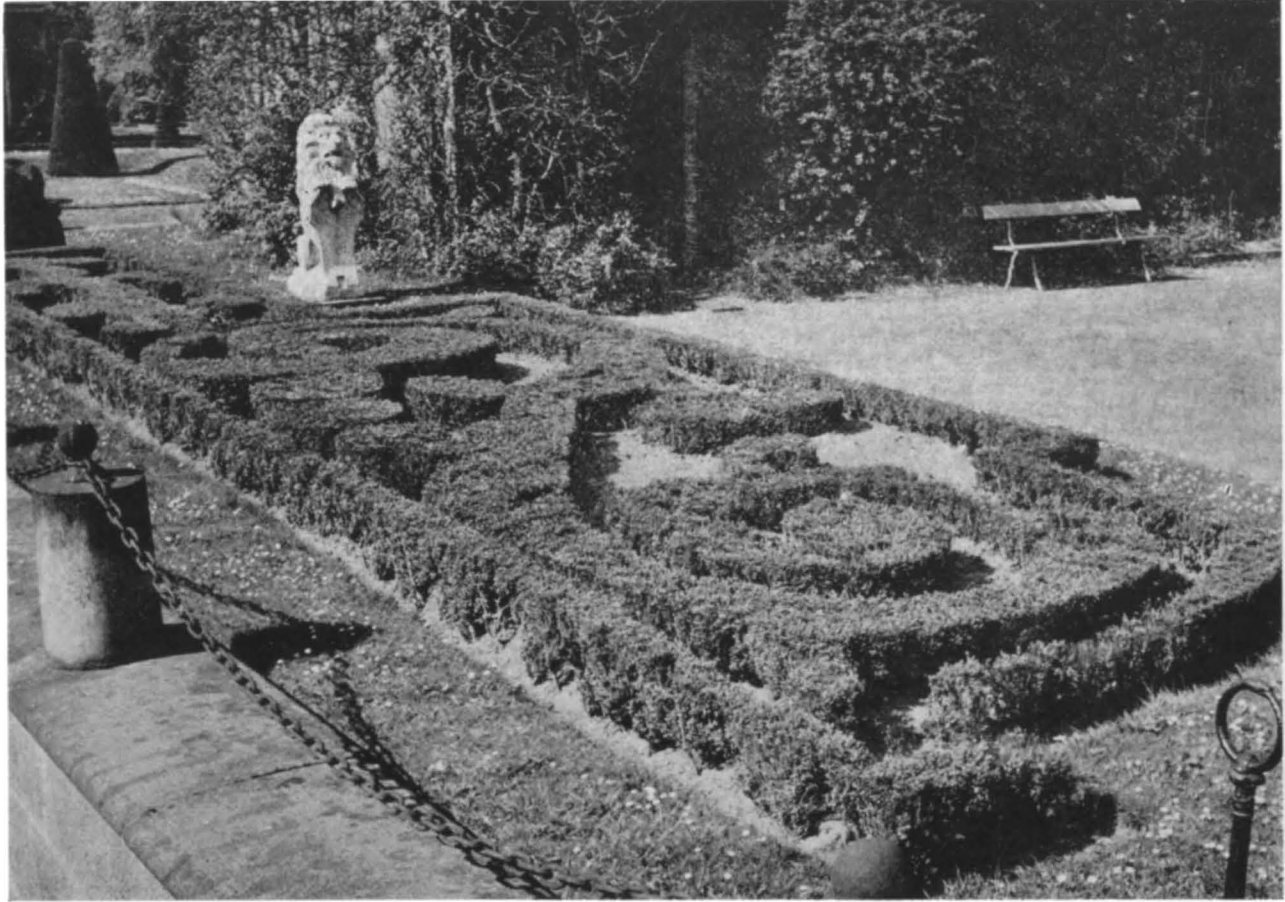


Fig. 1. Arabesques of Box at Twickel. Photograph by Dr. Bernet Kempers.

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## A Summary In English Of OM EEN STRUIK DIE PALM WERD (A Humble Bush That Became A Symbol)

By. Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers

**“Here we go round the boxtree-bush . . . . .”**

*Buxus sempervirens*; bush, tree, wood and “palms”. The starting-point for this book is the box-tree, *Buxus sempervirens* L., well-known to most of us as an evergreen (*sempervirens*) shrub or dwarf tree, no more than 15 or 20 centimetres high, used as a border for the flower-beds in our gardens. In the Mediterranean and the Near East, and incidentally in Western Europe, too — “Box Hill” in Surrey was famous for it in the 17th and 18th century — it reaches the height and size of a full-grown tree, up to 7 metres or more. The trunk and branches of these 80-100 years old box-trees, provide us with an excellent kind of wood, box-wood or “palmhout” as it

is called in the Netherlands after the “bukspalm” or “palmboompje”, the Dutch word for *Buxus sempervirens*.

The box-tree has absolutely no connection with the palm-trees of the *Palmae* family, as far as the botanist is concerned. Its twigs, however, have long been used — and are still being taken into the church for the consecration of the palms and incidentally for the procession on Palm Sunday in the Netherlands, in Belgium and in some other countries in the same way as the willows are used in some parts of England (hence: Willow Day). Besides treating the box as a bush and a tree, as a supplier of wood, this book is mainly concerned with the

various uses of its twigs, both as consecrated “palms” and in their secular manifestations. The box “palms” and twigs — as well as the leaves or branches of the actual palmtrees from which they have taken part of their symbolic or religious functions — come into the large group of, what may be called, “green boughs” and their derivatives (bunches, bundles, sticks, staffs, “tutties” etc.). Therefore, a special chapter will be assigned to a discussion of this type of “vegetable symbols”.

### I. The box-tree

The box-tree in its dwarf forms is used for framing flowerbeds and garden paths. The larger specimens found in the Mediterranean were used by the Romans for their “topiarian works” by cutting them into every conceivable form. This curious and sometimes fantastic type of landscape gardening was

likewise used in France, in the Netherlands (fig. 1), in the England of William and Mary and in North America. From the castle-grounds and country-estates of the nobility the box-tree fowls, peacocks, chairs and other figures moved into the frontgardens of peasantry and middle classes (fig. 2). Boxtree-bushes and other evergreens are often found in cemeteries and on graves. They keep their green colour and freshness the whole year round and, therefore, convey a message of eternal life.

The tiny flowers supply an ample amount of nectar, although of a bad quality and spoiling the taste of honey. The whole plant is, for that matter, slightly poisonous (mainly because of the alcaloid buxine in its leaves and bark). Cattle, horses and pigs eating it may be sick or may even die from it. The smell of the boxtrees was sometimes thought to be “very hurtful for the brayne”. Anyhow, Queen Anne did



Fig. 2. “Topiarian work”, Saasveld. Photograph from *Stichting Historisch Boerderji-Onderzoek*.

not like to see them in her gardens. Popular medicine recommends their leaves as a remedy against a sore throat. Famous herbalists such as Dodonaeus and Hieronymus Bock (fig. 3) do not set great store by the medicinal powers of the plant, but praise the qualities of its wood for "the making of nice carvings".

Sometimes in Germany the box was used as a Christmas tree or for decorating the rooms at Christmas time. The very first Christmas tree with lights on it on record — mentioned by the Duchess Liselotte of Orleans — dating from about 1660 (in Heidelberg?), was indeed a box-tree.

Boxwood ("palmhout") preferably imported from the Near East, is a very fine material for wood-carving, the making of boxes and various kinds of utensils of a moderate size. It is hard, does not rend, is not affected by insects and can be worked in a way similar to ivory. Already the Greeks and Romans were fond of using it. Their words *pyxis*, *puxos*, *buxus* were the origin of our *bus* (Dutch), *Buchse* (German) and *box* (both the pill-box and the box in the opera). It is manifest that boxwood was the ideal material for all kinds of containers. Moreover,



Fig. 3. *Buxus sempervirens*, from Dodonaeus' *Stirpium Historiae*, 1616.

it was used for nutcrackers (fig. 4), planes, rules, woodcut-blocks (fig. 5), the handles of knives and forks (fig. 6), tops (fig. 6), knitting-implements (for supporting the needles, fig. 6), draughtsmen (fig. 7), chessmen (fig. 8), statuettes, tablets, crucifixes and other sculptures of a religious nature, inlay and other details of furniture and for the styles of the diskwheels in a mill. Although it is now chiefly replaced by other materials, yet box-wood is one of the best kinds of wood we know. In former centuries it was also one of the most appreciated.

## II. The "green bough"

The "green bough" is a modest variety of Frazer's (and Aeneas's) Golden Bough. The subjects superficially discussed in this chapter, when treated in a more elaborate way, would cover a very similar group of symbols as in Sir John Frazer's famous work. To primitive and archaic peoples those trees and bushes which kept their "evergreen" appearance during the winter season when the whole of Nature seemed to be dead were highly convincing proof of an ever-lasting vitality and energy. Again, the first plants and shrubs showing signs of a spontaneously emerging new life were regarded as representatives of the same powers. What happened in Nature, moreover, was just another manifestation of the Divine Life, Holiness, Truth and Reality which is the spiritual background of this natural and human world. Green boughs — evergreens as well as harbingers of spring — consequently are not merely symbols of a natural life but even more so of supernatural values. With their help Man can be in direct contact with that higher world.

What in this way may be brought out as the archaic point of view does not apply to Modern Man but in a very much reduced sense. Many symbols which were a tactual reality for the former, for the latter are just a "survival", a fossilized idea or usage. On the other hand, there are still certain symbols which seem to appeal to men of all ages on account of their naturalness if not artlessness which makes them a kind of archetypical symbols. The "green bough" in its various manifestations would seem to be one of those. Nevertheless these, to the religious mind, highly suggestive symbols may have had a more or less different content in successive phases of history and in various social and cultural settings. A value attributed to them may or may not be directly related to an earlier, not necessarily "original" interpretation.

In order to get a better insight in the symbolical setting of the boxtree twigs which in chapters V-VIII will be discussed at greater length, a catalogue is given of the most important types of trees, boughs, etc. used in religious and popular customs. There are natural trees, although "natural" just on account of their having a natural appearance, but always accompanied by the symbolical surplus value attributed to them. Some of them are found on the earth, others in Heaven or in Hell. Sometimes they are completely leafless; more often, however, richly decorated. Others are cut off from their roots, either with their offshoots and leaves still showing, or reduced to a mere pole, incidentally with a tuft of green twigs on the top.



Fig. 4. Nutcracker of Box wood, 18 cm. long. Photograph N.O.M. (Nederlands Openlucht — Open-Air — Museum).

The boughs, in their turn, likewise either keep their leaves or are leafless if not reduced to a bare stick stripped of all natural projections. A branch or stick can be draped with all kinds of ornaments, fruits and eatables. A stick, moreover, can be decorated with carvings and turnery (this more ceremonial form is usually called a staff or a sceptre), or it is embellished with ribbons. There are, consequently, many varieties, some of which are interchangeable; the same type of personage at one time carries a stick or staff, at another a leaved bough (e.g. Gabriel in the Annunciation). But again a special variety of the "green bough" such as a sceptre may be typical for a distinct situation — in the hands of a king, for instance — without being interchangeable with a natural branch. There is also the possibility that there is not just one staff or branch but a whole bundle, either of the stems of one plant or of a combination of various species. Examples will be given presently. And again the "green bough" may appear as a wreath, a bower-like construction, a Jack-in-the-green or a man with a small tree bush on his head.

There is, of course, no reason whatever for every tree, branch or stick found in our surroundings, in a picture or in the hand of a man, to have a symbolical meaning. It all depends on the setting in which it is observed, on the use made of it or the shape and

decoration given to it. Green branches on a boat may be a sunshade, but again there may be a connection with the month of May. Green twigs on the house may be meant as a mere decoration, but some people put them there in order to pass on the auspicious powers of Nature to the house and its inhabitants. A tuft of sprigs is attached to a man's hat (fig. 9) or the headstall of a horse, just for the fun of it, perhaps, but it might be different when it is done with a special type of twigs and on a special occasion, such as a marriage.

A more dynamic use than by placing leaved branches on or in a house, on wagons and boats, on a hat, etc., is made of "green boughs" by walking around with them. And again, either with natural boughs or with bundles, decorated branches, sticks and staffs. As a bundle of leafless stems, thought to represent the divine order and manipulated by a priest, the ancient Persian *baresman* may be mentioned. Related with it are the Roman *fascies*, carried by the *lictors* accompanying the king or the consuls as an emblem of their own function and of the dignity of their masters. In both cases the bundles are made of the stalks of one kind of plant. By removing all external signs of their vital force such as leaves and flowers the stalks are artificially equalized with branches which have not yet budded and therefore still contain the whole power of their spontaneous vitality in a concentrated form. All of



Fig. 5. Box wood used for the carved handles of a knife and two forks, a knitting-sheath, and a top. Photograph, N. O. M.

it is "potentially" still there and not spent by growing leaves and flowers (just like the powers of life are potentially more active in Death than when realized in life).

A collection of stalks of different species of plants — more effective than the mere multiple of similar elements — is found in the Jewish *lulab* which is carried in procession in the synagogue on the Feast of the Tabernacles. It contains among other plants a not yet unfolded leaf of the date-palm (*lulab*). Bundles of various twigs or flowers are also found in the folklore of the Netherlands, e.g. at Midsummer-day (such as roses and walnut-leaves), at Assumption (a bundle of 7 or 9 species). The ancient Greek *eiresione* is a good specimen of a decorated bough, draped with eatables and wine-flasks and carried around in the spring-time by young people singing songs which remind us of spring customs in Western Europe to be discussed in chapter VII.

The stick or staff has rather a many-sided evolutionary history. In many cases it certainly has developed from the leaved "green bough"; there are however also other connections, such as with the mace, the lance and other weapons. Sometimes this is apparent from the shape of the staff itself. In other cases there is a combination of a stick and some emblem (forming a standard), in which the stick has

no meaning of itself but merely serves as a shaft. The main symbol then is the emblem mounted on it.

In ancient Greece the stick and the staff, just like the leaved bough, were symbols of the Divine Order and all its faculties, mentioned in the above; Truth, Holiness, Victory, Power. Staff-bearer *par excellence* was Hermes who with his golden staff or leaved golden branch led the dead to the nether world (and sometimes back again), who acted as a messenger for the gods and used his staff as a magic wand. By means of a golden bough Aeneas gained admission to the world of the dead. The persons to be initiated into the mysteries of Eleusis carried *bakcha*, boughs, as a token of their initiation. By a stroke with a stick the Roman slave was emancipated, in other words transported from one situation to another, a better one. In our days a similar wand projecting from the confessional chair in some of the churches in Rome symbolizes the rescue of the believer from a state of sinfulness. The gladiator free from further fighting was presented with a staff, he was *rude donatus*, just like our retired University teachers. Evidently the bough or staff was a symbol, if not a means, for guiding man from one place or situation to another, such as the freedom of initiates, slaves and retired workers, or the safety of those who have propitiated Heaven. We will find a similar idea in the use of boxtree twigs and "palms" in chapter VIII.

The messenger and postman carried a staff which, besides being a walking stick and a weapon, served as a symbol of his leadership, and also as a mark of his being delegated as a speaker in the name of his master. The archangel Gabriel delivered his message to the Holy Virgin with a staff, sceptre, palm or lily in his hand. The peasant messenger in the Dutch provinces of Drenthe and Twente who invited people for either a special task or a festival, carried a stick. The Greek orator held a staff in his hand (as a means of contact with the Higher World), the "Speaker" in the British House of Commons has a mace lying in front of him (as a sign that he is acting for the King). A staff, moreover, is a symbol of power, dignity, judicial functions, special offices, etc.

Branches are attached to houses in order to convey their auspicious powers to the inhabitants, for a similar reason a twig is put on a hat. People strike each other with boughs in order to give health or fertility. The Romans exchanged decorated branches, *strenae*, as auspicious presents; the French give their children *etrennes*, no longer branches, just presents. In Greece young people called on the villagers with *eiresione*; others with a stick or a branch in their hands as a token that spring has come, or of power or of their messengership. In a way it was — as it was in later times — a "release", opening the festivities. The branch or stick was also — we have discussed this before — a means of contact with the Higher World, of introduction to an atmosphere of freedom from sin. It would be impossible to distinguish clearly between the various aspects of the "green bough" as ultimately they all belong together. In the following chapter we will discuss a special type of "green bough", the branch or leaf of the "real" palms. (In the Dutch text green as a colour is treated at the end of chapter II in connection with the greenness of the boughs).

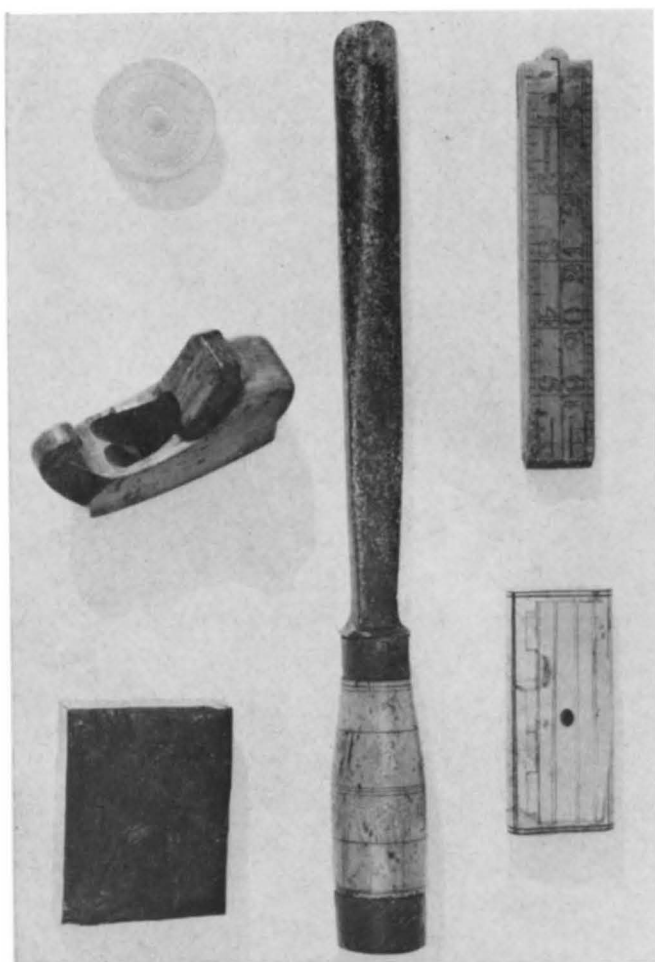


Fig. 6. Plane, ruler, woodcut blocks and other implements made from Box wood. Photograph, N. O. M.





Fig. 7. Draughtsmen (chequers, or in the U. S. checkers) carved about 1700. Arian van der Werff? Photograph, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

### III. The "real" palms

The *Palmae* constitute a family of about 1200 species spread over nearly all the tropical and subtropical countries where they are a very characteristic feature in the scenery. They are, moreover, an extremely useful family from the point of view of Man, providing him with food, beverages, oil, materials for writing, building, weaving, etc. The most striking member of the *Palmae* group in the Mediterranean is the date-palm with its feathered leaves, incorrectly styled palm-branches.

### IV. *Palma nobilis*

*Palma nobilis*, the palm of honour in the first Ode by Horatius, may serve as a designation for all palmleaves with a ritual or symbolic surplus value. The palm was the prize for chariot races and other contests, and in general for any victory. Statues of Nike, the Victories, Fama carry palms. Roman generals received them as a sign of their warlike exploits and the pacification effectuated by them. Christian martyrs who had fought the good fight and conquered death, got a palm as a token of their victory and admission to Heaven. The angels in Heaven as well as other blessed celestials carried palms. A

palm is a symbol of Heaven on tombs (in wreaths it is either a palm-like *Cycas revoluta* or an imitation in plastics. Dust Thou art!). Incidentally the palm is also a sign of virginity.

When Christ made his entry into Jerusalem the people and children of Israel came to greet him with date-palm and olivebranches, readily to be found everywhere in the Mediterranean bordering the streets and roads.

### V. "Jerusalem, clothed with boughs and verdure . . ."

As early as the 4th century A.D. the entry of Christ was annually commemorated in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, *Palmarum Dominica*. A procession was held by the people, accompanying the bishop who represented Christ. The children carried branches of palms and olives for, on the analogy of other occasions in the life of Christ, children were supposed to have greeted Him, the *Pueri Hebraeorum* still referred to in the hymns during the consecration of the palms in Catholic churches. In Western Europe similar processions were held since the 7th century. From the 8th or 9th century onwards the palms carried on those occasions were conse-



Fig. 8. 16th century chessmen exquisitely carved from Box wood. Photograph, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



Fig. 9. *Kermis (fair or carnival) at Walcheren*, by A. Dillens, 1870. Box twigs in the men's hats.

crated in the churches. In many instances such events were highly dramatized, e.g. by representing Christ as a person sitting on an ass, later by a wooden Christ on a wooden ass (in Utrecht since about 1200). The procession was headed by a group of pilgrims who had visited Jerusalem, carrying (real) palms brought along from the Holy Land. In Belgium, in Hougarden, even in our days a procession is held in which is included a wooden figure of Christ on the ass (carrying, resp. enclosed by, boxtree twigs instead of "real" palms (fig. 10). In Austria there is a similar sculpture at Thaur.

In the course of the former palm-processions at Amsterdam palms were thrown by boys from the windows of a certain building. The proceedings were often somewhat disorderly and anyhow very much

"papistic". Consequently an end was put to these and all other processions when in 1580 public worship by the Roman-Catholics was forbidden in the Northern Netherlands.

Apart from the prepared real palm leaves brought from Palestine by the Jerusalem pilgrims other kinds of greenery were used during the processions. In recent times in the Netherlands, in Belgium, in various parts of Germany and France especially boxtree-twigs are being used for the consecration of the palms. In other regions branches of needle-leaved trees, yew-trees, juniper and its relative *Juniperus sabina*, holly and other evergreens are used by preference. Besides, harbingers of spring, especially budding willow boughs, are often chosen (e.g. in England and Russia).

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The English summary of *OM EEN STRUIK DIE PALM WERD*, by Dr. A. J. Bernet Kempers, will be continued in the next issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. (Fig. 10, referred to above, will be in that issue.)

This second installment gives a more complete account of the "palm-processions" connected with the celebration of Palm Sunday in the Netherlands; and of the evolvement of these processions into the parallel but gay and secular custom (known to have been observed for at least two centuries) of "palm-pasen" for the children. Dr. Bernet Kempers says:

"'Palmpasen' are made for children, carried around and rewarded by the neighbors just because they represent a really nice custom, enjoyed by the children, by their parents, in short by everybody about."

Dr. Bernet Kempers is Director of the *Rijksmuseum Voor Volkskunde* "Het Nederlands Openlucht Museum", which may be loosely translated as the State Museum of Folklore "The Netherlands Open-Air Museum", Schelmseweg, Arnhem, The Netherlands.

# THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

## SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 17, 1967

The meeting convened at 11:20 a.m. in the Library, Blandy Experimental Farm, Boyce, Virginia.

Present were about 150 members, plus guests.

The President presided.

A motion was passed unanimously to accept the Minutes and report of the 1966 Annual Meeting as published in the July 1966 issue of the American Boxwood Bulletin.

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Report of Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Clay B. Carr.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

#### AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

Annual Meeting — May 17, 1967

Balance on hand as of April 30, 1966 (reported)	\$2,121.91		
Plus Adjustments	68.89		\$2,190.80
			<hr/>
<b>Receipts</b>			
Memberships	\$1,934.00		
Additional Bulletins	51.25		
Wagenknecht Lists	2.75		
Lunches	135.00		
			<hr/>
			\$4,313.80
<b>Disbursements</b>			
The Boxwood Bulletin			
Printing, photos, plates	\$1,174.46		
Mailing (Postage & Envel.)	84.27		
Copyrights	24.00	\$1,282.73	
			<hr/>
Editor to Williamsburg		104.16	
			<hr/>
			\$1,386.89
<b>Office Expenses</b>			
Envelopes, stationery, Postage, etc.	130.14		
Plate changes & Add Zip Codes	24.82	155.96	
Luncheon (1966 Meeting)			
Lunches, coffee, etc.		152.45	\$1,695.30
			<hr/>
Balance on hand — Bank of Clarke County as of April 30, 1967			\$2,618.50

A motion was passed unanimously to accept the Report of the Secretary-Treasurer.

Mrs. Carr then announced that she was regretfully resigning as Secretary-Treasurer due to urgent personal reasons.

The President in reply stated that Mrs. Carr's

services as Secretary-Treasurer, since the Society was founded in 1961, have been invaluable and have been one of the fundamental contributions to the success of the American Boxwood Society. A motion was passed unanimously expressing regret at Mrs. Carr's resignation and thanking her for her long and able service.

The President stated further that the name of Mrs. Anna Kirby would be presented for nominations as successor to Mrs. Carr; and that the American Boxwood Society is most fortunate in this regard since Mrs. Kirby, longtime secretary at Blandy Experimental Farm, is familiar with the operation of the Society.

President's report: The President reported as follows:

The Society is flourishing, as is shown by the steady increase in memberships and interest and by the continuing importance of the Boxwood Bulletin under the inspired editorship of Mrs. Whiting.

The affairs of the Society (in the periods between Annual Meetings) are administered by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors acting within the framework of the Society's Constitution.

The collection of 48 species of boxwood presented to him by Mr. Henry J. Hohman, Kingsville Nursery, Kingsville, Maryland, in memory of Grace Hendrick Phillips (as reported in the July 1966 issue of The Boxwood Bulletin) is now kept at Heronwood, the President's home near Upperville; where they may be viewed by our members. In addition, Mr. Hohman, in 1967, has added to the collection a new mutation of *Buxus microphylla*, var. *compacta*, a report on which will be published separately. Thus there are now available (at Heronwood and at Blandy Experimental Farm) two separate collections of the Hohman boxwoods for study by the Society members.

Mr. Alan Caspar, Acting Director of Blandy Experimental Farm, then greeted the members on behalf of himself and the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia. Mr. Caspar reported on the care being given to the Hohman collection at Blandy and invited tours of the farm and greenhouse. He stated that in the latter part of the recent winter on two mornings the temperature had dropped suddenly to minus 10 degrees (F), resulting in a certain amount of winter kill in the boxwood. Damaged specimens have been temporarily left untrimmed in order for our members to view the results of the winter kill.

Mr. John Richardson reminded the meeting of the large specimen of weeping boxwood growing on property of the telephone company in downtown Winchester. He has successfully rooted cuttings from this tree. It is expected that photographs and an arti-

cle on this plant will be published in the Bulletin. Mr. Richardson also reported briefly on a method of rapid rooting of boxwood cuttings with which he is experimenting at his nursery at "Fairfield", Berryville, Virginia. Mr. Richardson was asked to make a more detailed account of this matter for publication in the Bulletin.

Elections: Mrs. Clay B. Carr as Chairman of the Nominating Committee drew attention to articles in the American Boxwood Society's Constitution that provide that:

Officers be elected for a term of one year. Officers consist of President, 1st Vice-President, 2nd Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined.

Directors be elected for a term of three years. The Board of Directors consists of five persons elected and the Director of Blandy Farm, ex officio.

Dates for commencing and ending terms of office coincide with dates of Annual Meetings. In all offices, persons may be re-elected to succeed themselves.

Mrs. Carr then presented a slate of nominees. There being no nominations from the floor persons were unanimously elected as listed below and thereupon assumed office:

To serve until the next Annual Meeting, May 1968:

President: Rear Admiral Neill Phillips  
1st Vice President: Mr. John Mitchell  
2nd Vice President: Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr.  
Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. Anna Kirby

To serve as directors until the Annual Meeting in May, 1970: Mr. Alden Eaton, Dr. Henry T. Skinner, Dr. J. B. Wilson.

The Board of Directors now is constituted as follows:

Mr. Alan Caspar, Director Blandy Experimental Farm, ex-officio

Mrs. Edgar M. Whiting: Term expires May 1969  
Dr. W. R. Singleton: Term expires May 1969  
Mrs. Alden Eaton: Term expires May 1970  
Dr. Henry T. Skinner: Term expires May 1970  
Dr. J. B. Wilson: Term expires May 1970

Following the elections, the President reported that it is proposed that arrangements be made with Mrs. Kirby by the American Boxwood Society Executive Committee for an honorarium to be paid to Mrs. Kirby for her services as Secretary-Treasurer. That proposal was approved at the meeting.

The President also reported that, in accordance with the Constitution, the Directors elect an Executive Committee from among their Board and the Officers. In accordance with past customs, the Executive Committee for the coming year has been designated as consisting of the officers, and the editor of The Boxwood Bulletin, Mrs. Whiting. This proposal was approved by the Directors.

At 12:30 the meeting recessed for luncheon and reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

The afternoon session consisted of a program of talks, illustrated by slides or specimens as follows:

"Garden Design with Boxwood" — Prof. Albert S. Beecher

"Some Comments on the Wild Occurrence of Three Boxwoods" — Dr. Henry T. Skinner

"Plans and Hopes for National Colonial Farms" — Dr. W. R. Singleton

"Topiary" — Rear Admiral Neill Phillips

Talks were informal and stimulating. Audience participation, questioning and discussion were encouraged. Summations of the talks will be published in The Bulletin; except the subject of topiary which already has been covered by Admiral Phillips article in the April, 1967 Bulletin.

Before making his talk, Dr. Skinner introduced a distinguished visitor, Mr. Frank P. Knight, Director of the Gardens of the Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley, Surrey, England. Mr. Knight noted the great interest in boxwood in the U.S.A. as evidenced by the activities of our Society. He extended an invitation to any of our members who visit Wisley to call on him personally at the Director's office.

In his talk on the National Colonial Farms, Dr. Singleton pointed out the interesting possibilities for the establishment there by this Society of a boxwood garden. The matter will be followed up by the appointment of a committee to make a study and recommendations thereon.

On the conclusion of the program of talks, the President noted the great success of the meeting as evidenced by a record-breaking attendance and the high quality of the program and the interest shown. A vote of thanks was given to the persons who had worked hard for the success of the meeting, notably, Mrs. Whiting, Mrs. Carr and Mrs. Kirby.

The President then repeated his invitation to all those present to visit "Heronwood" at the close of the meeting. (Note: in spite of intermittent showers some 150 persons visited Heronwood to see the boxwood collections).

There being no further business to consider, the meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Clay B. Carr

Secretary-Treasurer

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Note: Dr. Skinner's article, based on his talk and slides, begins on the next page. Professor Beecher and Dr. Singleton will be heard from in forthcoming issues of The Boxwood Bulletin.

# COMMENTS ON THE WILD OCCURRENCE OF THREE BOXWOODS

By HENRY T. SKINNER

Director, National Arboretum, Crops Research

Division, Agricultural Research Service, U. S.

Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

## BOXWOODS OF THE FAR EAST

Forms of the Asiatic *Buxus microphylla* have long been puzzling gardeners of the Western World. This is due in part to the existence of five geographic varieties which, in general appearance, are very similar to one another, and to the further situation that some of these varieties are so variable in leaf size and habit that seedlings may exhibit almost the total range of characteristics of the species.

In comparison with European *Buxus sempervirens*, *B. microphylla* is generally smaller both as to leaf and plant. They tend towards many branched, compact, and often rounded bushes to 2, 3, or 4 feet in height, with some of relatively upright growth and others that may range from spreading to prostrate.



*Buxus Microphylla* var. *Japonica*, on the rocky ledges of Mt. Kosho, Kyushu, Japan.

Basic or first-named *Buxus microphylla* Sieb. and Zucc. (Himetsuge is its Japanese name) is usually described as a compact, rounded shrub to 2 or 3 feet high with square, glabrous shoots bearing round-ended obovate leaves,  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, and flowers in terminal clusters. It has been cultivated in Japan at least since 1450 and was introduced to Western gardens around 1860. However, according to Ohwi in his *Flora of Japan*, 1965, this boxwood is not known in a wild state and its origin is somewhat of a mystery. It could have been lost in the wild; it could have been carried to Japan from Korea or China; or it could even, possibly, be a hybrid or segregate from the much larger Japanese boxwood, which seems comparatively adept at producing diminutive or aberrant forms. As in the case of some other garden plants, it seems unsatisfactory to be dealing with the type of a species which cannot be definitely pegged down.

However, regardless of the origin of name-basic *B. microphylla*, at least one slender branched and low growing to procumbent variant is reported by Ohwi to inhabit moist, rocky areas of Kii Province of the Japanese island of Honshu. This is *B. microphylla* var. *riparia* Makino, or Ko-tsuge of the Japanese, which seems to have not yet reached our gardens.

The boxwood of Korea, *B. microphylla* var. *koreana* Nakai, makes a somewhat upright shrub with downy branchlets and leaf petioles, with leaves  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, and with flower clusters which may be axillary or terminal, and a growth height of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 feet according to the texts. This height is an underestimate, for young plants of the form brought by E. H. Wilson to the Arnold Arboretum in 1919, and distributed by Farquhar Nurseries, are already 3 to 4 feet high at the National Arboretum and, according to my recollection, the same type was a foot or so higher a few years ago at the Gray Summit headquarters of the Missouri Botanical Garden. One of the hardiest of all boxwoods, this clone established a record in surviving the extreme 1933-34 winter of Ithaca, New York, with no injury when all others were damaged or killed completely.

The fourth variant, that of the Chinese mainland, is *B. microphylla* var. *sinica* Rehd. and Wils. This is similar to the preceding in general appearance and in the downy covering of its shoots, leaves and lower bud scales, but its leaves average slightly larger and its flower clusters are only axillary, never terminal. Chinese boxwood, introduced around 1900, has proved only a little less hardy than the Korean and Japanese forms.

A fifth variant is the Formosa boxwood, *B. microphylla* var. *intermedia* (Kanehira) Li. As described by H. L. Li in his *Woody Flora of Taiwan* (1963), this variety is characterized by its smooth, rather downy branchlets and by glossy, rounded leaves which are considerably broader and longer than those of any of the preceding. Li does not indicate the height of this plant and his figure suggests that the leaves are less rounded than those of the large Japanese boxwood. Endemic in Taiwan, it is a plant of the forests at low to medium altitudes and has been cultivated at Taipeh at least since 1928. However, it does not seem to be in Western gardens and, when introduced, is likely to be somewhat tender.

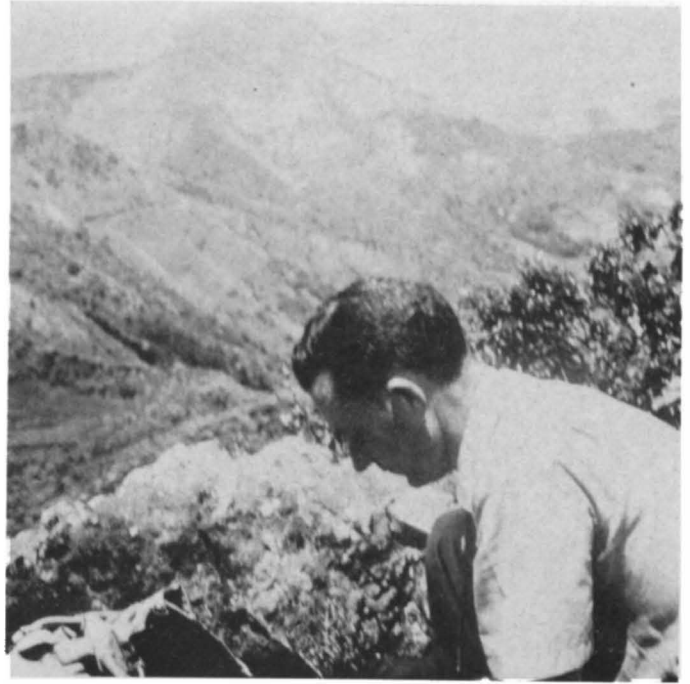
This leaves us with the most familiar, the largest, and in many ways the most distinctive of this particular boxwood complex: the Japanese boxwood or Asama-tsuge, which was designated as *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica* by Rehder and Wilson but which has more recently come to be regarded by others as a species in its own right. Japanese boxwood bears smooth, grayish and four-angled branches, and is distinctive in its large, glossy and rounded leaves,  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch wide and  $\frac{3}{4}$  to an inch or more long, and in its growth as an erect shrub or small tree to a height of as much as 9 feet, often with a single main trunk. Its pale yellow flowers are borne in axillary fascicles. Local and rare in a wild state, its principal habitats are mountains of the Japanese islands of Shikoku and Kyushu and of the Kanto district (and westward) of the center island of Honshu. It has long been cultivated by the Japanese, especially around their hilltop shrines. In the course of his 1961 travels within this area, John L. Creech sometimes found it difficult to decide whether a seedling colony was of wild or cultivated origin.\*

Japanese boxwood has proved to be among the most broadly adaptable of all boxwoods in the United States. It is as hardy as all but Korean and the toughest forms of *B. sempervirens*, yet is also among the best performers in the warm-climate areas of California and the Southeastern States. In its dissimilarities from the norm of *B. microphylla*, it might well merit rank as a distinct species.

Seedling offspring of *B. japonica* can vary decidedly in size, shape, and growth rate. However, such pronounced seedling dwarfs as *B. japonica* 'Morris Dwarf' and 'Morris Midget' have inherited the curious trick of occasionally reverting, by bud mutation, to the normal, fast-growing type. Little as we understand this reversion process, it is easier to accept among conifers where the reverting dwarf form is usually itself of "witches broom" bud-mutant (rather than seedling) origin. Fortunately, these boxwood reversions are not too frequent, and it goes without saying that for the good of the dwarf specimen, the reverting shoot should be completely removed as soon as possible.

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\* See John L. Creech, *Ornamental Plant Explorations, Japan*, 1961, p. 18, ARS 34-75, U. S. Dept. of Agric., May 1966.



Plant collecting with Dr. John L. Creech on the slopes of Mt. Kosho, Kyushu, Japan.

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A much better understanding of at least some of these Far Eastern boxwoods is likely to result from recent explorations undertaken through sponsorship of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's New Crops Research Branch in cooperation with Longwood Gardens. As has been previously mentioned, Japanese boxwood was studied by John L. Creech in its native habitat during his 1961 Japanese explorations. He provided the illustrations for this note. These single-trunked, 10-foot specimens of *B. japonica* were found at the summit of Mt. Kosho in northern Kyushu where the surrounding area was strewn with small seedlings. Seed and plant collections were



A small-leaved form of *Buxus microphylla* var. *Koreana* near Seoul, Korea.



*Buxus microphylla* var. *Koreana* trained as a small tree; on the grounds of a Buddhist temple near Seoul, Korea.

returned from this site; from the edge of rice paddies at Ushirobira, Hirado Island, Kyushu; and from approaches to the Hakone Shrine, Motohakone, Honshu. Their culture in this country should provide a better appreciation of the nature and variability of this variety or species.

Although he travelled the length and breadth of Kii Province, Dr. Creech did not locate the low-growing *B. microphylla* var. *riparia*. It must be very scarce, if still extant. He had remarked that apart from shrine plantings, boxwood is little used in Japanese gardens. In habit and appearance, they do not seem to appeal to the Japanese taste.

Plant explorations in Korea were conducted by E. G. Corbett of the Glenn Dale Plant Introduction Station and R. W. Lighty of Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, from July to October, 1966. Although the results of his explorations have not yet been published, I am indebted to Dr. Corbett for illustrations of the Korean boxwood, and for his observations on its occurrence and use. He was struck by the variability of this plant in leaf size and habit, from tall rounded to nearly horizontal in type. Unlike the Japanese, the gardeners of Korea are coming to use their native boxwood, especially in the vicinity of Seoul where the climate is very similar to that of Albany, New York. But Koreans do little cutting propagation, preferring to collect their plants from the wild or raise them from seed. As the pictures indicate, the more dwarf of



Where common boxwood, *Buxus sempervirens*, becomes the dominant cover of limestone outcrops in the Maritime Alps.





*Boxwood country of the Maritime Alps, from Col de Brouis near the French-Italian border.*

these forms are used for edgings and the taller ones as specimens, sometimes trained into miniature tree shape. A number of collections will provide us with a new view of this variety for the first time since the Wilson era. With this material and with other collections from neighboring areas, it may yet be possible to decide upon a more suitable name for the somewhat tender, soft-branched and spreading *B. microphylla* 'Koreana' which seems to have entered the trade via the estate of the late Samuel Everitt of Huntington, L. I.

With the success of present planning by Dr. Creech, it is hoped that a third boxwood-connected exploration may be undertaken in Taiwan. It is tentatively set for November of this year and, should it materialize, we can be sure that long-needed attention will be paid to the little known Formosa boxwood, *B. microphylla* var. *intermedia*. This could easily be the most promising of all for our warm climate areas.

#### BOXWOODS OF THE MARITIME ALPS

*Buxus sempervirens*, the common or "American" box of our gardens, is native to the limestone formations of a large cross section of Southern Europe. From the mountainous areas of southern France, the Pyrenees and Portugal, it flows over the hills of northern Italy and into the Tyrol, Yugoslavia, the remaining Balkan States and Greece. It spreads thence around the Black Sea to the Caucasus Moun-



*Common boxwood, Buxus sempervirens, amid late April snows of the French Maritime Alps.*

tains and the Elzburg range of northern Iran or "Persia", with scattered outliers in the cedar forests of Algeria, in Baden, Germany, in Belgium and, almost certainly, on famed Box Hill of Surrey, England. Perhaps the largest trees are those of the Black Sea-Caucasus-Elzburg area where it forms undergrowth to the oak forests, and where specimens have been known to attain 50 feet in height with trunk diameters of 2 feet. Timber export was a flourishing business from this region in earlier times.

So much for background. The purpose of this note is to record a few brief observations made amidst acres of wild boxwood in the French-Italian Maritime Alps. The occasion was an automobile trip, from Nice to Lake Maggiore at the close of the 1958 International Horticultural Congress, in the company of Mr. Harold G. Hillier of Hilliers' Nursery in England. As we ascended the main backbone of the Alps, boxwood began to appear. On hillsides approaching the border pass of Col de Bruis, it became almost the only vegetation in sight. It grew here in a bewildering array of forms and habits — as tall and upright bushes or as squat and spreading ones with

big or with little leaves either rounded or pointed. Little wonder that we have so many named garden variants. A day in such an area could yield a hundred candidates for selection and naming if anyone had the inclination for such an inexpedient undertaking! Plants grew in rocky limestone soils, entirely in the open and (due, doubtless, to exposure, cattle breakage and so on) were seldom much higher than 5 or 6 feet.

From the patterns of geologic history, from the variability, and from the aggressiveness of *B. sempervirens*, we would judge this plant to be one of the younger species in an evolutionary sense. Almost equally variable were the 2,000-odd plants raised some years ago at the Missouri Botanical Garden from Romanian seed collections arranged by Edgar Anderson. A hundred or more of these Balkan boxwoods are now growing at the National Arboretum. They run the gamut of habits, from the wide spread of 'Vardar Valley' (sent by Anderson to The Arnold Arboretum in 1935, from the vicinity of Yugoslavia's Vardar River) to complete dwarfs, and vigorous mounds, and verticals. They may well be among the hardest of all forms of common box.

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## BOXWOOD OF THE SUNKEN GARDEN

J. T. BALDWIN, JR.

The Sunken Garden of the College of William and Mary has dimensions of 730 feet east to west and 158 feet north to south, with 10-foot terraces on the north and south sides. Figure 1 shows the north terrace in early February, 1967. The Garden was completed in 1935 (See *The Alumni Gazette* for January 31, 1936).

Eight hundred 4-foot box plants were used atop the terraces. The plants came from the birthplace of General Zachary Taylor in Orange County, Virginia. There, according to Charles Richardson who helped with the planting and who is shown farthest from the camera in Figure 1, the boxwood was in an open



field of red clay, and the workmen pulled the plants up — one in each hand and without benefit of spade. Those plants (*Buxus sempervirens*) have thrived here in Williamsburg. Those with a southern exposure become very slightly bronzed in winter.

The plants have been regularly pruned, with the consequence that they suffer no snow or ice damage. Figure 2 shows the prunings being forked into a truck; in February of this year four truckloads of prunings from the Sunken Garden were taken to the city dump.

Both photographs are by Thomas L. Williams.

# NEW MEMBERS

ADDED TO ABS SINCE APRIL

Alexander, Dr. Alexander John, "Woodburn",  
Spring Station, Ky. 40378  
Blee, Mrs. Harry H., Inverness, Atoka Road, Middle-  
burg, Va. 22117 (C)  
Cabaniss, Mr. and Mrs. Robert W., "Williamsville",  
Route 1, Hanover, Va. 23069  
Carr, Houston H., 6058 Wheat Ave., Fort Worth,  
Texas 76133  
Frackelton, Mrs. Robert L., 1714 Greenway Drive,  
Fredericksburg, Va. 22401  
Glenn, Rev. C. Leslie, 16 Kalorama Circle, Wash-  
ington, D. C. 20008  
Graf, Miss Anita, Route 1, Box 363, Hamilton, Va.  
22068  
Hagedorn, Dr. June, Dogwood Avenue, Roslyn Har-  
bor, L. I., N. Y. 11576  
Hall, Mrs. Neville G., Sr., 2703 King Street, Alexan-  
dria, Va. 22301  
Hayden, Mrs. William R., Maddox P.O., St. Mary's  
County, Md. 20621  
Johnson, Mrs. C. Victor, P.O. Box 85, Crewe, Va.  
23930  
Kirby, Maurice H., c/o The First National Bank,  
Henderson, Ky. 42420  
Lambe, R. C., Extension Plant Pathologist, Virginia  
Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va. 24060  
Lower, Chas. P., Box 293, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.  
19006  
Ludington, Mrs. Francis H., Jr., 1375 Park Lane,  
Pelham Manor, N. Y. 10803  
Macfarland, Mrs. Charles S., 5-D, 800 Forest Avenue,  
Westfield, N. J. 07090  
Martin, Henry Christopher, 808 Springvale Road,  
Great Falls, Va. 22066  
Puller, Mr. & Mrs. J. B., Jr., 215 Queen Charlotte  
Road, Richmond, Va. 23221 (C)  
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andria, Va. 22300  
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Springs, Va. 22129  
Taylor, Mrs. Foxhall K., Foxhall Farm, Round Hill,  
Va. 22141  
Trimble, Mr. & Mrs. William C., "Oakdene", Valley  
Rd., Brooklandville, Md. 21022  
Watkins, William B., Jr., Old Chapel, Berryville, Va.  
22611  
Williamson, David, P.O. Box 37, Chestertown, Mary-  
land 21620  
Wingfield, Dr. William Lynn, 401 N. Allen Avenue,  
Richmond, Va. 23200  
Winn, Mrs. James J., Box 210, Leesburg, Va. 22075  
Wisecarver, Miss Camille C., P.O. Box 467, Berr-  
ville, Va. 22611

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The American Boxwood Society year runs from the An-  
nual Meeting date of each year to the time of the next An-  
nual Meeting, usually the second Wednesday in May. Members  
joining later in the year are sent a full year (four issues) of  
The Boxwood Bulletin, beginning with the current July issue.  
Their dues, like those of all other members, will again be  
payable in the following Spring. To have all dues collected at  
about the same time (a system widely adopted by organiza-  
tions of our type) greatly simplifies the task of our hard-  
working Secretary-Treasurer.

FOR YOUR ADDRESS BOOK:

If your letter is concerned with

Membership, now or renewal  
Payment of dues  
Change of address  
Gift Membership (see back page)  
Ordering back issues of the Bulletin  
Ordering Dr. Wagenknecht's List (see below)  
General information about the Society

write to

Mrs. Andrew C. Kirby, Secretary-Treasurer,  
The American Boxwood Society  
Box 85, Boyce, Va. 22626

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If you have contributions for The Boxwood Bul-  
letin — articles, news notes, photographs, sugges-  
tions of anything of probable interest to boxwood  
people, it saves time to direct them to

Mrs. Edgar M. Whiting, Editor,  
The Boxwood Bulletin,  
415 West Clifford St.,  
Winchester, Va. 22601

This applies to criticisms and corrections, too — "We  
regret errors; we welcome corrections."

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If you have something of real importance — a  
question of policy, a new project for the Society, a  
matter which needs top-level consideration, write to

Rear Adm. Neill Phillips, USN Ret'd., President,  
Heronwood,  
Upperville, Virginia 22176

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DR. WAGENKNECHT'S LIST OF  
REGISTERED BOX CULTIVARS  
AVAILABLE IN BOOKLET FORM

*"A Registration List of Cultivar Names In Buxus  
L." by Dr. Wagenknecht, is available in booklet form  
from The American Boxwood Society, Boyce, Vir-  
ginia. This list originally appeared in The Boxwood  
Bulletin, Vol. 4, No. 3, January 1965.*

*The price of the booklet is 25¢ a copy, plus 5¢ a  
copy postage on a single-copy order or any number  
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price is 25¢ a copy postpaid.*



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Regular membership dues at \$3.00 per year, of which \$2.00 are for a subscription to The Boxwood Bulletin. Other classes of membership available are: Contributing, \$10; Sustaining, \$25; Life, \$100; and Patron, \$500. The higher classes of membership provide income which permits the publication of more plates or of additional pages in the Boxwood Bulletin, as well as the expansion of other society activities. Names of those holding Contributing, Sustaining, Life, and Patron memberships will be published each year in the January issue of The Bulletin.