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THIS NUMBER OF CZECH MYCOLOGY IS DEDICATED TO THE EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY OF CZECH MYCOLOGIST DR. JOSEF HERINK

Eighty years of Dr. Josef Herink

ZDENĚK POUZAR

In 1995 and 1996, we could commemorate two important anniversaries: fifty years from the foundation of the Czech Scientific Society for Mycology in 1946 and the eightieth birthday of one of its founders, Dr. Josef Herink (born 1915).

Both the Society and Dr. Herink are closely connected – he has been one of the most active members of its council during the last half century and many members of this Society have been deeply influenced by his ideas, his methods and have profited from his knowledge of mycology and toxicology.

Josef Herink was born on December 26, 1915 in Prague to a family of an architect. Whilst still a young man and at secondary school, he directed his attention to fungi and wrote a treatise on his research into the polypores of Stromovka, a large park in Prague. Nevertheless, when thinking about a profession, he chose medicine and in 1934–1939 and after the World War 2 in 1945, he studied at the Medical Faculty of the Charles University in Prague. In his profession, he concentrated on internal medicine, toxicology and biochemistry, serving in various functions in hospitals, medical centers and laboratories in North Bohemia (Turnov, Mladá Boleslav, Kosmonosy etc.). However, in his free time, he concentrated on the fungi, especially the taxonomy of the Basidiomycetes and the

local research of Agaricales, Polyporales and Hydnoaceae but also Discomycetes and other macromycetes.

During more than half a century, Dr. Herink accumulated a collection comprising a rather large herbarium (fungarium) of several tens of thousands of specimens (now partly deposited in the National Museum in Prague). In the former Czechoslovakia, he was the first mycologist who systematically built up a herbarium of Agaricales with nearly all specimens being supplemented by documents describing characters of the fresh carpophores with special attention to such features which disappear during drying. This method has not only been systematically applied to his own material but he also stressed the importance of such notes in a number of lectures and in his personal contacts, especially with the younger generation of mycologists.

Together with the written notes, he also soon applied the systematic photographic documentation of every important agaric collection. In addition, some other groups of fungi were photographed by Dr. Herink and his portraits of some Discomycetes were used by e. g. M. Svrček in his monograph of the Lachneoideae (1949).

Dr. Herink was an enthusiast in the research of macrochemical reactions of the Agaricales and he applied a number of various chemicals in every occasion when fresh carpophores were at his disposal. In the macroscopic examination of agarics and bolets, he found a number of characters, especially in smell, taste, colour, consistency etc., which sometimes enabled identification in the field, without using a microscope.

During more than sixty years of experience with macromycetes Dr. Herink become acquainted with number of very rare or only seldom collected species. A generation of his younger colleagues in the Czech Scientific Society for Mycology had the privilege to learn from his knowledge of these rarities. His main object of interest for about sixty years was the genus *Lepiota* s. l. His studies covered not only taxonomy but also morphology. Here is one point which should be mentioned: the discovery of velum universale in *Macrolepiota procera* and its change during the carpophore development.

Nevertheless, this, as well as the great majority of his results, still remain unpublished. In other groups of Agaricales, he was especially successful with his discovery of a new species, a purely white *Lentinellus pilati* Herink (published in 1953), a fungus the existence of which was later confirmed by some other mycologist both here and abroad.

From the methodological point of view it is interesting to note his work on the various ways of observing the change and colour reactions of *Lactarius* milk. He introduced standard methods which enabled mycologists to work with comparable results in this field.

Besides the accumulation of specimens for taxonomic studies, Dr. Herink explored also some important localities for data about their biodiversity. Here

should mainly be mentioned the famous Boubín virgin forest in the Šumava Mountains, where he started the exploration already before the 2nd World War, and for several decades afterwards, with some very interesting species being discovered (agarics as well as polypores).

Dr. Herink is still very active in the organisation of mycology in the Czech and the Slovak Republic. During the War he organised within the Czech Mycological Society a group of those mycologists seriously interested in scientific mycology. He delivered a number of lectures on the bases of the taxonomy of various groups of agarics and bolets, some of which were stenographically recorded, with the manuscript circulated among mycologists for a number of years.



Dr. Josef Herink
1995

After the War, he energetically undertook the building of the newly established society, the Czech Mycological Club (1946) – now the Czech Scientific Society for Mycology – and the editing of the new journal “Česká mykologie” (1947) – now Czech Mycology. During the whole period of the last half century, he has been actively involved in a number of editorial and organisational activities.

The younger generations of mycologists in our country are deeply indebted to Dr. Josef Herink because of their chance to draw upon his knowledge and experience, not only in mycology but also in broader intellectual fields. We all are fortunate and feel honoured that we have had so many years in close association with his phenomenal personality.