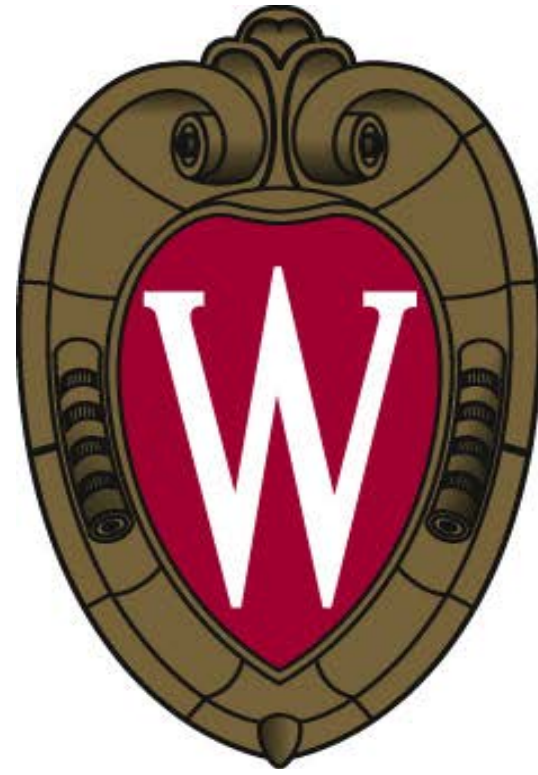


The American Society for Mohs Histotechnology

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University of Wisconsin
**SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

Introduction

Background

- Although some people have heard of Mohs surgery for the treatment of skin cancer, many are unaware that Mohs surgery was developed at the University of Wisconsin in 1936 by Dr. Frederic E. Mohs.
- Mohs surgery is practiced world wide and is still generally considered the gold standard for treatment of skin cancer.
- Because the correct processing of Mohs frozen sections was essential to the success of the Mohs procedure, there was a need to train professional technicians to provide this necessary service.

Objective

- To provide some historical background for a professional society created specifically to train technicians for members of the American College of Mohs Surgery.

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In the Beginning

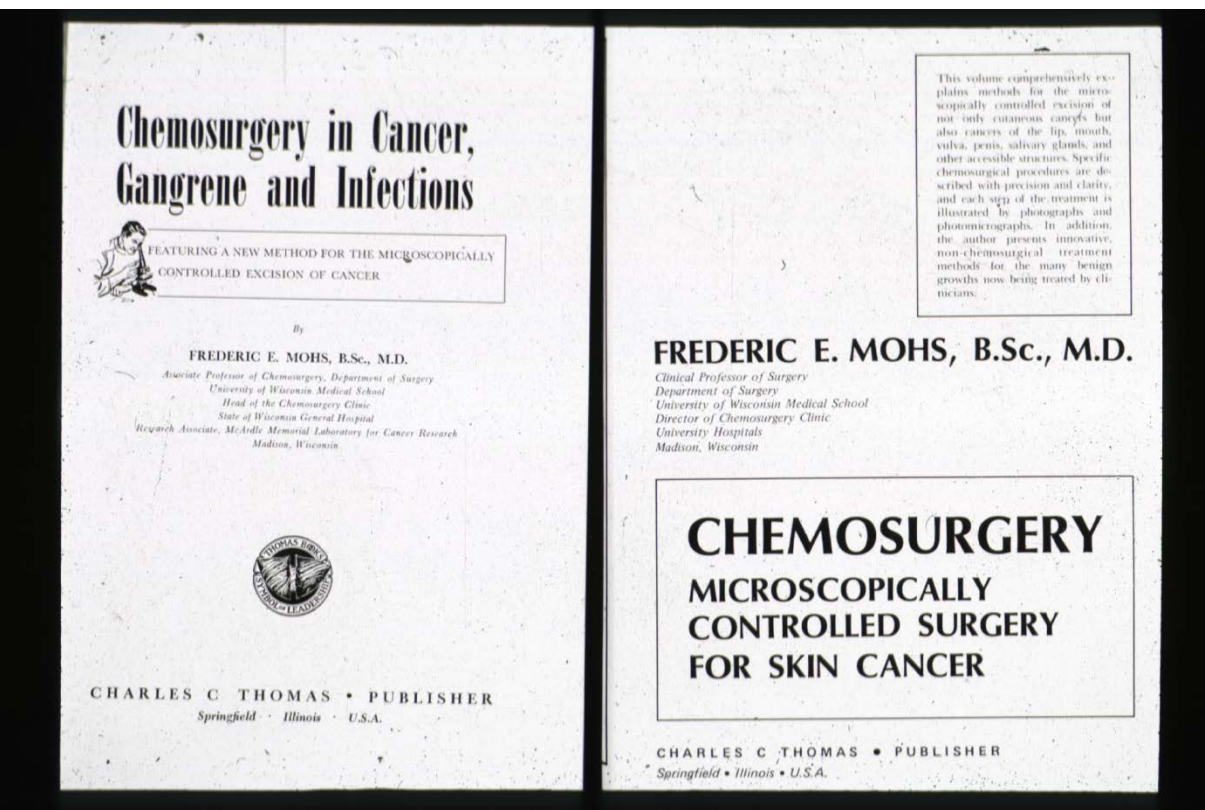


Dr. Frederic E. Mohs examining spleen cells. Spleen extract was once thought to have cancer fighting properties.

Fixed tissue paste, Z squares and petroleum jelly for fixing tissue in vivo. Fixed tissue was as tough as shoe leather and the sections would not adhere to the slides very well for staining. Still, there were some fine slides made for many years with fixed tissue.



Clockwise from the upper left Summer job Mohs tech 1940, young Bob Patnaude, Bob 25 years later, Mary Smith starting her day, Mary 20 years later. The equipment for processing tissue for Mohs has become safer to use since 1936.

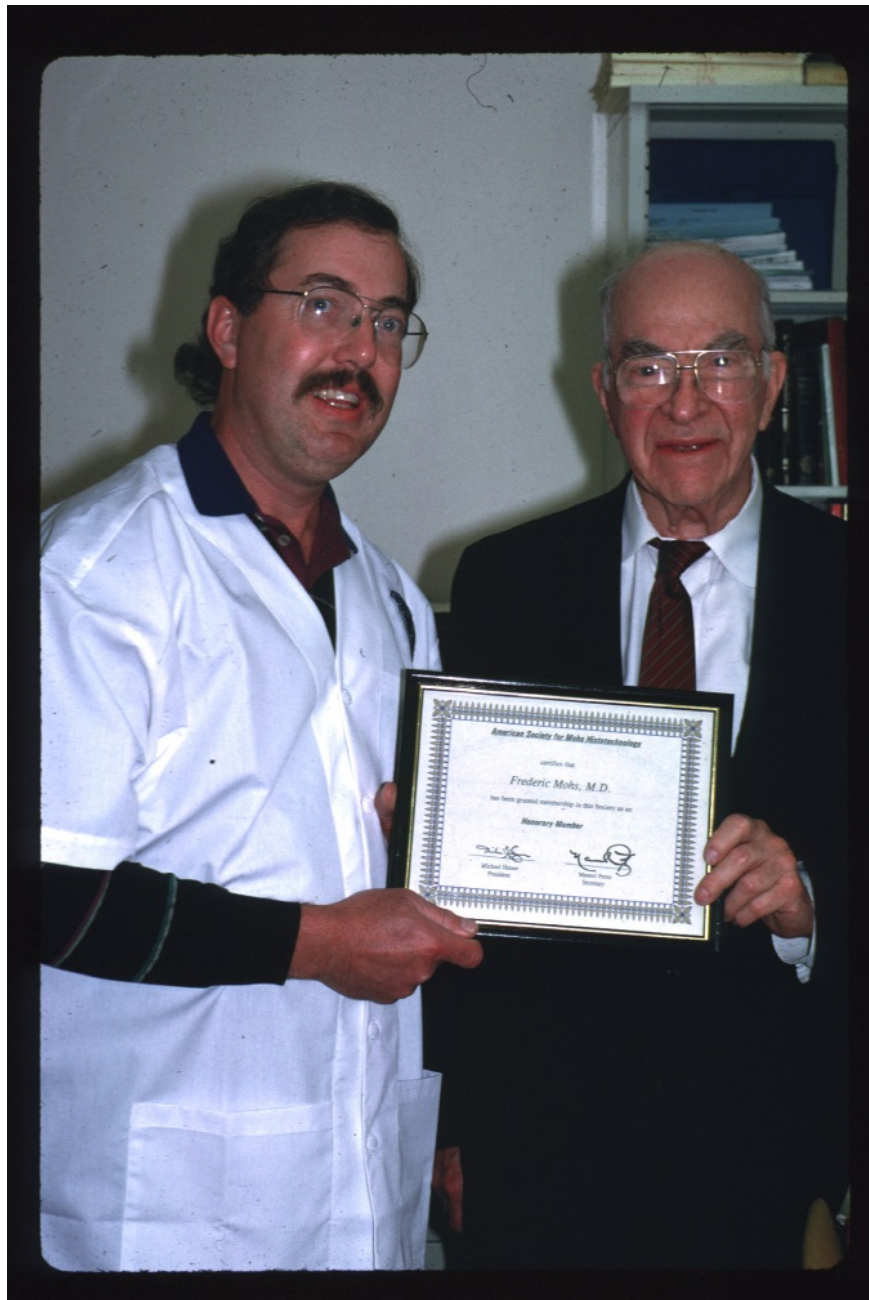


"Because of the importance of the microscopic sections, all (clinic) personnel are able to prepare the frozen sections. If the regular technician can not keep up with the sections...the nurse helps out...In case of illness, even the secretary can help..." Dr. Fred Mohs from **Chemosurgery in Cancer, Gangrene and Infections** 1956

20 Years of ASMh



Initial ASMh Officers: Roberta Arbaugh, Barbara Stripolli, Donna McConnell, Barbara Beck, Oreen Eudy, Kitty Stairs, Dr. John Skouge, Mike "Buzz" Hetzer, Manny Perez, Dr. Paul O. Larson and Bruce Saunders.

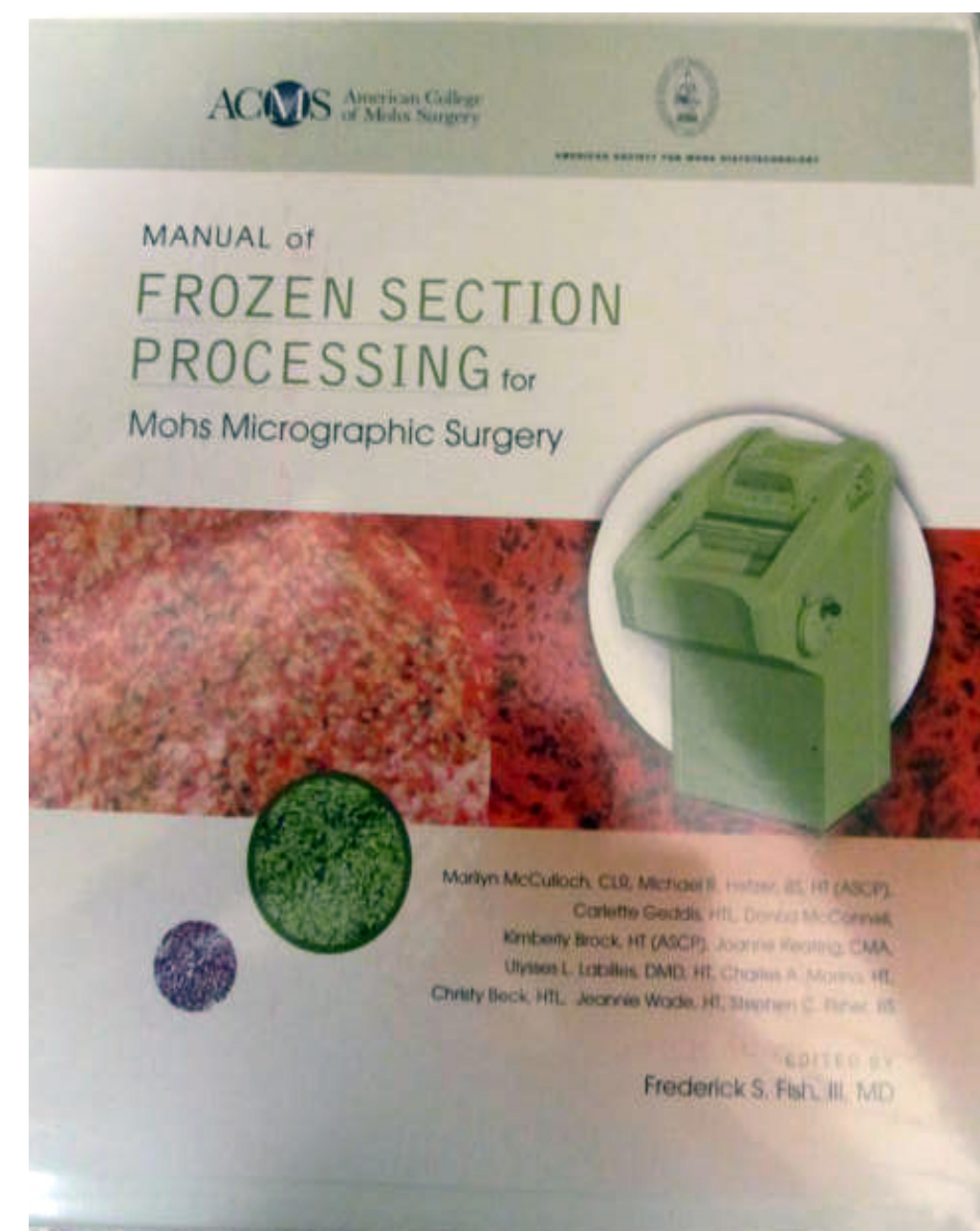


Mike Hetzer and Dr. Mohs, the first Mohs tech

The story of the American Society for Mohs Histotechnology (ASMh) goes back to 1990. Dr. Mohs had seen that the American Society for Mohs Surgery (ASMS) was offering a very expensive training course for techs. This bothered Dr. Mohs who questioned the cost and the quality of the instruction. Every other year Dr. Mohs hosted a conference in Madison and he asked Mike Hetzer to be the technical program director this year. There was a good turnout of technicians including Dr. Mohs long time technicians Mary Smith and Bob Patnaude. Mike was taken aside by Dr. Mohs, Mary and Bob who told him that he needed to start a training group taught by some of the more experienced Mohs technicians. Mike also met Barbara Strippolli at the 1990 Madison Mohs meeting. She was from New York City and was much beloved by Dr. Mohs who called her "Supertech". Barbara knew many of the Mohs surgeons and their techs and she offered to introduce him to them. Mike also contacted Manny Perez in La Jolla for help in recruiting West Coast techs.



Some of the contributing members of the Frozen Section Processing manual in Scottsdale Arizona with the manual's editor Dr. Frederick S. Fish III (the tall guy in the middle).



ACMS American College of Mohs Surgery
Fellowship trained skin cancer and reconstructive surgeons

Mike had the opportunity to sit next to Frieda Carson at a 1993 Wisconsin Histology Society meeting. At that time Frieda was the president of the National Society for Histotechnology (NSH) and she had just published her first book on histotechnology. She discussed the difficulties of starting a new professional society, which she thought should be done instead of starting a technical club. At that time, Mike was considering having the Mohs society be a subgroup (like a committee) of the NSH; an idea to which Frieda was amenable. Since Mike had already trained technicians from several foreign countries he had wanted to name the group the International Society of Mohs Histotechnologists (ISMh). Mike worked with Michael Thompson from the old management company of the Mohs College who wrote the bylaws as a hybrid of the National Society for Histotechnology (NSH) and the Mohs College bylaws after it was decided that the ASMh should be a part of the Mohs College and not the NSH. Michael Thompson also chose the name, the American Society for Mohs Histotechnology. Dr. Paul O. Larson from Madison contacted and secured support from many of the other Mohs surgeons and lobbied for financial support for the ASMh from the Mohs College.

Early Timeline

- *June 24,1936 -the first Mohs patient.
- *March 16,1944-the first fulltime Mohs technician, Eleanor Kenseth (Yes, Matt's great aunt)
- *June 6,1953-fresh tissue (yeah!)
- *July,1990-Dr. Mohs approaches Mike Hetzer about starting a Mohs technical club.
- *July,1992-breakout discussion and suggestions for starting a technical club for training and collaboration.
- *September,1994 the ASMh is chartered.
- *May 5,1995-the first ASMh meeting in Hilton Head, SC
- *Dr. Mohs is made an ASMh honorary member at the 2nd meeting in Palm Desert. The teaching symposium featured fresh cadaver tissue.
- *Bob Patnaude is made an ASMh honorary member and the abstract award is created at the 3rd meeting in Boston. Frank Sinatra's nephew provided free pasta while we set up the cryostats in the teaching room.
- *The Bob Patnaude memorial research grant is created during the 4th meeting in Portland.
- *The ASMh technical manual is unveiled during the meeting in Scottsdale 2008.

Join the ASMh

ASMh Membership

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or go to

www.mohstech.org

or pay by FAX

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