

PALEOBOTANICAL SECTION OF THE BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA MEMBERSHIP MAILING

June 2008

The Paleobotanical Section of Botanical Society of America is the oldest organization of Paleobotanists in the world and was organized between 1934-1936 by Loren C. Petry of Cornell University to:

- (a) Arrange a suitable program on paleobotanical subjects in connection with the annual meetings of the Botanical Society of America, Inc.
- (b) Promote general interest and encourage research in paleobotany.
- (c) Stress the importance of fossil plants in relation to botanical and geological problems.
- (d) Establish closer contacts between botanists and geologists concerned with paleobotanical research and teaching.
- (e) Assist in the dissemination of paleobotanical knowledge.
- (f) Cooperate whenever desirable and possible with other organizations in achieving these ends.
- (g) Act in whatever capacity it may find expedient as an organization of paleobotanists.

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FROM THE SECRETARY/TREASURER:

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Botanical Society Annual meetings are less than two months away, and I'm sure it will be a great meeting for the Paleobotanical Section. As noted in previous Newsletters, we have an exciting field trip planned, a banquet and auction at the Sage Bistro on campus, and I can now say with certainty that we have a full slate of talks. In addition, the Business meeting will be Wednesday afternoon. The 8th International Organization of Palaeobotany Conference in Bonn is also only a few months away, and the Paleobotanical Section is proud to help 13 of our student members attend the IOPC with travel awards. It is also time to submit citations to the Bibliography of American Paleobotany for 2007, and details are provided below. Unfortunately, this newsletter must close with the report of the passing of Dr. Sergius Mamay on March 26, 2008.

As always, feel free to contact me with your comments and suggestions at:

Mike Dunn
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Lawton, Oklahoma 73505
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BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA ANNUAL MEETING 2008

The Botanical Society of America will be held in conjunction with the Canadian Botanical Association/L' Association Botanique d' Canada, The American Fern Society, and The American Society of Plant Taxonomists at The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada, 26-30 July 2008.

Forty abstracts were submitted to the section, including 15 student papers, two papers covering the Paleozoic, eight over Mesozoic plants, and 12 about the Cenozoic. In addition, there are three posters, an informal presentation session, and an hour-long discussion session covering "The fate of fossil collections and data."

The Paleobotany Banquet will be held Monday, 28 July at 6:00pm at the Sage Bistro at the University Centre. Festivities will start with hors d'oeuvres and cocktails, followed by a buffet style dinner and an auction. Willy Taylor has graciously volunteered to serve as our auctioneer, so please be thinking of items to donate so Willy has plenty to work with.

The Section Business meeting will be Wednesday, 30 July from 4:00-5:00. Please send me a note if there is anything you wish to have included on the agenda.

A pre-meeting field trip to the Early Eocene Princeton and McAbee fossil deposit has been organized by R.M. and T.A. Dillhoff, and R.A. Stockey.

This will be a two-day trip to sites near Princeton and Cache Creek, British Columbia. Participants will have the opportunity to collect finely preserved Eocene fossil plants, as well as experience the geology and natural beauty of inland British Columbia.

Details can be found at the BSA Website, or from Richard or Thomas Dillhoff or Ruth Stockey at:

Richard M Dillhoff, Evolving Earth Foundation,
rdillhoff@evolvingearth.org

Thomas A Dillhoff, Evolving Earth Foundation,
tdillhoff@evolvingearth.org

Ruth A Stockey, University of Alberta,
ruth.stockey@ualberta.ca

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF PALEOBOTANY CONFERENCE 2008

The 8th International Organization of Palaeobotany Conference will be held in Bonn from Saturday 30th August to Friday 5th September 2008, in close conjunction with the 12th International Palynological Congress. The Conference opens Saturday 30th August with an opening ceremony, two key-note presentations, and the icebreaker party. The conference dinner is scheduled for Wednesday evening. Several one-day excursions will be offered during the mid-conference break on Tuesday, 2nd September, and a number of post-congress excursions will be offered after the meetings.

Please consult the IOP Web Site <http://www.palaeobotany.org/> or the Institut für Paläontologie Web Page at the Universität Bonn for additional information about registration, field excursions, symposia, etc.

At the 2007 Paleobotanical Section Business Meeting, the Membership voted to provide up to 15, \$500.00 Travel Awards to help support student travel to the 2008 IOPC. The awards were competitive, and a committee Chaired by Genaro Hernandez-Castillo along with Alejandra Gandolfo, Gene Mapes, and Steve Manchester elected to give these awards to 13 students. Congratulations to:

Richard Barclay
Caroline Elliott
Ignacio Escapa
Emilio Estrada-Ruiz
AJ Harris
Fabiani Herrera
Luke Mander
Daniel Peppe
Andrew Rees
Patricia Ryberg
Andrew Schwendemann
Leyla Seyfullah
Robin Smith

We have no doubt that these students will be excellent ambassadors for the Section at IOPC.

CALL FOR CITATIONS- BIBLIOGRAPHY OF AMERICAN PALEOBOTANY 2007

The editor of the Bibliography for American Paleobotany, Walter Cressler, has issued the annual call for citations. Please have your citations submitted by JULY 31, 2008 to:

wcressler@wcupa.edu

Or: Walter Cressler, Francis Harvey Green Library,
West Chester University, 25 West Rosedale Ave,
West Chester, PA 19383

Please submit your 2007 citations by either of the following media: 1) e-mail (PREFERRED), or 2) cleanly typed on white paper, sent by standard mail to arrive by July 31.

List citations in the current format of American Journal of Botany, with journal names spelled out in full, but without italics or underlining. Entries should be single-spaced, leaving a space between successive citations. Authors must indicate where each citation should appear in the Bibliography according to the categories below.

Precede each citation with the appropriate key number(s) from the list below:

- 1 - Techniques
- 2 - Review of a Book or Paper
- 3 - Book
- 4 - General
- 5 - General Palynology
- 6 - Precambrian
- 7 - Paleozoic
- 8 - Paleozoic Palynology
- 9 - Mesozoic
- 10 - Mesozoic Palynology
- 11 - Tertiary
- 12 - Tertiary Palynology
- 13 - Quaternary
- 14 - Quaternary Palynology
- 15 - Taphonomy
- 16 - Non-fossil
- 17 - Thesis
- 18 - Work in Progress (including submitted but not yet accepted, and other work in progress)

Work in press (accepted for publication) should be cited under the appropriate category (1-16).

LIST CITATIONS IN CURRENT FORMAT OF AMERICAN JOURNAL OF BOTANY

Sample Formats:

Review: DiMichele, W.A. 1995. Review of: Schindewolf, O.H., Basic questions in paleontology: geologic time, organic evolution, and biological systematics. Review of Paleobotany and Palynology 89: 481-483.

Book: Kurmann, M.H. and J.A. Doyle [eds.]. 1994. Ultrastructure of fossil spores and pollen. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 221 pp.

Journal article: Manchester, S.R. 1995. Yes, we had bananas. Oregon Geology 57: 41-43.

Article in a Book: Rothwell, G.W. 1995. The fossil history of branching: Implications for the phylogeny of land plants. In P.C. Hoch and A.G. Stephenson [eds.], *Experimental and molecular approaches to plant biosystematics*, 71-86. Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis.

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IMPORTANT DATES

ASAP: Find items to donate to the Paleobotany Banquet Auction.

26-30 July 2008: Botanical Society of America Annual Meeting, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

31 July 2008: Citations due for the Biolography of American Paleobotany.

30 August- 5 September 2008: The 8th International Organization of Palaeobotany Conference, Bonn, Germany.

5-9 October 2008: Annual meeting of the Geological Society of America, Houston, Texas.

21-26 June 2009. 9th North American Paleontological Convention, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio. Proposals for Symposia are due 15 September 2008. The Webpage can be found at <http://www.uc.edu/geology/faculty/miller.html>

For more information please contact:

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P.O. Box 210013
Cincinnati, Ohio 45221-0013

CALL FOR NEWS AND NOTES

The next Paleobotanical Section Mailing is scheduled for September 2008. Please submit news and notes about paleobotanists, paleobotany, and related issues by 31 August 2008 to:

Mike Dunn
Department of Biological Sciences
Cameron University

OBITUARY

Sergius H. Mamay, Paleobotanist

Dr. Sergius H. Mamay, paleobotanist with the United States Geological Survey (retired) and Research Associate of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, passed away at 1:51 PM on Wednesday, March 26, 2008, from complications following a fall and subsequent hip surgery. He would have turned 88 on May 20th.

Self-described as the world's only left-handed, Japanese-speaking, glockenspiel-playing paleobotanist, Serge Mamay was also one of the world's foremost experts on late Paleozoic plant fossils, particularly those of Permian age. He brought together and identified a large collection of plant fossils now deposited in the Smithsonian Institution which specialists from around the world visit to compare and investigate. Among his numerous publications, the well-known 1964 monograph with Charles B. Read — "Upper Paleozoic Floral Zones and Floral Provinces of the United States" — is among the most oft cited papers published on American Paleozoic plants. Similarly, Serge's "Paleozoic Origin of the Cycads," published in 1976, is a landmark paper with broad, lasting significance. Serge also published a large body of work describing new taxa and floras of the late Paleozoic age from the western United States, erecting no less than 19 new genera of fossil plants, most for unusual plant remains from the Permian of north central Texas. The latest of his works, scheduled for publication later this year, includes the first descriptions of the genus *Comia* in North America and a new genus, *Auritifolia*. Serge was a quiet but intense man who was devoted to his research and blessed with a photographic memory of the scientific literature. He was born in Akron, Ohio, in 1920, the son of two factory workers of Russian descent. He learned to play the piano "by ear" early in life, a gift that, along with his ability to improvise, afforded him the opportunity to earn money playing in dance orchestras through high school and late-hour nightclubs while going to college. This income substantially funded his higher education during the depression years. He continued to play the piano until his death.

Majoring in botany and languages at the University of Akron, Serge was drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II, one semester shy of completing his B. Sc. He entered the Army Medical Corps, but after being heard playing the piano in the USO Service Club during basic training, he was assigned to the post's band, where he played the piano in the dance band and the glockenspiel in the marching band. In 1944, Mamay saw a chance to get back to school through the Army Specialized Training Program and applied for language training (thinking about German or French). He spent the next two years becoming fluent in conversational Japanese and learning the written language, first at Yale, then at the University of Michigan. Finishing the course as top man, Serge gave the valedictory address—in Japanese, of course! He spent the remainder of his military service as an interpreter at Army General Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, during the occupation, completing his college degree while still in uniform.

Returning to the U.S. in late 1946, Serge started graduate school in 1947 at Washington University in St. Louis, where he studied with Professor Henry Andrews, completing his Master's degree in 1948 and Ph.D. in 1950. Following graduate school, Serge was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to study at Cambridge University in England.

While at Cambridge, Serge was recruited by Preston Cloud, Chief of the Paleontology and Stratigraphy Branch of the USGS. He accepted the job and moved to Washington, D.C. in 1951. Serge retired from the Survey in 1982. During his 31-year career with the USGS he was an integral part of the paleontology group at the USNM, composed of scientists from both the Survey and the museum's paleontology department. Serge remained active in retirement and worked a regular schedule as a research associate of the Smithsonian Institution until recently. A strong proponent of libraries and the importance of their collected works, Serge oversaw the Paleobotanical and USGS Survey Library for many years and acted—even in retirement—as librarian. He also continued as the guardian of the collections and showed them off to researchers from around the world.

Serge had three colleagues of particular importance in the development of his scientific career: Charles B. Read, Ellis L. Yochelson, and Arthur Watt, all with the U.S. Geological Survey. Charlie Read, a paleobotanist considerably senior to Serge, was third

in a long line of USGS-Smithsonian stratigraphers who worked in late Paleozoic rocks of the western United States. In 1955, Read joined Mamay and Yochelson on a trip to West Texas and New Mexico during which he showed them many collecting localities and helped them to understand the regional stratigraphy and the local lore. This was a turning point in Serge's career, taking him into the study of Permian plants. Mamay and Yochelson went on to write a highly significant paper on the presence of marine animal remains in "coal balls" (petrified peats found in coals of the late Paleozoic), and they remained good friends and colleagues throughout their lives.

In addition to being a Guggenheim Fellow, Serge was a 50-year Fellow of the Geological Society of America, a longtime member of the Paleontological Society, and a member of the Cosmos Club (1963-1974). He was elected to Honorary Membership in the Paleobotanical Section of the Botanical Society of America. During the course of his career, Serge also was honored informally many times by his colleagues, who named the fossil plant family and three genera (Mamayocaris, Delemaya, and Sermaya), in his honor. He was very proud to have been dubbed one of the "three Serges"—all great paleofloristicians who met in 1979 at the International Carboniferous Congress in Urbana, Illinois: Sergio Archangelsky—expert on Southern Hemisphere Gondwanan floras; Sergei Meyen—expert on Northern Hemisphere Angaran floras; and Sergius Mamay—expert on paleotropical Euramerican floras. This remarkable trio has been commemorated by the species *Neuralethopteris sergiorum*, which simultaneously honors all three. Serge led a colorful life, and he was quite a character in the museum family for decades. Stricken with diabetes in the 1960s, he kept meticulous records of the fluctuations in his blood sugar. He carefully saved, and joked about, every letter or reprint request in which his name was spelled incorrectly. They were numerous. His favorite was one addressed to "Dr. Sergium Mammay." A heavy cigarette smoker in his younger years, Serge kept a sign in his office admonishing smokers to "Smoke If You Insist, But Don't Exhale and Don't Return!" Serge enjoyed word play, as exemplified in the generic name *Wattia*, which he gave to an enigmatic plant, in honor of his colleague Art Watt. In 1966 Serge, Frank Whitmore, and Dave Dunkle founded In Vino Veritas, the members of which would honor each other as publications were produced by buying the latest

author a martini. Serge was also a lover of fine art and enlivened the Smithsonian - USGS paleobotanical library by borrowing a painting entitled "Death Preferred" from the National Collection of Fine Arts. The painting shows a damsel draped in a bed sheet about to hurl herself from an open window as three men break through the door leading to her chamber. Its unveiling was attended both by the Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian and the Chief Geologist of the Survey.

Outside the museum Serge was an avid fisherman, gardener, and lapidary—known for his collection of picturesque, handcrafted bolo ties and belt buckles. He enjoyed fishing for bluefish and striped bass on the Chesapeake Bay and often would rent a whole boat for himself and his guests. Serge was the proud owner of an ornate desk that had belonged to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, which he found at a small second hand furniture store in Washington, DC. After that purchase, Serge always gave the proprietor a reprint of his latest paper, which was displayed on an antique desk or bookshelf at the front of the shop.

We can say, without hesitation, that Serge Mamay will be sorely missed by his many friends and colleagues in paleobotany and geology. He was a generous mentor to many younger paleobotanists and upon retirement gave most of his enormous reprint collection to Judith Skog at George Mason University. A scientist of note, he will always rank among the greatest American paleobotanists in the history of the discipline.

Serge is survived by Hermie, his wife of 54 years, his daughter Patricia Conklin of Orlando, Florida; his son Gregory Mamay of Tumon, Guam, and his sister Nina Richards of Sarasota, Florida. Funeral services will be held at 3:00 PM on Thursday, June 12, 2008, at Fort Myer Chapel, Fort Myer, Virginia, with inurnment following at the Arlington National Cemetery Columbarium.

Submitted by:

Dan Chaney	Patricia Conklin
Bill DiMichele	Tom Phillips
Tom Dutro	Hermann Pfefferkorn
Frank Whitmore	

Reprinted from IOP Newsletter 85