



Suncoast Shorelines

September-October 2021

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VOL. 38, No 1

President's Message

Dear Shell Club members:

Hello to everyone! I hope that you are all well and safe. It has been an interesting 18 months as we all have tried to stay safe and healthy from our unwanted friend COVID. We were hoping to get a chance to see each other and have our meeting in September. The new Delta variant has caused us to cancel our meeting at Grace Lutheran Church. The Board of Directors and myself have decided to do a Zoom meeting for September the 7th. I will send out a link for you to join us. As you know, it is important that we all stay safe and healthy.

I am excited to be your new president! I am most thankful for our Board of Directors and our Committee Chair members who have agreed to stay on with me to make our club run smoothly. A special thank you to Nancy Holcombe for guiding us along during COVID. She along with our Board and Committee members kept our club active with her interactive Zoom meetings and enthusiastic smile and gentle guidance.

We were able to get out and enjoy our field trips. Steve and John took us to Fort Desoto park, Fred Howard park and various shelling adventures. It was nice to see our members and get a chance to see each other in a safe and fun environment. A big thank you to Steve for arranging our trips. We look forward to our new year.

The Board of Directors has increased our yearly membership as we have not had an increase for a few years. A thank you to Pat Snair, and Nancy for balancing our budget. A small membership increase will help us balance our 2022 budget. The new membership dues are \$20.00 per year for individual, and \$30.00 per year for a family. We will continue to have Lifetime memberships as well. A special thank you to Betty for her hard work keeping track of our members and making our directory. She will be collecting new membership dues starting in September.

Steve and I had an opportunity to attend a book signing written by Cynthia Barnett "The Sound of the Sea. Seashells and the Fate of the Oceans." The publisher (Ingrid) of the book W.W. Norton Book Company reached out to our club and gave us a book to donate to our club. We plan to raffle her book at one of our meetings.

We have new members who are joining us. We hope to increase our membership this year by inviting our guests to join us. When we get back to our meeting, we would like to have everyone welcome our new members to make them feel happy to stay with us.

We lost a couple of our members over the year. Hugo Freudenthal and Mary Marsh passed during 2021. John's mother passed along with Cheryl's sister. We have enjoyed their company and send our wishes for their family members as they share their memories with us and to those who have loved them.

Our Conchologists of America meeting met in Orlando in June. We were able to have our COA members, Mary Ellen, Carolyn, John, and Cheryl attend. John will give us an update in our September meeting. I would like to thank Sharlene for setting up our programs and for helping me transition as your new president.

A special thank you to Jennifer and Cathy for creating our Suncoast Conchology Newsletter! Our club should be proud of what we are doing and sharing this with our members and other Shell clubs. I always look forward to my copy!

I dream of the day when we can all get together and enjoy each other's company. I miss the mini boxes, displays and yummy snacks! Hopefully, we will meet again soon when it is safe. Take care everyone! See you on Zoom!

Debi

PLAN AHEAD

Tuesday, September 7, 2021, 7PM. Suncoast Conchologists Shell Club meeting. We will have a ZOOM meeting. You will receive an e-mail with the details. The program will be John Jacobs presenting a collection of shell pictures from the 2021 COA Shell Convention held in Melbourne, Florida in June. Come prepared to share a brief story about a summer adventure or shell you may have found.

Friday, September 3, 2021, 7PM, St. Petersburg Shell Club meeting will be held at the Seminole Recreation Center, Seminole, Florida. The program will be John Jacobs presenting a collection of shell pictures from the 2021 COA Shell Convention held in Melbourne, Florida in June.

Tuesday, October 5, 2021, 7PM, Suncoast Conchologists Shell Club meeting. We will have a possible open-air meeting at a local park where we can meet in person, but still be socially distant. Program and place to be announced.

Friday, October 1, 2021, 7PM, St. Petersburg Shell Club meeting will be held at the Seminole Recreation Center, Seminole, Florida. Program to be announced.



On July 14, retiring Suncoast Conchologists Shell Club president Nancy Holcombe officially passed the gavel to new president Debi McCreary at her home in Clearwater. The two followed this event with a lovely breakfast prepared by Debi and discussions on moving the club forward for the new year.

Field Trip

Field trips for the near future are on hold until we have more certainty with Covid.

2021-2022 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

COA Representative	Mary Ellen Akers
Education	Mary Ellen Akers
E-Mail	Nancy Holcombe
FaceBook	Cheryl Jacobs
Field Trips	Steve Geiger
Hospitality	Cathy Petre
Library	Shirley Anderson
Membership	Betty Scheetz
Mini-Box Displays	Vicki Eis
Newsletter Editor	Cathy Petre
Newsletter Distribution	Jennifer Kotimaki
Nominating	Anita Freudenthal
Phone Contact	Betty Scheetz
Photography	John Jacobs
Programs	Sharlene Totten
Projectionist	John Jacobs
Publicity	Elda Thomas
Raffle	Anita Freudenthal
Refreshments	Cheryl Putnam
Website	Cheryl Jacobs

NEGATIVE or LOW TIDES for Egmont Key

September

Fri	3 rd	+0.19	4:19	PM
Sat	4 th	+0.16	4:54	PM
Sun	5 th	+0.19	5:26	PM
Thu	16 th	+0.13	3:19	PM
Fri	17 th	+0.16	4:07	PM

October

Sat	9 th	-0.03	7:37	AM
Sun	10 th	-0.03	8:39	AM
Mon	11 th	+0.04	9:52	AM
Sat	23 rd	+0.06	7:08	AM
Sun	24 th	+0.07	7:49	AM

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

WHAT GOES ON AT A COA CONVENTION?

By Mary Ellen Akers; photos compliments of Carolyn Petrikin

To the utter rapture of shell aficionados, the Conchologists of America (COA) convened at the Hilton in Melbourne, Florida, June 16-20, 2021, preceded by optional field trips earlier in the week. The convention was hosted by the Astronaut Trail Shell Club and capably organized and coordinated by co-chairmen, Alan Gettleman and Phyllis Gray. The event was originally scheduled for June of 2020. Covid intervened. Amazingly, the COA national convention chair, Anne Joffe, and the local chairs for 2020, 2021, and 2022, were all able to negotiate with the three upcoming convention hotels to postpone each of the events one year ahead! It was only spring of this year that it finally appeared that indeed we could meet in June. These conventions take two years to plan (three for this one!), and the hosts need many hands. Members from other clubs in Florida, Texas, and North Carolina pitched in.

An explanation about the convention logo, which I designed: The theme for this year's convention was "COA 20/20: A Return to Human Space Flight and COA to Florida's Space Coast." Alan and Phyllis wanted the design to look like the arm patch designed for each NASA mission, often depicting the space ship itself en route from earth. The title was a tongue-in-cheek reference to the old movie, *Back to the Future*. I replaced the movie's old heap with a snazzy red 1950's Maserati racecar with an astronaut driver. As the Astro Club's emblem is *Cyrtopleura costata*, the Angel Wing, it made sense to add the pair of angel wings to the auto. The front grill work is the COA emblem shell, *Neptunea decemcostata*. Our intrepid waving COA astronaut has just launched, ready for some convention adventures!

Why attend a shell convention? 5 DAYS of SHELLS! Programs, auctions, and numerous shell dealers offering their delectable wares, the camaraderie of folks who are as flaky about shells as you are, plus lots of other related nifty activities in between.



Mary Ellen, John, Cheryl and Carolyn enjoy the Welcome Party

A Welcome buffet dinner was included in registration, a great way to catch up with friends and acquaintances, and to make new contacts. To add to the fun of the theme, there was an invitation to attend dressed as your favorite astronaut, fictional sci-fi character, or alien! Quite a challenge, but about a dozen characters were voted upon by acclamation.



Banquet Table Decoration

Who of Suncoast Conchologists attended? John and Cheryl Jacobs, Carolyn Petrikin, Andrea Hutchinson, Barnett Bailey, and I were there for the entire event. Cathy Petre was in town for the weekend and came for the Bourse (shell sales opportunity). (She was excited to have acquired a watering pot shell, *Penicillus philippinensis*, which I've touted at several of our educational – that crazy shell which starts out as a bivalve and morphs into a tube with what looks like a sprinkling can at one end.) Former member, Bev Dolezal, now living in Palm Beach Gardens, attended as well, serving as convention photographer and manning her Bahama Bev's booth at the Bourse. Over 130 people attended

the convention, fewer than usual, but remarkable considering Covid issues.

There was a Snail Parade (which our Club initiated for our first Shellers' Jamboree in 1989). The five categories spelled out the word ASTRO. Carolyn took both first and second place in the Amusing category with her plush critter and snail on shoe, and I took first place in the Original category for my myopic tie-dyed fabric snail (see photos). Awards were mini certificates.



**Snail Parade--Amusing Category
1st and 2nd place for Carolyn!**

There must have been 100 door prizes, given out before and between the programs. Carolyn won an exquisite large *Architectonica maxima*, with operculum. I won a set of ceramic salt and pepper shakers shaped like juvenile chambered nautilus. I noted something white on my lap -- the donor had thoughtfully filled the salt shaker with salt! No pepper though.

COA's 50th Anniversary will be next year, and the organization decided to commission a commemorative pin for the occasion and invited members to submit potential designs. Six folks participated, including me. Five were computer generated; mine was hand drawn and colored. Attendees voted. I actually liked one of the other designs more than my own and voted for it. It won, and was created by Leslie Crnkovic of Texas.



**Snail Parade--Original Category
Mary Ellen won 1st place!**

There were raffle items, and I confess I've forgotten most of them. However, there was a separate raffle of a specially cast sterling silver 34.5 mm \$2,000 Lion's Paw pendant, enhanced with a .4 carat diamond, commissioned by long active COA Board member and dealer, Donald Dan. The lucky winner was Jody Watts, wife of Dave Watts, long time Hawaiian Shells dealer at the Bourse, who had presented a program earlier, an underwater video of living Hawaiian shells *in situ*. He created quite a stir with his underwater video camera which was about the size of a large juice glass!

Early one morning there was a lovely full breakfast in a private dining room for club COA Representatives. Karlynn Morgan, COA's new president, presided. She had conducted the COA Business Meeting the preceding day and provided additional updates about the organization. There was a really interesting exchange of ideas from the 13 clubs around the country that were represented there, which I hope to share in the future.

During the three days of programs, there were four Silent Auctions. For 25 years, John and Cheryl Jacobs have dedicated themselves to this major activity and fundraiser for COA. In fact, the

organization honored them with its special *Neptunea* Award in 2015 for outstanding service to COA. During the year, John and Cheryl receive shell and related donations, ID unidentified specimens, confirm the already-listed IDs, label if necessary, package in clear plastic bags, sort into numbers of sessions, stuff their van, transport, and exhibit thousands of such donations for the typical four silent auction sessions, which they set up and supervise while open for bidding. Those events span the morning, or the afternoon, or even all day, at specific times between programs. Imagine a large room, lined round with tables, with some even in the middle, packed to the hilt with these individually wrapped goodies, tempting you to bid on them via your 'anonymous' registration number, and rebid when someone has outbid you, until the very last second of the allotted time. When time expires, you're shoo-ed out of the room, and John and Cheryl and trusted volunteers gather, sort into bidding numbers, and tally up and place in sacks. The items are moved to the check out and payment area, manned in recent years by North Carolina Shell Club members. There was even a separate smaller room for purchase of shell and related books, pre-priced. This year's four sessions brought in \$12,000. Note: Our Suncoast Conchologists and some individual members usually contribute shells for the Silent or Oral Auction. This year, our donation wound up in the Oral Auction (see below). Proceeds from the Silent Auction go directly to the COA Grant Fund for the benefit of molluscan research.



Carolyn's Door Prize!
Architectonica maxima
Giant Sundial, E. China Sea

One night is given over to the Oral Auction where the more valuable, unique, and rarer shells and related items are offered for verbal bidding. The various offerings were prepared in a manner similar to the Silent Auctions, and were displayed for inspection and close scrutiny prior to the event. Our club's donation for the Oral Auction was a deep water Florida scallop, *Caribachlamys mildredae*, which reaped COA \$60. Again, kudos to the NC Club members who have stepped up for a number of years to help at the actual event. Our *mildredae* was one of over 100 items auctioned, which netted COA over \$15,000, also earmarked for COA's Grant Fund supporting mollusk research. Suncoast Conchologists also contributed a cash donation as a convention Booster, to help with the various convention expenses.

Most people are unaware that COA is the largest grant provider for both undergraduate and graduate studies in malacology. \$25,000 *per annum* has been awarded annually in recent years. As noted above, proceeds from both the Silent and Oral Auctions go directly to this fund. Despite Covid, grants were awarded in 2020. This year eleven grants were awarded to American students and four to international students.

Everyone enjoyed the Final Banquet, also included in the registration fee. Lovely shell floral arrangements, made by the Astro club members, graced the tables at both the Welcome Buffet and the Banquet. The raffle items and the special Lion's Paw pendant were awarded. On this occasion, COA presents its coveted *Neptunea* awards each year, usually to non-professional folks who have been nominated by any COA member, and voted upon by the COA Board. Nominees are acknowledged for their service to COA, service to COA's scientific interests, and/or for service to the science of malacology as it applies to conchologists anywhere. Although there was no 2020 convention, those awards had already gone to Paul Callomon, Ed Shuller and Jeanette Tysor. This year's awards were to Doug Wolfe, Paul Kanner, and Roger Portell. In

keeping with the Space Coast theme, the banquet speaker was Wycliffe Hoffler MD, who spoke of his 40 years dealing in Aerospace Medicine at NASA.

The programs, presented over three days, are another major highlight of the convention. Always of excellent quality, they covered a variety of shell and related topics, each lasting about 20 minutes, followed by 5-10 minutes of questions and answers and audience interaction with these very knowledgeable speakers. Several of the 14 programs related to the geographical area and the space program, as well as the Indian River Lagoon, which covers about one-third the length of our state. Programs covered the living mollusks now on exhibit at the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum on Sanibel, the history of sea silk weaving (from pen shells' byssal threads) over the millennia, the philosophy and valuing of collections, Pacific nudibranchs (fascinating shell-less mollusks), Hawaiian shells in their underwater habitats, computerized data bases and shell research websites, Alaskan shells, and shells from the Antarctic, etc. The Antarctic speaker, Dr. Jerry Harasewych, recently retired from the Smithsonian, is co-author of the book and the source of that blurb that I cited in a *Shorelines* article a couple years ago, about deep water and deep pressure and carbon dioxide dissolving the calcium carbonate of shells. The poor mollusks at that depth have to compensate by lessening the shell material and producing more periostracum – with the consequence of those shells actually being flexible!

The final day and a half of the convention was given over to the notorious and wonderful Bourse, an opportunity for shell dealers to present their shells for sale to members and the public. Generally 10,000 sq ft is needed for this event, which takes six hours to set up. Because of Covid, the usual foreign dealers from Australia, the Far East, the near Mid-East, South America, and Europe could not travel to the USA; even some American dealers stayed home. Nonetheless, 16 dealers from Florida, North Carolina, Maryland, Massachusetts, California,

and Hawaii were able to come; a couple were new to COA. There is nowhere, other than a private tour of the closed areas of famous scientific museums, that you'll be able to see up close and to personally touch fascinating and gorgeous shells – everything from common to rare molluscan creations. It's an absolute feast for the eyes and, if you like, for your pocketbook!

Next year's COA Convention will be at the Moody Garden Hotel in Galveston, Texas, May 31 – June 4, 2022. I have fliers for details if you are interested!

So THAT'S what goes on at a COA Convention!



Dealers' Bourse--A huge room filled with hundreds of shells!



Beautiful Shells at the Bourse

Happy Birthday

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

11—Sharlene Totten 2—Barb Stauffer
 23---Cathy Petre 21—Earl Petrikin
 24—Sally Mitchell
 30 --Paul Gysan

In Memoriam

Mary Marsh, 89 of Latham, the beloved wife of Robert Francis Marsh, passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her loving family on the evening Tuesday, June 29, 2021. Mary has been a member of Suncoast Conchologists for the past 19 years with her husband, Bob. We will miss her.



Mary & Bob Marsh and Dick & Betty Fearn from the 2014 Fossil Fest

Cheryl Jacobs, Betty & Dick Fearn, Mary Marsh from Fossil Fest 2013



Pictures courtesy of John Jacobs



Picture courtesy of Debi McCreary

Reminder!

Don't forget to take advantage of the free admission for yourself and three guests to Clearwater Marine Aquarium. The facility has undergone major renovations recently. If you haven't been there in a while you "otter" go visit. It is "turtley" awesome and "dolphinitly" worth your while! During your visit don't forget to stop by the Suncoast Conchologists shell cases. You "shell" not be sorry you did! For more information on the free passes, please contact Sharlene Totten or Debi McCreary.

Did you know??

There are several apps you can put on your phone to find the low tide schedule no matter where you are located. The apps that several of our club members use are:

My Tides
Tides Near Me

**Rose Tellins are red,
 Mussels are blue.
 A gentle reminder:
 Your dues are due!**

WHAT IS A SHELL?

Well, we already know the answer to this—the hard, protective outer covering of the mollusks we all love to collect, whether they are scallops, olives, whelks, or another species. All turtles also have a shell—let's see what other “shells” there are!

The hard outer layer of a nut or seed

A framework or exterior of a building—the external structure of an unfinished building

The unfilled pastry crust of a pie

The exterior hull of a ship

An explosive artillery projectile or bomb

The short name for the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Company

The outer covering of an egg

A woman's sleeveless, collarless blouse or sweater

A light, narrow racing boat used by rowers

Hard-shell luggage

Where bands give concerts

A crab's outer layer

Carolyn Petrikin My favorite “shells” from several online dictionaries; below, photos of several “REAL” favorite shells.



SPONDYLIDAE
Spondylus ictericus
Reeve, 1856
Off Guarapari, Espirito
Santo, Brazil
Digitate Thorny
Oyster

CHARONIIDAE
Charonia variegata
(Lamarck, 1816)
Long Bay Negril,
Jamaica 7-75
Atlantic Trumpet
Triton



MURICIDAE
Murex
erythrostomus
(Swainson, 1831)
Playa
Buenaventura
Bahia
Concepcion, Baja
CA Sur 9-97
Pink-
Mouth Murex



SUNCOAST CONCHOLOGISTS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Annual Dues with E-mail copy of Suncoast Shorelines

Individual: \$20.00
Family \$25.00

For a printed copy of the newsletter, add \$10.00.

Life Membership:
Individual \$150.00
Family \$200.00

The membership year begins September 1st. Please make checks payable to:
SUNCOAST CONCHOLOGISTS, P.O. Box 1564, Palm Harbor, FL 34682-1564

Meetings are held at 7:00 PM the 1st Tuesday of each month except June, July, August and December at Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 North Highland Avenue, Clearwater.

All members please complete and return for our Membership Directory: Date _____

Name(s)* _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-Mail Address _____ Birth Date (month & day) _____

If you have an alternate address for part of the year, indicate mailing address and dates below:

Address _____ Dates--(From/To) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

E-Mail Address _____ Telephone _____

List all family members included in membership: _____

Membership Category:

() Individual () Family () Lifetime

Are you paying the extra \$10.. for a printed copy? Yes _____ No _____

Return this renewal form with your check to the Membership Chairman at our September meeting or mail to the above P.O. Box address before Oct. 20th.

If you can't send in the membership form, please send a note to Betty that includes your name, email, phone number, address and what the check is for.

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ALL About COA

PHOTOS!



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