



Maggie showing off a mountain blond morel, 2011
(Photo by Michael Beug)

Remembering Maggie

Steve Trudell, with help from Betty Gering, Michael Beug, Janet Lindgren, and other friends of Maggie

Mushroom hunters, moss seekers, librarians, teachers, calligraphers, and nature lovers of all sorts and many nations lost a dear friend last November with the passing of Maggie Rogers. She was 85. Maggie was born Mary Margaret Salisbury in Seattle, Washington in the midst of the Great Depression. She was the oldest of the three children (along with sister Betty and brother George) of George and Eathyl Salisbury, he a chemist and she an elementary-school teacher. The family lived originally in the Queen Anne neighborhood of Seattle, then in Alderwood Manor, and later moved to a rural setting near Monroe. After excelling as a student in elementary and high school, she was awarded a scholarship and went on to graduate from Western Washington University, then later earned a Masters of Library Science degree at the University of Oregon.



"Ring of Fungi"
border illustration
by Maggie Rogers.



Maggie at 5 months.
(Photo courtesy of Betty Gering)



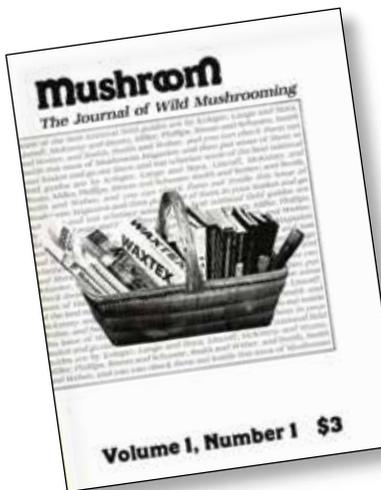
As a college coed at Western Washington University. (Photo courtesy of Betty Gering)

Maggie acquired the last name by which most of us knew her when she married Hank Rogers, whom she had met while in college. They moved to Vancouver, Washington (across the Columbia River from Portland, Oregon) and both worked there as teachers. After nearly two decades, when it became apparent that their lives were heading in different directions, the couple agreed to an amicable parting of ways.

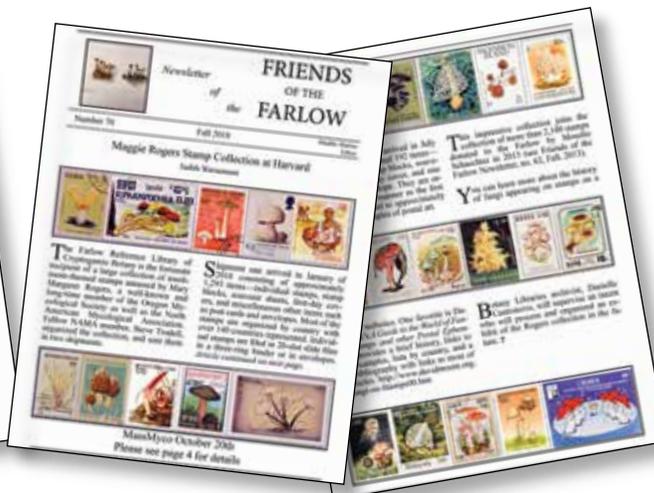
The mid-1970s found Maggie across the river in Portland, Oregon, where she became employed as librarian at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (now Education Northwest), and where she was to remain until retiring in the mid-1990s. "The Lab," as it is fondly referred to by those who work there, is one of 10 regional educational laboratories across the nation dedicated to improving academic outcomes

for all students. Maggie not only collaborated with researchers conducting literature reviews, she also worked in the Northwest region to promote literacy programs.

Many of us were privileged to have been guests in her little Locust Avenue house in southeast Portland. Fittingly, she lived in a small neighborhood where the streets were shifted 45 degrees from the north-south / east-west alignment typical of most of the city and thus appearing as a diamond on street maps. The house was filled with books, artwork, books, files, books, an old classical card catalog cabinet, books, a cat (Morrie being the latest of her companions), plants, books, photographs, books, and miscellaneous, often small, objects (including tiny books) reflecting her broad interests. And, if you found your way up the steep narrow stairway into the attic, you could find more books



Cover of Issue 1 of *Mushroom the Journal*.



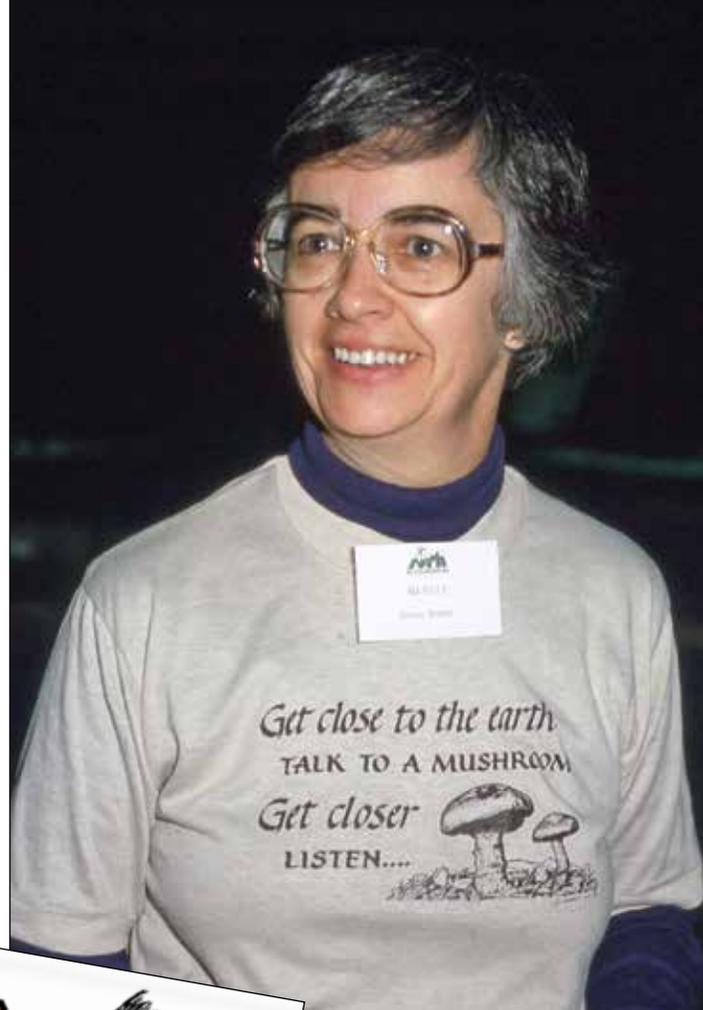
Announcing the Farlow's new mushroom stamp collection.



Camera in hand, but this time the tables are turned and she's the subject of a 1987 candid shot. (Photo courtesy of Betty Gering)



The essential Maggie — books, a cat on her lap, a mushroom pin on her sweater, and the ever-present smile. (Photo courtesy of Betty Gering)



Her t-shirt says it all, at the 1983 NAMA Foray, Granby, Colorado. (Photo by Linnea Gillman)



Displaying her musical prowess for an international audience during the 1989 Denny Bowman Russia myco-adventure. (Photo by Harley Barnhart)

and nearly every issue of *Mycologia* and *Mycotaxon*. In the backyard was a somewhat disorderly array of plant life that again reflected her eclectic interests, some in a small greenhouse and with maple seedlings usually in abundance.

Unfortunately health issues necessitated a move from Portland to Auburn, Washington for her final years.

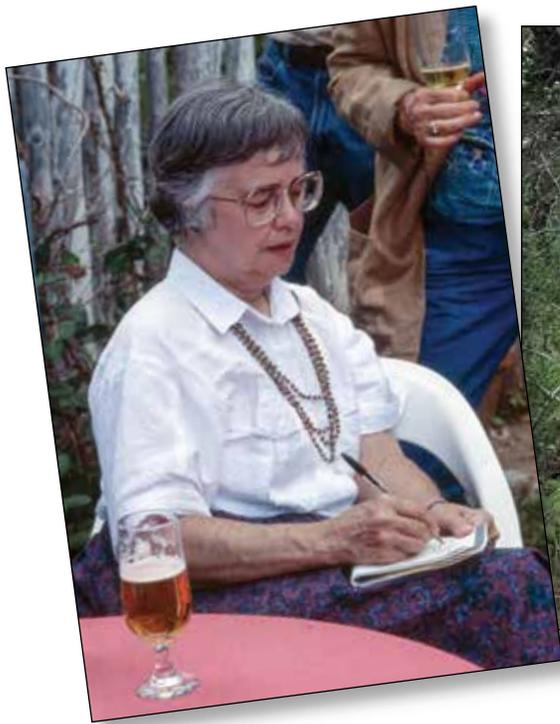
About the same time that she started work at The Lab, Maggie joined the Oregon Mycological Society (OMS). She quickly became a key member of the club and appropriately was honored with life membership. While probably best known for her direction of a truly substantial library and managing the club's book sales, she also played important roles in the annual spring and fall forays, searched out articles on mushroom toxins and poisoning cases for the Toxicology Committee, gave talks



One of her cartoons, which has appeared in many mushroom club newsletters when foray time comes around.

to the club and beyond, attracted and hosted visiting speakers, and provided the venue for Board meetings. When one of the club's members (Ken Lewis), who had a small business selling old books, died, Maggie acquired his stock and embarked on her Fungal Cave Books venture. Most were stored above her tiny garage, outfitted for the purpose by brother-in-law Will. She also was one of the small troop of committed volunteers for the Oregon chanterelle project, for whom "neither snow nor rain nor (lack of) heat nor gloom of night stayed these mushroomers from the swift completion of their appointed sampling rounds."

An active member of NAMA for several decades, she contributed to the organization in many ways, including serving terms as vice president and secretary, and also as chair or a member of committees such as Education and Foray. In recognition, she received NAMA's highest honor in 1990 — the Award for Contributions to Amateur Mycology. A regular at the Annual Foray, many of us were constantly on the lookout so as to dodge Maggie and her ever-present camera, sure to catch you in an unflattering pose. A downside of society's transition away



Explaining the finer points of *Dendrocollybia* structure to FUNGI Magazine's Britt Bunyard. (Photo by Patrick Leacock)

Always taking notes, here at the 1991 New Mexico Mycological Society post-foray banquet, where some scamp (a favorite Maggie word) slipped a glass of beer into the photo. (Photo by Steve Trudell)

from film photography was that we no longer could indulge in the game, as she never really embraced the switch to digital cameras.

Maggie was an atypical, but valuable, long-time member of the Pacific Northwest Key Council. She had too broad interests and too little taste for taxonomic formalities to adopt a genus and prepare keys, so instead she served as secretary, seller of the group's keys (in the days when printed copies were king), finder of wee things, and generally made the meetings a delight to attend. Although she was a confirmed tea-drinker, and not one to indulge in stronger stuff, she still managed to fit in with a crowd for whom wine is (a very close) second only to mushrooms.

In 1983, Maggie teamed up with Don Coombs of Moscow, Idaho to begin publishing *Mushroom: the Journal of Wild Mushrooming*. Together they produced 77 issues over a 19-year period and a highlight of most of them was the "Keeping Up" column that Maggie wrote. After Leon Shernoff took over as the principal editor / publisher in 2003, Maggie's involvement decreased, but she is still listed on the masthead as a coordinating editor of the long-lived publication.

In many issues of *Mushroom: the Journal*, Maggie drew attention to new finds of postage stamps with mushrooms on them. A lover of anything involving art and fungi, she had begun seeking out mushroom stamps and, over the years, assembled a substantial number of individual stamps, souvenir sheets, and first-day covers. The bulk of her collection has been donated to the Farlow Library at Harvard University (https://fof.huh.harvard.edu/files/fof/files/_70_fall_2018.pdf) where it joined another large collection, that of Dr. Elio Schaechter (<http://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/fof/files/fof62fall13.pdf>). Her many duplicate holdings will be donated to mushroom clubs to use in fundraising for scholarship programs. Maggie had a special relationship with Bill Long, a stamp dealer who kept her informed about new releases. This was one of many, usually

long-distance, relationships that she maintained by (usually illustrated and often ornately lettered) notes and letters, phone calls, and, later, e-mails. Among her special friends, Sam Ristich and Gary Lincoff figured prominently, but there were others, too numerous to count, throughout North America and beyond, such as Pat Brannen (New Mexico), Anna King (Scotland), Jan Kuthan (Czech Republic), and Tjikko Stijve (Switzerland).

In view of everything that Maggie had contributed to the appreciation of mushrooms and mushrooming by so many different people, it is entirely fitting that a newly described mushroom species was named in her honor — *Polyozellus marymargaretae* Beug & I. Saar (a blue chanterelle so far known only from Washington and Oregon). No doubt there is a lot more that could be written, but I'll leave it at that and let some of Maggie's friends speak to the impact that this remarkable woman had on those around her.

"It's really been a year, and this one is a hard one, folks! We will all miss her."

"Maggie and I exchanged many phone calls and it was always a pleasure to talk with her. I miss those calls and wish that I could have recorded them. So many of us in the mushroom world miss Maggie so much. How lucky we were to have known her."

"Bless her. She was a dear friend and so kind to me when I was a long-haired young mycologist."

"So sorry to hear of Maggie's passing. She was one of the sweetest people I know, and such a lover of books."

"She and I shared so much over so many years. I will always remember her happy laughter and unexpected little gifts."

"She was a true treasure and a great friend."

"Maggie was the face of OMS when we joined — kind, funny and enthusiastic. At our first foray, she handed awards to children and another went to me, for the smallest mushroom. I also got from her a large collection of books about small (and other) mushrooms, and that was a most generous gift."

"Yet more reminders of what good people we have lately lost — her impish wit and mirthful grin are now gone. So many times at the OMS meetings I would call out to Maggie to see if



Getting close to the earth and talking to a black morel while immortalizing it on film, 1990. (Photo by Steve Trudell).



An artists' conk decorated by Maggie at the 1990 NAMA Foray, Whistler, BC. (Photo by Sam Ristich)

she had “something to say” about the book sales and I would have the pleasure of her trundling to the podium with a gleeful look as she prepared another witticism concerning a new addition to the OMS bookstore. Her house for years was the site of the OMS board meetings and we looked forward to the shared time if not the tasks. A dear and gentle soul. I was and am honored to have had her friendship.”

“I don’t know how the calligraphy got started or when. She was so very talented in cartooning and decorating her correspondences with all sorts of sketches. She was very musical, playing the violin, piano, drums (in high school and college) and she loved classical music, fine arts and nature in all its forms. Her artistic bent no doubt was an important factor in her becoming fascinated with dyeing fabric and making paper with mushrooms.”

“Maggie was a special friend to many. Her delightful smile and humor will be sorely missed. I often had the pleasure of visiting her in Portland, hosting her at my home, traveling to NAMA forays together, and foraying with her. In the woods she would carefully seek out the most minute and beautiful mushrooms.”

“With Maggie’s passing it is for me the end of an era. She has always been such a delightful, kind and entertaining woman to spend time with. She and I enjoyed both the mushrooms and the various artworks of them. Maggie was among the wonderful people that made mushrooming fun. I shall miss her.”

“I am so saddened to learn of Maggie’s passing but so thankful for the years of forays and memories shared with such a kind, interesting and delightful person. She was interested in everything and always delving into all aspects of mycology and sharing it with us all from books and mushroom literature, to



Sharing her passion with fellow residents at Wesley Homes, 2016. (Photo by Betty Gering)

photography, taxonomy, mushroom dyeing and papermaking and fungal art of all kinds. You name it and Maggie knew about it and could tell you more! We could always count on Maggie to provide a delightful and artfully created card or written presentation or acknowledgment for any occasion, complete with her beautiful calligraphy. She will be greatly missed by our mycological community but live with great fondness in our memories.”

“Rest in Peace Maggie and thank you.”

Those wishing to make a memorial contribution might consider a donation to the Oregon Mycological Society Scholarship Fund (c/o Don Moore, 829 NE 5th Avenue Drive, Hillsboro, Oregon 97124) or to your local club to support its educational activities. ♣



Her namesake mushroom — *Polyozellus marymargaretae*. (Photo by Sava Krstic)

A Letter from Maggie

The preceding "Remembering Maggie" presented a picture of our friend through the words of others. In this letter to

her paternal grandmother, her own words give a more direct picture. Thanks to Maggie's sister, Betty Gering, for allowing us to print the letter. It was written in pre-calligraphy days on a good old-fashioned typewriter. ¶

October 1, 1972

Dear Nana ...

Just ignore the ink spots on the edges of the pages; I robbed the throw-away pile from the mimeograph room and, if it's free, let's think of the ink as a special decoration!

Great day in the woods today. Went out to check an annual mushroom haunt, and found the mushrooms yet a month agrowin' to go, but began to explore the area further than I'd ever gone before, and it was truly a secret spot to be shared with few. A road washout has isolated one of the older logging roads, and instead of growing up to alder thickets and blackberry huddles, this one has preserved its roadbed with moss, fine grasses, and an edging of young Douglas-firs and western maples. Nearly a city block long, the velvet road gradually rises, following the creek which isolated it some furious winter. Always the sound of the water; always the canyon beside the road.

From the green velvetness sprout little mushrooms: toadstool shapes, puffballs, and here and there the funny little hedgehoggies ... always on the shady side of something.

Across the creek are brilliant splotches and fits of color: the vine maples are as rich as gypsy clothing in their fall display this year. First a riotous red, then right beside it a warm burst of gold-orange-salmon touched with just branch-tips of red. The western maples are as bright as lemons, their great leaves occasionally separating from the branches and dropping with tiny paper crashing sounds. The great virgin forest of Douglas-firs and western yews darkens the interstices, offering framings and backgrounds for the once-a-year brilliance of the deciduous trees. Even the willows and elderberries have their own coppery identity at this time of year.

I photographed until I finished the roll of color film, then cached the tripod and hitched my knapsack of cameras and lunch over my shoulders and headed on up the road. Around the rock-cliff ahead, the road suddenly was ridden with eroded streaks; only the top layer had been dirt and fine gravel, for each of the channels was a hodgepodge of pastel cobblestones and rock chunks. In places the entire roadbed seemed to have been another creek at a higher level, at least during the rainy season. One more rock bluff to skirt, and still another stretch of grassy bed, this one sparked with wild strawberries, some of them still blooming! I dug three, hoping to plant them with my non-berrying coastal strawberries at home, whose proliferation of runners and young plants fails to hide the fact that not a berry was produced this year!

Another bend at the louder sound of water falling: the creek is not so far down in the canyon now, and has eaten away considerable of the bank, harrowing the roadbed 'til it is little more than a trail, and further on, simply a track along the edge of the cliff. Great ledges of stone begin to stair-step up, and I feel like a tiny animal at the bottom of a plaza. One of the beds of stone is evidently sedimentary: as the sun hits it just right, there are the images of an old, old tree trunk, a branch going out at right angles, a spray of cedar-like leaves

edging the bark. (Too bad, M – you used up the last photograph on a waterfall!) Fossils – my favorite link with the distant past.

The roadbed roughens again with erosion for a way, then opens out into almost a clearing. Someone once made a small fire here; the charred pieces still remain in their proper circle. Must have been a proper scout. Tattered bits and strips of a plaid cotton shirt are scattered around. Was it the work of coyotes, whose “scat” is dropped here and there regularly up the road? Could a bear have mouthed it for the salty sweat which probably permeated it? Lots of mysteries in the woods.

Then the food hunt begins: just off to the edge of the road, an elderberry with loaded branches. Luckily, I'd found a “walking cane” with just the right shape to pull down the branches, and there I loaded up a plastic bag full. Alert now for the bushes with their typically corky trunks and serrate leaves, I wandered awhile in the brush, looking for more. Found a few. But nothing like the first one.

So on up the road ... have probably covered two miles by now. (Before the end of the uphill, which accelerated at this point, I had probably covered about four miles.) The slope meandered gradually, swinging slightly to the left and then to the right as I trudged along, scanning for elderberries, for coyote scat (sometimes it has interesting bones and claws in it ... and the scat is completely dry and powdery from long exposure to sun and rain) and for anything else out of the ordinary. Now the sun is behind the trees in places, and my skin is aware of the new coolness. Further on the sun is behind the hill as I round another bend, and here is the first place the sun does not hit at all. And here the spiderwebs still are pearled with water droplets; here the maidenhair fern finds enough moisture to live year-round. And here I find SHAGGY MANE MUSHROOMS! Food again: food for the gods, when simmered with butter and poured over steaks or hamburger. Everything stops while I unload the knapsack and ground-search from knee level. Tiny, just coming out of the ground, their tops pushing lumps of dirt and lichens out of their determined way, the little knobs are topped with brown, but their white sides give them away. Eventually, if let grow, these will become first little Japanese parasols, closed. Then their parasol shape will begin to tinge pink at the base, then black, and – turning to ink as their edges curl outward and upward – then just stalks of white with an inky cap.

There was so much more: the strange mood which fell when the cloud of field-burning smoke turned the whole world reddish and strangely threatening; the clumps of an unknown bush whose berries look like third cousins to the elderberry, the grouse whose explosive flight upward jarred the peacefulness of the last few feet before time to turn back ... such a day. Such a way to find a few hours untouched by “have to's” and “guess I should's”.

And so back home to clean the dirt from the shaggy manes and put them on to simmer: enough to freeze a portion and eat a portion. And to put the elderberries into the big pot and reduce them to the juice which will make such a wildling-flavored jelly, as good as wild blackberry in its way.

And a letter to my favorite human ... thank you for letting me share.

Goodnight ...

Love, Margaret