

**Hope H. Miller (1933-2018)**



On September 26, 2018, Hope (Hartigan) Miller passed away peacefully with family at her side in Missoula Montana at the age of 85. Her contributions to mycology were many. She was author of *Hope's Mushroom Cookbook* (1995) and *Wild Edible Mushrooms* (2012); she co-authored *Mushrooms in Color* (1980), *Gasteromycetes* (1988), *Mushrooms of North America in Color* (1995), and *North American Mushrooms* (2006) with her husband Orson K. Miller. Hope put her college training in drama and speech to good use. She was a valued speaker NAMA and local mushrooms club meetings where she gave talks on Beatrice Potter (mycologist turned illustrator), cooking with mushrooms, and using fungi to dye yarn. Her quilts comprised of mushroom prints were legend; many were donated to NAMA and MSA auctions where they drew high bids. Hope attended countless mushroom forays and was the recorder at many, generating accurate lists of species before and after the advent of database technology. She received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Contributions to Amateur Mycology from the Texas Mycological Society.

But most of all, we remember Hope with Orson. The two were almost inseparable.

The love story began when the two met in college at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst on a double date. They married in 1953 just before Orson shipped off to Germany for his Army stint. Hope found a way to join him by working as a clerk typist for the CIA in Munich; their first daughter Andy (Andrea) was born in Germany. Hope raised the family while Orson finished graduate school at the University of Michigan, and she accompanied him on summer Forest Service jobs to Washington and Idaho. Their family grew with the addition of Ginny (Virginia) and Lisa (Annalise). Hope and Orson loved the West, and in 1964, built a small A-frame cabin just outside McCall, Idaho. It was here they put down western roots, and spent numerous summers and Christmas Holidays. In later years, the A-frame was remodeled into a retirement home. Orson was hired at Montana State University

in the late 1960's but the job was pulled just as they were relocating, a setback for their western dream.

Orson then accepted a job at Virginia Polytechnic Institute where he spent his long and productive career (1970-2002); their home in Blacksburg was nestled in woods and here they were gracious hosts to myriads of colleagues, graduate students, and friends. Hope developed her own skills as a mentor of young women. She was active in Girl Scouts for 27 years and received their highest award. She was an advisor for the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority at VPI for 18 years and voted advisor of the year for two years running. She received the Volunteer of the Year Award for Service to Youth from the Blackburg Citivan Club and was Vice President of the Virginia Skyline Council. And, as many of us can attest, Hope helped mentor many of Orson's graduate students.

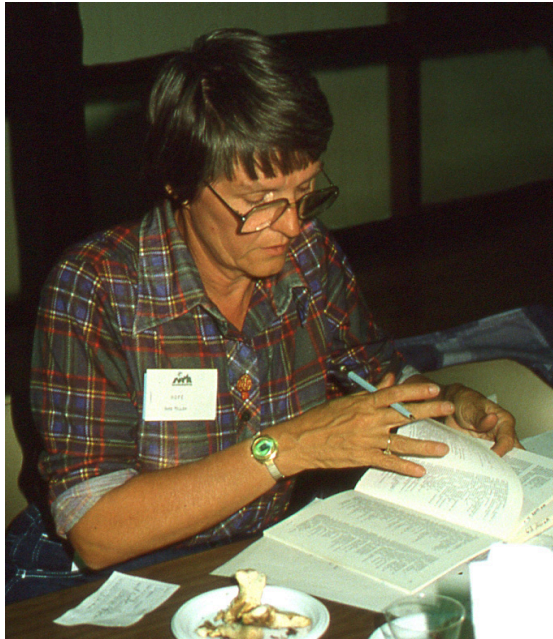
Hope accompanied Orson on all international field trips, where she contributed invaluable to field collection, labeling, and organization of collections. Their travels took them to all six continents and numerous countries. Hope was the navigator of the two, telling Orson when to turn left or right, and she kept them headed in the right direction. Happy Hours over the years with Hope and Orson meant shared story-telling where they completed each other's sentences.

Hope and Orson managed to keep their western connection not only in the form of the A-frame. Orson taught at the Biological Station at Flathead Lake in Montana every other year for twenty years (1971-1991, plus a short course in 1995). Hope was always there, and accompanied Orson and his students on short and long field trips, again contributing her many talents. Along with Marie Bailey, she kept the lists that ultimately resulted in the "*Checklist of Columbia Basin Fungi*" (1994) by O.K. Miller, H.H. Miller and C. Cripps and the *Checklist of Montana Fungi*.

When Orson retired in 2002, the Millers could finally return to Idaho and their dream cabin in the woods fulltime. In McCall, Hope became involved with the international organization P.E.O. Sisterhood (Philanthropic Educational Organization) whose motto is "women helping women reach for the stars" which they did by giving scholarships to deserving young women and she rose to the ranks of leadership in the organization. After Orson's diagnosis of brain cancer in 2005, they continued their partnership, producing their last book together "North American Mushrooms" during a difficult year at their beloved retirement home. After Orson's passing in 2006, Hope worked diligently to make sure that Orson's slides and notes went to join his 27,000 collections at the NY Botanical Garden. During this time, she also completed her second cookbook. In later years, Hope moved into a condominium in Missoula, MT to be near her daughters, grandchildren and great grandchildren, who remain mostly in Montana.

We cherish our time with this remarkable woman and are saddened by her passing. Cards can be sent to: The Miller Family (Attn. Ginny and Andy), 4018 Heritage Way, Missoula, MT 59802. Memorial donations can go to the Mycological Society of America newly renamed "Orson and Hope Mentor Travel Award".

-- Cathy Cripps, Bozeman, Montana, 2018



Hope (1983) and Hope, Andy and Orson Miller at Flathead Lake (images courtesy of Linnea and Lee Gillman)