The Art of Designing
With Boxwood
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.boxwoodsoctety.org

OFFICERS:

President:
Mr John Boyd III
Roanoke, VA

First Vice-President:
Mr. Kenneth Lee Hahn
Califon, NJ

Second Vice-President:
Mr. Charles Fooks
Salisbury, MD

Secretary:
Mr. Jan S. Carter
Eldersburg, MD

Treasurer:
Mr. J. Bennett Saunders
Piney River, VA

International Registrar:
Mr. Lynn R. Bardorf
Washington, D.C.

DIRECTORS:

Dr. Thomas Anisko (2011)
Kennett Square, PA

Mrs. Joan Butler (Life)
Winchester, VA

Mr. Walter S. Carell, Jr. (2013)
Millington, NJ

Mr. Hugh Crump (2012)
Cramerton, NC

Mr. Clifford L. Hoffman (2012)
Flemington, NJ

Mr. Ted Mays (2014)
Lowgap, NC

Mr. Dean Norton (2012)
Mr. Vernon, VA

Mr. George Schumacher (2011)
Turlock, CA

Mrs. Louise T. Smith (2014)
Fishers, IN

Mrs. Katherine Ward (2013)
Winchester, VA

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Mrs. Toorie Rinker
Stephens City, VA

EX-OFFICIO:

Dr. David Carr, Director, State Arboretum of VA
Boyce, VA

PUBLICATIONS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Non-member</th>
<th>Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boxwood: An Illustrated Encyclopedia</td>
<td>US$140</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxwood Handbook (3rd Edition)</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>$27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxwood: Choosing the Best</td>
<td>$25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intl Registration of Cultivated Buxus</td>
<td>$5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Issues of The Boxwood Bulletin (each)</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Boxwood Bulletin Index 1961-1986</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Handling, first class postage and applicable taxes are included in the price for domestic orders. Postage for international orders is actual cost (www.ups.com) plus US $3.00.

MEMBERSHIP:

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Dues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustaining</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing</td>
<td>$75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONTRIBUTIONS:

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

- General Operations
- Publications Fund
- Memorial Garden Fund
- Research Programs

HOW TO CONTACT US:

For ordering publications, membership, address change, contributions, questions, or submitting an article, please write to:

American Boxwood Society
P.O. Box 85
Boyce, VA 22620-0085

IN THIS ISSUE:

- The President's Corner ............................. 65
- Boxwood Bookshelf ................................. 65
- The Art of Designing with Boxwood .............. 66
- England & Belgium in December, 2011 ............ 67
- Board Meeting Minutes ............................. 69

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

The Boxwood Bulletin (ISSN 0006 8535) is published quarterly by the American Boxwood Society, P.O. Box 85, Boyce, VA 22620. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the American Boxwood Society, P.O. Box 85, Boyce, VA 22620.
The Presidents Corner, October

As the year progresses I see more and more that we are doing, not just in Symposium preparation but in progress of our Committees and outside involvement of the ABS in promoting boxwood. I know of several including myself that have had one or more chances to promote the ABS at speaking engagements. It is much appreciated by me and the members of the board each time any member is asked to talk and it is so important to us all to promote information dispersal as well as seeking new members.

We are also looking at research in several areas, especially in the Boxwood Blight problems. Tomasz Anisko is chairing the Research committee. As research request come in he and his committee members are reviewing the request and advising the board on those that will get our support. I know they will do a good job.

The symposium is here and I think we will always be pleased the meeting. I wish each of you could be there for the preparation has been extensive. It is certainly true of our members that if asked to participate, they certainly will and do so in spades. This is certainly true since we found we were at least a year late in starting the preparation for this Symposium. All of those that were asked came through with flying colors and my humblest thanks to all.

May each of you have beautiful boxwood gardens either small or large.

John Boyd

BOXWOOD BOOKSHELF

“The Art of Creative Pruning: Inventive Ideas for Training and Shaping Trees and Shrubs”


Review by Louise T. Smith

Jake Hobson, a sculptor by training, has an expert’s knowledge of creating topiary and obviously enjoys the challenge. He brings both an inspired and relaxed approach to the subject of pruning, a topic that could be quite dull in some hands, as well as daunting. Training and shaping trees and shrubs in your garden can make a huge difference in its appearance and spirit, and Jake’s presentation of his expertise is entirely engaging. You will want to get out there and get to work immediately!

Hobson’s familiarity with all styles of pruning is reassuring; he moves easily between Japanese formality, the more relaxed American formality, and even free form, very modern shapes. Your introduction to topiary is in good hands as Hobson gives enlightening examples, and practical advice, as well as crystal clear diagrams. He looks at cloud pruning, and pleaching as well as traditional forms of pruning and points out the difficulties that must be dealt with. He assures us that wielding the pruners is fun. While clipping may not come naturally to everyone, Hobson’s enthusiastic and clear instructions really make us want to pick up pruners and go confidently into the garden. “Clip hard, be brave and learn from your mistakes,” he tells us.

The photography in this book is a joy to behold. Boxwood is most often the plant that is illustrated, making this a book that will certainly appeal to the boxwood enthusiast, but there are others, too—hornbeam and yew, for example, treated in absolutely amazing ways.

A well-written book with a great deal of practical value and inspirational value, too, this is a must for your boxwood bookshelf.
Few plants lend themselves so easily to design and so creatively to the Designer as does Boxwood. It is the one plant that can be counted upon to stand beside the most permanent of garden hardscape material to form the backbone structure that any good design needs. The ability to grow and thrive in almost any condition makes it all the more valuable as a top plant design choice. Whether it is found in a warmer climate or wintery landscape the shiny reflective foliage is an eye catcher. Besides, it’s just plain pretty!

What makes a great design? It is the overall impression that is created by the skeleton of the design; the hardscape such as stone, brick, garden ornaments, structures, trees and select shrubs. These are the elements that even without the plantings form a pleasing view and are most important to the design. They can stand alone. With a good foundation skeleton, changes in the garden that become necessary over time, can take place without disturbing the integrity of the overall design. This garden skeleton sets the stage for all the rest of the plant material. The plant material, like actors on a stage, can be seasonal, changeable and variable. Boxwood is unique as a plant choice because it fits into both the stage category and the actor category, making it most useful.

The other important element of Boxwood is its ability to sustain pruning into shapes and forms that few other plants can endure. This makes it a valuable plant to use as a focal point of interest in a design. Topiaries, Bonsai and hedges often rely on Boxwood because of its ability to lend itself to hard pruning. In the Japanese garden, where cloud and mountain shapes are common, it is considered a standout material choice for this reason. In a formal garden design, Boxwood has always been a favorite to rely upon for forming structures such as hedges and borders.

There are many interesting varieties and choices of Boxwood available, each offering benefits because of their natural form and size. The designer need only use his or her imaginative ability to incorporate them in a beautiful plan. In groupings or alone the design needs of height, width and length can be easily achieved using Boxwood. It is the perfect plant to use when constructing a Celtic Knot garden, Labyrinth or Maze. Each of these designs, while beautiful by themselves, and often used for particular metaphysical or spiritual experiences, such as meditational walks and healing areas, are enhanced by the use of Boxwood. Few plants can brag of having such an impact for a design. From the perspective point of the Garden Designer or Landscape Architect, Boxwoods, as a plant of choice, can define, delineate and demarcate space in our designs making them an important tool for creative and innovative ideas. Michael Dirr in “Dirr’s Hardy Trees And Shrubs” refers to the Boxwood as “one of the most functional plants in garden history”. It is truly a plant that in mass is superb and alone is a specimen.
On December 11-18, 2011, Saunders Brothers, Inc. took a team to England and Belgium to try to understand more about Cylindrocladium buxicola, better known in Europe as Box Blight. We had heard very disturbing stories of how Box Blight had ruined boxwood in nurseries in North Carolina and Connecticut, supposedly the first sightings of this dreaded disease in the United States.

It was a difficult time of the year to travel because the days were cool and short. The sun was not bright until nearly 8 a.m. and it was beginning to get dark by 4 p.m. In the evenings, instead of visiting gardens, we were able to visit stunning centuries-old villages decorated in their Christmas attire.

Boxwood Blight was first identified in England in the mid 1990’s, and is now fairly widespread throughout Europe. It is accepted that the disease is everywhere in Europe. The disease is carried mostly by infected plants and soil or plant debris. The fungus was described to us as being a large and heavy spore, and therefore spreading rarely by wind. The fungus thrives at temperatures in the mid 70’s Fahrenheit where there is high humidity and leaf wetting. Once the fungi colonize a plant, it is mostly spread through rainwater splashing the spores into other parts of the plant or onto the neighboring plant. Therefore, under ideal environmental conditions, the disease could rapidly move from one boxwood to another in a tightly clipped hedge.

It appears that the variety Buxus sempervirens ‘Suffruticosa’ is the cultivar most susceptible to the disease. In Europe, ‘Suffruticosa,’ as well as most varieties, are trimmed to very tight hedges. ‘Suffruticosa,’ particularly when grown under full sun, already has a very tight outer shell which doesn’t allow good air movement. The shell creates a damp, dark, humid microenvironment which is the perfect microclimate for the disease to thrive. Europeans are getting away from this variety because of its susceptibility to Box Blight.

There is ongoing research on the effectiveness of fungicides in Europe. Many fungicides kill a large percentage of the fungi, but none will kill this disease completely. Most nurserymen spray their plants on regular schedules, usually about once per month, with fungicides that suppress the disease.

We were interested in seeing Box Blight in mature gardens and understanding how gardeners were managing the disease. From our casual observations of boxwood in gardens all over London, the disease does not appear to be a big issue. Boxwood in gardens tend to be widely spaced, inter-planted with other species of plants, have lower fertility, and usually lack overhead sprinklers, all of which discourage the disease.

The nursery environment would be much more favorable to the disease than more mature plants in gardens. Nurseries tend to have higher fertility, tighter spacing, and overhead irrigation, all of which are environmental factors associated with spreading the disease.

In England and Belgium, horticulturists accept Box Blight as being everywhere and when the conditions are right, the disease flares up. There is no government regulation of the disease or regulation of transport of plants between countries in the European Union.

In 2012, the views on the disease are somewhat different in the U.S. than in Europe. In the U.S., we know now that Box Blight has been found in several different states. However, the disease appears not to be widely present in nurseries nor widely present in gardens. Therefore, when it is found, an intense effort is made to eradicate the disease. With this mentality we should slow the disease from spreading for some time and learn a lot more about it.

We asked a number of European nurserymen and researchers if they thought we could stop the disease. The resounding answer was that we could not stop it, but good management practices would slow it’s advancement throughout the United States.

We came away from Europe thinking that there is a great need for research in the United States in the area of Box Blight. How can we manipulate growing conditions to eliminate an environment beneficial to spreading the disease? Do we have access to different chemistries that might better control the pathogen? How might weather conditions in the US affect disease development? What are the differences in susceptibility of different boxwood varieties?

Even though many questions remain, one thing is clear: there is no substitute for boxwood. We heard this message from every nurseryman we spoke to. We must continue to plant and grow boxwood. Our challenge now is to educate others and facilitate research so that we can slow the spread of Box Blight as much as possible and give ourselves time to find answers to these questions.
*Buxus sempervirens* with Boxwood Blight and regrowth. Notice how the disease appears in the center of this tightly clipped plant where there is minimal air movement or sunshine.

Our first goal was to not bring Box Blight back to Virginia. Pictured is Beth Scott wearing a Tyvek suit and booties.

We saw many homes in London with small but beautiful Buxus gardens. We saw no sign of blight in these gardens.

The Saunders Brothers team saw many beautifully sculptured topiaries throughout England. (*L to R*) Bennett Saunders, Beth Scott, and Jane Stanley.
The American Boxwood Society
Governing Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, July 19, 2011; Blandy State Arboretum, Boyce, Virginia

Call to Order
President Boyd called the meeting to order at 11:30 AM. In attendance were President Boyd, 1st Vice President Hahn, Secretary Carter, Treasurer Saunders, Registrar Bardorf, Directors Carell, Mays, Norton and Ward, Executive Director Rinker. It was determined that a quorum was present.

Minutes
The minutes of May 12, 2011 had been circulated and were approved.
(Hahn / Carell / unanimous by voice)

Financial
- Treasurer Saunders reported that the Society’s accountant had not completed the work on the just ended fiscal year, thus no detailed reports. The accountant has strongly recommended that the matter of designating funds as restricted versus unrestricted versus temporarily restricted be addressed. The current restricted fund options are: Memorial, Publication, and Research. A motion was passed to place all funds in the unrestricted class, except monies that were donor designated, which will be placed in the appropriate restricted class. (Norton / Hahn / unanimous by voice)
- A motion was made and passed to place $15,000.00 in the Publication Fund and to designate that as Temporarily Restricted. (Saunders / Bardorf / unanimous by voice)

Committee Reports
- Membership: The Executive Director reported that the total membership renewal to date is 25. A membership renewal notice will be distributed by the Executive Director within the next month.
- Bulletin: Walter Carell is editing Vol. 51, No. 1 issue. The recruitment of a permanent editor for the Bulletin is a priority. Winchester Printers has already ordered/produced the envelopes for the entire next volume.
- Blandy Arboretum Gardens: Walter Carell has worked with the David Carr led staff at Blandy in developing some sketches for gardens expansion into areas being made available to the ABS by Blandy. Lynn Bardorf strongly recommended the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among all interested parties, to define and stipulate the details of the arrangements.
- U.S. National Arboretum: A motion was made and passed to contribute $5,000.00 to the Friends of the National Arboretum, to be placed in the endowment fund for the maintenance of the National Boxwood Collection. The details of the presentation are to be worked out administratively. (Ward / Carell / unanimous by voice)
- By-Laws: President Boyd set out to establish a committee to review and make proposals for revisions as needed. Following some discussion as to how to proceed, it was determined that Dean Norton and Lee Hahn would serve as co-chairs. Louise Smith, Robert Frackelton and Jan Carter would serve as committee members as needed.

- Symposium: Ted Mays is serving as the chair for 2012 Charleston. He presented a questionnaire to the Board members, seeking information in order to best plan the itinerary and timing. This committee recommends incorporating sponsors into the program, but is unsure of the best approach. They intend to seek guidance from Board members relative to this matter.
- Publications/Registrar: Lynn Bardorf reports that the English Society has been invited to the ABS Symposium scheduled for Washington, D.C. He has not yet received a reply.
- Philadelphia Flower Show: A motion was made and passed that the ABS not participate in the 2012 Show. The discussion centered on the issue of not being able to process memberships and publication sales within the booth display area. Also cited were the rather meager enlistments versus the significant expense to the Society and individual members. The Board noted the dedicated efforts of Chair Filippone and the excellent display to represent the ABS in 2011.
(Saunders / Norton / unanimous by voice)
- Reporting Procedures: A period of open discussion took place regarding the practice of uniform procedures for all committees in reporting to the Board. The opinions and consensus is being referred to the By-Laws Committee.

Unfinished Business
- Logo: Discussion from the floor suggests that the logo(s) of the Society may already be registered. President Boyd will inquire of Robert Frackelton, who may have been involved in their registration, if that is in fact the case.
- Costs of Servicing Members: Some Board discussion regarding how such costs can be determined and managed. What is the future role of electronic media in managing these costs?

New Business
- A garden photo contest, via Horticulture Magazine, is seeking the ABS mailing list to contact members regarding the contest. The Board consensus was to not release the list.
- Future Meetings: An attempt was made to schedule future Board meetings while everyone was together. The attempt failed.

Adjournment
Seeing no further business, President Boyd declared the meeting adjourned, without objection.
Order Now! Essential Boxwood Reading!
www.boxwoodsociey.org