

# Mycena News

Mycological Society of San Francisco

October, 2003, vol 54:10

## MycoDigest

MycoDigest is a section of the Mycena News devoted to the scientific review of recent mycological information

### The History of Mycology in the United States

By Kelly Ivors

When the Mycological Society of America (MSA) presented me with a research award named after a prominent 20th century U.S. mycologist, I realized how little I knew about my professional ancestors. I decided to find out more about the founding fathers of mycology in the United States and thought that many of you would enjoy this synopsis.

The term 'mycology' is derived from the Latin *mykes* (mushroom) and *-logia* (study). Surprisingly, the systematic study of fungi is only about 275 years old, and predates the study of bacteria.

From the beginning of the 19th century many contributions to American mycology, but not all, were the work of resident botanists. Rev. Lewis David von Schweinitz (1780-1834) is commonly recognized as the founder of American mycology (Fig. 1). Although born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, von Schweinitz entered a theological seminary in Germany where he concentrated on botany and mycology. In 1805 he co-authored the most comprehensive book on fungi at the time, entitled *Conspectus Fungorum in Lusatiae Superioris* (Presentation of Fungi in Northern Lusatia). In 1812 he returned to the U.S., where he continued his clerical work as well as developing a parallel career in botany and mycology. His work consisted

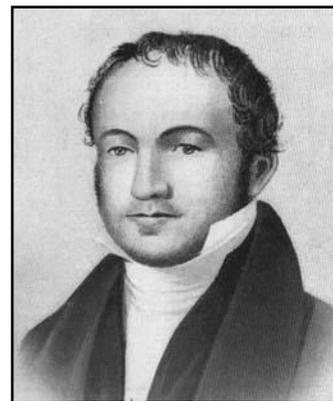


Figure 1: Rev. Lewis David von Schweinitz

of extensive catalogues and systematic descriptions of fungi, mosses, ferns, lichens, and flowering plants – for which he was recognized as the foremost authority on cryptogamia of his time. (In case you are wondering, the term 'cryptogam' was commonly used during this time, and is a general name for plants and plant-like organisms that lack flowers and are not reproduced by seeds, such as ferns, mosses, algae and fungi). In his 1832 *Synopsis Fungorum in America Borealis* (Summary of Fungi that Grow in North America), he described over 3,000 species of fungi, more than half of which were species new to science. After he died in 1834, his personal herbarium of nearly 23,000 specimens was given to the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

Rev. Moses Ashley Curtis (1808-1872) can be considered the next notable U.S. mycologist. He was known for his collections and is remembered for his conviction of the importance of wild fungi as a food source, particularly during the devastation following the Civil War, during which "he turned his knowledge of them [fungi] to useful account for his family and neighborhood; and he declared that he could have supported a regiment upon excellent and delicious food which was wasting in the fields and woods around him." Currently most of his collections are in British museums, although

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Speaker for October  
MSSF Meeting  
Mark Stanley

Chair of the California Oak  
Mortality Task Force  
(COMTF)

Update on the Progression  
of Sudden Oak Death

Mark Stanley graduated from Humboldt State University in 1972 and has been a registered Professional Forester since 1976. He worked for the California Department of Forestry and Fire (CDF) for 30 years and recently retired as Assistant Deputy Director. Currently he is Assistant to the Director as a retiree, as well as chair of the California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF). He was taught to gather mushrooms by his Italian grandfather when he wasn't much bigger than a mushroom himself, so he identifies with the love of mushroom foraging.

Mark will update us on the progression of *Phytophthora ramorum* – causal agent of Sudden Oak Death (SOD) – in the nursery and wildland environment. Other topics include possible ways this pathogen is dispersed, the roles we as "humans" and "gatherers" may play in pathogen dynamics, and the latest regulations relating to gathering of both host and non-host material in 12 infected California Counties. He will also provide a handout describing "Best Management Practices" designed for "gatherers" and people who recreate in the wildlands. This informational brochure is for those interested in minimizing the spread of the pathogen while they pursue their hobby or profession.

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## Councilor's Message

### Mendocino Foray Preview

*Dan Long danlong@speakeasy.net*

I raised my hand at a recent board meeting, offering to volunteer to create an ad of sorts for the annual Mendocino Foray, in the Mycena News. It seems that attendance isn't necessarily down, but certainly could be better. I would like to take this opportunity to write a more detailed description in the hopes that members of our group, who don't ordinarily go, will take advantage of this unique experience.

The vast variety of mushrooms we will find in the Jackson State Forest will vary from the common *Coprinus comatus*, to the elusive *Fistulina hepatica*. You might even find *Boletus edulis*. At this point, I would like to address the 800-pound gorilla that is lurking in the backs of our minds. If I hold off committing, to see if it rains before I go, this will better my chances of bringing home 30 pounds of porcini. Could happen, but more likely, the commercial guys will be there on Wednesday! So don't worry about it and don't let that determine if you go or not.

This foray is more about sharing good times with people with similar interests, brushing up on your identification abilities and learning habitat. A nice walk in the woods, having various mushrooms, plants, and trees pointed out to you by competent leaders is very rewarding.

This year we have scheduled a few things for your interest. Ken Litchfield and Norm Andresen, from our cultivation group, will give a short presentation on Friday evening on cloning or capturing mushrooms that we find. You can further your own cultures in the lab at the Presidio in the weeks after this event, if you choose. On Saturday, in the evening, Mike Wood has offered to put on a slide show, "The Mushrooms of Mendocino". Will he include the photo of a black *Cantharellus subalbidus* that he found last year at Salt Point? We can only guess. Fred Stevens was asked if he would answer people's questions about anything that might turn up on the display tables on Sunday morning, but that was just a ruse to get him to commit. We will relentlessly hammer him for identifications all weekend.

The lodgings are reminiscent of Jed Clampet's back woods cabin with large river rock hearths. The bathrooms are separate from the cabins, They are clean facilities with hot showers. Members of our culinary group prepare breakfasts and dinners. Pack your own lunches. This is worth the price alone. This all takes place November 14-16. The price is yet to be determined but should be around \$100 a person with children half price.

I hope you make your reservations because the more the merrier. Bring your appetites, kindling and firewood for your cabin and, for crying out loud, don't forget your corkscrew!

## WE GOT HELP

Last month's reluctant volunteers breathed a sigh of relief, and were filled with gratitude, as new MSSF member William Karpowicz joyfully stepped forward and accepted the position of Editor of the Mycena News. We also have a very talented, willing, layout person with whom we are currently negotiating. Patrick, standby, we may need the remainder of your best spots as well as a MycoChef dinner to close the deal.

Once again, this month's layout comes from the heart and hand of Rose Flaherty who will, hopefully, retire next month.

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## Letter to the Editor

Editor:

Lovers of mushrooms are no doubt aware of the unique relationships, mycorrhizal and otherwise, between deciduous and evergreen plants and fungi in the forest. They also recognize the important role of fungi in decomposition of organic matter, and how they provide food for vertebrates and invertebrates. Therefore, the Administration's misguided plan called the "Healthy Forests Initiative" should be especially alarming to MSSF members.

Under the guise of forest fire suppression, commercial logging interests would be encouraged to invade our National Forests, with little opportunity for public commentary on timber harvest plans. Rather than careful selective logging and brush clearing near communities, as urged by the Sierra Club and dictated by the "Sierra Nevada Framework", we could expect typically irresponsible forestry practices. These would include widespread removal of snags, "diseased" trees, major disruption of the forest floor and the delicate biologic balance there, and extensive clear-cuts. Removal of the overhead canopy and loss of windbreak with residual slash would increase future fire risk, and of course be fatal to plant and animal life resident in the forest, compounded by the frequent use of herbicides. The ultimate target of the timber corporations would be large, old growth trees, those most fire-resistant and most responsible for natural reproduction.

We are aware that the nutritional and physical needs of wild fungi are poorly understood at best, and that accurate estimates of the population of species are difficult to make, so the best we can do is try to preserve our National Forest ecosystems in their natural state of balance. To do this we urge MSSF members to join us in opposing the "Healthy Forests Initiative, by contacting their Congressional representatives and specifically by asking Senator Dianne Feinstein to support Senator Boxer's "California Wild Heritage Campaign", which would provide wilderness status protection to many National Forest areas and waterways within the state. The forests and inhabitants, lacking a voice, will be most grateful for whatever you can do.

Respectfully,

Bob Moncrieff  
Forest Protection Committee  
Loma Prieta Chapter, Sierra Club  
rolomo@earthlink.net

## Gary Lincoff to be at SOMA Camp Wild Mushroom Retreat

The Sonoma County Mycological Association (SOMA) invites you to the 7th annual SOMA Camp Wild Mushroom Retreat. The Camp will be held on Martin Luther King weekend, January 17-19, 2004. This year, SOMA is very pleased to have Gary Lincoff, well known author of the "Audubon Field Guide to North American Mushrooms", with us as our keynote presenter for the three day weekend.

SOMA is also very pleased to announce that we are moving the Camp to a beautiful new facility, located near Occidental, Sonoma County, about one hour north of San Francisco. The spacious, modern buildings are set amongst 225 acres of oak, madrone, tan oak, redwood, and Doug fir. The newly-built cabins are bright, clean, and airy, with hardwood floors and stylish bunks. There's plenty of room for all the workshops and classes, there's a great specimen room, and it's all surrounded by great habitat!

The Camp, a benefit for SOMA, is full of mushroom forays, specimen tables, slide shows, and speakers, as well as classes & workshops on mushroom dyeing, paper-making, cooking, medicine making, photography, cultivation, truffle hunting, and more, and of course, great wild mushroom cuisine from the SOMA culinary group.

Fees: \$175 until Nov. 15, \$195 after that. Registration closes on Wednesday, January 7. Fee includes lodging, meals, and all activities. Special Sunday only fee: \$90, includes lunch, dinner feast, and all the day's activities. To obtain a registration form, you may visit the SOMA website at [www.SOMAmushrooms.org](http://www.SOMAmushrooms.org), where you can also view photos and info from past SOMA Camps. Information and registration forms may also be obtained from Linda Morris, the Camp registrar, 707-773-1011, [lamorr@pacbell.net](mailto:lamorr@pacbell.net), or the Camp coordinator, Charmoon Richardson, 707-887-1888, [charmooon@sonic.net](mailto:charmooon@sonic.net).

Special note for food and wine fans: Before and after the Retreat, we encourage you to explore the scenic back roads and numerous wineries, restaurants, and artisan food producers in the area. Within a short drive of the Camp are the well-known appellations of the Russian River Valley, Dry Creek, and Sonoma Valley, with the Alexander Valley, Carneros region, and the Napa Valley not much further away. In addition, the beauties of the Pacific Ocean are also nearby.

We hope to see you at the Camp!

**For the most current  
Calendar information,  
call the MSSF hotline at  
415-759-0495 or check the  
MSSF web site at:**

**[www.mssf.org](http://www.mssf.org)**

## Roster and Member Handbook, 2003-2004

Members will find an updated roster and member handbook in the "Members Only" section of the MSSF website. The document contains a current list of MSSF Officers, Councilors, and Committee Chairs.

Members will receive a new printed *Roster, 2003-2004* in a few weeks.

## David Arora's Mendocino Mushroom Foray:

### Thanksgiving Weekend

**Friday, Nov. 28 - Sunday Nov. 30**

David Arora, author of "Mushrooms Demystified", is once again offering his Thanksgiving weekend mushroom foray at Albion on the Mendocino coast. The foray begins Friday afternoon, November 28, with a mushroom hunt, and runs through noon Sunday. Back by popular demand are foraging Canadian chefs Jill Milton and Brigid Weiler (co-authors of "Recipes from Garden, Sea, & Bush"); they will prepare meals including homemade bread, and as always there will be other chefs and experienced mushroom hunters on hand to contribute their help and expertise to what is always a fun- and fungus-filled weekend.

Scheduled activities include mushroom hunts, beginning and intermediate identification workshops on local mushrooms, cooking demonstrations, a potluck fungus feast, and glimpses of Arora's ethnomycological research in various lands.

The cost is \$150 per person including lodging (in heated cabins) and most meals. To register, or for more information please contact Debbie Viess at (510) 430-9353 (days or eves 7-9 pm) or [amanitarita@yahoo.com](mailto:amanitarita@yahoo.com) or 328 Marlow Dr., Oakland, CA, 94605.

All experience levels are welcome, including beginners. Please include your e-mail address when you register. Early registration is advised!

## MSSF Scholarship

The Mycological Society of San Francisco offers scholarships to full-time graduate students majoring in mycology attending colleges and universities in northern California. These scholarships vary in amount from \$500 to \$1,500 and are given in the name of Esther Colton Whited and Dr. Harry Thiers. All research proposals are welcomed, but special consideration will be given to taxonomic studies of the higher fungi of the Pacific States. Requirements include two letters of recommendation, one from a professional mycologist, a brief statement describing the research project, and agreement to present the results at a general meeting of the MSSF. Send inquiries/materials to Robert Mackler, 157 Mesa Ct., Hercules CA, 94547. Deadline for applications is December 10, 2003.

## The Foragers' Report

### "Revelation Is No Secret At All"

By Patrick Hamilton, MYCOCHEF@aol.com

"How much to reveal" was an e-mail subject posted by your reporter to our Internet Yahoo discussion group and many were the answers – most public and a few most private.

'Things to know about these days' is a whole lot easier with the Internet. For those who pursue The Mushrooms with or without relent, well, there's a big bunch of info available. Instead of the old axiom, "You won't know if you don't go," we now have, "Before you go you might as well know some things somebody else found out for you."

Is something now missing – from the hunt? Was it better when a zillion early morning trips to gas-eating far away spots were the one way to gather mushroom knowledge? Or is it now improved when one can simply tune into The Net and see what others have done for themselves – and for us?

Sounds to me like this could lead to a sort of couch tuberousness.

(However, I do realize that many of our older members are not able to go as much as they would like and to several of them – especially, for me, Larry Stickney – there is a great indebtedness for their years of mushroom lore passed on to us.)

We did find out a lot this season about the wheresabouts and the hows to find Sierra fungi. Early and strong mountain thunderstorms wetted the meadows of *Pinus contorta* var. *murrayana*, a.k.a. lodgepole pine, and brought out the fruiting bodies of their buddies and partners in that certain (perhaps?) symbiotic nourishment – the much pursued and prized *Boletus edulis*.

Folks reported finding other types of fleshy fungi too, starting back in mid August, around mountain lakes and any moist area mostly clear of the drying winds. Russulas were especially abundant and those willing to try cooking them probably found out that many taste pretty good – and others just do not.

Some of the mushrooms found by stouthearted Norm Andresen and friends in the high mountains around August 24 were: *Albatrellus* sp.; *Amanita gemmata* and *A. muscaria*; *Boletus edulis*, *B. calopus*, and *B. zelleri*; *Gastroboletus turbinatus*; *Laetiporus sulphureus*/*L. conifericola*; *Suillus brevipes* and *S. tomentosus*; many *Russula* in the "Shrimp Group"; and the always fun to say aloud *Thaxterogaster pingue*.

Matsutakes are being seen in some markets and these are probably from British Columbia (info thanks to the commercial market knowledge of Connie Green).

Another white mushroom, *Cantharellus subalbidus* (white chanterelle), was picked at the 4,400 ft. level in the more northern Sierra by one of the best contributors to our base of knowledge, Herman Brown. He, known to all of us who participate in Yahoo groups, reports lots being found and he is, of course, one who goes out often.

Herman disclosed that he cooked some of those weird looking gastroid king boletes, and "thought the taste of the stems to be strong

but *edulis*-like."

'Atta boy Herman – that is some very good information especially for our loosely knit club of "fungus eaters of lesser known species." (This group is very, very informal, holds no meetings, has no dues (and obviously few don'ts), and apparently each member only knows if he is a member. For more information, make it up.)

From the same general area near Lake Almanor there were tales of dyers' polypores taken and Blue-Capped polypores eaten (see the above paragraph).

Spots formerly not known by many along and around Hwy. 50 up near Echo Summit were revealed recently to the bolete crazed hordes by our president's foray. This is all well and good for those who NOW KNOW ONCE SECRET STUFF but several old timer types had communications as to the protocol of showing once private porcini pleasure palaces.

Those patches have been up there for how many years? And why did so few know about them? One picker who has hunted up there alone for years asked, "Did it take a handholding expedition to the exact spots to teach habitat to those who are apparently challenged in the exercise of locating which trees, where, and when?"

A note on this: Several years ago I wrote an article here about Sierra Fall boletes on how "the yellow pines and cedars give way to the lodgepoles and red firs." Implied was the information on elevation, moisture, exposure, soil, etc.

One of our Italian hunters wrote that, because of the maggots, he picked one out of every 30 porcini found up near Horsetail Falls. Huh? I thought that orzo was invented to look like maggots. Maybe not.

The same picky picker fellow posed this question: "Does the fruiting generally begin at the highest elevation and work towards the valley or start low and work to the peaks (given that ideal conditions exist.?)" My experience is that there is little average temperature and weather difference between, say, 6000 ft. and 7,500 ft. at this time of year. Unlike in the early spring when we look for morels in the same Sierra and when temperatures vary greatly between the lower fruiting elevations around 3,000 ft. and much higher up, where they will fruit much later. I have seen boletes, and other fleshy fungi, fruit – in moist places – at the lower and higher levels, at the same time, in the fall.

Extravagances of red, yellow and white amanitas were seen on the road to Carson Pass near Big Meadow. It is also a good road along which to pick wild rose hips this time of year. And if you continue over Luther Pass the aspen show is gorgeous in October (try to come back over Ebbets or Sonora Pass). Also, for those who don't mind getting really sticky, you can then pick delicious (and quite large) pine nuts on the *Pinus monophylla* growing on the eastern slopes, above the desert basin, and in those high valley floors.

I don't know about you, but I do know that this forager will continue to pursue more patches, perhaps further away, maybe deeper into the woods, but they will be my own adventures. At least until I tell (some of) my friends and reveal (some of) them here.

That's all for now folks. Keep those cards and letters coming.

## Cultivation Corner

By Ken Litchfield, © 2003, [klitchfield@randallmuseum.org](mailto:klitchfield@randallmuseum.org)

Well, have we got some cultivation events for you....

The first three Sundays in October we will have lab seminars with lots of stuff going on. Besides learning and experimenting with new techniques and other cool stuff from our facilitators, we will be making up a bunch of media and other goodies for the MendoForay and the Fungus Fair this year. With three seminars back-to-back we will be able to get lots of growth in these warm San Francisco summer days.

This year's MendoForay 2003 will have a bigger program of events than just picking delectable mushrooms. On Friday evening we'll have a special presentation to show you how to capture your own wild mushrooms for cultivation from the multitudes that you and everyone else collect during the weekend. We'll have some portable equipment set up in the Mushroom Exhibit Hall for you when you're not attending the other presentations. We'll have hands on informal demos Friday and Saturday evenings on how to use the equipment easily, while shooting the wine buzz breeze about mushrooms and other topics of interest.

At the seminars we'll also be growing out some cultures to display at the Fungus Fair. This year promises to be really big now that we have done it a couple years at the Oakland Museum and are getting into the groove. We look forward to all of our seminar trainees preparing a very impressive cultivation display this year and having the opportunity to educate the public first hand.

*Sunday, October 5th, 9am-3pm - Lab Techniques with Kelly Ivors*

We'll practice the lab techniques learned in Kelly's Media 101 seminar and delve deeper into various aspects of other media, substrates, and cultures to take home and provide for display at the upcoming events.

*Sunday, October 12, 9am-3pm - Make Your own Grow Chamber with Peter Werner*

We will learn how to make a cheap and easy home grow chamber for fruiting your cultivated mushrooms and lots of info about providing the proper conditions to make that happen. We'll be cooking up stuff, also. Peter is a graduate student at San Francisco State and has academic expertise in lots of fungal areas.

*Sunday, October 19, 9 am-3 pm - Cheap and Easy Clean Box's and Rooms with Phil Ross*

Phil is back to discuss the how-to-do-it-in a-cheap-and-less-sterile-environment tricks he couldn't cover in his first Hydrogen Peroxide seminar. Make your own clean box transfer unit to take home.

To register reply to me personally by e-mail, preferably, or by phone (415-863-7618), with seminars you want to attend and number of people. Directions will be sent with confirmation.

All of our seminars take place at the MSSF Lab and Mushroom Garden in the Presidio National Park and are intended to continue though the end of the dry season in October when the busy foray season will begin. They are free to MSSF members and \$15-25 for non-members which includes a one-year MSSF membership. There is sometimes a variable \$5 lab fee to cover propane and other sup-

plies. Coffee and pastries are provided and you should bring a personal lunch or potluck stuff, especially mushroom dishes, to share. We have the kitchen for food preparation. Whatever you bring in – fresh, wild or grocery foraged mushrooms – we'll show you how to capture – and how to cook and eat – the remainders. We always have a mix of experienced and novices in these fun endeavors, so whatever your level there will be something for you to gain and contribute.

## Mushroom Treasury Demystified

*George Collier, Treasurer [gcollier@stanford.edu](mailto:gcollier@stanford.edu)*

### MSSF Budget for 2003-04

Category	Budget	Target Inflow	Target Outflow
<b>INCOME</b>			
Events	1150	5810	-4660
Forays	1480	10700	-9220
Interest	200	200	0
Membership Dues	14150	14200	-50
Sales	2900	8900	-6000
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>19880</i>	<i>39810</i>	<i>-19930</i>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Committees	-3045	500	-3545
General Expenses	-12175	0	-12175
General Meetings	-2350	0	-2350
Officers	-460	0	-460
Scholarships	-1850	150	-2000
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>-19880</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>-20530</i>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>42525</b>	<b>-42525</b>

Here is a quick overview of the budget that the MSSF Council has planned for 2003-04. The table summarizes our budget in terms of *sources of income* (planned to generate \$19,880 for the year) and *operating expenses* (equal to our planned income).

We derive income from *events* (such as our Fungus Fair at the Oakland Museum, the Holiday Dinner, and Randall Museum Mushroom Day), from *forays* (as at the Mendocino Woodlands Camp in November and at the San Jose Family Camp in May), from *dues* contributed by members, and from *sales* (of books, T-shirts, and mycological products) at our events. All these activities are organized by members of the Council with help from dozens of MSSF volunteers. Thank you all!

Our expenses include those of the *committees* that run the show, *general expenses* such as insurance, printing costs for the *Mycena News* and the *Roster and Member Handbook*, telephone, the inevitable tax and filing fees, and the website. Our *general meetings* pay invited speakers a modest honorarium. As you can see, we have very low-cost (but high-quality) officers. And MSSF funds *scholarships* for promising mycological scholarship and research.

Although MSSF experienced a deficit of \$2382 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2003, the economic climate for 2003-04 is more auspicious. Meanwhile, our reserves are a healthy \$33,099.

## Culinary Corner

By *Alvaro Carvajal* [arturo.carvajal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:arturo.carvajal@sbcglobal.net)

On September 8, we had the first culinary meeting at the Hall of Flowers. As is traditional, the dinner was a potluck marking the beginning of the mushroom hunting season and of a New Year for the MSSF. Pretty soon, the cold rains of autumn will come and will bring us a bounty of delightful wild mushrooms. We will use these to prepare remarkable and memorable dishes to be consumed with the best and finest wines. Well, it is a dream, but it's my dream and this is my column.

For those of you who are new to the MSSF, I would like to take a few lines to explain what the Culinary Group is about. It is a forum for MSSF members interested in COOKING mushrooms, trying interesting dishes and exchanging ideas. We meet the first Monday of the month during the mushroom season, September to May. (Our December meeting coincides with the MSSF Holiday Dinner). At our other monthly meetings, a full dinner is prepared by a sub-group of the members. All members contribute to the meal, either as part of the team that prepares the main dinner or by supplying an appetizer, preferably made with mushrooms. Additionally, everyone is expected to participate at least once a year in the preparation of a main dinner. Meals have been centered on ethnic themes, a main ingredient, a holiday near the time of the meal, or the mushroom in season. The aim is for "chef-for-a-night" members to prepare menus that they are enthusiastic about. Ideally, when we meet at the September potluck, many members (or teams) will already have an idea for a dinner, and be ready to volunteer to cook a specific monthly dinner menu. There is a charge of \$14 per person for each meeting, money that is used to buy the ingredients of the meal and to pay the costs of the hall. To be a member of the MSSF Culinary Group, you must:

- Be a member of the MSSF,
- Pay a separate membership fee (\$12, \$6 for seniors),
- Expect to volunteer or be solicited as a culinary resource for special MSSF fund-raising events, such as the Holiday Dinner, the Mendocino Foray, or the Annual Mushroom Fair.

This year 40 people attended the September potluck and put together a venerable feast. We were lucky because due to unanticipated rains in the Sierras, the season started early, making available several edibles not normally seen this early in the season. That was reflected in the multitude of dishes that were available. We had several hors d'oeuvres: Figs Stuffed with Cream Cheese by Phil Brown; Goat Cheese and Morels in a delightful oil and fresh basil sauce by Mark Lockaby; a Bolete Humus by Dave Eichorn; and a Shrimp and Oyster mushroom dip by our esteemed treasurer, George Collier. Paul Menyharth prepared a tasty Seafood Chowder. (According to him, it started as a simple clam chowder and "kind of evolved and got more complex" as the day went by). Tarts were very well represented with several outstanding creations: Sandy Waks' consisted of Squash and Tomatoes; Carol Laplante prepared one with Cheese and Caramelized Onions; and Polly Shaw prepared one using common agaricus. There were several delicious salads by David Eichorn and George Repenic. The pasta dishes were represented by a Bennie Cottone's Rigatoni with Tomatoes and Peppers; a Penne with Abalone prepared by Carol Reed and Curt Haney; Porcini and Fresh Tomatoes made by Bill & Carol Hellums

and one pasta dish made by David Surraballe. David Bell prepared a Beef and Shiitake en Daube that I could swear was a beef stew, while Leon Ilniki made Meatballs in a Cream Sauce, and Sherry Carvajal brought Meatballs in a Morel and Dill Sauce. We also had several rice dishes: Roy Yokote prepared Rice with Matsutake and Soybeans; David Bell brought Casserole of Rice and Sausages and Tom Sasaki brought in some great rice cakes. We closed the evening with decaf coffee prepared by Remo Arancio and an exquisite Pineapple and Snow Mushrooms dessert prepared by Monique Carment.

As usual, I'm unable to remember all the dishes and their cooks. There were so many good and enticing dishes on the table that it was impossible to try all of them. I made a fair attempt to do so, and later that night I paid the price.

Our next meeting will be on the 6th of October. We will celebrate German Oktoberfest, with Venison and industrial quantities of good German Beer. Come and join us.

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## Renew Your 2004 Membership Now

Now is the time to renew your MSSF membership for 2004. You can do so by: 1) mailing a check to MSSF Membership, c/o The Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco, CA 94114; 2) using the PayPal option on the MSSF website; or 3) paying in person at one of the monthly meetings, the Mendocino Foray, or the Oakland Fungus Fair in December.

The regular, adult/family membership fee is \$25.00. For seniors over 65 and for full-time students, it is \$20.00. For e-members, who do not receive the Mycena News by mail, but must download it for themselves from the website, the fee is \$15.00.

If you have changed your name(s), mailing address, telephone number(s), or e-mail address, please notify Jane Collier, the membership chair, so that she can update the database. You may notify her in writing at the time you renew. Or you may contact her directly by telephone (415-641-6068) or preferably by e-mail at [jcollier@stanford.edu](mailto:jcollier@stanford.edu).

A few of you have already renewed for 2004, so be sure to check the mailing label on your October Mycena News to find out if your membership expires in December 2003.

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## Membership and Subscription Information

To join the MSSF and receive this newsletter, send a \$25 check, payable to MSSF (\$20 for seniors 65 and over and full time students), to MSSF Membership, Attn: Jane Collier, c/o The Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way, San Francisco, CA 94114. Please include contact information: home and/or work phone numbers and e-mail address. New and renewal memberships will be current through December of 2003. To change your mailing address, please notify Jane. MSSF members may also join or renew membership in the North American Mycological Association at a reduced rate by including with their MSSF check a separate check for \$32 payable to NAMA. Send it to Jane at the same address. For further information, e-mail Jane at [jcollier@stanford.edu](mailto:jcollier@stanford.edu) or call (415) 641-6068.

# History of Mycology

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some are at the Farlow Herbarium at Harvard University.

Another leading authority on fungi of the U.S. was Henry W. Ravenel (1814-1887). As an educated planter operating a South Carolina plantation, Ravenel turned to botany and mycology as avocations. Between 1853 and 1860 he published five volumes of *Fungi Caroliniani Exsiccati* – the first published series of named American fungi. In collaboration with English botanist M.C. Cooke, Ravenel later published a second series, *Fungi Americani Exsiccati*. He collected and classified an extensive herbarium of fungi, mosses, and lichens; his summary of specimens covered a total of some 11,000 species.

Perhaps one of my favorite U.S. mycologists is Charles Horton Peck (1833-1917) (Fig. 2). He was considered a leading American mycologist from 1868 until 1913, a period referred to as the “professionalization of American mycology” during which intense work in descriptive taxonomy of fungi took place. Peck was self-taught in the identification of fungi and was appointed State Botanist of New York in 1868. His earliest interest was in bryophytes, but he later turned to mycology and described more than 2,700 new species and varieties of North American fungi with monographs of the boletes, tooth fungi, and gilled fungi for all of North America. My favorite fact about Peck was that he carried a portable microscope into the field!



Figure 2: Charles Horton Peck (late 1800s)

William Gilson Farlow (1844-1919) is remembered as a pioneer investigator in plant pathology, who helped establish a systematic nomenclature for fungi, and directed many of America’s leading botanists. He received his M.D. from Harvard Medical School in 1870 and then spent several years in Europe studying under the well-known plant pathologist Heinrich Anton de Bary. In 1874 he was appointed Assistant Professor of Cryptogamic Botany at Harvard University where his research focused on plant diseases. He published many papers on rusts, fungi and algae. Some of his larger publications include the *Bibliography of Articles on American Fungi* (1887-8) and the *Host Index to Fungi in the United States* (1888). During his lifetime Farlow founded and endowed the Harvard Cryptogamic Laboratories and Herbarium.

William Alphonso Murrill (1869-1957) was a mycologist, taxonomist, writer and authority on the fleshy fungi (Basidiomycetes). He received his Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1897 and started his career with the New York Botanical Garden in 1904 as Assistant Curator. He became Curator and Supervisor of Public Instruction from 1919 to 1924. During this time he collected over 70,000 specimens of fungi from North and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean, of which the New York Botanical Garden Cryptogamic Herbarium holds about 14,000 specimens. Murrill published impor-

tant monographs on hymenomycetes during his career. He founded and served as editor of the journal *Mycologia*, as well as contributing to parts of *North American Flora* (1907-1916). Perhaps he is most remembered as the first scientist to identify and classify *Diaporthe* [*Cryphonectria*] *parasitica*, the Chestnut blight fungus. There are many professional successors to Murrill that have shaped the history of American mycology but have not been mentioned due to space. Surely the history of American mycology did not end in the early 1900s; in fact the list gets lengthy as mycology was just starting to mushroom at this time.

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## Calendar

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**Friday, December 5, Forays for the Annual Fungus Fair:** Forays to be scheduled throughout the Bay Area and beyond to collect mushrooms for the Fungus Fair. Details to be announced in next newsletter.

**Saturday and Sunday, December 6-7, Annual Fungus Fair:** Oakland Museum. Tentative schedule: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday.

**Monday, December 15, MSSF Annual Holiday Dinner:** 7 p.m., Snow Building at the Oakland Zoo, located at 9777 Golf Links Road, Oakland. For information, please contact Bill Hellums at (415) 255-4950 or [hellums@att.net](mailto:hellums@att.net). For reservations, send a list of those in your party attending plus a check, payable to the MSSF, for \$30 per person (\$35 for non-members) to George Collier/MSSF, 1535 Church St., SF, CA 94131.

**Monday, January 5, Culinary Group’s Monthly Dinner:** 7:00 p.m. Meeting and dinner at the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. For reservations or information, please contact Alvaro at (415) 695-0466 or at [alvaro.carvajal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alvaro.carvajal@sbcglobal.net).

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## *MSSF Calendar, October, 2003*

**Saturday through Sunday, October 11-12, Yuba Pass Foray:** Depends on weather conditions. Contact leaders for location and time. Norm Andresen at: [n.andresen@comcast.net](mailto:n.andresen@comcast.net) or 510-278-8998 Herman Brown at: [herman@fungi-zette.com](mailto:herman@fungi-zette.com) or 530-284-6241.

**Saturday, November 1, Santa Cruz Foray:** Location and time to be determined by leaders. Limited group size. Contact Tina & Thomas Keller at [tinakeller@covad.net](mailto:tinakeller@covad.net) or 408-879-0939.

**Saturday, November 8, Beginners Mushroom Walk in Marin County:** Location and time to be determined by leader. Contact Terry Sullivan by e-mail at [biologyhikes@aol.com](mailto:biologyhikes@aol.com).

**Friday through Sunday, November 14-16, Annual Mendocino Foray:** Weekend foray will include meals and lodging. Arrangements currently being made by foray coordinator. More information to be listed in the next newsletter.

**Saturday and Sunday, November 22-23, Annual Salt Point Foray:** Meet at 10:00 a.m. at Woodside Campground. This is a "just show up" event. Participants are responsible for their own campsite/lodging. Potluck feast on Saturday

night of picked edibles. Foray Leaders: David and Jeanne Campbell, [yogidog@comcast.net](mailto:yogidog@comcast.net) or 415-457-7662.

**Monday, October 6, Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner:** 7:00 p.m. Meeting and dinner at the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. We will be having a German Oktoberfest Celebration. For reservations or information, please contact Alvaro at (415) 695-0466 or at [alvaro.carvajal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alvaro.carvajal@sbcglobal.net).

**Monday, October 20 and November 17 Fungus Fair Planning Meetings:** 7:00 p.m. Oakland Museum. Contact Dan Long at: [danlong@speakeasy.net](mailto:danlong@speakeasy.net) or 925-945-6477.

**Monday, November 3, Culinary Group's Monthly Dinner:** 7:00 p.m. Meeting and dinner at the Library of the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. For reservations or information, please contact Alvaro at (415) 695-0466 or at [alvaro.carvajal@sbcglobal.net](mailto:alvaro.carvajal@sbcglobal.net).

**Thursday, Nov. 6, "Edible and Poisonous Mushrooms of the Bay Area":** Free talk and slide show by Debbie Viess, at the Richmond Branch of the S.F. Public Library. Contact Library for details at (415) 666-7166.

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