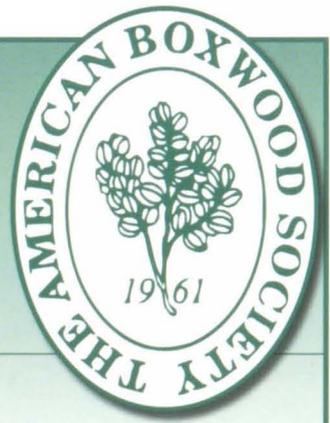


THE BOXWOOD BULLETIN



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

Vol. 49 No. 4

April 2010



*Historic
Garden Week
April 17-25, 2010*

The gardens of the Mount Sharon estate, gracing the cover of the Historic Garden Week in Virginia guidebook this year, are among the most beautiful landscapes on the East Coast. Mount Sharon will be a highlight of the tour in Orange County on April 17.

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 *Buxus*. Visit our website at:

www.boxwoodsociety.org

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Boxwood: Choosing the Best \$ 25

Boxwood Buyer's Guide (5th Edition) \$ 10

Int'l Registration List of Cultivated Buxus \$ 5

Back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* (each) \$ 10

The Boxwood Bulletin Index 1961-1986 \$ 10

The Boxwood Bulletin Index 1986-1991 \$ 5

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Annual membership from May through April includes four issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Dues paid after Jan. 1 to April 30 are applied to the upcoming May membership. Dues paid after May 1 receive partial year with no credit. Members outside the U.S. add US\$15 to any membership category.

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Monetary gifts to the Society are tax deductible and may be applied to:

General Operations Publications Fund
Memorial Garden Fund Research Programs

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American Boxwood Society

P.O. Box 85

Boyce, VA 22620-0085

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Be part of *The Boxwood Bulletin*! Submit an article, photograph, question, idea or report of your own experience.

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THE AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

PLEASE RENEW YOUR AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY (ABS) MEMBERSHIP

Spring is in the air and it is time to think about boxwood again. Please renew your ABS membership this month. If you are a life member, please disregard this request but notice our improvements.

ABS membership provides you with the following benefits:

- Quarterly Bulletins with very useful information on boxwood
- Regional activities such as local flower shows or lectures
- Annual meeting/ Symposium which proves to be very educational & fun
- Website with valuable information and links to other boxwood groups around the world

New this year

- We will be working to improve our Website
- For members we will be emailing you seasonal E-News letters with boxwood tips: pruning, when and what to watch for with pests/diseases, how to deal with them, selecting plants for different conditions, boxwood trivia, container/topiary tips, seasonal decorating tips, etc.

We continue to make major strides each year as an organization. Our website is running very smoothly and we will continue to improve and add more features which can be accessed only by members. For this feature we will require your telephone number and email address.

We would like to impress upon you, that if you renew within the next two months you will not miss a single issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin* **IT IS STILL QUARTERLY**

You can renew your membership on line with a credit card plus you can order books and ask questions. Please encourage any of your friends that you think would be interested in ABS to look at our website and become a member. Go to www.boxwoodsociety.org.

Best wishes for beautiful and bountiful boxwood in 2010-2011!

Sincerely,

Andrea Filippone
ABS Membership Chair
www.boxwoodsociety.org



www.boxwoodsociety.org

Membership Renewal

*Please print out and mail to American Boxwood Society
P.O. Box 85 Boyce, Va. 22620-0085*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____

e-mail: _____

Home Phone: _____ Office Phone: _____

Occupation: _____

** no membership information will be distributed, it is only for ABS use.*

Membership Levels:

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|--------------------|---------|
| Individual..... | \$35 |
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| Contributing | \$75 |
| Sustaining..... | \$100 |
| Life..... | \$1,000 |

**Membership in the
American Boxwood Society
runs annually May 1
through April 30**

Non-member subscriptions for groups and institutions, such as botanic gardens and horticultural libraries, are \$35 by the calendar year as established or current year for new subscriptions.

Please make checks payable to the American Boxwood Society

Mail to:

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Or visit our Website www.boxwoodsociety.org and pay online with your credit card.

Thank you

Historic Garden Week in Virginia

77th Season Opens April 17–25, 2010

By Suzanne Munson

Executive Director, Historic Garden Week

Once again, members of Garden Club of Virginia will open some of the state's most beautiful private gardens and homes during Historic Garden Week, April 17-25, to benefit historic preservation.

Celebrating 77 years of operation this year, Historic Garden Week in Virginia is the oldest and largest statewide program of its kind in the nation. Tours have been held annually since 1929, except for a period during World War II, and have raised more than \$15 million over the decades. Proceeds benefit the restoration of important historic gardens and landscapes throughout the Commonwealth.

Please visit the Tour Highlights pages of www.VAGardenweek.org for a preview of some of the outstanding properties featured this year, especially the "Glorious Gardens" and "Gardeners' Gardens" sections. Details about each tour are attached to the Schedule page by event name. The same information is provided in the 200-page Garden Week guidebook, available with a \$6 donation to Historic Garden Week, 12 East Franklin St., Richmond, VA 23219.

One of the most magnificent gardens on the East Coast, Mount Sharon in Orange County, will be open for public visiting on April 17. Owners Mary Lou and Charles Seilheimer collaborated with Virginia landscape architect Charles J. Stick in a five-year project to produce ten unique but integrated gardens, occupying ten acres on a hilltop with wonderful views of mountains and valleys on all sides. Individual spaces materi-



The gardens of Mount Sharon

alize magically through openings in a 450-foot tunnel of 100-year-old American boxwood. Some of these spaces take inspiration from signature gardens in the United States and Europe. The overall effect is a sophisticated blend of historic Virginia with European overtones. Pavilions, fountains, pergolas and statuary, like fine furniture, tastefully punctuate the "rooms." The gardens periodically reveal 60-mile vistas of the surrounding Piedmont countryside from the second highest elevation in Orange County.

Although numerous landscapes featured this year include old and lovely boxwood plantings, one property of special note is Nicola, a highlight of the Friendly Country Homes and Gardens tour in Albemarle County, April 18 and 19. Nicola is a working cattle farm that has been the home of Mary and

Byrd Leavell for 40 years and reflects their love of boxwood. The owners have propagated and placed several thousand English box bushes in various garden areas. The main garden was started in 2000 and contains 700 English boxwood. The nursery, where box plants are propagated, is nearby. Along the driveway are newly planted boxwood rope gardens that have been filled with deer-resistant plants. One section is a bountiful herb garden enjoyed by the owners. Scattered around the gardens is a hardy primrose that has been propagated from a single plant.

These are just two of the many landscape treats in store for Garden Week guests this year. Please take a few minutes to read the guidebook and browse through our website as you make your travel plans, for a thoroughly enjoyable springtime outing in Virginia's beautiful countryside.



A rousing rendition of Patrick Henry's, Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death, speech will be reenacted at Richmond's St. John's Church on April 21.



Middle Peninsula Tour

April 23, 2010

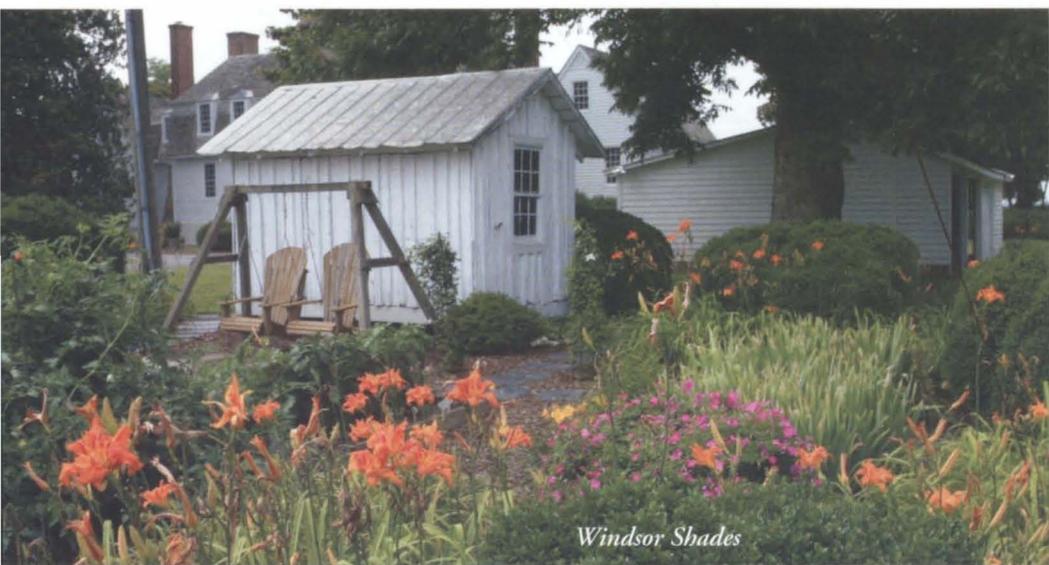
Historic Garden Week

WINDSOR SHADES, 1685 Sweet Hall Rd., West Point, 23181. From West Point: Rte 30W/33: Take Rte 30W for 7.5 mi., left on Rte 634/Sweet Hall Rd. 1.7 mi. From Wakema: right on Rte 640/Wakema Rd. 1 mi., left on Rte 626/Rose Garden Rd. 1.1 mi., left on Rte 30E. 3.8 mi., right on Rte 634/ Sweet Hall Rd. 1.7 mi. Augustine Claiborne built Windsor Shades circa 1745 on the Pamunkey

River. In 1753, a ferry was established to New Kent which ran until 1927. Subsequent owners used the house as a tavern/inn for travelers from northern Virginia going to Williamsburg. Some of the more notable guests included the Marquis de Lafayette and George Washington. The English basement tavern room houses one of the largest fireplaces in Virginia.

Today the house, a Virginia Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has been meticulously restored. Two new wings have been

added with the guidance of an architect associated with restoration projects in Colonial Williamsburg. The house retains much of the original 18th century woodwork, and rooms are filled with 18th and 19th century antiques. Cases in the upstairs hallway display Colonial and Native American artifacts found on the property. The grounds and 80-year-old outbuildings have been lovingly brought to life with beautiful formal and informal gardens. A boxwood maze stands to one side of the home while magnolia, pecan and crape myrtle trees shade it. Open for garden tour for the first time for Historic Garden Week by Mr. and Mrs. Carl R. Fischer.



Edward Scissorhands at the Lincoln Memorial

by Porter Briggs

Most days I like to go for a run or a walk at lunch. It breaks up the day and then makes the afternoon fresh like the morning. I lived in Los Angeles, New York, and now Washington and I have always found some route that took me by pleasant sites. Once I located my path, I would run the same course every day.

In 2005, my business was located in Georgetown in Washington, DC. I would run along the Potomac River, by the Watergate, the Kennedy Center, the Lincoln Memorial, cross the Potomac on Memorial Bridge, pass Arlington Cemetery, then over Key Bridge back into Georgetown.

It was a perfect route with lovely sites and no traffic. The highlight was the Lincoln Memorial, the most beautiful monument in the world, memorializing Lincoln, the greatest single public figure in history. My eyes would always linger for a few extra seconds on the elegant simplicity of the Memorial.

Gradually over the months, I realized something was amiss. The boxwood plants were neglected. Dozens of English boxwood were covered with vines. The neglect was especially painful to me because I know and love the plant - *Buxus sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'.

Virginia is an old state. Everything there seems older than anywhere else. It's encrusted with age and it's set in its ways. There are dozens of small clubs and societies that revere its past - my favorite is the Society for the Preserva-

tion of Virginia Antiquities. Fifteen years earlier I had belonged to another Virginia cult, The American Boxwood Society. Its name says "American" but to me, its soul rests solidly in Virginia.

In 1990, I had left Wall Street and Manhattan and moved to Orange County, Virginia, one of the counties in what is still today, Old Virginia. Orange County used to include present day Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and West Virginia, and is still home to some of the finest 18th Century estates, most of which have dozens of boxwood. Montpelier, the home of James Madison, has probably two hundred.

I was involved in a business venture outside of Fredericksburg, Virginia to build a large industrial scale greenhouse next to a power plant that was going to heat it. The facility had to secure over 20 permits from various governments, and I would sometimes wait months for the next one to be issued. During these months of waiting, I learned everything about boxwood and eventually started a company, Virginia Boxwood Company, to care for boxwood.

After a year, the Company was caring for boxwood at over 200 estates, homes and public places throughout Virginia and Maryland and employed a Virginia Certified Nurseryman and 14 Mexican laborers. I produced and hosted a boxwood seminar in partnership with the Virginia State Arboretum outside of Winchester, Virginia and



These poison ivy stems sticking out of the plant are what I saw from 200 feet when I ran by the Memorial that caused me to call the Park Service about the neglect of the boxwood. This was taken in November 2006 after the autumn leaves had fallen from the poison ivy. The diameter of the poison ivy vine at the ground was three inches. The damage to the leaves on the canopy from the poison ivy cover can be seen. Also, the plant has grown into the Magnolia and Holly tree in the rear. The vine was tightly wound throughout the boxwood and to remove it, I had to cut out several limbs of the mother plant.



Here are the same shrubs 35 months later. All the poison ivy is long since gone and the new growth is well under way. The plant has been separated from adjacent plants and the ground has been cleared of all debris and weeds—removed by hand by volunteers without using any digging tools under the shrub. We have had no sign of the so-called boxwood "decline."



Here are two groups of shrubs on the north side of the Memorial with damage to the canopy and growth into the adjacent plants. This was the only place we had volunteers contract poison ivy—one of whom was my wife. It took a year and a half to get this under control.



The cloud shapes starting to form nicely. I have shaped them to be viewed from about 200 feet which is the view the public has as they drive eastward across Memorial Bridge from Virginia directly toward the Lincoln Memorial.



This gives an idea of the majestic presence of the boxwood at the Lincoln Memorial. I made this photo when I first started in November 2006. Look at a five dollar bill and the copper penny and the shrubs at the Lincoln Memorial at the bottom of the depiction of the Memorial can be seen. I tell people we cleaned up the \$5 dollar bill and the red cent.

many of the best professional horticulturists from the region attended. Two great boxwood horticulturists, Lynn Batdorf from the National Arboretum, and Dean Norton, from Mount Vernon, lectured on every aspect of Boxwood. I was in the center of things and was learning.

But alas, I knew I would always be an amateur horticulturist specializing only in Boxwood and that my future was limited. So I sold the company and eventually moved to Washington and started another business that I own still today. I left horticulture and boxwood behind.

But then 15 years later, I saw the boxwood at the Lincoln Memorial.

For months as I ran by, I watched to see if anything would be done. The grass was cut but nothing was done about the neglect of the boxwood. Each day as I ran by, I would wonder if I should do something. Would I be intruding—who was I to tell the government how to care for the grounds of the Memorial? Who is in charge of the Lincoln Memorial? The Internet told me the National Park Service (NPS) was in charge and eventually I located Alice McLarty, Landscape Architect for the National Mall. After some understandable caution on her part (she told me later that she wondered if I was an Edward Scissorhands wannabe), she and I agreed to meet at the memorial. Alice explained that they didn't have any one with the specialized skills to take care of the boxwood as I had described it to her. On a complete impulse, I said, "I'll take care of it."

About two weeks later, I met her at the Lincoln Memorial, "The Lincoln" as the NPS employees tend to call it. I showed up in the middle of my lunch-time run in running clothes and was surprised to see Alice and five others: Project Manager, National Capital Region for the Park Service, the Historical Landscape Architect, the Re-

gional Horticulturist, the Grounds Supervisor, and the Volunteer Coordinator. The presence of these five people made me realize how serious they were about the care of the Memorial grounds.

We walked around the Memorial and talked for an hour and a half. I showed them the problems, told them I would correct them and how. When I explained that the boxwood over the next five to seven years would grow back and that, over the years, I would reshape them to look like clouds, everyone was satisfied. They gave me the green light to start the restoration of the boxwood. That was three and a half years ago in November 2006.

The first winter of 2006/2007 was taken up by getting the vines out of the shrubs and thinning the heavily over-



Alice McLarty, Landscape Architect for the National Mall, looked for a place to buy mature boxwood to fill in gaps in missing plants and we visited George Bridge Boxwood Company in Maryland to see their inventory from which Alice and Rob eventually bought American and English boxwood. Here we are on the visit. From the left, Brian Dahl, horticulturist for George Bridge, Lynn Batdorf, Curator of the National Boxwood Collection at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, DC, Alice McLarty, Park Landscape Architect for the National Mall and Memorial Parks, Rob DeFeo, Horticulturist for the National Capital Region of the NPS, and George Bridge, owner of George Bridge Boxwood.



Here I am in December 2006 on my first date with Diane Wilder whom I married two and half years later. She is a hard worker.



This is one of our volunteer groups, the Ritz Carlton Team of Personal Excellence, after three hard hours of removing weeds and English Ivy. We hauled off three truck loads of ivy that day.

grown boxwood. On the west side facing the Memorial Bridge, we removed one poison ivy vine that was three inches thick at its base and covered a boxwood shrub twenty five feet long, 15 feet wide and six feet tall. The next two years were mostly an effort to clean out the shrubs, remove 22 truckloads of vines and weeds that had grown inside and around the boxwood, and slowly start the shaping process. Over a year ago, Lynn Batdorf came to the Lincoln to check what I had done, and to my great relief, he approved.

Coincidentally, the Park Service was beginning the implementation of a plan to rehabilitate the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial to its original design when the Memorial was dedicated in 1922. While I worked on the boxwood, all of the plants other than the boxwood were pruned or removed by Park Service staff and landscape contractors, the ground plane was cleared by volunteers; and Alice and Rob DeFeo, the Park Service regional horticulturist, purchased very large specimen boxwood and other plants to bring the landscape of the memorial to its intended original appearance.

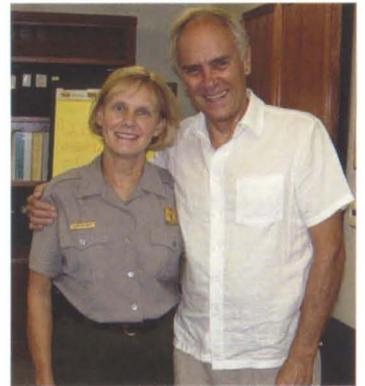
Now, in 2010, after three years, the grounds are nearly as well kept as the White House and the cloud formations are starting to come into focus. The boxwood are thriving, and I had the privilege of proposing to my wife on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. The two blizzards in January/February 2010 did a great deal of damage to some of the plants, boxwood included, but the effort will continue!

The Park Service Volunteer Program Coordinator, Ed Petru, has secured over 100 volunteers to help in the restoration of the grounds, and they have spent a combined 1,250 hours working on the grounds. We have had volunteer groups from Pepperdine University Alumni As-

sociation, The Burgundy Crescent Volunteers, Rotoract, the junior Rotarians, and The Ritz Carlton Hotel.

As we ended one work session with the Ritz Carlton volunteers at noon on a hot Saturday, a black limousine drove up to the parking area, and out came the maitre d' and the chef from the Ritz Carlton, and they served us a gourmet lunch on silver platters on the grounds of "The Lincoln."

It has been a grand adventure...and it continues.



Alice McLarty and me the day the Park Service named me the "Volunteer of the Year."

Porter Briggs owns a business in Washington DC. He lives in the Watergate with his wife where they have a full view of the Lincoln Memorial.



Alice McLarty and Rob DeFeo decided to plant the American in April 2009. Here the George Bridge Boxwood Company staff plant the American boxwood. The shrubs took the transplanting very well. On the advice of Lynn Batdorf, they planted the English boxwood in the winter of 2009.

AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY

50th Boxwood Symposium and Annual Meeting

October 15-16, 2010 • Newark, Ohio

ITINERARY

Thursday, October 14

Arrival at Hotel
5:00-6:30 Registration and
Welcome Reception

Friday, October 15

7:30-8:30 Registration
8:30 Leave for Dawes
Arboretum



Dawes
Arboretum
cypress trees

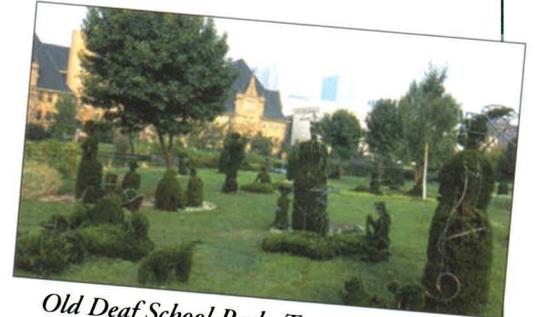


Dawes Arboretum
All Season Garden

9:00 Wagon Tour of
Arboretum
10:15 Visit Boxwood
Collection with
Rich Larson
12:30 Lunch at the
Arboretum, Lynn
Batdorf speaks
1:45 Tour the remainder
of the Arboretum
5:00 Return to Hotel
6:00-6:30 Annual Meeting
6:30-7:30 Cocktails &
Boxwood Auction
8:00 Dinner on your own

Saturday, October 16

8:30 Depart for
Inniswood
9:30 Depart for Franklin
Park Conservatory
11:30 Topiary Garden at
the Deaf School
12:30 Lunch
1:30 Depart for Mission
Oaks
5:30 Return to Hotel
6:30 Leave for Dinner,
Granville Inn,
Granville, OH



Old Deaf School Park, Topiary Garden



Mission Oaks

Hotel

Courtyard Marriott, 500 Highland Boulevard, Newark, Ohio,
42055; 740.344.1800; 1.800.321.2211 reservations

*Please reserve room under American Boxwood Society when making
reservations.*

Room rate is \$85 per night not including room tax.

Breakfast is not included.

*Breakfast is full buffet \$7.00 per person for guests of the hotel registered
under the American Boxwood Society.*

Registration Information

*Registration Fee is \$250 per member and family, \$285 per non member.
Registration Deadline is September 1, 2010.*

Please make checks payable to the AMERICAN BOXWOOD SOCIETY.

Mail to:

Jeff Miller
Boxwood Symposium Registration
383 Coal Hollow Rd.
Christiansburg VA 24073-6721

Register online:

OR www.boxwoodsociety.org



Tropical
Rainforest in
Franklin Park
Conservatory

Ocimum 'Boxwood'

The Burpee company recently released a new basil cultivar. It is of interest as its cultivar name is "Boxwood". This Basil Boxwood is described as having "tight mounds of small leaves that resemble boxwood plants". Burpee notes that it was discovered in a friend's garden on one of the hottest days of August where the plants remained in perfect form, extremely bushy and productive. The tight mounds of small leaves resemble boxwood plants making a highly ornamental edging for the patio or for a container by the kitchen door. Bred in France for a highly flavorful pesto ingredient. A beautiful new basil that makes a fine garden companion. Grows to a height of 12 to 16".

A Burpee exclusive, a packet with 100 seeds is available for \$3.95. Plants are also available at 3 for \$12.50.



Ocimum Boxwood

I referred to my sixth edition of the *International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants* 1995 (which I haven't used in 8 years) to check information for the review of the eighth edition. Inside, I was surprised to rediscover a "Beetle Bailey"



comic strip, which I had saved. It was written by Greg and Mort Walker on Jan 7, in the mid-1980s.

Amos Halftrack. How can any society ask for better publicity?

Lynn R. Batdorf

Of interest to boxwood enthusiasts is the second box where Miss Buxley identifies a *Buxus* 'Green Velvet' in the garden of Brigadier General



The Washington Ballet among the Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa' in the Morrison Azalea Garden at the US National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.

Future Annual ABS Meetings

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

Renew your 2010-2011 membership in the American Boxwood Society today! Please complete the enclosed insert, or visit:
www.boxwoodsociety.org



The Question Box

Q: I am a student intern with the National Park Service working during my time off from school. I was at the Lincoln Memorial taking photos of boxwood damage from the recent snowfall [Editor note: December 2009] and noticed some peculiar patches of foliage on a particular boxwood (*B. sempervirens* 'Suffruticosa'). It occurred in the middle of the shrub, and a few places on the top. I am unsure if the white foliage is a disease or pest. I would appreciate your thoughts on what it could be.



A: The malady you note is neither a pest or disease—it is abiotic. It is the result of the recent cold temperatures with high wind, not the snow. After recent transplanting, with the abridged root system, boxwood is more susceptible to cold injury. In this example, the leaf margins were burned and killed. While unsightly, there is nothing that can be done at this time. Wait until all the damage has an opportunity to present itself and the new growth has made an appearance. Then, if you wish, in late spring or early summer the dead areas can be pruned out.

In a related observation, I note that the foliage is severely overly-thick! To avoid *Macrophoma* and *Volutella* the foliage must be thinned! This is easily done after the new growth in the spring has fully expanded. Please refer to: www.usna.usda.gov/Gardens/faqs/BoxwoodThinning

Q: I was wondering if you may point me in a good direction for diagnosing the problem with this boxwood [page 55]. Along with the brown foliage it has poor color and only about 20% of it had new growth. A picture of close-up foliage will follow. Midday sun on the northwest of house. Picture taken from north east side of plant but whole plant shows same signs. Also it has not seemed to get worse over the last few months.

A: American boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) want to get tall, often mature at 40 to 55 feet tall. Your boxwood are being constantly sheared to keep them a fraction of the size they want to grow. The chronic stress of having its foliage regularly sheared off has exhausted the shrub, thus it can no longer produce new foliage. The lack of foliage can no longer protect the stems and the all-important vascular tissues in the stems are severely damaged from this over-exposure. Further, the shearing has created unorganized and weak branch growth which is never in the best interest of the shrub. The high mite population (and their resulting damage) is further weakening the shrub.

You've got to stop shearing the shrub so often. The shrub also needs a careful and comprehensive renovation pruning. Because the shrub has been constantly sheared, it doesn't know what to do, it needs direction. The entire branching structure needs to be looked at to properly determine which branches stay and which are removed. At this point the damage is severe and it has about a 50% chance of survival. Expect the recovery period to take 3 to 5 years. You've got to control the mite population. Your soil pH must be maintained between 6.8 and 7.5.

Q: I was hoping to clarify your recommendations regarding snow and boxwood. I had understood that brushing



the snow off of boxwood is not advised, as it causes cracking in the cambium, and while these injuries may not be apparent at the time, they will become so once the plant encounters the stresses of summer. I have related your paragraph from the *Boxwood Handbook* (pg.48), but would appreciate a confirmation. We have some branches that continue to be bent down by the snows of December 19, 2009 and my boss is very concerned.

A: Yes, this storm was one for the record books. First the heavy two feet of snow, which bent down the branches. Then, very cold weather keeps the snow from melting even turning it to something like ice. That's what makes this storm a bit unique.

The heavily bent branches are "glued" to the ground—not an exciting proposition. Nevertheless, the only option is to wait it out. Yes, this may result in some damage and injury. However, even done slowly and carefully, removing the snow/ice from these large branches will only result in more severe damage. Patience, and waiting it out is in the best interest of the boxwood.

Q: "American" boxwood is "such" a misleading name, can't we help people use better terminology? So is "English", for that matter. 'Suffruticosa' is simply a cultivar of common box which is Asian in origin. Please help!

A: The recognition of a standardized common name is inherently difficult. Local and colloquial names are continually being created while others are modified or fall into disuse. The time period (era) also results in different applications of common names.

Many, indeed most, ornamental plants do not have a common name that is either accepted or in use. This is

also true of boxwood where only about 8% of the population has a common name. Additionally, because common names are generally not applied uniformly, and often not used at all, their use is indeed confusing.

In referring to your use of American boxwood, this common name can either be applied to all cultivars of *Buxus sempervirens* (with the exclusion of 'Suffruticosa') or it may be applied to *Buxus sempervirens* 'Arborescens'. Which did you have in mind?

Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa' is not of Asian origin. It is native to western and south central Europe, in use there since the second and third centuries. It is one of two boxwood mentioned in *Species Plantarum* by Linnaeus in 1753. Because it has been widely used for so many centuries, it has no less than 29 common names (one of which includes English boxwood) and 15 botanical synonyms.

For all these reasons, I always use botanical names which are more stable and uniform than common names.

Q: The leaves on my English boxwood are turning red and brown. I was wondering what to apply. Typically I give them bone meal and cotton seed meal.

A: The red and brown foliage on your boxwood is a sign of chronic cultural stress which can be caused by a large number of different biotic and abiotic conditions. Without more information, I would be guessing as to the cause of the decline of your box. If you can answer these questions, I can provide better advice:

- can you send close-up photos?
- are the stems red?
- is the foliage normal sized, or is it stunted?
- do you mulch (if so, what type and how thick?)

- do the box receive full sun in winter?
- is poor drainage a possibility?

Boxwood should not be fertilized on a regular basis, even when using organic-based fertilizers such as bone meal or cotton seed meal. A simple soil test will provide valuable information indicating if fertilization is necessary, what type to use, and how much. Of course, if fertilizer is necessary, it ought only be applied only in fall. In general, the correct soil pH for boxwood (6.8 to 7.5) is a far more critical concern than soil fertility.

Q: I am interested in the history (or symbolism) behind tying a sprig of boxwood on a holiday package. I think it has to do with a tradition adopted by the early American Colonists? I am from a Dutch Family that dates back to the settlement in New Amsterdam; near Schenectady, New York. I know that you are very busy, but perhaps you can clarify my memories about this. I am a 67-year-old person and have lousy computer skills, but thought that I would give this a try!! Thank you so much for taking the time to read this.

A: In the Dutch countries, boxwood has been used in many ways. In the most dramatic example, on Easter and during other religious events, the clergy would march in the street. At the front of the procession would always be a young man holding a wooden staff which was topped with a large arrangement of boxwood. In this manner, the young man was clearing the way of evil spirits to prepare for the clergy.

To explain, in Eastern Europe about the 13th century “evil spirits” were believed to be responsible for all human maladies and disease, including malnutrition. Evil spirits were thought to harbor and wait inside shrubs. When an unsuspecting person would walk by, the evil spirits would leap out and attack this person. Even in that era, the very dense and hard properties of boxwood wood were well understood. Today, we know boxwood is twice as dense (hard) as oak. Indeed, most boxwood wood placed in a bucket of water will sink, something most woods cannot do. So, back in the day, town wise men and elders declared that it was not possible for evil spirits to harbor in boxwood because of its dense and resilient properties. It was believed that evil spirits preferred softer woods as this required less effort for them to bore into and wait.

With this newly-discovered medicinal use for boxwood, people began to plant boxwood around their home to protect families from evil spirits. Additionally,

places of business (without garden space to grow boxwood plants) would place a branch of boxwood in each room to protect themselves from the adverse effects of evil spirits.

Finally, to directly address your question, when people exchanged gifts or packages, a small piece of boxwood was tied to the top. This gesture of good will and best wishes also served as a guarantee that the contents were not infiltrated with evil spirits.

Q: I want to join the society in hopes of learning more about boxwood and I am waiting for my membership information to arrive. I have several questions. First, I lost an American boxwood topiary over the fall last year. It was planted in a container and one of a pair. I had several people look at it to advise me on the problem—they were members, and one advised me to remove it from the container and plant it in the ground which I did. Over the winter it died. I am concerned about losing the other now. I wonder what caused the problem and how to prevent it in the remaining topiary, which is verdant green and healthy now.

Secondly, I have five English box next to the back porch (20 to 30 years old). Last year two of them developed some dead spots which turned brown and I cut off leaving holes. What caused this and what can I do to prevent it from happening again?

A: Growing boxwood as a topiary specimen is very stressful to the shrub. Also, growing an American boxwood (which mature at 45 to 55 feet tall) in a container is very stressful. Combined together, these conditions create a near bonsai type environment. Without regular root pruning, exacting watering and temperature control, careful fertilizing, and a host of other labor intensive cultural practices, eventual failure of the shrub is assured.

Regarding the dead spots in your English box. It is mostly likely a fungal disease (*Macrophoma* or *Volutella*). Please do not focus on the dead branches by pruning them out—this will not correct the problem. It is essential to thin the dense foliage, particularly the healthy green portions! Thinning should be done annually with Nov/Dec being the optimal time. Prune out (do not break) branches about six inches in length in the most dense portion of the shrub. Keep doing this until you can just begin to barely see the interior branches.

While you can wait for membership information to arrive, you may also visit the American Boxwood Society website at: www.boxwoodsociety.org to join.

THE BOXWOOD BOOKSHELF

International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (Code) was published by the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS). This eighth edition was released in October 2009. This soft cover book is 7½ inches by 10 1/8 inches with 184 pages. It replaces the seventh edition published in 2002.

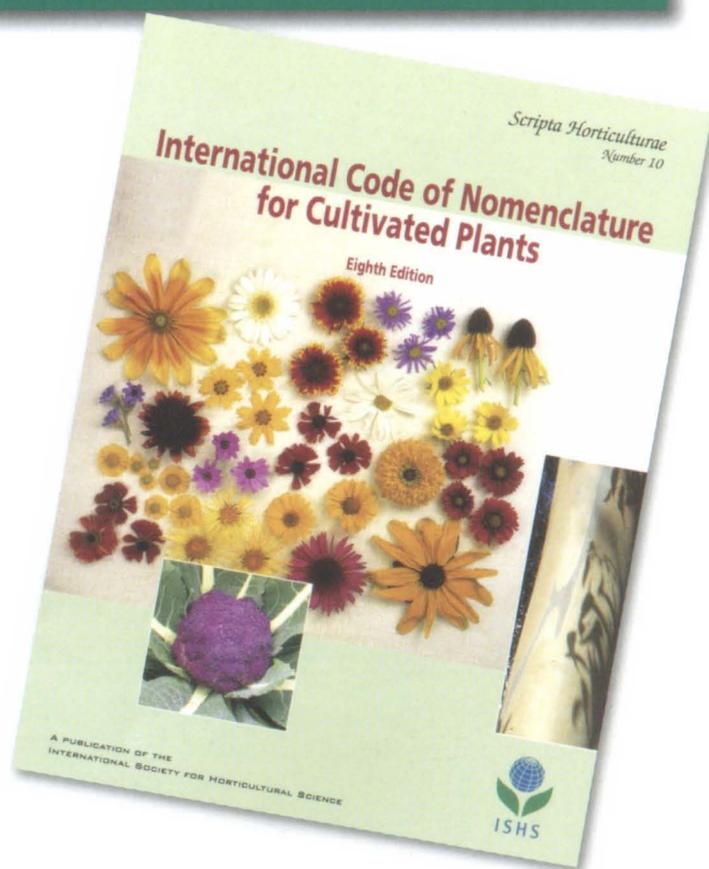
While perhaps of little or no interest to the general gardening public, it is essential to my work as the International Cultivar Registration Authority (ICRA) for *Buxus*—thus, it easily earns the most easily accessible spot on my Boxwood Bookshelf. The *Code* contains the international rules for naming agricultural, forestry, and horticultural plants.

The origins of this new edition lay in the Fifth International Symposium on the Taxonomy of Cultivated Plants held at Wageningen, The Netherlands in October 2007, where International Commission members considered proposed amendments. The proposals were encouraged from ICRA's and interested individuals and organizations culminating in a book of Abstracts which was distributed to attendees and Commission Members.

While the Principles remain largely the same as the 2004 edition of the *Code*, there are three changes of merit. First, it now recognizes all organisms traditionally treated as plants including algae and fungi. Secondly, it recognizes grex as a category in addition to cultivar and group (which will apply only to orchids). Thirdly, trade designations are given greater guidance. As with all previous editions, there are numerous minor clarifications and modifications throughout.

The eighth edition of the *Code* has ten appendices which are very useful. There are three new appendices each of which are a filter for cultivars, groups, or grex respectively. By following the pathway, with its questions and yes and no answers, one can more easily check if an epithet or name is: established, accepted, or rejected. At each step, the appropriate Article within the *Code* is cited for reference—a very useful feature for registrars. (These filters were included in the sixth 1995 *Code*, but omitted from the seventh 2002 *Code*.) In addition, this edition has a glossary and two indexes.

It is of interest to note that the number of ICRA's continues to decline, there are now only 72. Conversely, the number of Statutory Plant Registration Authorities



has now increased to 64. This trend, away from individual (plant society) registrar authorities and more towards statutory registrars, began in the 1990's.

With only 136 authorities who require this reference, it can be surmised that 200 or 300 copies might handily satisfy the demand for the *Code*. Rather, several thousand copies of each edition are distributed and used by a vast audience of professionals including: taxonomists, government organizations, trademark consultants, plantmen, the nursery industry, propagators, germplasm collections, compilers of plant directories, authors and editors, journalists, as well as teachers and lecturers.

The 8th edition of the *Code* is 20 Euros plus 7 Euro shipping (non-EU addresses) per book. The ISBN is: 978-90-6605-662-6. It is available by writing to: International Society for Horticultural Science, P.O. Box 500, 3001 Leuven 1, Belgium. More information is available from their website at: www.ishs.org. Also, updates to the *Code*, and other horticultural taxonomic news, are available at: <http://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/RHS-Publications/Journals/Hanburyana>.

Lynn R. Batdorf

The ABS Board of Directors Meeting

September 17, 2009

The Board meeting of the American Boxwood Society was held at Blandy Experimental Farm, Boyce, Virginia and called to order on September 17, 2009 at 12:25pm. In attendance: First Vice-President Lee Hahn, Second Vice-President John Boyd, Secretary/Treasurer Laurie Jamerson, Registrar Lynn Batdorf. Directors: Joan Butler, Walter Carell Jr., Dean Norton, Bennett Saunders, Henry Frierson Jr. Absent: President Edward Goode Jr., Andrea Filippone, Jan Carter, Charles Fooks, George Schumacher, Clifford Hoffman, and Jeff Miller.

There was a motion to approve the Minutes from April 2009 Board meeting by Henry Frierson. It was seconded by Lynn Batdorf and approved by the board. Lee requested that the minutes be E-mailed prior to board meetings so that board can review them prior to future meetings.

Treasurer's Report: The checking balance at BB&T is \$42,548; there are three CD's which total \$32,064. Assets are \$42,925; retained earnings are \$117,537. Restricted funds are \$32,379. The total operating funds of \$10,169, plus the CD's, total \$42,233.

Bennett Saunders suggested a formal report be prepared at the end of fiscal year by an outside firm to record income, make long range planning decisions and keep ABS viable. This would require a 4 to 5 year accounting history.

John Boyd made a motion to pay Mr. Saunders in full for the remaining two cases of his Trial book. It was seconded by Joan Butler and approved by the board.

Annual Giving Appeal: Lee Hahn presented information on the mailing. The membership is below 400 and any other sources should be included which would benefit being an ABS member. Laurie made a motion to pay for the annual giving appeal letter and mailing expenses, not to exceed \$500. It was seconded by Bennett Saunders and approved by the board.

Membership Drive: Lee Hahn reported that Andrea Filippone had sent each board member 20 tri-folds to use to promote ABS memberships at a total cost of \$132. Walter Carell had also developed an information tri-fold but the cost was currently \$1 a piece and a larger quantity would be needed to reduce printing costs. Andrea Filippone has a letter prepared that could be inserted in *Boxwood Bulletin* for membership renewal to reduce the cost of mailing renewals this year. Lynn Batdorf suggested an article in *The Boxwood Bulletin* could also be used to gen-

erate renewals. Henry Frierson suggested both Andrea Filippone's membership letter and Walter Carell's report on the expanded Memorial Garden could be mailed together.

Spending Cap: Lee Hahn requested the Board review spending and approval procedures. Walter Carell would like to have an approval before any ABS funds are committed. The board member should present a spending project to the Board - they should expect to cover the cost themselves if they do not first receive Board approval.

John Boyd made a motion to cap all spending at \$300. Henry Frierson amended the motion to make Laurie Jamerson responsible to distribute it to the Executive Board. Dean Norton felt all expenses should be accounted for and Joan Butler also suggested that projects ought to have prior approval. One concern is the infrequency of board meetings to anticipate all expenses. The motion was revised by Lee Hahn: Treasurer can approve up to \$300 and notify the Executive Board. Any additional funds must be approved in advance by the Executive Committee or the Board of Directors. It was seconded by Dean Norton and approved by the board.

Trade Shows: Lee Hahn has secured a booth for the third year at the New Jersey Flower Show February 18 to 21, 2010. A 12' by 12' Mt. Vernon knot garden mural will be used as a back drop. Charlie Hildebrandt suggested a "user" friendly booth with lots of plants. Walter Carell would like to have speakers on tap to give short Boxwood talks. The booth will be manned by Bill Plumb, Steve Barlow, Walter Carell, Clifford Hoffman and Lee Hahn.

The Philadelphia Flower Show (PFS) is eight days long and requires a lot of manpower to properly cover the booth. Andrea Filippone and Lee Hahn went to a social and met staff from Longwood Gardens and believe that there is an increased visibility by being part of PFS. Walter Carell noted that both the PFS and the Maymont Show in Richmond are smaller and each require a substantial effort to properly prepare and man the exhibit.

Regarding the Mid-Atlantic Nurserymen Trade Show (MANTS) in Baltimore, the Saunders family have offered to pay for an ABS booth which will probably not be near the Saunders Brothers booth. It is a 3-day show and will require at least 6 people to cover the booth. The show is January 6 to 8, 2010. Bennett Saunders thought the membership and informational letters were good ABS publicity for the show. Someone would need to design the booth, and Saunders would supply the plant material and

transport it to Baltimore. It would also be a good opportunity for both Blandy Experimental Farm and Mt. Vernon to exhibit boxwood.

Walter made a motion to accept Saunders Brothers offer for the MANTS booth in 2010 and that the ABS man the booth. It was seconded by Henry Frierson and approved by board. Lee Hahn would ask Jan Carter to be the point person. Henry Frierson suggested that Andrea Filippone design the booth. Walter Carrel suggested that the design be simple but powerful. Ample hand-outs would need to be transported to the show which has an attendance of 10,000 individuals. Lee Hahn made a motion to have Walter Carrell order tri-folds not to exceed \$1,500 for the MANTS show. It was seconded by Laurie Jamerson and approved by the board.

Memorial Garden: Work days are scheduled for both September 30 and October 6, 2009. Mulch will be needed at a cost of \$550. Bob Arnold will help with the arrangements getting it delivered. Mulch must be regular single shredded hard wood bark. Vines will be removed from as many areas as possible. The question of expansion of the garden was asked and although the last Director at Blandy was not in favor of this, Bob Arnold is. Bennett Saunders and Walter Carrell will be meeting with Bob Arnold after the board meeting.

Bulletin: The editor was asked if there were any options to reduce costs on printing. He responded there is no contract with the printer on number of issues, number of pages, or time. Reducing page count could be a savings. It has been suggested to only produce three rather than four issues per year and March, July, November or April, August, December could be considered. Pertinent information to benefit members and renewing membership should be considered if there was to be a change.

Registrar: Lynn Batdorf has sent photo files to Jeff Miller and they have correct botanical names. He is continuing his work on the International Photo Library. He will reference his registration list and where it can be purchased (the list is international). He also reported that members of the French European Boxwood and Topiary Society are returning to the USA in Fall 2010—tours will center on NYC and Long Island, Statue of Liberty and visiting Old Westbury. Lynn had provided Michael Dirr with information on boxwood characteristics to correct the sixth edition his *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*.

Annual Meetings: The 2010 meeting will be held in Ohio, in the fall, at the Dawes Arboretum. Discussion was held regarding an annual membership meeting in April or May to satisfy the ABS by-laws. There was discussion about the attendance of two meetings - would one meeting gain attendance, would attendance be less? Lee

Hahn suggested that the discussion be postponed as Edward Goode was Chairman and should be present to give his viewpoint.

Blandy Experimental Farm is the site for the 50th Anniversary ABS Meeting in 2011. This meeting may also be held in fall, so as not to conflict with Blandy's scheduled programs. Joan suggested we plan our meeting in spring and work around the Blandy schedule.

Executive Treasurer-Duties and contract: The ABS continues to add duties to this contract, but lack a clear understanding of what each party expects. A detailed contract outlining this information needs to be provided, including a 60-day, rather than the current 30-day renewal time period. Services in the contract could include: automatic renewal, payments via the web, current membership list, be pro-active and expand our presence in the horticulture world using strategic insights. Concerns include: the expectations of the ABS, attendance at board meetings, travel costs, and conference calls during board meetings. Bennett Saunders suggested that the contractor attend at least one board meeting per year. Henry Frierson noted that the contractor attended only a few meetings the past ten years as the ABS web master. Walter Carrell suggested that the budget be reviewed after the September meeting. Henry Frierson thought the president should negotiate the cost to come to meetings.

New Business: The ABS will no longer sell books through the American Nurseryman book sales. Extra copies of the January *Boxwood Bulletin* should be available at the trade shows for hand outs, should additional copies be printed for this use?

- SWETS— They want a detail of costs for local and foreign subscriptions—contacted John Boyd.

- If there is any interest in advertising in the Maryland Garden Week tour booklet, advertisements need to be placed soon for 2010. See Walter Carrell.

- The ABS Archives are secure and both John and Judi Maasi have a key for access.

- John Boyd is looking for back issues to make a complete set of the *Boxwood Bulletin* to have at the 50th Anniversary meeting. If you are not willing to part with your issue consider having it copied, and see John.

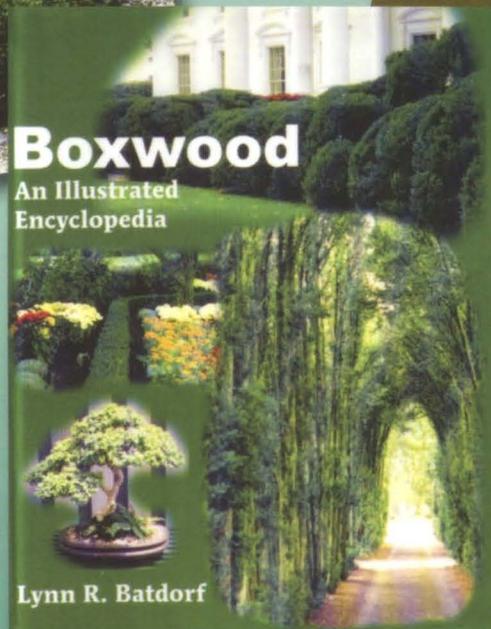
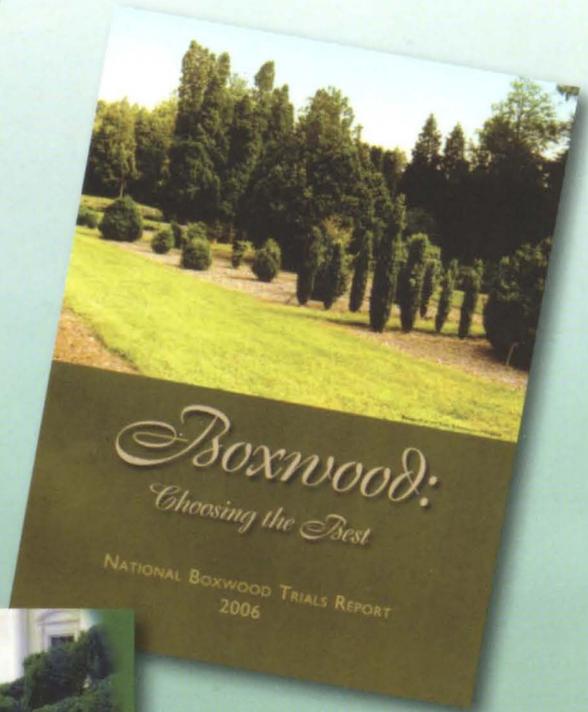
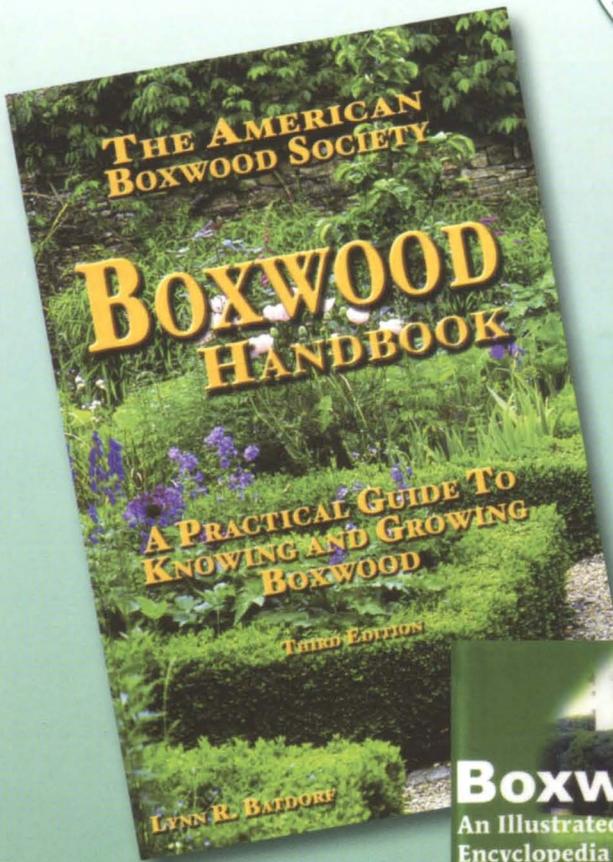
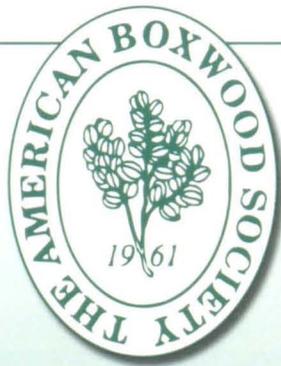
- Lee Hahn moved the Annual Business Meeting Minutes be reviewed at next board meeting.

With no other business for discussion, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Bennett Saunders. It was seconded by Henry Frierson and approved by the board. The meeting adjourned at 3:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Jamerson

Secretary American Boxwood Society



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www.boxwoodsociety.org