

01-02-2006: We celebrate Persoon's birthday

One of the great mycologists of our time was born on this day 244 years ago in South Africa.

Christiaan Hendrik Persoon was born on February 1, 1761 in Stellenbosch, South Africa. He is considered to be the father of fungal systematics and was considered to be a genius of his time by his peers

Although he was trained as a medical doctor, he spent all his free time on the study of fungi. He produced various works on the systematics of fungi of which the *Synopsis Methodica Fungorum* (1801) proved to be the most noted. His collection of valuable herbarium specimens is currently housed at the Nationaal Herbarium van Nederland in Leiden. The mycological journal, *Persoonia*, is also named after Persoon. However, after a productive mycological career, Hendrik Persoon died at the age of 75 in poverty.

The SASPP honours one of the great mycologists of our time by presenting the Persoon medal to deserving members in the society for their contributions to mycology.