

The *Boxwood* Bulletin

A quarterly devoted to Man's oldest garden ornamental



Kenmore Woods in Fredericksburg, Va., will be open April 25, 1995 during Historic Garden Week, sponsored by the Garden Club of Virginia. Large Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa' flank the front steps. See Notice on page 52. (Photo: Dr. and Mrs. Peter R. Smith)

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The American Boxwood Society

The American Boxwood Society is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1961 and devoted to the appreciation, scientific understanding and propagation of the genus *Buxus* L.

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Individual	\$15	Sustaining	\$50
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Back issues of <i>The Boxwood Bulletin</i>	(each) \$ 4
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<i>International Registration List of Cultivated Buxus L.</i>	\$ 3
<i>Index to The Boxwood Bulletin 1961-1986</i>	\$10
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Boxwood Handbook Fund
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For address changes, memberships, dues, contributions, or to order back issues or publications, write:

Treasurer, The American Boxwood Society
P.O. Box 85, Boyce, Va. 22620

For general information about the Society, advice concerning boxwood problems or cultivar selection, write to The American Boxwood Society at the same address. You are also welcome to write directly to the President:

Dr. Stephen D. Southall
3912 Faculty Drive
Lynchburg, Va. 24501

Call for Papers:

Technical articles, news, history, lore, notes, and photographs concerning boxwood specimens, gardens or plantings are solicited for possible publication in *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Photographs should be suitable for reproduction and fully captioned. Suggestions regarding format and content are welcome. Material should be submitted to:

Chairman, Bulletin Committee
1714 Greenway Drive
Fredericksburg, Va. 22401

Material to be returned to the sender must be submitted with a self-addressed envelope carrying suitable postage. Every effort will be made to protect submittals, but the Society cannot be responsible for loss or injury.

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New ABS Memorial Garden Takes Shape

Joan C. Butler, Chairman, ABS Memorial Garden Committee

Because of the natural formation for an amphitheater and a new master plan for the Orland E. White Arboretum (the State Arboretum of Virginia) at Blandy Experimental Farm, Clarke County, Virginia, The American Boxwood Society Memorial Garden had to be relocated. This garden contained a collection of various *Buxus* species and cultivars.

A group of boxwood from the amphitheater area was relocated along the road in the vicinity of the future ABS Memorial Garden (Photo 1). Nancy Takahashi, University of Virginia Landscape Architect, furnished the design for the relocation of the *Buxus* plants.

Two plants of *B. harlandii* that had to be removed from The Quarters Courtyard in the redesign, were moved to the east end of the area designated for the boxwood collection and located



Photo 2: Buxus harlandii, the vase-shaped form, at the east end of the ABS Memorial Garden. (Photo: Scot Butler)



Photo 1: 1992 photo of part of the ABS Buxus collection in a holding area awaiting transplantation to the new design. (Photos: Decca Frackelton except as noted)



Photo 3: *B. sempervirens* 'Belleville', one of the backdrop boxwood, is 8' high and 10' wide at 32 years.

between mature *Arborvitae* (Photo 2). These represent the two forms of *B. harlandii*. In 1993, before being transplanted, one measured 42" high by 66" wide and the other, 64" high by 84" wide.

Some of the larger boxwood in the newly designated area will be allowed to remain as a backdrop, along with the *Arborvitae*. Among these are plants of *B. sempervirens* 'Belleville' (Photo 3), 'Vardar Valley', 'Bullata', and 'Argenteo-variegata' (Photo 4).

In the late fall of 1994, the Boxwood Memorial Garden began to take on its permanent appearance after its relocation during the past several years. Following the interesting curving design planned by Nancy Takahashi, almost all the plants included in the *Buxus microphylla* species have been moved into their proper places, grouped in a logical arrangement (Photos 5 & 6).



Photo 4: *B. sempervirens* 'Argenteo-variegata', the Silver Boxwood, at 32 years is 5' high by 7' wide. The plant will be left in place to form a backdrop.



Photo 5: Part of the *B. microphylla* collection in December 1994. Across the back, left to right, 'John Baldwin', 'Henry Hohman', and 'Miss Jones'. Center row, 'Helen Whiting', (32 years and approx. 28" high, 50" wide). Front, 'Grace Hendrick Phillips' (left) and 'Compacta', 31 years.



Photo 6: Planted between *B. microphylla* 'Miss Jones' (left) and *B. sinica* var. *insularis* 'Pincushion' are *B. microphylla* 'Green Pillow' (front) and 'Quiet End' (back). (Photo: Scot Butler)

The plants which have developed as named sports of *Buxus microphylla* 'Compacta' are planted nearby so that they can be compared with one another and with their parent. These sports of 'Compacta' are 'Curly Locks'; 'Grace Hendrick Phillips', which measured 10" high by 28" wide in 1993; and 'Helen Whiting'.

The Korean boxwoods (*Buxus sinica* var. *insularis*) have likewise been located so that their relationship may easily be studied. These include 'Tide Hill', 'Pincushion', 'Tall Boy', 'Justin Brouwers' and 'Nana' (Photo 7).

All the relocated plants benefit from the shade cast by the background of *Arborvitae* and old boxwoods.

Companion plants will be trees which bear white flowers: Fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*), Sourwood (*Oxydendron arborea*), Shadbush or Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*) and

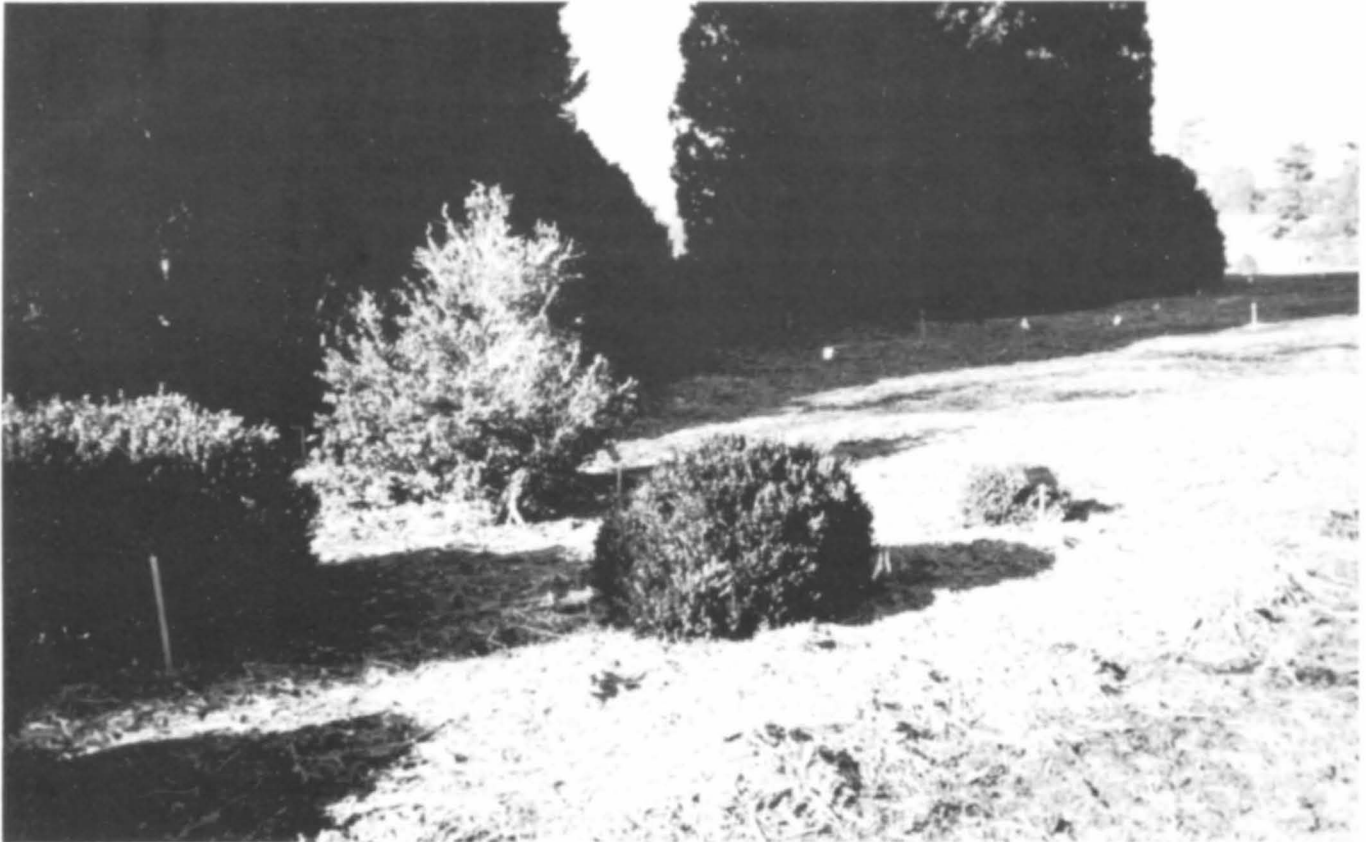


Photo 7: Some of the Korean boxwood cultivars: B. sinica var. insularis 'Pincushion' (left edge), 'Tall Boy' (back), 'Justin Brouwers' (front) and 'Nana' (to right of 'Justin Brouwers'). (Photo: Scot Butler)

Stewartia pseudocammelia. In another year or so, the Boxwood Memorial Garden will offer a fine opportunity to learn about unusual *Buxus* cultivars. An attractive exhibit is taking shape.

Mrs. Butler is also ABS Secretary and owner of Bluemont Boxwood. Decca Frackelton contributed to this article.



Photo 8: Mrs. Butler has arranged for the enlargement of the lath house for the protection of the Buxus cultivars being grown for use in the Memorial Garden. (The lath house is pictured before enlargement.)

? The Question Box

Q: What is causing my boxwood plants to turn reddish bronze this late in the fall and what can I do about it?

A: There are two possible causes of this condition:

(1) The fall season was unusually warm and very dry until generous December rainfall began. Additional water should have been provided. Dryness causes stress for boxwoods and can cause subsequent winter injury. Deep, copious watering before the ground freezes helps boxwood to withstand low temperatures and the loss of moisture when the leaves transpire throughout the winter. New growth next spring may be normal; if not, wait until late May or early June and cut out all dead stems and foliage, back to healthy tissue.

(2) Another possible cause of discoloring may be the result of delayed damage from last winter's ice and bitter cold. If bark on larger stems or trunks was split or even peeled off, healthy plants may have been able to heal these wounds and callus over with new tissue, creating a patched look on the stems. But the severe dry period in late fall may have interrupted this healing and the outside foliage has not been able receive enough nutrients, thus turning orange or bronze. This discoloration would have occurred during summer's heat if the plants had not been able to begin their own healing process. Only after new growth appears next spring will it be possible to know what is healthy. In June, all obviously dead branches should be pruned out.

(3) A third cause of bronzing may be the presence of "English" boxwood decline. In this case entire portions of the plant first discolor slightly, then turn straw tan and finally die. Eventually the entire plant may succumb. Only a soil test analyzing for this disease can tell positively if it is present. A chemical soil drench with Subdue (made by Ciba-Geigy Chemical Company) may be helpful in slowing or stopping this disease. Applications are made only in warmer weather; follow package

directions very carefully.

Q: What specific boxwood cultivars are recommended for use in edgings or low hedges as alternatives to *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'?

A: Although 'Suffruticosa' is still frequently chosen for edging, and indeed is often called "the edging box," it does not thrive when it must be sheared repeatedly over a period of years. Moreover it often suffers and deteriorates when its roots are regularly disturbed and cut during the planting of bulbs and annuals in the beds where it provides the edging. Much additional work is required to thin, shape and fertilize the mutilated boxwood plants. How much more practical it would be to choose a cultivar which is a true dwarf and can be allowed to maintain its natural habit end shape.

When we choose 'Suffruticosa' because it is sometimes considered a dwarf box, we are not recognizing that in a relatively short time it will outgrow its original spacing. This elegant plant with its soft billowing foliage (if allowed to grow naturally) will grow at least an inch each year, both upward and outward on each side. If planted too close to a walk or doorway to allow for this future expansion, within ten years it will have become at least a foot higher and two feet wider. Because this growth happens imperceptibly, the encroachment over the walk seems sudden; it becomes a nuisance when it is wet and impedes passage. But with adequate room it is an unmatched treasure.

There are other boxwood cultivars which grow more slowly than 'Suffruticosa'. The very slowest and most dwarf is *Buxus microphylla* 'Compacta' (also sold as 'Kingsville Dwarf'), which hardly enlarges at all, not more than one-quarter inch per year: a tiny leaf and dense, twiggy growth form a tight mound, reaching 12 inches high after perhaps 20 years. However, this delightful plant is far more attractive if grown in some shade; in full sun its color is quite yellow. An outline planting of this cultivar can be stunning.

It does grow broader than high, so some careful pruning will be needed every year if it is to be kept narrow.

Another truly dwarf box is *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Morris Midget'. It remains a wonderful small mound which may reach 18" in height when mature. It will never grow as rapidly as 'Suffruticosa'. *B. microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Morris Dwarf' grows a little more vigorously, but is still really slow to reach 24" high.

A third good choice for a small boxwood is *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis* 'Justin Brouwers', a Korean boxwood with very dark green, dainty leaves. It will become broader and higher than the 'Morris' cultivars, but does so very slowly; it is unlikely ever to attain the size of 'Suffruticosa'.

A fourth possibility for a low-growing edging is *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis* 'Nana', also a form of Korean boxwood. It will spread wider than 'Justin Brouwers', but hugs the ground, seldom reaching 18" in height. It produces soft, willowy foliage that will cascade down over low walls or steps. It can spread to a width of 3 feet or more in 20 years. Its foliage turns quite yellow in full sun, while in some shade it becomes a more pleasing dark green.

However, if the gardener is determined to maintain a tight sheared hedge as a border to flower beds, it would be much better not to choose boxwood at all. Perennial plants can tolerate constant shearing much more successfully; the use of germander or green or grey santolina might serve well.

The truly dwarf cultivars of boxwood can be maintained at a chosen size *not* by shearing, but by careful yearly shaping and thinning, practices which contribute to boxwood health. However, their natural inclination is to spread slowly sideways and become broader. If space can be allotted originally to accommodate this habit, the individual plants will be especially attractive.

Joan Butler, ABS Consultant

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor:

On a bright October morning in 1993, passengers from the Delta Queen, representing three Virginia Historical houses (Gunston Hall, Kenmore, and Stratford Hall), were transported by bus for a walking tour of Mooresville, Alabama. We were greeted by the Mayor of this historic town.

Boxwood is seen in many yards, ranging up to 150 years in age, and all blend with their surroundings.

The area around Mooresville was settled as early as 1805 on land belonging to the Chickasaw Indians, who ceded their land to the Federal government in 1816-1818.

After 62 residents petitioned for an Act of Incorporation, the town was incorporated in November 1818, one month before the state of Alabama was admitted to the Union. The streets and lots you see today are those laid out by the founders.

Things, of course, have changed, but the Mooresville appears largely untouched by time. Some buildings have been lost, and the business community has mostly disappeared, but the residences remain in their rural

setting and are the bedrock of the town.

Buildings are a mixture of architectural styles ranging from copies of 18th-century New England and classical houses to original buildings of the 1820s, 1840s, representatives of the Victorian style, an 1865 house with 14-foot ceilings that was moved from Decatur, Alabama, and a 1930s house with traditional style that has later additions. All show pride of ownership in their maintenance.

Our tour began on High Street where there was an original Stagecoach Inn and Tavern, built sometime before 1825 when it was sold for \$1,500 to David E. Putney. A listing on Tanner's Post Map of 1825 quoted supper as costing "two bits."

The original post office was located at this tavern. We ended our tour at the present post office at the corner of Lauderville and High Streets. The building owned by the town dates after 1840 and had mailboxes and office furnishings from the original post office. Some of the boxes, numbered 1-48 have been in the same family for generations (Photo 1).

Across the street from the tavern is

the Aunt Mandy and Uncle Zack Simmons cottage, typical of Downing Gothic of the latter half of the 19th century. This style, popularized by A. J. Downing, is rarely found in such a modest cottage. However, Uncle Zack was a carpenter who wished to display his talent. Each year the couple entertained the entire town, and it is said that they borrowed the necessary china, silver, and linens from the townfolk and returned them after the party (Photo 2).

Next to the Simmons cottage is a 1947 clapboard cottage on the site of earlier buildings. Boxwoods were used as foundation plantings (Photo 3).

An unmistakably Victorian-style cottage of the late 1800s on Market Street originally had four rooms, each with an iron mantle. Additions have been made, but it retains its original style (Photo 4).

Proceeding along Market Street, we saw the 1988 Underwood house, a replica of the 1730 Croningshield [*sic*]-Bentley house in Salem, Mass., which was built on the site of an earlier house (Photo 5). (The correct spelling, I believe, is Crowninshield.)



Photo 1: Mooresville, Alabama, Post Office, where refreshments were served and cards were posted as souvenirs. (Photo: Carter Frackelton)



Photo 2: The Aunt Mandy and Uncle Zack Simmons cottage, c. 1890, with two large boxwoods flanking the porch. (Photos: Decca G. Frackelton, except as noted)



Photo 3: The Peebles-Wilson-Eadon house was built in 1947, with an addition in 1981. Boxwoods accent the foundation. (Photo: Carter Frackelton)



Photo 4: This house from the late 1800s has boxwoods by the gate and larger plants by the porch—all the luxuriant growth its Victorian period suggests.



Photo 5: Underwood House, built in 1988, modeled on a 1730 Salem, Mass., house. Boxwood flanks the front entrance and evergreen topiaries frame the door.



Photo 6: Boxwood are used in front of an 1780-style "saltbox" built in 1986.

Next door is an 1790-style "salt box" that was built in 1986 by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Sneed on the original "shop" lot. They also reconstructed a building on the adjacent "blacksmith" lot which is now used as a private woodworking shop (Photo 6).

Built in 1826 and known as "the Corner House," is a fine example of Federal period brick and, typically, does not have a front porch. The Piney Street side has a frame addition and outbuilding as well as larger, older boxwood for screening (Photo 7).



Photo 7: The 1826 "Corner House," replanted with a boxwood border and a cluster of boxwood in front.



Photo 8: Boxwoods grace the front of this 1826 Federal house, one of two of that date on High Street.



Photo 9: A cluster of older boxwood at an unidentified residence in Mooresville.



*Photo 10: As the Zeitler-Hill-McLain house was begun in 1927, these *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa' were not in place in the last century.*

The Zeitler-Hill-McLain house, a handsome brick structure on Lauderville Street was begun in 1927 and work continued through 1945. Some of the materials used were from early 19th-century buildings. An earlier photo would indicate that the extensive plantings of mature boxwood have not been in place as their age would suggest *Photo 10*.

Decca G. Frackelton



*Col. Robert Utley, Retd., and his *B. sempervirens* 'Argenteo-Pendula'.*

To the Editor:

This is a photo of the *B. sempervirens* 'Argenteo-Pendula' that Col. Robert L. Utley planted at his mother's home in Nashville, Arkansas, when he was in the army and moving around.

When he retired to Fayetteville, Arkansas, he transplanted it to his home. A tree limb damaged it in 1993, but it is recovering.

Called the Golden Weeping Boxwood, it is found in old gardens of the Eastern Shore of Maryland, according to the late Dr. Henry Skinner.

Mrs. James Ward Walker

To the Editor:

When I was a child my parents purchased a cottage at a small family beach on the Potomac River near the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. My summers were spent there playing near the shore, rowing up and down the river (Daddy always let us row as far as we wanted as long as we stayed close enough to the shore to walk in), and swimming until my fingers were shriveled.

Our cottage was located in the Tidewater area of Virginia and very near to Wakefield, the boyhood home of George Washington. There were many other historic Virginia homes and buildings along the route we drove to reach our summer home, including Berkeley, Mount Vernon, Appomattox Court House, Shirley Plantation, and south of the beach, the finest of all and my favorite, Stratford Hall, home of Lighthouse Harry Lee and his son, Robert E. Lee. Because my father was a history buff, too many weekends to count were spent visiting these beautiful historic buildings and playing hide and seek with my sister in the wonderful boxwood that surrounded them all. I will never forget the smell of that Virginia boxwood.

After I grew up and married I found myself living in a small town (population 4,500) in southwestern Michigan, a beautiful state, but missing a lot of the foliage I was accustomed to and loved. My husband built a lovely home for me there and gave me the opportunity to choose the style, which was, of course, southern colonial, reminiscent of Williamsburg, or as close as a 23-year-old girl could extract from an older northern Dutch builder who considered all amenities expensive extravagances.

When the landscaper came to discuss the plantings around the house, I laughingly said I wanted dwarf English boxwood as nothing else was really appropriate for our house. I could not believe his response. He became very excited and told me he could supply us with boxwood. He related an

unbelievable story. It seems while attending a funeral in the town cemetery several years before he was surprised to see a good sized boxwood growing in the cemetery, as boxwood does not normally live that far north.

He returned later and discovered after some investigation that it had been planted there near the grave of a lady from the south by one of her relatives. The plant was very old and very healthy. After some difficulty he located the family and asked if he could take some cuttings. They agreed he could do so and he had successfully nursed along about 45 plants. He had taken beautiful care of the cuttings. They had grown to about 4 inches high. Due to the fact that our new house faced the north, he said he would supply enough for the front of the house, about 40 plants. He insisted they had to be placed close to the house and would only grow on the north side where they would not be exposed to the

winter sun. The nurseryman said the sun could cause the sap to flow and subsequent freezing again at night would kill them. They all survived the seven years we lived in the house. We moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, and I had to leave my little boxwood. They had grown to about six inches tall when we left.

Whenever we return to Michigan to visit and I am able, we go to check on the boxwood and our house. The present owners seem to have added some taller plants on the ends of the house and by the front door—northern plantings to me, but nice. We built the house in 1960 and as you can see from the photograph taken in 1992, our little boxwood have come a long way. I am sure they will be there for many, many years.

Ruth McDonald (Mrs. Frederick)
Vice Director, District IV
Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs



1992 photo of the Michigan home built in 1960 and planted with dwarf boxwood, then about 4" tall. Larger evergreens at the corners and entrance were added for a later owner. (Photo: Ruth McDonald)

NOTICES

Historic Garden Week April 22-29, 1995.

Private homes, gardens and historic landmarks will be showcased as the Garden Club of Virginia hosts its 62nd Historic Garden Week for the benefit of its restoration projects.

Featured historic attractions which have been beneficiaries of Historic Garden Week proceeds are Stratford Hall, Westmoreland County, home of the Lees, and Prestwoud, Mecklenburg County, built by Sir Peyton Skipwith, with the interpretative restoration of Lady Jean's garden.

Among the places open in the Fredericksburg area on Tuesday, April 25, 1995, is Kenmore Woods, Spotsylvania County, built 1829 by Samuel Alsop, Jr., now the home of Dr. and Mrs. Peter R. Smith. The 91-acre property includes a perennial garden, boxwood parterre, woodland garden, orchard, pool and several garden buildings. (see cover photo)

- April 22: Alexandria, Ashland, Orange, Portsmouth, Winchester
- April 23: Chatham, Leesburg, Virginia Beach, Princess Anne, Winchester
- April 24: Leesburg, Suffolk
- April 25: Fredericksburg, Lexington, Lynchburg, Petersburg, Richmond, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg
- April 26: Hampton, Harrisonburg, Martinsville, Northern Neck, Richmond, Warrenton
- April 27: Charlottesville, Albemarle, Danville, Norfolk, Richmond, Warrenton
- April 28: Charlottesville, Albemarle, Fairfax, Gloucester, Mathews
- April 29: Charlottesville, Albemarle, Eastern Shore, Roanoke, Staunton, Warren County

For the informative Guidebook, available in early March, send \$2.00 donation to cover postage to Historic Garden Week, 12E Franklin St.,

Richmond, Virginia 23219. Tickets are sold at each house on the tour and block tickets in various localities. For further information: (804) 644-7776.

Maryland House Tour

The Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage has set dates and locations for its 1995 tours as follows:

- Sat. Apr. 22
Dorchester County (Eastern Shore)
- Sun. Apr. 23
Caroline County (Eastern Shore)
- Sat. Apr. 29
Charles County (Southern Maryland)
- Sun. Apr. 30
Rockland area of Baltimore County
- Wed. May 3
Carroll County
- Sat. May 6
Canton-Baltimore City waterfront

The Pilgrimage is an annual event in Maryland, and raises funds for preservation, restoration and maintenance of historically important sites throughout the state. Contact Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage, 1105A Providence Road, Baltimore, MD 21286, phone (410) 821-6933.

Fifth Annual Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival Apr. 22-23, 1995

Historic downtown Leesburg will be transformed into a botanical garden for visitors to see boxes of topiary, potted plants and fresh cut flowers, shrubs and trees, gardening equipment and supplies

Admission \$2 adult and \$1 children ages 6-12. The festival is sponsored by the Leesburg Department of Parks and Recreation. Call (703) 777-1262 for more information.

1995 ABS Annual Meeting May 19-20

Locating the Annual Meeting in Williamsburg has been popular, so the Board has decided to have it there again. Please mark your calendars and make your plans to attend. The accommodations will be at the Lord Paget Quality Inn. You will be responsible for your own reservations for either or both nights. A block of rooms will be held until April 19. The daily rate is \$45.00 per room.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Friday, May 19, 1995

- 12:00 N Early registration
- 1:30 PM Program
(to be announced)
- 8:00 PM Evening Program,
Speaker, Dr. Gwynn
Ramsey, Professor
of Biology, Lynch-
burg College and
raconteur of Appala-
chian folk tales;
reception

Saturday, May 20, 1995

- 8:00 AM Registration-Danish/
Juice/coffee
- 9:30 AM Business Meeting
- 10:30 AM Educational Program
(to be announced)
- 12:00 N Luncheon
- 1:00 PM Bus Garden Tour of
the College of
William and Mary
boxwood collection
- 3:00 PM Boxwood Auction

A form for registration and a more detailed schedule will be enclosed in the April issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Make plans to attend.

September 1994 Board Meeting Minutes

The fall meeting of the ABS Board of Directors was held on Thursday, September 8, 1994, at 1:30 p.m. in Charlottesville, Virginia. In attendance were President Dr. Stephen D. Southall, Vice President Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton, Secretary Mrs. Joan Butler, Executive Treasurer Mrs. Katherine D. Ward, Directors Mr. Lynn R. Batdorf, Dr. Henry Frierson, Mrs. Sigrid Harriman, Mr. Tom Saunders, Mrs. Tyra Sexton, Mr. Stephen Zapton and ex-officio Dr. Edward F. Connor, Director of Blandy Farm.

The minutes of the spring Board Meeting were approved as published in *The Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol. 34, No. 1, p. 22. The Treasurer reported a balance of \$33,215.55 in the checking account and \$22,645.15 in a certificate of deposit; \$18,310.98 of these funds are reserved for special funds.

Annual Meeting: Discussion followed on the 1994 Annual Meeting in Williamsburg. Attendance was higher than in 1993, but several locations need to be improved in 1995: the room in which the Workshop was held was not satisfactory, and the Coffee Shop does not seat enough people to provide comfort at the Friday evening program. It was agreed that sites for future Annual Meetings should be chosen for three years in the future to provide more planning time. A committee of Dr. Frierson, Mrs. Harriman and Mr. Zapton will select possible places. The 1995 meeting will again be held in Williamsburg on May 19-20, but other places were discussed for 1996 and 1997. Decisions will be made at the January Board Meeting to be held at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. on January 14, 1995, from 11 to 3. President Southall noted that more frequent Board

Meetings were needed and proposed they be scheduled at least in May, September and January. It was suggested that a speaker from the location of the following year's Annual Meeting site might encourage more attendance. Suggestions for 1995 were offered: head gardener at Busch Gardens for Friday evening, to be contacted by Tom Saunders; a talk by a Colonial Williamsburg speaker on other uses of boxwood, to be explored by Decca Frackelton; Joan Butler will inquire whether a speaker from Ladew Topiary Gardens in Maryland would offer slides and instructions on topiary. Steve Zapton will contact the National Park Service in Yorktown, Virginia, to request a speaker or a tour. Tom Saunders offered to provide small boxwood plants of a choice cultivar for distribution to those who attend. The annual auction will terminate the meeting. Ways will be sought to encourage members to become more involved with the Society.

Registration and Publications: Mr. Batdorf reported that there have been no new cultivar registrations; his work on the *Monograph of Buxus* is in abeyance until completion of the *Handbook* and the fourth edition of the *Buyer's Guide*, which he expects to have ready for the editor after October. The *Handbook* is nearing publication; Mr. Batdorf displayed a photocopy of the final version which he had just received. After careful proof reading and assignment of a Library of Congress Catalog number it will be ready for the printer. In August Mr. Batdorf attended the second International Symposium on Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants in Seattle, Washington. Many interesting subjects filled the program of the busy sessions, such as standards for plant descriptions, procedures for registration of names, and trademarks.

The American Association of

NOTICE

ABS AUCTION - May 20, 1995. Anyone with named cultivars to offer for the boxwood auction at the annual meeting, please contact Mrs. Scot Butler, 107 Cottage Dr., Winchester, VA 22603.

Botanic Gardens and Arboreta is promoting the establishment of national plant collections and the U.S. National Arboretum has applied for designation as the National *Buxus* Collection; a representative from AABGA will soon visit the Arboretum for an evaluation. Mr. Batdorf noted that a University of Maryland graduate student is undertaking a study of boxwood leaf miner, which is actually a gall miner; perhaps the subject might serve as an ABS research project.

The fourth edition of the *Boxwood Buyer's Guide* will be appearing soon. Tom Saunders suggested that an announcement of it might be sent to the Virginia Nurserymen's Association to appear in their next publication. The *Handbook* is almost ready; 4,000 copies will be printed and the price will be \$15.00 including postage. Mr. Batdorf invited the Board to meet at the U.S. National Arboretum in January 1995, probably January 14, from 11 to 3.

Research Committee: Mrs. Butler reported that the original cultivar evaluation project at the Chicago Botanic Garden had been terminated after the effects of last winter's bitter weather had killed all cultivars except half of the 'Vardar Valley' plants and the 'Green Velvets'. However, Mr. Richard Hawks is willing to undertake a new test, choosing cultivars which are believed to be hardy in Zone 4. He wishes to delay the start until February 1995. Dr. Thomas Banko at the

Virginia Research and Agricultural Experiment Station at Virginia Beach might undertake a study cultivar susceptibility to root rot. Tom Saunders suggested that plants be inoculated with *phytophthora parasitica* and then treated with Subdue to test natural resistance and also effectiveness of the treatment.

Memorial Garden: Dr. Conner requested authorization for \$1,500 to cover fall planting in the Relocated Memorial Garden: \$600 for co-planting material (trees and shrubs) and \$900 for additional seasonal labor. It was noted that expenditure of up to \$8,000 had previously been approved; only \$1,322 has been spent for the installation of water lines.

The Board expressed great regret that a letter of resignation had been received from Mrs. Katherine D. Ward, ABS Executive Treasurer.

President Southall remarked that the Board needs to discuss where the Society is headed; a sense of direction is needed; a vision for the future to promote good planning. It was recognized that an Executive Secretary/Treasurer is a necessity for the Society; a job description would be helpful and a regular salary must be established. Dr. Connor noted that the Friends of the State Arboretum had encountered the same need and has arranged to have their Secretary paid by Blandy Farm and they reimburse Blandy for her salary. This procedure simplified the payment of Social Security and other payroll taxes.

A meeting of the Executive Committee (Dr. Southall, Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Butler, Mrs. Frackelton and Mr. Batdorf) was scheduled for Thursday October 27 at 2 p.m. in Charlottesville, Virginia; if necessary to complete the planning session, the meeting will continue through dinner. All Board Members are welcome to attend this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Mrs. Joan Butler, Secretary

Executive Committee Minutes October 1994

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the ABS Board of Directors was held on October 27, in Charlottesville, Virginia. In attendance were President Dr. Stephen D. Southall, Vice President Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton, Secretary Mrs. Scot Butler, Executive Treasurer Mrs. Katherine D. Ward, and Directors Mr. Lynn R. Batdorf and Mr. Steven Zapton.

Discussion centered on the future direction and focus for the Society and ways in which the Executive Treasurer's job could support and enhance the Society's purposes. It was noted that the requirements will fill more than a half-time position. During the membership renewal period the load is extremely heavy. It was agreed that a computer would add greater flexibility. It was mentioned that Mrs. Ward has both a computer and a copy machine.

Questions were raised about the adequacy of ABS dues income to cover the publication of *The Boxwood Bulletin*; expenses for postage and printing continue to increase rapidly. Most other plant societies have considerably higher dues than ABS. The Society is strengthening its future by offering the *Handbook*, a revised *Buyer's Guide* and by the preparation of a *Monograph for Buxus*, all fine accomplishments produced by Director and Registrar Lynn Batdorf. It should be possible to promote ABS more widely through contacts with other plant societies. New topics in the *Bulletin* are desirable.

As discussion continued on the Executive Treasurer's position, it was pointed out that salaries for other similar jobs are much higher than ABS has allocated in the past. The Society has become so large that it can no longer operate as a mostly volunteer organization. It was recognized that the position requires at least 500 hours annually and that a salary of \$6,000

would be reasonable. It was moved and seconded and passed unanimously that \$6,000 would be set for the position of Executive Secretary/Treasurer. President Southall then offered the position to Mrs. Ward, who accepted and agreed to rescind her resignation.

A question was asked about the number of complimentary copies of *The Boxwood Bulletin* which are mailed; there are 17 on the list, including some horticultural libraries. An announcement was read about a Medal and Award offered by the Arthur Hoyt Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College, Swarthmore Pennsylvania. It was unanimously voted that the Secretary (Mrs. Butler) will prepare the documentation needed to nominate Mr. Lynn R. Batdorf for this award.

Discussion followed on the 1995 Annual Meeting to be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, on Friday and Saturday, May 19-20, 1995. Possibilities for speakers were announced. The Nominating Committee chairman, Mrs. Tyra Sexton has assembled a good committee with representatives from different regions.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Mrs. Joan Butler, Secretary

The Seasonal Gardener

Practical tips for boxwood enthusiasts from Society members



Winter Maintenance

Many garden enthusiasts are frustrated during the winter months because they are unable to actually “do anything” in their garden. They then resort to perusing seed catalogues and planning for spring. Boxwood growers, however, are very fortunate in that winter provides a great opportunity for us to do “hands on” work and maintenance on our gardens. The holiday season provides the guiltless opportunity to pluck our boxwoods. Guiltless because even though we cannot root the cuttings, we can bring them inside and use them creatively in our holiday decorations. Even if all of the cuttings are not used in decorations, the period from December through February is an opportune time to pluck boxwoods.

Plucking as an annual routine is recommended for a number of reasons. It allows air and light into the center of the plant, stimulating growth and maintaining a dry environment free of disease. Plucking, as opposed to shearing, is recommended since it creates the minor openings in the plants which allow the free flow of the elements. Shearing takes off far too much of the outer leaf surface, exposing stem ends, without creating any of the valuable openings. Plucking also allows one to shape plants over a period of time. Unsightly bulges in one area or tall, skinny plants can be selectively plucked in the needy areas resulting in the shape that you desire. Even plants which are much too large for an area, such as beside a walk, can be gradually reduced in size over a period of a couple of years without ever looking butchered.

Minor thinning can be done anytime during the winter period without endangering the health of the plant. However, if one is to do major thinning, it would be best to wait until the end of February since the worst of winter is over. The reason is that plants have the greatest probability of winter survival if their leaf to root equilibrium is not disturbed. A severe winter can stress plants and any change in the leaf to root equilibrium will exacerbate that stress. By the end of February, with winter over, plants which need major plucking can be safely plucked. The new growth of spring will soon fill out the plant and cover any

unsightliness created. The plant will quickly have its typical “billowy clouds” appearance.

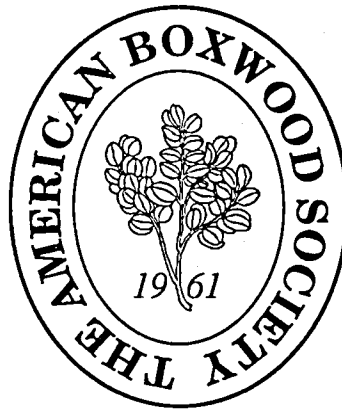
After plucking, cleaning plant interiors with strong water pressure is facilitated since the debris is easier to wash out of a plant which has been thinned. Plants grown in full sun often have sides which are very thick and impenetrable. By first plucking these sides, it is then much easier to wash and clean debris from the sides. Spray and clean from the interior driving the debris out. The interior base is the most common area for debris to accumulate.

Another reason for plucking at the end of February is that this is an appropriate time to root the cuttings. Sticking the cuttings 2 inches to 3 inches into the soil in a shady, damp area will result in roots by June. (For detailed instructions on rooting, see articles listed under “Propagation” in indexes to *The Boxwood Bulletin*.)

Snow can be very destructive to boxwoods. Small plants are not hurt as much as large ones. Actually snow can be helpful to small plants because it literally covers them up thereby insulating them from strong winds and cold. During a heavy snow it is advisable to gently knock the snow from larger plants before it accumulates and begins to bend the branches down. Be careful because the branches are very brittle during the cold and break easily. Keeping the snow off while it is snowing is preferable to knocking it off after it has already weighed the branches down and opened the plant up. A plucked or open plant will survive snow much easier than a tight one because the snow can more easily fall into and through the holes of the open plant as opposed to staying completely on top of the unplucked, tight plant. Ice is much more difficult to deal with than snow because it does not easily brush off. If you know that an ice storm is coming or if it has just started you may cover your prize boxwoods with burlap or plastic to “shed” the ice. Attempting to knock the ice off is probably not advisable since the ice is difficult to remove and you risk breaking the branches in the attempt.

Stephen D. Southall

President of the ABS and co-owner of Boxwoods of Virginia



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