

EARTHSTAR

E X A M I N E R

Number 14, March 1990

Newsletter of the Missouri Mycological Society

About the Winter Meeting

by Ken Gilberg

I was so happy that the meeting was so gratifying for everyone who came. If anyone was unhappy with anything it might have been their own gluttony, but those people should forgive themselves in the name of mycophagy.

Mushrooms to me have always been a catalyst for *gran cuisine*, and the MMS is now proven to possess quite a few culinary artists. This being our first attempt at a luncheon, think of what the future might bring... The invitation that I wrote was vague about the food preparation (partially intended). Thanks to generous contributions of food and cooking we had a wonderful variety:

Dr. Richard Parmley's *radiatore con salmone e shiitake*;

Phoebe Copley's Hungarian mushroom soup with oysters, boletes and champignons;

Don Dill's oyster mushroom chili and marinated oysters;

Doris Amann's spinach salad;

Gertrude Stawski's green bean and coral mushroom casserole;

Frank Motta's *rissoto* with *boletus* and his home-made wine;

Leland Von Behren's homemade wine;

Wanda Dill's sour cream cake;

Debby Jones's chocolate cookies;

Ken Gilberg's *luganega* with *porcini*.

We came closer to the Woolhope Club's menu than I ever would have imagined and it could not have been a more pleasant experience. While I'm naming names, thank you Ellen Menown, for arranging so many of the details, shopping and taking care of the beverages. The day went so fast and there was so much to say to so many. People came to the meeting whom many of us hadn't gotten to meet because they are so far away. Linda and Jim Lathrop (Linda wore a glowing smile that afternoon), and Ron and Deanna Dollarhite drove over four hours to join us. We got to meet some new members - Gary Fouch and Mark D'Angelo and some others came who we hope will become members.

We were enthralled by new member Gregg Bogosian's slide show of his work at Monsanto with bioluminescence. The slides of a variety of fungi photographed in one city park on a single day were gorgeous. The Orso's slides of Montana mushrooms reminds me of how little I know about mushrooms and was a fun guessing game. Thanks to Doris Amann for making copies of the mushroom cookery book and Leland for bringing copies of a mushroom identification handout.

I was impressed by my slide show - impressed with how knowledgeable the Missouri Mycological Society is about basic mycology. I can see that we're ready for more detailed investigations into Missouri mushrooms. We didn't have time to cover all the things that we wanted to, but we got our bylaws passed. Phil Roos has now submitted our application for tax exempt status to the IRS.

The invitation to the winter meeting promised to decode the menu reprinted from the Woolhope Club. According to a book on the history of mycology, the Woolhope Club was actually the precursor to the second mycological society in Europe, the British Mycological Society, formed in 1896 (the first being the *Societe Mycologic de France* in 1884). The roots of the BMS go back to 1868 when Dr. H.G. Bull of Hereford invited members of the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club to 'a Foray among the Funguses,' and by so doing introduced a term subsequently used to designate mycological field excursions. The foray was a great success and became an annual event culminating with a dinner at the Green Dragon Hotel in Hereford. Here is the illustration and accompanying article xeroxed from the *Gardener's Chronicle* October 13, 1877.

Some people asked where to get the book *Les Gratin des Champignons*, slides of which were in Ken's show. This book of humorous but factual caricatures of mushrooms is available from Lubrecht and Cramer, R.D. 1 Box 244, Forestburgh, N.Y. 12777.

Odds & Ends

Phil Roos

Morel Foray: Likely at Babler Park next month. You'll be notified by phone.

If anyone else keeps track of, this is Issue #14 of the *Earthstar Examiner*. Ken's dinner invitation was issue #13, although it wasn't numbered.

The current membership list is enclosed. I welcome the many new members and regret that some people I had gotten to know did not choose to renew.

I distributed copies of our financial statement for the first three years at the annual meeting. People who did not attend and would like to see it, please call or drop me a postcard.

The New Mexico Mycological Society announces that its 1990 Foray will be held August 17th, 18th & 19th near Taos. Dr. Nancy Smith Weber will be the mycologist. For details, contact Peggy Hooton at 505-243-1457 or Jane Caudill at 505-881-2275.

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The article on the back page, originally published in the *Chicago Tribune*, is borrowed from *The Mycolog* (Kaw Valley Mycological Society).

The annual meeting was so full of things that we didn't get to my thing, which is developing two slide shows of Missouri Mushrooms. As nice as Ken's slide show is, it bespeaks his personality. I want one which any experienced member can take to any group.

After some thought, I propose two shows, one of gilled and one of non-gilled fungi. Each would fill an 80 - slide carousel and have about 40 species. Each would have a prepared script

which could be read or used as a point of departure, or abandoned. Some suggestions for species follow. To save space, I am giving only the Latin names. The aim is to include the most common mushrooms to be seen in populated areas, as well as those big and bright enough to draw the attention of those who spend time in wood and field. Also, we should include those best to eat and the most dangerous ones.

I don't know whether anyone else is interested in this project. For me, this is a new approach. Instead of looking for the most unusual mushrooms, I will try to decide which ones would most likely be noticed by the non-mushroomer.

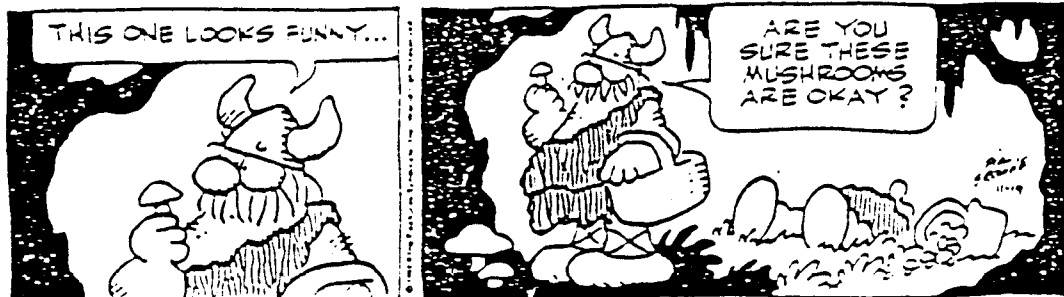
Non-Gilled Fungi:

Auricula auricularia; *Boletus bicolor*; *Craterellus fallax*; *Fomes (Fometopsis) pinicola*; *Ganoderma applanatum*; *Gyromitra caroliniana*; *Hericium erinaceus*; *Hypomyces lactiflorum*; *Laetiporus sulphureus* (probably needs four slides); *Lycoperdon pyriforme*; *Morchella semilibra*, *M. deliciosa*, *M. augusticeps*; *Phellinus rimosus*; *Pycnoporus cinnabarinus*, *Scleroderma citrinum*; *Trametes versicolor*; *Urnula craterium*.

I don't know which are Missouri's most common boletes, puffballs and earthstars and will be asking you about them.

Gilled Fungi:

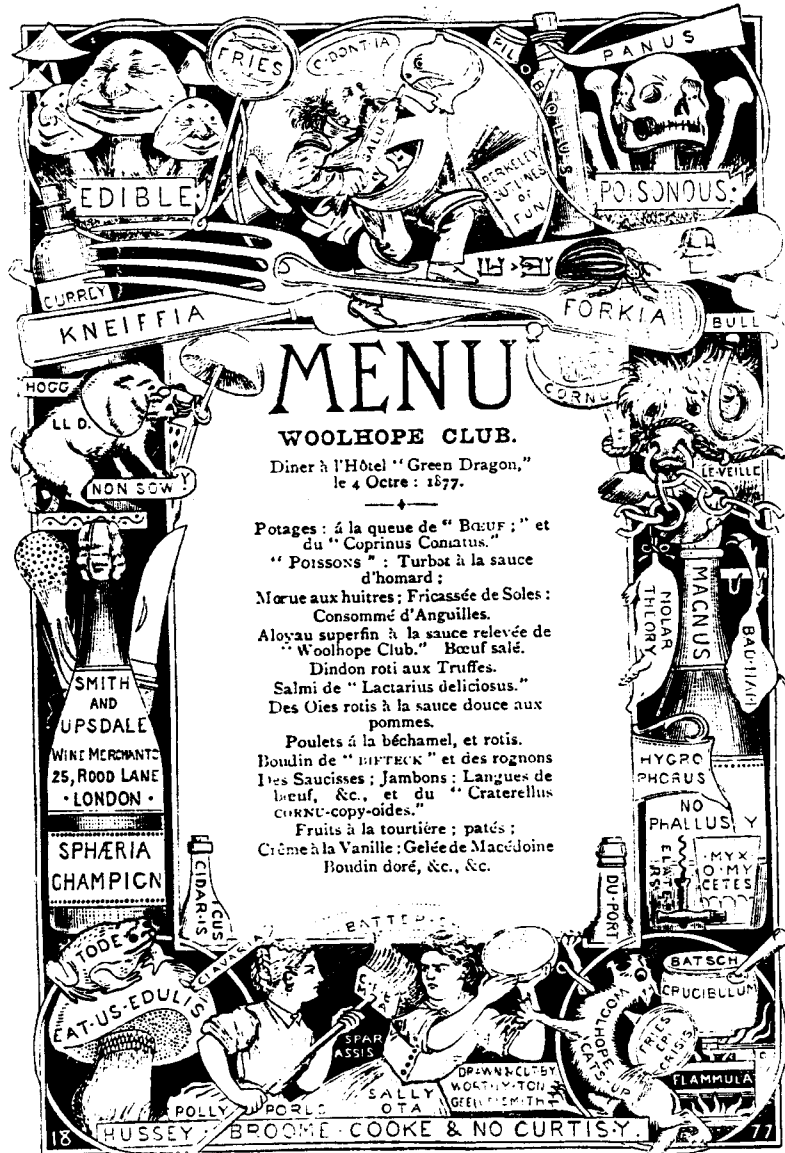
Agaricus campestris; *Aminita. brunnescens*; *A. chlorinosma*, *A. theirsii*; *A. virosa* (or whatever our most common summer amanita turns out to be); *Armillaria mellea*; *A. tabescens*; *Cantharellus cibarius*, *C. cinnabarinus*; *Chlorophyllum molybdites*; *Coprinus atramentarius*; *C. comatus*; *Entoloma abortivum* (both forms); *Flamulina velutipes*; *Laccaria ochropurpurea*; *Lactarius piperatus* (or whatever our common summer lactarius turns out to be called); *Lepiota procera*; *Marasmius oreades*; *Oudemansiella radicata*; *Omphalotus illudens*; *Pleurotus ostreatus*; *Pluteus cervinus*; *Russula emetica* (group).



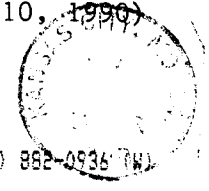
THE WOOLHOPE MENU.

FOR such of our readers as may not be so deeply versed in fungi as we the members of the Woolhope Club, we append a brief explanation of the allusions to be found in the pictorial border of the *menu* card. Beginning at the top, the pleasant faces seen in the "edible" fungi, and the dolorous mementos manifest in the "poisonous" ones, explain themselves. The former are suitable for frying, and "Fries" is the greatest living authority on fungi; the latter cause unpleasant symptoms and pain us—"Panus" is a genus of fungi; the pill-box, pill and medicine-bottle, are represented by the genus of fungi named "Pilobolus." Mr. Berkeley in the top centre is being attacked by a starry Puff-ball (a species of vegetable octopus), and his exclamation of affright naturally takes the form of another genus of fungi named "Odontia." It will be observed that Mr. Berkeley, who is applying "Salus" to the nose of the monster (a material "no fungus can withstand") has let fall his *Outlines of Fun-gology*. The bottle of "Currey" on the left immortalises Mr. Fredk. Currey, the famous fungologist. "Kneiffia" underneath is a genus of fungi, and "Forkia" is a genus shortly to be established. The cuneiform inscription indicates the character of the fungoid octopus and the Colorado beetle at Hereford. The porcine quadruped on the left points to Dr. Robert Hogg, who has published a book on fungi, and the inscription "Non Sow!" indicates that he is not to be confounded with Sowerby. The umbrella handle and great knife on the left always appear at the Hereford meetings: they belong to Mr. Plowright, the famous surgeon and fungologist of King's Lynn. The wine bottle bears the name of the renowned wine merchants of Rood Lane, who supply so many fungus eaters with their (as pronounced after dinner) "Sphæria champign." Sphæria is an immense genus of fungi, and "champign" is Champignon with its tail off. On the right we have Dr. Bull, the physician of Hereford, supporting "Cornu" (Latin for Dr. Bull's Horn of Plenty). M. Max Cornu, of Paris, is one of the highest living authorities on fungi, and was a guest at Hereford. The chains and ropes ornamenting the bovine nose indicate the power and irrepressible energy of Dr. Bull. Leveille is the name of a great fungus author, and refers at the same time to the "veal" which at an early period clothes the bones of all oxen. "Magnus" refers to Dr. Magnus, of Berlin, the fungologist. The greatness of this author's name has expelled the cork from the bottle. "Bad-ham," on the dried pig's leg, refers to Dr. Badham, who wrote the *Esulent Funguses of England*; whilst the mole hanging head downwards indicates the miserable condition of Mr. Lee's "molar theory," which referred the formation of fairy rings to the underground gyrations of the mole. "Hygrophorus" (the Water Bearer) is the name of a large genus of watery fungi; and the "Myxomycetes" are a large group of fungi, now attracting peculiar attention. Phallus is a genus of fungi, which does service here in indicating that there is "no fallacy" as to the quality of the wine consumed. Some fungi bear spiral cork-screw-like springs for use in dispersing the spores; the springs are named "elaters," therefore the cork-screw figured is in more senses than one an "elator." The bottle of cider on the left and Agarius cidaris are synonymous, and "Du-Port" on the right is the name of an excellent fungoid clergyman from Norfolk who attended the Hereford meeting. Arriving now at the bottom we have "Tode," a writer on Mushrooms, together with a figure of *Boletus edulis* beheaded. Hussey, Broome, Cooke and Curtis are all renowned fungologists—Hussey and Cooke are in conflict, the latter has just thrown a rolling-pin (*Clavaria*—a genus of fungi) at the latter, and is now in the act of discharging a basin of batter (*Batarrea*—another genus of fungi) at her opponent. The cook's name is Psalliota, a sub-genus of fungi, the hussy's name Polyporus, a large

genus of the same class of plants. C.E.B., M.A., on the hussy's weapon, point to the name and degree of Mr. Broome, the fungologist. "Sparassis" is an important genus of fungi, which is here giving a hint to the combatants as to how to proceed when their artificial weapons are no longer available. "Crucibulum" is the name of a large genus of fungi, and means a saucepan: the "Batch" inside is the name of a great fungus author. "Flammula"—a little flame—is a subgenus of fungi; and "Fries Epi-crisis" (the fat-in-the-fire) is the name of the best text-book of fungi in existence. The nature of the Woolhope ketchup, or "cats-up," was fully described in the *Gardeners' Chronicle* last year. As a matter of fact the word "Poissons" (fish) was misprinted "Poisons" by the printer; it was also overlooked by the revising editor, and appeared as "Poisons" on all the cards on the fungus dinner-table.



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Mushrooms

They'll make you forget turkey hunt in a hurry

BY JOHN HUSAR
Chicago Tribune

Nothing brings a hunt to a skidding halt faster than the sight of a wild, delicious mushroom. Some guys immediately forget birds and bunnies.

Oh, they'll pretend, but you and I know better. Especially if they've already bagged some game. With fresh, good mushrooms, nothing tastes better. So they poke around the moldy leaves while partners scream about the concept of a hunt.

A pal once found some morels on a turkey hunt in Shawnee National Forest, and that was it for the gobblers. We filled caps and pouches with every mushroom we could find. We'd basically driven 6 1/2 hours to go mushroom hunting with turkey permits in our pockets.

Around Chicago, the last two autumns weren't great for mushrooms. One buddy, though, seemed unusually content. I should have wondered when Bob Lissak came by last Christmas with a package of dried wild mushrooms and the quiet grin of a knowing man.

I DIDN'T ASK where he'd found them, because courtesy does not permit such intrusion. You may ask a fellow where he catches two-pound crappies and he might tell you. But a mushroom hunter would rather reveal his bedroom secrets. I know of one old fellow who'll walk a mile in the wrong direction to mislead strangers.

Thus when Lissak suggested I put some shopping bags into my pouch for the rabbit hunt we were planning, the hairs tingled on the back of my neck.

"This is December," I said. "Where are we going to find mushrooms?"

Well, it turns out that old buddy Bob had found the mother lode. He'd been hunting near a stable where racehorses are trained when a partner waved him toward the training track.

"You won't believe it," the pal said. "There are piles of horse manure all around here. And in every pile, there are the biggest, fattest mushrooms you'll ever find."

Bob confessed that he'd kept this secret for two years, but now it was time to share. "It's all right," he said magnanimously. "I've already



got all the mushrooms I need. I must have 40 pounds frozen at home."

He noted that even large commercial operations use horsetrack manure to grow mushrooms and a check with Campbell's farm in West Chicago proved him right. They get theirs from Arlington Park.

THE MORNING was clear and golden; crisp, but climbing toward the 60s. Bob and I cased through nearly a mile of fields and woods with Jenny, his daughter, and Diva, the dog.

It seemed like a good idea to combine hunting and mushrooming, although you can guess the priority. The guns were just in case a bunny or bird should pop up and hit us in the face.

In time, we reached the track and, indeed, right beside the horses pulling sulks were lawnny piles of manure.

Bob smiled. Three plate-size mushrooms gleamed from a shadowy crevasse and he carefully cut them free. They seemed to be the tan, leather-hued habitue of conifers and hardwoods that a field guide would call Lepistrina trina.

"THERE'S MORE over here," Bob said, and dozens of colonies of leaflike caps gleamed in the sun, some so tight they grew out of each other. I sunk to my knees in the manure and began cutting. Never did the ground smell so sweet.

"This is mushroom heaven," I said.