



# The Boxwood Bulletin

A quarterly devoted to Man's oldest garden ornamental



Volunteers from the Boxwood Society of the Midwest work with boxwood in the nursery at the Missouri Botanical Garden.  
(See story on page 28.)

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# The American Boxwood Society

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The American Boxwood Society is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1961 and devoted to the appreciation, scientific understanding and propagation of the genus *Buxus L.* There are more than 800 members in the United States and nine foreign countries.

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Memberships for the year May through April include \$12 for four quarterly issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*:

Individual	\$15	Contributing	\$30	Life	\$250
Family	\$20	Sustaining	\$50	Patron	\$500

Non-member subscriptions for groups and institutions, such as botanic gardens and libraries, are \$15 by the calendar year.

## Available Publications:

Back issues of <i>The Boxwood Bulletin</i>	\$ 4
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<i>International Registration List of Cultivated Buxus L.</i>	\$ 3
<i>Index to The Boxwood Bulletin 1961-1986</i>	\$10

## Contributions:

Gifts to the Society are tax-deductible and may be undesignated or applied to:

Boxwood Handbook Fund  
Boxwood Memorial Garden Fund  
Boxwood Monograph Fund  
Boxwood Research Fund

## Correspondence:

For address changes, memberships, dues, contributions, or to order back issues or publications, write:

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

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

Mr. Dale T. Taylor  
105 S. Princeton Avenue  
Wenonah, N.J. 08090

## Call for Papers:

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

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

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

# Evaluation and Pruning; A Report from the Midwest

Mary A. Gamble

Whether the gardener faces one neglected plant or a garden of boxwoods grown shabby, the solution to the problem almost always starts with two steps. First, there is a thorough evaluation of the plant or plants, the physical setting, and history of recent care. Second is proper pruning tailored to the specific situation.

## Evaluation

An overall look at the general color of the *Buxus* leaves tells the experienced gardener a great deal of information. If it is a good, rich and vibrant green-tending to undertones of yellow, blue or almost black according to species and variety or cultivar—the plants are healthy, and pruning will be esthetic rather than therapeutic. But if the leaves are dull, listless, with many of them yellowish, then the gardener will study individual plants to discover the various sources of troubles.

Spider mites and leaf miners—boxwood's principal pests in the Midwest—may be present. The presence of spider mites is indicated when clusters of leaves have turned a light sickly yellow-green. The spider mites can be seen with a hand magnifying glass, or several affected leaves can be shaken over a white cloth where the mites will be visible to the naked eye. Spider mites thrive in the hot, humid summer weather St. Louisans know so well. If the infestation is light, a forceful water spray applied every two weeks to both upper and lower leaf surfaces may eradicate the mites. If the infestation persists or is heavy, there is no alternative to spraying. Consult a reliable garden shop for proper spray and directions. It will take several sprayings. If ignored, the spider mites will weaken a boxwood plant until it may fall victim to severe weather conditions such as drought or cold.

The leaf miner is a tougher customer. Its presence is indicated when bumps

appear on the upper surface of leaves. Turn such a leaf over and scratch the lower surface of the bump. You will find the larva of the miner. About mid-May a metamorphosis occurs; the larvae become tiny flies which fly to new leaves, where they burrow in to lay the eggs which become the next generation of leaf miners. The leaf miner can be fought only during the brief period (10 days or two to three weeks) when the flies are active. Rarely can an infestation be eradicated in a single year. It is recommended that for the leaf miner the gardener seek professional help. The surface spray used to fight them is highly toxic and must be applied more than once in a summer, and usually repeated for a year or more. Left to proliferate, leaf miners can cause irreparable damage to boxwood in as short a period as three years. A second area of inspection is to take a look at the major stem, or stems, of each boxwood to see if the bark is split.

If a split is relatively new, the plant will appear perfectly healthy at a casual glance, but if the split encircles the stem, the plant is doomed. Practically, the gardener might as well bite the bullet and take the plant out. The only precaution is to provide seasonal protection such as burlap, and winter mulching of the stem to leaf-line area. If a group of boxwoods show signs of localized physical distress, look for an exposure problem. If the distress is general, look for a drainage problem. Sometimes poor drainage is hard to detect. If in doubt, dig a hole 18 in. deep and fill it with water. If it drains overnight, no problem; but if water remains, drainage must be improved. Drainage tiles may work. Poor drainage cannot be ignored. It means slow deterioration for the plants and ultimately, death. Relocation of the boxwoods may be the easy solution.

If a boxwood shows localized surface damage, consider its exposure. If, for

## The Cover

Boxwood nursery space at the Missouri Botanical Garden was assigned to the Boxwood Study Group of the St. Louis Herb Society, now the Boxwood Society of the Midwest, by Robert J. Dingwall, Chief Horticulturist. He told the group how to plant the more than 2000 test boxwood plants. The "boxers" were taught that pruning involves the whole plant, from the inside to the finishing surface touches.

example, it is exposed to the southwest wind, some form of protection should be given: a berm, a conifer shield, a wall, etc. If it has an eastern exposure and is against a bank or wall on which snow accumulates, the morning sun reflected off the snow can winter-burn the foliage. Look for these and other physical conditions which put the boxwoods under stress. If conditions can be changed and protection offered, fine; if not, save the boxwood by moving it. Boxwood really does not like to be "babied." It is not a high maintenance plant, but neither is it a low one. The trick for the gardener is to find the right balance of care. This begins with proper siting where drainage and exposure meet the boxwood's minimum requirements. It continues with routine care which includes twice-monthly watering (except when rainfall is adequate), a light feeding schedule, and regular inspection for the presence of pests. It ends with proper pruning. If a plant is pruned meticulously one year, the next year it may need only a touch up.

## Pruning

"The pruning season should not be rushed," says Bob Dingwall, who remains the Society's mentor on prun-

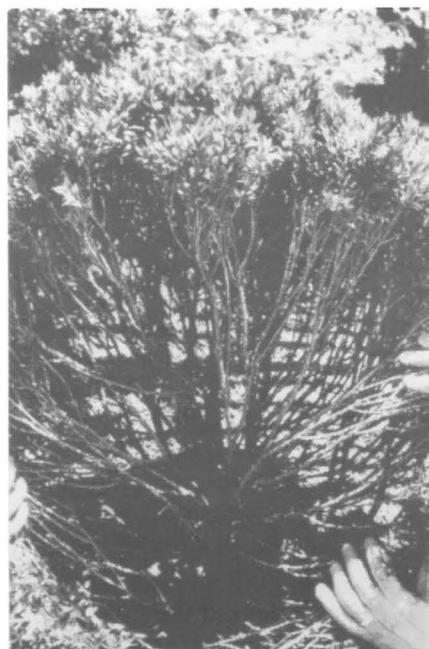
ing. He suggests April 15 as a conservative starting date and August 15 as a good time to stop. Other experienced boxwood gardeners believe it is safe to start pruning—especially of large plants—in mid-March and continue until the job is finished. It is suggested, moreover, that the gardener refrain from cutting his or her own boxwood for fall and winter holiday decorations.

The seasoned gardener looks upon boxwood's slow growth as an asset. It means its care can proceed at a careful rate which makes the maintenance of boxwood a pleasure, not a chore. Just don't plant more boxwoods than you can care for.

The two boxwoods pictured above and right represent both the meticulous and the ruthless aspects of pruning as demonstrated and taught by Bob Dingwall. (Both plants were in a lath house, which explains the shadows.) At left: a pruner's hands hold back the outer branches of a boxwood to show its neat interior; not a dead twig, not a broken branch, not a bit of debris. At right: a boxwood which has deteriorated after transplanting. Bob Dingwall pruned it ruthlessly, yet left a framework for recovery. This took place over three years.

On subsequent pages are pictures of four distinctive and distinguished boxwood gardens which have been pruned by Society members. Each garden is different. Each offered a challenge and each benefited, as did the Society.

**Mrs. Stratford Lee Morton's Garden:** The late Elise Morton's boxwood garden in St. Louis County, Missouri, shows both the vigor and grace of the boxwoods. All are *Buxus sempervirens*. All are pruned to accentuate their natural, casual charm. The "bones" of the garden space were laid out by Peter Seltzer, who designed many beautiful St. Louis gardens in the 1930s and 1940s. But it was Elise Morton who transformed the place into a boxwood garden. She planted the first boxwood in 1943. And she did much of the boxwood garden work herself.



She was generous with her garden. When the Boxwood Society of the Midwest was formed she became a charter member and gave a party for the Society in her garden. She felt at home there. One year, troubled by the sickly appearance of a handsome, large boxwood, she consulted us. We found leaf miners and she lost no time in fighting them. In three years the leaf miners were gone. Another year she asked us to prune her boxwoods. Even

when crowded with pruners (everyone wanted to help), the garden was an island of serenity in which romantic garden figures—collected by Mrs. Morton and her husband—seemed to keep a watchful eye on the pruners.

**Mrs. Francis A. Mesker's Garden:** The view from Polly Mesker's garden is breathtaking. But, as the photo shows, Boxwood Society of the Midwest pruners were too busy to look at the Missouri River, glimpsed at far right.



*Buxus sempervirens in Mrs. Stratford Lee Morton's classically beautiful garden.*

Polly Mesker and her husband designed the formal garden because they knew exactly what they wanted. In it boxwood plays a supporting role in which a low-clipped boxwood hedge defines the garden boundaries. One year Polly asked us to top the hedge, remove any dead or injured branches or twigs; in short, to do a proper pruning job. It was good practice for precision pruning. All pruners held the line by following a string stretched at the designated height. The pruners also followed the good practice of slanting each bush slightly downward and outward so the hedge was wider at bottom than at top. This permits light to reach every layer of leaves.

#### *"Secret Garden" at Gray Summit:*

As the photo shows, the "Secret Garden" adjoins the gate house at the Arboretum in Gray Summit, Missouri. When the wall was planted several decades ago, the plants of *Buxus sempervirens* were set 2 feet apart. Over the years they have grown together so that the wall literally is impenetrable.

When the department manager of the Arboretum asked the Society to prune the garden, we accepted it as a challenge. And in this case a member's chain saw saved the day. The boxwood wall was filled with dead limbs and limbs hopelessly entangled. Proper pruning straightened things out where needed, cleared away dead and broken limbs, and made a start at the poison ivy, an unexpected hazard. When the job was done, there was room for new growth. This garden rests on a strata of limestone in which planting holes were dug with pickaxes. In 1974 the BSMW named this handsome boxwood 'Hermann von Schrenk' for the scientist who brought the original cuttings from Virginia in 1937. (Note: 'Hermann von Schrenk' does magnificently at Gray Summit; but we have had great difficulty in establishing young plants elsewhere.)

**The Williams Garden:** In 1990 the BSMW was asked by member Mary Randolph Bollinger if it would prune her grand-mother's extensive boxwood garden, which had fallen into disrepair. Her grandmother, Mrs. John Gates



*Mrs. Francis A. Mesker's garden crowns a 100-foot cliff which overlooks the Missouri River.*

Williams, had planned the garden which, in many ways, resembled and reminded her of those she had known in her native Virginia. A thorough survey showed the plants—both throughout the grounds and in the garden proper—had suffered severely from spider mite and leaf miner infestation. The severe drought of summer 1989 had aggravated the situation. Jane Penhale agreed to direct the work, which was carried out by volunteers from the Horticulture

Committee, headed by Claude Badeusz.

With her customary thoroughness Jane surveyed the grounds and garden, boxwood plant by boxwood plant. She enlisted a crew of 13 pruners. The job took four mornings, or approximately 224 man-hours of work. The pruners found it necessary to cut back severely six- to seven-foot boxwoods that bordered three sides of the large, rectangular boxwood garden. As BSMW pruners finished a section, the profes-



*BSMW members pruning the mass of *Buxus sempervirens* 'Hermann von Schrenk' at Gray Summit Arboretum.*

sional horticulturist who had taken over management of the garden moved in. He fertilized the plants and sprayed where necessary. The Society also benefited from the advice of its pruning mentor, Bob Dingwall. He determined the severity of the pruning.

In 1991 we were asked to do the job again. Jane and Claude made a fresh survey of the garden. "We were pleased," reported Jane, "that 50% of the plants had made a strong comeback. In our preliminary inspection we tagged six large boxwoods to come out, and decided to give four 'iffy' ones another year. We also decided to wait another year on the low hedge. It was interesting to find everything on the east side of the garden dead, and everything on the west side dead except for the last nine plants that were simply beautiful. These plants will be moved.



*Five pruners make short work of a big job in the Williams garden. Note, inside pruning comes first; outside, last.*



*BSMW work sessions are often broken by a picnic, which lightens the task.*

"There was again a heavy mite infestation which was responsible for many losses. Poor drainage was a strong factor in losses on the east side. This was surprising, as boxwood had done well in this location for a number of years. As a safeguard, horticulturist David Binks will lay drainage tiles the length of this questionable row.

"In short, this year's follow-up to 1990's extensive pruning led to removal of several dozen boxwoods which were in a bad condition. The 1991 pruning crew numbered six on day one (when the weather was fine) and three on a second day when pruners worked in the rain to finish the job. In short, the second



*Boxwood borders lengthen the perspective of a 17th-century English style "great garden."*

pruning took half the number of pruners and half the time. In both years a contribution was made to the Society commensurate with the work," said Jane in her final report.

*Mrs. Gamble has long been a boxwood enthusiast. She was a founder and the first president of the Boxwood Society of the Midwest, and has contributed numerous articles to this publication.*

# Lakewold Gardens

## A Jewel in the Pacific Northwest

Just south of Tacoma, Washington, and overlooking Gravelly Lake in Lakewood, is ten acres of horticultural grandeur named Lakewold. The name, a Scandinavian term meaning "lake woods," was given to the property by Mrs. Everett Griggs whose family purchased it in 1924.

A succession of noted landscape architects as well as devoted owners have brought the gardens to their present state, beginning in 1907 when the Olmstead Brothers were hired. Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Alexander had them design the perimeter fence, gate and brick walkway. In 1938 Corydon Wagner, Jr. bought the property from the Griggs family. In 1953 the Wagners called upon noted landscape architect, Thomas Church, for designs and suggestions.

Among the contributions of Thomas Church through many years were the quatrefoil-shaped swimming pool, a shade garden around a 200-year old Douglas fir, considered a "wolf" tree (unsuitable for lumbering), creating a lookout to view the rock gardens, waterfalls and pools leading to the lake.

Mrs. Wagner had a hand in the creation of the gardens as well. Mr. Church discouraged the development of a rock garden as being too much maintenance which would cause the neglect of the formal areas, but she persisted. A fine collection of unusual rhododendrons is incorporated in the rookery beside waterfalls and carefully selected rocks.

Mr. Wagner in the meantime pursued his collection of exotic trees. In addition to conifers there were

planted such deciduous trees as the rare *Davida involucrata* (handkerchief or dove tree), various *Acers*, *Sequoia sempervirens* as well as *Sequoia giganteum*.

A boxwood parterre using the quatrefoil shape was one of several repeats of the pool design.

The boxwood parterres also contain topiary. The peacock in the center one of three was a gift from Thomas Church. A medieval-type knot garden surrounds an antique wellhead. Here boxwood, germander and the gray form of *Santolina* are used to make the design.

Not the least of the attractions is a view of snow-capped Mt. Rainier, which on a sunny day can be clearly seen from the area of the swimming pool.



Quatrefoil swimming pool from which can be viewed Mt. Rainier.

**[Editor's Note:** Our thanks to Mr. John Veach, who obtained the photos and information on Lakewold. Mr. Veach had known of Lakewold as he followed Mr. Corydon Wagner, Jr. as President of the National Forests Products Industry in 1952; his wife, Jane, served with Mrs. Wagner on the Board of Directors of the Garden Club of America, 1962-66.

The Veaces are both long-time members of the ABS and were early participants in ABS tours. They have never visited Lakewold, but upon learning the gardens are now open to visitors and will be maintained through Friends of Lakewold, Mr. Veach went to great lengths to obtain black and white photos for *The Boxwood Bulletin* as he felt the gardens would be of much interest to our readers and anyone visiting the area.

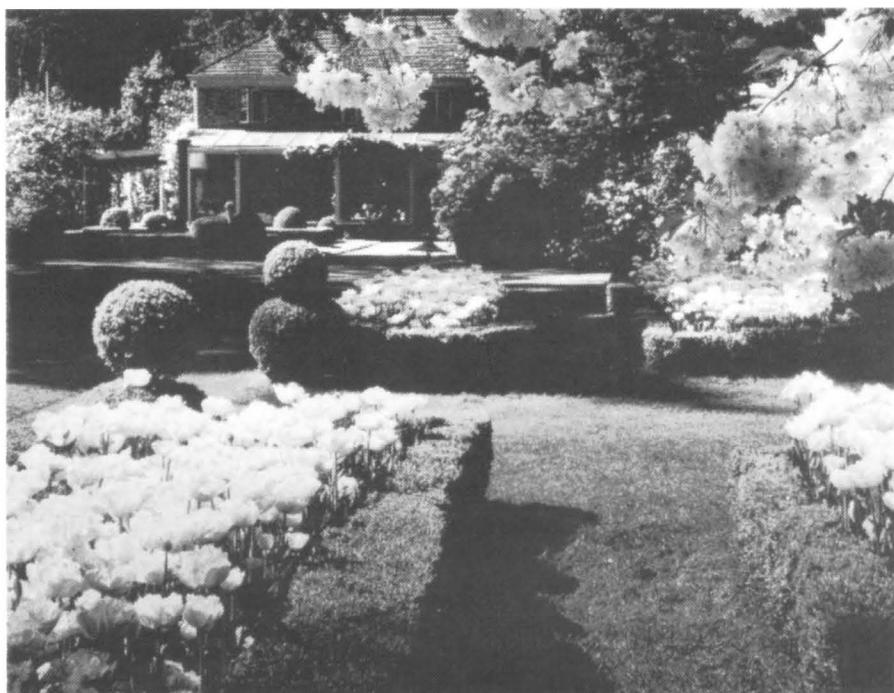
(Mrs. Wagner is a former Regent of Kenmore in Fredericksburg, Virginia, where she served ably and with much interest on the Garden and Grounds Committee.)



Three boxwood parterres with topiary swans and peacock (center).



Knot garden framed by boxwood with knots of germander and gray santolina.



White tulips blooming in boxwood parterres with overhanging cherry blossoms.

More about these gardens may be found in *The American Woman's Garden* by Rosemary Verey and Ellen Samuels. Information on Lakewold,

which is open April through September, can be obtained by writing Friends of Lakewold, P.O. BOX 98092, Tacoma, WA 98498 or calling (206) 584-3360.]

### Garden Club of Virginia

Chairman of The American Boxwood Society Memorial Garden, Phillip D. Larson, sent a copy of an article from the September 1991 issue of The Garden Club of Virginia *Journal* about their Horticulture Field Day, May 91 1991, arranged by Horticulture Chairman Mrs. George Horkan, Jr. of the GCV. The group visited Blandy Experimental Farm and the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area. Chairman Larson was on hand to guide the visitors through the Boxwood Memorial Garden. They were amazed at the "hundreds" of boxwood types, labeled as to cultivar and age.

### ABS History

We learned with regret of the death of Mrs. Hugh A. Walker of "Keystone," Hillsboro, Virginia, who with her late husband was a Charter Member of the ABS. Her daughter kindly notified us and enclosed some photos and correspondence from H. Churchill Newcomb, the first president of the ABS.

At right is the text of the cover letter sent out by Mr. Newcomb, Chairman and the Arboretum Advisory Committee. This included a note hoping to persuade Mrs. Walker to help establish a boxwood society.

A letter dated July 29, 1961, enclosed some photos, dated May 17, 1961, of a meeting of the Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club at "Oak Hill," the home of Mrs. Thomas DeLashmutt. Mr. A. G. Smith, one of five Honorary Life Members elected at the May 2, 1961, organizational meeting of the ABS, was featured speaker on boxwood. Mr. Newcomb mentioned that as a result of seeking Charter Members, he had about 400 personal letters to write, testimony to the success of the effort.

Probably not a dozen travelled veterans among the members of the many garden clubs ever have identified *Buxus balearica*, a species with leaves two inches by one and one-quarter. It is an exotic strangely overlooked by gardeners along the Gulf Coast, for it will do well where oranges and lemons grow—in Texas, Florida and California. How many cultivate *angustifolia* with its shimmering, willow-like leaves, or distinguish the hardiness of oval-leaved *rotundifolia*, or enjoy the dark beauty of *handsworthii*, or know the spectacular display of silvery *argentea*, or of golden leaved *aureo-variegata*, or have utilized the tall, even outline of *columna*, denser and more regular even than Irish Yew as it stands like a giant sentinel over a garden bed?

Save for a specimen of *balearica* that did not survive, all of these species are growing unprotected at the Arboretum, on the elevated and, in winter, cold floor of the Valley of Virginia. Our Boxwood Society will serve many a well informed Garden Clubber, too.

To become a charter member attendance at the organization meeting, of course, is not necessary, but we hope you will come and that, meanwhile, you will send us the names and addresses of all persons who might be interested.

Between 10 and 10:30 on May 2, 1961, we will register at the Library in the west wing of the main building. Thereafter, we will tour the plantings, examine specimens, peep into the laboratories, and visit the radiation plant. A brief organization meeting will be held at 12:45 p.m., when we will adopt a constitution and elect officers. A box luncheon then will be available (see enclosed form). If enough members have been enlisted, spade work looking toward publication of our first year book should be possible.

You will find present a number of the best informed authorities on boxwood plant genetics, and other horticultural specialists. For the most part you will meet congenial, questioning interested gardeners—gallery spectators like myself, rather than stars of a distinguished cast. Meanwhile, will you kindly fill out and return the enclosed form?

Cordially,

J. Churchill Newcomb

J. Churchill Newcomb, Chairman

J. T. Baldwin

Mrs. George H. Flowers, Jr.

Monroe Bush

C. H. Lewis

Harry F. Byrd, Jr.

E. M. Quillen

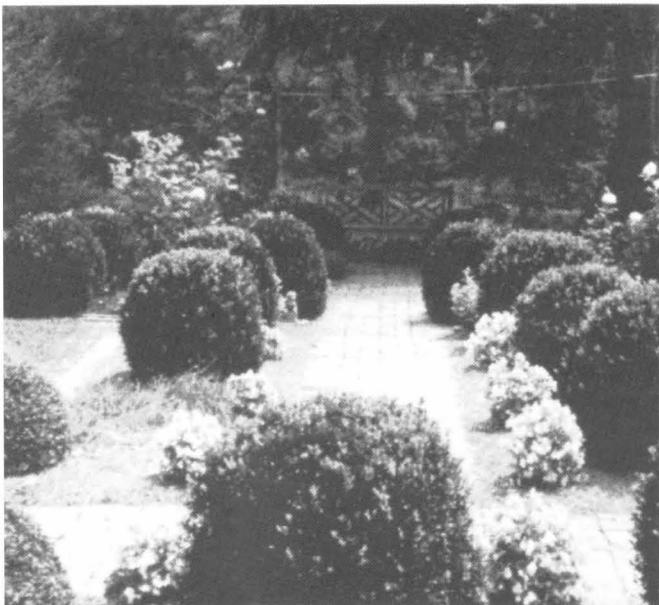
George M. Darrow

Henry T. Skinner

Arboretum Advisory Committee

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## Our Members Share...



Chance Whitaker of Newnan, Georgia, has created a formal area with boxwood framing walks leading to a Chippendale-style teakwood bench. Summer color is provided by begonias facing down the boxwood, caladiums massed behind the bench, and roses off to the side.



ABS Life Member Mrs. John Hart of Falls Church, Va., has a comfortable perch from which to attack the boxwood which had overgrown her entrance walk.



In Marietta, Ga., long-time ABS member Miss Frances G. Welsh has a magnificent stand of *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa', with blooming dogwood in the background.



The home of Mr. and Mrs. Edward F. Carey, Reston, Va. Planted by the Davey Tree Company 20 years ago, eight large *Buxus sempervirens* and 23 *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa' have thrived under the care of the owners.



*At Leach's Arboretum in Portland, Oregon, a Buxus hedge outlines two woodland trails with a fern accent. (Photo: Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton)*



*Buxus sinica var. insularis enhances an outcropping along the entrance walk to The Quarters at the Blandy Experimental Farm, Clarke County, Va. (Photo: Mrs. Frackelton)*

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a a	a a	a a		
a a	a 5 a	a a		
a a	a a	a a		
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Key:

- 1- *Buxus sinica var. insularis*
- 2- *Buxus microphylla 'Compacta'*
- 3- *Buxus microphylla 'Grace Hendrick Phillips'*
- 4- *Buxus microphylla 'Green Pillow'*
- 5- *Buxus sempervirens 'Graham Blandy'* (columnar, not dwarf)
- 6- *Buxus microphylla var. japonica 'Morris Midget'*
- 7- *Buxus microphylla var. japonica 'Morris Dwarf'*
- 8- *Buxus sinica var. insularis 'Justin Brouwers'*
- 9- *Buxus microphylla 'Helen Whiting'*
- a- Three kinds of *Alchemilla* (*alpina*, *pubescens*, and *mollis*)



*A display of dwarf boxwood under construction at the home of ABS 1st Vice-President Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton (Photo: Mrs. Frackelton)*

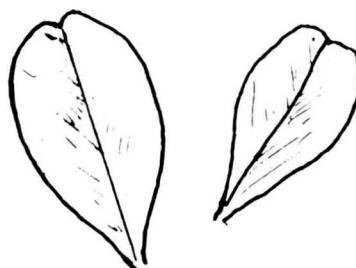
## The Roots of *Buxus harlandii* 'Richard'

At the request of Decca Frackelton, I embarked on a search for the roots of *Buxus harlandii* 'Richard' on my return to Louisiana to spend the winter.

I first contacted Dr. Steven Doughty, the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Agent in the New Orleans Metropolitan area. He advised me to contact Dr. Dennis Wppard or Dr. James Foret at the University of Southwest Louisiana at Lafayette, La. I was told by the head of the horticulture department at Nicholls State University here in Thibodaux that Dr. Floret was the man to see as he had been the head of the Horticulture Department at USL, and been the one most involved in propagating 'Richard' and dispersing the plants. I made an appointment and went to Lafayette to meet him. He told me that 'Richard' had been discovered as a vegetative mutation (sport) on a plant of *B. harlandii* at the Straughn Nursery in Loranger, La.

As Dr. Foret apparently traveled around the state, and knew the nurserymen, he was given a plant of the sport, and used it to propagate at USL. He recommended that I visit the Straughn Nursery, and to request an interview with Darryl Straughn.

When I phoned to make the appointment I was told that Darryl was no longer at the nursery, but I went to Loranger to talk to the two brothers who now run the nursery. I learned that the plant was named for their father, Richard Straughn, after his death in



1960. For some time 'Richard' had been sold extensively, but they had problems with it, and decided to no longer propagate it. In extreme cold, the leaves would turn brown, the dirt splashed on small plants when it rained, and when shipped to California the roots would have to be washed of soil. Finally he said, "You should talk to our Uncle Darryl; he was the one who discovered the sport and propagated it."

I was fortunate to find him at home and he was most helpful. He said the *B. harlandii* bushes had come from a nursery in Mobile owned by a man of Japanese descent. He couldn't remember the name. One day he discovered the sport and was so impressed with it that he began propagating from it. As he recalled that was in 1949. It was Darryl who had passed on plants to Dr. Foret. He had named it after his older brother and partner upon the latter's death in 1960.

*Mrs. Richard C. Plater, Jr.*  
Clarke County, Virginia



*Buxus harlandii* 'Richard' in three-gallon container—a 1988 gift from Mrs. Richard B. Plater, Jr. (1991 photo: Dale T. Taylor)

[Editor's note: With the understanding that this plant is not cold-hardy, Mrs. Plater presented two specimens of *Buxus harlandii* 'Richard'. One was given to Chairman P. D. Larson for propagation for the ABS Memorial Garden and one to Mr. Dale T. Taylor for his collection and to propagate for Mrs. Frackelton's collection.

The Platers live part of the year in Virginia, where Mrs. Plater has rooted and grown boxwoods of interest for many years. They opened their outstanding garden to the American Boxwood Society members in 1983. Mrs. Plater is a Charter Member of the ABS.]

## NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

### Annual Meeting Minutes—May 1991

**Tuesday Evening Program:** Mr. Richard D. Mahone showed delightful slides of boxwood, topiary and gardens in England, Holland and Williamsburg, Virginia. A reception followed the

presentation. Refreshments were generously provided by Mrs. Robert Frackelton and Mr. Dale Taylor.

**Annual Meeting:** On May 15, 1991, the 31st annual meeting of the ABS was held in the library at the Blandy Experimental Farm of the University of Virginia (also the State Arboretum) in

Boyce, Virginia. The meeting was called to order by the President, Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton at 11:00 a.m. Cdr. Phillip D. Larson had guided members on an interesting tour of the Boxwood Memorial Garden prior to the business meeting. Mrs. Frackelton thanked the University, Dr. Edward Connor,

Director of Blandy Farm, and all his staff for making this exciting facility available to the members.

Great appreciation was also expressed to Mrs. Becky McCoy and her committee for providing lunch.

The minutes of the 30th annual meeting on May 16, 1990, were approved as published in *The Boxwood Bulletin* (Vol. 30, No. 1, p. 12).

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$15,113.35 in the checking account and. \$31,722.95 in two certificates of deposit. The full Treasurer's report is available on request. ABS has 791 members and 3 honorary members.

**The Boxwood Bulletin:** Mrs. Frackelton expressed gratitude to the editor, John S. McCarthy in St. Louis and also to others who helped in proofreading and preparation for mailing: Lynn Batdorf, Tyra Sexton, Carter Frackelton; and to Katherine Ward, who transported the printed issues to the Boyce post office.

**Memorial Gardens:** Cdr. Larson reported on his work in maintaining the boxwood plantings; in ferreting out new cultivars and acquiring cuttings of them; in propagating back-up plants for every cultivar in the garden, as protection should originals die; and in growing and distributing plants to be used in the redesigned garden and amphitheater. Cdr. Larson uses a space in the Blandy greenhouse, and has participated in the addition of a shade structure and a new hoop plastic greenhouse for additional growing space,

**Handbook and Registrations:** Mr. Batdorf reported that he has two new Dutch registrations in progress. The *Handbook for Boxwood* has been put on computer to facilitate further additions. A new five-year Index of *The Boxwood Bulletin*, Vols. 26-30, is ready to go to the printer. Mr. Batdorf would show slides of perennials during the lunch period, from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m.

**Research:** Mr. Mahone reported. that Dr. Tom Banko at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research Station (HRAES) at Diamond Springs had found poor results from his experiments

with boxwood tissue culture. Work is continuing on pathology and anti-desiccant research. There had been a heavy loss of boxwood plants which had been set out in a low damp area with poor drainage, which had encouraged disease. Mrs. Butler reported on correspondence with Mr. Richard Hawks at the Chicago Botanic Garden about propagation success with 10 cultivars selected for an evaluation project. As might be expected, dwarf forms showed a much lower percentage of rooting than the more vigorous upright forms. An article on this subject appeared in *The Boxwood Bulletin* for April 1991, Vol. 29, No. 4, p. 65.

**Garden Tour:** Mr. Mahone noted that 42 people had greatly enjoyed the April 27-28 tour of Gloucester County, Virginia, where the gardens were at their peak. The weather was glorious.

**Auction:** Mr. Dale Taylor gave an enthusiastic speech for the boxwood plant auction to be held in the afternoon, promising unusual plants which are hard to find in nurseries.

President Frackelton noted the 30th anniversary of the founding of ABS. There are still 38 charter members on the rolls and six were present at the meeting: Mrs. George Burton, Mrs. Harry de Butts, Mrs. Gerald Halpin, Mr. Lunsford Loving, Mrs. Antone Rodgers and Mrs. Herbert Solenberger.

**Nominating Committee:** Mr. Mahone, Chairman, presented the following slate of officers and directors for 1991-1992:

**President:**

Mr. Dale T. Taylor

**1st Vice-President:**

Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton

**2nd Vice-President:**

Mrs. Malcolm Holekamp

**Secretary:**

Mrs. Scot Butler

**Treasurer:**

Mrs. Katherine D. Ward

**Directors to serve until May 1994:**

Mr. John W. Boyd, Jr,

Cdr. Phillip D. Larson

Mr. Thomas Saunders

The proposed slate was unanimously elected.

Mr. Taylor voiced a tribute to Mrs. Frackelton for her fine leadership as president since 1986 and presented her with a small plant of *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis* 'Justin Brouwers'.

Mr. Taylor suggested some future goals for the Society: an increase in membership; support for Blandy Farm and the State Arboretum; completion of the *Handbook for Boxwood*; programs of education and publication for the nursery trade; contribution of articles to national magazines; and production of a slide program to be made available for a speakers' bureau about boxwood. Mr. Taylor stressed the need for the support of all members to accomplish these goals.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m. and members enjoyed a fine lunch served in the Quarters dining room.

A brief meeting of the officers and directors was held immediately after the close of the business session. Those present were: President Taylor, Vice President Frackelton, Secretary Butler, Treasurer Ward and Directors Batdorf, Boyd, Larson, Mahone and Saunders. The Executive Board consists of three officers (Taylor, Butler, Ward) plus two elected Directors (Beldorf and Frackelton).

Mrs. Butler was appointed as 1992 Nominating Committee Chairman. She will serve with two other members.

President Taylor will circulate a revised budget for 1991-1992.

The afternoon session reopened at 1:30 p.m. Mr. Lynn Batdorf presented a most informative slide talk on boxwood cultivars, showing specimens from many wide-spread public gardens.

The boxwood plant auction was a great success. John Boyd and Dale Taylor offered background information on the many cultivars donated for sale, and lively bidding produced many delighted purchasers.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Joan Butler, Secretary*

## A Message from the Newly-Elected President of the ABS



*Dale T. Taylor*

It is indeed a pleasure and an honor to serve as President of the American Boxwood Society. As I recently read through every issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin* ever printed (going back to 1961) it became evident to me that some very special people have served our Society over these last three decades.

It is now up to each of us to carry forward the wonderful work, and legacy, of those early members, officers and directors, in seeing to it that the public becomes better aware of boxwood.

Please remember that the American Boxwood Society is your Society.

I ask for your questions, concerns, recommendations and input. But most of all, I ask that you become involved by attending our annual meetings, boxwood workshops and garden tours, as well as submitting pictures and articles for our outstanding quarterly, *The Boxwood Bulletin*.

As we go forward, we will be looking at ways to improve the public's knowledge and awareness of the many facets of boxwood; to stimulate more interest in

the nursery trade for boxwood as a garden ornamental; and to provide for continued funding in a number of areas of boxwood research.

Over the coming months, I shall ask your board of directors to move forward on current plans for a renovated and expanded Memorial Garden at the Blandy Experimental Farm of the University of Virginia, Boyce, Virginia. And I will seek their input on new projects such as a boxwood video program that can be used by our members and garden clubs across the country to tell the story of boxwood; an endowment fund to provide for the long-term financial needs of our Society; and a program to encourage arboreta to grow and display boxwood as a significant part of their collections.

Join with us in seeing to it that boxwood, Man's oldest garden ornamental, takes its rightful place as one of the world's most desirable garden ornaments as well.

*Dale Taylor*

## Saunders Elected to the Board of the ABS

Born August 29, 1959, Mr. Saunders grew up on a farm near Piney River, Virginia, the second of eight sons. He received a B.S. in Horticulture from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1981 and has been employed by the family nursery, now Saunders Bros., Inc., since April 1982. His wife, Lyn, a Clemson University (S.C.) graduate in Ornamental Horticulture, helps in sales and book-keeping. They have three children: Thomas, age 5, Christine, 3, and Caleb, 1.

Tom became a Certified Virginia Nurseryman in January 1991 and belongs to the following associations, serving on boards and committees of most of them: International Plant Propagation Society, Southern Nurseryman's Association, The American Boxwood Society, Virginia Christmas Tree Grower's Association, and Virginia Nurseryman's Association.

The Saunders family—Paul and Tatem and sons—received Outstanding Virginia Farm Family from VPI&SU's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in July 1988. The family was featured in the Rural Sportsman section of Progressive Farmer in September 1990.

Other activities include Farm Bureau where he has served on and chaired various committees and begun new programs; church, where he has taught Sunday School, served on Building and Grounds and youth committees, and Deacons Council; Massie's Mill Ruritan Club, where he has served different offices, including president; and is serving on the Superintendent's Planning Council for Nelson County Schools.

The family business includes 35-plus acres of nursery and about 100 acres of peach and apple orchards. The business began in 1947 as a 4-H project when 75 "English" boxwood cuttings were stuck into red clay and over 25 rooted. In the early 1960s blocks of



Thomas Saunders

Japanese hollies, *Buxus sempervirens* and *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa' field grown plants comprised the list of plants for sale. As the trend to container plants grew, they began to grow boxwoods in gallon metal cans collected from the schools' kitchens.

After August 20, 1969, when Hurricane Camille dumped up to 32" of devastating rain, resulting in mud slides in Nelson County, field production was abandoned and container stock was expanded. From the 20,000 plants that survived the '69 flood the nursery is now growing over 750,000 plants. Most of these are shipped from Virginia north to New Jersey and Pennsylvania and west to West Virginia to chain stores and garden centers.

Tom adds, "Boxwoods have probably done more to develop my character than any other plant I have grown. As a child, I was "coerced" into rooting a specified number of cuttings annually if I wanted spending money to do something special on weekends. In the end, however, I was happy as my father paid us according to the number of cuttings that rooted. He would purchase these plants to line out in our farm's nursery containers. It did not

take me long to realize that the more cuttings I got in a rooting bed, the happier I would be the following spring.

Furthermore, the challenges of growing boxwoods in a container have been great. Very few individuals grow these plants due to their slow growth rate. Because of this, there is little literature available on the dos and don'ts of growing them. Our experiences and successes have been through a trial and error production system. We have had some failures, but fortunately these have been outnumbered by our successes.

Being active in The American Boxwood Society and conferring with its members should continue to make boxwood production a more enjoyable challenge in the future."

### IN MEMORIAM

**Mrs. Hugh A. Walker**

*Charter Member*

**Mrs. Harold M. O'Connell**

*Member since 1964*

**Mr. Hewlett W. Lewis**

