

**FUNGI WALK at PENN WOOD on Sunday October 4th 2026
and CELEBRATION PARTY for DEREK SCHAFER.**

Penny Cullington

Today's walk was a bit different from the norm and only 2 hours long as we were due back at the Village Hall for 12.30 where Linda Seward and her helpers Lisa and Andrew Dodd were already beavering away setting out everything ready for our party to celebrate the inception of BFG back in 1998 with our President Derek and his retirement from office. Today's group of 23 with Derek and Jenny started off in the churchyard though we didn't expect to find much there as grassland everywhere has been somewhat devoid of fungi so far this autumn. Surprisingly we spent a productive half-an-hour there with a list of 20 species before moving into the woodland. Here we found the expected dry understorey to which we're becoming accustomed, but with this group's developing experience and skills I was still kept pretty busy scribbling though photogenic opportunities were certainly few and far between. Progress was that of a snail as per usual, consequently the planned route was soon abandoned in favour of a shortcut – one we often have to take! - and we made it back to the hall in perfect time.

The woodland list stands at 68 species so far (but may grow a bit) consisting mostly of common things but with 8 new for the site. There was one notable find. Stephen Plummer excels at discovering tiny things and true to form handed me a chunk of wood, probably Beech, with some miniscule gilled mushrooms (caps were only about 2 mm across) which appeared to be gills-upwards and with hardly any stem. With a hand lens one could see that each cap had only 8 gills at most and I was reminded instantly of a photo of a *Mycena* species I'd seen in books but had never found: *M. clavata*. Realising this was likely to be something rare and interesting we asked Barry to work his magic with the camera and I took the chunk of wood with several specimens in tact home where the spore shape told me straight away that this had to be an *Entoloma* (Pinkgill) and not a *Mycena* as I'd tentatively suggested. At this my heart sank – *Entoloma* is possibly my least favourite mushroom genus to work with and I often struggle! Sure enough keying it out got me near to some possible species but nothing quite fitted perfectly. The tiny specimens then shrivelled to almost nothing in the drier but were safely collected for sequencing. The give-away pink spore colour of this genus can be seen in Barry's stunning photo colouring the few gill edges but in the field this was not apparent – these miniature mushrooms were just too small.

Below: the rare *Entoloma* cf. *jahnii* found today. (BW)

On passing on my thoughts to Sarah in the morning she did some research online and elsewhere and then asked me if I'd considered *Entoloma jahnii*. I had, but as the spores appeared a bit on the small side and the gills not numerous enough I'd dismissed it (also I thought I'd found cystidia on the gill edge which are absent in this species). However, on checking out some links online I came across a Field Mycology article written by our President Derek in 2008 (what a coincidence!) entitled 'Persistence pays off' and all about this tiny *Entoloma* he'd found new to the UK. Reading it through and seeing his photos there I realised this surely had to be what Stephen had



found. Reading it through and seeing his photos there I realised this surely had to be what Stephen had

found at Penn. So much of the detail matched Derek's description: the 'crepidotoid shape and finely hairy white cap surface, its occurrence on bare damp wood, the radically reduced gills, microscopically the spore size was within range and the 2-spored basidia I'd observed fitted too. Furthermore I also realised that what I'd thought were cystidia were in fact on the cap and not the gill edge because of necessity I'd included some of the cap in my preparation when dissecting such a tiny piece of material. This matched as well, thus I became convinced. Hopefully sequencing will confirm this ID though often these unusual and tiny Pinkgills have no published sequence with which to compare one's results.

But what serendipity that Stephen should turn up *Entoloma jahnii* today when we had Derek – who'd first found and identified it in the UK - with us to celebrate his mycological achievements and the setting up of BFG!



On to the party now, but below you'll find more fungi photos and for details of what we found this morning see the separate species lists. So a few more members and mycological friends were able to join us for the lunch and around 40 of us sat down to enjoy the spread of finger foods provided by all the attendees. The hall was decked out with fungal bunting and Linda together with Lisa and Andrew had it all set out and waiting for us. Linda had created a slide show which was projected onto one of the walls with an array of photos of Derek, and this together with music playing gently set the scene perfectly. As we ate our fill there was

much enthusiastic chat amongst friends old and new, then with a short introduction from me Derek told us all about how and when he became involved with mycology, the BMS, BFG, recalling the many characters – especially Alan Outen who played an important part in my mycological story



also – who'd influenced his path and progress over the last few decades. It was fascinating, amusing and kept us all enthralled until it was time to present him with our few gifts: a print (of Inkcaps of course!) found by Jesper, a cushion with Inkcap theme made by Linda, a felt Inkcap model made by Gill and a bottle from Dancersend from Mick. Then it was time to cut the mushroom themed cake beautifully crafted by Sarah, complete with a fondant icing hat containing delicious chocolate truffles to represent the occasion last year at Burnham Beeches when Derek memorably had to resort to this receptacle for collecting his horse droppings!

All too soon it was time to thank everyone for coming and making today such a memorable occasion for all of us, to thank Derek and Jenny for all they've done over the years for BFG, and especially to thank Linda for her brilliant organisation and planning which made today such a special occasion – one which we shall remember for a long time. If you'd like copies of any of these photos do let me know.





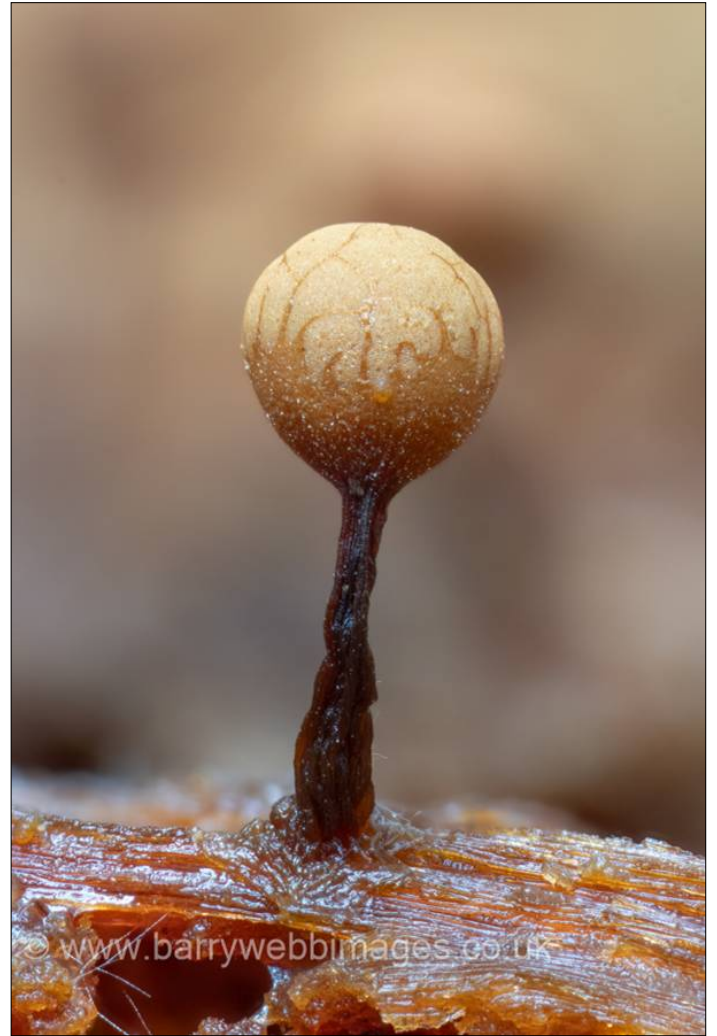
Above left: *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca* (False Chanterelle) under the Larches (PC); above right: the very firm fleshed *Russula lepida* (Rosy Brittlegill) under Beech (CVS)



Above left: *Imleria badia* (Bay Bolete) with blueing pores (PC); above right: *Mucidula mucida* (Porcelain Fungus) seen in good numbers today on fallen Beech (NF).

Below left: *Coprinopsis acuminata* (Humpback Inkcap) found in soil amongst grass (PC); below right: *Cyathus striatus* (Fluted Bird's Nest) spotted by Jenny Schafer and new to the site today (JS).





Above: our largest mushroom and our smallest slime mould! Left: *Macrolepiota konradii* - a Parasol often synonymised with *M. mastoidea* (Slender Parasol), to be sequenced (cvs); Right: the diminutive *Cribraria rufa* (BW)



Above left: the slime mould *Didymium nigripes* on the prickles of a dead Holly leaf (BW): Above right, the slime mould *Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa* in its pale yellow form on bare wood (JW).