



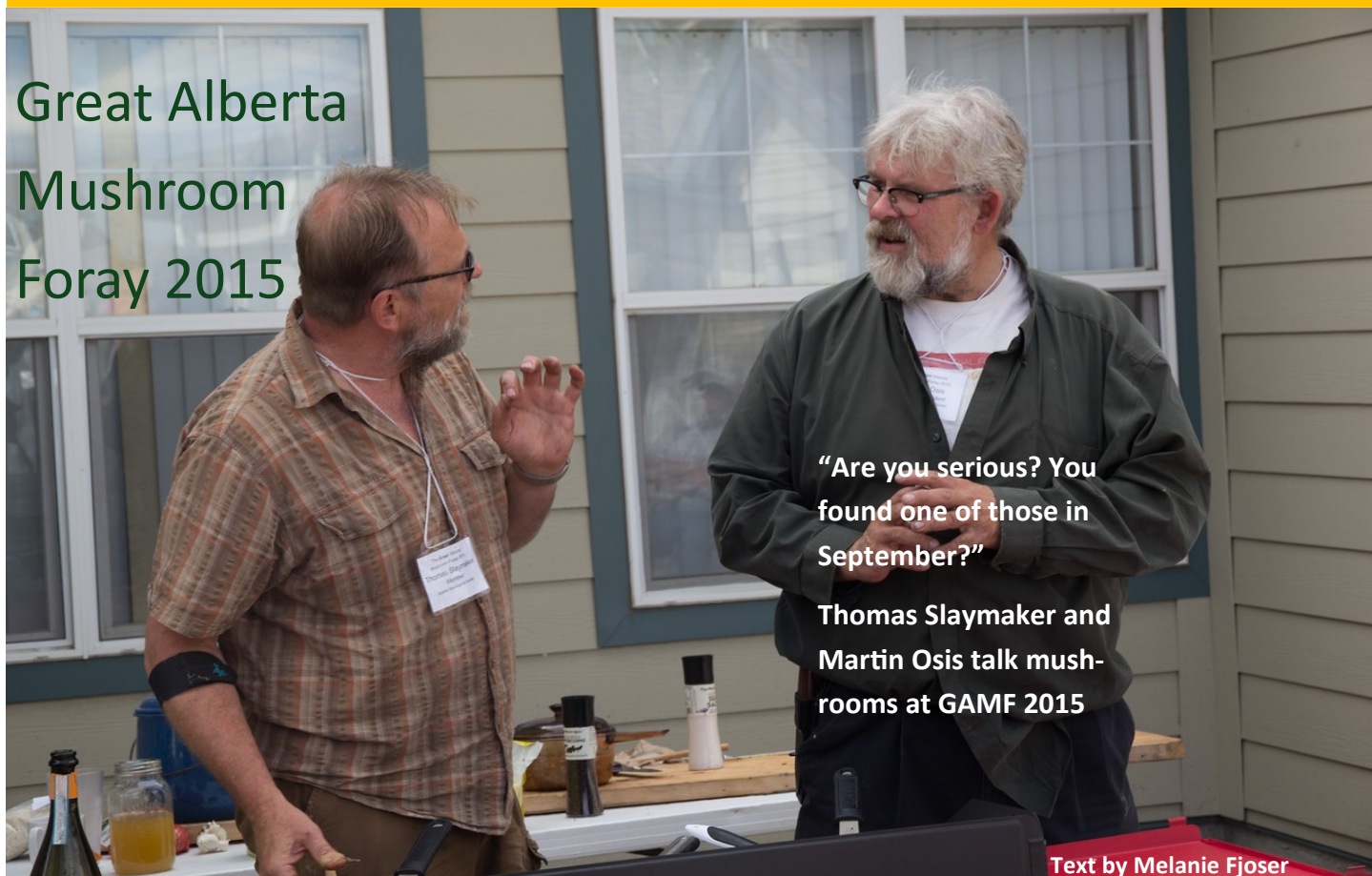
SPORE PRINT

The Alberta Mycological Society Newsletter

Fall 2015



Great Alberta Mushroom Foray 2015



"Are you serious? You found one of those in September?"

Thomas Slaymaker and Martin Osis talk mushrooms at GAMF 2015

Text by Melanie Fjoser

The Great Alberta Mushroom Foray is our members' premiere fungi immersion weekend, held annually in a different area to scope out different species and different habitats. This year, our event was held **July 31 – Aug 3 at Grande Prairie Community College**. Accommodations on campus were very comfortable condo-style rooms, and the weather was beautiful. There were many foray sites to choose from, and then our mycologists became very busy! We had various volunteers step up for various tasks, including data input and specimen shuttling, while **Rick Watts** patiently photographed specimens, after which **Liz Watts** whacked the DNA right out of the chosen ones. Many thanks to **Thomas Slaymaker** for building and storing the super dehydrator—it really helped with processing specimens! We enjoyed lectures from **Dr. Scott Redhead** on a **Brief History of Mushrooming in Canada**, **Paul Kroeger** gave

us two lectures, the first on **Mushrooms as an Economic Non-timber Forest Product** and then a interesting and entertaining talk on the **History of Psychedelic Mushrooms**. **Mike Schulz** spoke on the **Microscopic Characteristics used in Mushroom Identification**, and **Martin Osis** looked at some **Urban Mushrooms** including those that can be found infesting the inside of your home. **Thomas and Martin** gave a hands-on presentation on **Cooking Edible Mushrooms** in the courtyard of the condos; the theme of the presentation was two-fold, to prepare common mushrooms that are not prized as good edibles, and to preserve common edible mushrooms in uncommon ways. The foray provided lots of super-slimy larch suillus (*Suillus grevillei*) that made up two dishes, along with stewed larch boletes in chicken stock and canned in chai tea apple cider pickle.

(Continued on page 3)



President's Message

Rosemarie O'Bertos

Hello Fellow AMS Members,

As the excitement of another great mushroom season winds down, allow me to stir it back up by announcing our AGM and President's Dinner. Grab your calendar and put a big red circle around March 19, 2016! Once again we will enjoy the venue of Ernest's at NAIT and it is always a sellout. You will want to register as soon as possible! Members will receive an email when registration is open.

I am very delighted to announce that our guest speaker (at both the AGM and the President's Dinner) is Dr. Michael Kuo, Ph.D. Dr Kuo is the principal developer of MushroomExpert.Com. He is the author of "Morels" and "100 Edible Mushrooms" and has co-authored several other books including "Mushrooming in the age of DNA; Now Comes the Fun Part".

Speaking of fun, there is talk of a chaga hunt, Sunday (March 20, 2016) the day following the AGM, with Michael Kuo. Keep your eyes and ears open for more details.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT: If words like "web design", "Paypal" and "Joomla" energize you, then you have to contact webmaster@wildmushrooms.ws ...there is an awesome opportunity waiting for you! Ryan, our webmaster will be sharing his skills in the area of web design to ensure that he is not the only one who knows our system.

As you will read on Page 8 in this Spore Print, the AMS is mourning the loss of three long-term members this year: Vi Presley, Gerlinde Cegiely, and Hans Weissenborn. We send our deepest condolences to family and friends - we will greatly miss these well-loved members.

Looking forward to seeing you all very soon...

Your AMS President - Rosemarie O'Bertos

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Calgary - Russ Green / Barb Shworak

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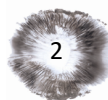
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The Great Alberta Mushroom Foray 2015

Melanie Fjoser

(Continued from page 1)

Both were generally well received by even the most sceptical. A bumper crop of portobella (*agaricus*) were pan fried and served with a balsamic glaze. Thomas prepared the meaty Shaggy Parasols (*Chlorophyllum rhacodes*) in a spicy garam masala stew. Finally, there was a *Hericium* risotto in champagne prepared and served while different culinary approaches to fungi were discussed.

In spite of a dry summer in Grande Prairie the mushrooms were abundant and diverse. The *leccinums* and *suillus* presented as some of our well-known old friends, but amongst those were several that kept the identifiers up late going through the literature and describing the unique features of several species in great detail.

One of these was a birch bolete (*Leccinum sca-*

brum cf.) that was found growing in the absence of birch. What made this mushroom especially unique was an extremely tough and thick skin on the stalk. Several unique *suillus* also appeared on the tables. This group is generally well documented in Alberta so seeing new ones from the Grande Prairie area was certainly a surprise. One of the mushrooms that did stand out was a yellowish *Cortinarius* with a distinctive teal coloured stem. This one thing all the mycologists could agree on was that no one had seen a *Cortinarius* such as this one before. We look forward to getting our DNA results to continue the search for a possible species name.

We had one moderately-serious wasp sting incident; wasps often build nests in the ground, and we remind foragers that wasps do enjoy flying right up the pant leg, so next time you pick be sure your pant legs are secured to your ankles when walking in the woods. Thanks to Martin for organizing this popular event, and to everyone else who attended and volunteered! Plans are ongoing for the 2016 Great Alberta Foray, proposed for Ft. MacMurray.



Did you know? AMS Directors receive a 50% discount on Great Alberta Mushroom Foray fees. This is to say "Thank You!" to our Directors who work hard all year on behalf of members. When the election comes up in March 2016 as part of the AGM, consider whether you have some time and talent to be able to serve as a Director - if you're interested, please send us an email. contactus@wildmushrooms.ws.



Fungal Factoid:

How long is the history of mushrooms? A couple of million years, about like humans, you might think. Well, a mushroom fossilized in amber found in Oregon in 2007 dates back 100 million years. Mushrooms make poor fossils, and this fossil is one of only a handful of fleshy fungi ever found to have ended up fossilized in amber.

<http://www.nature.com/news/2007/070611/full/news070611-1.html>

Beakerhead

Barb Shworak

Calgary's annual event dedicated to mixing Art, Science and Engineering, known as Beakerhead, is over. I am sure some of you are curious about In/Flux the art display made from mushroom blocks. It took 7000 mushroom blocks to make the 90 meter long moveable sculpture.

Photo Courtesy of ErinLYYC.com



The blocks, supplied by Ecovative Design, were about 16" by 6" and about 5" tall. The blocks are made from agricultural fiber and mycelium. The spores are added to the fiber and the product is allowed to grow until mycelium fill every corner of the block. The blocks are then heated to stop the mycelium from growing. For the size of the block the blocks are really quite light. Photo above shows a brand-new block plus one that was part of the sculpture showing wear. There is also a broken block showing the agricultural fibres inside.

Construction consisted of blocks on plastic tubing with plastic washers (made from a trellis) between each block. The ends appeared to be capped with wood and had a method to attach guidelines with karabiners. Outside the structure were little towers that had cement blocks with guide wires attached. The guide lines attached to these guide wires and moved along them as the structure moved. The block joints can be seen in the photo.

At the start the blocks did have some issues with breakage. The blocks are really more for packing

and insulation and not intended for structural use. They are intended to replace Styrofoam in packing as a compostable solution to an environmental problem. The sculpture was in the process of being repaired on two of my visits and not moving on the other visits so I did not get to see it move.

Photo Courtesy of Trico Charitable Foundation



Once the event was over some the blocks were given to Fort Calgary to be used to teach sustainability. Some were also donated to the Calgary TELUS SparksCenter and some to the horticultural society for composting. Some of us visiting the display were able to get some blocks for ourselves. All in all it was still amazing to see what mushrooms can do. Saving the planet one block at a time.



President's Award 2015



President Rose O'Bertos presenting the 2015 President's Award to Bill and Janice Moore

The President's Award is usually presented at the President's Dinner early in the year. As this year's recipients Bill and Janice Moore did not attend the Dinner, they were given their well-deserved award during the Summer Solstice pot-luck dinner at Moose Hill Hall in June. (Look for the antlers in above photo.) Bill and Janice are the couple who always, always step up to offer and will do anything asked of them to help things move along smoothly. They arrive early, and leave after all the work is done. But most importantly, they take full advantage of their AMS membership -- if you, too, attend many AMS throughout the year, you will always see Bill and Janice there!

Each year Society members are chosen by the President to receive the "President's Award".

The President's Award was originally proposed by then President Peter Arabchuk when he presented awards to Bill Richards and Martin Osis for contributions to the Mycological Society. Since then, both Martin and Bill have been awarded with Honorary Life memberships.

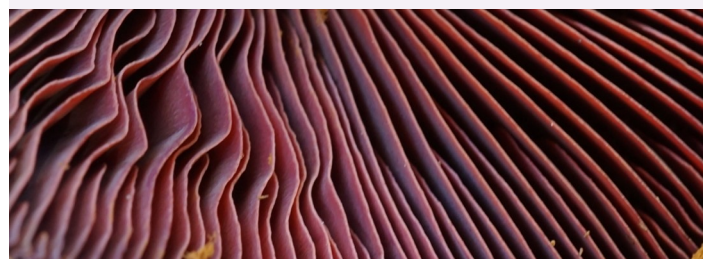
In 2008 the Board redefined the President's

Award and proposed two criteria:

- that the award should go to a non-Board member for extraordinary contributions and effort on behalf of the Society and;

- that it was purely the President's prerogative to make the choice.

Fungal Factoid: Interested in natural dyes? If you find enough of them *Cortinarius semisanguineus* (gills pictured below) will make you a lovely red sweater. And *semisanguineus* is not the only mushroom you can use! Intrepid mushroom dyers have used chanterelles, horse mushrooms, maitake, and even the shaggy mane. A more comprehensive list can be found at: <http://mushroom-collecting.com/mushroomdyeing.html>



The Peace Report

Ken Dies, Peace Foray Coordinator



Our annual spring “Verpa Foray” was held on May 9, 2015 with only four enthusiastic mushroom hunters; unfortunately most of our regulars could not come. There were many *Verpas* to be found—not as abundant as last year but a good harvest nonetheless.

The “Great Alberta Mushroom Foray” was held in Grande Prairie. This is the first time this annual event has been held in Grande Prairie or this far north before. All events took place at the Grande Prairie Regional College while all 13 foray sites were located in different niches within 35 km of Grande Prairie. Although it was a relatively dry July, over 125 different species of mushrooms were identified during two days of forays. Every person I had spoken with had a great time in GP. The presentations given by Dr. Scott Redhead and Paul Kroeger were enjoyed by all.

A foray was also held in a mature spruce forest on August 22 with only four mushroom hunters. Although we had a good rainfall about a week earlier the mushrooms were not as plentiful as had been expected. Honey mushrooms were plentiful while the only other edibles encountered were *Leccinum* and *Pluteus*. A good variety of *Lactarius*

species and *Russulas* were present but none were edible.

The Shaggy Mane (*Coprinus comatus*) is one of the most distinctive and easy to recognize edible mushrooms we have. Its size, shape, and tenden-



Grande Prairie Foray

My Favourite Edibles

Ken Dies, Peace Foray Coordinator



cy to grow in tight groups make it easy to spot even from a considerable distance. Their white cylindrical bodies covered with reddish uplifted brown scales and a shaggy brown top distinguishes them from all other mushrooms. (Below right.) They are most productive from late August to October and can be found fruiting in lawns, pastures, playgrounds, along roadsides and in hard packed soil, often appearing shortly after a soaking rain. These tasty mushrooms should be collected at an early stage before their gills start maturing and turning black. Over mature (too much black) will make them taste bitter. They will turn inky (deliquesce) within a few hours after picking and so should be prepared almost immediately. The refrigerator will slow down the process somewhat, but the Shaggy Manes will not keep.

The Shaggy Mane has a pleasant, subtle flavor that is quite mild so mixing them with strong flavored foods or other mushrooms may cause the flavor to be lost. They will always be good sautéed and served as a standalone dish. They can be dried in a dehydrator but their flavor becomes quite strong.

The Meadow Mushroom (*Agaricus campestris*) (above) is one of the most commonly picked edible mushrooms, worldwide. The silky to fibrillose

scaly white cap, pink gills when young, poorly defined or temporary ring, absence of a volva, stocky profile, free gills and chocolate brown spores are the salient field marks of this favorite. It is most abundant in the fall right up to freeze-up. In fact after a couple of good frosts these mushrooms are free of any maggots as the fly hosts are no longer around. It is always more abundant in heavily manured pastures. The Meadow Mushroom is similar to *Agaricus bisporus* sold by the millions in grocery stores.



AGM=Election Time!



David Arora speaks at the 2015 AGM

As you've read elsewhere in Spore Print, our AGM will be held on March 18, 2016. One small, but very important part of our AGM, is the Election. Many of you have skills and talents that we hope you will share with us; this is the time to ask yourself: Is 2016 the time for me to help ... new ideas to our Society?"

Executive positions are 2 year terms; some of these directors will stand for re-election when their term is up. The positions open for election and/or re-election are: President, Vice-President, Foray Coordinator, and five Directors-at-Large. The complete Board consists of 14 directors.

As well, there are committees that require a Chairperson or Project Manager: Newsletter Editor and Newsletter Chair; Webmaster; Special Event Planner(s) for recurring events (e.g. Devonian Botanic Garden EXPO); Risk Management; Volunteer Coordinator(s); Indoor Meeting Coordinator; Fundraising and Grants, and other ad hoc committees as may be required. Some of these positions will be held by directors, and others may be stand-alone positions.

The perks?

- Directors receive a 50% discount for The Great Alberta Mushroom Foray held annually

in a varying location. See more about the GAMF on pages 1 & 3.

- Directors participate in a January "Retreat", where we spend a weekend together eating, imbibing, socializing, and sorting through tabled items we didn't get to the year before.
- Directors work with awesome, inspiring people who are dedicated to the Kingdom of Fungi!

When you receive your "Notice of AGM", be ready to nominate yourself or someone else. If you're ready right now to throw your hat in the ring, please send an email to: contactus@wildmushrooms.ws. Remember, you must be a paid member to stand for election.



Silent Auction

Silent Auction Items Needed Please!

Those who attend the President's Dinner will be familiar with the Silent Auction held during the evening. This is a major fundraiser for AMS, to help us pay for activities and speakers for our events. Please dig deep, and use this opportunity to promote your business or workplace, or elsewhere, with a donation. It could be an item, a gift card, a service, cash donation or... use your imagination! If you would like an official AMS letter that you can use to solicit donations, or if you need to get a donation to us, please contact us at:

contactus@wildmushrooms.ws. Ask the donor to

attach a business card or name with contact info so that we may send a Thank You. We will need the item before the President's Dinner on March 18 at the very latest, but, the sooner the better, so that we know what to expect.

AGM: Great Ideas Accepted Here!

Coming to the AGM on March 18? Don't forget to bring along your ideas for 2016 planning: forays, speakers, suggestions – what would you like your AMS to look like?

Some mushroom delicacies from last year's President's Dinner



Devonian Botanic Garden EXPO...



Bill Richards answers the infamous question: "Can I eat that?"

...The Greatest Show *from* Earth!

Melanie Fjoser

Our annual EXPO attracted hundreds of visitors on Sunday, August 16 to enjoy all things fungi! The variety of fungi displayed was astounding, as usual, and our guests were quite properly amazed at what our members could find in just one day in Alberta. Member volunteers conducted "Mushroom Walks in the Garden", and we had speaker Martin Osis fill the tent with folks eager to learn more about mushrooms. Liz Watts and her hard-working mother Edna served up delicious sliders and corn on the cob with mushroom flavourings. Thomas served two types of mushroom soup made by him and Martin to hungry guests in our **Wild Mushroom Café**. Chef Stuart Whyte delighted passersby with on-the-spot delicacies made from edible fungi found on the walks. Meanwhile, folks patiently lined up to purchase memberships, books, and posters. It was a very busy EXPO!

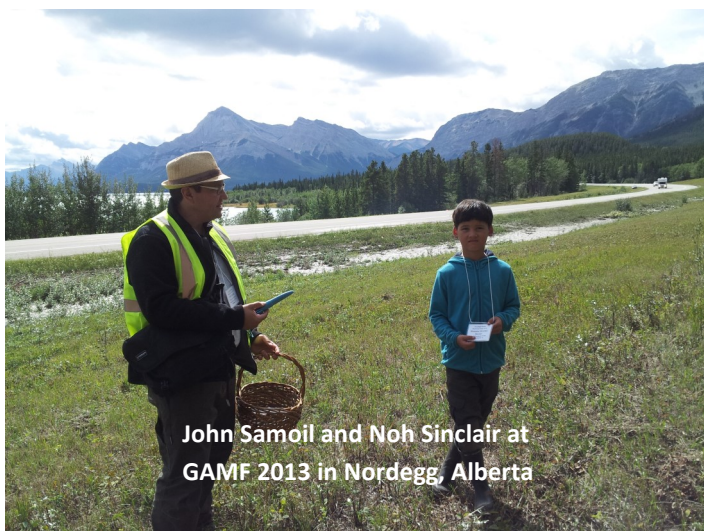
This is our major event for the public each year, and more than 35 AMS members volunteered to help out and to show our visitors a great time. We thank you all so very much for your time and enthusiasm as AMS Ambassadors! Even those with limited mushroom knowledge can be of great service in this event – and it's fun! Thank you also to Sorrentino's, who donated a \$50 gift card – we drew a name from all the EXPO volunteers – congratulations to Liz Reid who will enjoy a fabulous dining experience at Sorrentino's!

The Devonian Botanic Garden is a 240-acre property 115 minutes southwest of Edmonton, with cultivated gardens and plant collections, and a nature trail system. Check it out.



Note from the Editor, Paul Sinclair:

I have gotten many hours of pleasure from editing the newsletter over the past couple years. Though I have been in Saskatchewan, the position kept me participating in AMS events, meeting new people, and learning new things about mushrooms. Unfortunately, 2015 started with me juggling too many balls and ended with me dropping some! I am reluctantly going to pass the torch to the next hardy soul ready to do battle with Microsoft Publisher. I also want to acknowledge the able guidance of Melanie Fjoser without whom there would have been even more typos and mislabeled photos! —Paul



John Samoil and Noh Sinclair at
GAMF 2013 in Nordegg, Alberta

"City of Champignons" EXPO

Rob Arthur



The photo above is Stuart Whyte from Culina Catering (Mill Creek). He is giving his massive ron-deau pan a work out, creating a creamy wild three-mushroom sauce for the tacos at the Alberta Mycological Society in Devon. Not sure if you had a chance to taste the mushroom soup he created: Thai-inspired with coconut milk and a blend of mushrooms. It was a definite home run and a change from the typical dairy-base sauce.

Candace brought the green lobsters, and Thomas, Ryan and Martin brought in the fairy ring. Judging by his interaction with the visitors to the botanical gardens, Stuart also appeared to enjoy the day as he was able to cook with many varieties of wild mushrooms.

Fungal Factoid

You can buy oyster mushrooms like these (right) in Costco, but you can just as easily grow your own. Cut an oyster mushroom off at the base. Place a "stem butt" between layers of wet cardboard and leave for several weeks. Inoculate sawdust once the oysters have colonized the cardboard.



Passings

Vi Presley 1932 - 2015



Members of the Alberta Mycological Society were saddened to hear about the passing of long term member Vi Presley on February 24. Vi, along with her daughter Bev Anderson, and grandson Michael Cote attended many forays, Summer Solstice parties, and President's Dinners. She was always an eager forager, not letting mobility issues get in her way of searching out choice mushrooms! We will always remember Vi helping out wherever possible especially at our Devonian Expo. We extend our sincere condolences to Bev, Michael and all of Vi's family and friends.

Gerlinde Cegiorny 1941-2015

We were so sorry to hear of the passing of Gerlinde. Gerlinde, with husband Claus, and dog Nelly were robust hikers and mushroom pickers, especially on the weekend forays. It was obvious



to everyone that Gerlinde enjoyed the hobby of mycology tremendously, as she wore her delight on her sleeve for all to see. She participated fully in foray activities, interacting with other members in her friendly, open-hearted way. At her funeral,

her children spoke of how she was enthralled with the natural world, including mycology, and passed those interests on to her family. She has been very much missed at this year's events, and we hope that we will see Claus again when he is ready to join us for future activities. We'd like to extend our deepest condolences to Claus and to their family and friends.

Hans Weissenborn 1927-2015

We are also sad to advise you of the death of our dear friend and member, Hans Weissenborn, who passed away September 16, at the age of 88. Hans and his wife Inge have been members of AMS for many, many years. This couple has tirelessly participated in many years of forays, meetings, EXPOS, and pretty well every event the AMS has held over the years, acting as enthusiastic ambassadors for the AMS. In fact, the 2013 President's Award went to Hans and Inge Weissenborn. We were all very pleased, and not a bit surprised, to see Hans and Inge Weissenborn receive this award. President Rosemarie O'Bertos presented the Weissenborns with a framed photo that came from our 2012 Photo Contest. We send our sincere condolences to Inge and family. A Memorial Service was held on Nov. 7, 2015.

Hans, Vi, and Gerlinde will be sadly missed by the AMS members.



Major AMS Events for 2015 / 2016

November 24, 2015	Indoor Meeting Highlands Library 6710 - 118 Avenue, Edmonton 7:00-9:00 pm Note change of venue.	"Topic: The Role of Odors in Fungal Communication and Ecology." Speaker: Dr. Jon Cale, post-doctoral fellow with the University of Alberta's Department of Renewable Resources."
March 19, 2016	AGM – Time: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Check your emails for registration and agenda details. *Speaker for both of the day's events is Michael Kuo, Founder of MushroomExpert.com.	President's Dinner 2016 NAIT– Time: 6:00 pm for cocktails. Pre-registration and payment is required for this event; please watch your in-box and our website for details. Our Silent Auction will be held during the Dinner.
March 20, 2016	We are planning a Chaga foray with Michael Kuo on this Sunday. More details to be announced. Dig out your snowshoes for this one!	

*There will be many more AMS events to come. Paid-up members receive detailed info on AMS activities by email. "Foray in Your Neighbourhood"—weekly evening forays—will be held on varying weekday evenings in Edmonton, and Thursday evenings in Calgary, from May to September. Members, watch your email for locations. Events are subject to change during the season. Check our website regularly for updates.



One of Japan's many *Amanitas* growing at the Imperial Palace in Kyoto, Japan in early July 2015.