



NEWSLETTER



Fifty Years of the Boxwood Garden

Story page 9

President's Message

2012 Winter Newsletter

This past year, when publishing our 2011-12 Yearbook, we made the “courageous “ decision to list our names as we address each other...that is, without the past accepted way of listing them in parenthesis behind our mate's name. There were several good reasons for this decision, one of which was our husbands do not make up our membership and have no responsibilities to it.

We still stand by that decision, however, we must admit it has come to our attention that as a group we do quietly rely on our significant others to assist with many chores related to those responsibilities, and they generously lend a hand when there is a computer problem we can't seem to address, a coat rack that needs to be hung, a broken greenhouse window in need of replacing, a garden that needs to be transplanted, a lath house to be torn down, friendly bartenders are required, or a bit of music to spark a celebration, as well as transportation of plants from greenhouse to St. Mary's calling for some extra manpower...we could go on.



To “Those Who Are Not Named”, we would like to say, “Thank You”! To the Bob's, the Jim's, the Clint's, the Allan's, the Leslie's, the Dexter's, the Dick's, the David's, the Wayne's, the Greer's, the Cal's, the Fred's, the Peter's, the Tom's, the Phil's, the Joe's, the John's, the Gary's, the Brian's, the Gil's, the Henley's, the Winn's, the Michael's, the Kevin's, we want you to know how appreciative we are of your support. You help to make the wheels turn and keep The Garden Club of Buzzards Bay a well-oiled machine.

In addition to this list, we would like to add Steve and Gene, who are always there to lend a hand doing those little extra things in the gardens (including cleaning up after the hurricane), helping to set up for our meetings, creating centerpieces for our garden party...again, we could go on. “Thank you”! You make our home away from home in the greenhouse, the gardens and the Coach House a very special place.

Please pass this message on to “Those Who Are Not Named” – (you know who they are).

Mary



Horticulture Committee

by Ruth Furman

The Horticulture Committee met in the new year to discuss and review upcoming projects and events. The committee will participate in the Centennial Tree Project researching suitable 19th century apples for the RJD orchard. (See Centennial Tree Project report for more information) Committee members received starter seedlings to nurture in anticipation of the May Zone I meeting "Visions & Vistas" featuring Olmsted plants. The committee was reminded of the Boston Flower Show coming in March; the competition schedule can be found on the Mass Hort web site under Bloom & Boston Flower Show. Our very own Timmy Shapiro will be handling classifications for entries. The draft schedule of the joint flower show (Little Compton and GCBB) was discussed and green thumbs titilated. Annual seeds will be ordered for the flowering annuals class. Any GCBB-ers interested in starting seeds please contact the Horticulture Committee Chair. After Labor Day our veteran horticulturists (successful past participants in the world of GCA Flower Shows) will review the finer points of preparing and submitting plants for the show. An exciting and busy year ahead - stay tuned!

Shirley B. Meneice Meeting

Huntington Library, Pasadena, CA

by Mina Otis

Snowy BALMY Buzzards Bay PASADENA Politics
PEACE –

And then home again, to digest a Peak Experience (I
thank GCBB SO MUCH!!)

The Shirley Meneice Conference was The Best. The
Best organized, The Best Hotel, The Best Locations -- the Huntington for Horticulture on Many
Many Levels, and Descanso Gardens (a post-war authentic Japanese-designed Peace Garden).

The Best speakers (we had to chose from hundreds of options!) and
The Best Buddies.



I chose "Tomatoes" and "Pruning" as being relevant to Buzzards
Bay. Tom and I are not allowed to grow vegetables at Round Hill
(we do grow Tomatoes which are technically A Fruit, but in pots
from store-bought plants), so Pruning was of Highest Interest. Gem:
FIRST, remove All Dead Wood
-- yup, ALL of it, even the wee
bits. THEN step back, ponder,
and assess The Best Possible
Shape for this particular plant.

*Huntington Photos*

Top: The Huntington began as a Formal Private Garden

*Above right: spider web from Descanso Japanese Garden -- symbol to me of complexity-in-
simplicity-in-complexity (Humanity in War and Peace)*

Above left: Serious Horticulture: specimens for micro -- viewing!

Centennial Tree Project

by Ruth Furman and Nan Sinton



An apple a dayor, perhaps a pear.....thus began the 2012 work on the GCA Centennial Tree Project (CTP). The final report by the Olmsted Institute in December 2011 of the landscape survey they undertook surveying the RJD gardens determined the period of the garden as 1880 and also noted there was a small orchard in the southwest quadrant of the property during the Jones family tenure.

The CTP steering committee met early in the new year and outlined plans which would culminate in the planting of six fruit trees in the SW corner, a combination of apples and pears. A field trip to Tower Hill will be scheduled to look at the Davenport collection, an heirloom apple orchard maintained by Tower Hill and also a grafting workshop of heirloom apples. Also discussed were other events to highlight the existence of the orchard such as cider making, apple tastings and

lectures to be held locally. The culmination of the activities will be the planting of the orchard in 2013.

The Conservation Committee, led by Susan Rothschild, kicked off the first meeting of the CTP, and the committee will focus on the social history of a “gentleman’s orchard” researching the relevance of these residential orchards in New England and in particular New Bedford. While many homes had had at least one apple tree, and some like the Jones with six or more, the major producing orchards for well to do families were situated in more rural locations. The Jones family orchard was in Dartmouth. Many aspects of orcharding will be investigated from fruit uses to pest control during the 19th century. Did you know that whale oil was used for pest control on apple trees?! Lots of fun and discovery ahead!

Nan Sinton and Ruth Furman convened their Garden History & Design and Horticulture Committees; they will explore apple and pear varieties available in the 19th century and determine which varieties would be suitable for planting at the RJD. Many resources for investigation were suggested from museums, libraries, 19th century plant catalogues, horticultural society records, books and period pamphlets. The choice of apples will be passed on to the Conservation Committee for inclusion in their final product such as an audio, a booklet or virtual booklet. All the attendees at the various meetings conducted thus far were very excited about the project, and as this is a club wide endeavor please join in on the “pickings!”

This period was an exciting time for the development of fruit cultivars in the US and in Europe. Whichever fruits are chosen, the major attributes are that they be aesthetically pleasing trees expressing the look and feel of Mr. Jones’ gentleman’s orchard.

Features

Winter Houseplant Care

From "PlantOasis," courtesy Linda Cornell

Winter is a difficult time for houseplants, and as a result, many plants enter a rest period during the winter. Winter brings short day lengths, reduced humidity, and low temperatures. The growth of many plants will slow during this period, and some plants may even enter a dormancy period.

With proper care, houseplants can be maintained during the wintertime. However, be alert for problems associated with low humidity, temperature extremes, and insect pests. Below are some winter care tips to keep in mind:

- During the winter, most houseplants are not in an active growth phase. As a result fertilizer should not be applied during this time. If you feel the need to feed your plants, it should be done with a weak dilution of fertilizer, and infrequently during this season.
- In many cases, watering can also be cut back during this season. Be sure to check the soil when you are watering your plants. If it feels moist, you can wait a few more days before watering.
- Certain houseplants (For example, indoor bulbs such as amaryllis, some orchids, etc.) go through a dormant period during the cold weather months. Many plants with dormant periods are ones which adapted to a "dry season" in the natural environment where they evolved. These plants are deciduous, and will loose their leaves during their dormancy period. During the dormant period (which often occurs in winter), plants should not be watered at all, or else very infrequently. Some bulbs will benefit from being placed in a cool, dark location when they are dormant. Be sure to read about your plants individual care needs to learn about how it should be treated.
- Be aware of temperature extremes during the winter season. Some plants may be particularly sensitive to cold drafts, or cold window panes. In addition, the warm, dry heat of home heating systems may cause plants to dry out faster than usual.
- Home heating also takes a toll on humidity levels. The humidity level in homes can drop dramatically during the winter season, making living conditions uncomfortable for both humans and plants. Plants may show signs of low humidity stress, such as brown leaf tips, and increased pest infestation. For more information on how to raise the humidity levels, please see PlantOasis's article on [humidity](#).
- Insect pests may continue to be a serious problem during the winter season. Be sure to check all plants for signs of infestation. For more information, please see PlantOasis's article on [houseplant pests](#).

Visiting Another Zone

by Mary Schubert

Several of my good friends in CT belong to a GCA Club in Zone 2, the Connecticut Valley Garden Club. We often share stories about our respective clubs and compare common activities



we carry out under the umbrella of the GCA. They are most envious of our greenhouse activities. I am most envious of their ambitious commitments to their community.

For example, several years ago, their membership, in honor of their upcoming 100th Anniversary, pledged to raise \$100,000 to help fund the restructuring of Hartford CT's Elizabeth Park Rose Garden. Elizabeth Park is the oldest municipal Rose Garden in the United States and is listed on the National Register of Historic

Places. This was of particular interest to me, because as a child I spent many a happy outing visiting this park with my family.

Their most recent fund raiser, "Set to Celebrate", a holiday table show, captured my interest as it was billed as an "unofficial" flower show. Basically, they followed many of the GCA guidelines (producing a schedule for one), but did not have it judged. They also invited non-member designers to participate, giving it an extra buzz.

In spite of having to postpone the original show, which was to be exhibited in the Pond House in the rose garden because of the major snow storm in October, they were able to regroup in a matter of weeks and the show went on in early December at the Town and County Club in Hartford. (Did you ever know a garden club member who couldn't meet a challenge?)

It was a dazzling display of table settings which included





children's tables, entry hall tables, tables set for family celebrations, intimate dinners for two as well as winter picnics and "hot stuff" left to the designer's imagination. I don't believe the Tiffany Holiday Tables in NY are any better. I walked away with a zillion new ideas, and you know I have been setting tables for many moons.

The event featured a Preview Party and two days open to the public. Attendance was up to expectations, money was raised for their project, and they are already planning another event next year. I have included a few photographs. Anyone interested?



Boxwood History

by Carolyn Willard



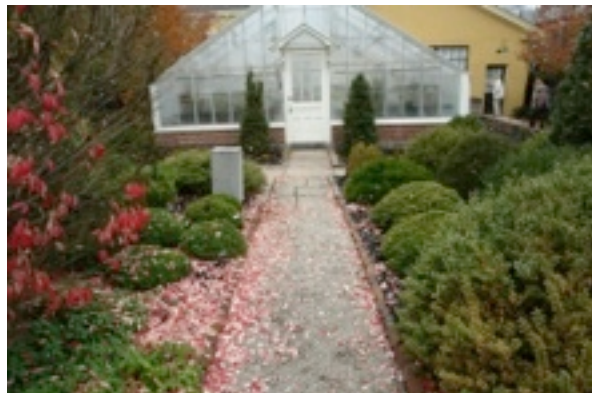
*The Rotch Jones Duff greenhouse and grounds in 1983
before the boxwood gardens moved from Nonquitt.*

The Garden Club of Buzzards Bay Boxwood Gardens will turn at least 50 this year. Our 46 varieties at the Rotch Jones Duff House are thriving, dispelling the misconception that boxwood is not suitable for northern climes. “Although a collection of (then) 35 boxwood suggests visual monotony, the garden is a tapestry of diversity, not only in plant height and form but also in leaf shape and color,” *Garden Design* writer Tovah Martin said of the GCBB garden in 1988.

Like many involved projects, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the gardens moved from propagation project to garden. Sometime in the mid-1950’s, Sue Underwood (mother of Joan) and Mary Plowden-Wardlaw, our oldest member who will turn 104 on Feb. 29, took a boxwood propagation workshop at the Arnold Arboretum. In 1961, club members took cuttings from 22 varieties of boxwood from the Quisset garden of horticulturist Sarah Chapman Francis (Mary P-W’s mother) and ultimately planted them in Nonquitt. Along the way, Edie Knowles took the reins of the project, infusing it with her



enthusiasm and expertise as a member of the American Boxwood Society. By 1962, the gardens were enlarged and moved to raised beds at the Nonquitt home of Mrs. Russell Knowles (Joan Bullard's mother.) Various propagation methods were explored and varieties added.



In 1964, at Mary's suggestion, an ad was placed in the GCA Bulletin offering government inspected boxwood cuttings for propagation. One bag of ten for \$1.00. By 1972 GCBB had shipped 14 varieties to 28 States, a total of 2,500 cuttings, all taken from shrubs grown from cuttings from that Quisset garden. From 1964 to

1974, cuttings and propagation instructions went to botanical gardens from Brooklyn to St. Louis, garden clubs and private gardeners. In 1992, some 250 cuttings were sent to the Memphis Garden Club. The club moved the boxwood from Nonquitt to the RJD in stages from 1986 to 1993 and continued to add varieties, to reach today's 46 in the RJD garden.

"Practical boxwood information was very hard to find, so the Boxwood Committee, led by Edie Knowles, decided to remedy the situation," Happy Webb wrote in 2010. In 1978 they gave a boxwood symposium to GCBB members, which was reprinted in the American Boxwood Society Bulletin in 1981. By 1990, some 500



copies of the expanded Booklet were printed and sold nationwide. Throughout this period they raised and sold young boxwood plants, participated in Boxwood Trials, competed successfully in Horticulture events, published articles and won the Evelyn D. Cronin Horticultural Award.

Most recently, the club grew 125 plants for distribution at our 2010 Zone I meeting, with only three of the cuttings unsuccessful. "The plants grew so well that they outgrew the pots we had bought and we had to wrap them in burlap," according to Boxwood Committee Chair Debbie Tinay. GCBB grew 100 plants for the 1990 Zone I meeting; 69 plants for the 1971 Zone.

We are now in the process of designing a new lath house as part of the Olmsted project that will offer the part-shade required for young plants. The old lath structure was removed this summer to allow for the replacement of an oil tank. This fall members started more cuttings at a workshop by Sue Fairfax.

Photos from top: Greenhouse in 1983, Boxwoods in 1988, Boxwoods today, Edie Knowles (center) directs (from left) Twink Underhill and Jane Biholdorff at RJD in 1993.



In 1963, GCBB members work in the new raised beds in Nonquitt.

Boxwood Tips and Factoids

- Boxwood, probably the oldest of garden ornamentals, decorating early Egyptians gardens, was popular especially in Victorian times and now is making another comeback.
- According to the 2011 National Boxwood Trials Report, deer almost never, ever forage on boxwood. (The GCBB gardens were cited in the report, which rates various varieties for ease of cultivation, joining several botanical gardens.)
- Plucking boxwood is critical. “Plucking” describes the pruning of interior growth to allow ample air circulation, where shoots from 2 to 8 inches are eliminated. Best done in the late winter/early spring, “plucking” is especially necessary on plants grown in full sun to promote interior growth. (*Debbie Tinay and the Boxwood Committee Fall 2011*)





■ Never shear boxwood with a hedge trimmer as it violates all principles “plucking” promotes. To get a sculptured look, prune by hand, “plucking” interior growth.

■ Best to propagate in a mixture of $\frac{1}{2}$ peat moss and $\frac{1}{2}$ **coarse** sand. Strip leaves off the lower inch of 5” cutting, scrape off $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the bark with sterile knife. Dip in Rootone and plant. Place a “tent” of wire hoops and plastic over the cuttings after watering and seal. Place in a shaded place and should start to root in six weeks.

■ One method of propagation uses upside down mayonnaise jars over cuttings outside in the fall. Prepare cuttings as above and plant under shrubs which have been well-watered and mounded with 3” of dirt to hold water. Top with jars, working them into the soil to seal. Ignore until spring, put a wedge under jars for air. In June remove jars and

by fall, plants will be ready for transplanting into pots or elsewhere in the garden.

Above left: Molly Barrows tends mayonnaise jars used for outdoor propagation in 2002. The Lath House was then located where the cold frames are now.

Below: Forty-six varieties thrive in today’s garden.



Wreath Making



Betsy McBratney makes yet another stunning wreath, while Happy Webb plays helper to Mary Cook, putting picks on greens during the wreath workshop to benefit the Rotch Jones Duff House.



Sue Fairfax makes a “tapestry” wreath, where greens are put into a sphagnum-moss form to create a pattern of greens. Happy Webb and Tina Read organized the wreath-making; the following week Tina held a workshop to create topiary for GCBB members.

Mini Zone 1 Meeting

November 17, 2011

Tower Hill, Boylston, MA

by Mary Shubert

Each year, in the fall, the GCA Zone 1 Chair calls a Mini-Zone meeting, gathering all the zone reps and club presidents together to discuss pertinent topics being focused on in the coming year. Most often club chairs of specific standing committees are invited to join them. This past November, Abby Coffin, our new Zone 1 Chair called us together at Tower Hill in Boylston, MA. She asked the presidents to invite the club chairs of Awards, Garden History & Design, Horticulture, and Programs to attend.



Abby opened the meeting by discussing the importance of “Sustainability” in our lives and club activities. Attendees had been asked not to bring bottled water to the meeting this year, but to bring their own drinking vessels to be filled with beverages from the hospitality table. Carpooling to Tower Hill was also encouraged. The caterers for the meeting were chosen on the basis of their sustainable practices.

A Zone 1 Environmental Statement, ‘The Garden Club of America Zone 1 members are committed to minimizing the environmental impacts of the Zone 1 Mini Meetings,’ was proposed and met with overwhelming approval. It was an especially interesting meeting to attend as it was a turn-over year for the Zone Officers and Committee Reps. They were all introduced and spoke to the meeting, giving us an idea of the goals being set for the coming two years.

Committee Break-out Meetings allowed Christel Phipps to meet with Mary Fran Townsend, the new Program Rep; Ellen Christie to meet with Patsy Rabstajnek the Zone Award’s Rep; Ruth Furman to meet Kita Reece, the Horticulture Rep; and Margaret Forbush, representing Nan Sinton to meet with Kate Thompson, the new Zone Garden & History Rep. The President’s meeting was filled with new thoughts and challenges. We all agreed that it was a positive experience to meet with chairs of other clubs, some of whom came to the meeting with new ideas and others with problems to be solved.

We all enjoyed the camaraderie of the meeting, but most especially during the shared ride to and from the meeting with our fellow members.

Provisionals



Holly McDonough

I was raised in Old Greenwich, CT and developed a love of flowers and gardening from my mother. When I was a teenager my parents bought The Old Greenwich Flower Shop. I worked during holidays and after school waiting on customers, answering the endless phone, and delivering many flowers!

Shortly after college I relocated to Marblehead, MA to pursue my love of sailing. I worked in Boston's Flower Exchange for "Creative Distributors." The company no longer exists. At that time we sold all the accessories to the florist industry including silk flowers. Fresh flowers were sold at the Exchange next door.

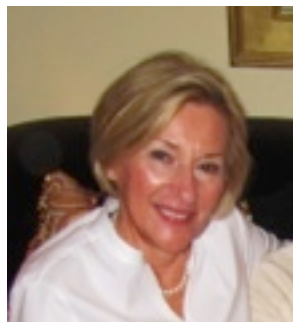
I met my husband, Joe, also a sailor, in Marblehead. We married and now have two girls, Liz, 24, and Sara, 21. Liz is in a graduate program in PA and Sara is a senior under graduate in DC. Now I have time to garden!!!!

When the kids were growing up we lived in Lexington, MA and Brookline, MA. I was an "at home" volunteer mom. Busy with their lives, I would dabble with gardening, collecting my favorite plants, and hoping they would thrive. Our family time was spent cruising on our sailboat in New England.

After summering in Marion for 25 years we retired here three years ago. I am looking forward to participating in the GCBB, for the camaraderie and educational opportunities it will bring!

Photo: Holly & Ellen Christie at provisional luncheon





Sally Lutz

Coming from Iowa, I couldn't help but absorb a "healthy respect" for all things plant life. Even though I am a City Girl (yes, Iowa does have cities) my roots run deep in the farming community -- both parents were raised on a farm.

I graduated from Drake University and began a career in advertising: Good Housekeeping Magazine, New York City; Campbell-Mithun Advertising, Minneapolis; WJAR-TV, Providence. No time for plant life here!

I married a City Boy from Chicago, and we moved to Providence and eventually Rehoboth, MA. With two small children and a home with three acres, I soon became involved in the Rehoboth Garden Club and began a strong connection with gardening – both vegetable and flower. At that time we also decided that a summer home was in order, hence, Star of the Sea Drive, which eventually became our permanent home. Gardening was a priority here as well, but with a new challenge...salt spray. I quickly learned the hard way what works, and what doesn't work down by the water! Interestingly however, I still have plants given to me by the Rehoboth Garden Club. What a nice reminder of special friends.

Currently I am semi-retired and working in our business, Alden Buick GMC and Alden Mazda in Fairhaven. I have one grandchild and another on the way...and already I've given the 3 year old his very own rake!

Thank you Tina Reed for introducing me to the Garden Club of Buzzards Bay. I'm looking forward to making more special friends.



Photo: Tina Reed with Sally at provisional luncheon

Recipes

Seafood Gumbo

From the Silver Palate, with variations from Carolyn Willard

- 8 oz. turkey kielbasa, cut into 1-inch slices
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 cup EACH red and green pepper, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups diced onions
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 cups chicken broth
- 3 cups drained plum tomatoes, slightly crushed (or one and a half cans diced tomatoes)
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper
(I use about half of cumin and cayenne so not too spicy)
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and veined
- 12 oz. sea scallops, cut in half
- 12 oz. cooked crab or lobster
- 12 oz. piece of white fish (cod, haddock, etc) cut into 1-inch squares
- 1 pound sliced frozen okra (if using fresh okra, sauté for 10 minutes before bell peppers).
- 2 T. chopped parsley



1. In a large pot or dutch oven, sauté the sausage over medium heat in 1 T. of olive oil. Set aside.
2. Add remaining oil to pot and sauté onions, bell peppers and garlic. Cook about 10 minutes.
3. Add chicken stock, tomatoes, cumin, cayenne, salt, black pepper and bay leaf. Simmer, uncovered about 30 minutes. Add shrimp, scallops and frozen okra and cook for five more minutes. Add crab or lobster and parsley and cook until heated through, 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Serve in bowl with scoop of cooked white (or brown) rice in the center of the bowl.

Note: You can vary seafood mixture – more fish, less shellfish, etc.

Flapjacks

from Ruth Furman

Here's the recipe for these popular English biscuits (cookies) and children love them - making & eating!

FLAPJACKS (measured by weight)

100 g	butter	4 oz
100 g	soft brown sugar	4 oz
200 g	golden syrup	8 oz
200 g	porridge oats	8 oz

Swiss roll tin, approximately 9" x 12" in greased.
Oven temp 325 F.

1. Melt butter in a pan, add sugar and syrup, warm gently until smooth. Stir in oats and mix well.
2. Spoon into tin, flattening mixture w/ wetted fingers.
3. Bake for about 30 mins. until golden brown; cut while still warm. Remove from tin when cold.

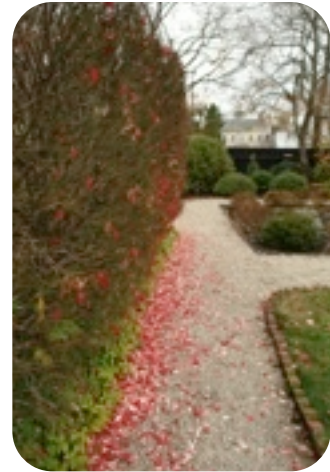
Note: Golden syrup with molasses is available at Stop & Shop. Golden syrup (pictured above) may also be available @ Lee's. A small container is 454 g so I use a bit less than half. Eight ounces of porridge oats is 2 1/4 cups; I usually use old fashioned oats, but this time I used quick cooking which worked well and is finer textured.

ENJOY!



Winterberries in Ruth Jolliffe's garden

Fall Activities



Fall colors & crew!



Jam Jar Exchange chez Fran Levin's



Nan and Fran's African cultivars

