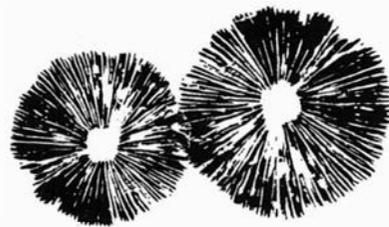


SPORE PRINTS

BULLETIN OF THE PUGET SOUND MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Number 280

March 1992



ANNUAL SURVIVORS' BANQUET

Patrice Benson



By now, you should be honing your recipes for this year's Survivors' Banquet. As mentioned last month, PSMS will supply paper plates, tablecloths, utensils, coffee, tea, and punch. The partakers supply everything else. (You may bring your own utensils and dishes, but remember: You won't be able to wash them afterward.) Admission is one dish to serve 6-8 along with the recipe (signed). If

your dish contains wild mushrooms, please indicate the species (some people do have allergies!) Dishes should arrive ready to eat, with serving utensils. (No oven or kitchen space is available.) Put your contribution on the table marked with your type of dish (salad, main course, etc.). Suggestions are as follows:

- A-F main course
- G-H bread and butter or interesting spreads
- I-M appetizers
- N-R salads
- S-Z desserts

We will have an alcoholic beverage permit, so feel free to bring your favorite beverage.

The doors open at 6:30 p.m., Friday, March 13, at the regular meeting room at CUH. Dinner will begin as soon as everything is ready, probably about 7:00 p.m. Call Denny Bowman, 525-8399, with questions or to volunteer to help. Bon Appetit!



EXPLOSIVE-EATING FUNGI *Mushroomers, March 1991 via NATS Current News*

A white fungus that rots trees also eats high explosives and rocket propellants, offering a possible solution to some tricky waste problems, according to a Utah State University researcher.

Dr. Steven D. Aust, director of USU's biotechnology center, is already testing the effectiveness of white-rot fungi at Thiokol Corporation's facility near Brigham City and at a U.S. Navy submarine base in Washington State.

Aust said four research groups at USU and two at the University of Notre Dame and Pennsylvania State University are sharing a \$2 million federal "superfund" grant to explore the fungi's possibilities for disposal of certain hazardous wastes.

Under the Navy contract, the fungus is being used to consume contaminated soils around a torpedo-loading facility at the Navy's Bangor submarine base in Kitsap County.

Aust has been working with some of the 1700 different types of white-rot fungi since he was at Michigan State University five years ago, and has had success breaking down such toxic materials as DDT, PCBs, and used motor oil.

More recent work has shown success with explosives, including "HMX," a component of solid rocket fuel. HMX is an acronym for "Her Majesty's Explosive," which was invented by the British a century ago.

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HOT MUSHROOM TARTS

[from *The Seattle Times*, November 30, 1988]

30 pieces

Pastry dough:

- 3 oz cream cheese, room temperature
- 1/2 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 cup flour

Filling:

- 1/2 pound mushrooms, cleaned and trimmed
- 1/4 cup parsley
- 5 green onions, including 2 to 3 inches of green stem
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon ground marjoram
- 6 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 6 tablespoons bread crumbs

1. To make the pastry: Cream together the cream cheese and butter. Add the flour and mix well. (This can be done in a food processor.)

2. Roll the dough into 30 balls. Place the balls in small tartlett or muffin pans measuring about 2 inches in diameter. Press the dough into the bottom and up the sides of the pans. Chill 1 hour.

3. To prepare the filling: Finely chop the mushrooms in the food processor. Remove the mushrooms and mince the parsley. Remove and add the green onions, chopping finely.

4. In a medium frying pan, heat the butter and oil. Add the vegetables and saute over medium heat for about 6 minutes, or until the vegetables start to give off their liquid and thicken a little. Transfer to a bowl and add the salt, marjoram, Parmesan and bread crumbs, mixing well.

5. Divide the filling among the tart shells, pressing down lightly. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes, until lightly golden. Let the tarts sit in the pans for 5 minutes to firm up before unmolding. Note: To freeze the tarts, bake them first, unmold and then freeze after they are cooled. Wrap carefully to store. Reheat from the frozen state in a preheated 375-degree oven for 7 to 10 minutes. Serve hot.

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Center for Urban Horticulture, Mail Stop GF-15,
University of Washington, Seattle, Washington 98195
(206) 522-6031

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EDITOR: Agnes A. Sieger, 15555 14th N.E.,
Seattle, WA 98155

CALENDAR

- Mar. 13 Survivors' Banquet, CUH
- Mar. 16 Board meeting, 7:30 p.m., CUH
- Mar. 21 Tolt River field trip
- Mar. 23 Beginner class, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Isaacson Classroom, CUH
- Mar. 27 *Spore Prints* Deadline
- Mar. 29 Cultivation Group tour of Fungi Perfecti, 9:15 a.m., CUH parking lot.
- Mar. 30 Beginner class, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Isaacson Classroom, CUH
- Apr. 6 Beginner class, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Isaacson Classroom, CUH

BOARD NEWS

Agnes Sieger

There are some changes in committee chairs. Harold and Beth Schnarre will be the new co-chairs for Book Sales. Joanne Young will take over publicity, and Bill Bridges will be the new Librarian. Kern Hendricks reported that the Stuntz Foundation has invited two prominent European mycologists, Henry Dissing from Copenhagen and Eef Arnolds of the Netherlands, to the Pacific Northwest in August and September 1992. Arnolds will be the key speaker at a gathering of the Oregon Mycological Society in August, and perhaps we can get him to speak to PSMS. Dr. Ammirati has a grant to study spruce mycology in the Olympic National Park, opening up some interesting collecting areas for the NAMA foray. The board voted to raise the admission price for the 1992 annual exhibit \$1.00 for adults. The price will be \$4.00 for adults and \$2.00 for children and seniors, seniors to be defined as 60 or over.

Membership Meeting

The meeting this month will be held during the Survivors' Banquet, Friday, March 13, 1992, at the Center for Urban Horticulture, 3501 N.E. 41st Street, Seattle.

We, the members, are the program and the workers. Patrice has asked me to coordinate the few volunteers we need to make this happen smoothly. So, what I need are a few volunteers (about seven or eight) to coordinate. If you care to lend a hand, give me a call at 525-8399 and I'll set you up with one of the small jobs that needs a little special attention. —Dennis Bowman

CULTIVATION GROUP

Louis Poncz



On January 26th, twenty-eight enthusiastic people attended the Cultivation Workshop A to Y that took place in a warehouse kindly provided by Teknos, a maker of science exhibits. Each participant received a notebook crammed with articles describing how to create the proper environment in the home with a minimum investment, how to create a "Leaning Tower of *Pleurotus*," and how to grow oyster mushrooms, shiitake, morels, and *Stropharia rugosoannulata*. Most of the articles included references and lists of suppliers. Each participant also went home with a spatula and knife, several Petri dishes containing either mycelium or living tissue, a bag of straw inoculated with oyster mushrooms, and pages of notes on mushroom cultivation techniques.

Bill Bridges gave the keynote address, followed by Denny Bowman, who discussed the three most important techniques in mushroom cultivation—sterility, sterility, and sterility, and Mark Jarand, who discussed fruiting techniques. Many questions were asked, including several on such exotic topics as how to inoculate in the outdoors and how to grow *Lyophyllum decastes*. Besides the talks, each participant attended three work stations — a display of the colorful contaminants that mushroom cultivators often encounter, two HEPA filters where they inoculated Petri dishes, and an area for preparing straw inoculated with oyster mushrooms.

We would like to thank Bill Bridges, who organized the workshop, and Mark Jarand, Lynn Phillips, Denny Bowman, Walter Knox, Sondra Shira, Bill Seetham, and Claude Simonin for putting together this extremely informative hands-on experience.

Anyone who is a member of PSMS is invited to join us when we visit Fungi Perfecti, Paul Stamets' mushroom farm. Those who would like to participate in this event MUST meet at the parking lot of the Center for Urban Horticulture at 9:15 a.m. on March 29th; please bring your own lunch. In addition to visiting Fungi Perfecti, we hope to hunt for wild mushrooms and inoculate media with these mushrooms in the outdoors.



MUSHROOM MISSIONARIES

Patrice Benson and Lynn Phillips gave a mycophagy program and cooking demonstration to the Snohomish Mycological Society on February 11th.

*Mushroom gathering;
On our way back,
How many the briers!* —Gacho

MEET THE BURBRIDGES

Inga Wilcox

Ralph and Peggy Burbridge have been members for 15 years. They joined PSMS in 1977 after attending the mushroom show at the Pacific Science Center. Peggy came to Seattle from Canada; Ralph came from the State of Missouri. They met through "Parents Without Partners" and have been married for 20 years.



Prior to joining PSMS they had been going on forays with a friend. This proved to be both an enjoyable and a frustrating experience for the Burbridges: Their friend only recognized one species — chanterelles. Now they have expanded their knowledge, are very fond of morels (Peggy seems to have a special eye for finding them), and enjoy many delectable species.

Ralph has served on the board. Both Ralph and Peggy help with the annual exhibit and host forays. Ralph is now retired after a diversified career. During WW II he served in the Air Corps, where he was a bombardier on the B-17 and flew more than 50 combat missions. He was a newspaperman, and before retiring he worked for the VA in vocational rehabilitation. Ralph's hobby is wine making. He was awarded seven ribbons at last year's State Fair for both red and white wines. Peggy still works as a pediatric nurse practitioner.

Both remember one foray at the Cispus Environmental Center. They were hunting with some other members when one of the men picked some little grayish-white mushrooms and declared them to be edible. Though somewhat hesitant, Ralph and Peggy accepted his pronouncement and ate a small amount. Both of them got sick. The mushroom turned out to be *Clitocybe dealbata*. Their advice: "If in doubt, don't eat it."

Sweet Pickled Dill Peppers

Peggy Burbridge

Use sweet red, green, and yellow bell peppers and Rumanian sweet, Hungarian sweet, and/or red, green, or yellow pimento peppers. Cut into squares, removing seeds and ribs. Sterilize four clean quart canning jars, place 1-2 heads of dill weed in each jar, and pack in the pepper squares. Add 1 Tbs salt and 2 tsp pickling spices to each jar. (Optionally add 1-2 small hot peppers and 1-2 cloves of garlic to each jar). Boil 3 C water, 2 C vinegar, and 2 C sugar. While still boiling hot, add to peppers. Seal with sterilized lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 5 minutes to seal.

CONSERVATION & ECOLOGY COMMITTEE Ron Post



HB 2865: One of the least debated bills in Olympia this winter was House Bill 2865, which puts mushrooms into a "special forest products" category and requires commercial picking permits for more than a certain amount of wild edible mushrooms. (At first, the word "edible" was left out; then it was put back in. The word "fickle" comes to mind.) The bill passed out of the House of Representatives unanimously. It is in the Senate at the time I write this.

If the bill passes and gets signed into law, "commercial" pickers will have to have a permit. The permit must

be signed by the landowner and issued by (or okayed by) a county to be valid.

The bill has a "floor" above which permits are needed. The floor would be 3 gallons per species per day, or 9 gallons in aggregate, plus one mushroom, per day. (The gallon quota makes measurement a visual, not a weights and measure, task.) Three gallons is about the size of a large grocery sack.

Call 362-4374 for information. Call 1-800-562-6000 to tell your state senator what you think!

Conservation Survey: Some of you out there (13 of 45) returned your surveys from the November meeting. This was a survey about attitudes, not factual knowledge. Here are a few highlights:

- Thirteen people (100%) said that conservation of fungi is desirable.
- Nine people would not pay permit fees for recreational picking, but four people would.
- Eleven thought government should sponsor more research on the role of fungi in ecosystems.
- Eleven thought commercial picking practices are not compatible with conservation.
- Six believed there is insufficient data to tell whether commercial harvesting of fungi affects the long-term viability of a species. Six said they didn't know, and one believed the data are sufficient.
- Three thought human activities have little or no impact on fungal diversity. Eight said overharvesting would have the most effect on diversity, and five thought competition with wildlife would have the most effect. Four people thought habitat damage can result from collecting wild plants.

Upcoming Program: The Conservation and Ecology Committee is planning a program for a PSMS meeting! Panelists are being contacted to talk on topics related to the conservation of fungi and forests. Stay tuned.

BEGINNER MUSHROOM CLASSES Denis Benjamin

There is still room in the Beginner Classes starting this month. Signup sheets will be available at the Survivors' Banquet. The cost is \$15.00 for the series.

Dates: March 23, 30, April 6, 13, 20, 27
Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Place: CUH, Isaacson Classroom

Topics: An Introduction to the Biology of Fungi
Mycology as a Hobby — the Do's & Don'ts & How To's of Mushrooming, from collecting to cooking to studying
The Gross Anatomy of Fruiting Bodies
Identification of Gilled Fungi (Kit Scates chart)
Classification and Identification of Non-gilled Fungi
Mushroom Poisoning, including common edible species and poisonous look-alikes
Field trip.

These classes are designed for those just getting started in amateur mycology, not for those who want detailed taxonomic information.

Explosive-Eating, cont. from p. 1

The fungus has also been used to break down TNT and RDX, or "Royal Deutsch Explosive," the German equivalent of HMX, Aust said.

Aust said the key to the process is the fungi's ability to break down long-chain polymer molecules. Such molecules make up the strong lignin in a tree which provides its rigidity.

Lignin does not break down in the presence of ordinary bacteria, but the fungus can reduce it to a powdery white "rot" and some carbon dioxide gas.

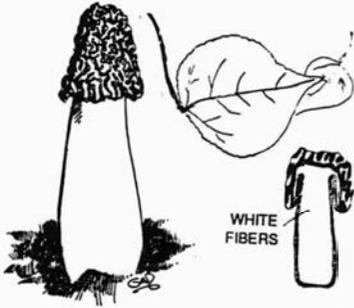
Since polymers found in many hazardous materials also resist degradation with bacteria, the fungi may provide an effective alternative.

COMING UP, THE FIRST FIELD TRIP OF SPRING

Our annual introduction to Spring, the learning field trip to MacDonald County Park, is scheduled for Saturday, March 21. MacDonald Park is on the Tolt River about 1/2 mile south of Carnation in King County. Enter the park on N.E. 40th Street from State Hwy. 203. Watch for PSMS signs on the corner. Use the day-use parking lot and cross the suspension bridge to the shelter.

There will be a short lecture at 9:00 a.m., followed by a foray for *Verpa bohemica* under the cottonwoods in surrounding areas. Wear shoes suitable for soggy ground and bring your rain gear. For your mushrooms, bring a container with a wide bottom (not a plastic bag).

There will be coffee and goodies at the shelter. Bring a sack lunch. The trip ends around noon.



Jennie M. Schmitt died on February 11th after a long illness. She was PSMS President from 1978 to 1980 and had previously been Membership Chair and Vice-President. Jennie was born and raised in Wisconsin and came to Washington in 1943. Three years later she married Dave and began raising a family. She and Dave joined PSMS a year after its formation. They often identified at field trips and were always generous in sharing choice hunting sites. Jennie was a fine taxonomist and a gifted teacher. She frequently taught classes for PSMS and was a guiding influence in the South Sound Mycological Society. Active in NAMA, her quiet efficiency made her difficult job as recorder for their 1981 foray seem easy. She encouraged many of us in our early struggles with taxonomy and microscopy and her influence is still felt in our society. Thanks, Jennie. Farewell.



William Bridge Cooke died during the past holiday season. He worked with microfungi for most of his professional life, but is known to amateurs for his study of polypores on which he worked after his retirement. Bridge and his wife were a delightful couple. They sojourned at forays across the country, traveling by bus and making prodigious collections. Bridge kept the Aphyllophorales and distributed other fungi to colleagues according to their specialties. A large box of *Inocybe* species he mailed to Dr. Stuntz is still awaiting cataloging in the University of Washington herbarium.

