



The Colonial Master Gardener

Publication of JCC/WBG Master Gardener Association & Virginia Cooperative Extension

MAY 2004

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN (Continued)

“Natural Characteristics” Of greatest help in achieving sustainable site design is to realize that much can be learned from nature. When nature is incorporated into designs, spaces can be more comfortable, interesting and efficient. It is important to understand natural systems and the way they interrelate in order to work within these constraints with the least amount of environmental impact. Like nature, design should not be static but always evolving and adapting to interact more intimately with its surroundings.” from “Sustainable Design: A Collaborative National Park Service Initiative”

PRESIDENT

Barbara Gustafson '99

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NEWSLETTER

Charlie Clapper '02

The purpose of the James City County/Williamsburg Master Gardener is to learn, educate and communicate environmentally sound horticultural practices to the community. Trained by the Virginia Cooperative Extension, Master Gardener volunteers are committed to offering information to the public through sustainable landscape management educational programs.

Sweet April showers, Do spring May flowers.

Thomas Tusser

CONTRIBUTORS NEEDED. Your newsletter editor needs your help. I need volunteers to write articles for upcoming newsletters. Articles on perennials, annuals, shrubs and trees and community environmental issues are requested. Dee Albright has agreed to write a series on herbs beginning in June. The editor would suggest that volunteers agree to write three articles to run in three successive newsletters. This approach lessens the burden. Everyone is busy but sharing your knowledge and interests with the membership is important. CHARLIE CLAPPER

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT: OFFICERS FOR 04/05.

President: Barbara Gustafson **VP Project Coordination:** Charlie Clapper '02

VP Internal Ed: Minouche Robinson '00: **VP Youth Ed:** Charlene Talcott '01

Secretary: To be filled **Treasurer:** Dave Banks '03 **State Reps:** Angela Cingale '00
Ann de Forest '03 **DAVE BANKS, SUE LIDDELL, AND LYNN FLOOD,** Nom. Committee

Visit the Master Gardeners Association website at <http://jccwmg.org> for a complete listing of upcoming events and educational opportunities. Use of the county van may be possible for out of town events. Call Ann Odle if interested



PRESIDENT'S CORNER (New e-mail is Barbara-sq@cox.net)

Anne Haltiner is sitting in for the newlywed !

President Barbara asked me to write her column in the President's Corner this time. She and Art are in the midst of their "Special Day." I do not claim to be a writer. However, I am pretty good at stealing wonderful ideas from extraordinary people. Hope you enjoy my favorite folks!

"Where flowers bloom, so does hope." **Lady Byrd Johnson**

"Life without love is like a tree without blossom and fruit." **Khalil Gibran**

"Do not be afraid to go out on a limb ... That's where the fruit is." **Anonymous**

*"Knowing trees, I understand the meaning of patience.
Knowing grass, I can appreciate persistence."* **Hal Borland**

"They kill good trees to put out bad newspapers." **James G. Watt**

"And this, our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything." **William Shakespeare**

THE BOOK CORNER

For the person who has time to read in bed, Modern Library has come out with a new series of paperbacks called the Modern Library Gardening Series. These are "older" gardening books, with prefaces and notes by well-known gardeners. So far I only have four of the eight or so, but I find them extremely useful, both from a historic standpoint, and for the notes on the texts by other in-the-know people. The titles, so far, are: William Cobbett, THE AMERICAN GARDENER (from an 1856 ed.); Reginald Arkell, OLD HERBACEOUS; A NOVEL OF THE GARDEN; Richardson Wright, THE GARDENER'S BED-BOOK (from a 1929 ed.); Frank Kingon Ward, IN THE LAND OF THE BLUE POPPIES. (These are the 4 I have.) And, Karel Capek, THE GARDENER'S YEAR; Margery Fish, WE MADE A GARDEN; Eleanor Perenyi, GREEN THOUGHTS, and Charles Dudley Warner, MY SUMMER IN A GARDEN.

These don't only serve as bedtime reading, but when things get too hot in the garden and you've retired to the hammock to rest a bit, you might try one, just to see what earlier gardeners and botanists thought about their "missions in life". I'm sure you'll find that the same joys, sorrows, and problems have accompanied gardeners through the ages, and that should make you feel good all over! **AILENE BARTLETT**

THANKS

We would like to thank the following merchants for their generous donation of a raffle prize for our SPRING INTO GARDENING event: Basketville, Bumblebee's Florist, Custom Welding, Farm Fresh, Jamestown Feed and Seed, Ken Mathew's Nursery, Lowe's, My Sister's Place Florist, Plow and Hearth, Schmidt Florist, Turf and Garden, The Williamsburg Brass Shop and Williamsburg Fine Art and Framing. **ANN DEFOREST, Raffle Organizer**

BOXWOOD: AN HISTORIC SHRUB FOR WILLIAMSBURG GARDENS

Many James City County residents, influenced by historic gardens in this area, have boxwood plantings in their gardens. Although boxwood is considered to be a low-maintenance shrub, it is subject to a number of diseases which can be minimized by knowing your plant and its growing requirements.

Boxwood was introduced to North America from Europe in the mid-1600s and soon became a popular plant in formal gardens and hedges. Although there are approximately 160 varieties, three are commonly seen in our local gardens.

Buxus sempervirens, the common or American boxwood, can attain a mature height of 15 to 20 feet. The wood and roots are highly prized for carving. Highly prized for its wood, it is used as a foundation, corner or screening plant.

The cultivar, *buxus sempervirens suffruticosa* or “English” boxwood is very dwarf and slow-growing. The leaves are quite fragrant. It is used for edging and can be pruned regularly to maintain its dwarf shape. However 150-year old plants can attain a height of 3 feet.

Finally, there is *buxus microphylla* (Japanese or Korean boxwood). Japanese boxwood rarely grow more than 3 feet tall and are usually used as an edging or low hedge plant. Japanese boxwood tends to suffer fewer disease problems than common or English boxwood.

As if it were not confusing enough for “American” boxwood to have originated elsewhere, there are also boxwood impersonators. The dwarf yaupon holly is distinguished from boxwood by its leaves. Smooth boxwood leaves sit directly opposite one another on the stem, while the scalloped holly leaves are arranged alternately.

The most important factor in preventing disease is to plant boxwood properly. Boxwoods should only be planted in well-drained soils. They grow best in semi-shade, although they will live in full sun.

Once established, deep water boxwood during periods of drought. Boxwood can be pruned or sheared in spring for shaping or to remove any branches killed by winter cold.

A soil sample analysis submitted to Extension will provide specific fertilizer recommendations for your particular site. A sign of nitrogen deficiency is yellowing of leaves, particularly older leaves inside the plant.

Some of the diseases and pests to which boxwood is subject are phytophthora root rot, English boxwood decline, nematodes, volutella stem blight, leafminer, mites and psyllid. If you suspect you have any of these problems, you can obtain further information from articles on our web site. You can also take samples to the Extension office for analysis.

Don't be overwhelmed by the list of possible problems. Boxwood can provide a delightful addition to your landscape – it's even deer resistant!

SHIRLEY LIVINGSTON, Master Gardener Volunteer

THROUGH THE GATE...to the George Reid Garden

The intern lab day, held on March 23, was a notable success thanks to the George Reid team leaders, some other key MGs, and this year's class. On April 6, we hosted USDA personnel from MD to TX. In return, those of us who worked were invited to a lecture at the symposium. Each team has had workdays and tidied up for Garden Week, April 17-24. Of course, the major emphasis is April 20, the day that Williamsburg has their tour. We are not officially listed, but the reality is that hordes of visitors will pass by the George Reid Garden on that day. Current MGs, it is not too late to sign up for a team. Just let me know. Let the major work begin!

MARILYN RIDDLE

DELECTABLE AND FUN FUNDRAISER

We still need your recipes for the JCC/Williamsburg MG Cookbook. Contact **Angela Cingale**, cingale@attglobal.net

Co-chairs **ANGELA CINGALE** and **DEBBIE MADDOCKS** thank you.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING
Bruton Heights Lane Auditorium
May 6, 9:00 am

Visit to Sandy's Plants Leave the parking lot after the business meeting to drive to Sandy's

Visits to MG Gardens Merle Powell, Genrose Lashinger, Minouche Robinson, Susan Miller, Pat Rathke
Dates to be announced

Visit Just Gardens – Northern Neck – May 13/14

JUNE 3 Bayberry Lane Field Trip – we will leave after the business meeting; Salad Lunch for \$8.50(Chicken salad, assorted cheeses, bread and cracker assortment, two salads(Chef's choice), choice of regular or diet soda, tea, lemonade or bottled water. **YOU MUST HAVE YOUR RESERVATION AND CHECK FOR LUNCH IN TO GENROSE NO LATER THAN MONDAY, MAY 24 – NO EXCEPTIONS! MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO BAYBERRY ROW**

JULY 1 Town Meeting at Lane Auditorium - Discussion of MG Survey

AUGUST 5 Annuals That Thrive in July and August – Mark Weathington, Norfolk Botanical Garden

SEPTEMBER 2 Tentative – Lynn Trott, Dahlias

OCTOBER 7 TBA

CELEBRATION OF HERBS IN DESIGN

The Colonial Triangle of Virginia of The Herb Society of America will be holding a fundraiser on May 11, 2004 at the Williamsburg Regional Library, 515 Scotland Street, Williamsburg, starting at 2:00 pm. Our featured speaker is Staci Young of Anastasia Florals, an independent floral designer who has displayed her work for Governor Warner at Keswick Hall, The Hay Adams Hotel in Washington, D.C., the University of Virginia and Evelynton Plantation. Staci will discuss ornaments for the garden, using live herbs, and she will design an herbal bee skep. A reception of homemade herbal refreshments will follow the program; recipes will be available.

All funds are to benefit the upkeep of the Hospice House Herb Gardens and other Unit projects.

Tickets are \$10 each; reservations must be made by May 4, 2004.

Contact: **LILLIAN CAMPBELL**, PugLove@cox.net

IF YOU DIDN'T GO, YOU MISSED A GOOD THING!

The Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden in Richmond had their annual plant sale last weekend. If you didn't go, you missed the opportunity to get plant material from an amazing variety of vendors, including Ginter itself. Next weekend Maymont has their spring sale (too bad it's the same weekend as ours!), and the York Co. MGs and one of the MG groups across the water are having their sales soon, too. GO! It's an opportunity to see vendors, talk to people, get ideas, view different plant material, and have a good outing! (I "only" came home with 6 plants... Saw lots more I liked, then realized that I already had them! That's what "senior moments" do!)
SUPPORT OTHER GARDENING GROUPS - ATTEND PLANT SALES! **AILENE BARTLETT**

JCC/Williamsburg Master Gardeners at the Farmers' Market SUMMER/FALL, 2004

May 1 *Shade Garden into Sun Garden*

May 15 *Perennials* including demonstrations in the Reid MG Learning Garden

May 29 *Trees and Shrubs*

June 12 *Gardening with Children*

June 26 *Vegetables* including demonstrations in the Reid Garden

July 10 *Herbs* including demonstrations in the Reid Garden

July 24 *Drought Tolerant Plants*