

The *Boxwood* Bulletin

A Quarterly Devoted to Man's Oldest Garden Ornamental



The arch of ancient English boxwoods greets visitors as they approach the road-front entrance to the house at Woodlawn. See article on page 64.

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The American Boxwood Society

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

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Memberships for the year May through April include \$16 for four quarterly issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*:

Individual	\$25	Sustaining	\$75
Family	\$35	Life	\$500
Contributing	\$50		

Non-member subscriptions for groups and institutions, such as botanic gardens and libraries, are \$25 by the calendar year as established or current year for new subscriptions.

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Back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* (thru Vol. 36)

(each) \$ 4

Boxwood Handbook: A Practical Guide (Revised) \$ 17

Boxwood Buyer's Guide (4th Edition) \$ 6

International Registration List of Cultivated Buxus L. \$ 3

Index to The Boxwood Bulletin 1961-1986 \$ 10

Index to The Boxwood Bulletin 1986-1991 \$ 4

Index to The Boxwood Bulletin 1991-1996 \$ 3

Publications may be ordered from Mrs. K. D. Ward, ABS Treasurer, 134 Methodist Church Lane, West Augusta, VA 24485-2053. Prices include tax, postage and handling.

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

Boxwood Memorial Garden Fund

Boxwood Manual 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. 22620-0085

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

Dr. Stephen D. Southall

3912 Faculty Drive

Lynchburg, Va. 24501-3110

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*. Material should be submitted to:

Chairman, Bulletin Committee

1714 Greenway Drive

Fredericksburg, Va. 22401-5209

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38th Annual Meeting Scheduled for May 15-16, 1998

ABS Meets in the Washington, D.C. Area

Co-sponsored by the U.S. National Arboretum

Speakers and their programs:

Dr. Bonnie Appleton

An Extension Nursery Specialist and an Associate Professor of Horticulture at Virginia Tech University, she has a B.S. in Plant Science, an M.S. in Ornamental Horticulture and a Ph.D. in Crop Science. Her work has focused on topics such as container nursery design, landscape renovation, herbicide injury, and growing trees, shrubs, and vines. A noted and well-respected author, she has written four books and more than 500 articles for a variety of trade and popular publications.

Her topic for the meeting is "Ergonomic Garden Tools." Many of the tasks performed in caring for boxwood, such as digging, raking, pruning and spraying involve repetitive motions. One of the best ways to prevent some of the repetitive motion injuries (carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis elbow, trigger finger) that plague gardeners is to use ergonomically-designed garden tools. The science of ergonomics will be explained, and a wide variety of tools demonstrated. Ways to make existing tools more ergonomic (body friendly) will also be presented.

Mr. Dean Norton

The Horticulturist at Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, he has a B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture. Dean is responsible for applying the latest plant science and management techniques to horticulture in a historic setting. He supervises 21 employees who tend the gardens and grounds. Besides being interviewed on television and radio, he has lectured before many professional organizations throughout the country.

Schedule of Events

Thursday, May 14

8 p.m. Board meeting (TBA)

Friday, May 15 *At US Nat'l Arboretum*

8-9 a.m. Registration (pick up packets; pre-registration)

9 a.m. Welcome, business, coffee break, program

12:30 p.m. Lunch and book signing

1:15 p.m. Tours of the National *Buxus* Collection

2:45 p.m. Program with speakers continues

5:00 p.m. Boxwood auction (TBA)

7:30 p.m. Banquet dinner at the Holiday Inn, Calvert, Md.

Speaker: Mr. Wayne Amos

"White House Gardens"

Saturday, May 16

7:30 a.m. Coffee at the Holiday Inn on Powder Mill Road, Calverton, Md.

8:30 a.m. Bus departs for tour of private gardens, lunch and tour of Sotterley in St. Mary's County, Maryland (see next page)

His presentation, "Boxwood at Mt. Vernon," as the title suggests, will focus on the boxwood and their long public history. The well documented gardens of Mt. Vernon have a rich and interesting history regarding their design usage and cultural considerations.

Dean and his entertaining style will both inform and delight the participants.

Mr. Ian Robertson

A Landscape Design and Horticultural Consultant, trained at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Edinburgh, he manages his own design and build firm. An internationally acclaimed horticulturist, he has worked on garden projects throughout the U.S. He frequently lectures on horticultural, environmental, and design topics.

His lecture, "A Short Story, 'Be-

low and Above Stairs'" is a tale of the life and experiences of Bertie the Boxwood as he struggles with the realities of existence under the guardianship of Peter the Person. It is a gripping tale with a moral.

Mr. Lynn R. Batdorf

Curator of the National Boxwood Collection at the U.S. National Arboretum, he has a B.S. in Horticulture. He serves as the Boxwood Registrar for The American Boxwood Society, which is the International Registration Authority for Cultivated *Buxus*. He wrote the popular and authoritative *Boxwood Handbook*. He has published numerous articles and lectured widely on a variety of boxwood topics.

His presentation, "Knowing and Growing Boxwood," explores the cultural conditions to promote healthy boxwood. Planting, pruning, soil

conditions, winter effects, pests and diseases of boxwood are discussed.

Mr. Wayne Amos

A native Georgian, and graduate of the University of Georgia in Horticulture, after working for nurseries in California and Georgia, he has been with the National Park Service, White House grounds, for 21 years, with an exception of three years when he was conservatory manager for the greenhouse and nursery production that services the White House grounds. He lives and gardens in Alexandria, VA. His program will show the prominent and historical gardens which surround one of the world's most easily recognizable houses.

Countess Véronique Goblet d'Alviella

General Secretary of the European Boxwood and Topiary Society (EBTS). This young, highly energetic

and enthusiastic society is involved in numerous, high profile activities. Her presentation will detail the exciting projects of the EBTS.

Mrs. Elizabeth Braimbridge

Mrs. Braimbridge and her husband, Mark, started the Langley Boxwood Nursery, south of London, in 1983. In 1993, this nursery was awarded the status of a National Collection of *Buxus*. Today, the nursery is world-renowned for its selection and quality of boxwood and topiary. They are responsible for organizing the European Boxwood and Topiary Society, several boxwood expeditions to Cuba, various scientific research projects, and many other significant programs involving boxwood. Her presentation will summarize the many interesting facts surrounding boxwood expeditions in Cuba.

ABS Garden Tour Saturday, May 16

For the learning enjoyment of those on the garden tour, visits to four sites have been planned for Saturday. The tour is a big step back into time, to see a few of the oldest houses and gardens in St. Mary's County, Maryland. All tour stops, except Sotterley, are private homes. The owners graciously opened their Manor Houses so that we may experience and learn from what they have to offer.

Maryland "manor houses" were built under the feudal manorial system as established in Maryland in the 17th century by Lord Baltimore. The Maryland manor was a grant of one thousand or more acres with Court privileges and other privileges as in the manors of England. These houses are relatively small for the most part and are not to be confused with the popular conception of a manor-house.

Cross Manor

One of the most famous of all of the Maryland manors is Cornwallleys'

Cross Manor, on St. Inigoes Creek. Many believe this to be the oldest home in Maryland dating back to 1643. The manor of 2,000 acres was granted to Captain Thomas Cornwallleys. Cross Manor received its name from a hunting accident when Cornwallleys accidentally shot and killed a friend. Cornwallleys was so grieved that he built a large cross on the spot where his friend died. The cross is said to have lasted a hundred years. The manor was named after the cross, the name it still bears today.

A great deal of activity occurred when the present owners purchased the property in 1985. The manor, barn, corn crib and other buildings were completely restored to their earlier glory. The summer kitchen was rebuilt into a guest house. Other structures were built to include a second guest house, pool and tennis court.

English boxwood surround the

REGISTRATION:

Forms were mailed in the January issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. If you've misplaced yours, please contact Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton, 1714 Greenway Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22401-5209. Registration fee includes refreshments, lunch and banquet dinner on Friday, May 15, and bus trip with coffee before departure with lunch and tours on Saturday, May 16.

COST:

Registrations received before April 10: ABS members \$115, non-members \$135. Registrations received April 10-25: ABS members \$125, non-members \$145.

Make checks payable to The American Boxwood Society and mail with registration form to Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton, 1714 Greenway Drive, Fredericksburg, VA 22401-5209. Be sure to include telephone number.

LODGINGS:

Registrants are responsible for their lodgings and any meals not specified. Rooms are being held until April 29, 1998, at the Holiday Inn, 4095 Powder Mill Road, Calverton, MD., phone (301) 937-4422. Identify yourself with The American Boxwood Society for a special rate of \$75 plus tax for single or double room and \$125 plus tax for a suite. After April 29, regular rates and availability will apply.

manor on three sides. Two large masses of English boxwood can be seen between the house and the



The "land side" entrance to Cross Manor.



The "water side" view of Cross Manor with masses of 6-8' English boxwoods.



View from the second story porch to the water, showing the large boxwood masses that dominate the landscape.

waterfront. These boxwood masses are thought to be 300 years old. A rich assortment of roses, perennials, herbs and a vegetable garden are found near the main house.

Visitors may notice a monument at Cross Manor. A gunboat, the U.S.S. Tulip, was assigned to the Potomac Flotilla during the Civil War. It was usually docked at a wharf at Cross Manor. In 1864, the Tulip started out for the Washington Navy Yard for boiler repairs. The boilers were in very bad condition, and when a few miles up the river from Cross Manor, they exploded. Most of the 9 passengers and 22 crew members aboard were killed. In memory of those who died on the Tulip, the Federal Government erected a monument. This is one of the smallest of all Federal Parks.

Woodlawn Farm

In 1634 Cecilius Calvert (the second Lord Baltimore) granted 600 acres named Trinity Manor to his brother, Leonard Calvert, first Governor of the colony of Maryland. His son, William, inherited the Manor,

and his heirs continued to live here through the American Revolution. The original house was plundered by the British militia and has not survived.

In 1798 Colonel Matthias Clarke started building this home in the neo-classical style to portray the new Republic. This 180-acre portion of Trinity Manor was named Woodlawn Farm about 1875 and is presently a working farm. The house is large and fully-developed, exhibiting vernacular characteristics of 18th-century architecture: brick ends laid in Flemish bond with frame facades, and projecting chimneys linked with two-story "pents" and brick nogging. It retains almost all of its original woodwork, adapted from English pattern books of the 18th century. Noteworthy is the abundance of fretwork and the over-mantles of the two riverfront parlors. Interior furnishings are primarily American 18th- and early 19th-century, including some Maryland pieces.

Virginia and Thomas Cox bought Woodlawn Farm in 1972 when the

house was in very bad repair. It was they who diligently preserved what Clark had started nearly 200 years earlier. They added a contemporary kitchen wing with running water in 1987 to make living in the 20th century easier. In 1990, shortly after Tom Cox's death, they were awarded the Grand Prize by the National Trust for Historic Preservation for their outstanding restoration of the house. Woodlawn Farm was sold in 1994 to Elizabeth and Hans Wolf, who now feel fortunate to be stewards of this beautiful home and its environment.

The house is surrounded by magnificent tree specimens and ancient boxwood gardens. The recently re-opened arch of ancient English boxwoods (150- to 200-year old *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa') greets visitors as they approach the road-front entrance to the house. The original waterfront entrance faces Calvert Bay, the Potomac River and the State of Virginia in the distance. A fine view can be seen after walking through the kitchen garden.

Visitors can enjoy the elegant



Woodlawn Farm as approached from the land with a glimpse of Calvert Bay (right center in photo)



The house at Woodlawn is surrounded by magnificent tree specimens and ancient boxwood gardens.

simplicity of the Federal-style home in rural Maryland and see how the present owners mix living in the early 19th and late 20th centuries, all under one roof.

Mulberry Fields

Built about 1760 by Captain William Somerville. The kitchen and office buildings (originally slave quarters) are placed symmetrically with the great house, but off the long axis. The beautiful Georgian house sits on top of a steep hill, with a magnificent view of Breton Bay and the Potomac River. The house is quite distant from the Bay, but it was made to seem closer by an optical illusion created by the planting of two rows of trees from the house down to the bay shore. The two rows of trees diverge

from the house, forming an open "V." The house and the two large dependencies have a very unusual feature for St. Mary's County; they use all header brick bond, rather than Flemish bond.

The plantation reached the height of its prosperity around the turn of the 18th century in the tenure of William Somerville. Shortly before his death, he had increased his slave labor force from 46 to 180 men, women, and children. An old brick quarters (perhaps the one that old-timers remember was dated "1760" on the gable) could not accommodate all, and frame quarters had to be built to house the newcomers. Most, of course, worked in the fields, cultivating mainly corn, wheat, flax, and

cotton. Cooks, stable hands, waiters, and housekeepers gave the mansion and the thicket of outbuildings around it the appearance of a busy village. A nearly matched pair of service buildings, a kitchen and a "workhouse," still flanks the dwelling on the rear, its business end. A dairy, meathouse, two carriage houses, and a long granary that once stood nearby have disappeared.

Inside the house, the rooms were comfortable if somewhat over-furnished with the accumulations of at least two prosperous generations of Clarkes and Somervilles, and heirs from three to four different branches of the family. Mahogany and walnut tables and chairs bookcases, looking glasses, a huge Wilton carpet, and



This spectacular view from the manor at Mulberry Fields to the Potomac River involves an optical illusion. The row of trees appear to be planted in a parallel row. Actually, along this one-mile view to the Potomac River, the rows of trees are planted 200' apart at the house, and slowly widen to 800' at the river.

innumerable beds. The crannies and corners hid the usual clutter of fish hooks, pickle pots, paper, and crockery (a tradition still honored by the present owners). Some things were new: the "Burnt Black china" tea set, for instance; others were "antique" and "broke". "2 prints Royal Family" suggests that more than the furniture was out of date by 1806.

The new master of Mulberry Fields, William's son, William Clarke Somerville, was one of those youthful, cosmopolitan creatures who inhabit romantic novels. An Army Major in the War of 1812, he subsequently toured Europe, called on beautiful people like Lord Byron, the Duke of Wellington, and the Marquis de Lafayette. He returned from Italy to re-christen his pedestrian Mulberry Fields "Montalbino." But when he sold the plantation in 1822, everybody in the neighborhood went back to calling it by its old name. The property then passed quickly through several hands until it was acquired by Thomas Loker in 1832, who probably made the first and last major addition to the house: the two story Doric

portico. The Lokers sold it to Jessie Fay in 1916 from whom it passed to the present owners, Holger and Mary Jansson and their family.

A garden path winds along the slopes of the hillside among ancient American and English boxwood. The American boxwood are some of the largest to be found. Near the entrance to the mansion, which is one of the finest in the county, stands the largest black walnut tree in Maryland. The entrance road winds through a beautiful old forest containing some of the largest remaining white pine trees in the county. Approaching the manor, a bowling green with its rising berm and strong axis, frame the front door. The first floor of the mansion is open for tour participants.

Sotterley

This mansion, built in 1727 by James Bowles, stands on a high plateau, and commands a wonderful view of the Patuxent River. A visit here is a very pleasant experience, as it has been a working plantation since the early eighteenth century. Williamsburg has a similar feel, but Sotterley is more authentic, because

the outbuildings are originals, where Williamsburg's are replicas. In 1961, Mabel Satterlee Ingalls gave the property to the Sotterley Mansion Foundation. This is a trusteeship which manages the plantation and makes it available to the public from April to November.

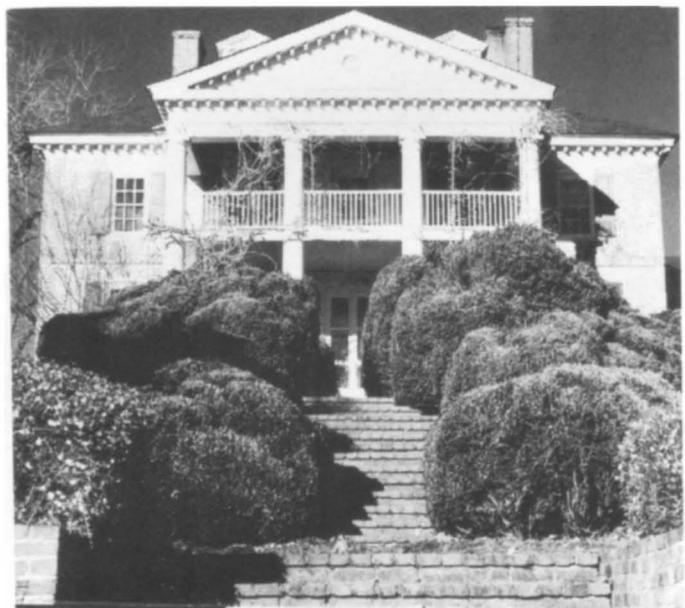
The house is built of brick covered with wide clapboard siding. It is a long low building, painted white, with large porticoes and tall chimneys. The interior is full of fine woodwork. There are numerous outbuildings such as a stable, barns, custom house, spinning house, smoke house, "necessary," and the north gatehouse used as quarters for household slaves. These form a cluster around the mansion, creating a self-sufficient community, as most Southern Maryland plantations were known to be.

The large perennial and vegetable garden has a sundial which bears the Plater, Briscoe, and Satterlee coats-of-arms. These were previous owners of Sotterley.

The house is dedicated to George Plater III, 1735 to 1792. He was the sixth Governor of the State of Mary-



The present owner at the land entrance to Mulberry Fields.



The "water" side of the manor at Mulberry Fields showing the English boxwood.

land and a lifetime resident of Sotterley. He was also a Naval Officer of Patuxent, a Delegate to the State Convention, a Delegate to the Continental Congress, and President of the Maryland Convention to ratify the Federal Constitution.



An entrance to the Sotterley gardens.



Sotterley is on a high plateau, with a wonderful view to the Patuxent River.

Designing With Boxwood

Before and After, the Frierson Boxwood Garden

Sigrid Georgii Harriman

John Brookes, the English garden designer, states that gardens are reflections of the age in which they are created. The successful ones are a synthesis of the conditions of their time; their style is determined by function and by the manner in which their functional form is realized.

Early gardens were enclosed by walls, divided by irrigation channels, planted with fruit-bearing trees, herbs and vegetables, and surrounded by boxwood. Early gardens are direct descendants of Eden and reflect our desire to create a small paradise in an otherwise hostile environment. The components of today's gardens strive to achieve this: plants that flower and bear fruit, provide shade for protection from the elements, and water that cools the atmosphere and irrigates the land. Thus, a successful garden of today will welcome you and provide that mythical haven we know only through illustrations and descriptions

from the past. It will reveal those components slowly and evoke all our longings for shelter, beauty, and

comfort upon entering them.

It was my fortune last year, to get to know such a garden in Charlottes-



Frierson front before redesign. (Photo: Sigrid Harriman)



Hidden living room window before redesign. (Photo: Sigrid Harriman)



New planting under living room window. (Photo: Melinda Frierson)

ville, Virginia. I was asked by Dr. Henry Frierson and his wife Melinda to help rejuvenate the entrance to their garden. The foundation

plantings in front of the 1940 gambrel-roof brick house had overtaken the dining and living room windows on either side of the entrance. Both

Buxus sempervirens and *Buxus sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’ strained mightily against walls and windows. Other evergreens contributed to an overwhelming impression of a house run out of breath. The generous front walk of polished soapstone is lined with newly planted *Buxus* ‘Green Gem’ and leads via a hand-forged iron railing to the stoop of the house. A row of *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica* ‘Green Beauty’ encloses the front garden at the street. The finishing touches were to be a new planting scheme in front of the residence.

We decided to use different, slow-growing boxwood cultivars in a balanced pattern reminiscent of a historic boxwood parterre. After all old plantings and their extensive root systems were removed, the ground was prepared and readied for the new boxwoods. Two mature *Buxus sempervirens* ‘Meyers Columnar’ were placed either side next to the top of the stoop, together with two good sized *Buxus sempervirens* ‘Elegantissima’ at the bottom. The outer corners of the residence were emphasized by placing three *Buxus sempervirens* ‘Graham Blandy’ diagonally to each corner. Thus, two defined spaces under the dining and living room windows emerged—ideal for two diamond-shaped boxwood parterres. Our choice for the ideal edging plant: *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis* ‘Justin Brouwers’ was successful, the glossy, dark green slender leaves contrast beautifully with all the other less glossy ones. (See reduced planting plan.)

The inner planting area of the diamond-shaped boxwood beds was underplanted with white daffodils for best spring showing. For summer and late summer interest, white blooming hostas will provide a lush background for the various boxwoods in the front garden. Meticulously groomed lawn areas wrap around the house and lead the visitor to the real treasure of this garden: the “back yard” oasis which many strive to achieve.



Overgrown plants were replaced with boxwood and bulbs.



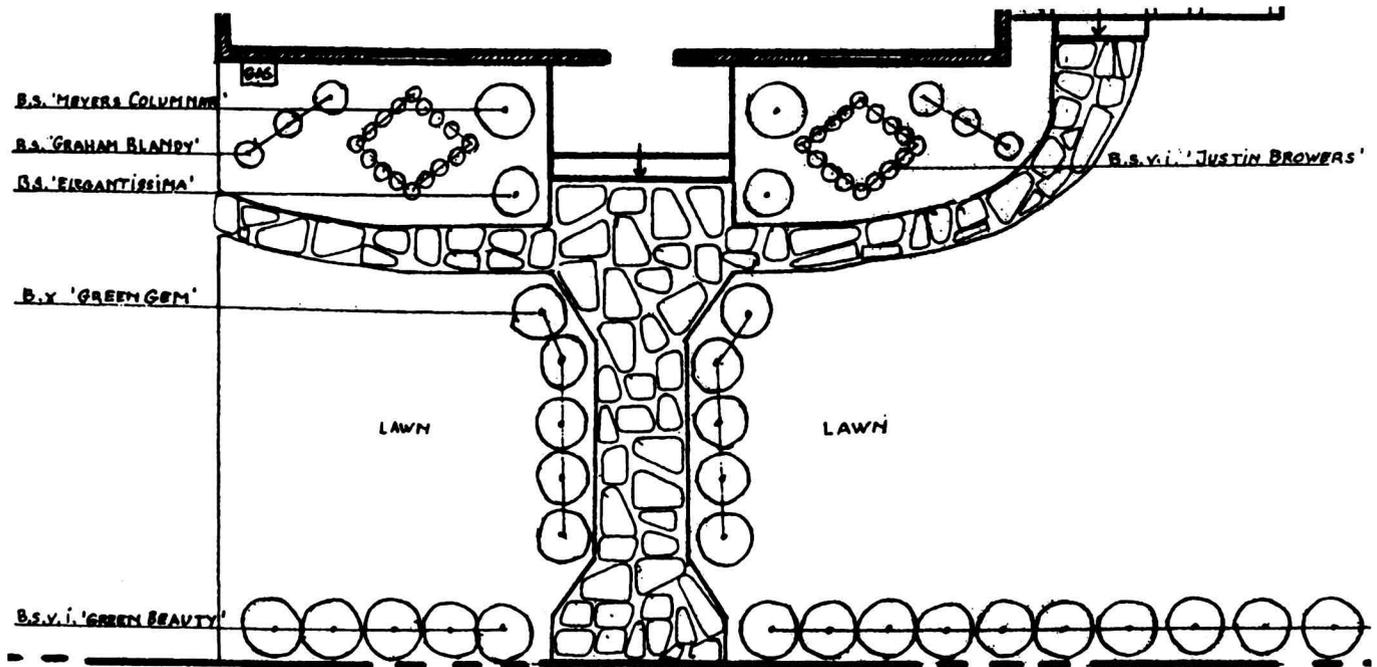
Front porch after replanting.



New planting under dining room window. (Photos: Melinda Frierson, except as indicated)



Entry to a new secluded sitting area. (Photo: Dr. White M. Wallenborn, courtesy Garden Club of Virginia))



Frierson revised plot plan. (Drawing: Sigrid Harriman)

Boxwood Hardiness in Southwestern Pennsylvania

Clyde Weber

Background

Until recently, boxwood has not been a popular landscape plant in this region, but with the increase in deer population, and the beginning realization that there are hardy cultivars to be grown here, boxwood is now coming into increased use. In our nursery, boxwood has never been touched by deer, while many other landscape plants have been devastated. In this situation, there is a need for boxwood information as to cultivar selection, hardiness, and culture.

This article is being written to record some of the information learned by growing, first *Buxus sinica* and *Buxus microphylla* over the past 25 years. In the past several years, we have started some small plantings of *Buxus sinica* [sic], *Buxus microphylla*, and selected *Buxus sempervirens* cultivars. It has been our intention to record our observations on hardiness as related to growing conditions and cultural practices.

The comments made in this article are based on observations made in our nursery which is located in Zone 6 of the USDA hardiness map. We are located about 25 miles west and north of Chestnut Ridge, the most western of the series of parallel ridges of the Allegheny mountains. This and the adjacent Laurel Ridge create a finger of colder weather (Zone 5) that passes further south, and sometimes spills out over adjacent areas. Our normal Zone 6 reports minimum temperature readings of -10 to 0°F, while Zone 5 reports -20 to -10. In our nursery we have occasionally seen -20, with -27 being the lowest temperature that we have personally experienced here.

Our two mainstay species of *B. sinica* (several unnamed cultivars),

and *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem' have survived our Zone 5/6 conditions and have even thrived when planted with some minimal protection. The original plants of these species were obtained from Miami Nursery in Ohio. The *Buxus sinica* was purchased under the name *Buxus koreana* 'Little Leaf' and the *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem' was purchased under the name *B. microphylla* 'Large Leaf'. I have been informed that the 'Large Leaf' variety has been renamed 'Winter Gem'. It certainly retains its dark green color throughout winter when the cultural conditions include good soil, drainage, and minimal winter protection. Under more adverse conditions of exposure and less than good drainage, both *B. sinica* and *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem' have bronzed or discolored heavily, but recovered their green color with the warm days of spring. The *B. sinica* varieties that we have grown are light green, and the *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem' is a glossy, very dark green.

A third variety that we have grown is *Buxus microphylla* 'Compacta', which was originally purchased as *B. microphylla* 'Kingsville Dwarf'. This variety has been found to be hardy only under protected conditions. It is the slowest-growing boxwood cultivar with 25-year-old plants reported to be only 10 inches in height and 25 inches in width. We have grown some to 12-15 inches in diameter in about 15 years.

The above mentioned boxwood types are being used as controls in our new test plantings. One or more of these varieties will be planted in each new grouping or test garden of boxwood, and the new test varieties will be compared directly to these controls. These new test gardens will

be referred to as Oak Hill Nursery, "Boxwood Memorial Test Gardens," in memory of my beloved wife, Janet, who passed away suddenly on Oct. 18, 1997.

Test Gardens

Some of the test garden plants have been in place 3-6 years, but these are mostly the cultivars described in "Background" above. More recent types were added in 1996 and 1997, with observations made on Jan. 10, 1998, and described below. The fall and winter temperatures to this date were unusually mild, with the low being around 10°F. or -12°C.

Plantings #1 and #2 are around the old farm house which was built in 1868. Planting #1A consists of *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem', *B. sinica*, *B. microphylla* 'Compacta', *B. sempervirens* 'Dee Runk', and *B. sempervirens* 'Elegantissima'. All except the last two are well-established plants. This planting has protection from a high-branched Norway spruce, which is probably as old as the house, a pink dogwood, and the farmhouse. The planting also contains low-growing mixed companion plants. All of the boxwood in this group have excellent mid-winter appearance (Jan. 10, 1998), with no discoloration or bronzing except for the *B. microphylla* 'Compacta', which show minimal bronzing.

Planting #1B consists of *B. sinica*, *B. microphylla* 'Compacta' and *B. microphylla* 'Jim's Spreader'. The *B. sinica* show no discoloration or bronzing, and the 'Jim's Spreader' only very slight scattered bronzing, which may be normal leaf loss. These plants have almost full winter exposure as evidenced by the toll taken of the *B. microphylla* 'Compacta', with 2 dead, 3 heavily bronzed with dead branches, and the remain-

ing 3 moderately bronzed.

Planting #2 is currently *B. sinica* used as a partial border for a flower bed. The appearance on Jan. 10, 1998, is excellent, with light green color and no bronzing, even though it is heavily exposed to winds from the west.

Plantings #3 and #4 have south, west, and north exposure. The planting consists of *B. microphylla japonica* 'Green Beauty', *B. sinica insularis*, *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem', *B. sinica* var. *insularis* and *B. microphylla* 'Compacta'. The 'Winter Gem' show 2 heavily bronzed, and 13 minimally bronzed. The *B. sinica* var. *insularis* and *B. sinica insularis* exhibit only scattered light bronzing while the *B. microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Green Beauty' show no discoloration. All *B. microphylla* 'Compacta' are fully bronzed. These plants, except for the 'Compacta'

indicate good selections for this heavily exposed area. The two bronzed 'Winter Gem' may be caused by a localized wet spot.

Planting #5 consists of *B. sempervirens* 'Dee Runk', *B. microphylla* 'John Baldwin', *B. sempervirens* 'Graham Blandy', *B. sempervirens* 'Inglis', *B. sempervirens* 'Joe Gable', *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem', *B. sinica*, and *B. microphylla* 'Compacta'. Also some seedlings taken from under an old plant in this county are included. These are labeled *Buxus X, Andy*, indicating the person who gave them to me.

This planting borders a gully which is a seasonal water course in a low spot with Hemlock trees breaking the west wind. All plants exhibit excellent color except the *B. microphylla* 'Compacta'.

It should be mentioned that in general, the observations made on the

above plantings are better than those made on the field plantings. The more adverse results of the field plantings are due to full exposure and poor wet weather drainage. Summer droughts have also been hard on our boxwood.

Our plans call for an increase in these small plantings with an increase in the number of plants of each cultivar or variety. This will give more reliable results.

Also many of the plants, except for *B. sinica*, *B. microphylla* 'Winter Gem', and *B. sempervirens* 'Joe Gable', were recently planted (ABS auction plants) and are therefore still small. Periodic updates of hardiness observations will be issued. If anyone wants to suggest or supply test plants please get in touch with me: Clyde A. Weber c/o Oak Hill Nursery, 281 Sumney Road, Bentleyville, PA 15314. Comments, corrections, and additional notes are also welcome.

The Rt. 50 Boxwood

C. T. Fooks

In the early 1960s the State of Maryland completed the last leg of a much needed dual highway from the Bay Bridge to Ocean City. This section of road from Salisbury to Ocean City passed through a field of nursery stock of the former Tingle Nursery Company. Some of the nursery stock was left on each side. To this day, in the woods on the north side, one can see *Acer Palmatum* and *Magnolia Grandiflora* mixed with native trees which have come up and outgrown them.

On the south side, a group of three boxwood were left close enough to state right of way that they were not enveloped by the growing woods. I casually observed these boxwood as they continued to grow by the side of a busy highway, without any help or hindrance from man. They gradually

developed into a compact, conical shape about 8 feet tall and 3 feet wide at the base with a good dark green color. It occurred to me that these plants had developed naturally with many desirable characteristics that landscapers were looking for. I don't have the exact records, but sometime in the 1970s I began propagating this plant. Without having a name (some people have the plants and no name, while others have the names without the plants), we labeled it "Rt. 50." We have continued to propagate and still identify it as "*Buxus* Rt. 50." We sell it as American Boxwood.

About the same time that I was observing these plants, so was Blaine Bunting, Sr., who was at that time propagator for the former Bunting Nursery Company of Selbyville, Delaware. Blaine came to the same

conclusion that I had, that these were desirable plants for the nursery trade, and began propagating them. Blaine tells me they grew them in the field, where they developed with well-shaped, upright forms of good color. They called them "American Boxwood" and shipped a lot of them to the New England states where they were well received by their customers as "good, hardy American Boxwood."

For several years after propagating it, we did not grow it in very large quantities. Recently, we made a decision to produce large landscape-sized *Buxus* for the landscape trade. The Rt. 50 boxwood is one of several that we have chosen to produce. In evaluating the performance we have compared it to the cultivar 'Belleville', which we like very much. The

foliage and general appearance of the plants are similar. Comparing Rt. 50 and 'Belleville' planted from 1-gallon containers at the same time in the same block, we have made the following observations:

1. Rt. 50 has grown faster, about 18 inches in height compared to 'Belleville' at 15 inches.
2. 'Belleville' has developed with a better conical form at the same age. The Rt. 50 is columnar at this size.
3. Both are about the same color.
4. Both have endured winters under harsh field conditions equally well.

We have found that the Rt. 50 develops a nice conical form by the time it reaches 3 feet in height. From



The Rt. 50 boxwood about 7 years from cutting, 30-36" high, 15-inch base. (Photo: Charles Fooks)

these observations, we have concluded that the Rt. 50 boxwood is one that will fit well into our production and that we can market it with confidence that it will perform well in the final landscape where it is planted.

After the 1996 ABS meeting we gave Regina Boehm and Wolfgang Kohnert of Mettman, Germany a small plant of Rt. 50. They later wrote an article which was published in *The Boxwood Bulletin*, October 1996, Vol.36 No.2 entitled "Impressions from a first visit to the United States." In the article they mentioned receiving "*Buxus* /Rt.. 50/ Mr. Fooks own variety." Since it had been published in the *Bulletin* I thought society members might be entitled to know the story of the Rt. 50 boxwood.

Garden Week Highlights for Boxwood Enthusiasts

By Suzanne Munson, Historic Garden Week Executive Director

Among the many tours featuring lovely boxwood gardens are three events in the Charlottesville area April 19-22. The concept of the Friendly Gardens tour, April 19 and 20, was developed in 1950 when members of The Rivanna Garden Club suggested opening small gardens which were maintained solely by their owners. The event was so successful that the Friendly Gardens have been on the Historic Garden Week tour for many years. This year's event features a walking tour of 12 city gardens.

Charlottesville Garden Features 15 Cultivars of Boxwood

One of the Friendly Gardens includes more than 15 cultivars of boxwood. When the current owners, Dr. and Mrs. Henry F. Frierson, Jr., purchased it in 1985, the yard had groupings of large common tree boxwood and *B sempervirens* 'Suf-

fruticosa', some as old as the 1940-vintage house. The owners are enthusiastic boxwood collectors and have added a row of *B. microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Green Beauty' bordering the sidewalk in front and *Buxus* 'Green Gem' flanking the stone entrance walk.

The weeping form of *B. harlandii* is found against the side of the garage, anchored at the end by a fastigiata variety. A row of *B. sempervirens* 'Graham Blandy' lines the rear picket fence. Entering the back yard from the right, the owners have added a bed of boxwood which includes cultivars *B. microphylla* 'Compacta', 'Helen Whiting', and 'Grace Hendrick Phillips', along with *B. microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Morris Midget'. Among larger plants here are *B. sinica* var. *insularis* 'Justin Brouwers', *B. sempervirens* 'Memorial', and a variegated *B. sempervirens* (see p. 69).

The Charlottesville-area garden

clubs will also sponsor a walking tour of the University of Virginia's beautiful Pavilion Gardens April 21, designed by Thomas Jefferson and featuring boxwood and other plants authentic to the early 19th century, and a Country Estates and Gardens tour April 21 and 22 showcasing magnificent rural properties. One of these is Kinloch, once described as "in a grove of forest oaks on the slope of a gentle hill with a bold spring at its foot." Its formal gardens were started in the 1930s by Mrs. Linton R. Massey. She planted five varieties of boxwood and used the hedging and brick walls to create "outdoor living rooms," developing eight gardens. Landscape architect Rachel Lilly used Mrs. Massey's foundations of stone and brick walls and added brick walkways, an assortment of trees and a vast array of flora. The focal point of the garden is the Roman-ended pool which is enveloped with greens, whites and silvers.

**Boxwood Estate Open in Richmond
April 23**

On the Richmond tour April 23 is an impressive home known as Boxwood, designed in 1924 by Duncan Lee and located on three and a half acres of manicured lawn and gardens overlooking The Country Club of Virginia's Westhampton golf course. Noted landscape architect Charles F. Gillette designed the original landscaping and gardens, among them an English boxwood garden. Some of his work remains, including the ancient English and American boxwood along the front entrance walkway. Regarding Boxwood, Mr. Gillette commented in 1934: "In this work, which has turned out very well, we stuck to the Virginia text and a truly old atmosphere already pervades the place. We used, of course, boxwood, yews and crape myrtle in quantity and filled in with all the other usual things—lilacs, old-time roses, etc. This, in a word, is my description of the place: Modest and to the point." The garden and landscaping have been renovated by the present owners with the assistance of Richmond landscape architect C. Preston Dalrymple.

Among the fine properties on the Ashland Garden Club's tour in Caroline County April 18 is Old Mansion, built in 1669 and said to be the oldest continuously inhabited



Old Mansion, built in 1669, the source for some of the National Cathedral boxwood in the 1930s. (Photo: Ashland Garden Club)



Mulberry Place on the Ashland Garden Club tour has mature boxwood and is undergoing a long-term restoration. (Photo: Ashland Garden Club)



Boxwood in the pool area of Kinloch in Albemarle County on the Charlottesville tour April 21-22. (Photo: Garden Club of Virginia)

residence in Virginia. Huge trees and boxwood have always surrounded the house; some still present are original and are over 300 years old. Some English boxwood now growing in the

entrance border of the Bishop's Garden at Washington National Cathedral were transplanted from Old Mansion in the 1930s.

Another handsome old property on

this tour is Mulberry Place, constructed in 1827. The present owners purchased the estate in 1988 and are in the process of an exciting long-term restoration of the garden. To be incorporated in the plan are more than 400 ancient English boxwood. Garden Week visitors are invited to view the plans and designs in progress.

Reedy Mill—Caroline County Gem

A horticultural highlight of this

Caroline County tour will be Mrs. Gordon Penick's Reedy Mill, an extraordinary lakeside garden which has been featured in *Horticulture* magazine, *Southern Living*, *Time-Life Books* and on the cover of *White Flower Farm Catalog*. The two-acre landscape and garden area on the shores of a 45-acre lake includes a bog garden, a dwarf conifer collection, a mixed border of inspired English design, a gazebo and patio garden, and a new shade garden.

Detailed information about these and the many other wonderful properties open this April is included in the 1998 Garden Week guidebook. Guidebooks are available free of charge at many information centers throughout the state or by mailing a \$4 donation for postage and handling to Historic Garden Week, 12 E. Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23219.

Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage - 1998

This is the 61st Annual Pilgrimage, a series of tours from Saturday April 18 through May 9, 1998:

Saturday, April 18- Charles County

Sunday, April 19- Baltimore City

Saturday, April 25- Dorchester County

Sunday, April 26- Talbot County

Saturday, May 2- Howard County

Saturday, May 9- Washington County

There are many historic and notable places open to the visitor.

Charles County in Southern Maryland will play host on Saturday, April 18 for the Maryland House and Garden 1998 Pilgrimage.

In 1632, Charles I of England by charter made Cecil Calvert, Lord Baltimore, Proprietor of Maryland. Only he and subsequent Lords Baltimore had power to grant land.

In 1658, Charles County, named in honor of his Lordship's son and heir apparent, was separated from St. Mary's County.

The 18th century was a prosperous era of plantation life with tobacco the "gold of the province." Among the notables from Charles County were General William Smallwood; John Hanson, president of the Continental Congress; Thomas Stone, a signer of the Declaration of Independence;

Daniel St. Thomas Jenifer, a signer of the Constitution; Drs. James Craik and Gustavus Brown, physicians to George Washington.

The countryside was pillaged in 1812 when the British landed at Benedict on the Patuxent River and marched to Washington. During the Civil War, Charles County changed from a basically agrarian area. Today it is influenced by the pressures of a major coastal highway through its

midland and increasing urbanization from the Washington, D.C., area.

Mt. Air is one of the jewels of the Pilgrimage Tour. An elegant waterfront estate, it is situated on a magnificent promontory commanding a breathtaking view of the lower Potomac and Port Tobacco Rivers. The main manor house was constructed about 1801, by Mr. Luke Thomas Matthews, incorporating into the foundation a small structure



Mt. Air in Charles County with ancient boxwoods framing the house is on tour April 18. (Photos: Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage)

described as “old” in 1725. It is a regionally typical Federal-style house of clapboard over brick nogging. The central block is three stories high. In 1994, a full historical renovation was undertaken and a south wing added.

The beautifully maintained grounds feature one of America’s largest gardens of English boxwood. The formal design has grown into a maze over the years. Shading the gardens are walnut, cedar, elm and chestnut trees. Color is added by magnolias, lilacs, weeping cherries, crape myrtles, rosebushes and forsythias. The main gardens also contain notable marble statuary. Mt. Air remains a 480-acre working farm with numerous dependencies.

Also open in Charles County are Yatten and Westwood Manor. The latter is situated on a hill overlooking the Wicomico River valley on a portion of a manorial grant to Sir Thomas Gerrard in 1651.

Dorchester County (Saturday, April 26) is the largest county on the Eastern Shore. It offers natural beauty and recreational opportunities in a pristine environment. Almost surrounded by water, the county has the Chesapeake Bay on the western and southern shores with the Choptank River on the north and the Nanticoke River on the east. The history of the county dates back more than 300 years. It was named for Sir Edward Sackville, fourth Earl of Dorset and a close friend of the Calvert family.

Early settlement was along the shorelines. Six Maryland governors have been among Dorchester County’s noted citizens, including Thomas Holiday Hicks, who was credited with keeping Maryland in the Union. Other noted citizens were Anna Ella Carroll, the silent member of Lincoln’s cabinet who is buried in Old Trinity Churchyard, just west of Cambridge, and Harriet Tubman, known as “the Moses of the people,” who led more than 300 slaves to



Mt. Aire, showing a portion of the house with the continuation of masses of ancient boxwoods. (Photos: Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage)



Yatten, also in Charles County, shows mature boxwood and a handsome Magnolia grandiflora to the right.

freedom via the Underground Railway. Cambridge, the county seat, was founded in 1684 and is the site of several of the tour places.

Meredith House, built circa 1760, is the home of the Dorchester County Historical Society. The original milk house, still to be restored, is to be one of the beneficiaries of the tour.

The gothic-style Christ Episcopal

Church, begun in 1883, occupies the site of two earlier church buildings dating back to 1692. There is a rose window portraying the Sermon on the Mount, five smaller panels representing Love, Joy, Peace, Patience and Humility, a Tiffany window and panels portraying the story of the good samaritan.

The Dorchester Arts Center is

located in a house dating from 1790. It was part of a larger house, half of which was split off in 1906 and moved 15' closer to the water.

Cambridge House, a good example of Queen Anne architecture, has had many notable owners, including two governors. In 1719, the property (with no house) was sold for \$30. In 1789, a brick house on the site burned and was replaced in 1830 by a wood-framed cottage. In 1874, the cottage was moved and a brick structure added. In the 1880s, the main part of the house was added to the back cottage and a final addition was constructed around the turn of the century. The house was divided into apartments, but has now been returned to its original splendor.

The landscaping of Cambridge House was designed by award-winning Dallas architect, David Rolston. It incorporates magnificent English boxwoods which were planted 100 years ago.

The Davis House, a Victorian style 1894, was remodeled to Colonial Revival style and presently has Greek and Colonial Revival influences; and the Hooper-Wolff House, dating back to the late 1700s are also on the tour.

The Howard County tour (May 2) is based around Ellicott City. Named for the Ellicott brothers who bought 700 acres in the wilderness in 1771 on the steep rocky banks of the Patapsco River, the town sprang up around the settlement they developed. The town became a major outlet for the farming community which followed the lead of Charles Carroll of Doughoregan Manor and switched from soil-depleting tobacco to wheat crops.

With the arrival of the B&O railroad in 1830, Ellicott Mills, as it was then called, became one of the most important manufacturing centers in the state. Flood (1868), hurricanes (1972 and 1974), and fire (1984) have

wrought their damage, but the community has survived and visitors can enjoy Colonial Craft demonstrations and gifts in a restored log cabin and history in the B&O Station Museum as well as featured places on the tour.

Among the places on the tour are Mt. Ida, the last home built by the Ellicotts, c. 1828, a blend of Greek Revival and Italianate styles; Patapsco Female Institute Historic Park which has the stabilized ruins of a former girls school, located atop Ellicott City's highest elevation; and a charming Victorian farmhouse, built in 1888, with lush perennial gardens and mature boxwood said to have come from cuttings of George Washington's Mount Vernon boxwood.

Washington County, on tour Saturday, May 9, 1998, was formed from Frederick County in 1776. It was the first county named in honor of George Washington. Hagerstown, the largest town in the county, located in the center of the valley, is the county seat. Many log houses remain from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The stylish elements of British and European designs began to appear in the county by the late

19th century.

Plumb Grove, built in 1831, the overseer's house at Montpelier (Maryland), built in 1771; Stafford Hall, early 19th century, on the National Register; St. Mary's Episcopal Church, its cornerstone laid in early 1849 and another early 19th century house are among the showplaces open in Washington County.

Weldon, a contraction of Well Done, was built c. 1741 on land granted by Frederick Calvert, the last Lord Baltimore. An article in the Baltimore Sun of September 27, 1925, describes the large garden of old flowers and boxwood as a sanctuary for birds. Today the garden still holds the ancient boxwoods.

In Memoriam

Janet Weber
Member since 1989

Mary Carolyn Jones
Member since 1984

S. Douglas Fleet
Charter and Life Member

NEWS OF THE SOCIETY

Minutes of the Winter Board Meeting

The winter meeting of the Governing Board of The American Boxwood Society was held on Friday, January 16, 1998, at the Double Tree Inn in Charlottesville, Virginia. In attendance were President Dr. Stephen D. Southall, First Vice President Tom Saunders, Executive Treasurer Mrs. Katherine D. Ward, Secretary Joan Butler, Registrar Lynn R. Batdorf and Directors John W. Boyd, III, Scot Butler, Charles Fooks, Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton, Dr. Henry Frierson, Mrs.

Sigrid Harriman, and Steve Zapton.

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. by the President, who introduced Dr. Michael A. Bowers, interim Director of the State Arboretum of Virginia, Blandy Farm, and ex-officio Board Member, who was accompanied by Mrs. Mary Olien, Assistant Curator for Education at the State Arboretum. She will be organizing school programs and workshops.

The minutes of the September 5, 1997, fall Board meeting were ap-

proved as published in *The Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol.37, No.2, pp.36-37.

Mrs. Ward presented the Treasurer's Report showing balances of \$3,320.70 in the checking account and \$15,345.95 in the certificate of deposit, which was renewed on November 16, 1997. The costs for printing the revised edition of the *Boxwood Handbook* have been paid in full.

Committee Reports:

Finance Committee. The President appointed a Finance Committee consisting of Mrs. Ward, Mr. Batdorf, Mrs. Frackelton and Mr. Saunders, to prepare the 1998-1999 annual budget to be presented at the Board meeting on May 14, 1998. Board members who expect to need funds for the next fiscal year should normally request them before the January Board meeting, but this year should submit their requests immediately. Mr. Saunders asked Mrs. Ward to provide comparison figures on expenditures for 1996-97 and 1997-98.

The Boxwood Bulletin and Membership. Mrs. Frackelton requested more articles for *The Boxwood Bulletin* and contributions for the Seasonal Gardener; news of special gardens; new uses or experiences with specific cultivars. Sixty-one new members have joined as a result of advertising for the revised *Handbook*; a membership application envelope is sent to everyone who orders a copy. Each Board member was asked to write a list of their favorite cultivars and about alternative uses of box. A list of Internet sites referring to boxwood would be interesting.

Registrar. Mr. Batdorf announced that Dr. and Mrs. Mark Braimbridge and Countess d'Alviella will attend the ABS Annual Meeting in May as representatives of the European Boxwood and Topiary Society, of which Dr. Braimbridge is the Chairman and Countess d'Alviella is General Secretary. The EBTS has encountered a serious *fusarium* fungus problem and

had asked for ABS funding support for a research project. Mr. Batdorf believes the problem is a result of sanitation neglect in a much damper climate than our U.S. experience. No support was voted.

Mr. Batdorf reported that a new 1996 boxwood garden at the Missouri Botanic Garden has encouraged horticulturist Dan Moses to collaborate with Mr. Batdorf on two articles for *The Boxwood Bulletin*.

On July 20-26, 1998, Mr. Batdorf will attend the Third Annual International Symposium on Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants of the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) in Edinburgh, Scotland, and will present a paper on boxwood on July 22.

Mr. Batdorf reviewed plans for the Annual Meeting on Friday, May 15, and Saturday, May 16, 1998. A maximum of 120 participants can be accommodated. The meeting and garden tours will be advertised to the general public on April 5. **Members are urged to register early!** Mr. Fooks will provide plants of *Buxus microphylla* var. *japonica* 'Morris Dwarf' as gifts to all who attend. Mrs. Frackelton will handle registration for the meeting and Mr. Saunders will bring some plants for the auction.

The spring meeting of the Governing Board will be held on Thursday evening, May 14, 1998, prior to the Annual Meeting on Friday. The 1999 Annual Meeting will be centered in the Richmond area; Mrs. Ward will contact the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and other possible sites.

Memorial Boxwood Garden. Mrs. Butler requested authorization to order 36 new plant labels and stakes for the Memorial Garden at the State Arboretum, Blandly Farm. Sample labels were circulated and funds for labels were approved, the style to be chosen in consultation with Bob Arnold, Grounds Superintendent. Mrs. Butler noted the need for a printed brochure to be made

available to visitors in the Garden. Board members were asked to send her suggestions for content, such as explanation of the way plants are organized in the beds, an overview of *Buxus* species, description of characteristics of cultivars, history of ABS and the Garden.

Internet home page. Discussion followed acknowledging the desirability of creating an ABS web site, but unfortunately Mrs. Ward is not able to participate because her local telephone company cannot act as her local service provider. President Dr. Southall has reserved the name "boxwoodsociety.org" so that no other entity can use it. An e-mail account would cost about \$50 per month. Lengthy discussion ensued about the purposes for our Internet presence. We need to promote the Society's goals and educational objectives. Dr. Frierson and Mr. Batdorf will explore records of contacts and costs from web sites at the University of Virginia and the National Arboretum; Mr. Batdorf will contact the Water Lily Society to research their experience with their home page.

The State Arboretum of Virginia Blandly Farm. Dr. Michael A. Bowers, interim Director of the State Arboretum, noted that 3,000 hits have been recorded since a web site was created at Blandly Farm in March 1997. He welcomed the long ABS-State Arboretum partnership and sought members' support for a legislative bill in the 1998 Virginia General Assembly, amending the 1998-2000 University of Virginia budget request to provide money for a staff horticulturist and additional grounds personnel to maintain the appearance of the Arboretum. Board members agreed to telephone expressions of support to their legislators.

Nominating Committee. Mr. Zapton, Chairman, reported on progress to date.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Joan Butler, Secretary

