

The Journal of the American Boxwood Society – Devoted to Our Oldest Garden Ornamental

# THE BOXWOOD BULLETIN

58th Annual Boxwood Symposium

*First & Second of June 2018. Locations throughout Central Virginia*



The American Boxwood Society is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1961 and devoted to the appreciation, scientific understanding and propagation of Buxus. For additional information on the Society visit our website at: [boxwoodsociety.org](http://boxwoodsociety.org)

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Membership in The American Boxwood Society runs annually, May 1 through April 30. *Dues can be paid online or by mail.*

### Individual ..... \$50

*Benefits: Annual Subscription to The Boxwood Bulletin, Member Registration Rate for Symposium, Member Discount for ABS Conferences, Vote at the ABS Annual Meeting.*

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Monetary gifts to the Society are tax-deductible and may be applied to Research Programs, our Memorial Gardens Fund, our Publications Fund, and/or General Operations.

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# News from ABS

## Digitizing *The Boxwood Bulletin*

The American Boxwood Society (ABS), founded in 1961, recently celebrated its 55th year of successfully promoting boxwood and supporting research. There have been several major accomplishments of the Society, one of which is the continuous publication of *The Boxwood Bulletin*. That's 4,056 pages, measuring 8½ by 11 inches, occupying 12 inches of shelf space. Each page is full of taxonomy and nomenclature, gardens, events, history, personalities, legends and lore, definitive cultural information, research on various pests and diseases, and much more – all concerning boxwood.

To access this information, the ABS published three printed indexes covering the first 35 years of publication. To both improve and update access, the ABS digitized all the back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*; that is, converting the printed volumes to searchable PDFs, and making them available with search engines on the ABS website. Two contractors were required. The first scanned every page at 300dpi (dots per inch) into TIFF (tagged image file format) images. A second contractor took these electronic files and created a search engine. Key features include browse and search options with advanced search capability of key words and/or date(s). *Written by Lynn R. Batdorf*



Be part of *The Boxwood Bulletin*! Submit an article, photograph, question, idea or report. Common topics include Boxwood: Gardens, Public or Private Collections, Care, Design, History, Topiary, or Art.

We're counting on you to help make this YOUR Bulletin!

# 58th Annual Boxwood Symposium

On June 1 and 2, 2018, members gathered in Charlottesville, Virginia to attend the 58th Annual Symposium of the American Boxwood Society. The first day was highlighted by trips to Whilton Farms, the Rotunda at the University of Virginia, Michie Tavern for lunch, Monticello, and a trip up to Carter Mountain Orchards for a dinner with a panoramic view of Charlottesville.

On June 2, the 59 attendees were first treated to The Quarry Gardens in Schuyler, then on to lunch at Pharsalia, with afternoon stops at the Saunders Brothers container nursery operation and farm market. From there, the group traveled for a tour of the Saunders Brothers field growing area. The grand finale was a barbeque dinner at the home of Bennett and Lynn Saunders, complete with live bluegrass music, and local beer and whisky, for a grand ol' Southern farewell party. *Many thanks to Adrienne Phillips and Tootie Rinker for their help in putting together this Symposium!*

## Symposium: **Whilton Farm**



*Bennett Saunders and Courtnay Daniels*



June 1st dawned sunny and bright and 56 boxwood and garden enthusiasts were eager to get off the bus and into the garden to begin the 58th Annual American Boxwood Society (ABS) symposium at Whilton Farm in Greenwood, Virginia. Our first lesson in garden sanitation was to don medical type “booties” to prevent the introduction of foreign diseases and fungi to the garden. A small action to take to help preserve this lovely garden!

Terry and Courtnay Daniels are the proud owners of Whilton Farm. Courtnay and farm manager Dan Whitten were on hand in the front courtyard of the stately Georgian mansion to introduce us to this remarkable property. The 350 acre farm contains 29 acres of gardens filled with rare and unusual plants. Most of the gardens are no more than 17 years old and many are younger. They were created over time as need and interest brought new opportunities.

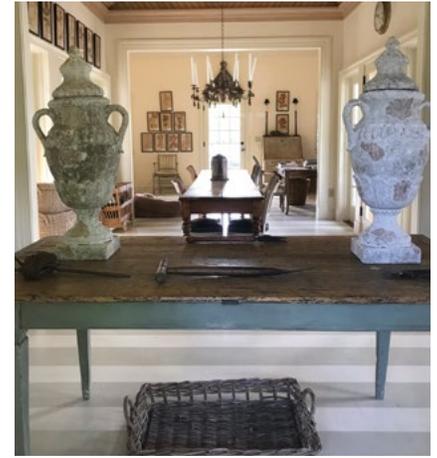
Courtnay explained that the garden simply grew from one garden room to another as time went by. Many of the garden rooms were encouraged by family events, such as their daughter’s wedding, which added a lovely large garden room that still provides wonderful memories of that special day.

As a veteran gardener myself, I could appreciate that the amount of planning and effort that went into these gardens was simply overwhelming. Not only did they plan out the room, but each and every tree and plant appeared to have just enough room for its mature form. This is a difficult task because, as all of us know, it’s just hard to buy a 5 foot tree and to try to plan for it being 25 or 50 feet tall one day. This is a remarkable feat!

Each garden was unique and combined colors and textures of both specimen plants and ones that we find in our own gardens in a most pleasing fashion.



Jim Walker & Dan Whitten



Albert Walker



Many varieties of boxwood in both their natural form and as topiaries could be found as we wandered through the different garden rooms. I also marveled at the gates, each one was different and exciting in form and design. We were all spellbound by the series of hedges, some containing two varieties of plants with both varieties thriving and looking very healthy. Some hedges contained mature, uniformly-sheared Trifoliate Orange trees, a fun surprise!

One room that deserves special mention was Terry Daniel's garden room. This one was simple and definitely designed by the man of the house as it would be a great place to sit, read, and perhaps smoke a cigar. A square area defined by a hedge, each corner containing a crepe myrtle and a bench, and a square grass area with a sculpture of a dog in the center, gave the feel of a restful retreat. Simplicity of maintenance would provide time for rest. A wonderful retreat in a garden of surprises!

As we toured the garden with Courtney, we passed by brick walls, statuary, fountains, pools, follies, a greenhouse, Courtney's office, and seating areas that provided a perfect backdrop for viewing the gardens and the acres of farmland beyond the formal areas.



Everyone present enjoyed the unusual varieties and combinations of plants, shrubs (many boxwood!), and trees. A Wall Street Journal article about the farm described it as having, “... one of the largest collections of rare plants in the country.” Those of us there that day would agree—a rare treat and fabulous start to our Charlottesville area symposium! Thank you, Courtney and Terry, for opening your private garden to us for this tour!

*Written by Donna W. Downing, Photos Courtesy of Cheryl Crowell, Beth Sams, Andrea Filippone and Bennett Saunders*



## Symposium: **The Rotunda & Lawn at the University of Virginia**



On our way back to Charlottesville for lunch, we stopped at the recently-refurbished Rotunda at the University of Virginia and strolled the famed UVA Lawn. “The Lawn” is the grassy field around which Thomas Jefferson designed the original university buildings. The 54 student rooms on The Lawn are greatly coveted as senior residences despite having no air conditioning or bathrooms. Faculty and their

families reside in the Lawn Pavilions, but their gardens are open to the public. The gardens are enclosed by undulating brick walls – a wonderful example of uniformity and form creating structure as well as beauty.

*Photos Courtesy of Andrea Filippone and Bennett Saunders*



## Symposium: Michie Tavern



At Michie Tavern, ca. 1784, we enjoyed an 18th century bill-of-fare lunch offered by servers in period attire. After lunch we toured the Tavern and outbuildings and took part in a square dance! The Armory & Artifacts Shop, established around 1790, specializes in antique firearms as well as battlefield relics, musical

instruments and military accoutrements. Interestingly, this single-room log cabin was built from first-growth trees harvested near Saunders Brothers property in Nelson County.

*Photos Courtesy of Cheryl Crowell, Andrea Filippone and Bennett Saunders.*



*John McGuinness, Linda Williams, Donna Downing and Bruce Downing*



## Symposium: Monticello



Here we were - 50 ABS members, all boxwood enthusiasts - at the doorstep of Monticello - and there was not a boxwood to be found on this plantation. What were we to do? After inspecting wonderful old tulip poplars, catalpas, maples and tilias, we entered the house of Thomas Jefferson and saw an amazing collection of treasures - antiques, books, portraits, busts and his many mechanical gadgets. Jefferson designed the clock whose weights went around the front door and through the first floor, self closing doors, copy machine, sky lights, triple-hung windows, and two wine dumbwaiters in the dining room on either side of the dining room mantle.

Thomas Jefferson's home exemplified his wide ranging interests and his love of education. He believed "Knowledge is power, knowledge is safety...knowledge is happiness". Walking through these rooms was like walking through history. In the front entry foyer, dinosaur jawbones lay on the side tables, native American clothing draped on the railings, and a map of Africa and another of the U.S. showing the route of the Lewis & Clark Expedition hung on the walls.



Off to the left of the main entrance hall was Jefferson's private wing - reading room, library, study and bedroom. Here he spent many long hours reading his prized collection of books, and studying the classical architectural drawings in *Gibbs' Book of Architecture*.

Jefferson entertained his guests in the Parlor, a grand room partially shaped by the octagonal dome above, a geometric shape which Jefferson loved and repeated throughout the house. On the walls of this room hung portraits of Jefferson's friends and foes. One of his best friends was Benjamin Franklin.

Next we passed through the quaint dining room and tea room. With beautiful neoclassical moldings and high ceilings, Thomas Jefferson designed these spaces to be intimate when needed, yet big enough to handle more guests if necessary. The great mechanical inventions of this room were the two wine dumbwaiters hidden on either side of the mantle.

As we exited the building, we came onto a terrace. In 2016, the terrace railings were reconstructed by removing the Chinese-inspired railings and





installing a picket style that they believe was Jefferson's original design.

For the landscape part of our tour, we were met in the West Lawn by Peggy Cornett, Historic Gardener and Curator of Plants. Here we saw several of the majestic trees including the *Melia azedarach* (chinarberry tree). Unfortunately, they lost the two main tulip poplar trees that flanked the back of this iconic façade. Amazingly, a new one is emerging out of the old trunk.

Jefferson diverged from the rigid Williamsburg rectilinear and symmetric landscape plan. Instead he planted perennials like *Cerithe*, *Nicotiana*, and *Lunaria* in solid blocks in a serpentine path around the West Lawn. From this level we walked through Mulberry Row where one would find the plantation's industries, including nail making, blacksmithing, joinery and weaving.

From there we crossed to the vegetable garden which had spectacular views of the neighboring countryside. Here we found rows of Jefferson's heirloom vegetables: several cultivars of lettuce, cabbage, peppers, tomatoes and leeks. Jefferson's prime focus was to provide enough food for the health and welfare of the plantation. Currently, there is not a deer fence so they too struggle with deer on a daily basis.



As we walked back to the bus, we passed the graveyard. In this fenced quadrant was the obelisk that Jefferson designed and had inscribed with the three things he wanted to be remembered for:

- Author of the Declaration of the American Independence
- Author of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom
- Father of the University of Virginia

One man's life spent in pursuit of political freedom, religious freedom, and educational opportunity despite the all the challenges he faced. Even today we still face these challenges, but we have Jefferson's beliefs to inspire us.

Although there were no boxwood to be seen, it was a great visit , exploring one of the great minds of the late 18th and early 19th century.

*Written by Andrea Filippone.  
Photos courtesy of Cheryl Crowell, Andrea Filippone,  
Beth Sams and Bennett Saunders.*



The Walker Family with Thomas Jefferson. From left to right: Beth Sams, Albert Walker, Mr. Jefferson, Betty Walker and Jim Walker



## Symposium: **Carter Mountain Orchard**



Attendees finished the day at Carter Mountain Orchard, rated by “Southern Living” magazine as one of the top 20 apple orchards in the entire South. The farm on Carter Mountain is celebrated for having the most spectacular view of Charlottesville from anywhere except outer space! Here we enjoyed a

lovely cocktail hour, auction, and catered meal. The wine-tasting room offered a variety of delicious fruit wines, and the tasting fees went to charity. Win-win!

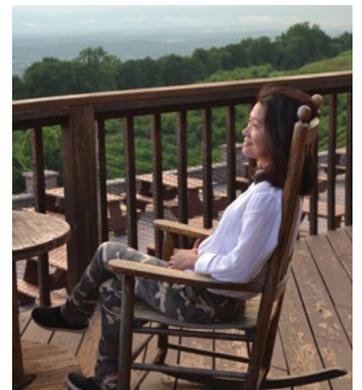
*Photos courtesy of Cheryl Crowell, Andrea Filippone and Bennett Saunders.*



Jim Saunders conducting the auction



Cathy Erickson, Michael Kayes and Mary Ann Stewart



Ty Tan relaxing on the deck

## Symposium: Quarry Gardens



Armand and Bernice Thiebolt, owners of Quarry Gardens

### Letter from the President

The observation deck above the old quarry was inviting. There was a huge rock in the middle that was the size of a small truck. I hopped up, stood on my tippy toes to see over the fence, and took it in. I had a panoramic view above anyone else. I can get my photo now, I thought!

I was interrupted. “Mr. Saunders, please be careful,” our guide Susan politely said. “The plant you are standing on is very rare”. I looked down. Sure enough, there was a bowl-like cavity on top of the rock that had some sort of grass growing on it.

“Oh, I’m sorry” I said. Embarrassed, I jumped off the rock and fluffed up some of the leaves that I had mashed down. I thought I was just standing on a rock. And some grass. And it didn’t matter...

I’m a country boy and a farmer. Grass is for mowing. Spray the broadleaf weeds with 2-4D. Anything that

you didn’t plant is a weed, made for Roundup. Manicured boxwood, hydrangeas, magnolias and maybe a few concrete pavers make your garden delightful.

The Quarry Gardens in Schuyler, Virginia were a real treat for the participants in the American Boxwood Society Symposium on June 2. Armand and Bernice Thiebolt purchased the quarry in 1991. Nelson County has a vein of soapstone which runs through the eastern edge. The soapstone was very popular in chemistry labs and for countertops, but nobody knew what to do with the big holes once the soapstone was no longer economically viable to mine. The quarry was abandoned and served as a dumpsite for old refrigerators, tires, and anything else somebody might want to push off their pickup truck. If you found the right spot about 50’ above the quarry, it was cool to watch appliances go crashing down the rock wall and slowly submerge in the water. Good Saturday fun!



Bennett Saunders & the rare plant





John Howes

For 23 years, the Thiebols cleaned up this mess. Today, the garden is a showcase of hundreds of native plant species. The one-mile rugged trail around the perimeter of the quarry also features frogs, fish, songbirds, turtles, and other wildlife.

As a local from Nelson County, I salute the Thiebols for their unique perspective of this property. They saw something that others didn't. Even as the president of the American Boxwood Society and a nurseryman who relishes perfectly geometric shapes in perfectly straight rows, I concede that natural landscapes with native plants are beautiful in themselves. Sometimes we feel that only very polished, symmetrical, and ornate landscapes are worthwhile. The Thiebols have reminded me otherwise.

Along with Adrienne, as co-organizer of the 58th Symposium, it was truly a pleasure to host such a great group of gardeners! I hope everyone enjoyed the Symposium as much as we did!

*Written by Bennett Saunders. Photo of Armand and Bernice Thiebolt courtesy of Tom Daly. Other photos courtesy of Cheryl Crowell, Andrea Filippone and Bennett Saunders.*



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Indianapolis, IN

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**boxwoodsociety.org**

## Symposium: Pharsalia



With the chirping of cricket frogs ringing in our ears from the morning's walk around the soapstone pools at Quarry Gardens in Schuyler, our tour bus wound through the nooks and crannies of central Virginia to the small community of Tyro and the historic Pharsalia Estate. We had been promised a midday meal featuring locally-sourced food at this beautiful antebellum plantation property, and the approaching noon hour had moved the conversation in that direction. But as we drove through rolling hills of grapevines and espaliered apple trees up to the estate, it was clear lunch would not be the only treat in store for our senses.

We started with a brief history of the property given by our hostess Foxie (Massie) Flippin Morgan (more on her name later). In 1814-15, Major Thomas Massie built the original plantation house as a wedding present for his son William. The property was situated on over 1,000 acres and included 30 slaves. After some early struggles and with the help of his fourth wife Maria, William turned the property into a thriving business, growing wheat and tobacco with a stable of horses, teams of oxen, dairy cattle and hogs,



Foxie Flippin Morgan



and it remained so through the 1850's. William and Maria were Foxie's great-great-great-grandparents.

William died in 1862 as the Civil War and Reconstruction changed everything about his county and his country. Maria struggled in the postwar era to keep the business going, and while she did many innovative things like switching from wheat and tobacco to more lucrative items such as fruit and smoked hams, more and more of the original estate was let go over the years to cover debts. When Maria died in 1889, it took less than 5 years for all the land to pass out of the family.

But Foxie's story had a surprising and happy ending. In 1952, after 60 years outside the Massie family, her parents, George and Perkins Flippin, bought the Pharsalia Estate. Perkins Flippin worked long and hard to restore the property, and the excellent condition of the mansion today is largely due to her efforts. When she died in 2004, Foxie and her husband Richard bought and subdivided the property to specifically concentrate on restoring the plantation house.

With our historical curiosity piqued and storm clouds forming overhead, we headed for the outdoor tent where our lunch was waiting. And what a lunch: scrumptious fried chicken, salads with fresh spinach, strawberries, corn and black beans, sweet cakes and lemon shortbread were served buffet style in bright earthenware bowls, and complemented perfectly by floral arrangements featuring some of Foxie's peony varieties. Even the rain couldn't dampen spirits as we feasted on brownie bites and coconut cake, enjoyed new friends seated next to us on the oversized picnic tables, and soaked in the beautiful views.

After lunch, we dodged the raindrops across the lawn for a tour of the inside of the main house. The original 1814 structure was four rooms: two bedrooms, a dining room and a parlor, with assorted outbuildings including an outdoor kitchen and toilet (“the necessary”). Although little of the original furniture has survived, the house is tastefully decorated in period style with many interesting and unique furniture and tableware pieces, cigar boxes, bed warmers, candlesticks, and omnipresent foxes woven into many of the articles.

Foxie walked us over the quarter-sawn oak floors in the original residence, the additions put on in the 1830’s and 40’s, through the transformative restoration of the home and grounds when the property came back into the family in the second half of the 20th century. She summered there as a child, and in recent years, has spent time uncovering the past through her and her husband’s restoration efforts. You really felt a sense of the history the house has lived through, and the changes and differences between the many eras it has seen. There was an outside slave entrance into every room accompanied by a “pull bell” on the inside, each one with a different tone so the servant would know which room to respond to. Over the mantle in the dining room hangs



*During lunch, Robert Saunders talks about the future of boxwood*



*Tottie Rinker sneaking some of Cheryl Crowell’s dessert*



*Tatum and Paul Saunders*



a picture of Foxie’s grandmother, Florence Massie Morton, from the early 1900’s, dressed in formal wear and wearing a peach-colored shawl. She held the original nickname “Foxie”, which she got not because of the modern connotation of the word, but rather because she was adept at dubious card games, and therefore sly as a fox. A hundred or so years after the portrait above the mantle was painted, the second Foxie came across that very shawl during the demolition of a wall, and a piece of it is prominently displayed in a case next to the painting.

We left the plantation house and the rain had become more constant, making touring the gardens difficult. We walked through the various outbuildings that housed interesting period pieces used in the weddings and events that are held now on the property—antique wine barrels, water spouts, items from Richard Morgan’s antique wood business. We also learned Foxie’s grandmother planted most if not all the boxwood on the property in the mid to late 1900’s. As such, there were many mature specimens, including one we thought was a ‘Justin Brower’ variety. That was confirmed when we uncovered the slightly wet and very faded tag still on the trunk at the base of the plant.

When time came to board the bus for our next adventure, we left the estate well versed in its serendipitous story and that of Foxie's family as well, both delicately intertwined with the history of Nelson County. It turned out to be the tale of two industrious men, Major Thomas and William Massie, who conceived of and started the enterprise that made the Pharsalia Estate possible. It was also a story of two exceptionally strong women—Maria Massie who continued to lead and grow the business after William's death until her death in 1889, and Perkins Flippin whose restorative efforts starting in the 1950's saved the mansion from the ruins of time.

Today Pharsalia includes the plantation house and a 22-acre cut flower farm where Foxie (perhaps the third strong woman in this story) cultivates native and specialty blooms for purchase. The surrounding orchards and vineyards that made up the original property are also a Morgan/Flippin enterprise. It is used for weddings, corporate functions and farm-to-table culinary events, all feeding the restoration of the property that has been associated with her family for over 300 years.

*Written by John Stewart. Photos courtesy of Cheryl Crowell, Andrea Filippone and Bennett Saunders.*

## Symposium: **Saunders Brothers Inc.**



The drizzle and rain continued as ABS members crossed the rolling hills of Nelson County, Virginia and left the excellent lunch and house tour at Pharsalia for the campus of our hosts, Saunders Brothers, Inc. Tom Saunders joined the ABS bus at the company's headquarters for a bus tour of the container division at Tye Brook Farm. Tom began his tour by explaining that, even on a sunny, fair day (which

the afternoon was not), the Saunders Brothers' plant hygiene rules did not allow visitors to walk in the container division campus and a bus tour was the order of the day. Although such a plant hygiene rule may be relatively new in the commercial plant industry, it has become not only a "best practices" standard, but also an economic imperative for commercial boxwood growers, among others.



The tour of the container division at Tye Brook Farm was much more than a view of various hoop houses and open growing areas. Tom Saunders took time to discuss the container division's extensive selection of plants and related business practices, its water conservation and plant house heat retention and conservation technologies, as well as its soil mixing and shipping practices and facilities. It was clear that the results of Saunders Brothers' development and implementation of these specialized technologies and practices are improved operational efficiency and assurance of healthier, more robust plants that arrive at market on time. For many ABS members, Tom Saunders' comments were an initiation to the complexities of breeding, growing, selling, and shipping healthy landscape plants, shrubs, and trees within the constraints of each plant type's best growing season and each purchaser's climate and soil conditions.

When the ABS bus returned to Saunders Brothers headquarters and Farm Market, ABS members were treated to an exhibition of wreath-making by Pancho Becerra, an expert from among the Saunders Brothers employees. His hands quickly and skillfully created wonderful examples of boxwood wreaths. A number of ABS members strolled the outdoor plant sale area and departed with new treasures for their gardens. For ABS members with a sweet tooth, Saunders Brothers provided its wonderful homemade Peach Melba to



*Pancho Becerra demonstrating wreath-making*



*Bernie and Nan Cross with their bounty from Saunders Brothers Farm Market*

fortify members for the second leg of the Saunders Brothers facility tour.

Bennett Saunders, ABS president, led the bus tour of the company's boxwood cultivation campus known as Harewood Farm, and what a campus it is! Nestled in a wide valley, a veritable green bowl, were thousands of field-grown boxwood of numerous types, sizes, and shapes, including topiaries in geometric shapes (except that, in a good-natured salute to a fellow employee, those responsible for growing topiaries in the field had created two topiaries to represent a guy and his gal). As part of the Harewood bus tour, Bennett Saunders also discussed the results of the in-house "boxwood disease tolerance" breeding program, the water conservation techniques being implemented, and the all-important personnel and tool and equipment hygiene used throughout the boxwood cultivation campus and applicable to all visitors and personnel. It was clear that the Saunders Brothers hygiene rules were practiced with close to a religious fervor and always with an eye to operational efficiency and breeding and cultivation improvements.

The tour of Saunders Brothers boxwood cultivation campus was not the end of the ABS Symposium day. In a "But Wait, There's More" turn in the valley road, ABS members arrived at "Harewood", the lovely late 1877 home which Bennett shares with his gracious wife, Lynn, donned their mandatory shoe covers, and immediately fell under its spell. A restored late 18th or early 19th century log cabin on the grounds of "Harewood" gave some members an inkling of life in what was still the backcountry in 1800. To others,



*The pigs at Bennett Saunders' Home*

Bennett introduced the approximately 48-inch topiary pig that he has created for his wife (who has taken a shine to the alive kind) and explained the challenges of encouraging his boxwood to grow horizontally when all it wanted was a vertical opportunity.

Under a white tent, members found a groaning board of delicious barbeque and other Southern foods and a beverage stand replete with local brewery and distillery selections and other drinks aplenty. There away from the rain, tables were adorned with small boxwood plants as gifts for each guest and The Little Mountain Boys performed blue grass music throughout the evening. In addition to ABS members, guests included Armand and Bernice Thiebolt, the founders of the Quarry Gardens at Schuyler, and Paul and Tatum Saunders and younger members of the Saunders family, many of whom work with their fathers and uncles at Saunders Brothers.

After dinner, Bennett Saunders treated all when he joined The Little Mountain Boys with his fiddle. His mother, Tatum Saunders, could be seen both dancing to the band's music and singing along with them from time to time alone and with other family members. ABS members, other guests, and members of the

Saunders Brothers team often joined her and sang along, too.

The tours, the beauty of the rolling, unbelievably verdant Nelson County countryside, the feast, the music, and the easy, genuine warmth of all the Saunders family and the Saunders Brothers team made the last afternoon and evening of the 2018 Symposium a wonderful treat for everyone!

Nothing was dampened by the steady rain and drizzle. The Saunders family and their team (especially Adrienne) have set the best practices standard for hospitality, and those who attended the Symposium say "Many, Many Thanks"!

*Written by Revelle Gwyn. Photos courtesy of Cheryl Crowell and Beth Sams*



## The Question Box

**Q:** I live in Germany and have a lot of boxwood on my property. I would like to know, if there is a possibility to grow new boxwood out of the seed.

Usually I breed it by branches but this time I would like to try the way with seed. I would very much appreciate if anyone can help and get me some advice to try it?

**A:** The method of propagation ought to be determined by the desired results. You've been using boxwood cuttings. This method of asexual propagation is preferred to create more identical plants. This is typical when doing a stock increase in a boxwood which possesses desirable traits. Propagation by seed, is sexual, and promises the progenies are different from the parent. These traits may or may not be obvious. This is used to create a boxwood with new or different traits.

Here are some details for seed propagation from the 4th edition of the Boxwood Handbook:

'An exciting aspect of growing buis from seeds is the resulting seedlings may have unique characteristics, different from the parent plant. The chance of discovering a unique buis with new characteristics is good. When the seed capsule matures, it dries and becomes brown, it then splits open into three parts and the six mature shiny black seeds will fall out. Maturation of the fruit capsule varies from plant to plant and from year to year, so the seed collector must be on the alert for the opening and drying of the seed husks beginning in June. To ensure successful seed collection, small light-weight cloth bags can be tied to the young branch, enclosing the entire capsule in June.'

'Buis seeds will germinate very easily and uniformly if given a cold stratification of 4°C for ten weeks. Seedlings that germinate in the spring can be planted out in protected areas the next spring. It takes at least three years for a seedling to begin to exhibit its true characteristics such as leaf size and color and rate of growth. Plant habit characteristics such as shape and size will take much longer, usually decades.'

# News from Blandy Experimental Farm

*The American Boxwood Society established its charter at Blandy Experimental Farm (today, the State Arboretum of Virginia) in Boyce, Virginia, on March 24, 1961. The two organizations have always maintained a close professional collaboration as it relates to boxwood. Members of the Board recently went to visit the ABS Boxwood Memorial Garden and meet with the new Arborist, Chris Schmidt.*



## A New Era: Chris Schmidt Named Arborist

Blandy's new arborist is a familiar face: Chris Schmidt was named to the position January 22 after an extensive search and interviews with a series of candidates. Chris steps into the position left open after the 2017 retirement of Blandy's longest-serving employee, Bob Arnold.

As arborist, Chris will coordinate the care of the Arboretum's woody plant collection, including general collections care and maintenance, propagation, planting, and record-keeping. She will oversee a three-person crew that includes two landscape specialists and a grounds coordinator who maintain the overall appearance of the Arboretum. "It is with great, great pleasure that I step into the arborist's position at Blandy," she said. "I am eager to move forward on the work Bob Arnold began."

Chris started working at Blandy in 2013 as an arboretum specialist. Prior to that, she was assistant retail manager for Fort Valley Nursery in Woodstock. She also held positions at the Winchester Agriculture Experiment Station and the Virginia Truck and Ornamentals Research Station in Virginia Beach, and taught plant identification at Tidewater Community College in Chesapeake.

"My primary goal is to continue the renovation and rejuvenation of the collections throughout the arboretum," she continued. "I will be responsible for the



From left to right: Lynn Batdorf, Cheryl Crowell, Chris Schmidt and Sabrina Hartley



Chris Schmidt



Lynn and Chris discussing *Microphyllas*

health of the plantings and I will need to be watchful of any changes, especially among the historical trees and shrubs. My long-term objective is to ensure that visitors to Blandy are made aware of the truly beautiful landscape and the unique and extensive plant collection we are so fortunate to have here. I am thrilled to have been given this wonderful opportunity."

Chris holds a masters degree in plant pathology from Virginia Tech, and earned her bachelor's degree in biology from St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY. She lives in Woodstock, Virginia.

# Boxwood Publications

## *Le Manuel du Buis*

### EBTS-France

The sister organization of the American Boxwood Society (ABS) is the European Boxwood and Topiary Society (EBTS) – Europe. It was established in Brussels in 2008 with independent chapters in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. Many chapters were established prior to the formation of EBTS-Europe, the umbrella organization. EBTS-France was established in 2003 by Patrick Salembier who has continuously served as its President.

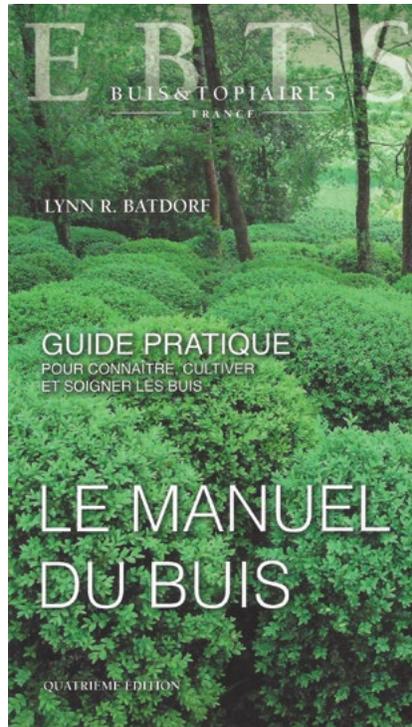
### L'histoire

The premier presentation of the fourth edition of the Boxwood Handbook, titled *Le Manuel du Buis*, occurred on Saturday, September 9, 2017. The prelude to this event began to slowly and quietly coalesce over many years. French boxwood enthusiasts, wanting healthy boxwood, were inundating Patrick Salembier with their questions and concerns. In his desire to provide accurate information to help his membership, Salembier would occasionally pass a question on to Lynn Batdorf.

About two years ago, Batdorf and Salembier mused about the continuing boxwood inquiries. They agreed the best way to help those seeking comprehensive and authoritative boxwood information would be an updated edition of the 2005 *Boxwood Handbook*, one with a French perspective. The idea of *Le Manuel du Buis* was born. It would become the first reference book on boxwood in French. Written by Batdorf, it would be aptly translated into French by Martine Higonnet. She earned a B.A. in Political Science and Languages from Vassar College, and later moved to France where she bought the famous historical topiary garden, Le Jardin des Ifs, in Haut-de-France. Her lifelong command of the nuances of French and English made her the ideal translator.

### The Château

The release of *Le Manuel du Buis* occurred at The Château de la Ballue situated between Saint Malo and Mont Saint Michel, in the rolling hills and dense forests between Brittany and Normandy. In the 12th



century the château was first a fortress, with an enclosing wall and drawbridge. It had a dovecote and two chapels. It was razed, then rebuilt on the original foundation between 1616 and 1620 under Gilles de Ruellan, a tax collector for the region of Brittany. The estate was confiscated during the French Revolution. In the 19th century it was an important royal glassmaking factory. Abandoned for 30 years after WWII, it was bought by Claude Arthaud in 1973 who partly restored it. A comprehensive restoration began in 1995 by the current owners.

The château is a French historical monument recognized by the many literary celebrities of the romantic period who have resided there.

Victor Hugo was one of these. He began writing his last novel, “Quatre-Vingt-Treize”, (or “Ninety-three”) published in 1874, while residing at La Ballue. The hosts gave this author both the honor and privilege of allowing him to stay in the very room once occupied by Victor Hugo.

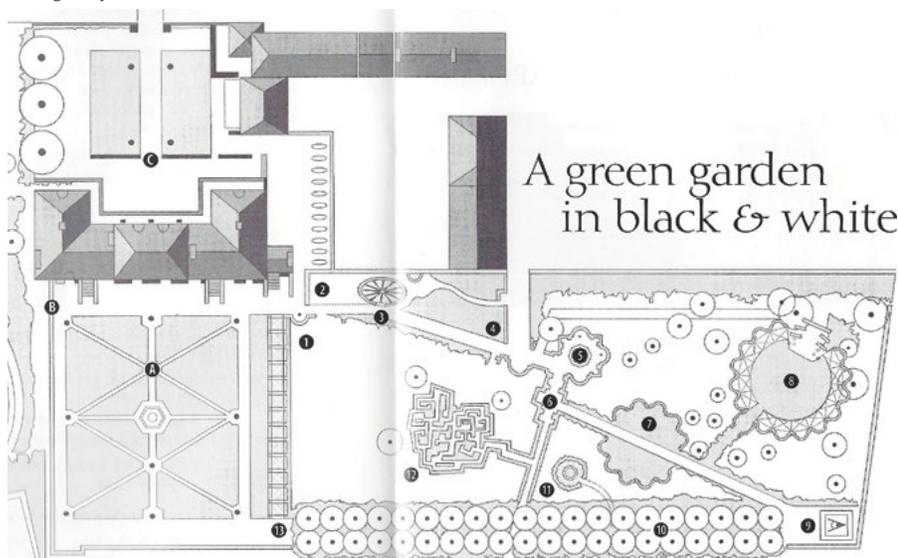


Standing in the room Victor Hugo resided in while writing “Quatre-Vingt-Treize” published in 1874. Left: Lynn R Batdorf. Right: Marie-Françoise Mathiot-Mathon. Photo by Patrick Salembier.

## The Jardins

A potato field during World War II, the gardens were soon abandoned until 1973 when they were partly restored. A more recent and far more significant garden restoration began in 1995. The nearly 5 acres of gardens have two very different styles separated by a wisteria allée and columns of sculpted yew trees. The numbers below match the line drawing of the gardens.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <i>Carpinus betulus</i> grove  | 9) the Temple of Diana                          |
| 2) fern grove   | 10) linden alley                                |
| 3) atrape grove   | 11) music grove                                 |
| 4) the undulating garden  | 12) the labyrinth                               |
| 5) scented grove  | 13) wisteria walk                               |
| 6) the "knee joint"   |   |
| 7) the <i>Cupressocyparis leylandii</i> grove   | A) the formal garden of François Hébert-Stevens |
| 8) the green theatre, a circular turfgrass area framed with <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> and <i>Taxus baccata</i> | B) the Door of Venus                            |
|   | C) main courtyard of the château                |



The distinctive and highly regarded gardens are featured in a 142 page hardback book, *Variations sur les Jardins de la Ballue et leurs Paysages*, published in 2012 by Verihac Éditions, Paris. Written in both English and French, the history and narrative explain the many intricate design features, including the topiaries. The numerous, professionally prepared, full color photographs, provide a tantalizing view of the gardens.

The movie, *Panique au Sénat*, produced by Paris-Brest Productions, was filmed in the gardens. There are at least 20 news documentaries about the garden, all of which can be viewed at: <http://www.laballuejardin.com/en/reports-television>.

## L'événement

On Saturday, September 9, 2017, garden writers, newspaper reporters from Paris, château owners, and professional gardeners gathered for a buffet breakfast and brunch in a 17th century buffet dining

room. Afterwards, Marie-Françoise Mathiot-Mathon, managing the château with her husband Alain Schrotter, gave a private garden tour to the participants. Then Lynn Batdorf gave a lecture on boxwood, previously presented at the 55th ABS Annual Symposium at Longwood Gardens in May of 2015. Lynn spoke in English and Martine Higonnet provided a French translation. A book signing followed.



L to R: Martine Higonnet, Marie-Françoise Mathiot-Mathon, Patrick Salembier, Lynn Batdorf. Photo by Philippe Ternynck.

## La collection de buis

Finally, it was a great treat to be personally led through the boxwood collection at The Château de la Ballue by one of its owners, the boxwood enthusiast Marie-Françoise Mathiot-Mathon. It began with a view of the long formal display of triangular-shaped boxwood beds. Then we moved on to the boxwood collection. We spent hours examining 80 different boxwood cultivars, about 300 plants in total. It is most unusual for a private garden to have 80 different taxon of *Buxus*. This exceeds many public arboreta and gardens. Begun in 2008, these cultivated boxwood have been obtained from nurseries throughout Belgium and France. Marie-Françoise's passion for boxwood is at a level rarely seen in any garden, public or private. Great effort has been taken to obtain corrected identified boxwood with correctly written nomenclature. All are well cared for under ideal site conditions. Correct identification is ensured by:

- 1) a triad of maps
- 2) an inventory matrix
- 3) a metal label attached to each plant
- 4) a privately printed book

It is the fourth level of documentation which requires explanation. A privately printed book titled, *La collection de buis des jardins du château de la Ballue*, was produced in December 2016. With each photograph professionally produced, it is a high quality photographic journal documenting 61 different *Buxus* taxa in the collection. Each cultivar has a full page, natural color photograph, close-up of a representative branch and a facing page showing the habit of the shrub. The accession number, complete botanical name, source and year of acquisition are included with each entry. Following protocol in most arboreta, the accession number in the inventory matrix matches those in the photo essay.



Photo by: Patrick Salembier



## Hospitalité française

Fulfilling the responsibilities as International Cultivar Registration Authority for *Buxus*, requires more than expert nomenclatural skills. Frequent travelling to document, verify and authenticate new boxwood names and plants is one of these. North American and Western Europe are the primary sources for new *Buxus*. Since the formation of the EBTS-France, France has experienced a renewed interest in “buis”. Concurrently, it has meant greater participation by the International Registrar. It is exciting to have nurseries, professional gardeners, EBTS-France members, Château owners and others, all earnestly interested in correct nomenclature and cultural information for their buis. French hospitality is unique. Their rich history, love of life and their “jardins” must be personally experienced and savored, not read about in a travel guide. Generous and warm hospitality is freely given. A guest quickly becomes acutely aware of the constant concern for providing a pleasant and safe visit is paramount for the French.

## Fermeture

This fourth edition of the Boxwood Handbook took two years to write. Now, for the first time, gardeners and professionals throughout Europe have a comprehensive and reliable guide for the care of their beloved boxwood. It is available from: [www.Amazon.fr](http://www.Amazon.fr).

*Written by Lynn R Batdorf.*

*Photos taken by Lynn R. Batdorf, except as noted.*

*Lynn R Batdorf is an Honorary Life Member of: EBTS-France, EBTS-UK and ABS. Batdorf supervises the National Boxwood Collection, certified by the Conservatory of Special Plants (CCVS), in Le Touquet-Paris-Plage, France. He is the author of Boxwood: An Illustrated Encyclopedia and four editions of the Boxwood Handbook.*

*Since 1985, Batdorf has continuously served as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for *Buxus*. For 36 years, he served as curator of the National Boxwood Collection, certified by the Plant Collections Network (American Public Gardens Association), at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.*

# From the ABS Board of Directors

## Teleconference Summary - April 11, 2018

- President Bennett Saunders reported that the “Boxwood Management-Today and Tomorrow” conference was a great success and thanked everyone involved.
- The ABS Treasurer, Michael Hecht, reported the society finances are solid. A \$5,000 gift in memory of Sheila Ano was made to the society by her husband Dr. Antonio Ano. The Board remembers Sheila fondly and sincerely appreciates this donation.
- Executive Director Report - Tootie Rinker reported a slight increase in membership numbers, in part due to the Boxwood Conference. She is now working on the Annual Symposium.
- Approximately 37% of our membership returned the membership survey and the results will assist the Board with future planning. Thanks to all who participated!
- A survey was also presented to the people attending the Boxwood Management Conference, and the results will help us plan future events.
- The International Registrar, Lynn Batdorf, reported that effective February, 2018, Melanie Underwood, ICRA for Narcissus and Delphinium at the Royal Horticultural Society in Wisley, UK, has kindly accepted the heavy and large international responsibilities as Secretary of the ISHS Special Commission for Cultivar Nomenclature.
- The website continues to improve, and the Board decided to add scanned copies of recent issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin* to the site to increase the value of paid advertisements. These issues will not be searchable as are the older copies. Members are invited to advertise!
- Videos of the Boxwood Management Conference presentations will soon be available as YouTube videos accessed from the ABS website.
- Revised Bylaws were approved by the Board at the January 10th meeting and will be presented for a vote at the annual meeting. New subscription fees and benefits were also approved.
- Next year, the Symposium will be held in Indianapolis, IN, hosted by Ron and Linda Williams. We are also discussing an International Tour and will have information at this year’s annual meeting.
- The Board is discussing policy and actions related to memorial benches.



## The Question Box

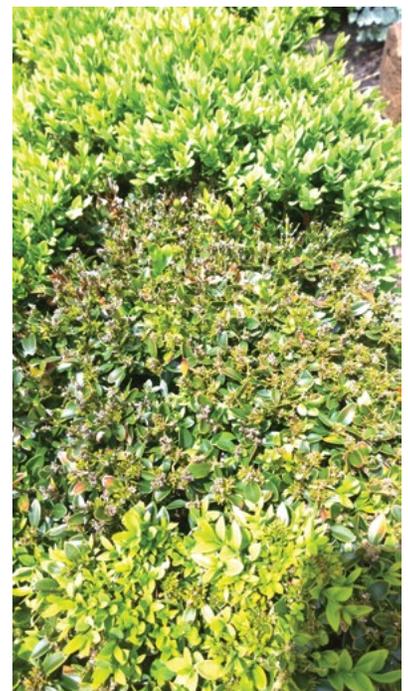
**Q:** I’m trying to figure out what’s happening on these boxwood (and nearby hydrangeas). Could it be a virus? Would it attack both plants? Your help is much appreciated!

**A:** No virus. Indeed, only 2 or 3% of all plant diseases are viral. In fact, this is not even a disease.

The spring new growth (twigs and leaves) was heavily burned by severe frost damage. This, then, resulted in a second flush of tight new growth.

The question is why did this occur on only one branch? There are a variety of abiotic conditions, causing cultural stress, which may be responsible. Your boxwood is *Buxus sempervirens*. It is unusual to see *Buxus sempervirens* with foliage this dense which suggests chronic shearing. Less likely is root damage from no mulch, or low soil pH.

The good news is there are no pests or diseases affecting your boxwood.



## MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Andrea J. Filippone is Landscape Designer/ Partner for AJF Design and F<sup>2</sup> Environmental Design, bringing together the finest elements of design with ecologically sound scientific practice. Ms. Filippone, a Watson Fellow, and a former instructor at the Harvard



University Graduate School of Design, has spent most of her career working in architecture and interior design. In the past ten years she has started a boxwood nursery and now spends most of her time defining structure and space in the outdoor environment as a Landscape Designer and environmentalist. Her dedication to environmentally sound practice is evidenced by her offices which include the five acre nursery containing more than 50 buxus cultivars, including a closed loop composting system, and glass greenhouses powered by solar voltaic and thermal panels... and, yes, this can all be done in an aesthetically pleasing way!

## MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

Revelle Gwyn is an amateur gardener whose principal interests are plant selections for historic properties and salvaging and maintaining 19th and early 20th century Southeastern landscapes and the buildings that often accompany them. So, it is no surprise that boxwood, plants beloved and grown by American gardeners for decades beyond counting, are of interest to her. A native North Carolinian who has lived in the high tech sector of northern Alabama for more than a quarter of a century, Revelle is a retired corporate lawyer who has turned her interests and energy to her long-neglected love of plants.



As a member of the ABS Board of Directors, Revelle could be said to fill the role of representing boxwood owners, that is, those concerned with the long-term consequences of planting and maintaining boxwood on their properties and the way in which their plants' health and vibrancy impact their settings. She looks forward to learning from other Society members and assisting with Board with long-term planning and designing research sponsorship requirements, corporate governance issues, and membership development initiatives.

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## Letter from the Editor

Dear Members,

It is with great pleasure that I begin my term as Editor of *The Boxwood Bulletin* and expand my role with the American Boxwood Society. Most of you may not know me because unlike the Virginia roots of the Society, I reside up in the woods of Maine. I have had the fortune of working with ABS since 2012. My first project was to assist with the ABS booth design at the Philadelphia Flower Show. Since then I have continued to work on the website and other print media. Now I hope to help unify the print and digital branding.

This is your bulletin, it is the expression of the members of the Society at this time. I help with the layout but you, the members, are the real voice. Please let me know what you are interested in reading or seeing - or, even better yet, consider writing an

article or submitting photographs. We are actively looking for more sources and you are some of the most enthusiastic and knowledgeable people in the boxwood world.

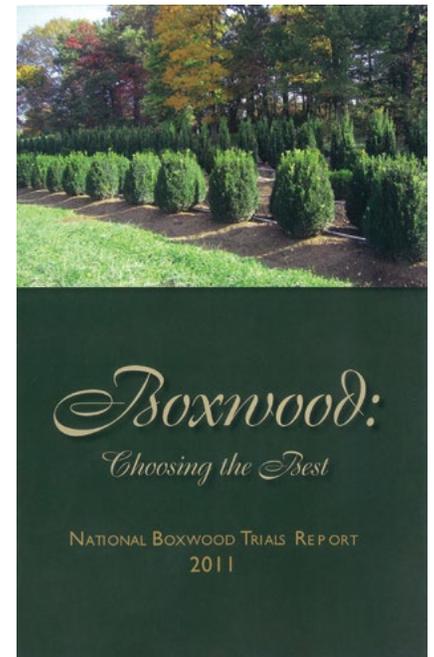
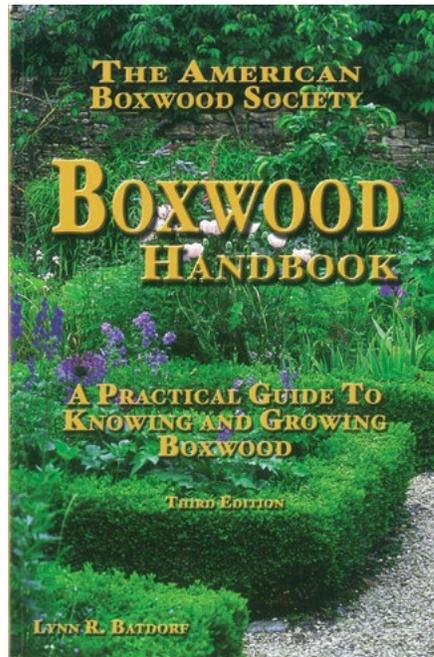
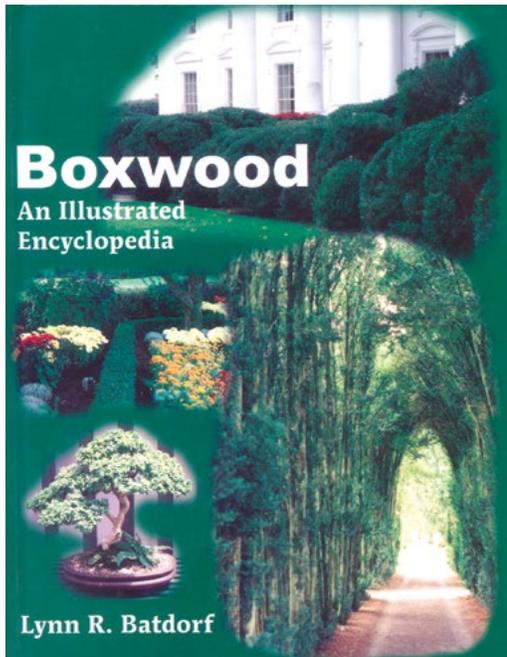
For those interested in my design and horticultural background, I encourage you to visit my website at [sheapowelldesign.com](http://sheapowelldesign.com). Please feel free to reach out any time. I look forward to getting to know more of you!

Shea Powell  
[shea@sheapowelldesign.com](mailto:shea@sheapowelldesign.com)



# Essential Boxwood Reading

Order online now at [boxwoodsociety.org](http://boxwoodsociety.org)



*Boxwood: An Illustrated Encyclopedia.* A comprehensive reference of all of the known temperate boxwood, which includes nearly 1,050 different plants. It contains information on the size, hardiness, habit, leaf shape, stem characteristics, annual growth, site conditions, pests, landscape use, history and common names. It took U.S. National Arboretum horticulturist Lynn Batdorf nearly 20 years, six trips to Europe, countless visits to nurseries and botanic gardens throughout the United States, to complete his book. Hardback Book. 343 pages, includes nearly 1,050 different plants.

*Boxwood Handbook: A Practical Guide to Knowing and Growing Boxwood (3rd Edition).* An authoritative guide to boxwood culture. Includes chapters on: The history of boxwood; Recommended boxwood with descriptions; Boxwood in the landscape; Culture including pruning, transplanting, site conditions; Propagation; Pests; Disease. 123 pages. Written by Lynn R. Batdorf.

*About the Author:* Lynn Batdorf has been the Registrar for The American Boxwood Society – the International Cultivar Registration Authority for *Buxus L* – since 1985. He is curator of the National Boxwood Collection at the United States National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., where, since 1977, he has been managing the most complete living collection of boxwood.

*Boxwood Choosing the Best, National Boxwood Trials Report 2011.* More than sixty Boxwood Trial test cooperators from the United States and several international sites present this comprehensive evaluation of boxwood cultivars. With this data, boxwood lovers now have access to information that will allow them to come to a reliable conclusion as to the performance of some of the best boxwood cultivars. Edited by Paul M. Saunders.



Discover even more at [boxwoodsociety.org](http://boxwoodsociety.org)