October 1986

The Boxwood Bulletin

A QUARTERLY DEVOTED TO MAN'S OLDEST GARDEN ORNAMENTAL

Photo: Courtesy Woodrow Wilson Birthplace

Lower terrace of the garden at the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace, Staunton, Virginia. The boxwood parterre is divided into bowknot and crescent beds. This photo was taken just after the brick walkways were installed around 1960. *(See Page 28.)*

Boyce, Va. **Vol. 26, No. 2**

The Editor solicits and will welcome contributions of articles; news; notes; photographs, suitable for reproduction, of boxwood specimens, gardens, and plantings; and other items of probable interest to readers. It is requested that every item of such material carry the name and return address of the sender and be accompanied by an addressed envelope carrying the proper postage for return. While every effort will be made for the protection of all materials submitted for publication, the Editor cannot assume responsibility for loss or injury.

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The Boxwood Bulletin

October 1986 Vol. 26, No. 2

Editor — Scot Butler
Co-Editor — Joan Butler

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ILLUSTRATIONS

BUXACEAE AND THE TAXONOMY OF THE BOXWOODS *(BUXUS)*

Peter Goldblatt

Introduction

Buxaceae, the plant family to which the boxwood genus *Buxus* belongs, is a small one as plant families go, and consists of only five genera, distributed almost throughout the world, but absent from Australasia. The genera are *Buxus* (some 60 species in Europe, Asia, north and northeast Africa and the Caribbean including Mexico and Central America); *Notobuxus* (8 species in tropical and southern Africa); *Sarcococca* (about 20 species in the Himalayas, China and Indomalesia); *Styloceras* (3 species in west tropical South America); and *Pachysandra* (4 species in southeastern U. S. and east Asia). Until a few years ago botanists admitted a sixth genus to the Buxaceae, the southwestern U. S. and Mexican *Simmondsia*, the plant from which jojoba oil is obtained. Critical studies have now shown that *Simmondsia* should be regarded as a separate family, Simmondsiaceae, which is closely related to Euphorbiaceae, the spurge family.

Of the five genera of Buxaceae, *Buxus, Pachysandra,* and *Sarcococca* (sweet box) are in cultivation. *Buxus* is by far the most important of these three and is dealt with below. *Pachysandra* is a useful evergreen ground cover; the only species extensively grown is *P. terminalis* Sieb. & Zucc., a native of Japan. The native North American *Pachysandra, P. procumbens* Michx. (Allegheny spurge) is occasionally grown in the Midwest and Northeast, and is an attractive ground cover for shady situations. Some six cultivated species of sweet box were mentioned by Lewis Palmer in this journal some years ago (Palmer 1965). None are extensively grown in North America but *Sarcococca hookeriana* Baill. and *S. ruscifolia* Stapf are found in Southern and Pacific Coast gardens.

Buxus is the largest genus in Buxaceae, probably comprising some 60 species, although the more commonly quoted figure is 70 species (Airy Shaw 1973). One center of distribution is eastern Asia where at least 26 wild species occur in China, Japan, and south and west to the Himalayas and the East Indies. To the west, some 5-6 species occur from Iran to the Mediterranean basin and Central Europe. Two species occur in northeast Africa; in Madagascar, a third, which is very poorly known, should probably be transferred to *Notobuxus*. Another center of distribution is the West Indies where some 33 species of *Buxus* are found. Of these, 27 species occur in Cuba, with a fewer number on other West Indian islands. Four species occur in Mexico, two in Panama and one in northern Venezuela and Colombia. The New World species of *Buxus* are rather poorly known and there are none in cultivation.

The Cultivated Boxwoods

1. The European Species

Very few species of boxwood are in general cultivation, and by far the most important is *Buxus sempervirens* L. This species ranges from central and southern Europe to North Africa with its eastern limit in Turkey. *Buxus sempervirens* was in the past regarded as extending into the Caucasus and Iran, but some recent treatments regard the boxwoods of this area as *B. colchica* Pojark. and *B. hyrcana* Pojark. (Pojarkova 1949; Rechinger 1966). Botanical authorities do not always agree, and in the very thorough *Flora of Turkey* (Davis 1982) both *B. colchica* and *B. hyrcana* are included in *B. sempervirens*, which then extends the native range of the species into the mountains of Iran.

Buxus sempervirens was the first boxwood to be grown for ornamental purposes and was probably one of the first ornamentals grown in Europe. It is a very variable species both in the wild and, of course, in cultivation, and many cultivated varieties (cultivars) have been nam-

ed (Dallimore 1908, provides a good summary). Linnaeus, who described *B. sempervirens*, recognized both arborescent and dwarf forms (var. *arborescens* and var. *suffruticosa*). Although horticultural manuals usually cite several named varieties under *B. sempervirens*, Dallimore listing as many as 21, the tendency today in scientific treatments is not to give infraspecific recognition to variants and cultivars. In the modern and authoritative *Flora Europaea*, Webb (1968) does not even mention the variation found in this species. However, the older botanists did formally recognize several varieties and the great French botanist Henri Baillon, who monographed Buxaceae in the mid nineteenth century (Baillon 1859), listed 7 varieties and 10 subvarieties of *B. sempervirens*.

The only other European species in cultivation is *Buxus balearica* Lam., from the Mediterranean including North Africa and Turkey. This is a large-leafed species. It is less hardy than the other cultivated boxwoods, but nevertheless does survive in the open in north temperate gardens. In England at Kew one plant was described as a large tree some years ago, but it fell victim to a storm in 1916.

2. The Asian Species

The second important group of cultivated boxwoods belongs to two east Asian species, until recently regarded as a single species, *Buxus microphylla* Sieb. & Zucc. (Hatusima 1942). However, in 1980 a treatment of Buxaceae was published by Mien Cheng in *Flora of the Peoples Republic of China* (*Flora Reipublicae Popularis Sinicae* vol. 45, 1), in which the name *B. microphylla* is restricted to plants from Japan. A later scientific name of this species is *B. japonica*.Cultivated boxwoods of Chinese and Korean origin belong to the species *B. sinica*.

The important small-leafed Korean boxwood of North American gardens, known here as *Buxus microphylla* var. *koreana*, is treated as *B. sinica* subsp. *sinica* var. *insularis* (Nakai) M. Cheng. It has been known botanically for the past 40 years as *B. microphylla* var. *insularis* (Nakai) Hatusima because the varietal name *insularis* predates by two years the varietal name *koreana*, hence the confusing necessity to use the name var. *insularis* for the Korean boxwoods. Cultivars of this variety are well-known for their great hardiness and have increased the area where boxwoods can be grown by a considerable extent (Rehder 1966). The plants are very slow growing and thus seldom achieve appreciable size. A good review of Korean boxwood in its native land by Richard Lighty was published in this journal some 20 years ago (Lighty 1967). There are now several named cultivars of Korean boxwood; for nomenclatural purposes they should best be identified as, for example, *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis* 'Wintergreen', etc.

Following Cheng's treatment of the cultivated Far Eastern boxwoods as two separate species, the boxwood of Japan is *B. microphylla*. The type form upon which the name *B. microphylla* was originally based is not known in the wild, but was grown in Japanese gardens in the early nineteenth century. It was introduced to the West in about 1860. It is a small plant with small leaves and is not much cultivated today and not at all, so far as I know, in North America. Like *B. sinica, B. microphylla* is very hardy.

The leaves of the Japanese boxwood (*B. m.* var. *japonica*) are a little larger than those of *B. sinica*, and plants will, given time, grow to about 9 feet. This boxwood has in the past been recognized by some botanists as a species distinct from other forms of boxwood included in the species *B. microphylla* (now mainly in *B. sinica*) and was treated as *B. japonica* (Bailey 1951; Chittenden 1951; Skinner 1967). There are several named cultivars of *B. microphylla* var. *japonica*. 'Green Beauty' is one of the better cultivars. It eventually grows to a height of 20 feet under ideal conditions.

Other Asian species reported in the literature as being in cultivation are:

Buxus harlandii Hance—An endemic of southern China, described as from Hong Kong (Baldwin 1967), it is not hardy in North American gardens except in the coastal Southeast and California. It is seldom encountered elsewhere in gardens today. The name is occasionally given in error to cultivars of *B. sempervirens*.

B. wallichiana Baillon—This is a Himalayan species, probably introduced as a curiosity. It reaches a height of 6 meters and is a useful timber tree in India. It seldom reaches this

height in cultivation. Dallimore reports that it is a strong grower, but difficult to propagate.

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Photo: Mary Gamble

Peter Goldblatt stands beside one of a matched pair of B. s. *'Inglis' at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The pair was set out this spring by the Boxwood Society of the Midwest from their nursery at the MBG.*

Editor's Note: Peter Goldblatt was born in South Africa and educated there at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and at the University of Cape Town, where he received a Doctorate in botany. After teaching botany for several years in Johannesburg and Cape Town, he moved to the United States in 1972 to take up a research position at the Missouri Botanical Garden. In 1975 he was appointed B. A. Krukoff Curator of African Botany. His main research interests are in the systematics and evolution of the family Iridaceae, and in the flora of southern and tropical Africa. He has maintained an interest in boxwoods since coming to the United States, and this article is a revised and updated version of the one published in the July 1976 issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin* (Vol. 16, No. 1).

The Boxwood Garden of the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace

Dr. Katharine L. Brown
Executive Director, Woodrow Wilson Birthplace

The birthplace of Woodrow Wilson, now a presidential museum, has attracted visitors to Staunton, Virginia for half a century. Neither the builders nor the early occupants of this house had in mind the elegant formal garden which now adds special beauty and warmth to the place.

The elders and trustees of Staunton's Presbyterian Church acquired a full quarter of a city block near the eastern edge of town in 1845 on which to build a manse for their minister.

The Reverend Rufus Bailey, founder of Augusta Female Seminary (which became Mary Baldwin College), served on the building committee for the Manse. Its Greek Revival lines are much like those of the original college building which he designed, so he may well have designed the Manse also. The builder was John Fifer of Augusta County.

The first occupant of the Manse was the Reverend Benjamin Mosby Smith, who moved in with his wife and five children in 1847. In 1855 the Smiths left for Union Theological Seminary, then at Hampden-Sydney College, and the Reverend Joseph Ruggles Wilson, who had been teaching science and philosophy at Hampden-Sydney, came with his wife, Jessie Woodrow, and two little girls to occupy the Manse that same year. Their son, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, was born in the Manse on December 28, 1856.

From the diary of the Reverend Mr. Smith, we have learned in recent years that some fruit trees were planted, and that there were flower and vegetable beds at the Manse. A stable, which was still standing in the early years of the twentieth century, was built on the Frederick Street side of the lot.

Portions of the original Manse lot were sold by the church beginning in 1874. Therefore, when Mary Baldwin College bought the Manse from the church in 1929 to hold until a foundation could be formed to preserve and restore it as a presidential birthplace, the lot and garden were much smaller than in the Wilson family's time there. No photos of the garden or lot have been discovered which date prior to 1930. A pen and ink drawing of the Manse, c. 1925, from Frederick Street shows a solid board fence along the street side of the lot. A snapshot, c. 1930, from behind the Manse looking west across the yard shows it to be overgrown, chiefly with lilac bushes.

In 1932, while the College still owned the Birthplace, The Garden Club of Virginia agreed to undertake work on the garden. In that year Mrs. Lawrence S. Davis became the seventh president of the Club and Mrs. Thomas R. Boggs, Fredericksburg, its first restoration chairman. These two ladies worked closely with the indefatigable Mrs. Herbert McKelden Smith of the Augusta Garden Club in Staunton on plans for the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace garden. At their fourteenth annual meeting in May 1933, delegates voted to appropriate a maximum of $2,500 to the work in Staunton. Thus, the garden was established even before the Birthplace Foundation existed or the house was restored and opened to the public.

Charles Gillette, noted landscape architect of Richmond, Virginia, was retained to design the garden. He located a letter written by someone who had lived in the Manse around 1870 indicating some of the plants growing there at the time. He used this information as a guide to selection of plant materials.

The land sloped steeply, so Mr. Gillette decided that it should be terraced in three levels. The steep banks to each terrace were planted with *Vinca minor*. The level immediately behind the Manse was planted with large old English boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* var. *suffruticosa*). The area outside the Manse door was bricked and a pergola constructed over it.

Brick steps led down to the middle terrace and a brick walk bisected its lawn. Apple trees were planted in the center of each lawn section. A Chippendale gazebo was constructed at

the northern edge of the lawn next to a brick wall which The Garden Club constructed along Frederick Street to replace the board fence.

Brick steps again led to the lower terrace which was a parterre divided into bowknot and cresent beds, each bordered with small English boxwood. The remaining bedded areas against the east bank and against the brick wall on the west side of the garden were also edged with small, close-clipped English boxwood. Grass paths served as walkways between the formal beds.

Charles Gillette's planting scheme for the garden depended heavily on spring bulbs, particularly tulips and narcissus. He also recommended planting many types of "old roses" predating the hybrids developed in the 1860's. These included two varieties of *Rosa centifolia muscosa*, 'Duchesse de Verneuil' 1856 and 'Gloire des Mousseux' 1856, and two of *Rosa chinensis bourbonia*, 'Hermosa' 1842, and 'Souvenir de la Malmaison' 1843.

Recommendations for herbaceous perennials included bleeding heart, phlox, foxglove, lemon daylily, hosta, Virginia bluebell, white peony and tree peony. He suggested several shrubs, including Japanese flowering quince, lilac, bridal wreath, Carolina allspice, and mock orange. The sole vine he suggested was *Akebia quinata*.

In October 1938 the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace Foundation, Inc. was chartered by the Commonwealth, and soon embarked on a plan to restore the house. At that time a large front porch, designed c. 1895 by Staunton's well-known architect, T. J. Collins, was removed and replaced by a Greek Revival porch similar to the one originally on the house. Two additional windows were cut in the ground level of the house, necessitating a stone retaining wall. The Garden Club of Virginia Restoration Committee provided $600 for this project, and another $400 to carry out more of Mr. Gillette's planting scheme for the garden.

Over the next twenty years, the small boxwoods bordering the beds grew into dense and handsome hedges, carefully clipped. The apple trees and lilacs grew large and shaded the middle and lower terraces. Mimosa trees behind the Manse reached the height of the third floor balcony, and the weeping willow behind Mr. Gillette's wellhouse showed luxuriant growth. The number of visitors increased dramatically, and wore away the grass paths between the bowknot beds. The Foundation meanwhile had acquired the brick house adjacent to the Manse at 20 North Coalter Street, which offered the possibility of expanding the garden.

In 1960, aid from The Garden Club of Virginia again made possible important improvements in the garden. The worn grass paths were replaced by walks of old brick laid in sand in a herringbone pattern. Landscaping was carried out in the area behind the house at 20 North Coalter Street to make it compatible with the formal terraced garden, with extensive planting of boxwood, tulips, hosta and tree peonies. The garden was now much closer to its original size in 1846 when the Manse was constructed.

Just seven years later, another important addition was made to the garden. The Foundation had the opportunity to construct a parking lot in the center of the block to accommodate the more than 15,000 visitors who came to the historic site annually. Ralph E. Griswold of Pittsburgh was engaged to design a brick terrace between the west brick wall of the 1933 garden and the new parking lot on a lower level. The Garden Club of Virginia appropriated $10,000 for this project, which was chaired locally by Mrs. Frank Gilliam.

Completion of this work was marked in June 1968 by the formal dedication of the terrace and the unveiling of a plaque honoring Mrs. Herbert McKelden Smith. Mr. Thomas G. McCaskey of Colonial Williamsburg presided over the festivities honoring Emily Smith for her years of leadership in The Garden Club of Virginia and her long-time presidency of the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace Foundation.

The decade of the 1970s saw some changes in the garden planting. Under the direction of Dr. and Mrs. Albert Gillespie of the Trustees' Garden Committee, the large old lilacs that shaded the lower terrace were removed, the remaining apple tree on the center terrace—then nearly dead—was removed, and two large old cherry trees taken down. The high cost of qualified gardeners and some damage to boxwood roots led to a decision to do less transplanting of annual bedding plants. Improvements in the brick walks were made to protect the roots of the boxwood hedges through a generous gift from the Gillespies. Work relating to the extensive restoration of

Photo: Courtesy Woodrow Wilson Birthplace

The planting in the Birthplace garden grew in forty years to the point that it obscured the historic house. This photo was taken in 1965.

the Manse in 1979-82, including engineering work, necessitated the removal of the mimosas and the weeping willow. The garden became a much more open, sunny place.

The Restoration Committee of The Garden Club of Virginia continues its lively interest in the Birthplace garden. Through this committee the Foundation received a landscaping plan for the area immediately adjacent to the historic house from Rudy J. Favretti of Connecticut, a nationally recognized authority on historic landscaping in America. The new design is low in maintenance, but compatible with mid-19th century gardening taste. Mrs. George M. Cochran, former President of The Garden Club of Virginia, Trustee of the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace Foundation, and member of its Garden Committee, serves as liaison with the Restoration Committee of The Garden Club. The most recent gifts of The Garden Club were a pair of willow oak trees for the lower terrace to provide gentle shade for the boxwood, and an improved watering system for that same terrace where the most extensive boxwood beds are located.

In spite of half a century of growth, expansion, and change, the garden at the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace remains remarkably true to the plans of Charles Gillette. It remains an outstanding example of the art of landscape design in the second quarter of the twentieth century and, with the exception of the "old roses," nearly every type of plant on his original plan is still to be found in the garden. The boxwoods flourish, and have escaped the blight. They continue to form the basis for the design of this garden, which is one of the loveliest in the Old Dominion.

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Photo: Courtesy Woodrow Wilson Birthplace

Extensive restoration and engineering work in 1979-82 made the garden sunnier and gave the handsome Greek Revival house a more open look.

* * * *

Editor's Note: Katharine L. Brown is a native of Parkersburg, West Virginia where, she says, "Boxwood is relatively unknown and rarely seen, alas." A graduate of Hollins College, she holds a Ph. D. degree in history from the Johns Hopkins University. After writing a dissertation on Presbyterians in Colonial and Revolutionary Virginia, she authored a book on the history of the Episcopal Church in Southwestern Virginia 1738-1938. At present she is an adjunct professor at Mary Baldwin College. Before coming to the Woodrow Wilson Birthplace she was director of the Stonewall Jackson House in Lexington. Dr. Brown's principal interest in boxwood is in seeing that it thrives in the Birthplace garden.

Notes on Two Talks at the Woodlawn Workshop

Editor's Note: The first of five talks at the boxwood workshop held at Woodlawn Plantation on May 29, 1986 (see *The Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol. 26, No. 1, July 1986, Page 15 for the printed program) was given by Mr. Dean Norton, Horticulturist at Mount Vernon. His experience with the care and culture of the boxwood at that historic national shrine is not only of practical value to boxwood gardeners in general but also constitutes an interesting chapter in the history of the Mount Vernon boxwood, one which can be appreciated all the more on your next visit to Washington's home. Joan Butler, the second speaker, injected a new note into the usual workshop curriculum with a talk on the characteristics of some dif-

ferent types of boxwood. The types selected and her comments on them may stimulate members to look beyond just the so-called American and English varieties.

* * * *

Mr. Norton said that he had been at Mount Vernon for 17 years, first on a part-time basis as a high school student, later as a boxwood gardener, and now as Horticulturist. One of the most valuable lessons he learned in the process of replacing the entire parterre garden was *not* to dig a well or trench in which to plant, because doing so prevents proper drainage and movement of nutrients through the soil. After years of building elaborate frames for winter protection, boxwood plants now receive little artificial help. Wiltpruf, an antidesiccant, is applied following a hard freeze on a day when the temperature reaches 40 degrees F. or above, but there is no concrete proof that this practice really leads to better plants in the spring.

Three conditions required attention when he began caring for the Mount Vernon boxwoods: lack of nutrients in the soil; high acidity of the soil (pH average was about 4.0); pruning had long been neglected.

First to be attacked was the soil acidity. Ground limestone was applied in the summer and dolomitic limestone, which contains magnesium, was applied in September. The soil pH rose slowly during the first year.

Next was a program to provide nutrients, first through foliar feeding. Peters 20-20-20 liquid spray fertilizer was applied three times in May at 10 day intervals (iron may be added to this liquid fertilizer). After the soil pH was corrected and plants could absorb soil nutrients, 10-10-10, bone meal (for phosphorus) and dried blood (for nitrogen) were used in early March. In recent years fertilizing has been done with 10-10-10 only. Osmocote (3-4 month type) was also used with good results.

Finally the plants were pruned for health and control of size. The first priority was to cut all dead wood and to remove leaves and debris which had accumulated at the base of the plants. Then they were plucked to thin the branches and let air and light reach the centers. If plants had to be sheared to maintain a formal parterre design, the work was completed by the end of March so that new spring growth would quickly cover the cuts.

In the Northern Virginia area fall is the preferred season for transplanting boxwood because the roots can establish new growth before hard winter cold arrives. However, February, March and April are also satisfactory months for transplanting if the ground can be dug. When plants must be moved in the summer the transplanting should be preceded by heavy plucking and the removal of new foliage to compensate for roots lost during digging.

* * * *

After speaking briefly about the American Boxwood Society, Mrs. Butler described the great variety found in the boxwood genus. She discussed nomenclature, urging that growers abandon the terms "English" and "American," which are inaccurate, in favor of the clearer and more descriptive "edging" or "slow-growing" for the former and "common" or "fast-growing" for the latter. She reviewed the two-part system of names established by Linnaeus in 1753: genus *Buxus*, species *sempervirens*, variety (in nature) *suffruticosa* and the present "fancy" name for a cultivated variety (cultivar) such as 'Graham Blandy'. The most frequently-planted species in the U. S. are *sempervirens*, *microphylla* and, in southern gardens, *harlandii*.

A display of potted boxwoods was used to illustrate the great variability found in both *sempervirens* and *microphylla*: variegated specimens included 'Argentea', 'Aurea Maculata', 'Elegantissima' and a variegated sport (mutation) from 'Ponteyi'. Great differences in leaf size and shape were visible in 'Latifolia Pendula' (large), 'Hermann von Schrenk' (dainty) and *Buxus microphylla* var. *compacta* (tiny). Varying habits of growth were visible in 'Graham Blandy' (tightly upright) and 'Vardar Valley' and 'Helen Whiting' (low and spreading).

Plants which develop from seeds are also responsible for new types. When tiny volunteers appear around boxwood plantings, some may develop characteristics totally unlike the presumed parents. Such seedlings can provide interesting new introductions like those selected by Dr. H. T. Skinner from *B. m.*

var. *japonica* seedlings: 'Morris Midget' and 'National' (a tall, vigorous, large-leaved plant).

Mutations or sports also provide new forms. *B. m.* var. *compacta* is a prolific producer of shoots which do not resemble the original miniature: 'Helen Whiting' and a lovely dwarf, 'Grace Hendrick Phillips' are examples which were recognized and introduced by Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr. and Henry Hohman of Kingsville Nurseries.

The great variety of shape and color makes boxwood an outstanding landscape addition. It can be used very effectively in groups, but it also is a fine specimen plant.

Mrs. Butler also showed a sample of sarcococca, another member of the boxwood family, which can be used as a glossy low plant in densely shaded gardens.

* * * *

The ABS congratulates member Col. John Hodges on being elected mayor of Williamsburg, Virginia.

Gift to ABS Library

The officers and directors acknowledge with gratitude, and call to the attention of members, a gift from Elizabeth (Mrs. Mark V.) Braimbridge to the ABS Library of a booklet of color slides on the Waddesdon Bequest.

Entitled *The Waddesdon Bequest I: Medieval Masterpieces (12 Colour slides with commentary)* this little volume, published by the British Museum, contains fascinating photographs and descriptions of some miniature boxwood carvings produced in the southern Netherlands in the last years of the 15th century and first third of the 16th century. Among them are a boxwood altarpiece, a tabernacle and a rosary bead (described as "probably the most elaborate of this form of boxwood carving to have survived").

These treasures were bequeathed to the British Museum in 1898 by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild under strict conditions for their display. If permission can be obtained from the Museum it is hoped that the photographs can be printed in black and white in *The Boxwood Bulletin* along with the commentary. In any case, the booklet and color slides will be available for reference in the ABS Library at Blandy Farm.

Again, our sincere thanks to Mrs. Braimbridge for this meaningful reminder of the importance of boxwood in the creation of great artistic carvings.

New Index to *The Boxwood Bulletin* is Now Available

Members are advised that the long-awaited, comprehensive index to all 25 volumes of *The Boxwood Bulletin* is now available for $10 per copy. The index is a separate publication that runs to 56 pages of single-spaced entries. It is primarily an author and subject index, but includes in a special section 10 pages of references to all the *Buxus* species and cultivars that have been featured in *The Boxwood Bulletin* through the years.

To order a copy, please send a check for $10 made payable to the American Boxwood Society (with the word "Index" on the check) to:

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Our thanks go to Mr. Lynn Batdorf and others who have assisted in compiling this index. We also take this opportunity to acknowledge the generous response of members to our appeal for gifts to the Bulletin Index Fund. As of September 15, 1986 a total of $435 had been received from the following members: Mr. Thomas F. Bayard III, Professor Albert S. Beecher, Mr. Scot Butler, Mr. Tom Dilatush, Mrs. Arthur A. Dugdale, Mr. James T. Gallagher, Mrs. A. R. Gillespie, Mary Elizabeth Loomis, Mrs. Antone Rodgers, Mrs. Dale Shugart, Mrs. Herbert A. Solenberger, Mr. Dale T. Taylor, and Mrs. Orme Wilson.

Photo: Mary Gamble

B. s. *'Mary Gamble', here photographed at the Missouri Botanical Garden, forms an almost perfect sphere.*

Boxwood Society Of The Midwest Names Plant For Mary Gamble

Jane Edmonds Penhale

Buxus sempervirens 'Mary Gamble' is a plant the Boxwood Society of the Midwest deems worthy to name in honor of its founding member and first president.

It was Mary Gamble's cousin, Lucy Mason, a charter member of our Society, now deceased, who first noted this dainty-leaved boxwood growing in the yard of her son's neighbor in Lincoln, Massachusetts. In November 1971 she brought back from a visit there a handful of cuttings which our Society rooted, beginning a test of its hardiness in the Midwest. It has weathered our chancy climate well.

When we were considering naming this plant in token of our esteem for Mary Gamble, we wrote Lucy's son Max Mason, a landscape architect in the Boston area, to check on its history. To our surprise and delight it has a past dating back to 1830. This is the story related to Max by Peggy Marsh, the neighbor from whom the original cuttings came.

Abner Post, an ancestor of mine, was a prosperous bank president in the town of Westfield, Massachusetts. In 1830 he built a new home for his family which featured a green garden on the grounds. This boxwood provided one of the shades of green.

Around 1900 the Westfield house was torn down to make way for construction of a railroad. The box along with some white lilacs and a yellow rose were moved to the family's country home in Weston, Massachusetts. When the Massachusetts turnpike took our family's Weston home, I, following family tradition, moved the box, lilacs, and rose to my home on Winter Street in Lincoln, Massachusetts.

And it was there that Lucy Mason took the cuttings which led to the naming of the cultivar, *B. s.* 'Mary Gamble'.

New Boxwood Cultivar Registered

Buxus sempervirens 'Mary Gamble'

Registered by the Boxwood Society of the Midwest.

Description: This broadly upright cultivar has grown to a height of 61cm and a width of 61cm in 15 years. The leaves are uniformly lanceolate—narrowly elliptic with a cuneate base and an acute tip. They measure 1.3-1.7cm long and 5-8mm wide. The internodal length is 6-7mm. Leaf color by the RHS Colour Chart is yellow-green group 146A on the upper epidermis and 146B on the lower. The plant has not been observed in flower.

Clonal herbarium specimens have been deposited at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, Missouri. Iso-clonal herbarium specimens have been deposited at the U. S. National Arboretum in Washington, D. C.

NOTE: *Buxus sempervirens* 'Mary Gamble' was formerly carried as 752062 by the Boxwood Society of the Midwest in its nursery. Its convenience name, 'Lincoln, Mass.', was never registered.

Lynn R. Batdorf, Registrar

Photo: Shaw Camera

Life-size photo of sprig shows the uniformly lanceolate leaves, one of the attractive aspects of Buxus sempervirens *'Mary Gamble'.*

"Meet Me in St. Louis"
For the 1987 ABS Annual Meeting and Tour

Sheila Hoffmeister
Boxwood Society of the Midwest

Note: At their fall meeting on October 30, 1985 your officers and directors voted to accept with thanks the generous invitation of Dr. Peter H. Raven, Director of the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis, to hold our 1987 Annual Meeting there. In addition, our members and friends in the Boxwood Society of the Midwest (BSMW) are busy arranging a tour of some private boxwood gardens on the day following the meeting. These events are scheduled for the weekend of ***May 8-10***, so please mark your calendar and plan to attend what promises to be an exciting time.

Fuller details and a registration form will be printed in the January 1987 issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. But anticipating that some who make the journey may want to arrive early and/or stay after to enjoy St. Louis' many attractions, Mrs. James F. Hoffmeister of the BSMW has thoughtfully provided the following sketch of a few of the many entertaining features that await the visitor to St. Louis.

From the beginnings as a French fur trading post, through its strategic role in the development of the American West, to its present status as a Midwest manufacturing center, St. Louis has turned its face to the river.

Dominating the riverfront today is Eero Saarinen's 630-foot metallic inverted catenary curve, the Gateway Arch, symbol of the city's role as "Gateway to the West." Tram cars carry visitors to the observation deck atop the Arch, while beneath it lies the Museum of Westward Expansion which retraces the steps of Lewis and Clark, who began their exploration of the Louisiana Purchase just above St. Louis.

Framed by the legs of the Gateway Arch is the Old Courthouse, which witnessed the Dred Scott decision. Nearby is the 1834 Cathedral of St. Louis IX, the city's patron.

To capture the true flavor of the river, one can take an excursion on the Riverboat *Huck Finn* or hiss and boo the villain in an old-time melodrama aboard the *Goldenrod Showboat*.

Immediately north of the Arch is Laclede's Landing—a shopping and entertainment center housed in restored iron-fronted commercial buildings on gas-lit cobblestone streets. And immediately west of downtown, the creatively restored Union Station complex provides unique shopping, eating, and boat rides near a biergarten.

Those interested in historic homes can view the Chatillon-DeMenil House, a Greek Revival mansion with many French antiques; the home of prosperous fur trader Robert Campbell; the home of poet Eugene Field, which also contains an antique toy museum; the Federal brick home of Dr. Thomas Sappington, which features an herb garden, library, and tea room; or the General Daniel Bissel House, which contains furnishings from the 1812-50 period.

Forest Park, the site of the 1904 World's Fair, is home to the Art Museum, with its outstanding collection of pre-Columbian art, and the St. Louis Zoo. Also in the park are the St. Louis Science Center and Jefferson Memorial, home of the Missouri Historical Society which features a large display on the achievements of Col. Charles A. Lindbergh.

Of particular interest to American Boxwood Society members is the Boxwood Society of the Midwest's boxwood collection housed at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The 79-acre Garden also houses a magnificent Japanese garden, an English woodland garden, a demonstration vegetable garden, an herb garden, an azalea garden, and a fragrance garden for the blind. The Climatron, a geodesic dome, houses tropical and sub-tropical plants, including an orchid collection. The Linnean House, the oldest greenhouse west of the Allegheny Mountains, houses a camellia collec-

tion. The restored home of the Garden's founder, Henry Shaw, is open to the public.

For the ethnic flavor of St. Louis, try a freshly made canolli or Italian sausage on the Hill, sauerbraten or potato pancakes on the South Side, or Thai or Vietnamese cuisine on Grand Boulevard near the Missouri Botanical Garden.

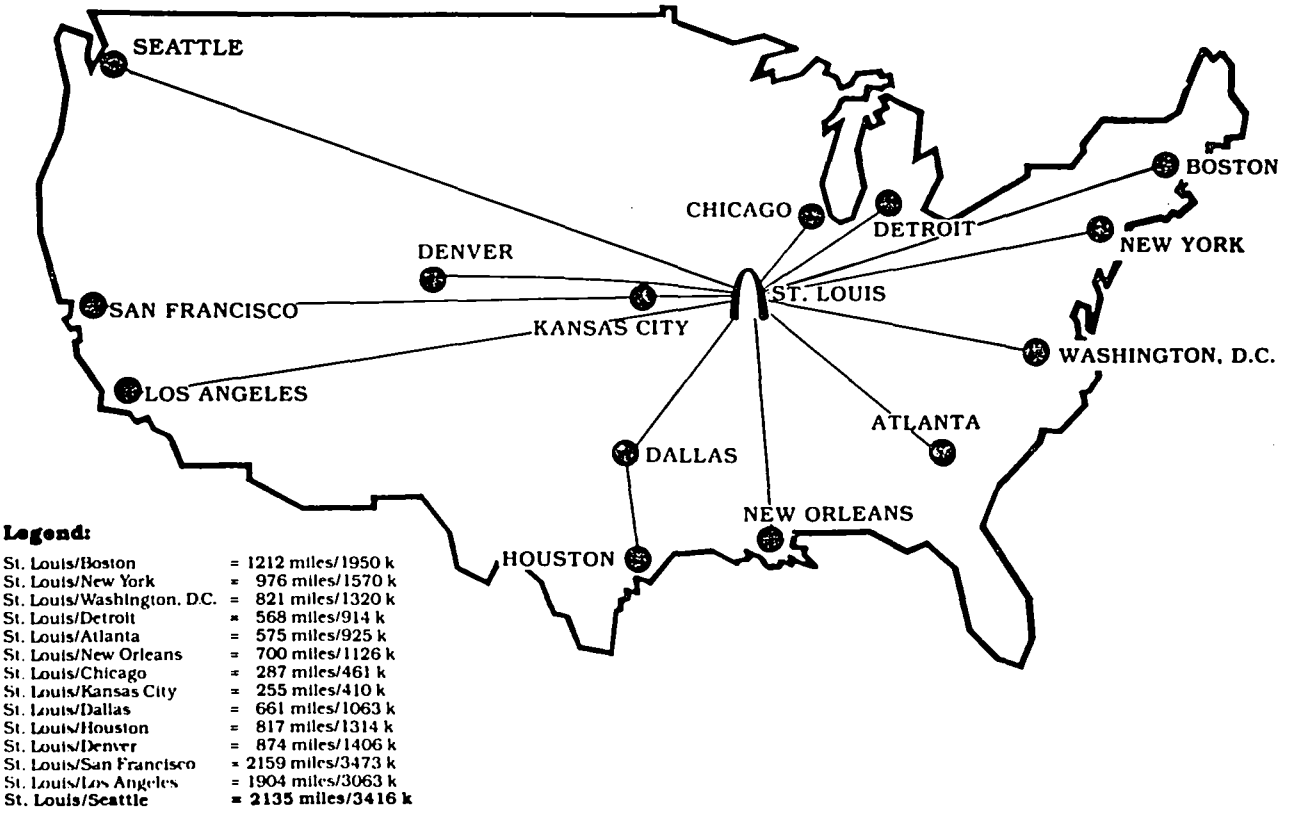
There are also several interesting side trips an hour or so away from St. Louis.

St. Charles, on the Missouri River, was the state's first capital and the site from which Lewis and Clark departed. Restaurants and craft shops line the restored area along the riverfront. The Frenchtown area is an antiquer's delight.

Travelling further up the Missouri on Route 94, one passes near the home in which Daniel Boone died and into Augusta, a small river town with antique and craft shops. Further up the river on Highway 100, the town of Hermann with a strong German heritage has two wineries with tours. Hermann also offers craft and antique shops as well as several historic homes.

One hour south of St. Louis lies the 250-year-old village of Ste. Genevieve, which contains some of the oldest extant French Colonial homes in the country. The Bolduc House, home of a wealthy French merchant, features a sill-and-stone foundation, a massive trussed roof, an 18th century garden, enclosing gallerie and a stockade fence. *Buxus sempervirens* 'Ste. Genevieve' takes its name from this town.

St. Louis, Missouri
THE CENTRAL PLACE



Map: Courtesy St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission

Some "Different" *Buxus* Cultivars at the Morris Arboretum

Tom Dilatush

Seedlings of *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica*

The parent plant of these seedlings was formerly on the Morris estate grounds and was probably obtained in the 1890s. It is designated M-355 in the arboretum records. The parent plant was first identified as a cultivar of *Buxus sempervirens* ('Rotundifolia') but after it produced flowers and seed it was determined to be *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica*. In the winter of 1933-34, which set an all-time record for cold in the area, it was injured 40 percent but recovered well from sprouts on older wood to become 8-9 feet tall with formal shape by 1946.

Photo: Tom Dilatush

Herbarium specimen of M-355, B. m. *var.* japonica, *seed parent of 'Medium Dwarf' and Very Dwarf', Morris Arboretum.*

Seed from this plant was sown, and the resultant seedlings were designated 47-249. The seedlings were apparently sorted to general size groups of dwarf, medium dwarf and very dwarf. These were then evaluated and the presumed best individual medium dwarf was propagated and designated 50-579. Hedges of the dwarf and medium dwarf were planted in 1962 at the base of the rose garden. These hedges, now 24 years old, are of interest. The dwarf hedge has foliage reminiscent of 'Wintergreen', but is probably taller than 'Wintergreen' would be at the same age. The medium dwarf hedge has foliage reminiscent of *compacta* (Kingsville dwarf), but again is larger, perhaps by twice, than *compacta* would be at the same age.

This medium dwarf hedge is a wonderful study in reversions, as it has many faster growing shoots. Some resemble *Buxus sempervirens* foliage while others resemble elongated versions of *compacta* foliage. A reversion may someday appear on the hedge that will be worthy of propagation, as has been the case with *compacta* reversions.

Photo: Tom Dilatush

Larger leaf reversion at top of B. m. *var.* japonica *'Medium Dwarf' hedge.*

And what about the very dwarf variant? A speciman of it is perched on a sort of rock throne near the big *Acer buergerianiums* not far from Hillcrest Avenue in the arboretum. It has foliage resembling *compacta* but the shape of the plant is flatter and it is slightly more informal. In size it is perhaps half again as large for the age as *compacta* would be. Propagations of it planted by our back door are exceptionally attractive; we recommend it to ABS members as an interesting "different" cultivar.

Photo: Tom Dilatush
B. m. *var.* japonica *'Very Dwarf' on its rock throne.*

Buxus sempervirens 'Prizren'

Among the Anderson cultivars at Morris Arboretum (these are descended from seed that Dr. Edgar Anderson had sent back from the Balkans in the 1930s), one named 'Prizren' stands out. It grows 6-8 inches a year, and at 38 years of age is perhaps 20 feet tall. Its width is pleasingly proportioned to its height, and it is obviously hardy and vigorous. It seems to me to be a far better tree boxwood than those commonly sold as such, probably because it is more adapted to our climate. Many of the Balkan boxwoods have greater tolerance to cold and dry air than do the cultivars we normally grow that have come from the mild, moist climate of England and Western Europe.

It might be instructive to propagate and outplant a test group of five 'Prizren' so that they could be observed at young ages to see if the cultivar is practical for nursery production and marketing. A "control" of five common tree box (*B. s.* 'Arborescens') might be planted nearby. Again, it is a "different" cultivar that ABS members may wish to try.

Boxwood Blockmaking

Carolyn Watts

Since the first flowering of wood engraving in the 18th century, English engravers have chosen to work on box because no other wood is as hard, fine-grained or durable. The detail of line possible on box is remarkable. So too is the number of prints which can be taken from one block. In the early 19th century the English engraver Thomas Bewick noted that after 900,000 printings a woodblock he had made for a Northern newspaper still showed no sign of serious wear.

Wood engraving as we know it now was born towards the end of the 18th century, when artists were experimenting with more expressive ways of working on wood. Since the middle ages the usual printmaking technique had been the wood "cut," a relief image made on the long grain of wood by removing the background with knives. Now artists discovered that a far more detailed image could be created on the harder end grain, using new kinds of tools to produce a striking incised design. And whereas wood cuts had mainly been done on apple, pear and sycamore, leaving box only for special work, engraving could only be done on the densest woods, and box was the obvious choice.

Bewick was the first great artist to exploit the novel technique. Before long his witty pastoral scenes of birds and animals had created a fashion for woodblock illustration which lasted for nearly a hundred years.

Today wood engraving in England is flourishing again after a dismal patch in the 1960s and 70s when its simple black and white lines were thought to be dull and outdated. Like their predecessors, the new generation of engravers continues to work on boxwood whenever they can get it.

But it is in increasingly short supply and artists like Hilary Paynter, secretary of the British Society of Wood Engravers, often end up using other woods instead. Holly is usually agreed to be the best substitute. Says Hilary: "I've also tried maple, which is used widely in America, but it's crumbly and coarse. Lemonwood is lovely but inconsistent. There's just something about working with box . . ."

Engravers work on boxwood in the form of "blocks"—thick, hand-made boards which can be fitted direct into a printing press. Each block is a strikingly beautiful assembly of tiny blocks of prime wood. The crucial engraving surface is perfectly flat, polished by hand till it is smooth as glass and a deep, glossy yellow. Most blocks are rectangular and vary in width from a few inches to over a foot.

Preparing boxwood this way is the work of highly-skilled craftsmen who these days are few and far between. In the heart of London, however, I came across T. N. Lawrence and Son, a remarkable family firm which has been making boxwood blocks since 1859. Their address is Number 2, Bleeding Heart Yard, London.

Bleeding Heart Yard itself is a small courtyard with worn cobblestones and a long history. Dickens mentions it in *Little Dorrit*, and it is a stone's throw from where the infamous Artful Dodger entertained Oliver Twist. The firm occupies the upper floors of a pretty, ageing warehouse at one end of the Yard. Business is conducted from a minute front office with a low ceiling, a large oak counter and wood panelling on the walls. From the workshop next door come the sounds of activity and the rich smell of wood.

Eighty-five-year-old Stanley Lawrence, who became a blockmaker in 1917, is the grandson of the firm's founder. A humorous, white-haired man with a sweet smile and a passion for boxwood, he has almost singlehandedly kept blockmaking alive in England over the past 40 years. He has a world-wide reputation as a master craftsman.

Photo: Carolyn Watts

Bleeding Heart Yard, London.

Today, he is officially retired. But he still spends several days a week at Bleeding Heart Yard, and it was there that I asked him what makes a good blockmaker. "Practice," he said unequivocally, with a characteristic peal of laughter. "And a good teacher," he added.

Stanley Lawrence's own teacher was his father, to whom he was apprenticed when he left school. From him he learnt how to select and grade wood, make up a block, and polish it till it shone.

"I'll show you," he said, disappearing for a moment into a back room. He emerged with two blocks, each about the size of a prayer book

and nine-tenths of an inch thick. "Type high," he said, explaining that by convention each engraving block is made precisely the same thickness as a printer's blocks. Early engravings were mainly illustrations in newspapers, books or periodicals, so woodblocks had to lock snugly into a normal press.

His first block was dated 1905. At some stage French chalk had been dusted into its engraved, ink-blackened surface, revealing an astonishingly detailed drawing of lancers on horseback. The second block was new, so it was easy to see its construction. Eight small rectangles of wood had been glued together and secured with fine tongues of wood. The result was strong, compact and built to last.

In the light and airy workshop, the walls were lined with storage shelves piled high with inch-thick slices of boxwood. "It takes two or three years for them to dry," said Mr. Lawrence, picking up a round to show how the wood tends to split along its radius as it dries.

When a round has shrunk all it ever will, a deft pencil stroke marks out the small rectangles of flawless wood which will be put together to make a block. These are cut out, matched with as many other pieces as necessary, then meticulously joined using tongue and grooove.

Next the craftsman creates the engraving surface. He does this by planing flat one side of the block, then polishing it with fine glass paper till it has the perfectly flat finish essential for printing. Finally, he uses a machine to grind down the back of the block till the whole thing is type high.

Since the hardness of box varies, and a block may be an assembly of wood from different sources, matching the small pieces of wood to produce a consistently-textured block is a vital part of the process. Just as a badly-joined block can split open under the warmth of the engraver's hand, a poorly-matched block will cut unevenly, ruining a design.

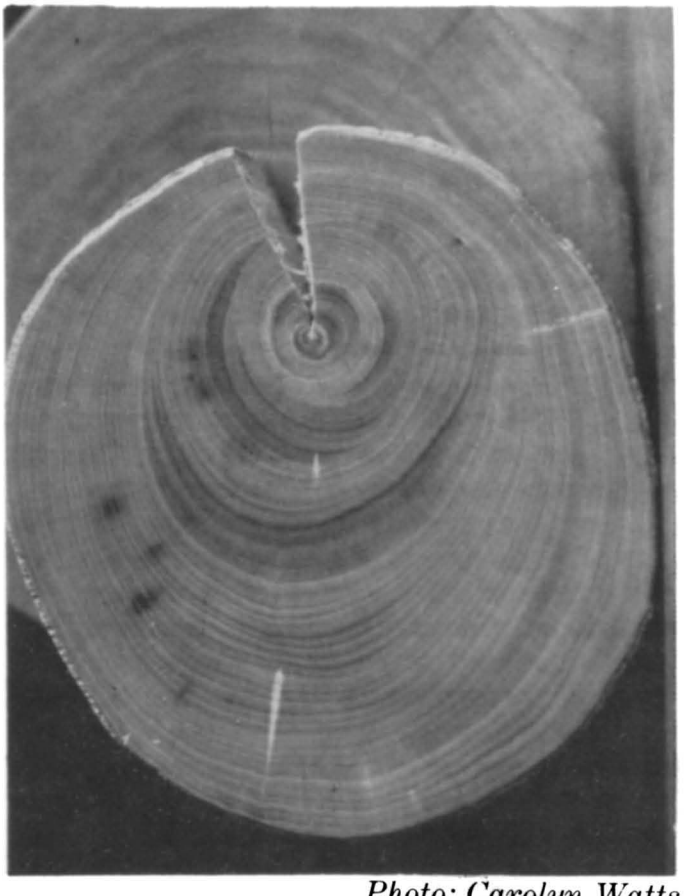


Photo: Carolyn Watts

Round of boxwood showing split. A small square will be taken from this round.

Photo: Carolyn Watts

The youngest Lawrence holding a round of boxwood and a boxwood block assembled.

Of existing varieties of true box, only two are traditionally used for blockmaking: *Buxus sempervirens* and *Buxus macowani* (Cape Box). Today supplies of Cape Box—from South Africa—have dried up. So too have supplies of *Buxus sempervirens* from Crimea and Turkey. Most box now comes from Britain, so the firm is always alert for news of trees due to be cut down—as happens from time to time on large country estates. Once inspected and bought, a tree is sent direct to the sawmill; by the time it reaches Bleeding Heart Yard, it is already in rounds.

Since Stanley Lawrence followed his father's steps, no younger members of the family have taken up the craft, though both his son and grandson work on the business side of things. In the 1940s Stanley Lawrence found himself the only practising blockmaster in England. Since then, to ensure the survival of the craft, he has spent many hours training apprentices from outside the family. Two have stayed on, and today the workload at T. N. Lawrence is in the skilled hands of Edward Skeggs and Robert Stead—"the future blockmakers," as Mr. Lawrence proudly introduces them.

As I left, the master craftsman handed me two small nuggets of polished box, and a copy of a book on engraving by one of the century's finest engravers, George Mackley. Like so many famous and aspiring artists, Mackley himself was once a regular visitor to the small workshop in Bleeding Heart Yard.

* * * *

Editor's Note: Carolyn Watts is the daughter of our London member-correspondent Elizabeth (Mrs. Mark V.) Braimbridge. She was an Oxford Scholar with a degree in Social Anthropology. After 18 months in Japan and an assignment on the Japan desk of a merchant bank in London, Miss Watts took up journalism, her main interest being the Third World. She is presently in Hong Kong working as a feature writer on the *South China Morning Post*. We want to thank her for this original, informative article on boxwood blockmaking and to wish her well wherever her career as a journalist may take her.

An example of the block engraver's art.

Photo: Courtesy UVa Alumni News

North entrance to The Quarters, which houses living accommodations, labs, offices and a library. The gravel walk is edged with a low-growing form of Korean boxwood.

Blandy: New Developments Down on the Farm

Robert Brickhouse

(Reprinted in condensed form from the University of Virginia *Alumni News*, March/April 1986, with the permission of the author and the *Alumni News*)

What important University of Virginia research facility has provided the setting for dozens of Ph. D. projects since the 1930s, contains a thousand species of trees and plants, is a working farm as well as a retreat for seminars and discussion groups, is known internationally, has a type of boxwood named for it, and was once almost given to Virginia Tech?

The answer: Blandy Experimental Farm, of course.

But, as the research station's director, Edward F. Connor, readily points out, "Blandy Farm" isn't a name on the tips of most people's tongues around Charlottesville.

Partly because of its off-Grounds location in Clarke County in the northern Shenandoah Valley (about a two-hour drive from Charlottesville) and partly because of shifts in scientific interests, Blandy Farm has kept a modest profile in recent years. Mr. Connor and Blandy's staff are hoping to change that.

In recent months, researchers in environmental sciences, agriculture, biology, landscape architecture and related fields, both at U. Va. and other institutions, have been invited to explore new research possibilities at the farm and biological field station. And plans call for establishing postdoctoral research fellowships, summer

research stipends for graduate students and internships for undergraduates at Blandy. The science and landscape courses now taught there may be expanded, too.

The unique place that is undergoing this renaissance is partly an estate-like farm with living accommodations for up to 28 persons and partly an extensive botanical garden. Located near the town of Boyce, the 700-acre farm has been a venerable part of the University since 1926, when it was bequeathed as part of the estate of Graham F. Blandy, a lawyer from New York who spent his summers and retirement years there. Over six decades it has seen periods of heavy use by biology faculty and students, while scholars in philosophy and other non-science areas have used it as a quiet retreat.

One of two biological research stations operated by the University (the other is at Mountain Lake in Southwest Virginia), Blandy Farm is also open to the general public from dawn to dusk, 365 days a year, and draws numerous visitors to its pastoral setting among the winding roads, cornfields, meadows and stone walls of Clarke County. The main public attraction is Blandy's Orland E. White Arboretum, which was designated the official state arboretum by the 1986 General Assembly.

Established in 1929 and named in honor of the University biologist and internationally known plant expert who was Blandy's first director, the arboretum is the only mature one in Virginia and the only mature one on limestone soils in the Eastern United States, according to Mr. Connor.

And in addition to serving both the research community and the general public, Blandy is also a teaching farm, with some 80 acres of pastureland currently used by Lord Fairfax Community College for courses in pasture management and animal production.

"Blandy has tremendous potential in so many areas," says Mr. Connor, an environmental scientist whose own research interests include studying which insects feed on Blandy's 30 different species of oaks from around the world.

• • •

Mr. Connor makes the 90-mile drive from Charlottesville to Blandy about once a week, crossing the Blue Ridge at Front Royal. After tending to administrative matters with Blandy's five-person staff in the horseshoe-shaped main building, The Quarters, he heads out to work among the farm's trees, plants, fields and ponds. In addition to conducting his own plant-insect research, Mr. Connor is preparing a computerized map of the entire 135-acre arboretum so that each of its 6,000 individual trees and woody shrubs can be located by researchers.

"Blandy is a very unusual field station because it includes a managed agricultural environment as well as the arboretum," says Mr. Connor, who has been a member of the University's environmental sciences faculty since 1979 and the experimental farm's director for the past three years.

Blandy also offers greenhouses, planting equipment, a library, laboratories and "plenty of space to set up field experiments, he adds. "We are ideal for experiments that involve field manipulations."

• • •

"Boxwoods turn up all over Blandy," says Michael Bowers, the farm's resident scientist and research coordinator. He points to several taller than he is—so big they "have escaped." With hundreds of boxwoods, Blandy serves as the headquarters and meeting place of the American Boxwood Society, which maintains a special boxwood garden on the property. And a variety of boxwood developed at Blandy is now grown in ornamental gardens throughout the world: *Buxus sempervirens* 'Graham Blandy'.

"But Blandy has much more than just boxwoods to offer," says Mr. Bowers, who holds a Ph. D. from UCLA and who came to the farm last summer after doing ecological field work in the Mojave Desert.

"For me it's been a real switch," he says as he strolls through the fields. "This place is a lot of fun for ecologists. In addition to plants and trees, it's great for birds and small animals. There are a lot of deer. There's a red fox who lives down in this corner. These stone fences are great for chipmunks. And the spider communities in the woodlots are fantastic. The possibilities for the ecologist are overwhelming."

Mr. Bowers and his wife, Christine Flanagan, also an ecologist, live with their two children in a farmhouse on the property, and Ms. Flanagan is currently developing an educational program for Blandy to be used by public school students.

"The children love the place," says Mr. Bowers. "My wife and I love it." At the end of the day he leaves his office in The Quarters and walks home in the dusk along a lane past cornfields. He is going to check on a calf in his barn.

• • •

Graham F. Blandy, the New York lawyer who bequeathed the 700 acres to the University, had retired at his Clarke County farm, "The Tuleyries," when he died in 1926....

Three years after Mr. Blandy's death, Orland E. White began planting the arboretum. The most extensive holdings are of coniferous trees, boxwoods,oaks and maples. But the arboretum also contains a number of rare and exotic plants such as

Photo: Courtesy UVa Alumni News

Graham F. Blandy in whose honor an outstanding ornamental boxwood was recently named.

Photo: Courtesy UVa Alumni News

One of the most extensive holdings in the White Arboretum at Blandy Farm is of coniferous trees.

the Franklin tree (now extinct in nature) and the Dawn Redwood, and Blandy boasts the largest stand of ginkgo trees in the United States.

There are self-guided trails for visitors, and each plant is numbered so that it can be identified on the maps in The Quarters....

The plants and trees in the arboretum are arranged according to the Engler-Prantl system of classification, a standard arrangement from the simplest to the most complex in biological makeup. But "Orland White also had a good eye for design," says Mr. Ewert, who has managed the arboretum since 1972. "In addition to using an organizational system, he had a nice sense of how to arrange things, a nice sense of balance."

Now Mr. White's arboretum (the University's board of visitors designated it the Orland E. White Arboretum upon his retirement in 1955) has grown to be one of the most diverse in the mid-Atlantic region. Since it is on limestone soil, says Mr. Ewert, "it offers a chance to test the way things grow in limestone. And being in a transitional climatic zone, we can grow both northern and southern plants here. A large range of plants does well in our zone." The arboretum includes two species of pistachios, for example, that are on the northernmost edge of their range. At another climatic extreme, growing among the ubiquitous boxwoods, is a deodar cedar that also grows in the Himalayas.

"All parts of the world have to have plant collections like this, places where plants can be studied in a particular environment," says Mr. Ewert, adding that Blandy exchanges seeds with some 260 institutions around the world, including several in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. "We're part of an overall network," he says.

In 1941 a large addition was built onto The Quarters, providing plenty of room for living accommodations as well as space for the library,

microcomputers, laboratories and offices. The original wing of The Quarters dates back to 1825 and is said to have housed slaves for the Tuleyries mansion.

In the 1950s Blandy became the focus of radiation research in projects headed by Ralph W. Singleton, who succeeded Mr. White as director. A pioneer in radiation studies, Mr. Singleton had set up the nation's first radiation field at Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island.

For several years at Blandy, plants were subjected to radiation in a circular pit in one of the fields, and mutations were studied under an Atomic Energy Commission contract. Corn mutations were the main subject of study, and American chestnut seeds were also irradiated to see if mutations might be resistant to the great blight that had wiped out the tree.

The radiation program ended with a decrease in funding in the 1960s. All radioactive material was removed, according to Mr. Ewert. And, as faculty interests in the University's biology department turned more to cell research, Blandy, which had steadily produced Ph. D. projects during Mr. White's tenure, was used less and less.

Recently, however, environmental scientists and landscape architects, among others, have recognized numerous possibilities for research projects and courses, says Mr. Connor. Current research at the farm, involving graduate students and scientists from U. Va. as well as from other institutions, focuses largely on the ecology of plants, insects and small mammals....

Mr. Connor hopes that as many as 15 researchers will soon be staying at Blandy full-time during the summers and that word will continue to spread about its research potential. "With such diverse opportunities as this offers," he says, "once you reach a certain number of people, more and more will become interested."

CORRESPONDENCE

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Editor's Note: In 1968 our Society was invited by the ISHS Commission for Horticultural Nomenclature and Registration to serve as International Registration Authority for the genus *Buxus*. This Authority involves preparing and maintaining a list of all cultivar (cultivated variety) names which have been used for *Buxus* throughout the world, and keeping it up to date as we register new cultivars. The position of Registrar was first filled by members Dr. Burdette L. Wagenknecht, then Dr. Bernice M. Speese, and now Mr. Lynn R. Batdorf. Mr. Batdorf is Curator of the Boxwood, Peony, Daylily and Iris collections at the U. S. National Arboretum. In addition to serving as Registrar for the ABS he is also our first vice-president. We thank him for making available the following correspondence and think that our members should be aware of the important work that he performs as International Registration Authority for the genus *Buxus*.

* * * *

The Royal Horticultural Society,
P. O. Box 313, Vincent Square,
London, SW1P 2PE

30th May, 1986.
Air Mail

To all International Registration Authorities

Dear Registrar,

Report of Activities, Current Published Cultivar Lists and Plans for Future Publications

I am required to present a report on the activities of all International Registration Authorities to the Council of the International Society for Horticultural Science and to the ISHS Commission for Horticultural Nomenclature and Registration which will meet in Davis, California, U. S. A.

In this connection, may I request from you a brief report at your earliest convenience concerning your activities as an IRA. It would be very much appreciated if you would cite any current cultivar lists which have recently been published or which you contemplate publishing within the next year.

In order to assist you with this task I enclose a proforma which I should be glad if you would complete and return to me *not later than July 7th 1986*. Regrettably it will not be possible to include information in the report received after this date.

We appreciate very much your efforts and the service your organisation provides for International Horticulture and will be pleased to take this opportunity of publicising your work at the International Horticultural Congress.

Yours truly,

C. D. Brickell
Chairman
ISHS Committee for
Nomenclature and Registration

* * * *

U. S. National Arboretum
3501 New York Avenue, N. E.
Washington, D. C. 20002

July 22, 1986

Mr. C. D. Brickell
Chairman, ISHS Committee for
Nomenclature and Registration
P. O. Box 313, Vincent Square
London, SW1P 2PE, ENGLAND

Dear Mr. Brickell:

Mr. Gene Eisenbeiss, Registrar for the Holly Society of America, who is the IRA for cultivated *Ilex*, suggested that I write you.

At the March 1985 Board of Directors Meeting of the American Boxwood Society, I was elected as the IRA for cultivated *Buxus*. I am replacing the late Dr. Bernice Speese, the previous IRA for *Buxus*. I only became aware of your address and your request for updates from all IRA's on 18 Jul 86. Obviously, I have missed the 7 Jul 86 deadline, but nevertheless would like to provide the information to update you.

International Registration Authority for *Buxus*

Address: 1409 Elm Grove Circle
Colesville, MD 20904 USA

Registrar: Lynn R. Batdorf, Registrar for the American Boxwood Society, the International Registration Authority for cultivated *Buxus*.

Publications, 1982-1986:

Batdorf, L. R. 1985. *Buxus sempervirens* 'Graham Blandy'. *The Boxwood Bulletin,* Vol. 25, No. 1, p. 8.

1985. *Buxus sempervirens* 'Henry Shaw'. *The Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol. 25, No. 2, p. 47.

Publications in preparation:

Ready for printing is an index, "*Buxus* species and cultivars." It is a 25 year listing of all *Buxus* species and cultivars mentioned in *The Boxwood Bulletin.*

Third draft of a 120-page manuscript, *Monograph of Buxus.* Still far from completion, nearly 300 species, cultivars, synonyms have been cited. Descriptions, origins, photographs are a part of each listing.

Nearing completion is a manuscript, "Registration Lists of Cultivar Names in *Buxus.*" It is primarily an updated listing of past and current IRA's in *Buxus.*

Sincerely,

Lynn R. Batdorf
Horticulturist

* * * *

The Royal Horticultural Society,
P. O. Box 313, Vincent Square,
London, SW1P 2PE

28th July 1986
Air Mail

Lynn R. Batdorf, Horticulturist
United States National Arboretum
United States Department of Agriculture
3501 New York Avenue, N. E.
Washington, D. C. 20002

Dear Lynn Batdorf:

Many thanks indeed for your letter of July 22nd concerning the International Registration Authority for *Buxus*.

I had not heard Dr. Speese had died and was very sorry to learn this.

I am most pleased, however, to welcome you as International Registrar for *Buxus* and it is extremely

useful to have the information on activities of the IRA for presentation to the ISHS Council in August.

As it happens the list of reports for circulation was in the process of being typed when your letter arrived, so it has been possible to insert the information in the text without any problems.

It is good to see the very considerable amount of work being carried out by the IRA and I am sure that this effort will be much appreciated by members of the ISHS Commission for Nomenclature and Registration as well as the ISHS Council.

With many thanks again.

Yours sincerely,

C. D. Brickell
Director General

cc: Mr. Freek Vrugtman, Royal Botanic Gardens, Hamilton, Canada.

Boxwood on Maryland's Eastern Shore

Photo: James C. Wilfong

Ancient boxwood billows around tombstones in the Tilghman Family cemetery in Talbot County, Maryland.

THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

INFORMATION

Address: P. O. Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620

DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Regular (individual) membership dues of The American Boxwood Society are now $10.00. This includes $8.00 for a subscription to *The Boxwood Bulletin.*

The Boxwood Society membership year runs from May of one year through April of the following year. Dues are payable in advance of each membership year. New members who join the Society at intervening times of the year are sent all four issues of *The Bulletin* for that membership year and then, like other members, pay dues in advance of the next membership year.

Non-member subscriptions are for groups and institutions such as botanic gardens, libraries, etc. Subscriptions are $10.00 per year, and run by the calendar year.

At the present time all back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* are available except Vol. 22, No. 1, July 1982 (photocopy can be supplied, however). Price per single copy of any and all issues is $2.50.

The present classes of membership are:

Category	Annual Dues
Individual	$ 10
Family	15
Contributing	25
Sustaining	50
Life	250
Patron	500 or more
Institutional Subscriber	10

Gift memberships are announced to the recipients by boxwood-decorated cards which state that four issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* are included in membership.

Contributions are welcome for the Research Fund, the Boxwood Memorial Garden, the Boxwood Handbook and the Boxwood Bulletin Index.

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.

FOR YOUR ADDRESS BOOK

If your letter is concerned with:

Change of address
Membership: new, renewal or gift
Dues
Donations to research programs or memorial gifts
Ordering back issues of *The Bulletin*
Ordering List of Registered Boxwoods

Write to:

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

If your letter is concerned with:

General Information about the Society
Advice concerning boxwood problems or cultural information
Boxwood cultivar selection

Write to:

American Boxwood Society
P. O. Box 85
Boyce, VA 22620

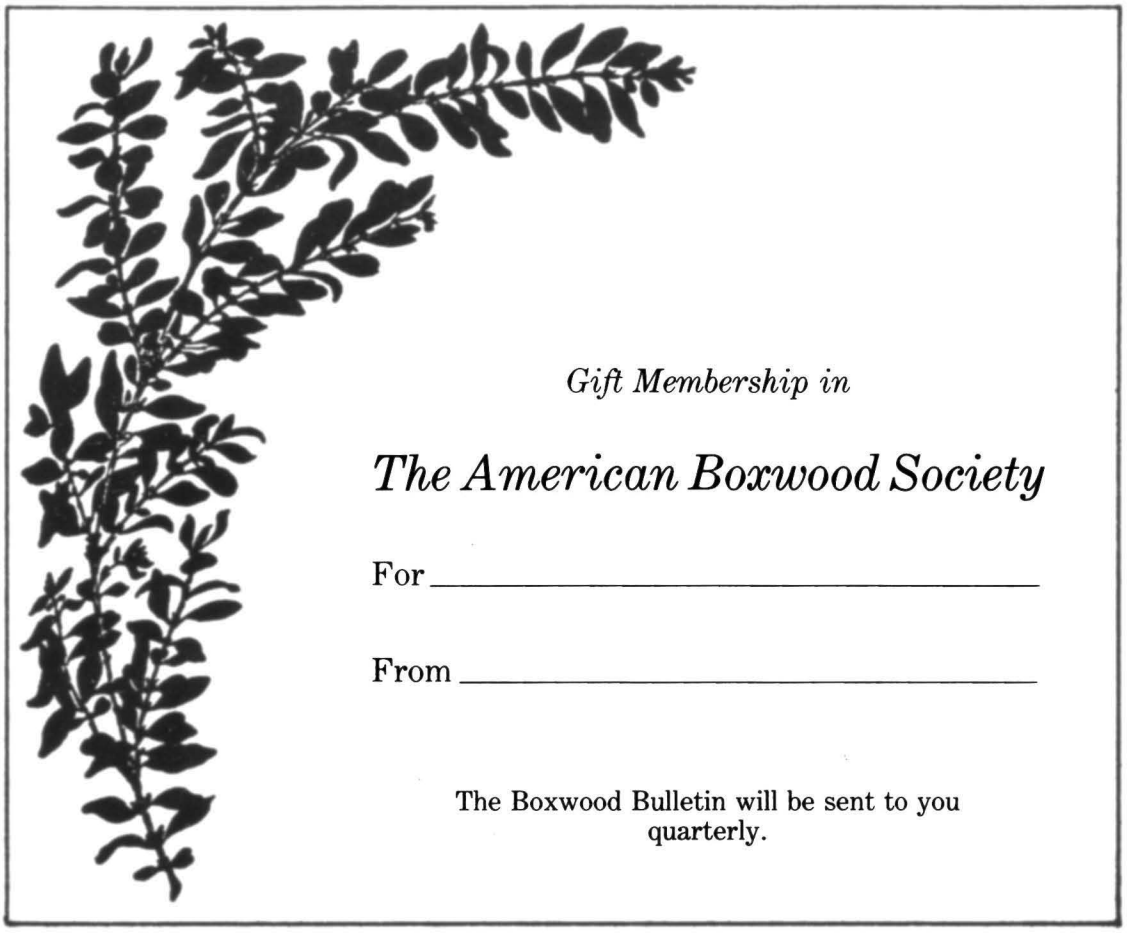
Your request will be forwarded to a member of the Board or another appropriate member who can provide the help you have requested.

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

Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton
1714 Greenway Drive
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

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

Mr. Scot Butler, Editor
The Boxwood Bulletin
P. O. Box 190
Bluemont, VA 22012



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in the
American Boxwood Society

If you are looking for a Christmas gift for a friend, why not give a membership in the American Boxwood Society?

Above you see a reproduction of a gift card just as it would go to one of your friends announcing your gift membership. The cost is $10 per year, including four issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Send your gift request to the Treasurer, American Boxwood Society, P. O. Box 85, Boyce, Virginia 22620.