



Suncoast Shorelines

May-August 2021

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President's Message

It is with mixed emotions that I write this the last of my President's Messages for my term as president. When I took the presidency two years ago, I was excited to take on this role to lead our club. Little did I know what we would be faced with in the ensuing pandemic. The lyrics "The times they are a changing" pretty much became our theme song starting last March. And as the pandemic continued into this club year, it became even more of a challenge to keep the club moving along. We did as so many other groups had to do; we went to virtual meetings. And while we all would rather meet in person, the virtual meetings kept us in touch and also in touch with our snowbird members.

Our May 4 meeting will be our last meeting for this year. While it will be virtual, it will follow our usual May program format where we have members share shelling experiences with us. It will be a fun evening and I do hope we have a good turnout. Unfortunately, once again we cannot have our annual May picnic due to the COVID situation; therefore, please make an effort to attend the May meeting so we can see folks before our summer break.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Board for all their support and work this past year to keep the club and our monthly meetings going. They have worked tirelessly and I couldn't have gone on without them. I also want to thank our members who have stayed with us through these trying times – rejoining the club, attending our ZOOM meetings, contributing to our virtual programs. We, the Board, could not have gone on without **you**.

As we move ahead to a new year, it is my sincere hope that come September we will be able to meet in person again. In the meantime, I wish everyone a wonderful summer. If you are traveling, I wish you safe travels and fun adventures.

Stay Safe!
Nancy

PLAN AHEAD

Tuesday, May 4, 2021, 7PM Club ZOOM MEETING A few Suncoast Conchologists members and a few St. Petersburg club members will each give a short talk about a memory from a club Field Trip, a favorite shell or special shelling story.

June 14 -20, 2021 COA CONVENTION, Melbourne, Florida. Information about the convention is in your March-April Newsletter and this issue also, go to the COA Website <https://conchologistsofamerica.org/> for forms.

Field Trip

Field trip will be Thursday May 27. There is a lower Tampa Bay low tide around 8 PM. Clubs Choice: Two great options would be Fort DeSoto east beach and Skyway North. We'll vote at the May meeting and then I will send reminder and directions.

**Reminder: COA Convention –
Return to the Future
June 14-20, 2021
Hilton Melbourne
200 Rialto Place, Melbourne, FL 32901**

Hotel Reservations should be made with the Hilton in Melbourne. www.hiltonmelbourne.com
Group Reservation Code: COA2021 Phone: (321)768-0200

Field Trips are planned for Monday, June 14th, Tuesday, the 15th and Wednesday morning, the 16th. Programs begin afternoon of 16th along with the first Silent Auction, followed by the traditional Welcome Party at 6:00 PM. On Thursday the 17th, programs continue as well as the Silent Auctions. The Oral Auction will begin at 7:00 PM on the 17th. Programs and Silent Auctions continue on Friday the 18th, followed by the Banquet that evening. The Dealers' Bourse, featuring dealers from around the world with a huge variety of shells and shell-related items for sale, will be open Saturday the 19th from 1-8 PM and Sunday the 20th from 9-2 PM.

The Bourse is definitely a convention highlight, and you do not need to be registered for the convention to attend it or the Oral Auctions. Forms and info for the convention are available on the COA website <https://conchologistsofamerica.org>. If you have any questions, call Mary Ellen Akers, our Suncoast Conchologists COA Representative at (727)415-3907.

Suncoast Conchologists Club is supporting this COA Convention 2021 with a monetary donation and a unique shell for the Oral Auction. In addition to Mary Ellen being our COA Rep, she drew the logo for last year's convention that was cancelled. Club members John and Cheryl Jacobs chair all of the Silent Auctions. Numerous members of our club are COA members and attend the convention.

NEGATIVE or LOW TIDES for Egmont Key

May 2021

Sat	1 st	-0.2	11:07	PM
Mon	24 th	-0.4	5:28	PM
Tues	25 th	-0.7	6:15	PM
Wed	26 th	-0.8	7:03	PM
Thurs	27 th	-0.8	7:53	PM
Fri	28 th	-0.7	8:45	PM
Sat	29 th	-0.4	9:41	PM
Sun	30 th	-0.2	10:42	PM

June 2021

Wed	9 th	-0.2	6:38	PM
Thurs	10 th	-0.3	7:15	PM
Fri	11 th	-0.3	7:54	PM
Sat	12 th	-0.3	8:37	PM
Sun	13 th	-0.2	9:22	PM
Mon	21 st	-0.3	4:35	PM
Tues	22 nd	-0.6	5:24	PM
Wed	23 rd	-0.8	6:12	PM
Thurs	24 th	-0.8	6:59	PM
Fri	25 th	-0.8	7:46	PM
Sat	26 th	-0.6	8:33	PM
Sun	27 th	-0.4	9:20	PM

July 2021

Thurs	8 th	-0.3	6:27	PM
Fri	9 th	-0.4	7:04	PM
Sat	10 th	-0.4	7:41	PM
Sun	11 th	-0.3	8:19	PM
Mon	12 th	-0.2	8:57	PM
Tues	20 th	-0.3	4:32	PM
Wed	21 st	-0.6	5:22	PM
Thurs	22 nd	-0.7	6:08	PM
Fri	23 rd	-0.7	6:52	PM
Sat	24 th	-0.6	7:33	PM
Sun	25 th	-0.4	8:12	PM

August 2021

Fri	6 th	-0.3	6:12	PM
Sat	7 th	-0.3	6:46	PM
Sun	8 th	-0.3	7:19	PM
Mon	9 th	-0.3	7:52	PM
Wed	18 th	-0.3	4:28	PM
Thurs	19 th	-0.4	5:16	PM
Fri	20 th	-0.4	5:58	PM
Sat	21 st	-0.4	6:35	PM
Sun	22 nd	-0.3	7:09	PM

But remember, the low at St. Petersburg occurs almost 2½ hours after the low at Egmont Key, but Clearwater Beach is very similar, about 10 minutes behind Egmont....

http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/tide_predictions.html

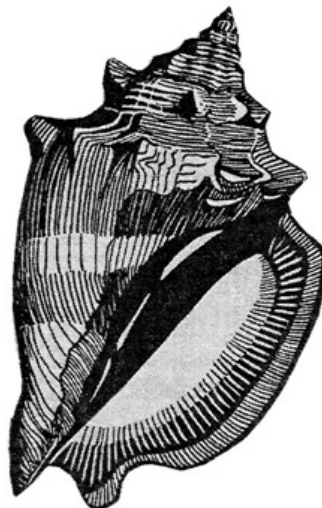
Shells on Stamps: *Strombus alatus*

John Jacobs

After finishing a Shells on Stamps article for the St. Petersburg Shell Club newsletter "Tidelines", I thought it would be a nice idea to accomplish one for the Suncoast Conchologists newsletter "Shorelines" in the same vein. For the "Tidelines", I wrote about how few stamps existed depicting the club shell, *Melongena corona*, Crown conch/King's crown. As it turned out, there are very few stamps showing this species.

So, for Suncoast Conchologists, the club shell is *Strombus alatus*, the Florida fighting conch. Amazingly, I've only found one stamp with this shell. Considering the numerous stamps from Caribbean islands which have been issued, this came as a surprise.

Dominica issued a stamp on March 8, 2004 showing a Florida fighting conch. This is part of a set of four single stamps, a miniature sheet of 6 different stamps, and two miniature sheets with one stamp each. All have a shell as the main theme except one miniature sheet which has a fish on the stamp but shows a hermit crab in a stylized shell in the border of the sheet.



Happy Birthday

MAY

23---Mary Ellen Akers

JUNE

1---Jennifer Kotimaki

6---Vicki Eis

6---Joyce Holbrook

11---Wendy Hayward

17---Ron Mucci

25---Sara Jean Henkel

25---Mary Marsh

30---Murray Smith

JULY

7-- Debi McCreary

29---Huguette Pittman

AUGUST

1---Pat Snair

3---Bill Turner

15---Bob Linn

24---Steve Geiger

29---Cheryl Jacobs

How Suncoast Conchologists CMA Membership Works

Our Club has a "POD of 4" membership in the name Suncoast Conchologists.

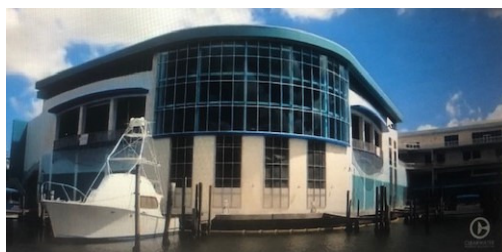
Translated this means that the member is a Suncoast Conchologist member and can take 3 guests.

Guests can be Suncoast Conchologists members or not.

We have passes made out to Member Suncoast Conchologists, Guest 1, Guest 2 and Guest 3.

There is no free parking. But there are benefits (which includes some discounts) listed with the passes.

If you wish to visit CMA, contact Sharlene Totten and she will email you the passes with benefits list to print and take with you to CMA. You must show your Suncoast Conchologists membership card along with the printed passes in order to get in for free. Only one member may use the passes at a time.



SUNCOAST CONCHOLOGISTS

CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM

By Carolyn Petrikin

I first visited the Clearwater Marine Science Center sometime in 1971 or early '72, shortly after the former water treatment plant on Clearwater Beach had been acquired by CMSC, many months before it was open to the public. I was given a "tour" of the original building by Dennis Kellenberger, the first Executive Director of the aquarium, walking across rather narrow boards on the second floor with nothing but a huge empty space far below---quite a rather scary experience! This was the area that became the first home for Sunset Sam and Winter the Dolphin after the aquarium opened in 1972.

Sometime during the 1990's, CMSC changed its name to Clearwater Marine Aquarium--CMA. Over the years, Suncoast Conchologists has supported the aquarium with various contributions towards its progress. We've often been asked where this money came from—it was proceeds earned from our Shellers' Jamborees that we hosted several times every other May. Around 2005-2006, I put together the first shell exhibit near the area where the Sting Rays were located. This exhibit was removed after several years.

Following this exhibit, Suncoast Conchologists donated the money needed to build several large shell display cases. Currently, three of them are on display at CMA, with themes of **Florida**, **Caribbean** and **Worldwide**. Over the years, they have taken many hours by Sharlene, Mary Ellen and myself to set up the displays and keep them in good shape---determine the layout, acquire the needed material and shells, create the labels and prepare the shells. This has become an ongoing process. Over time, the cases get bumped, moved, etc., which means many visits to the aquarium have been needed to keep the shells and the backgrounds looking the way they should be!

This photo of the **Florida** exhibit case was taken while "tweaking" these cases during our recent visit to the aquarium to straighten and "freshen up" our Suncoast Conchologists display. When you visit the aquarium, be sure to take a look at these lovely cases sponsored by our club.



SHAR'S CLAM CHOWDER

3 cans Clams-minced, do not drain

1-2 cups chopped celery

1 cup chopped onions

2-3 cups cut-up potatoes

Add water to cover and cook.

Mix together:

½ cup butter

¾ cup flour

½ teaspoon sugar

½ teaspoon salt

Add 1 quart of half and half and mixture to the chowder.

Heat through.

ENJOY!!!!

Sharlene



Ancient shell horn can still play a tune after 18,000 years

By The Associated Press

A large conch shell overlooked in a museum for decades is now thought to be the oldest known seashell instrument – and it still works, producing a deep, plaintive bleat, like a foghorn from the distant past.

The shell was found during the 1931 excavation of a cave with prehistoric wall paintings in the French Pyrenees and assumed to be a ceremonial drinking cup. Archaeologists from the University of Toulouse recently took a fresh look and determined it had been modified thousands of years ago to serve as a wind instrument. They invited a French horn player to play it.

“Hearing it for the first time, for me it was a big emotion – and a big stress,” said archaeologist Carole Fritz. She feared that playing the 12-inch (31-centimeter) shell might damage it, but it didn’t. The horn produced clear C, C sharp and D notes.

The researchers estimate it to be around 18,000 years old. Their findings were published Wednesday in the journal Science Advances.

Conch shells have been used widely in musical and ceremonial traditions, including in ancient Greece, Japan, India and Peru. The shell instrument found in the Marsoulas cave is now the oldest known example. Previously, a conch shell instrument found in Syria had been dated to about 6,000 years old, said another Toulouse archaeologist, Gilles Tosello.

The latest discovery was made after a recent inventory at the Natural History Museum of Toulouse. The researchers noticed some unusual holes in the shell. Crucially, the tip of the shell was broken off, creating a hole large enough to blow through. Microscopic inspection revealed the opening was the result of deliberate craftsmanship, not accidental wear, according to Tosello.

By inserting a tiny medical camera, they found that another hole had been carefully drilled in the shell’s inner chamber. They also detected traces of red

pigment on the mouth of the conch, matching a decorative pattern found on the wall of Marsoulas cave.

“This is classic, really solid archaeology,” said Margaret Conkey, an archaeologist at the University of California, Berkeley, who was not involved in the research. “This discovery reminds us that their lives were much richer and more complex than just stone tools and big game.”

Marsoulas cave is not located near an ocean, so the prehistoric people must have either moved around widely or used trading networks to obtain the shell, Conkey and researchers said.

“What makes conch shells so interesting is that the spiral cavity formed by nature is perfectly adept at resonating musically,” said Rasoul Morteza, a composer in Montreal who has studied conch shell acoustics, and was not involved in the paper.

Using a 3-D replica, the archaeologists plan to continue studying the horn’s range of notes. Tosello said he hopes to hear the ancient instrument played inside the cave where it was found.

“It’s amazing when there’s an object forgotten somewhere, and suddenly it comes again into the light,” he said.

Thanks to Anita Fruedenthal for sharing this article for us to reprint here for our club.



Two views of a 12-inch conch shell instrument released recently. By carbon dating related artifacts from the French cave where this shell was found, researchers estimate the age to be around 18,000 years, making it the oldest seashell instrument known.

Carol Fritz / AP

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