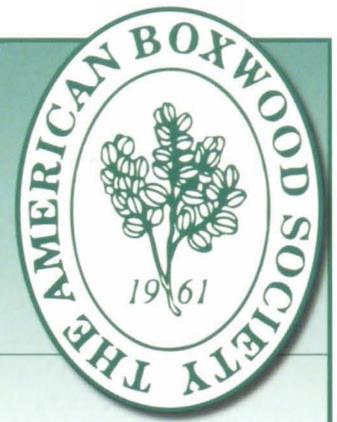


THE BOXWOOD BULLETIN



A quarterly of the American Boxwood Society
devoted to our oldest garden ornamental

Vol. 48 No. 2

October 2008



The EBTS France participants at the Château Lacoste.

May 2008

The American Boxwood Society

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The American Boxwood Society Tours Paris & Dordogne, France

The first ever international tour of the American Boxwood Society actually began in June, 2007. At that time 22 French members of the European Boxwood and Topiary Society participated in the 6-day ABS 2007 International Boxwood Symposium. By May 2008, one year later, the French were ready to reciprocate with an exciting 7-day program featuring premier boxwood gardens in southwest France with a grand finale in Paris.

Eleven participants from the American Boxwood Society arrived at Charles de Gaulle International Airport in Paris on Tuesday, May 6, 2008 where we were greeted by our French hosts. We proceeded immediately by car to southern France, by way of Périgueux, to the area known as the Dordogne, "The land of a thousand castles." We made an unplanned, yet spectacular stop at Le Saillant, a 12th century castle which has belonged to the du Saillant family since 1320. The château includes a park with prized ancient specimen trees, a 13th century



Holly Hamilton alongside the Château Le Saillant.

chapel, and Gothic bridge which spans the Vézère River. That evening, when we arrived at our destination, we were quickly introduced to a spectacular dinner. This was the first of an endless number of gourmet's delights that was to follow for the

next seven days, as we enjoyed *foie gras* at the farmhouse that produced the delicacy!



The Vézère River at Le Saillant.



A 13th century, six-arched gothic stone bridge that was once a toll bridge at Le Saillant.



The Domus of Vésone preserved in Périgueux, Vesunna.

Wednesday, May 7, began with a tour of Vesunna, a museum to preserve and interpret the ancient city of Périgueux. Founded in 16 BC, it is the most renowned Gallo-Roman city in existence. Only in 1959 was the heart of this ancient site discovered. Opened to the public only a few years ago, it has become famous and important due to its large size, one full acre, and its well-preserved state. Of primary interest is the Domus of Vésone famous for its exceptionally beautiful colored wall paintings which can be viewed from two mezzanines and a network of raised walkways.



The Tower of Vésone.

With English hand-held recorders it was possible to fully understand and appreciate the entire exhibit. Perhaps the most beautiful collections were displayed in the two distinct tours. The first, "City and Public Life" documents the city, its inhabitants, major monuments, architectural decoration, the world of the dead, religion, and the economic ex-



Vesunna

changes. The second, "House and Private Life" details the construction and evolution of the typical home, the bath and the preparing of meals, the heating systems, decorative wall paintings and more.

That afternoon we were treated to a 2-hour privately guided tour of Périgueux, the capital of the Périgord. As one of the largest ancient preserved areas in France, it has 39 sites classified as "Historical Monuments" which are up to 2,000 years old. Features include the Vesunna Temple; the Barriere Castle; Cloister Square with its Farmers market, previously the site of public executions; and the large St. Front Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its 12th century bell tower, which dominates the area.



The American members enjoying lunch in the ancient city of Vesunna.

Thursday morning, May 8, found us at the Château de Hautefort, built in the 17th century, and appropriately described as "The most beautiful castle in Périgueux." This medieval fortress towers over the Bauze and Lourde valleys. Here we joined the French participants in a guided tour of this Château surrounded by French



The Courtyard of the St. Front Cathedral, with Buxus sempervirens, in Périgueux.



The entrance to Hautefort, with sheared boxwood and yew.



A delightful walkway using arborvitae at Hautefort.



A view of the southern France countryside from Hautefort.

gardens with boxwood, yew and a variety of flowering herbaceous perennials. One dramatic feature was the entrance gateway, built in 1588, which is preceded by a working drawbridge crossing a dry moat. Another unique feature was the Tour (Tower) de Maure named in honor of Jean de Bretagne, the count of Périgord from 1438 to 1456; it was topped by a lantern-shaped dome which had a magnificent interior wood framework. The gardens filled with boxwood were particularly impressive. The castle was surrounded by boxwood gardens designed as parterres de

embroideries, elaborate plantings based on embroidery patterns popular in the 16th century. They were to be seen also in the now dry moat as we looked down from the drawbridge. Most notably, we could gaze down upon the east terrace which has a boxwood hedge planted in the form of a gushing fountain, the symbol of Baroness de Bastard's dream of building a fountain in this spot.



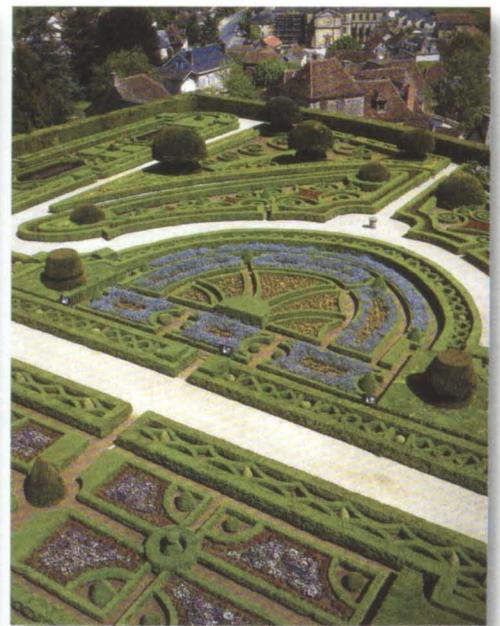
Another box garden at Hautefort which in the French style is meant to be best viewed from above.



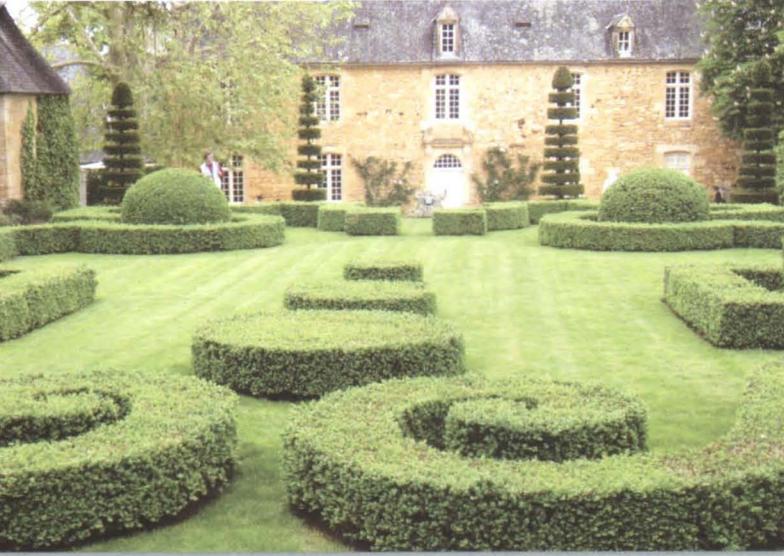
The trimmed box hedges of Hautefort.



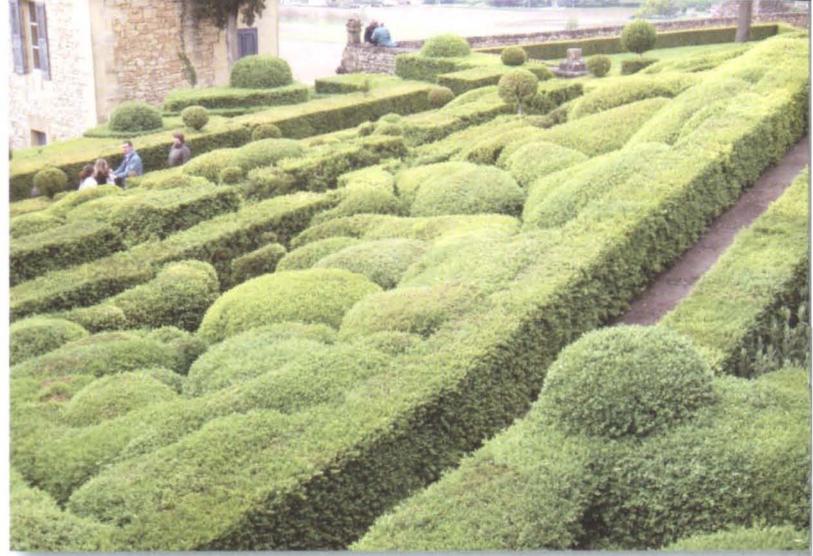
Geometrically trimmed English boxwood and flowering wisteria along the Château wall at Hautefort.



On the east terrace at Hautefort, a box hedge forms a gushing fountain, a symbol of Baroness de Bastard's dream.



One of the dozens of boxwood gardens at Eyrignac.



The entrance to Marquessac with thousands of sheared boxwood.

On Thursday afternoon we travelled to the Château de Losse, a medieval fortress overlooking the adjacent Vézère river. Built in 1575, its sole access is by a bridge over the moat and through a fortified gatehouse, the largest of its kind in France. The Renaissance Hall built within the stronghold of thick stone walls is unchanged from when it was first built. The gardens have a variety of notable features. The sheared hornbeam, designed in the 17th century, create “green chambers” and labyrinth walks. The gardens within the walls feature a walk through the shady scented wisteria tunnel leading to tightly sheared boxwood hedges which were joined by flowering roses. Beyond were large lavender beds framed with rosemary as was done in Elizabethan times.

Friday, May 9, was an exceptionally full and exciting day. It began with a tour of Eyrignac. Its first build-

ing, commissioned in 1653, is still standing. Renovated in 1960, it was opened to the public in 1987. Eyrignac is such a notable garden it is listed as a French Historic Monument and in 1992 was awarded the Grand Prix of French Gardens by *La Demeure Historique*. All of this is a small indication of the premier design and quality of the various intensively-cultivated gardens. While perhaps most famous for its hornbeam avenue, there are many other significant gardens and features. A few include: the sheared boxwood in the formal French-style garden, the Chinese pavilion, the fishpond with boxwood clipped into cones and balls set on top of sculpted Italian pottery, a private chapel, the summer house, the “Rest Roundabout” with boxwood sheared into spirals, and the avenue of vases. Lunch was a French culinary delight served, appropriately enough, in the Orangery.

Friday afternoon found us in Sarlat, which became a city in the 8th century. It was the border between the Kings of France and of England during the Hundred Year War. Sarlat has some of the best preserved 14th century buildings in France. It’s authentic “old world charm” makes the city a frequent and natural choice for numerous movie sets.

Friday afternoon brought a tour of *Les jardins suspendus de Marquessac*. Opened to the public in 1997, its story begins in 1692 when Bertrand Vernet, an advisor to the French king during the siege of Sarlat, constructed high walls and four imposing terraces on top of the nearly vertical cliffs. Today the grounds of the château cover 55 acres of magical, unspoiled terrain, crowned with a network of sheared boxwood located 450 feet above the



Marquessac



The sheared hornbeam at Eyrignac.



The boxwood walk at Marquessac.



Marqueyssac is along to top of this entire mountain ridge.



The large sheared boxwood garden at the entrance to Marqueyssac.



Even the steep cliffs leading to the heights of Marqueyssac have thousands of carefully sheared boxwood.

valley floor. It was in the second half of the 19th century that Julien de Cerval gave the site its current appearance by planting tens of thousands of boxwood trees and shrubs. The garden was intensively renovated in 1996 by Kléber Rossillon who managed more than 80 different contracting firms and a team of 10 gardeners. The devotion of this man to the preservation and sharing of this garden is as inspiring as the garden itself.



A gardener edging the box at Marqueyssac.

It was Kléber Rossillon himself who delighted in giving us a private tour of a world-class boxwood garden! Rossillon showed and explained every feature of the boxwood gardens to us which included: dry-stone huts, waterfalls, the Esplanade, the Grand Alley, the cliff walk, the upper walk, and the Belvedere with its unrivaled overlook of the renowned "Valley of the Châteaux" 425 feet above the Dordogne River.



Kléber Rossillon, the owner of Marqueyssac, led the tour.

It is estimated that there are currently more than 150,000 boxwood plants in Marqueyssac. The recent renovation of Marqueyssac necessitated the removal of some boxwood and severe pruning of many others. This resulted in a large volume of boxwood timber. Thus a turner's workshop was constructed to take this wood and create a rich variety of delightful boxwood artifacts.



Patrick Salembier taking a photograph of his wife, Veronique, in the boxwood garden at Marqueyssac.



A walking path at Marqueyssac.



A few examples of boxwood artifacts created from the boxwood at Marqueyssac.



Château Lacoste



The formal boxwood garden at the Château Lacoste.

The 150,000 annual visitors to Marquessac are comfortably served by a restaurant, a tea-room, a large gift shop, and a library. In the summer on Thursday nights, thousands of candles illuminate the walkways which are enlivened by a quartet. Our group, as dusk approached, was treated to a private champagne reception.

While it seemed as if nothing more could possibly be crammed into

such an exciting and full day, we were treated to dinner in the town of Domme. Domme is a walled city, built in the 13th century, with fortified gates and towers which were, at one time, used as a prison. Located atop the towering cliffs, Domme overlooks a unique and vast panorama of the Dordogne valley in southern France. It is no wonder that Domme is listed as among the most beautiful villages of France. This 13th century setting with its traditional French feast which included appetizers, numerous entrées, various wines, and desserts, was an exceptional banquet on a scale which defies description for fear of diminishing some part of this experience.



The Boxwood Registrar, Lynn R. Batdorf, is recognized by the EBTS- France during their Annual General Meeting at the Château Lacoste.

On Saturday morning, May 10, we were off once again, this time to the Château Lacoste. The Marquis de Sade (1740-1814) inherited Lacoste from his father's family. It is a pinnacle of gray fieldstone which commands breathtaking views of the Vaucluse. It sits on a two-acre plateau and still retains its moat, parts of its walls and ramparts. It is still one of the most romantic sites in France. In Sade's era, there were about 350 residents in the 42 rooms of Lacoste. A passionate gardener, Sade oversaw the planting of a labyrinth of evergreens and groves of fruit trees. In 1792, when the French Revolution took a radical turn, La-



The Chartreuse de Conty



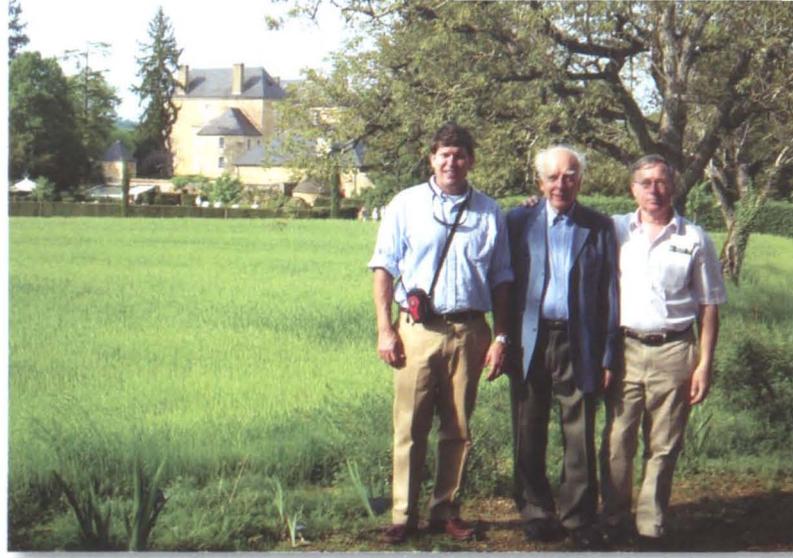
The entrance courtyard to the Château Vuyrignac.



An Italian inspired garden at Veyrignac.



A private garden at Veyrignac.



(L to R) W. Edward Goode, Jr., Jean-Yves Haberer and Lynn Batdorf at Veyrignac.



The rear garden at the Chateau Veyrignac.



A view up to the overlook at Veyrignac.



One of the many intimate gardens at Veyrignac.

coste was sacked, almost to the ground – the ruins which we were able to see are in part the result of this ransacking.

The Château Lacoste was also the site for the Annual General Meeting of the European Boxwood and Topiary Society – France. After the meeting the current owner of the Château Lacoste joined us in an elegant buffet-style lunch. Afterwards the EBTS asked Lynn R. Batdorf, the International Cultivar Registration Authority for *Buxus* to speak to the assembly.

Then we were off through more of the southern France countryside to tour the Chartreuse de Conty, a typical château built in the 18th century, which was previously surrounded by a vineyard. In 1927, Maurice Savary bought Conty château which was soon surrounded by a Tuscan-inspired garden. On both sides of the main Italian path with its cypress, Indian lilacs, ancient roses, and geranium pots are various flowering and fragrant shrubs located throughout the turfgrass. A medieval vegetable garden, rock garden, and a path with rose laurels add charm to the center of this garden.

Next we toured the Château Veyrignac with its large formal gardens. We were greeted with a cham-

pagne reception and a magnificent view of the river. The property was so large that the two hour tour was barely long enough to see the intensive gardens.

At the Château de Caudon we were greeted by the owner, Marquis de Maleville. He explained that the gardens have an English-Chinese inspiration and were created between 1808 and 1814. The property has remained in the same family since it was first built. There is a large vegetable garden, a large English-style boxwood garden, a park, and a beautiful, small monolithic chapel.

We toured the gardens at our leisure, then we entered the grotto where we were served a candle-lit dinner. Afterwards we were entertained with an auction which included boxwood plants, books, and garden tools.

The end of the auction marked the end of the Annual General Meeting for



Eddie Goode (L) and Lynn Batdorf (R) enjoy a game of chess at Veyrignac.



The Eiffel Tower



A view of Paris from atop the Eiffel Tower.



The Orangerie at the Gardens of Versailles.



The main axis at the Gardens of Versailles.

the European Boxwood and Topiary Society – France. On Sunday May 11, the Americans were treated to a three day post tour which began with a drive back to Paris. We arrived in time to enjoy a sightseeing tour of Paris which culminated in a visit to the Eiffel tower. The Eiffel Tower is a global icon of France and is one of the most recognizable structures in the world — no visit to France can be considered complete without visiting it. When the Eiffel Tower was completed in 1889 it was the world's tallest tower. Standing at 1,063 feet it is equivalent to about an 81 story office building. It offers a

breathtaking and unhindered view of the entire city of Paris.

The Eiffel Tower is located next to the Seine River which was our next destination — a three hour boat tour with dinner on the Seine. We were treated to another well-prepared French dinner, superb wine, and engaging conversation with our French hosts while enjoying the view of the world-famous Paris monuments.

Monday, May 12 was a very special day reserved to tour the gardens of the Château de Versailles. Versailles is the consummate symbol of sovereign power. During its construction, everything about it was designed and built with this singular goal in mind. From the crown of a hill with a view extending into infinity, a king whose power was bestowed by God governed a France which was, at the time, the pre-eminent European power. In this era it was Louis XIV who was largely responsible for transforming a country hunting lodge built by his father. In a series of four major and distinct building campaigns, the château had largely taken on the appearance which it retains today.

From 1682 to 1879 Versailles was,



(L to R) Patrick Salembier (President of the EBTS – France), Joël Cottin (chief gardener of the Arboretum at Versailles), Lynn Batdorf (Int'l Boxwood Registrar)



Joel Cottin turned on the fountains in one garden at Versailles exclusively for our group to enjoy.



A dinner boat cruise through Paris on the Seine River.



English Boxwood along a retaining wall near a large fountain in Versailles.



The Baths of Apollo; (LtoR) rearing horses by Marsy, Apollo attended by Nereids, horses at rest by Guerin. This garden was closed to the public.



The Bosquet of the Ballroom, or Bosquet of the Shellwork, created by Le Nôtre in 1680.



The group at the gate to the Orangery with one of the Stairways of the Hundred Steps in the background.

with a few small exceptions, the unofficial capital city of the kingdom of France. Versailles lost its role of capitol city during the French Revolution in 1789. The château, stripped of furniture and ornaments, was abandoned. In 1837, King Louis-Philippe preserved Versailles by establishing it as a National Museum dedicated to “all the glories of France.” World War I ended with the Treaty of Versailles. With expanding suburbs Paris has absorbed Versailles and it is a large suburban city in the metropolitan area of Paris. Its role as an administrative and judicial center was clearly established in the 1960s and 1970s and today it is the main center of the western suburbs of Paris.

This acclaimed history made for a very special visit to the gardens of Ver-

sailles. It was all the more special when our group was given a private guided tour of the most noteworthy features of the gardens at Versailles by Joël Cottin, *jardinier en chef du Arboretum* (chief gardener of the Arboretum) *Château de Versailles*. Joël Cottin, the consummate host, had fountains turned on exclusively for our group, opened gardens which were closed to the public, and explained everything with great detail and enthusiasm. Then we joined Joël Cottin in his private office for a Champagne reception and box lunch — something that only the French can successfully accomplish. Then the greatest and most pleasant surprise of this exciting tour by our gracious and attentive hosts occurred when Joël Cottin asked if we wished



A champagne reception in the courtyard for the office of the head gardener of Versailles.

to tour the Palace. We knew this wasn't possible as the day was a national holiday and the Palace of Versailles was closed to everyone. Nevertheless, our group gained exclusive admittance and enjoyed the privilege of a



The Chapel at Versailles. The ceiling (partly visible) was painted in 1708.



Martine Higonnet and Edward Goode Jr admire the beauty of the Palace of Versailles.



A French box lunch was served in the chief gardener's office. This fabulous treat could never be confused with any box lunch served in America.



The famous Hall of Mirrors at Versailles constructed by Hardouin-Mansart and Le Brun between 1678 and 1686.



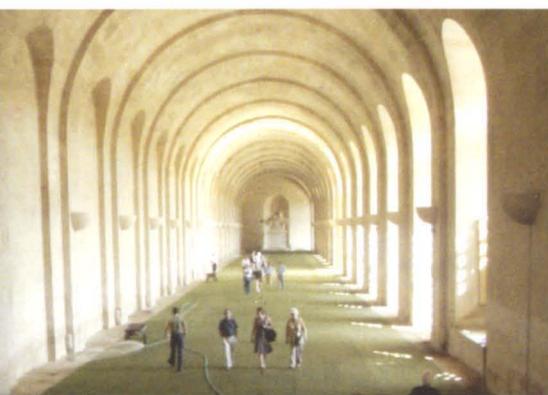
(L to R) Patrick Salembier, Joël Cottin, and Lynn Batdorf with French and American flags in the background enjoy a champagne toast.



The Gallery of Battles, with 33 paintings, at Versailles. Constructed in 1833-1834.



Left: Joël Cottin and Kristen Goode take an 18th century cart for a test drive in the Orangery at Versailles.



A portion of the great Halls in the Orangery at Versailles.

The patrons are a who's who and include: 19th century Brillat Savarin, the author of the *Psychology Of Taste* (1826), Musset, George Sand, Chateaubriand, Madame Récamier, among others, also went to *A La Petite Chaise*. In the 20th century, the artists and people of the theater made *A La Petite Chaise* their favorite place to go after their performances. Eve Lavallière and other high society celebrities from Montmartre and other cities would have eloquent writing circles. François Mitterrand, when he was a student at the school of political sciences, made *A La Petite Chaise* his favorite place to spend his free time.

This historical Paris landmark restaurant prepared a unique meal with a custom menu which was prepared specifically for our visit. It is worth mentioning this small detail as it is representative of our entire 7-day tour through southern France. This grand tour required more than a year to plan and involved hundreds of logistical considerations. Every detail no matter how small was carefully attended to. Certainly our hosts' only consideration was to be what the French are so well known for — the best hosts in the world!

All too quickly, Tuesday May 13 arrived and we were taken to Charles de Gaulle International airport for our return flight. With heartfelt appreciation we left our generous and considerate hosts while discussing numerous opportunities for even more French/American interaction in the future.

privately-guided tour by Joël Cottin through the Palace of Versailles. This was completed with a tour through the Orangery which is flanked by the two great Stairways of the Hundred Steps.

Our last night in France found us at the oldest restaurant in Paris, *A La Petite Chaise*, or "The Little House". The construction of this restaurant dates back to 1610. In 1680, Georges Rameau had a wine store, a business that is still in operation today. The gate outside, with its sign attached, which was constructed during that period, confirms the existence of the wine store. In fact, a royal edict made it obligatory for the wine traders to protect their establishments with gates. With this information, one can affirm that it is the oldest restaurant in Paris.



The Question Box

Q: I found 4 boxwood plants over 7' tall and got some seeds from the plants. Will they grow from seeds or do I need to take cuttings?

A: Boxwood will grow from seed, but it is a long slow process. Taking cuttings will save several years. Attached is an excerpt from the *Boxwood Handbook – A Practical Guide to Knowing and Growing Boxwood* by Lynn R. Batdorf.

*Q: Our historical society maintains a colonial style herb garden enclosed with boxwood which is about 30 years old. We have recently noticed a problem with the boxwood turning bronze and have been told that the problem is *Volutella* due to the density of our plants. One of the local garden centers suggested that we contact your Society to help us with this problem. What can you suggest to us to solve this problem?*

A: Yes, dense foliage is the primary cause of *Volutella*. However, *Volutella* can not cause bronze foliage (it causes straw-colored foliage).

The bronze foliage a sign of cultural stress which can include: improper, or lack of, mulch; the soil pH being too low; too much exposure from either the sun or winter wind. There are dozens of other causes, but these are the most common. The most common mistake is when warm weather approaches in the spring the foliage will return to a green color and most gardeners incorrectly assume the problem is gone. Unfortunately, the plant is still stressed, it just doesn't have the additional stress inducing factor of cold.

While you don't say, I assume we're discussing English boxwood. If so, please realize it is essential to thin the foliage at least every two years in November or December. The thinning will maintain air circulation through the interior of the plant and will help discourage *Volutella* and other boxwood disease.

Q: I planted 12 boxwood and one by one they are dying. The top leaves start to wilt and it then it affects the entire shrub.

On some shrubs only half of it has died off. Can you tell me what the problem might be. I have watered and fertilized on a regular basis.

A: If you could send a photo, we might be able to tell more. Please send a close-up and an overall view. What size are your plants, what type and how much fertilizer have you been using?

Q: I am looking for information on the dwarf varieties of boxwood because I have a small garden and I can't seem to find it. Can you tell me some of the smallest varieties to look for and sources to buy them. Perhaps my local nurseries will have them here. But on my inquiries regarding them, I have gotten different botanical names. I live in Wichita, Kansas which is Zone 5.

A: With considering both your USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 5, and the size restriction of only dwarf boxwood, the choice is easy. *Buxus microphylla* 'Compacta' (aka 'Kingsville Dwarf') is the only boxwood for you. If you were Zone 6, it would add a few more possibilities. Please remember, your hot, dry and humid summers can be as much a limiting site factor as your cold winters. Also, when selecting a location for your box, protect it on both the south and western sides to reduce the damaging effects of the sun and wind. Any garden center, or nursery, near you, should be able to locate wholesalers and growers that have this plant.

Q: I've heard boxwood is helpful with hair loss. Is this correct and how would it be used?

A: Boxwood have many proven alkaloids, a few have experimental medicinal uses. However, we can assure you, there is no proven use associated with boxwood for hair loss on either animals or humans. With our chemotaxonomy understanding of the various boxwood species, one can only be highly skeptical of such a claim. The use of boxwood is strongly discouraged for this or any other treatment.

Please be aware that buxine and cyclobuxine, two alkaloids present in boxwood in large quantities, are toxic to humans (when ingested). This has caused vomiting, convulsions, and even death through respiratory failure.

Q: I have a family that wishes to give to the non-profit I direct a container and boxwoods to place outside our front door on Martin St, here in Martinsburg, West Virginia. Would you recommend a container it should be rectangular, how many and what kind of boxwoods would best grow in it at that location (south side of building), and companion plantings (Ivy?). As this organization is related to George Washington and his family plants familiar to him would be appreciated. Also, can the container and plants be found? We have budget of \$300.00.

A: Boxwood roots grow extremely wide and very shallow. Thus, while the shape of the container isn't important, its dimensions and size are. It must be very wide and at least 30 gallons in size. A light color of the container is important to reduce the effects of sunlight and heat.

Having a southern exposure will greatly injure and kill many roots as the soil will quickly warm from the many hours of being exposed to direct sunlight. Boxwood roots stop growing when subjected to temps in the upper 80's and die at low 90s. Also, the wide daily temperature changes will damage the roots. Just as important, the soil moisture in containers experience rapid and severe changes which again, are not beneficial to box roots.

When highly stressed from these temperature and moisture changes, the growth slows dramatically. Also, box in containers are far more susceptible to rapid and severe pest infestations.

So, having said all that, if you're still interested, box in containers can be successfully grown — they just take a lot of monitoring for the above conditions. Don't forget to maintain a high soil pH (6.7 to 7.5) and use moderate to light applications of a very slow release fertilizer.

While using companion plants with the boxwood may give a nice appearance, they take water and nutrients that would otherwise be available to the box. As an alternative, I would suggest you plant the box alone, and place additional smaller containers near the box container, which would allow a frequent rotation of colorful and seasonal plants (pansies, spring bulbs, summer annuals, mums, cabbage & kale, cut holiday greens). They will also shade the box roots and provide important protection.

While there is much to consider, requiring vigilant care, it can be quite successful and very attractive.

Q: We received numerous small boxwood with gold margins last spring, supposedly B. 'Green Gem'. It could also be Buxus sempervirens 'Marginata' (Flint '97), Buxus variegata (Dirr '98), magnesium deficiency (Sheridan Nursery), phosphorus deficiency. (my first thought), or herbicide (Prodiamine applied to some/all plants 1 May; plants arrived 10 May or sooner). Maybe I could send someone who has/grows Buxus sempervirens 'Marginata' a few branches?

Subsequently I saw the same bright yellow leaf margins on boxwood at two boxwood booths I visited at the Boston trade show. I saw one boxwood, species and cultivar not stated, from a large California grower. Their salesman said it was magnesium deficiency, which is what another nursery said last year. I also saw a Buxus 'Green Velvet' — their grower said every boxwood under overhead irrigation from Oregon has it. A call to that Oregon nursery said the same, however it doesn't happen with drip irrigation when air temperature is in the 90s and they to water all day long. Some customers like this "variegation", others don't. He suggested to me the plants' inability to take up nutrient due to lack of transpiration, which happens with calcium, or leaching of nutrients. It was on all the plants with a small, young hedge outside the office of a big New Jersey nursery. I observed it on boxwood in two small planters at a market in downtown Boston as well as a landscape in downtown Boston.

A: We first became aware of this 10 or 15 years ago. While location it not responsible, it is most common on the west coast. Generally, it is a function of low soil pH. Boxwood require a soil pH between 6.7 and 7.5. Soil-less soil mix used by growers is well-drained (a function that is well understood), but the pH tends to be near 5.0. Below 6.0, phospho-

rus and magnesium become increasingly unavailable to the plant. These nutrients may (or may not) be present in the soil. At the lower pH the plant can't assimilate these nutrients.

Thus, the orange or gold-tipped leaves are the result of actual magnesium deficiency or more likely, the inability of the plant to uptake this nutrient. Thus, the leaves with a tan-colored margin are the result of actual phosphorous deficiency or more likely, the inability of the plant to uptake this nutrient.

Regarding the observation of overhead irrigation causing (or not causing) the discolored foliage, this is unlikely to be primarily responsible. However, if heavily watered with a low pH, then yes this will contribute to the discolored leaves. Also, some areas have water with high (some so high as to be toxic) boron levels. Levels exceeding 0.5 ppm can cause injury similar to what you've noticed. Further, because high sodium levels can also cause this, the electrical conductivity must be under 0.75 dS/m for optimal boxwood health.

Q: I live in Connecticut and have planted American boxwood a few years ago. They all seem to be doing fine until recently. Many are showing signs of stress. We just finished a brief hot spell. However, it has been a usual summer (warm and humid). I have been watering at least once a week. I am not sure if the stress is derived from insects/disease or lack of moisture. Should I increase my watering or apply fertilizer or do something else. Please advise, I don't want to lose these beautiful shrubs.

A: There may be a variety or biotic and abiotic factors involved. If you have mulched you box, it is unlikely that a dry soil is a factor. However, to be sure, dig a small hole at the edge of the dripline (the outer edge of the branches) to determine if the soil is dry and water is needed.

Fertilizer may or may not be necessary — only a soil test can determine if it is necessary. It will also indicate what type and the amount to use — all valuable information. If fertilization is necessary, apply it only in the fall, never spring.

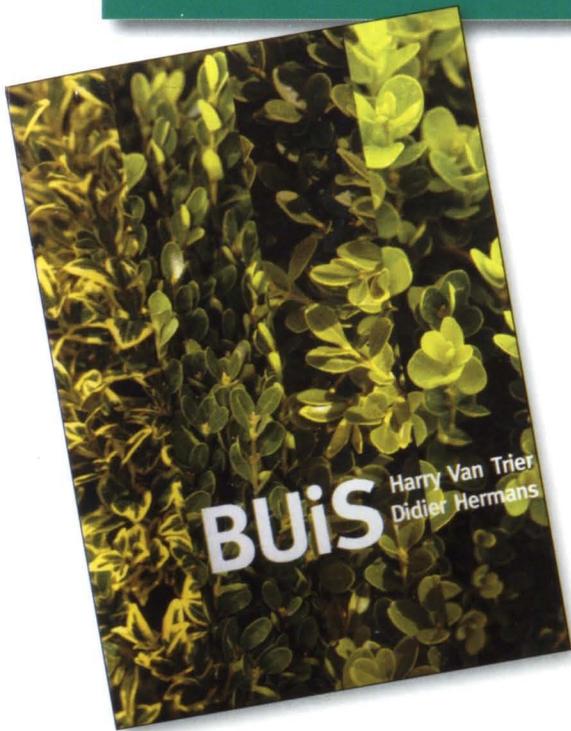
As far as the chance of any pests or diseases, there are various signs and symptoms to determine their presence. More detailed information regarding the plant is necessary to make a proper determination. Please refer to chapters 6 and 7 of the *Boxwood Handbook* for specific instructions.

Future Annual ABS Meetings

- ❖ Spring 2009 – Atlanta, GA
- ❖ Fall 2010 – Newark, OH
- ❖ Spring 2011 – Boyce, VA
ABS 50th Anniversary
- ❖ Spring 2012 – Charleston, SC
- ❖ Spring 2013 – Williamsburg, VA



THE BOXWOOD BOOKSHELF



Buis was written by Harry van Trier (a biologist at the Kalmthout Arboretum in Belgium) and Didier Hermans (a boxwood specialist). Published in March 2007, by Actes Sud in France, it is an over-sized 10" by 13 1/4" hard bound book with dust jacket having 143 pages with 197 large-sized color photographs.

The numerous large well chosen high quality photographs suggest a pretty coffee table book with minimal text, which fails to inform the reader. This is not the case with *Buis*, the French word for "boxwood". While those fluent only in English might consider attempting to read a book written in French to be a substantial hindrance, it is not difficult to "read between the lines" and follow the ample engaging and informative text which will easily appeal to the most discriminating boxwood professional or enthusiast.

Buis begins by presenting the history, religion and customs of *buis*. It

also touches on both the medicinal and commercial uses of boxwood.

The next section, titled, "On origins and botanical nomenclature" presents a brief overview of the genera then moves on to a good description of eight different temperate (or nearly so) *Buxus* species. Next is a section which illustrates how to display *buis* in the garden in a variety of situations, as a hedge or topiary, and finally as a single specimen. A though discussion of commercial propagation and production is presented in the next 12 pages.

Europeans prefer to clip and shear their *buis* and this book, as in other European boxwood books, gives considerable space to the mechanics of this task. Then, the next four pages discuss commercial fertilization with emphasis on five different macro- and micro-nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium and magnesium). Diseases and pests are given a brief introduction.

The real strength of *Buis* is in the next, and largest, section entitled cultivars where 47 different cultivars are described in 34 pages. Each entry is given three photographs: the first has a one leaf at actual size; the second shows a branch illustrating either one or two years' growth; and the third shows a young shrub. The text varies for each entry and may include: a written description of the shrub, description of the leaf, history, citation and synonyms.

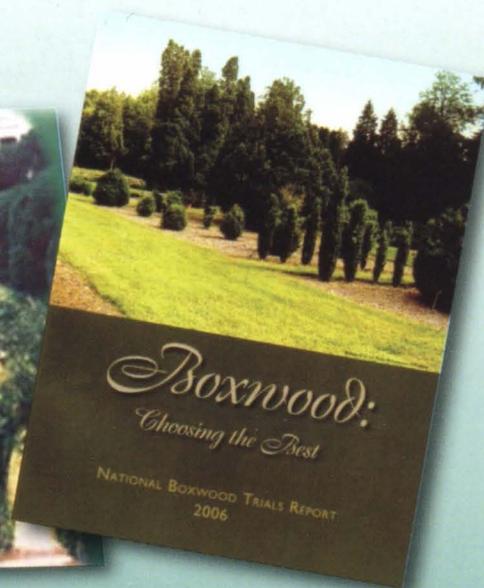
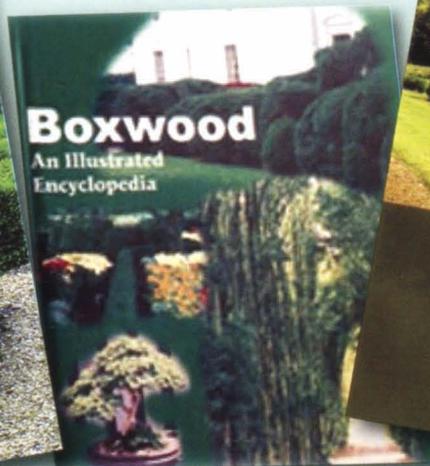
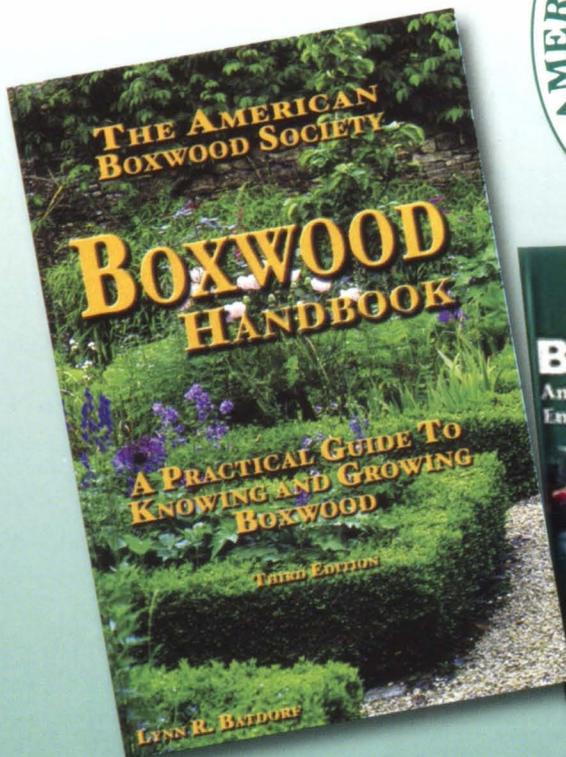
Buis finishes with an index of the species, cultivars, pests and diseases; a bibliography and a list of website addresses for boxwood societies and for Belgian and German nurseries.

It is easy to appreciate all of the photographs taken by Hugo Maertens, each one are both interesting and informative. I like each photograph and I found myself continually picking up the book to reexamine the photographs for fear that I might have overlooked a small detail in one of them. I also like the well-chosen matte finish paper which is thick, but not stiff. Even with the attractive dust jacket removed, the dark green hardback book is nicely embossed with silver on the spine and imprinted on the cover.

Buis was released a little more than one year ago and is very easy to obtain. In less than five minutes, using Amazon.fr I had successfully ordered my copy, for 40.5 Euros including postage, which arrived 10 calendar days later!

Lynn R. Batdorf





Order Now! Essential Boxwood Reading – See Details on Page 14.

The American Boxwood Society gratefully acknowledges the generous donations made by the following individuals in the 2007 Annual Giving Fund!

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