

The *Boxwood* Bulletin

A quarterly devoted to Man's oldest garden ornamental



At the west entrance of Kenmore, there are fewer boxwood near the mansion. Midway plants have been cut back, but those lining the brick wall still “peep” over. See story on page 31. (Photo: Mrs. Robert Frackelton)

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3912 Faculty Drive
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Technical articles, news, history, lore, notes, and photographs concerning boxwood specimens, gardens or plantings are solicited for possible publication in *The Boxwood Bulletin*. Photographs should be suitable for reproduction and fully captioned. Suggestions regarding format and content are welcome. Material should be submitted to:

Chairman, Bulletin Committee
1714 Greenway Drive
Fredericksburg, Va. 22401

Material to be returned to the sender must be submitted with a self-addressed envelope carrying suitable postage. Every effort will be made to protect submittals, but the Society cannot be responsible for loss or injury.

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The Baldwin-Noake Collaboration

Compiled by Mrs. Robert L. Frackelton

Recently some negatives and a few color slides were presented to the ABS. The photographs were taken by Colonel Donald W. Noake for Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr. of the College of William and Mary and an officer of The American Boxwood Society at that time. As nearly as could be determined, these photographs were taken during 1969 and 1970. Searching old issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*, we were able to identify a good many and to review a wealth of information.

Korean Boxwoods

The April 1969 issue of *The Boxwood Bulletin* (Vol. 8, No. 4) contained an article by Dr. Baldwin on Korean boxwoods. In consultation with several others, he attempted to sort out the confusion in nomenclature.

For thirty-seven years, beginning in 1906, Takenoshin Nakai had studied the Korean flora. Baldwin credited Dr. Nakai with a unique knowledge of Korean plants, but noted that as a taxonomist he was a "splitter" and did not follow the usual professional procedures. As an example, according to Baldwin, Nakai did not validly establish *Buxus koreana*, not having published a Latin description nor having deposited a type specimen in a herbarium.

Baldwin cited various descriptions of Korean boxwoods from different sources and included three photographs of the plant formerly known as *Buxus* var. *koreana* and now properly, *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis*, sometimes followed by 'Nana' to indicate the dwarf form. In the article Fig. 1 was of a specimen of the Korean boxwood photographed by Dr. Bernice M. Speese in 1952. Fig. 2 was photographed by Col. Donald W. Noake in 1969 and captioned as a companion plant to Fig. 1. The text noted that these two plants were grown by J. B. Brouwers of



Fig. 1 *B. sinica* var. *insularis* 'Nana' as photographed in 1969. (Photos: Col. Donald W. Noake)



Fig. 2 Branchlet of *B. sinica* var. *insularis* representative of Fig. 3 in the April 1969 article.

Williamsburg, formerly Landscape Superintendent at Colonial Williamsburg. The plant photographed in 1969 was at the time twenty-three inches tall with a spread just short of seven feet.

Shown here is the plant as photographed by Col. Noake and a representative of the branchlet in Figure 3 of the original article. (This is the low-growing form of Korean boxwood which borders the entrance walk to The Quarters at Blandy Experimental Farm, Boyce, Virginia.) (Figs. 1 & 2)

The Common Box in Britain

by Roy Lancaster

Another photo (shown here), in the same April 1969 issue, of *B. sempervirens* 'Handsworthii' accompanied a two-part article by Roy Lancaster which was reprinted from *Gardeners Chronicle* issues of May 31, June 7 and June 14, 1968 with permission. (Baldwin probably had this photo taken to accompany the article.)

The July 1969 issue of the *Bulletin* contained the description by Roy Lancaster in which he used the spelling 'Handsworthensis': a strong growing cultivar, erect, wide-spreading with orange-tinged twigs. Leaves medium-sized, elliptic, elliptic-oblong to broadly elliptic, firm and somewhat leathery, olive-green to gray-green, becoming dark shining green when shaded. Lancaster stated that because of its vigorous growth it is ideally suited for use as a hedge or screen. A large specimen at Kew measured 15' x 20' (1968) while a hedge in Hillier's Jermyns Lane nursery was 13' high. He noted that it is listed under both names. (Fig. 3)

Lancaster said cv 'Hardwickensis' or 'Pyramidalis Hardwickensis' are supposed to be related, but distinct from 'Handsworthensis', but that ones he examined were identical. Both were raised by Fisher Son and Sibray at their Handsworth nursery near Sheffield. Further, he felt certain phases of the forms 'Arborescens' 'Latifolia', and



Fig. 3 A 1969 photo of a *Buxus sempervirens* 'Handsworthii' plant from Kingsville Nurseries, Kingsville, Md.

'Pyramidalis' are similar and may have arisen from a common ancestor. (Because of its growth habit, 'Handsworthensis' was dubbed "Candelabra Boxwood" by Henry J. Hohman of Kingsville Nurseries.)

This July 1969 issue continued with Mr. Lancaster's descriptions of *B. sempervirens* cultivars and was preceded by a photo of *B. sempervirens*

var. *Latifolia Maculata*, now written as 'Latifolia Maculata' branchlet from a Kingsville Nurseries plant. (Fig. 4)

Lancaster calls 'Latifolia Maculata' a relatively low shrub reaching 6-8' in shade with leaves medium to large, ovate to ovate-orbicular, dark green, variously striped and splashed yellow. He considers it worth growing for its spring foliage which is a bright sunny

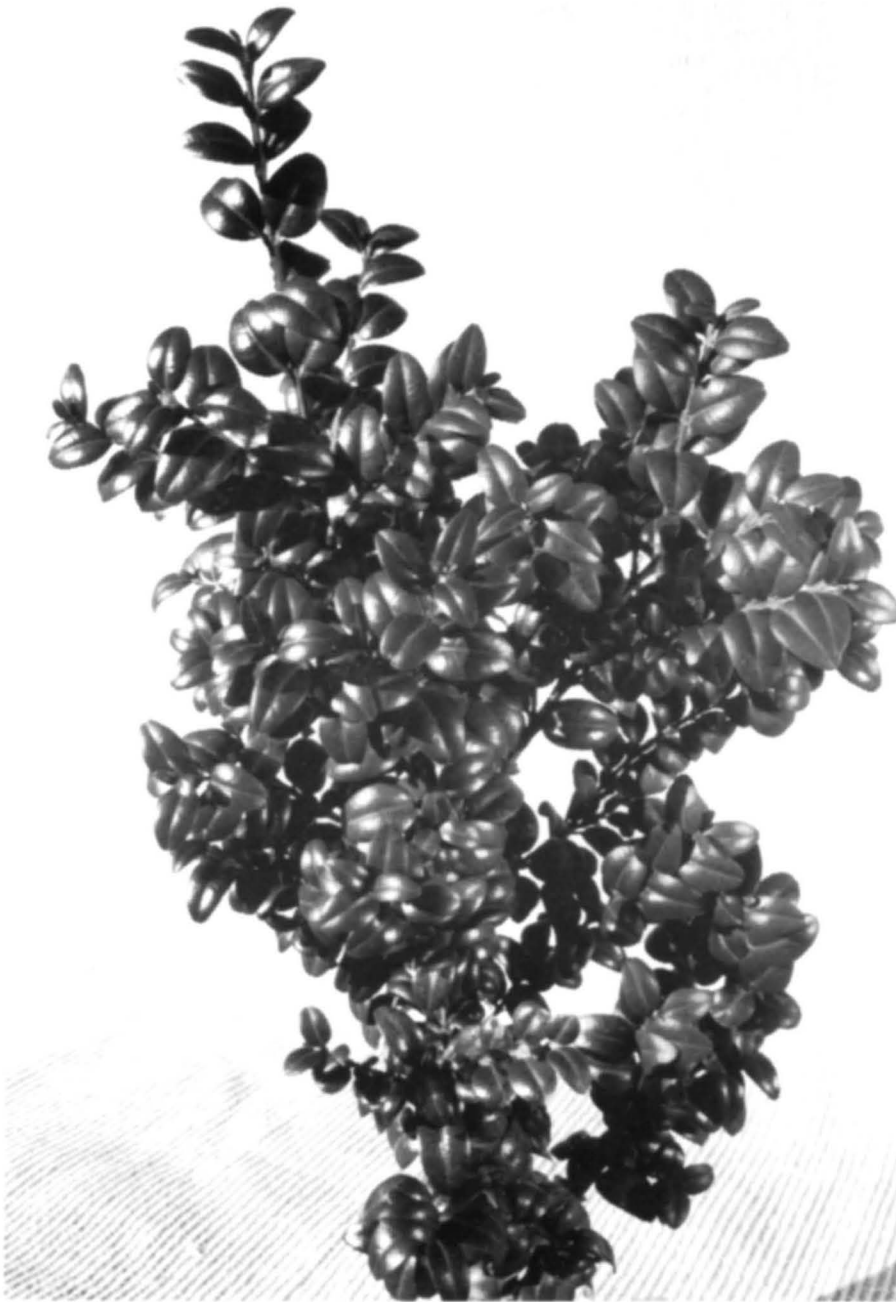


Fig. 4 A 1969 photo of a *Buxus sempervirens* 'Latifolia Maculata' plant from Kingsville Nurseries.

yellow. The older leaves tend to lose their variegation.

'Latifolia Maculata' had been sold under the name of 'Japonica Aurea' and in England was commonly found in country churchyards. It will make an attractive low hedge and annual pruning seems to encourage the rich yellow young growth, he said. A specimen at Winchester (England) measured 4' x 6'

while another in a wood at Longleat was 9' x 10'.

Birds Feed on Boxwood Leaf Miner

The next of the Noake photos appeared in this July 1969 *Bulletin* under a piece by Dr. Baldwin about the nuthatch and leaf miner, the result of a

letter dated March 1, 1969, from Henry J. Hohman (Kingsville Nurseries) in which he stated that after fifty-seven years in professional horticulture he was still learning. His narrow-leaf *Buxus sempervirens* 'Angustifolia' had long been troubled by leaf miner, but this year nuthatches had come to his rescue! These photos by Colonel Noake tell the story. (Figs. 5 & 6)

Richard Mahone, Assistant Director of Landscape and Maintenance, Colonial Williamsburg (1969) reported that he had frequently seen birds feeding on leaf miners of holly, less often on those of boxwood. When boxwood was heavily infested with leaf miner he had observed warblers, tufted titmice and chickadees feasting on the larvae.

Baldwin stated that in Williamsburg the types with the most growth in spring are the most heavily infested with leaf miner. *B. sempervirens* 'Salicifolia' was among the most heavily infested. (*B. sempervirens* 'Joy' - in Fredericksburg - seems to be especially susceptible to invasion.)

Boxwood and Peckerwood by J. T. Baldwin, Jr., reprinted from *The Boxwood Bulletin*, January 1970, Vol. 9. No. 3)

Inordinate tippler, the yellow-bellied sapsucker has been called. And so he is, drilling sap-wells spaced as regularly as grains of corn on a cob and down to the wood of some three hundred kinds of trees and shrubs over a three-thousand-mile range in eastern North America; feeding upon the delicate cells that divide and upon those that transport food and primarily upon the sugary sap itself, but varying his diet with ants and other insects attracted to the sap and with fruits such as berries and nuts. The bird makes no practice of searching out wood-boring larvae. But certain harmful insects do fall within its fare.

Over its migratory range the sapsucker from an economic standpoint does little damage, though individual plants may suffer, severely; where the



Fig. 5 March 1969 photo of leaves of *B. sempervirens* 'Angustifolia' torn up by nuthatches.



Fig. 6 Enlarged detail of damaged boxwood leaves.

bird breeds and where it overwinters. tree-damage is considerable and estimated in millions of dollars each year.

The regularity of its work readily distinguishes the drilling of this bird from that of other woodpeckers. The sapsucker makes circular or squarish elliptical holes usually in rings or partial rings around the stem but sometimes in vertical rows. If the meal is especially good, the bird may remove considerable patches of bark. Pitted and scarred branches may die.

Fortunately with us boxwood is not often attractive to the sapsucker, but rarely an individual plant may be severely damaged. The accompanying photograph made by Col. Donald W. Noake in the spring of 1969 shows a badly ravaged specimen of *Buxus*

sempervirens at the College of William and Mary. (Fig. 7)

Various repellants may be applied to individual plants to discourage the inveterate avian visitor. Bird Tanglefoot is recommended. It is a non-drying compound that adheres to the stem and makes it sticky and uncomfortable to birds. Under usual conditions an application will last for months.

Lest I leave too negative an impression of the yellow-bellied sapsucker, I quote the following paragraphs by Winsor Marrett Tyler (*Bull. 174*, U.S. National Museum, pp. 126-127, 1939) that describe the beauty of the bird in motion.

"It is spring in the Transition Zone when in April the yellow-bellied sapsucker passes through from its breeding ground in the Canadian Zone.

If spring is tardy most of the trees may be leafless, but many of them have blossomed, and the sap is running.

"At this season the sapsucker is light-hearted and jaunty compared to the sober, quiet bird that visited us the autumn before. The breeding season is near at hand, and if two birds meet they often engage in a sort of game, a precursory courtship, wherein one bird flies at the other in a playful attack; the other eludes the rush of the oncoming bird by a sudden, last minute retreat—winding around the branch on which it rests, or sliding off into the air. In these pursuits in and out among the branches we are impressed by the agility and grace of the birds and by the easy way they direct their course through the air. They do not appear to impel themselves by strength of wing alone, but, espe-



Fig. 7 Sapsucker-damaged boxwood at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va. (from January 1970 Boxwood Bulletin).

cially in their slanting descents, they let the force of gravity pull them swiftly along, and then, by the impetus of the speed attained, glide upward to a perch. They seem to swing from branch to branch with little effort, slowly opening and closing their wings to guide them on their way. As we watch them we are reminded of trapeze artists in the circus.

“But the new sap is running, and the birds quickly tap the supply by drilling into the bark of their favorite trees and drink of the sap as it flows freely from the wounds.”

This is poetry.

Workshop on Boxwood Held at Williamsburg

The April 1970 issue of the *Bulletin* reported on the Boxwood Workshop sponsored by the Horticultural Committee of The Garden Club of Virginia (GCV) under the Chairmanship of Mrs. D. H. Patteson-Knight on Wednesday, February 25, 1970, attended by about 95 club members of GCV. Mrs. Lucius J. Kellam, President GCV and Admiral Phillips, President ABS were honor guests. Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr., College of William and Mary and Mr. Alden Eaton, Colonial Williamsburg (CW), both officers of the ABS presented the program with the assistance of Mr. Richard D. Mahone, Mr. Everett J. Raynes and other members of Mr. Eaton's staff.

The workshop began with talks by Dr. Baldwin and Mr. Eaton at The Cascades where a display of pruning tools and equipment had been set up. Next there were guided tours of the boxwood collection at the College of William and Mary and CW gardens with a demonstration of topiary pruning behind the George Wythe House garden where there was a collection of boxwood topiary.

Mr. Eaton's staff, explained their method for controlling boxwood leaf miner. In late February or early March an infested plant or a suspect one is given an overall clip of two or three inches. Then the plant is given a good shake to remove clippings and dead material. All trash and clippings are carefully raked up and burned. It was suggested that a tarp be placed under



Mr. Alden Eaton speaks to garden club members with a tool display in the background (Feb. 25, 1970)



Figure 9 Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr., and Mrs. D. H. Patteson-Knight (Horticultural Chairman, GCV) pause on the tour to chat with a participant (Feb. 25, 1970).

the plant before beginning to facilitate the clean-up. This is followed within a day or two by spraying with lime-sulfur when the temperature is at least 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Examine in late spring for the need of follow-up spray with a different chemical. (The original photographs used in the April 1970 issue were not located, but some others were - all by Col. Noake.) (Figs. 8 & 9)

Prolific Flowering and Fruiting of Boxwood

by J. T. Baldwin, Jr., reprinted from *The Boxwood Bulletin*, April 1971, Vol. 10, No. 4

During the spring of 1970 in Williamsburg, Virginia, boxwoods of

various kinds flowered and fruited more prolifically than I can recall having seen in previous years.

Col. D. W. Noake, U.S.A. Ret., photographed a plant of *Buxus sempervirens* in flower and in fruit. His photographs are reproduced here. We stripped the leaves from one of the branches to show the frequency of the immature fruit; in the process we lost some of the capsules. Remember that each fruit contains six seed. and we show only a small part of a twelve-foot-tall plant! (Fig. 10)

In an article on the same subject. printed in *The Boxwood Bulletin*, January 1964, Vol. 3, No. 3, Dr. Baldwin paraphrased from Alfred Rehder's *Manual of Cultivated Trees and Shrubs* (Macmillan, 1940) the

descriptions of boxwood flowers and fruits.

The flowers are without petals and occur in axillary or terminal clusters which usually consist of a central pistillate flower and several staminate flowers. The staminate flower has four sepals and four stamens much longer than the sepals. The pistillate flower has six sepals and a three-celled ovary with three short styles.

The pistillate flowers, of course, develop into fruits. The fruit is subglobose or obovoid, 3-horned capsule which at maturity opens into three 2-horned valves; on each valve are two lustrous black seeds. Philip Miller in his *Gardeners Dictionary* (1733) wrote more picturesquely about the Box-Tree: "The fruit is shap'd like

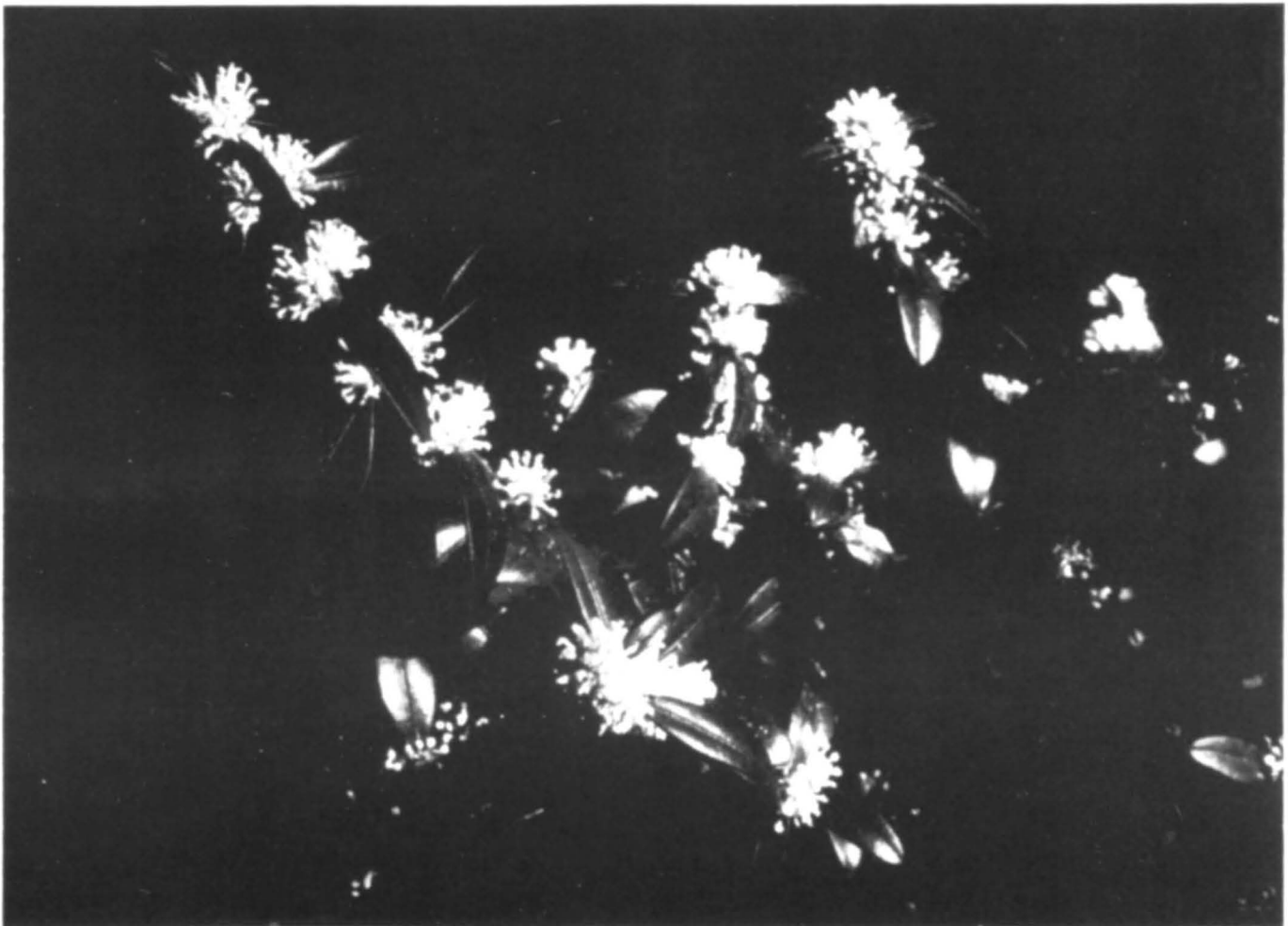


Fig. 10 Flowers on *B. sempervirens*, March 1970.



Dr. J. T. Baldwin, Jr., with students on a field trip.

a Porridgepot inverted, and is divided into three cells, containing two seeds in each; which, when ripe, are cast forth by the Elasticity of the Vessel.”

The seeds may be thrown several feet. If duff or leaf mold are present, the seeds will germinate and establish seedlings by the hundreds. Those in the dense shade of the mother plant will die soon after germination unless some boxwood enthusiast rescues them. In Virginia seeds are discharged from the exploding fruits in June and July.

For reasons not yet known certain clones (vegetative lines) of boxwood set fruits in which some or all of the seeds abort.

J. T. Baldwin, Jr., Class Field Trips

According to Mrs. Alfred Armstrong, who was instrumental in procuring Col. Noake’s photo negatives for us, Col. and Mrs. Noake used to accompany Dr. Baldwin with his botany class on field trips, camera in hand. (Figs. 11 and 12)

Our appreciation to Mrs. Armstrong in directing these negatives to us and to Mrs. Noake for sorting and sending the negatives.

Colonel Donald W. Noake, retired Army officer, had completed a course in photography and was pressed into service by Dr. Baldwin. The results show not only talent, but that he had a very good lens.



Figure 12 Boxwood growing out of a wall, with fern above, as noted on a botany field trip.

Kenmore Revisited

Kenmore, in Fredericksburg, Virginia, was built by Colonel Fielding Lewis, whose wife was George Wash-

ington's only sister. The first Historic Garden Week of The Garden Club of Virginia was held to raise funds for the

gardens at Kenmore. The GCV has just completed a three-phase renovation of the gardens.



A view from below, showing the new pattern of boxwood and perennial border looking toward more mature boxwood. (Photos: Mrs. Robert Frackelton)



View from the east portico: All mature boxwood were removed from the lower quadrants, creating a more spacious look.



Kitchen courtyard herb garden is being developed. Phillip Samuels, long-time gardener, was called back to lay the brick.

Letter from the Newly-Elected ABS President

I am honored to have been elected to the Office of President of The American Boxwood Society and am pleased to accept the responsibility. I agreed to serve knowing that all of the members of the Board are hard working and dedicated professionals who function as a team toward the purposes and goals of the Society. Each board member serves the Society in his/her own area of expertise and my goal is to facilitate and coordinate their services to the membership.

As we begin this journey together I hope that the members will make their wishes known concerning the focus, direction, purposes, and ideas for the Society. It is through shared communication that we are then better able to define and refine our Society's goals. My hope is that in building from our past efforts and successes, our future can be thoughtfully planned. Continual assesment then affords focus and allows us to honestly evaluate our accomplishments and directions. Hobbyists, horticulturalists, growers, homeowners, and designers can all participate in generating and honing our best ideas and in charting our collective future. Shared communication will help us establish major directions and areas of emphasis.

Thank you again for the confidence which you have shown in selecting me. I am looking forward to the opportunity to serve you.

Stephen D. Southall

Memorial Garden Update



Water lines were installed (see photo). Areas to be planted were laid out, mulched and tilled. Dr. Connor reported at the September Board meeting that some planting would be scheduled for this fall.

New ABS President



Dr. Stephen D. Southall

Stephen D. Southall was raised on a poultry farm in Deltaville, Va. and as a youngster his main pleasure was working on the land with an Allis-Chalmers WD-45 tractor for which he was given total responsibility. His first exposure to "English" boxwoods was on this farm since there were approximately 800 plants surrounding the main house. Upon leaving the farm in 1964, he entered the University of Richmond and went on to complete his Ph.D. in Psychology at the University of Virginia. Currently, Professor of Psychology at Lynchburg College, he teaches Introductory Psychology, Sensation Perception, and Human Memory.

A firm believer in conservation, his first English term paper as a freshman at the University of Richmond was on the topic of the conservation of farm land. Always a gardener, he was the only graduate student at UVA with a pickup truck and Roto-Tiller. A fireside chat one evening in the home of friend and colleague, Ken Shumaker, led to his interest in growing boxwoods. Shumaker's father-in-law, Mr. Arvin Foster, suggested that raising some boxwoods would be a good thing for "you boys" to do. The result of that suggestion was the establishment of English Boxwoods of Virginia, which grows and wholesales the 'Suffruticosa' form of boxwoods exclusively. They market plants ranging in size from rooted cuttings to three foot specimens.

Southall's wife, Sally, graciously helps in the office. His daughter, Sarah, a sophomore at Lynchburg College, prefers office and computer work over rooting and potting, but has put in her time in all phases of the business. David, age 11, and in middle school "helps" by driving the tractor, but also fertilizes and pots plants. Rebecca, age 8, has just taught Joseph, age 5, how to count the right number of scoops of fertilizer in a container. They all can spot an "English" boxwood from 50 yards away.

Southall joined the Board of The American Boxwood Society in May 1989 and was elected President in May 1994.

New ABS Director



Henry F. Frierson, Jr.

Henry F. Frierson, Jr. holds a B.S. in biology from Davidson College and an M.D. from the Medical University of South Carolina. A native South Carolinian, he has lived in Charlottesville, Virginia since 1981, where he currently is an Associate Professor of Pathology at the University of Virginia Health Sciences Center. He is married and has one daughter.

In addition to membership in ABS, Dr. Frierson is a member of the Friends of the State Arboretum, the American Horticultural Society, and the Friends of the U. S. National Arboretum. His special interest in boxwood concerns rare and unusual cultivars, especially dwarf varieties. He enjoys tending to more than a dozen named boxwood cultivars at his home in downtown Charlottesville, as well as to an assortment of unnamed seedlings and cuttings he has collected since his serious interest in boxwood developed several years ago.

A collector by nature, Dr. Frierson became fascinated with boxwood when he first learned that there were many more cultivars besides the commonly recognized "American" and "English" varieties. His interest was further piqued by a tour of the Memorial Garden and attendance at a workshop at Blandy Farm, both of which were conducted by the late P. D. Larson. He has since avidly sought information about *Buxus* from all sources, including all back issues of *The Boxwood Bulletin*, and has enjoyed searching for specimens to add to his collection.

New ABS Director



Steve Zapton

Born July 18, 1944, Mr. Zapton grew up in Detroit, Michigan. He received a B.S. in Studio Art from the University of Michigan in 1966 and a M.F.A. in Photography from Pratt Institute in New York City in 1970. Since 1970 he has taught photography and design classes at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia where he is a professor of art. He has won numerous prizes and honors for his work.

He is active in preservation efforts within the Shenandoah Valley and has been a board member of the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Historical Society and one of the founding members of the Society of Port Republic Preservationists.

The Zaptons have restored the Dundore-Downs house and office in the Village of Port Republic, Virginia. Their house is the oldest in the community. At their ten-acre mini-farm, situated along South River, Steve, an avid gardener, has planted rare and native varieties of trees and shrubbery for the past ten years.

A close friend and neighbor, Jim Gallagher, whose passion for boxwood is contagious, is responsible for introducing Steve to The American Boxwood Society. He also credits Mr. Gallagher for opening his eyes even wider to a new level of appreciation for this ornamental jewel.

Having always admired Jim Gallagher's English Boxwood garden, Steve in the last year has been involved in designing a pleasure garden on his property that will feature different varieties of *Buxus microphylla* and other miniature plants. He has acquired plants from various nurseries but is known to rescue boxwood from local demolition sites as well as the Rockingham County landfill.

He is very much interested in being an active member of The American Boxwood Society as well as promoting the appreciation of this unique ornamental plant. He has been heard saying, "America would be a better place if every American household had a boxwood growing in its garden."

New ABS Director



Malcolm E. Jamieson, Jr.

Mr. Malcolm E. Jamieson, Jr. ("Jamie") joined the ABS Board in 1993 and planned the Garden Tour for the Annual Meeting in May 1994, giving us not only a tour of the grounds at Berkeley, but also the treat of a guided tour on the house.

Mr. Jamieson was born in 1944, a native of Charles City County in Tidewater Virginia. He now lives in Richmond, Va. He was educated at St. Christopher School in Richmond, Class of 1965, and received his degree in horticulture in 1969 from North Carolina State University in Raleigh, N.C. He and his wife, Judy, have a son, "Mac," age 18, and a daughter, Cary, age 22.

He is the third generation owner/operator at Berkeley Plantation (Charles City County, Virginia), which consists of a tourist operation, working farm, wholesale growing nursery operation (boxwood, shrubs and ornamental trees, mainly B&B.)

He belongs to the American Association of Nurserymen, the Richmond Nurseryman's Association (Secretary and Legislative Chair). He is Committee Chairman of Boy Scout Troop 444 (Richmond).

1994 Garden Day in Fredericksburg, Va.

Every year the Rappahannock Valley Garden Club of Fredericksburg,

Virginia, holds a garden day tour as part of Historic Garden Week, spon-

sored by The Garden Club of Va. These boxwoods were observed on the tour.



Old boxwood (Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa') being rejuvenated. Some now resemble topiary work, but should in time resume their natural shape. (Photos: Mrs. Robert Frackelton)

Close-up of an old boxwood with new growth resembling an "animal" shape.

Another Work Day at Blandy's Orland E. White Arboretum

ABS work days at Blandy are held to assist in the care of the Boxwood

Collection for the American Boxwood Society Memorial Garden. Mrs. Scot

Butler is Chairman of the Memorial Garden Committee.



May 1994: Boxwood under lath after weeding and rearranging according to type.



Break for lunch during work day in the shade of trees and mature Buxus sempervirens.

New Members Joined in 1993-1994

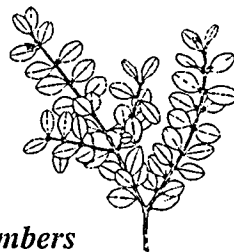
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George Eastman House	Rochester NY	Mrs. Meriwether H. Morris	Owings Mills MD	Mr. David Winn	Fredericksburg VA
Mr. John W. Grice	Denton NC	Mr. J. Clifford Murdock	Decatur AL	Mr. Phil Winters	Richmond VA
M/M Stan Harmon	Farmville NC	Deborah Nevins	New York NY	Mr. Glen Workman	Winchester VA
Mr. Joseph Henderson	Wilmington DE	Mrs. William E. Odom	Wytheville VA	Mrs Philip L. Yeats	Lusby MD
Mr. Julian D. Hudson	Clarksville VA	Lillian Goodman Owen	Ripley TN		
Huntington & Kiest, Landscape Architects	Portland OR	Russ Pommier	Albany OR		
Mr. Malcolm E. Jamieson	Richmond VA	Elizabeth Porter, Garden Works	Gladwyne PA		
Mr. Charles D. Jordan	Riverside PA	Mr. John Christopher Pracht IV	Anderson SC		
Edwin Joseph	Gloucester VA	Boria & Linda Sax	White Plains NY		

Registrants for ABS Annual Meeting; May 20-21, 1994

Martha Armstrong	Williamsburg VA	Miss Carter Frackelton	Fredericksburg VA	M/M George Schumacher	Turlock CA
Lynn R. Batdorf	Colesville MD	Edward, Eleanor and Willie Goode	Richmond VA	Mrs. Tyra Sexton	Fredericksburg VA
M/M William E. Boone	Waldorf MD	M/M Bruce M. Gregory	Richmond VA	M/M Kenneth Shumaker	Lynchburg VA
M/M John W. Boyd, Jr.	Alton VA	M/M Lee Hahn	Califon NJ	M/M Howard C. Smith	McLean VA
John W. Boyd III	Roanoke VA	Mrs. Sigrid Harriman	Fredericksburg VA	M/M Drew Somerford	Jeffersonton VA
Bartow H. Bridges, Jr.	Virginia Beach VA	M/M John H. Hart	Falls Church VA	Dr. Stephen Southall	Lynchburg VA
M/M Scot Butler	Winchester VA	M/MHoward C. Hathaway III	Portsmouth VA	Mrs. Betsy Sykes	Raleigh NC
Ms. Pamela Byrne-Daigh	Goochland VA	Mr. Clifford Hoffman	Flemington NJ	M/M. J. Ward Walker	Del Rio TN
Mrs. Edward Chamberlin	Purcellville VA	Mr. Richard D. Mahone	Williamsburg VA	Mrs. Katherine Ward	Deerfield VA
Mrs. S. A. (Rene) Clark	Midlothian VA	Dr./M. Charles McComb	Bena VA	M/M Edward J. Weber	Annapolis MD
Mrs. John Debell	Fairfax VA	Mrs. Edith Medlin	Raleigh NC	M/M Wm. T. Wells, Jr.	Williamsburg VA
M/M James H. Driver	Sparks MD	M/M William Plumb	Moorestown NJ	Mr. Rollin Woolley	Hayes VA
M/M Robert Dykes	Delmar MD	Mrs. L. C. Powell	Alexandria VA		
C. Ross Edmond, Jr.	Longwood Gardens PA	M/M Gary Richardson	Annapolis MD		
M/M Joseph Ferguson	Salem VA	M/M Ian Robertson	Charlottesville VA		
M/M Charles T. Fooks, Sr.	Salisbury MD	Mrs. Antone Rodgers	Baltimore MD		
Mrs. R. L. Frackelton	Fredericksburg VA	M/M Thomas Saunders	Piney River VA		

The Seasonal Gardener

Practical tips for boxwood enthusiasts from Society members



Subdue Fungicide and “English” Boxwood Decline

Since 1961, when The American Boxwood Society (ABS) was founded by enthusiasts deeply concerned about the widespread death of boxwood plants of all ages, the Society has maintained interest in the search for identification, treatment and perhaps even cure of the cause.

From 1972 on, the ABS supported research at Virginia Tech (VPI&SU) in Blacksburg which isolated a root rot organism associated with “English” boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens* ‘Suffruticosa’) decline: *Paecilomyces buxi*, as well as a second organism sometimes found with it, *Phytophthora parasitica*.

Other sources of stress (such as drought, soggy damp sites, clogged plant interiors filled with old leaves, and dense outer foliage choking off all light from reaching inside) were found to contribute to the development of decline in plants attacked by either of the two organisms (see *The Boxwood Bulletin*, Vol. 17, No. 2, p. 35.)

In 1979 the results of the VPI studies were noted in *The Boxwood Bulletin* Vol. 18, No. 4, p. 84: “A new experimental fungicide called Subdue, by the Ciba-Geigy Corporation, was provided recently for testing against *Phytophthora* root rot. During the past 6 months we have consistently obtained encouraging results with this fungicide on both “English” and “American” boxwood. However, the fungicide has not yet been registered for ornamentals.”

In 1989, after quite a delay, Subdue was available for treatment of *Phytophthora* root rot on azaleas and rhododendrons. And at long last, by 1992, the product

was labeled for use on boxwood.

Some reports of good success were received in 1992; disease appeared to be arrested. Another report of treatment with Subdue in 1993 seemed at first less satisfactory. Plants which were suffering severely were treated twice with Subdue as a soil drench, in spring and again in June. Then came last winter’s bitter cold, ice and snow in early 1994 and the struggling plants looked like a lost cause. However, a later report has been received. The dead was cut out and healthy new growth is evident. The dead had split bark indicating winter damage.

Another reported treatment, applied in July 1994, appears to have produced improved color and vigor; in this last case, however, the Subdue application had been preceded by a thorough cleaning and thinning, opening up the interiors of clogged and neglected plants to light and air.

If Subdue is to be used for boxwood decline, it is wise to water well a few days before application, and then to water deeply immediately afterward, so that the material is not lost to evaporation, but is carried down to the lower roots. Be sure to carefully follow directions on the label.

Mrs. Scot Butler, ABS Secretary

If members have had any experience with this fungicide, please send notes on the response you have observed to Mrs. Butler, 107 Cottage Drive, Winchester, VA 22603.

