



The Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club, Inc.

The Junonia

January 2021

Don't Miss the January 10th Shell Club Zoom Meeting Program "Shell Collecting in the Florida Keys"

Shell Club member Amanda Baker will present the program, "Shell Collecting in the Florida Keys" at the January 10th Sanibel Shell Club. The meeting via Zoom will begin at 2:00 PM.



Amanda and her family moved from Ohio to Florida seven years ago. She loves spending her free time taking shelling trips with her three children, Dominic, Olivia and Nicholas. One of the places she likes to collect shells is in the Florida Keys. Amanda will take us shelling with her on one of these trips through the magic of her photography and showcase her shells collected from the Keys.

President's Message



Dear Shell Club Members:

Happy New Year! I hope that 2021 will bring you health, happiness, and harmony. And, of course, great shells!

I am reminded as I write this of a particularly important reason why I am involved in the Shell Club. A red tide bloom has hit Sanibel and

Captiva once again, leaving dead fish and sea life and affecting the local birds.

I am so glad that a substantial amount of the money we raise at the annual shell show is used to study and perform research on red tide, working towards healthy oceans. We look forward to a healthier ecosystem in South Florida.

I am excited about the upcoming January meeting. Shell enthusiast Amanda Baker will be presenting about shelling in the Keys. For those of you who have seen Amanda's Facebook postings, you know that she and her children find some incredible shells!

The virtual shell show committee continues to work tirelessly to put on a first-rate show in March. We will get an update on their progress. It is just around the corner.

See you at the meeting.

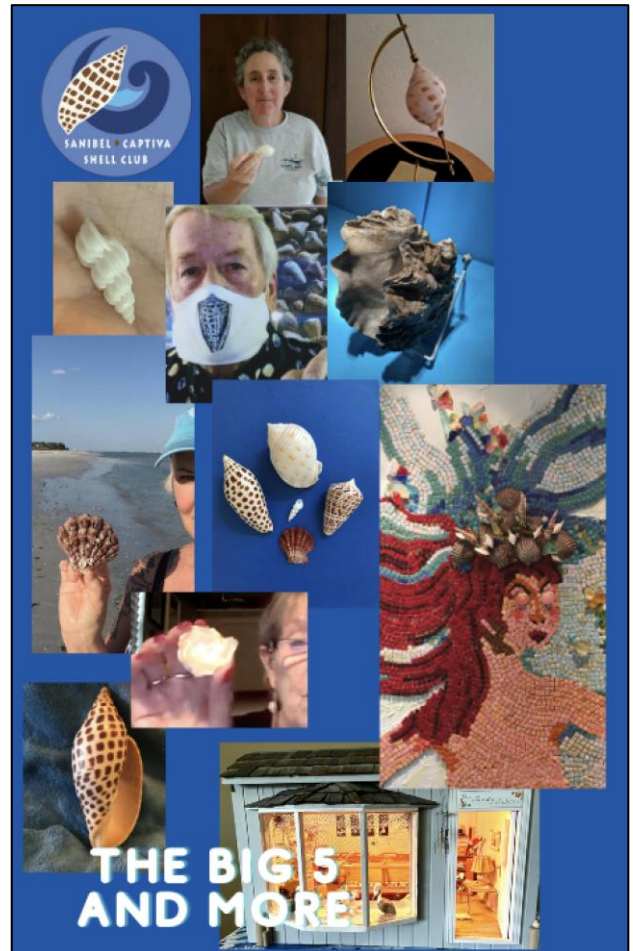
Karen Silverstein

December Club Zoom Holiday Party

by Kim Short, Secretary

President Karen Silverstein opened the meeting by introducing herself, and welcoming all attendees and then turned the proceedings over to Clair Beckmann, wearing her Cephalopod of Ceremonies hat.

The remainder of the meeting consisted of members sharing stories of how they found one of the "Sanibel Big Five": Junonia, Scotch Bonnet, Lion's Paw, Alphabet Cone, or Wentletrap.



Phyllis Sharp videotaped each presenter for the Virtual Shell Show in March 2021. In all, more than 25 members shared how they found their special shell.

Clair reported on some of the new videos that will also be included in the Show.

Karen wished all "Happy Holidays". The virtual Holiday Party ended at 3 p.m. There were 33 participants.

If You Were Not Able to Attend the Party

Highlights from the meeting can be viewed on our YouTube channel by clicking:

<https://youtu.be/zXR-xJx2GrY>

or through the Club's website link

<https://sanibelshellclub.com>.

In addition to the Zoom video of the meeting, we've added crisp pictures of the shells that were a bit fuzzy during the meeting, and we've added two additional videos that were submitted to the club's Drop Box. So even if you attended, you will enjoy seeing more about these great finds. Our thanks to everyone who shared a story and made this a very memorable holiday gathering.

If you were not able to attend the November and December meetings, videos of the presentations by Dr. José Leal of the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum and Leah Reidenbach of SCCF are also available through our website: <https://sanibelshellclub.com/sanibel-shell-club/>.

Welcome, New Members!

We welcome the following new members to the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club:

Shawn & Laura Shaffer – Sanibel
Gregory Taylor – Omaha, NE



One of the benefits of belonging to the Shell Club is that you may visit the Shell Museum without charge. This is because of the financial support the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club gives the Museum. You will also receive a 20% discount on any purchases you make at the Museum Store.

Please feel free to contact any of our Board members or committee chairs if you have any questions about our club and our club activities. We look forward to sharing our enthusiasm about shells with you.

If you have not done so already, remember to subscribe to the Shell Club's website.

Grants Report

by Joe Timko

The Board of the Shell Club continued its strong support of the **Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum** by awarding \$7,750 in grants for 2020. The second installment of \$6,250 for the Shell Museum's aquarium construction project was made this year, bringing the total so far to \$12,500 toward this major donation. Also, another \$1,500 grant was approved to cover the cost of the one-year fee for Specify Software to host the cloud-based database of over 500,000 shell specimens. It is a continuation of last year's Digital Imaging Project grant for database hosting. There was no application this year for "Adopt-A-Class" because the in-person program was cancelled due to the corona virus pandemic.

The Shell Club Board approved a \$1,000 grant this year for **Conchologists of America** as the eighth installment of a \$10,000 perpetual grant award that will be

called the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club Award when we reach the 10th year.



Pictured (L to R) are Clair Beckmann, Donald Dan, and Karen Silverstein.

Fossil Field Trip

by Susi Butler, Field Trip Chair

Six Sanibel Shell Club members had the opportunity to join Roger Portell, Carmi Thompson and a few others from the University of Florida/Natural History Museum when they conducted their research work on shell fossils at an "always closed to visitors" quarry south of Arcadia, Florida. Two club members were allowed to join the group each day: Diane Scrimenti and Rodger Bunnell on December 1st, Jean Burks and I had our turn on the 2nd, with Meredith Blain and Sabine Pratsch on the 3rd. We helped them as they sampled various layers in the walls of the quarry, up to 17' tall. It was really fascinating to be looking at shell fossils that have been buried for 2-3 million years.

We were allowed to collect shell fossils at the end of each day and we went home with several interesting ones seen in pictures on the next page. I had never found a *Junonia* on the beach, but I found one here.

A few found shark eye shells with their operculums tucked inside which was nice, as well as large whelks, scallops, nutmegs, a turbinella, etc.

Definitely an educational trip and a rare opportunity that we really appreciated being involved with. We are looking forward to seeing the research results in the future.





A beverage can is included for scale.

Parts of the dig were filmed for presentation during the Virtual Shell Show in March.

If anyone has a question about the dig, contact me by email at jbutler895@aol.com.



Photo by Meredith Blaine

Treasurer's Report

by Linda Edinburg, Treasurer



Treasurer's Report: There is \$23,490.04 in the checking account. Our grants for this year have all been paid. The large amount in the checking account is because it is currently holding \$17,094.00 in sponsorships for our virtual show. That amount will soon be moved to savings to wait for next year's grant payments.

Recent Donations

This month we again received the annual grant of \$1,000. that Sally Wilmeth so graciously sends us from her parent's, Pat and Harvey Wilmeth, fund. Thank you so much, Sally, for your continuing support of our club and its goals.

Shellers From the Past and the Present

By Tom Rice and Frank Maartense

"Every man on earth has his own story that is admirable in some sort of way."

That certainly applies to we shell collectors. We are all eager to tell our beautiful stories and to share our treasures. And why not? Many of these shell stories have been recorded in "Shellers from the Past and the Present," a database with the names of approximately 69,000 people who are or were engaged with shells. "Shellers from the Past and the Present" goes back to the early times of shell research.

The founding father of this magnificent database is Tom Rice, an American malacologist in heart and soul. When Tom started scientifically collecting shells some 60 years ago, he noted the "authors" of the shell species and immediately wondered, "who were these scholars?" In the next half century he would meet many of them. After Tom quit publishing his shell magazine "Of Sea and Shore," which at its height reached collectors in more than 60 countries, he looked for another challenge to, as Tom himself calls it, "keep my brain active." Over the years, Tom had compiled a photo archive of people he'd met at many shell fairs and trips around the world, as well as the numerous visitors to his shell museum "Of Sea and Shore Museum of Shells and Natural History" in Port Gamble, WA.

Tom asked himself what had become of these people and their collections? He began to gather information. His file started to grow, thanks also to the American Malacological Society's "2400 Years of Malacology," that lists thousands of malacologists from around the world and throughout the centuries. "Biographical Etymology of Marine Organism Names (Bemon)" also became an important source of information. Tom gathered more than 20,000 names. What to do next?

Actually he only planned to use the project for himself ("an exercise for my mind"), but he showed a CD with all the names to his friends Guido and Philippe Poppe. That turned out to be a great decision. Guido and Philippe encouraged Tom to continue his research and agreed to add the files to their Conchology website www.conchology.be. He invited others to add names, information, photos, corrections, et cetera. Tom was very impressed and excited, and in 2013 "Shellers from the Past and the Present" was posted on www.conchology.be. It immediately became a mega hit.

In 2018 Frank Maartense from The Netherlands added the Dutch zoologist Jan van der Hoeven (1801-1868) to "Shellers." That was his first real acquaintance with the database. While studying Tom's project, the information about malacology really appealed to him, as well as the great stories behind the shell collectors. Frank wanted this knowledge to remain available to everyone in the future: "Shellers from the Past and the Present" for the benefit of the shellers of the future. Frank really wanted to participate in the project and contacted Guido Poppe with the request to assist Tom Rice with his database. Guido thought it was a great idea, and passed it on to Tom. There was an

immediate click between Frank and Tom. For two years now, Frank and Tom have co-edited and organized "Shellers from the Past and the Present."

"I think we have quite an extensive collection after 35 years. It is fantastic to read all these stories. After reading them and learning more about the people who deal with shells, collecting itself has become even more fun for me," says Frank.

"Every man on earth has his own story that is admirable in some sort of way." We read this comment in an email from a South African lady who asked if we would put information about her father, the malacologist Hugo Wessels, in the database. It is a wonderful story about a farmer who, besides collecting shells, was a hunter and gold miner. And, as a doctor of medicine, he worked among the native people of South Africa, where he was considered a kind a saint. The story goes that after his death people broke into his grave to get a piece of hair or bone as a relic.



*Two ladies collecting shells. Manhattan Beach, NY, 1885
Collection of the New York Historical Society*

Adventures such as those of the famous American malacologist and world traveler Ted Dranga (1901-1956) are also in "Shellers." While gathering on the uninhabited northwest coast of Australia near Broome, Ted was arrested and taken by an Australian soldier for questioning. He was asked what he was doing there in the midst of a war going on. He assured his interrogators of his peace-loving mission. What else could you call shell collecting? Ted was then released.

Another adventurer, Walter Jakob Eyerdam (1892-1974), an enthusiastic collector travelling all over the world, was acclaimed by botanists, ornithologists and conchologists as a superior collector. For many years Eyerdam made a living as a cooper, making wooden barrels for whaling in Alaska. His shell travels took him five times to Siberia. There is even a mountain named after him there. He spent time in the Pacific, Alaska (25 summers), South America and the Caribbean. He was a good friend of Tom Rice.

Nobel Prize winners are also on our list, such as Eric Richard Kandel, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 2013. He used the seaslug

Aplysia californica, better known to us as the Californian sea hare, in his research on the biological mechanisms of memory storage. Other laureates mentioned are Bernhard Katz, Sidney Brenner and August Krogh. Katz studied synaptic transmission by using the synapse in the stellate ganglion of squids. Brenner initiated the sequencing of the genome of the Octopus bimaculoides and *Lottia gigantea*. Krogh studied the giant axon of the squid in order to understand mechanisms of action-potential generation.

Really all the big names in the field of malacology are listed in "Shellers." And also all those collectors who are simply fascinated by the color, shape, habitat and complexity of shells. That is the vast majority of entries and it is what makes "Shellers" so much fun.

If you want to be part of "Shellers from the Past and the Present" also, or you want to add or amend information, go to www.conchology.be and scroll to "Shellers from the Past and the Present." It is user-friendly, easy, fun and informative. Kindly note that "Shellers from the Past and the Present" is a part of a public website. All contributions can be read by everyone.

You can also send us an email for more information:

Tom: ofseaandshore@gmail.com

Frank: frank@tarrant.nl

Junonia Fragments Wanted

Do you have any Junonia fragments that you would like to sell? Jack Rink is an artisan jeweler in Port Saint Joe, FL who is looking for broken Junonia fragments to use in his work.

Jack is not interested in whole Junonias, but he is looking for fragments of any size down to about 3/4" x 3/4". Even if they have a weathered exterior, he might be able to use them.

If you have any fragments you would like to sell, place them adjacent to a ruler or tape measure for scale and take a photo of them. You can send your photo to him at jackrink77@gmail.com. He will contact you with an offer.

You can view his work on his website

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/ElementalSilverWorks>

About Life Memberships

When the recent membership directory was sent out, a couple new members noticed that some people were listed as life members and they were curious about that category of membership.

Life memberships were offered in the early 1980's as a way to raise additional funds for the scholarship program at the University of South Florida. The money that the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club contributed was matched by a special grant through the University.

This category of membership was dropped about 17 years ago. However, what began as a modest contribution of \$500 in 1985 has grown to become a significant endowment and one that supports cutting-edge research by some of USF's brightest marine science students each year.

A “Thank You” from the Nigey Children

Last month President Karen Silverstein told about how Connie Jump received a letter from Kevin Nigey by way of our Shell Club website. He was wondering about getting two sets of common Sanibel shells and some fossil shells for his 7-year old and 13-year old children for Christmas.

With the help of our board members Linda Edinburg, Clair Beckmann, and Carol Periard, and Lorin Buckner from the Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, a large box with a vast variety of common and not-so-common shells was sent on its way. Connie Jump very generously offered to buy the family a membership to the Shell Club so they would have the opportunity to enjoy and learn from our Zoom meetings.

The following letter was received from Kevin Nigey.



Meet my two children Hunter age 13 and James age 7 receiving the box from your club. They are extremely grateful to the club for their incredible gifts and support! The people in your club are generous and deeply appreciated. We will be sending a small token of appreciation back to you for taking the time to help us.

We would like to meet you in person, visit Sanibel, the museum, and learn where some of the best sites for hands on exploration are. We would like to keep working with you and obtain a classification of each type of shell and its fossil counter part if possible.

Here are my children receiving and opening your amazing gifts!!! I asked them to put them in groups and identify them with the keys you graciously sent us. Here is how they laid them out.



A Shell Story

by Ken Burgener and Stella Warschauer

Hi, my name is Ralph and I am the shell pictured here. A gentleman named Ken was nice enough to pick me up as he walked along the beach this morning. There are millions of shells here on the beach where we come to die and why he chose me, even with my broken top, is amazing. Even more amazing is that we began to converse. Several minutes into our conversation Ken said he would like to tell my story on Facebook.



So, here goes. I have only been on shore for about a week, having been pushed ashore during the recent storm. We shell families all talk about our “after life” and we all dream of being taken to a better place.

But reality is that we all know that within a few weeks of “beaching” we will either be ground to sand by people stepping on us and then ending up in peoples’ houses only to be swept away, OR we will be rescued (and I say that loosely) by someone shelling along the shore. Birds and dogs running along the beach can be hazards too as they like to play with us, pushing us around and tossing us in the air.

I guess the best thing would be for us to be rescued by a “sheller” but that too has its hazards. Several of our citizens have gotten word back to us telling us unbelievable stories of where they ended up. Because I am broken no one even glances at me. A few days ago I was excited as some woman bent over to grab me, or so I thought. No, she just pushed me aside as she was looking for a “special” shell. Knowing that I am an outcast, the best I can hope for is to be collected and then used in a driveway or sidewalk. Oh no, turns out those companies only use old shells for that.

Now we hear the Junonia shells, “MISS PERFECTS” get their pictures in the newspapers. We down here dislike them because of their popularity and we always try to mess with them making them imperfect, but NO, humans will still pick them up, damaged or not. Life is not fair...

I, myself, am a Van Hyning’s Cockle and can grow up to 5 inches or more. We are all over the beach and only the perfect ones get to go home with a human. We heard from some of our shells that the humans stuff us into boxes, after putting us in acid to make us clean! That must really hurt! Then we hear that some humans will glue us on a board and hang us on a wall. I do not believe this but many of my shell friends do. There is even talk about a place that puts hundreds of us on display and charges people to look at our dead bodies. How sick can those people be? A shell museum it is called. How come I have to be dead to get there? Oh! Ken just told me that some of my friends are alive in the big building but still being prisoner for life? What did we do?

Some of the names the humans have given us makes us mad or makes us laugh. A horse conch? We do not even know what a horse is. I make sure to stay out of the way of this guy, as he is known to eat some of us. Lion’s

Paw, Turkey Wing, Channeled Duck Clam? Nope we do not know what you are talking about. Oh maybe a Shark Eye, but I would not be brave enough to tell Mr. Shark that a shell was named after his eye. And who is the Van Hying that I am named for? I have so many questions for Mr. Ken.

Note from Ken: Today I put Ralph back on the beach so he can become sand. He said his last wish was that someone would take "Miss Perfect Junonia's" and put them in a box with his kind to live forever in a dark closet in South Bend, Indiana. This is a true story. If you do not believe it, go ask Ralph.

Virtual Shell Show Update

by Clair Beckmann
Virtual Shell Show Chair



I am happy to announce that all the rough video footage for the Virtual Shell Show is in hand and by the next issue of *The Junonia* we will be able to announce the Virtual Shell Show schedule of events. You will be able to view the show on the Shell Club's new YouTube channel March 5th and 6th

from 12:00 noon to 3:00 PM EST.

Our programs will appeal to a broad base of viewers. There is something for everyone. The show will take you from our own backyard with new videos of live mollusks and other sea creatures found on our beaches to intimate glimpses into some amazing shell artists studios.

The spectrum ranges from fun do-it-yourself projects to research presentations by the universities and institutions funded in part by grants from our Shell Club. You will travel back in time to how the Sanibel Shell Show began; go behind the scenes of the Florida Museum of Natural History Invertebrate Paleontology Collection, an area that is not open to the public; and then venture into a fossil pit with Roger Portell, the Collections Director. In all, there will be about 35 different video presentations during the two-day Virtual Shell Show.

Besides these video presentations, you will have the chance to see the 424 photos that were sent to us from 15 different countries for our photo contests and fun photo slideshows. The top photos from the seven different photo contest categories have been chosen and during the show you will have the opportunity to vote for your favorite one.

We will be giving door prizes at random times during the 2-day video program, but in order to win a door prize, you must make a comment while the video is playing.

Next month's issue of *The Junonia* will give you everything you need to know about how to access the Virtual Shell Show; how to be eligible to win a door prize; and, how to vote for the "People's Choice Photo Award" during the show.



Once again, I want to thank all the individuals and businesses for sponsoring our 2021 Virtual Shell Show. They have helped make it possible for us to provide research and educational grants in 2021.

Did You Know?

(Reprinted from 10 years ago) From the Kid's Section of the Conchologists of America Web site

Mollusk evolution began more than 500 million years ago, during the Cambrian period.

Some oysters may shed over one million eggs in a season! Only about one out of every million of these oyster eggs lives to adulthood.

Female cowries sit on top of their eggs to protect them from enemies.

Some oysters alternate their gender: Male one year, female the next!

Ninety-nine percent of all snail species have shell whorls that coil in a clockwise direction.

Many land snails can lift ten times their own weight up a vertical surface.

Mr. Thomas Green of La Plata, Maryland, consumed 350 edible snails in eight and a half minutes.

The deep sea bivalve *Tindaria callistiformis* grows only one-third of an inch (8.4mm) in 100 years!

In Invercargill, New Zealand, Mike Racz opened 100 oysters in 2 minutes and 20 seconds

*Wishing You a
Happy and Healthy
New Year!*

**Members who do not renew their membership
by January 31st
will be deactivated and benefits
terminated.**

**A renewal form is on the last page of the newsletter or you
can pay by credit card by going to the Club's website.**

Thank You to These Virtual Shell Show Sponsors



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funlab2@aol.com

Sanibel Shell Club Website:
<https://sanibelshellclub.com>

Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club

Membership Application/Renewal

The Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club welcomes your membership. We usually meet monthly on the 2nd Sunday, October through April, the exception being December when a social function is planned.

Due to the pandemic, all meetings are being held virtually via Zoom at 2:00 PM on the second Sunday of the month. The meetings are announced in the club's newsletter. An email invitation to join each meeting is sent to the members the week before the meeting.

We publish a newsletter, *The Junonia*, on the months that we meet. Back issues of the newsletter may be read on our website <https://sanibelshellclub.com>. A copy of *The Junonia* will be sent to your email address.

Membership in SCSC includes free admission to the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum and a 20% discount in their gift shop. Please allow two to four weeks for membership processing before these benefits are available to you at the museum.

Date _____ **New Member** **Renewal**
Annual Dues: **Single membership - \$20** **Family membership - \$25**

Please complete all the information below, including phone numbers.

Name(s): _____

Summer Address: **Phone** _____

Street City State Zip

Winter Address: **Phone** _____

Street City State Zip

Email Address: _____

If you do not want your street address, phone or email to be made public, **please check the box(s) below.**

I DO NOT want the information checked below included in the membership directory:

Street address Phone number(s) Email address

Make check payable to **Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club**. Mail it to us at:

Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club
P.O. Box 355
Sanibel, FL 33957

Or you can pay by PayPal:

Go to the Shell Club's website <https://sanibelshellclub.com> and use this link: "Become a Member or Renew".

The Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club is a 501(C)3 charitable foundation.