

## The decease of Dr. Josef Herink

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Czech mycological science has suffered a serious loss by the death of Dr. Josef Herink – one of the few oldest Czech mycologists – who initiated in 1945 the foundation of the Czechoslovak (now Czech) Scientific Society for Mycology, originally named the Czechoslovak Mycological Club.

Josef Herink was born in Prague on December 26, 1915, and died there (post-operative embol) on August 20, 1999 at the age of 83 years; he was buried at the Old Cemetery in Mladá Boleslav, N. Bohemia. He studied medicine at the Charles University in Prague but stayed with his family and worked as a physician (MUDr.), a specialist in internal medicine, mostly in two North Bohemian towns, Turnov and chiefly Mnichovo Hradiště.

He was active in several branches of medicine and mycology. As regards mycological taxonomy, J. Herink described three new species of agarics, viz. *Lentinellus pilatii* Herink 1953, *Inocybe crocifolia* Herink 1954 and *Rhodophyllus viridulus* Herink 1955. At the generic level, he proposed the following genera: *Neohygrocybe* Herink 1958, *Camarophylloopsis* Herink 1958 and *Gliophorus* Herink 1958 from which *Camarophylloopsis* is now commonly used. In addition, he proposed several new combinations.

During his many years of lasting mycological activity, J. Herink thoroughly studied many species of macromycetes, for instance *Hypholoma coprinifacies*, *Baeospora myriadophylla*, *Cystoderma paradoxum*, some species of *Agaricus*, *Armillaria*, *Cortinarius*, *Entoloma*, *Lepiota* s.l., *Mycena*, *Omphalina*, etc. and published "small monographic works" on them. Particularly important is his paper on the variation of *Helvella gabretae*; on the basis of this study, the species was merged with *Pseudorhizina sphaerospora*. J. Herink studied in detail rich fresh material of the bolete *Xerocomus moravicus* (Vacek) Herink and his paper significantly spread knowledge of this species among the European mycological community. He devoted his whole life to his beloved genus *Lepiota* s.l., on which he published several papers (1954, 1961, 1962, 1975). In the last months he intended, with co-authors or alone, to write some papers on several interesting macromycetes but his death hindered this project.



Dr. Josef Herink

Photo 28. 4. 1997 by F. Kotlaba

J. Herink systematically improved the method of macrochemical reactions in the agarics and boleti for years. He used it as a diagnostic feature not only for the identification of species but also for their delimitation. He applied a number of chemical compounds, which he always took with him, and systematically applied when making the descriptions. Chemical reactions in species of the genus *Lactarius* were so attractive to him that he elaborated a method of proceeding specifically with milk reactions (1956, 1957).

One of the aims of J. Herink was to find characters in the agarics and boleti to identify species macroscopically, without using the microscope. For this purpose, he looked for very small differences in smell, taste, consistency, discolouration of context after bruising or cutting, as well as other features. Microscopical characters were applied in the last phase of the final preparation of the description and formation of a taxonomic concept. When using this method, he was able to identify many species in the field at sight ("*prima facie*"), on exhibitions of fungi or during lectures. He also systematically studied in detail the colour of fungal spore prints.

His whole life J. Herink collected data on the distribution of fungal species (macromycetes) in the former Czechoslovakia. He succeeded, e.g., in collecting rich data on the distribution of *Hygrophorus marzuolus* in Czechoslovakia, where this species reaches part of the northern boundary of its European distribution area (published 1949, 1951).

He founded the documentation methods of recording distribution data of larger fungi. With herbarium specimens, he provided also descriptions of the carpophores or notes on such characters, which disappear when drying. Simultaneously, he consistently numbered all his records of fungi in the field and the same number was included with herbarium specimens. He used this method from the thirties up to the end of this century – this is almost 60 years of documentation of macromycetes in the Czech and Slovak Republics. During his long life he accumulated a great number of herbarium specimens, a part of which is preserved in the herbarium of the Mycological Department of the National Museum, Prague, PRM (Czech Republic).

J. Herink was active in nature conservancy organisation. He systematically studied the mycoflora of some nature reserves, especially Boubín Virgin Forest and Karlštejn National Nature Reserve. J. Herink was also a co-author of Red Data Book Nr.4 (cryptogamic plants) of the Slovak and Czech Republics (1995), for which he elaborated 20 species of agarics and boleti (illustrated with paintings of his younger brother, the painter Jan Herink).

During his long life, Josef Herink prepared a large number of lectures for members of the Czechoslovak (Czech) Scientific Society for Mycology (shortly Society), devoted not only to agarics and boleti but also to fungal poisonings and nature conservation. These mostly dealt with special scientific problems and were not just elementary lectures. At the end of World War II, he systematically studied the taxonomy of boleti and he submitted a key to the identification of the species based on diagnostic features ascertained by himself. Herewith he influenced the concept of this group of fungi in the former Czechoslovakia. In the fifties,

he thoroughly revised Velenovský's new species of *Lepiota* (s.l.) with the results summarized in a lecture in which he also informed our mycologists about the distinguishing characters of the species in this genus. His last lecture (on the genus *Clitocybe*) was delivered to the Society in Brno, and later also in Prague, only about three months before his death. Since seventies, he accompanied his lectures with nice coloured slides of fungi.

The Society, as well as the former State Nature Conservancy, organized a number of field excursions on which J. Herink took part. At these occasions, he taught many mycologists how to recognize various agarics, boleti and other macromycetes, common as well as rare ones.

A special part of J. Herink's activity was the study of poisonings by fungi, where he was able to use his profession as a physician combined with his great knowledge of fungal toxicity and its treatment. This line of his study resulted in his best-known book under the title "Poisonings by fungi" (1958), which is a separate edition of a large chapter from the book by Vondráček V, Riedl O.: Clinical toxicology (1st edition 1954; the last and edition 5 in 1980). The texts in this book are accompanied by precise paintings of poisonous fungi by Jan Herink. Josef Herink also wrote the entry "Fungi" in a Medical Encyclopedia (1st edition 1967, 2nd edition 1982). For a number of years, he was also head of the Chemical Laboratory of the District Health Service at Kosmonosy near Mladá Boleslav.

J. Herink worked intensively from 1947 up to his last months on the editorial board of the scientific journal *Česká mykologie* (now *Czech Mycology*), of which he was one of its founders. In the first volumes of this journal, he wrote bibliographical contributions and later during his entire membership biographies of Czech mycologists. Nearly all his scientific contributions were published in this journal in Czech language with summaries in Latin, French, German or English. It must be regretted that he did not write more papers as his knowledge on the Agaricales, especially, was really enormous.

To the honour of Dr. Josef Herink, the following species of fungi have been named: *Agaricus herinkii* Wasser 1996, *Conocybe herinkii* Svrček 1996, *Coprinus herinkii* Pilát et Svrček 1967, *Gymnopus herinkii* Antonín et Noordeloos 1996 and *Sepultaria herinkii* Svrček 1948.

Dr. Josef Herink, a Honorary President of the Czech Scientific Society for Mycology, will be commemorated not only for his great contributions in mycology and medicine but also for his brilliant intellect, righteous character and honesty in every life situation.

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