

*The*

JULY 1980

# Boxwood Bulletin

A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL



*photo courtesy U. S. Department of Agriculture*

KNOT GARDEN IN NATIONAL HERB GARDEN  
National Arboretum  
Washington, D. C.

Edited Under The Direction Of  
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# The Boxwood Bulletin

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EDITOR — MRS. CHARLES H. DICK

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# The National Herb Garden At The U. S. National Arboretum

A Cooperative Project of the U. S. Department  
of Agriculture and The Herb Society of America

## NEW GARDEN OPENS

Beginning June 13, 1980, *The National Herb Garden* will be a major attraction for visitors to the U. S. National Arboretum in the Nation's Capital. Preparation of the site started in 1979. When the 2-acre garden opened for public viewing, some 7,000 carefully selected herbal plants are on display.

## WHAT IT IS

The National Herb Garden is really three gardens in one. In herbalist parlance, there are three "rooms," each containing a major garden. Plant material masses, changes in elevation, and treillage (lattice-work) are used to separate, yet integrate, the three rooms: A *Knot garden*, a *historic garden*, and *speciality gardens*.

In the *Knot Garden*, plants are arranged to look like interwoven chains. Although the design is intricate and formal, it is truly simple compared with the original knot gardens of the Renaissance in France and Italy. Much of the detail in the Renaissance designs, in turn, was borrowed from Greek and Roman pattern books intended for embroiderers. At a time when garden designs were taken from embroidery patterns, gardeners developed a special vocabulary to indicate features of their gardens. This vocabulary included such words as tendrils, beads, plums, interlacing, and wreaths. In France these gardens were called "*parterres de broderie*," and in England the patterns were called "knots." Throughout this evolution, it has been customary to fill spaces between the chains with nonplant material such as colored earths, crumbled brick, iron filings, or colored pebbles.

*The Knot Garden* in The National Herb Garden has three interlinked chains, with each chain made of a single plant species. The species are Japanese holly, dwarf blue cypress, and dwarf arborvitae. Crushed brick fills open space between the chains.

Roses are prominently mentioned in every phase of the long history of the cultures and use of herbs. Literature of the Roman Empire contains references to roses and cultivation of rose gardens. Greek and Roman writers described the therapeutic value of rose leaves and petals. Ancient Egyptians knew how to extract scent-containing oil from rose petals. Dried rose petals were used as room-fresheners several centuries ago.

The prominent position of roses in herb gardening was established by wild roses, long before

breeders started developing the hybrids familiar to many gardeners today. These wild roses are also referred to as Old Roses, species roses, or historic roses. It is these wild roses, which are extraordinarily fragrant, that are traditionally included in formal herb gardens. Unfortunately, however, many historic roses have not been perpetuated; and some of those that were saved are difficult to obtain. About half of the current rose collection for The National Herb Garden was obtained in Europe.

The *Speciality Garden* area features 10 gardens arranged in an oval. The gardens vary somewhat in size, but most are about 40 feet long and 25 feet wide. Each garden reflects a theme. Each shows the historic importance of the plants it contains and their relationship to cultural, pharmaceutical, commercial, and culinary uses. The ten themes are:

*Dioscorides* — This garden includes some of the plants used and described by Dioscorides, a Greek who was the outstanding physician and author on botany of his time (first century A.D.). His book, *De Materia Medica*, was for 1,500 years the standard work on botany and the therapeutic use of plants and plant parts.

*Early American* — Plants used by this country's settlers are included. Many settlers brought medicinal or other herbal plants from their homelands, and also used native plants.

*Dye* — Even today, when a wide choice of synthetic dyes are available, many fabric workers prefer to use dyes derived from plants. These include indigo, goldenrod, and yarrow.

*American Indian* — American Indians used herbs as a source of medicines, dyes, poisons, foods, and materials to use in their many crafts. This collection includes plants used by Indians of Eastern North America.

*Modern Botanicals* — This garden portrays present medicinal use of herbs. Included, for example, is *Digitalis purpurea*, the foxglove plant that furnishes the digitalis used in some heart ailments.

*Culinary* — Here, visitors probably will find more plants with which they are familiar than in any other speciality garden. Included are garlic, thyme, dill, savory, parsley, and rosemary.

(Continued on Page 4)



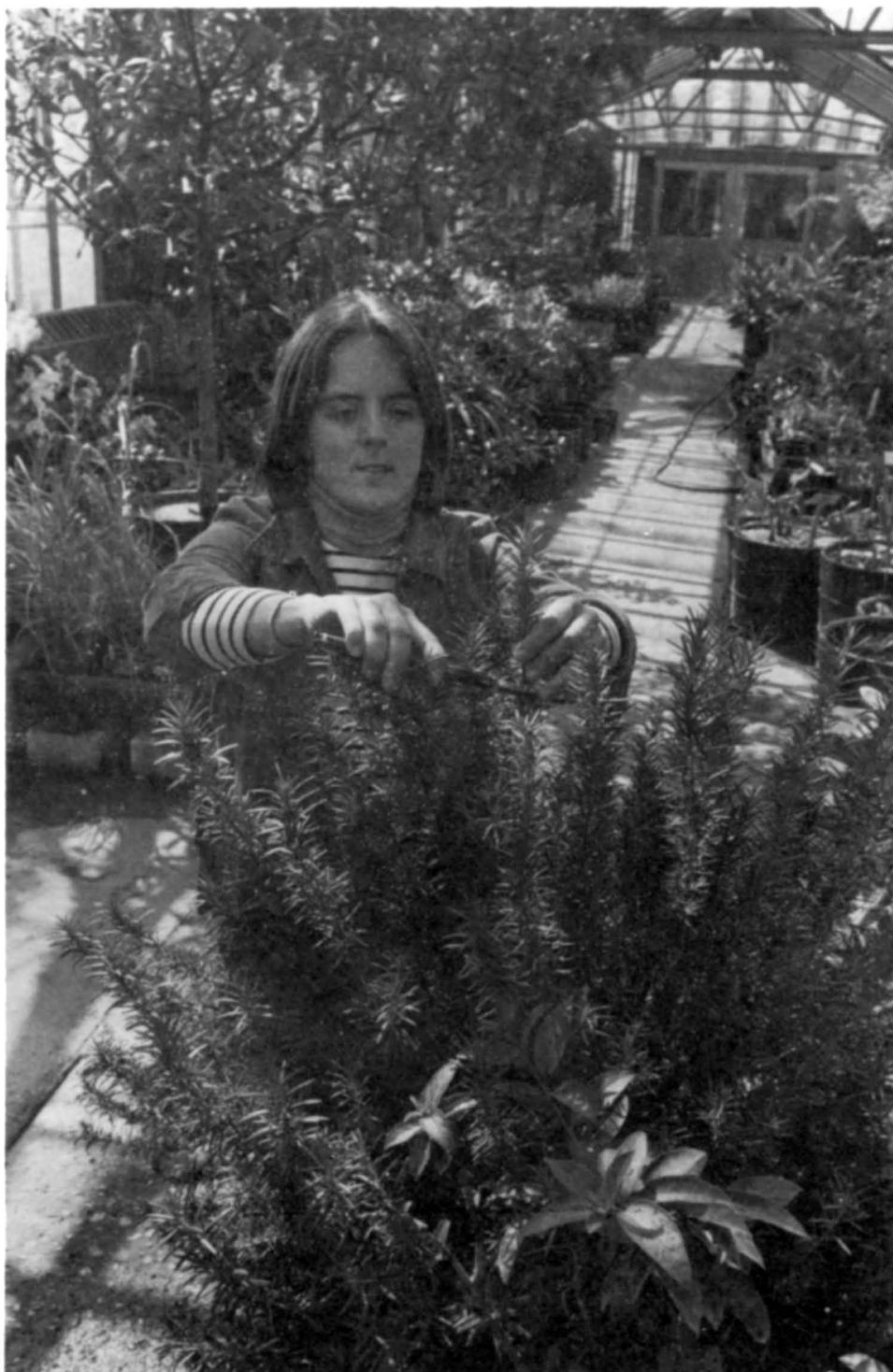
*photo courtesy U. S. Department of Agriculture*

### IN THE FUTURE — A SHADY RETREAT

Autumn-flowering clematis will soon cover this arch at the new National Herb Garden in Washington, D.C., and provide shade for visitors on summer days. "A place to rest in the shade will be welcome," explains Garden Curator Holly Harmar Shimizu, "because the Garden is intentionally located where it gets full sun. Most herbs love sun. This plant is a vigorous grower, and will climb and cover the entire arch. This variety of clematis also

has a pleasant fragrance, which will add to the enjoyment of people relaxing in the shade."

Here Mrs. Shimizu discusses plans with Dr. John L. Creech, Director of the U.S. National Arboretum. The National Herb Garden, on the grounds of the Arboretum, is now open to the public.



*photo courtesy U. S. Department of Agriculture*

### ROSEMARY PLANT AND HOLLY!

*Mrs. Holly Harmar Shimizu clips cuttings from a rosemary plant.*

Holly Harmar Shimizu, recently appointed Curator of the National Herb Garden, clips cuttings from a rosemary plant destined for the new Garden of the U.S. National Arboretum.

“Rosemary is one of the all-time favorites in herb gardening,” Mrs. Shimizu says. “For at least 2,000 years herbalists have treasured rosemary for its fragrance, medicinal and culinary uses, and symbolism in folklore.”

To propagate rosemary plants, Mrs. Shimizu clips a sprig of new growth 4 to 5 inches long, and strips its leaves from about 1 1/2 inches of the bottom. She then places the sprig in moist sand and leaves it until it roots, in 6 weeks or less.

Rosemary, a popular house plant, is a native of the mild climates of countries bordering the Mediterranean. A perennial, Mrs. Shimizu says it will survive most winters in climates such as that of Washington, D.C. if given some shelter.

## HERB GARDEN

(Continued from Page 1)

*Industry* — This garden displays economically important crops such as cotton, rice, jute, flax, rape, and hemp.

*Fragrance* — Many home gardens or window boxes include some of these plants — lavender, mint, rosemary, and scented geranium.

*Oriental* — Oriental people have cultured and used herbs for several thousand years, and herb- alists in other parts of the world have much to learn from them. Most of the plants in this garden come from China, Japan, and Korea.

*Beverage* — Visitors who think of tea as being made from only one species of plant may be surprised at the wide range of plants and plant parts that are brewed for drinking. Many cultures have their own favorite herbal teas.

### HOW IT CAME TO BE

The National Herb Garden is proof that persistence pays. In 1965 some of the members of *The Herb Society of America* conceived the idea of a National Herb Garden at the U. S. National Arboretum, in the Nation's Capitol. Over the next 15 years Herb Society officers worked out the problems - - they raised funds, overcame legal obstacles, employed an architect, and found support in The Congress.

*Arboretum Director* John L. Creech recalls that 1976 was a pivotal year. "In a Bicentennial ceremony, The Herb Society gave \$17,760 to the Arboretum for The Herb Garden. Also, in 1976 the Society and the Arboretum signed an agreement formalizing the cooperative arrangement between the Society and the Arboretum," he notes. In March 1976 the Board of Directors of The Herb Society voted to retain Sasaki Associates as landscape architects. Construction started in 1978, soon after The Herb Society presented a check for \$200,000 to Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland, and the U.S. Congress provided matching funds.

*Curator* Mrs. Holly Harmar Shimizu joined the staff of the U. S. National Arboretum in January 1980, in the position of Curator of The National Herb Garden. Mrs. Shimizu was graduated in 1974 from Temple University, Ambler School of Horticulture, with an Associate in Science degree. In 1976 she received her Bachelor of Science degree in horticulture from Pennsylvania State University, where she was elected to membership in Pi Alpha Xi, the horticulture honor society. In addition to her scholastic training, Mrs. Shimizu has a broad range of horticultural work experience, including the 1975 summer student program at Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pa. From 1976 to 1979 she worked in Europe. Her European experience included tours of duty at outstanding arboretums or nurseries in England, West Germany, Belgium, and Holland. During the month before she joined the Arboretum staff in January 1980, Mrs. Shimizu spent a month in Japan visiting nurseries and gardens, including the Takeda Herbal Garden in Tokyo.

"From the time a knot garden is conceived on the landscape architect's drawing board, it is as formal and precise as if the Elizabethans planned it," explains Mrs. Shimizu. "First the plan is drawn to exact scale, with the position of every plant plotted within a fraction of an inch. Next, the person doing the planting must exactly follow the plan. Finally, care-taking of the garden is intensive. Almost constant manicuring is required to keep the chains in the desired form."

### LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

The landscaping-architectural design for the National Herb Garden was rendered by Sasaki Associates, Watertown, Mass. This is the firm that also designed the Arboretum's Japanese Bonsai Collection, which won worldwide acclaim since its dedication in 1976. The Herb Garden and Bonsai Collection are twin attractions, in neighboring locations at the Arboretum.

### OTHER FACILITIES

Associated with The National Herb Garden is a trial-and-propagation garden, which is a secluded area holding cold frames and compost bins. Here, new plants may be tested and special propagation done. Ornamental and culinary peppers are featured in beds outside this garden.

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### Additional Note:...

On the evening of June 12, Kay and I were fortunate to be part of the group that assembled for the dedication of the new Herb Garden at the U. S. National Arboretum. For the opportunity of attending this function we owe credit to Doris Frost, for it was Mrs. Frost who encouraged Kay to join the Herb Society several years ago. She is a delightful lady who has crossed our horticultural path on numerous occasions, always brightening our day. Mrs. Frost spoke on "Herbs" at Blandy and the audience loved her.

Mrs. Frost is an active member of the American Boxwood Society and I hope many of you have had the chance to meet her at one of our Annual Meetings or Workshops.

Boxwood enthusiasts will be pleased to note that Boxwood plays an important role in the design of the new Herb Garden. Hundreds of lovely large boxwoods are used in the garden, defining shapes and patterns, and forming much of the background for the herb planting areas. Try to get to the Arboretum soon if you haven't already seen this wonderful display, or, better yet, join the ABS on Oct. 30, 1980 when we hold another of our Boxwood Workshops at the U. S. National Arboretum. Put the date on your calendar now and plan to attend.

Thomas E. Ewert, ABS Director

# THE SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

*Doris Thain Frost*

On June 12 at the U. S. National Arboretum the agonizing yet persistent hopes, dreams and efforts of The Herb Society of America, its 14 chapters and many members-at-large, climax in the dedication of the National Herb Garden, a cooperative project of the Society and the Department of Agriculture.

Back in 1965 the idea of a National Herb Garden was proposed and the idea was approved with enthusiasm by Dr. John C. Creech, director of the U. S. Arboretum. A design was drawn and presented to the Herb Society by Elsetta Gilchrist Barnes. Implementation of the plan was given to Sasaki Associates of Watertown, Mass.

Then began the long, frustrating process of acquiring the funds to finance the project. It had been hoped that the garden could be completed for the U. S. Bicentennial in 1976. But it was not to be. The final goal on funds was reached in December 1978.

Now in the summer of 1980 the two-acre garden is to be dedicated. The gardens, designed in the shape of an old-fashioned key, are really three gardens in one. In the vocabulary of the herbalist there are three "rooms" each containing a major garden. Some 7,000 selected herbal plants are on display, with the plant masses, changes in elevation and treillage (latticework) used to separate the three rooms.

One enters through a paved brick terrace that overlooks the Knot Garden, the plants in interwoven chains — three — with each chain made of a single plant species — Japanese holly, dwarf blue cypress and dwarf aborvitae.

From the Knot Garden one continues into the Historic Rose Garden. With roses prominently mentioned in every phase of the long history of the culture and use of herbs, wild roses maintained a prominent position in herb gardening. These roses are often referred to as Old Roses, species roses, or historic roses. These roses were used in perfumery, along with lavender and other fragrant herbs.

Many historic roses have not been perpetuated and some of those that were saved are difficult to obtain. About half of the collection in the National Herb Garden was obtained in Europe.

Charles E. Bell, Jr. of the Potomac Rose Society says that species roses and their derivatives "consist of variants of the *Rosa gallica*, *R. damasena*, *R. alba*, *R. centifolia*, *R. spinosiss*, *R. foetica*, Bourbon roses, hybrid perpetuals, Tea roses, various old climbers, miniature roses and several other old species roses."

In the Historic Rose Garden, which is a gift from a member in memory of her daughter, is an armillary in memory of Mrs. Nanette Strayer, a founding member of the Potomac Unit, The Herb Society. The specially designed sundial is set in concrete.

The largest of the three parts of the key is the Speciality Garden that features 10 gardens, most about 40 feet long and 25 feet wide. Each garden reflects a theme, emphasizing historic importance of the plants in cultural, pharmaceutical, commercial and culinary uses.

Small herbal trees and benches are in the center of the area so that a visitor can sit and observe all the gardens.

Reprint Excerpt — *The Herbarist*, June 1980.

*DORIS THAIN FROST* is currently associate editor, *BULLETIN*: a past editor for four years; an editor of *The Herbarist*, publication of the Herb Society of America; and for seven years editor of the Potomac Herb Journal of the Potomac Unit, Herb Society. She also participated in the classification of plants in the 1942 edition of the *Fuchs Herbal De Historia Stirpium*. The beloved Fairfax County Herb Lady assisted in the restoration of the herb garden at Sully Plantation, Fairfax, Va. She received the White Ribbon Special Achievement Certificate for Especially Outstanding Garden Club Work in 1978 from National Council. She is one of those who agonized for a decade to create the National Herb Garden.

Editor



# Herbs For Flavor, Fragrance, Fun In Gardens, Pots, In Shade, In Sun

*Doris Thain Frost*

Herbs give much pleasure and profit if you grow them yourself. Plant herbs in your garden, read books about them, and discover personal joy and an added dimension to your cooking.

First of all, a place is needed to plant the seeds or roots and this means productive soil. A grower with an outdoor plot is indeed fortunate. Herbs will grow well in any garden where vegetables thrive, in the garden rows or around the edges. Herbs will grow in flower beds, in borders, among ornamental shrubs and roses, just so there is good drainage and six or more hours of sun.

Most herbs prefer an alkaline soil, a pH of 6.5 to 7.5. If the soil test indicates acidity, work ground limestone into the soil. The amount will be indicated in the soil test analysis received from your county extension services.

If an outdoor plot is lacking, many herbs will grow in boxes, pots or hanging baskets if the same conditions good soil, drainage and sun — exist.

When planning an herb garden, remember that herbs belong in different classes according to their life span. Annuals, tender and hardy, may be planted in the vegetable garden as they mature in one season. Biennials and tender and hardy perennials must be planted in locations that will not be disturbed by cultivation or rotation as they live several years.

Prepare the plot as for vegetables. Animal manure and compost are good fertilizers, preferably applied in early spring. Use mulches to keep the herb foliage clean, for weed control, and to preserve soil moisture. Cocoa hulls, buckwheat hulls, leaves, straw and hay are popular mulches.

Herbs are propagated by seeds, cuttings, layering, and divisions. If you want only a few plants, buy them from commercial growers.

Seeds come in packets, sold by established seed houses and by some commercial herb growers. Unless you have the equipment and space to start seeds indoors to transplant later, experience has proven that the average gardener had best buy seeds of annuals and plant them where they are to grow, and start perennials from cuttings, divisions and plants.

Parsley, the culinary biennial, can be started from seed if many plants are desired, or a few small plants purchased.

Cuttings can be rooted in water or in a medium of perlite, milled sphagnum moss, or in compressed peat pellets. The rooted cuttings may be transplanted into pots or into the garden if the season permits.

Divisions are made by digging up an older plant and pulling apart or cutting sections of the root and re-planting each section individually.

Plants from commercial growers should be carefully examined for insects and disease, and if they are to grow outdoors, bought and planted when the ground has warmed and all danger of frost is past.

Bees, lady bugs, praying mantis and many other insects are friends in the herb garden as they pollinate plants and also destroy insect enemies. Herbs are peculiarly resistant to most insects and diseases.

Sometimes mints become mildewy early in the season. Either harvest early, or cut and destroy the affected stems. New growth for the second crop will be free of mildew.

Sometimes dill and fennel attract tomato worms. These can be removed by hand. Japanese beetles attack basil. Shake them off into a can of kerosene or into a bucket with warm water, salt and detergent added.

Do not use poisonous substances or powders on any herb to be used in food or beverages.

## *When to Harvest*

The secret of a good harvest is timing, taking into account the readiness of the plant and the use to which it will be put. Just before the flowers fully open is said to be the time when the most oils and flavors are present and the richest fragrances prevail.

Successive harvests can be made of mints, comfrey, basils, parsley and others by cutting the stems early in the season, not too close to the ground so that new growth will start quickly. Cut again in late summer, and — with annuals — before frost when the entire plant may be harvested. If seeds are desired or self seeding is planned, a crop must be allowed to mature and ripen seeds.

Herbs for future use may be dried, frozen, the flavors preserved in vinegars and jellies, or kept fresh for a short time. To dry, cut the stems or stalks when the plant is ready, as I explained. Don't cut too close to the ground. Separate into small bunches, tie with string, and hang in a warm, dry, dark place such as an attic or vacant room until the leaves are crisp and brittle. In the summer this takes from three to ten days.

Strip the leaves, and buds or flowerettes if desired, and put as whole as possible into a jar with a tight lid. Check for a few days to be sure the herbs are perfectly dry, or mold, mildew or other problems will develop. The leaves are kept as whole as possible to preserve the flavor. They can be crumbled when used.

When only the leaves are dried, as with comfrey, gather the leaves, and spread thinly on newspaper in a warm, dry place until crispy dry. Then store in jars.

Basil, parsley and chives sometimes turn very dark if air dried. Stems of these can be laid on brown paper and put into an oven at 150° F or less. Leave the oven door open to allow moisture to escape. This method takes several hours.

The quickest, most modern way is to dry in a microwave oven. Place sprigs on a paper towel and cover with a paper towel. Put into the oven for one minute. Take out of oven and cool. If not completely dry put back into oven for a few seconds. When crumbly, store in jars. Basil, sage, parsley, mints and oregano, especially, retain beautiful, appetizing green colors when dried this way.

If only seeds are to be used, such as from dill, fennel or coriander, take care to cut the stems when ripe but before the seeds fall. A paper bag carefully put over a head or umbel and tied with string before the head is severed is then hung upside down (seed head down) to catch the seeds as they dry and fall.

### Freezing

To freeze herbs, gather as for drying, wash if dusty, pat off excess water, place into plastic bags and put into the freezer immediately. When it's time to use them, snip or chop the herbs without thawing as they mince easily while frozen. Mint, tarragon, lovage, parsley, chives, sorrel, and sweet marjoram take kindly to this method.

Another good way to freeze is to put the chopped herbs into an ice cube tray, fill with water, and freeze. Then put the cubes into plastic bags and store in the freezer. The cubes can easily be popped into soups or stews when needed.

Herb flavors can be enjoyed in vinegars, jellies, and pickles.

Fresh herbs are probably the most desired as the flavor is at its best. Herbs can be kept in the vege-

table bin of a refrigerator for a while, at least through the winter holidays. Or they may be planted in pots and kept in a sunny place or in a greenhouse.

Parsley, Chives, sweet marjoram, thyme and basil are some of the easiest to grow in pots. Many herbs have deep or large root systems that require more space than is usually available in pots.

Herbs that are easy to grow and delightful to use are listed below. Do try to grow some of them in your home garden. Advanced herbalists will know many more.

**BASIL** — *Ocimum basilicum* (pronounced like dazzle). A tender annual. Plant seeds when all danger of frost is past, and cut the last harvest before cold winds turn the leaves black. Of the many varieties, lettuce leaf, dwarf bush, lemon, and the purple or opal basil are the ones used for flavoring food.

Harvest basil when the flower heads appear. If the leaves are to be kept growing, keep the flower heads pinched out. Use fresh in salads, salad dressing, soups, and vegetables. Basil's clove-like flavor has a special affinity for tomatoes, cottage cheese, and egg dishes. The leaves can be dried quickly in the oven, or made into a vinegar to which the red or opal variety gives a lovely ruby color.

**CHIVES** — *Allium schoenoprasum* is the most delicate tasting member of the onion family (see onion chapter for production details). The tender, hollow spears are cut and chopped finely to flavor a great variety of dishes.

The lavender flower heads of chives may be cut close to the ground and dried to go in winter arrangements, or chopped fresh and added to salad. A beautiful perennial, chives often are grown as garden borders.

Chives are best used fresh, and a fresh supply can be kept for winter by potting a few plants and bringing them indoors in fall. Or the snipped foliage may be frozen in ice cubes as described before.

Chives are good in herb butters, green salads, in sour cream for dressing potatoes, in fact in any dish where a mild onion flavor is desired.

**DILL** — *Anethum graveolens* is a hardy annual. Plant the seeds where they are to grow in the early spring, or in the autumn to get an early start. Make successive plantings from April to July. Dill re-seeds very easily if a few plants are allowed to mature.

Both fresh foliage and seeds of dill are used in pickling, in vinegar, minced over salads, cottage cheese and potatoes, blended into sauces for veal and fish, or baked into dilly bread. Dill foliage is the dill weed found in the grocery store.

Dill has such a refreshing flavor that it should be much more widely used. Green dill umbels are distinctive in flower arrangements.

**EGYPTIAN ONION** — *Allium cepa var. viviparum* is a hardy perennial, a curious member of the onion family that forms its bulbs on the tips of its long green shoots rather than in the ground, as most of its relatives do. (See onion chapter for production details.)

Egyptian onion is a very ornamental plant in a garden border. The bulbs may be used in any way an ordinary onion is used. The fresh stalks may be chopped and used too.

**GARLIC** — *Allium sativum*. Garlic's health-giving qualities have been known since ancient times. It also serves as a bug repellent in the garden. (See onion chapter for production details.)

Garlic gives that extra touch to a salad, pickles, and vegetables. The taste for it develops and often it is used as a condiment at the table like salt and pepper. Garlic contains an important essential oil, allicin. Chewing a sprig of parsley or a whole clove is supposed to sweeten the breath after indulging in garlic-flavored food.

Garlic butter is excellent with sour dough or French bread, and garlic vinegar for flavoring potato salad, stews, and cooked greens.

**LOVAGE** — *Levisticum officinale* is a hardy perennial that often grows to six feet in height. Plant it in a permanent place as it lives many years. One or two plants are enough for a small garden. It grows from seed but the best way to begin is with a division from an old plant, or with a young plant from a nursery.

Lovage likes a bit of shade and moisture. The large celery-like leaves are the usable parts. They have a strong celery flavor. The leaves can be cut from the stems and put fresh in salads and soups, or like celery used with other vegetables. In the fall, the leaves can be spread out to dry on paper for winter use.

The dried leaves turn yellowish and do not keep their flavor much more than a year. All the foliage will die down in the fall but new shoots appear in early spring. Lovage is ornamental in a garden corner.

**SWEET MARJORAM** — *Marjorana hortensis* is a tender perennial, treated as an annual. It is sometimes called knotted marjoram because of the form of the flowers and seeds along the stem ends. It is a small, low plant, most easily started by buying plants and setting them into the garden when the ground is warm. Seeds may be sown indoors in early spring and transplanted later but this is for the advanced gardener.

Two harvests may be made. The first is when the plant starts to bloom. Cut back all the stems,

leaving at least an inch of the stems above ground. The harvested marjoram may be dried in small bunches or spread on paper in a warm, dry room. The plants can be cut again when they flower the second time.

Culinary uses are many, as marjoram is one of the most aromatic herbs. The delicious, spicy flavor remains when the leaves are dried. It can be used with fowl, lamb, herb butters, vegetables, and in herbal tea mixtures.

**MINTS** — *Mentha*. There are many varieties of these hardy perennials. The most popular mints are peppermint (of which curly mint is a variety), spearmint, and orange and apple mint. The best way to start is to find a friend who has a mint bed and get one or two root divisions, or buy them from a nursery.

Mint likes moist, fertile soil and doesn't mind some shade. It reproduces by sending long, lateral stolons (runners) under the ground. These may be divided to supply new plants.

Mints may be cut two or three times each year, leaving a few inches of stem to grow again. The leaves are stripped off and dried in a warm dry place, or oven, or hung to dry in small bunches and stripped later.

You can make mint tea, mint sauces, mint jelly, or mix mint with other herbs or citrus juices for teas and jellies. The fresh leaves may be used in green or fruit salads, with new peas, and in candy.

**OREGANO** — *Origanum* has many varieties. These hardy perennials are not clearly defined by herbal authorities. The oreganos and marjorams are closely related but the varieties are different in growth and flavor.

Greek oregano, *Origanum heracleoticum*, is thought by some to be the true oregano. This plant is treated as a tender perennial in the Washington (D.C.) area. It is slow growing and the flowers are white.

Others call *Origanum vulgare*, a very hardy perennial, the true oregano. It grows several feet high. The blooms are pink and purplish.

Oreganos are propagated by cuttings, divisions, and young plants from nurseries — often not labeled correctly.

As soon as the flowers appear the stems may be cut to dry in small bunches. The leaves may be used fresh all summer long.

Oregano goes well with tomato dishes, tomato juice, pizzas and other pastas, spaghetti, macaroni, and noodles. It also enhances lamb, beef, soups, and salads.

**PARSLEY** — *Petroselinum hortense* is a very hardy biennial. The seeds take about three weeks to germinate, unless soaked overnight in water before planting. An old saying is that the seeds must go to the devil seven times and back before they will come up.

Busy gardeners usually buy plants from a nursery every year and plant them in a permanent plot or border in order to always have a good supply. The foliage makes an attractive low border. Medicinal uses of parsley are ancient and numerous since the plant is a rich source of vitamins A and C and of calcium, niacin, riboflavin and other properties. Parsley is often made into an infusion or tea and drunk alone or combined with other herbs to promote health. The leaves are used for flavoring in soups, stews, potato dishes, and as a breath sweetener with garlic-seasoned dishes.

Harvest parsley by cutting the stems an inch or two above the ground, and dry quickly on paper in a dry, shady place as the leaves turn dark very easily. Many think oven methods are best to preserve color and flavor.

Fresh parsley can be used most of the year as it is very hardy. It is also lovely in hanging baskets for indoor gardens.

**ROSEMARY** — *Rosmarinus officinalis* is a tender evergreen perennial, one of the most esteemed and decorative herbs. It needs a well drained alkaline soil, a sunny location, and protection during the winter until well established. It makes a beautiful large pot plant in a green house.

Rosemary is propagated by cuttings or layering. Young plants may be bought from nurseries. Late summer is the best time to take cuttings.

Rosemary has an assertive spicy flavor delicious with lamb, chicken, other meat dishes and stuffings. Rosemary butter is luscious on hot biscuits. The tips and leaves may be dried for future use, but since the plant is evergreen, fresh tips are always available.

**SAGE** — *Salvia officinalis* is a hardy evergreen perennial that becomes woody and sprawly after four or five years. Sage is most easily propagated from seeds or young plants from a nursery. It needs sun — and good drainage.

The fresh leaves may be used all year, but cuttings of sprigs may be dried in a warm shady place or by oven methods. Sage makes a good, healthful tea. Its strong, dominating flavor improves cheeses, poultry, dressings, sausages, pork, and wines.

**SALAD BURNET** — *Sanguisorba minor* is a hardy perennial easily grown from seed in full sun. As it grows 1 to 2 feet tall, it should be thinned to leave the plants 12 to 18 inches apart. The leaves are used fresh as the cucumery taste and smell

vanish when dried. It is a pretty border plant. The leaves are fern-like and usually evergreen. The flavor is good in fresh salads, vinegar, and wine punches.

**SORREL, FRENCH** — *Rumex scutatus* is a very hardy perennial, whose broad leaves add a nice sharp taste to spring greens, spinach, and herbal soups. It is used fresh. The leaves can be cut throughout the growing season. It is grown from seed or from root divisions. The flower stalks should be removed as they appear, so that the green leaves may be produced longer.

**SUMMER SAVORY** — *Satureia hortensis* is a hardy annual whose seeds are sown in the garden in the spring. It grows fast and the plants should be hilled to keep them upright. Savory needs sun and plenty of moisture.

Savory can be cut and dried when the flowers open, or the tips of the plants pinched and used fresh throughout the summer. Savory makes a delicate tea. It is the Bohnenkraut of the Germans, excellent with green beans, butters, spreads, green salads, egg dishes, and all kinds of meat.

Winter Savory, *Satureia montana*, is a hardy perennial that forms a small bush with lavender flowers. It is very desirable as a border plant, but not as aromatic as summer savory — therefore less useful in cooking.

**TARRAGON** — *Artemisia dracunculus* is a tender perennial, unless the roots are somewhat protected with straw or mulch during the winter in the Northeastern areas. Avoid buying seeds as the true variety rarely sets seeds — you might find you have the Russian or Siberian variety which is very vigorous but lacks the aromatic scent and flavor of the true type.

Propagate from a cutting or root division or buy young plants from a reputable source. Plant in a sunny place, especially well drained, with room for the shallow lateral roots. Stems should be harvested in early summer, leaving at least three inches of stem above the ground to furnish growth for one or two more harvests later in the year.

Dry the leaves quickly as they turn brown easily. Try oven methods. When dry, seal in dry tight containers. A better idea is to pot a plant or two to keep indoors and enjoy fresh. Fertilize regularly and keep on the dry side.

The culinary uses of tarragon are ancient. Tarragon vinegar is well known for flavoring sauces and salad dressings. Tarragon is especially delectable on fish, cauliflower, spinach, roast turkey, and egg dishes, and it makes sauce Bearnaise. The robust flavor is best used alone and not combined with other herbs.

THYME — *Thymus vulgaris* is a hardy perennial that can be started from seed, but best results are from divisions or plants purchased from a nursery. Plant in a sunny, well drained location. It is a low, bushy plant with lovely blooms that is attractive in a foreground. Of the many varieties, the so-called French and English thymes are best for culinary purposes.

One cutting, made when the flowers begin to open, is taken for drying. The next growth should be left to help the plant survive the winter. Dry on paper in a warm, dry room. When dry, rub off the leaves and discard the stems. Store in dry, tight jars.

Thyme makes a stimulating tea and can be used to flavor any meat, fish, or vegetable. It is good in most any food. Greek thyme honey is famous. It can be found in organic food stores, or a thyme syrup can be made from our native honey mixed with strong thyme tea.

#### BASIC HERBAL RECIPES

##### Herb Butter

Soften one half stick butter (sweet, unsalted if possible)  
Add one tablespoon finely minced fresh herb or one-half teaspoon dried herb  
Cream together, adding a few drops lemon juice  
Use on hot breads, vegetables, baked potatoes  
Herbs to use: basil, tarragon, thyme, chives, dill, parsley, marjoram, rosemary

##### Herb Vinegar

Clean and dry wide-mouthed glass jars  
Gather fresh herbs. If dusty rinse in cold water and pat dry (water clouds vinegar)  
Fill jar lightly with herbs  
Heat, do not boil, good cider or wine vinegar  
Pour vinegar over herb, cover with a non-rust lid or just put waxed paper over mouth of jar  
Set jar in room temperature location for two or three weeks  
Strain through cheesecloth and bottle  
Herbs to use: dill, basil, salad burnet, tarragon, mint

##### Herb Jelly

Two cups herb infusion  
One fourth cup vinegar or apple cider  
Four and one half cups sugar  
Heat the above until sugar is dissolved (high heat)  
When boiling add one half bottle liquid pectin  
Rolling boil for one and one half minutes  
Take off fire. Add one or two drops food coloring if desired  
Fill sterilized jelly glasses and seal with melted paraffin  
Herb to use: Sage, basil, thyme, parsley, marjoram, rosemary, mint  
Infusion: 2½ cups boiling water over 1 cup fresh herb. Let cool and strain

##### For Further Reading:

*A Primer for Herb Growing*. The Herb Society of America, 300 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, Mass. 02115 50¢.

FOSTER, Gertrude B., *Herbs for Every Garden*, E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 201 Park Ave. S., New York, N.Y. 10003. \$5.95.

## SCOTCHTOWN BOXWOOD WORKSHOP

July 9, 1980

Hanover County Virginia

Sponsored by the Cooperative Extension Service of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, the Department of Horticulture and the Cooperative Extension office of Hanover County in cooperation with the American Boxwood Society.

#### PROGRAM

MORNING SESSION — 9:30 AM — Moderator, Ralph E. LaRue, Extension Agent, Hanover County

*Welcome to Scotchtown* — Mrs. Rosalie Fulwinder, Resident Hostess

*The American Boxwood Society* — Mr. Albert S. Beecher, President, The American Boxwood Society

*The History and Use of Boxwood in Hanover County* — Mr. William R. Shelton, Rural Plains

*Boxwood Cultivars* — Dr. Bernice Speese, Botanist, William and Mary College, Williamsburg, Virginia

Lunch — 12:00 Noon

AFTERNOON SESSION — 1:00 PM — Moderator, Charles K. Curry, Extension Agent, Henrico County

*Root-Rot Organism as they Affect Virginia Grown Boxwood* — Mr. Marshall Trammel, Plant Pest Control Agency, Richmond

*Using Boxwood in Small Residential Landscapes* — Mr. James A. Faiszt, Extension Specialist, Landscape Design, Virginia Tech

*Propagating Boxwood from Cuttings* — Mr. Tom Ewert, Director, Blandy Experimental Farm, Boyce, Va.

Tour — House and Grounds at Scotchtown  
90 persons attended a very fine program.

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The Scotchtown Boxwood Workshop was held in Hanover County, Virginia, at the home where Patrick Henry lived from 1771 to 1778. He lived here with his wife, Sarah Shelton Henry, and their six children. The large frame house was built about 1719 by Charles Chiswell following the plan of his home in Williamsburg. The home is now owned by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. The house has been restored and furnished in the period and the grounds have been landscaped by the Garden Club of Virginia. It is a Virginia Historic Landmark.

# DESIGN UNIFICATION WITH BOXWOOD

## A CASE STUDY

*George B. Briggs*



photo George B. Briggs

*The dramatic West Front of Chinqua-Penn is softened by large American Boxwood, two of which are in large containers.*

Nestled in the scenic piedmont landscape of North Carolina lies Chinqua-Penn Plantation, a multi-faceted architectural and horticultural gem. Fanciers of boxwood, as well as lovers of architectural, garden design, nature, or exotic objects of art, find it a treasure of interest.

The plantation, located near Reidsville and twenty miles north of neighboring Greensboro, was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jefferson Penn. A transplanted Virginian, Mr. Penn was born in Patrick County, Virginia, and moved to Reidsville at the age of six months when his father, F. R. Penn, founded the Penn Tobacco Company. The company was later sold to the American Tobacco Company, and young Jeff Penn became responsible for sales in the Orient. He died at the Greenbrier Hotel in 1946. Mrs. Penn was the former Beatrice Schoellkoph, a member of the prominent upper-state New York family that harnessed Niagara Falls as a source of electrical power. Mrs. Penn outlived her husband by 19 years, and provided for the present public enjoyment of Chinqua-Penn by bequeathing the facility and an accompanying endowment to the state supported university system of North Carolina.

Reminiscent of his Charlottesville namesake, Thomas Jefferson, Mr. Penn was a man of diverse interests and strong ability who fashioned his home

as a quiet, pastoral retreat from the rigors of daily life. But unlike Jefferson, Jeff Penn, as he was affectionately known, focused his efforts on the farm and cattle, leaving most matters of house and garden to Betsy.

World travelers, the Penns brought back countless and priceless furnishings and art objects, mostly oriental. But ironically, the place is more like an English country home than anything else. The Y-shaped mansion, constructed of logs and stone, captures the intimate warmth, scale, and detail of the Tudor years. The grounds blend formal gardens with natural, tree-canopied lawns into a charming and unique creation.

Two factors, in particular, bond the diverse elements into a unified theme. First is the emphasis on the natural landscape of the region. The house with its wood and stone, and the ground's reliance on native species, in spite of the profusion of exotic art and plants, ensure that the plantation never loses sight of its piedmont, tarheel context. Even the ornate Japanese Pagoda looks at home nestled among mature oaks and their associated understory.

This philosophy is reflected in the Chinqua-Penn name itself, a play on words between the family name and the native Chinquapin (*Castanea*

*pumila*) that sprinkled the site before the devastation of the Chestnut blight.

The second unifying factor is the profusion of boxwood that permeates the grounds. In Jeff Penn's opinion, the boxwood was the only plant that measured up to the dignity of the plantation house; other species, to his way of thinking and in his own words, were "poor men's hedges." As a young boy and the son of Howard Briggs, a Reidsville nurseryman, "I remember the truckloads of Old English boxwoods leaving our fields, destined to edge Chinqua-Penn formal garden and rose garden."

According to Mr. Talley, box problems through the years have been typical for the species. Cascading ice and snow from the steep slate roof of the mansion have left their marks here and there. Because of the extent of the plantings near the home and the relatively light annual snowfall, protective structures have not been a practical approach to the problem.

In the pest category, nematodes come to Mr. Talley's mind first: "Before a satisfactory nematocide hit the market 30 years ago, all available treatments damaged the plants. But since that time, nematodes have been effectively controlled through



photo George B. Briggs

*Chinqua-Penn. Boxwood, in Mr. Penn's mind, was the only plant that measured up to the dignity of the plantation house.*

Mr. Charlie Talley, the charming and semi-retired head gardener who first joined the staff in 1929, brings the boxwood history to life. He traces the large boxwood specimens back to the Buchanan home in Spencer, Virginia, residence of Mr. Penn's aunt. The 80-100 year old plants were transplanted to Chinqua-Penn 50 to 60 years ago, now having matured into graceful, massive drifts and masses.

Transfer of the property from private to state administration, and the resulting tightening of budget, have necessitated an unfortunate move away from the once extensive boxwood plantings. At one time, the formal garden contained intricate boxwood beds composed of several cultivars, but has now been converted to more easily maintained lawn and perennial borders. Only the perimeter plantings of large specimens remains. Likewise, the edging of the rose garden was recently converted from box to helleri holly, also for maintenance considerations.

soil drenches every other year. Leaf miners and field spiders that spin unsightly webs head the above-ground pest list; the most reliable weapons against these have proven to be Malathion and Isotox. Incidentally, he nor his son, Dwight, who has taken over the gardener's position, has had problems with the boxwood decline that has troubled so many Virginia plantings.

Although boxwoods were the "rich man's hedge" at Chinqua-Penn, Mrs. Penn's interest in plants was much broader. During her 19 years after Mr. Penn's death, she continued to introduce exotic species to both the grounds and the conservatory. Even today, 16 years after her death, specimens cycads, coffee plants, breadfruit, fish-tail palms and other exotic tropicals that she acquired are maintained. Not far from the conservatory stand the area's oldest dawn redwoods, but like all the exotic elements of the plantation, they stand among native species, thus remaining in the context of the place.

That inclusive theme - the blending of unlike elements - seems to be the most valuable cargo brought back from the orient. The beauty and uniqueness of Japanese gardens is founded on the expression of nature's balancing or opposing forces (yin and yang, as they are called). They perceive nature as an intertwined system of adversaries brought into harmony. . . Exotic and native, formal and natural, action and repose, male and female, but Chinqua-Penn captures the essence of the concept without copying its oriental expression.

The oriental philosophy further professes that

man is only one of the many creatures of the globe, and that all parts of nature, including man, are one. Hence, the counter balance of natural forces includes man, and Chinqua-Penn is no exception. The Betsy-Jeff relationship is the ultimate and central juxtaposition; he a rough, rowdy, plain spoken man, she a sweet and refined lady. Seemingly an unlikely match, the couple was in actuality complementary, compensating, and compatible. As one tours Chinqua-Penn, observing the pleasing mixture of style and elements, the realization never escapes that the garden is expressive of the very nature of the owners.



photo George B. Briggs

*The East lawn is formed by massive old English Boxwood. A problem, as one might expect, is boxwood damage by cascading snow falling from the slate roof.*

#### A MESSAGE FROM MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN-HARRISON SYMMES

The first issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin* in October 1961 outlined the Society's membership goal. That statement still stands as one of the best ways a Society such as ours can fulfill its basic purposes. The following paragraphs are quoted from it:

"Our ability to publish useful bulletins and handsome annuals with a long series of illustrated accounts of interesting and lovely boxwood gardens in this country and abroad depends entirely upon the size of our membership. . ."

"Four new members each: that is our goal."

"It is the most important one that as a Society we ever shall have. It is the only call for material

assistance that we shall ever make and the only kind of assistance that we wish. As a non-profit, scientific and educational journal, produced by unpaid volunteers, *The Boxwood Bulletin*, we are not abashed to say, merits the cooperation of each member in obtaining four new members whom we likewise may serve. It is not an immodest or greedy request."

It was suggested at the Annual Meeting on May 7, 1980, that each of us should try to interest gardening friends in joining the Society, and several members at that time pick up enveloped applications to hand to friends. For those who would like to have some applications on hand to give to friends, please write to: The American Boxwood Society, Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620. Four new members each is not a greedy request. Have you obtained your four?

# AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

20th Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 7, 1980



photo Tom Ewert

*Entrance path at Blandy Experimental Farm, place of ABS meetings.*



photo Tom Ewert

*Library-meeting place for ABS 20th Annual Meeting, Blandy Experimental Farm.*

## *Early Arrival Activities*

Prior to the Annual Business Meeting and Educational Program of the American Boxwood Society on May 7, 1980, planned activities were held for early arrivals. On Tuesday evening in the Library of the Blandy Experimental Farm, Thomas E. Ewert, one of our Directors, showed slides of the 1979 *Boxwood Garden Tour* that visited Montpelier Mansion, Laurel, Maryland; the Victorian Garden of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; the Robert E. Lee Boyhood Mansion, Alexandria, Virginia; Gunston Hall, Lorton, Virginia; Oxon Hill Manor, Oxon Hill, Maryland; and the Garden and Home of Mr. & Mrs. Scot Butler, McLean, Virginia. Several of the members who were on the tour loaned slides for this evening of fun. Following the slide presentation all gathered around the punch bowl to meet new friends and to renew old acquaintances. President and Mrs. Albert S. Beecher were the hosts.

Wednesday was a beautiful day and early arrivals had a choice of a tour of the Orland E. White Arboretum of the Blandy Experimental Farm or the Boxwood Memorial Garden developed by the American Boxwood Society. Thomas E. Ewert, led the Arboretum tour and Prof. James A. Faiszt, Extension Landscape Specialist for the Department of Horticulture at Virginia Tech, conducted the Boxwood Memorial Garden tour.

At 10:30 A.M. the big bell in the courtyard of the Blandy Quarters sounded and summoned the tour groups back for a coffee and doughnut break hosted by Mrs. Scot Butler. There was also an opportunity for those who had not registered to meet Mrs. Thomas E. Ewert, the Registrar.

## *Business Meeting*

The 20th Annual Meeting of the American Boxwood Society was called to order by the President, Professor Albert S. Beecher, at 11:00 A.M. on May 7, 1980, at Blandy Experimental Farm, Boyce, Virginia. Professor Beecher welcomed the members and guests and then introduced Mr. Thomas E. Ewert, Director of the Blandy Experimental Farm, who extended greetings and gave a brief history and description of the Research Station.

Professor Beecher expressed thanks to a number of the members for special work in connection with the Annual Meeting: Professor James A. Faiszt for assisting with publicity; Mrs. Albert S. Beecher, Mrs. James A. Faiszt and Professor James A. Faiszt for preparing the evening reception; Mr. Thomas E. Ewert for narrating the slide presentation; Mrs. Scot Butler for hosting the coffee break; Mrs. Thomas E. Ewert for registration responsibilities; Mr. Richard Mahone and Dr. Bernice M. Speese for planning the educational program and Mrs. Charles H. Dick for making arrangements for the afternoon garden tour.

A motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes of the 1979 Annual Meeting as printed in the July 1979 *Boxwood Bulletin* was seconded and unanimously approved by the membership.

President Beecher reviewed the numerous accomplishments of the Boxwood Society since its formation in 1961 and discussed future goals. These accomplishments and goals are listed in the *Boxwood Bulletin* for April 1980 in the article "Looking Back-Forward" on pages 63 and 64. For the sake of brevity they are not repeated here.

The next order of business was committee reports:

1. *Secretary and Treasurer*: Mrs. Thomas E. Ewert, Secretary Pro Tem and Treasurer, read the Secretary's Report.

2. *Membership*: Mr. Harrison Symmes reported that Society membership has reached a total of 920, 120 more than last year, with growers, nurserymen, hobbyists and writers among the new members. He emphasized an interest in seeing the group expand and reported a proposal under discussion to spend a small amount of money on national advertising to test the response. Mr. Symmes also suggested that word of mouth from members to their friends and from professionals to their customers would increase general interest in the Society, as would programs by community groups such as garden clubs.

3. *Tours*: Mr. Richard Mahone announced that plans are underway for a garden and/or house tour in April or May of 1981. The details have yet to be decided, and he will reveal fuller plans at a later date.

4. *Workshops*: Professor James A. Faiszt announced that the Department of Horticulture at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University is planning to co-sponsor with the Boxwood Society two boxwood workshops in 1980. The first one is scheduled for July 9th at Scotchtown, Patrick Henry's home from 1771 to 1778. It is located near Ashland, Virginia. The second Boxwood Workshop will be held on October 30th at the National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. Professor Faiszt indicated that he is working closely with County Extension Agents to publicize these programs. He welcomed suggestions and volunteer help from the membership-at-large. A general workshop program was outlined, possibly including speakers on the uses of boxwood, and a study of the more familiar varieties of boxwood. Program details will be announced later.

5. *Boxwood Handbook*: Professor Albert Beecher restated that a Society goal is to issue a handbook. The committee has compiled a list of the subjects to be included and is now at work preparing the Handbook.

6. *Memorial Gardens* Mr. Thomas E. Ewert reported that labeling of species and varieties in the garden continues and is nearly finished. He pointed out a new topiary plant, donated by our former Director, Alden Eaton, that will be located near the new steps which are being constructed in the garden. These new steps will provide a direct access to the garden from the main headquarters building. Ewert indicated that he would like to see names given to new boxwoods that are as yet not named.

7. *Bulletin Editor*: Mrs. Charles H. Dick noted that the April issue was published and that everything was running on schedule. President Beecher thanked the Editor for the long hours she puts in preparing the *Boxwood Bulletin*.

8. *Bulletin Committee*: Mr. Scot Butler urged members to contribute information and growing tips either to him, Mr. Harrison Symmes, or Mr. Thomas Ewert, all members of the committee, and also to submit questions that could be printed and answered in the *Bulletin*.

9. *Nominating Committee*: Chairman Harrison Symmes and committee members Mrs. Joan Butler and Mr. William Gray proposed the following officers for 1980-81:

President	Professor Albert S. Beecher
1st Vice President	Mr. Richard Mahone
2nd Vice President	Dr. Bernice M. Speese
Treasurer	Mrs. Ewert
Secretary	Mr. Dayton Mak

Mr. Mak is a retired Foreign Service Officer who lives in Washington, D.C., and may be a new acquaintance for some members.

In the absence of further nominations from the floor, election of the slate was moved and seconded and passed unanimously.

Following the committee reports, three questions were raised. The first concerned the discussion in a *Bulletin* article on the differences between English and American boxwood. The question was, what is the final difference between the two. The Registrar, Dr. Bernice Speese, suggested that a definition could be found in a paper by Dr. Henry T. Skinner. The second question pertained to specific plants covered by the franchise of the American Boxwood Society. Professor Beecher responded that it covers the "Genus *Buxus*." A third question concerned research work on oil derived from the Jojoba species; and it was agreed that this subject would make good material for an article in the *Bulletin*.

The President had no further business on the agenda and since nothing else was brought from the floor, a motion for adjournment was seconded and passed and the meeting adjourned at 12:10 P.M.

Joanna G. Berg  
Recorder

## Lunch

For many years it has been the custom for members attending the Annual Meeting to bring a picnic lunch, and to enjoy a leisurely lunch on the grounds of the Arboretum and to chat with friends. This practice continued but there was also available a catered lunch for those who made advance reservations. Mrs. Thomas E. Ewert headed up the catered lunch committee that planned and organized a delightful lunch.

Some members who finished their lunch early took the opportunity to visit the Boxwood Memorial Garden or to tour the Arboretum area near the quarters.



photo Tom Ewert

*New steps from Quarters down to Memorial Garden.*

## Education Program

Vice President, Richard Mahone, opened the educational half of the Annual Meeting by introducing the afternoon speakers, Mr. and Mrs. James O. Anderson, Mr. James Baden, and Dr. Francis R. Gouin.

Mr. & Mrs. Anderson of "Powder Mill Spring," Baltimore, Maryland, presented slides and described their problems with an 80-year-old boxwood hedge along the flagstone pathway to their front door. The hedge had overgrown the path and was badly in need of attention. Mr. Anderson reported that an estimate from a landscape architect to move the hedge back ran to \$10,000 with no guarantee that the boxwood would survive the move. As an alternative to the risky move, the Andersons elected to trim the bushes.

With advice from American Boxwood Society members who showed him how it should be done, Mr. Anderson undertook to trim the boxwoods, and he had several slides "before" and "after" the operation. He pointed out that the trimming was severe, but added that it had not been done for 28 years. Heavy pruning might be criticized in some quarters, but Mr. Anderson had seen it done successfully in Williamsburg, among other places, and felt it was worth a try as compared with actually moving the whole hedge. The slides show-

ed a healthy, well-thinned hedge that admitted sunlight and air. Close up, the stems had clearly been "cleaned" of twigs all the way up, but from a distance the hedge had the traditional boxwood appearance.

Regarding regular maintenance of boxwoods, Mr. and Mrs. Anderson use Miller's 10-10-10 three times a year sprinkled by hand around the bushes one and one-half feet outside the drip line. They consider spraying essential four times a year and advise major pruning every ten years in addition to annual washing with a high pressure hose.

The second speaker of the afternoon was Mr. James Baden, Grounds Superintendent, Old Westbury Estate, Old Westbury, New York, who gave a talk on the "Use of Boxwood for Topiary," and demonstrated his remarks by pruning a small boxwood into the beginning of a spiral topiary, one of the most difficult forms to shape.

Topiary is defined as, "sculpturing and shaping natural forms into unnatural-like ones," and Mr. Baden pointed out that even smoothing and rounding a shrub is a mild form of topiary. The art of sculpturing shrubs can be traced as far back as Pliny in Rome, 62-110 A.D., who used boxwood topiary as decorations around gardens. (Boxwood was subsequently introduced to England where it became naturalized.)

In selecting shrubbery for topiary, Mr. Baden commented that it is helpful to possess imagination and an eye for possibilities. Animal figures are the easiest to do, he said, and added that it is wise to keep notes on your plans because, since boxwood is slow-growing, it is easy to accidentally prune the wrong branch. Making his comments as he shaped a spiral, Mr. Baden recommended selection of quick-growing boxwood varieties that could be pruned three or four times a year.

The third and final speaker of the day was Dr. Francis R. Gouin, Extension Horticulturist at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, who had many interesting comments on "The Container Culture of Boxwood." Many of his points were of a technical nature, the details of which have been published in his new article entitled, "Container Culture of Boxwoods in the Nursery," that appeared in the April 1980 *Boxwood Bulletin*.

In his talk, Dr. Gouin emphasized that the secret of successfully growing boxwood in containers lies in obtaining the right soil mixture, drainage, air space and light. Ordinary garden soil is sufficient to produce healthy container boxwoods. They prefer a soil that maintains a pH balance of 7, such as leaf compost, milled pine bark and expanded shale. Containerized shrubs also need a heavy feeding schedule and they should not be planted too deep.

For overwintering of container boxwoods, Dr. Gouin recommended several methods of protection. Based on the principle of using a material to insulate the bushes with as little surface exposure as possible, the processes outlined included the "Structureless Thermo-blanket System," the "Micro-foam" method, and the "Poly Blanket." Each of these systems yields wet plants with good green color ready to start the next growing season. For more

detailed information on Dr. Gouin's approach, see page 47 in the *Boxwood Bulletin* for April 1980.

Joanna Berg  
Recorder

### Garden Tour of Rosemont

At the conclusion of the Educational Program, the group adjourned to "Rosemont," the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard E. Byrd, Berryville, Virginia, for a concluding tea and tour of the grounds. Mrs. Charles H. Dick made the arrangements for this delightful visit.

Rosemont is located two miles west of Berryville on Route 7. Home of the late Senator Harry F. Byrd, built in 1804 by George H. Norris after his marriage to Jane Bowles Wormeley. After the house had passed through several hands it was bought by Senator Byrd, then Governor of Virginia, in 1929. The stately columned portico overlooks sixty cultivated acres and is surrounded by apple trees. The grounds feature rare trees, shrubs, dogwood, azaleas and magnificent oaks.

From the portico there is a beautiful view of the countryside. Closer in are some beautiful boxwoods and azaleas that were in full bloom. On the grounds there is a wide variety of shade trees, and the group was especially impressed with the beautiful specimen Japanese Red Maples visible from the portico.

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### Boxwood Committee Note:

In the Business Meeting Minutes reference was made to a paper by Dr. Henry T. Skinner. His paper was entitled "What is American Box?" and it was published in the *Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol. 7, No. 2, October 1967, page 17.

Reference was also made to the suggestion that an article on Jojoba would be appropriate for the *Boxwood Bulletin*. In some of the earlier issues of the *Boxwood Bulletin* articles on Jojoba were printed, as follows:

- Volume 5, No. 2, October 1965, Pages 32-36.
- Volume 12, No. 1, July 1972, Pages 8-11.
- Volume 12, No. 2, October 1972, Pages 27-32.
- Volume 13, No. 1, July 1973, Pages 15-16.

For those not familiar with Jojoba the following might be of interest since we are now energy conscious. In the Southwest part of the United States, Jojoba has long been recognized as a useful browse plant for cattle and deer, as a xerophytic ornamental, and especially as a source of oil. It is called the desert boxwood, *Simmondsia chinensis* of the family *Buxaceae*. The *Boxwood Bulletin* Committee is planning to solicit an updated article to report on what has occurred since 1973.

## American Boxwood Society

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May 7, 1980

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#### PROGRESS REPORT

A recent report from Sandra Sardanelli, a graduate student in the Botany Department at the University of Maryland, indicates that she hopes to complete her research experiment in the spring of 1981. She is working in the area of plant parasitic nematodes and boxwood diseases. She writes that when her research is completed and thesis approved she will be happy to provide an article for the *Boxwood Bulletin*.

## COSMOS CLUB PLANTS BOXWOOD GIVEN IN MEMORY OF DR. BALDWIN

(Extracted from the June 1980 Issue of the Cosmos Club *Bulletin* by Permission of the Author)



photo Scot Butler

*Boxwood planted at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D. C., donated by Dr. Bernice Speese and Colonial Williamsburg in honor of the late Dr. J. T. Baldwin.*

The response of the Club to the call for boxwood has been amazing! To date the Garden Committee has received some 70 plants in hand or pledged. . . In addition, the Club has received a total of \$255 in individual donations. . .

The Garden Committee was also pleased to receive 40 identical boxwood plants donated by Doctor Bernice Speese, Registrar of the American Boxwood Society, in memory of Doctor John T. Baldwin ('48 - '74), a recognized authority on boxwood and a long-time member of the Club.

All of these gifts will provide the Garden Committee with a significant boost in its plans to restore and upgrade the gardens. The boxwood will be used to restore the fountain area in the West Garden. The overgrown azaleas, hydrangeas and ligustrum in the area immediately adjacent to the fountain will be removed and replaced by plantings composed entirely of boxwood. One boxwood bed, providing an elegant border, will run along the outside perimeter of the garden. This boxwood hedge would also provide an evergreen background to the patio, and separate that area from the parking lot. A second, smaller, boxwood hedge will be placed in the center of the fountain area in the shape of the Club symbol "Cc." . . . All of the box-

wood plants donated and used in the West Garden are of the variety *Suffruticosa*; the 40 plants donated by Doctor Speese are all of the same clone.

For those who may not be familiar with its history, the boxwood has been grown and cultivated for centuries as an ornamental evergreen, garden shrub and small tree. In biblical history, the box was highly prized along with ". . . the Fir tree and the Pine," Isaiah, Chapter XLI, verse 19. They are recognized by their simple, leathery, opposite leaves which are destitute of stipules and usually have a cleft apex. They may also be recognized from their tiny axillary flowers which are borne in small clusters in the early spring.

Scientifically, the box is known by the generic name of *Buxus*, a genus belonging to the Spurge family, Euphorbiaceae. It is represented in the United States by not more than a half dozen species; however, there are many varieties. The box used in the West Garden all belong to a dwarf variety, specifically identified as: *Buxus sempervirens* var. *suffruticosa*.

One final point — To believers in dreams, it may be of interest to learn that to dream of box is considered to be a fortunate occurrence, as it denotes a long life, and prosperity. . . and also a happy marriage.

John Farmakides, Chairman  
Garden Committee



photo Scot Butler

*Boxwood planted at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D. C., donated by Dr. Bernice Speese and Colonial Williamsburg in honor of the late Dr. J. T. Baldwin.*

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(*Editor's Note:* As reported in the Minutes of the Annual Meeting printed in this issue, the Bulletin Committee invited members to submit questions relating to boxwood. The Committee does not guarantee to answer *all* questions but will do the best it can, invoking the help of other more knowledgeable members. Even before the Annual Meeting had ended a number of questions were presented in writing to Committee members. Four of these are printed and answered below. Two additional questions will be treated in articles planned for future issues: propagating boxwood from seed, and recent developments in finding commercial uses for the Jojoba plant (a desert member of the boxwood family).

Please send questions on boxwood to the Chairman of the Bulletin Committee, Mr. Scot Butler, 7525 Old Dominion Drive, McLean, Virginia 22102.)

- Q. Is the adjective *American* in the title of our Society meant to modify the word *Boxwood* or the word *Society*?
- A. From the very outset our Society has been interested in all varieties of boxwood and not in just so-called "American box." There would have been less confusion over the years if the name had been simply *The Boxwood Society* or *The Boxwood Society of America* rather than *The American Boxwood Society*. The fanciers of holly came up with the title of *The Holly Society of America* for the title of their organization. If a similar procedure had been followed by the founders of our society it might have eliminated this ambiguity in our title.
- Q. What location (soil, sunlight, pH, etc.) is recommended for a boxwood nursery?
- A. Boxwood prefers a sandy loam soil that is well drained. Avoid planting in soils that remain too wet, tend to bake or crack or are too heavy. Boxwoods are rather indifferent to soil pH. If sufficient humus is present and the texture is suitable, boxwood plants will grow in acid, neutral or alkaline soil. Boxwood grows in full sunlight but will survive in heavy shade if it is planted in a suitable soil and proper cultural practices are followed. The availability of water for irrigation is an important consideration in selecting a site. Some type of vegetation for a windbreak may be needed for excessively windy sites.
- Q. Are rare specimen young plants, such as are at Blandy, available for purchase? If so, where? Are there nurseries in Northern Virginia that specialize in *Buxus sempervirens*?
- A. The American Boxwood Society headquartered at Blandy Experimental Farm does not have rooted boxwood cuttings for sale. Boxwood members who are willing to propagate their own plants can arrange to obtain boxwood cuttings of certain varieties by contacting Mr. Thomas E. Ewert, P.O. Box 175, Boyce, Virginia 22620. Each year at the Annual Meeting one or two rooted cuttings of a named variety are distributed to those in attendance. The ABS main office has been compiling a list of nurseries that grow and sell boxwood. If you are interested in buying certain varieties and would like to know where they might be obtained, write the American Boxwood Society, Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620. Please include a stamped return envelope.
- Q. Where does one find help in planning a boxwood garden?
- A. The landscape extension specialist at many of the Land Grant Universities will respond to letters requesting information and may have available an extension publication. Virginia members can request Bulletin 238, *Design of the Home Grounds*, from the Department of Horticulture, VPI & SU, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061. Some County Extension Agents have a background in horticulture or landscape design and may be able to advise. Professional help is available from landscape architects, landscape consultants and nurserymen trained in design. Books on garden planning are available in most libraries. Another suggestion for help is to write to the American Boxwood Society, Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620 and outline the specific type of help you are seeking. In the back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* there have been articles on "Designing with Boxwood" and "Patterns for a Traditional Boxwood Garden."

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## IN MEMORIAM

June 1, 1980

Word has been received at the Society's headquarters of the death of:

Mrs. Baylor Hickman  
Goshen, Kentucky 40026

Our deepest sympathy and condolences to her family and friends.

## BOXWOOD DAY AT KENMORE

ALICE W. DAVIS

Hunting Creek Garden Club

The weather wasn't worth a nickel, but it was a silver-dollar Horticulture Day at Kenmore. *Buxus sempervirens* was the star of the day, but also starring on that wintry Thursday, March 13, in Fredericksburg were the intrepid garden club members who donned extra layers of wool, raincoats, boots, mufflers and headgear to watch the pruning demonstrations of some of Kenmore's overgrown boxwood.

Mr. Richard Mahone, Director of Landscape and guardian of some five miles of box in Colonial Williamsburg, and two able members of his staff, shared their boxwood expertise, answering questions and examining specimens of box that members had tucked into their purses before leaving home. Demonstrations gave us courage to drastically prune overgrown plants which will restore themselves to beauty in two or three years. Hedge plants should be pruned to a pyramidal shape, the top "rolled back," to forestall snow and ice damage. Slanting sides also allow more light to reach the bottom branches.

After a tour of the mansion and a most attractive basket lunch, the assembled horticulturists were treated to a fact-packed lecture by Mr. Mahone on the care and problems of boxwood. So well-organized were his remarks that note-taking was a pleasure and his beautiful slides accented the key points of his lecture. Here are a few highlights gleaned from his fund of information.

The best time not only for severe pruning but also for moving box is from 4 to 6 weeks before the last killing frost of spring. "Plucking" in the crown of the bush lets in light and stimulates stem growth. Sanitation is important: Take out dead leaves and twigs because this decaying material is a prime location for insect eggs.

Boxwood is shallow rooted and should not be cultivated. Mr. Mahone recommended a course mulch, to the drip line for specimens, and six inches beyond drip line for hedging. Periwinkle gives good ground cover; English ivy is too invasive. Small bulbs may be used for underplanting, but tulips and daffodils, with their deeper root systems, should be avoided.

Recommended for feeding box were organic fertilizers, if not too green, inorganic fertilizers of 10-10-10 or 8-8-8, or soluble (20-20-20) fertilizers

for foliar and root feeding. Liquid feeding should be done every 30 days until July 1st. Only bone meal should be used when transplanting.

Boxwood needs one inch of water per week during the growing season of 6-8 months. An important factor to check in the late fall is that box, and other broad-leaved evergreens, do not go into the winter and its freezing ground conditions without sufficient moisture. For snow removal, use a broom, shaking the bottom branches first.

Mrs. Robert Frackelton, chairman of the Horticulture Committee, master-minded this very successful Boxwood Day, and the information gathered here by club horticulturists will spread to club members and fellow gardeners who are concerned with the health, future vitality and evergreen beauty of this favored plant of the Virginia landscape.

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## MEMORIAM

### CONTRIBUTOR TO BOXWOOD BULLETIN

Mr. E. Bradford Clements of Milton, Ontario, Canada prior to his recent death was a frequent contributor to the *Boxwood Bulletin* and wrote several interesting and informative articles on how to grow boxwood in cold areas. The titles of his papers were:

*Is It Too Cold Here for Boxwood*, Volume 8, No. 2, October 1968, pages 19-20.

*The Story of Clembrook Boxwood*, *Ibjd.*, pages 20-22.

*How to Grow Boxwoods*, Volume 14, No. 2, October 1974, page 26.

*How to Grow Boxwoods in Cold Countries*, Volume 16, No. 2, October 1976, page 28.

Mr. Clements was a nurseryman and owned and operated Clembrook Boxwoods. Through experience, testing, and observation he learned a good deal about growing boxwood, and willingly shared his knowledge. Members living in the colder areas of the United States and Canada would benefit from reading his articles cited above.

It is appropriate now to quote an observation that he made in one of his articles which shows how much he loved boxwood, "you should take warning that it is easy to become infected with *Boxwood Fever*. If you plant one you will soon just have to plant more and you will soon just have to try other varieties. Also you will look right past the most glorious displays of other flora in any public or private garden and see only the boxwood."

Albert S. Beecher



# BOXWOOD WORKSHOP

## SCHEDULED FOR NATIONAL ARBORETUM

On October 30, 1980, a Boxwood Workshop is scheduled for the National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. It will be sponsored by the American Boxwood Society in cooperation with the Cooperative Extension Service of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, The Department of Horticulture and the Cooperative Extension Office of Fairfax, Virginia.

The National Arboretum is located in northeast Washington, D.C. The Arboretum's 444 acres are administered by the Science and Education Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Arboretum was established by an Act of Congress in 1927 for the purpose of research and education on tree and plant life.

The format of the Boxwood Workshop will include lectures during the morning session with special emphasis on boxwood cultivars. After lunch there will be an opportunity to visit the Arboretum Boxwood Garden which was started in 1952, and

includes plants from foreign and domestic locations. Four major species and approximately eighty cultivars are in the garden. Mr. Lynn R. Batdorf is the Curator of the boxwood plantings at the National Arboretum.

In addition to the tour of the Arboretum Boxwood Garden, there will be an opportunity to visit the new National Herb Garden that was officially dedicated on June 12, 1980. It is a cooperative project of the Herb Society of America and the Department of Agriculture. Boxwood members who have never visited the National Bonsai Collection will want to plan to visit this outstanding display.

Program details will appear in the *Boxwood Bulletin* for October. However, anyone desiring the details in September before the *Boxwood Bulletin* is published may obtain them by contacting Prof. James Faiszt, Department of Horticulture, VPI & SU, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.

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*Mark this date on your calendar and plan to attend the —*

**21st Annual Meeting**  
**The American Boxwood Society**  
**May 13, 1981**  
**at**  
**Blandy Experimental Farm**  
**Boyce, Virginia**

# DIRECTORY

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THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

## INFORMATION

Address: Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620

### DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Regular membership dues of The American Boxwood Society are now \$5.00. This includes a subscription to *The Boxwood Bulletin*.

Non-member subscriptions are for groups and institutions such as botanic gardens, libraries, etc. These are \$6.00 a year, and run by the calendar year.

The Boxwood Society year runs from one Annual Meeting to the next; from May of one year to May of the next year. Those joining the Society at other times are sent all the *Boxwood Bulletin* issues for the current Society year, beginning with the July number. Their dues are then again due and payable in the following May. This was voted by the Society in order to lighten as far as possible the heavy work load of our busy Treasurer.

At the present time any or all *Bulletins* are available, back to Vol. 1, No. 1 (Vol. 1 consists of three issues only, there was no Vol. 1, No. 4.) Price per single copy is \$1.50.

Besides regular membership dues at \$5.00 per year, there are other classes of membership available: Contributing, \$10.00; Sustaining, \$25.00; Life, \$100.00; and Patron, \$500.00.

Gift memberships are announced to the recipients by boxwood-decorated cards which carry the information that *The Boxwood Bulletin* will come as your gift four times a year.

Members of The American Boxwood Society are reminded of the 1968 IRS decision that contributions to and for the use of the Society, are deductible by donors as provided in Section 170 of the Code.

If your letter is concerned with  
Membership, new or renewal  
Payment of dues  
Donations to research programs  
Change of address  
Gift Membership  
Ordering back issues of the *Bulletin*  
Ordering Dr. Wagenknecht's List

Write to:

Mrs. Thomas E. Ewert  
American Boxwood Society  
Box 85  
Boyce, Virginia 22620

If your letter is concerned with:

General information about the Society

Advice concerning boxwood problems or cultural information

Boxwood selection

Albert S. Beecher, President

In some cases depending upon the nature of your request, your letter may be forwarded to a member of the Board or another appropriate member who can provide the help you have requested.

You are also welcome to write direct to the President of the American Boxwood Society:

Professor Albert S. Beecher  
807 Sunrise Drive, S.E.  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

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If you have contributions for the *Boxwood Bulletin* - articles, news notes, photographs, suggestions of anything of probable interest to boxwood people, it saves time to direct them to the Editor:

Mrs. Charles H. Dick, Editor  
The *Boxwood Bulletin*  
514 Amherst Street  
Winchester, Virginia 22601

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