



# SHELL-O-GRAM

Official Publication of the  
**JACKSONVILLE SHELL CLUB, INC.**

**July-August, 2004**

**Volume 45(4)**

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**Charlotte Thorpe, Treasurer**

## **August Meeting**

The Thursday, August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting will convene at 7:00 PM at the St. Nicholas Park Christian Church at 3226 Beach Blvd.; near where Atlantic and Beach Blvds. join and just across the street from the Curry Thomas Hardware Store.

The educational program will be presented by Nellie Hawley, who will report on a trip to Roatan, Honduras some years ago. She'll discuss the regional fauna and tell us a bit about some other collectors who have made the pilgrimage to this delightful Caribbean Island.

Harry Lee will present the Shell-Of-The-Month on *Conus kalafuti* da Motta, 1987, which occurs on and around Roatan.



**Danielle Wirsansky (age 10) and her shell show awards**

## **President's Message**

**By Billie Brown**

Hi Everybody.! What a group to be a part of. The Jacksonville Shell Club still has it going. After such a successful shell show, everybody deserves a huge pat on the back, high five, or whatever. We can still pull off one of the best shows in the state. Congratulations to us.

We didn't have a very big group for our July Meeting. Maybe you all had enough togetherness. I know that some people were going out of town and others just couldn't make it, but please come when you can. The only new business conducted at our meeting was to appoint a committee to nominate a slate of officers for the coming year. That committee includes Harry Lee, Charlotte Thorpe, and Bill Frank. We went down the work sheet, with facts and figures from our treasurer Charlotte Thorpe, which spelled out everything you needed to know about the financial part of our show. What a job! We had reports from chairmen and a bit of friendly chit-chat.

A few personal notes are in order. We have several of our members that need our special thoughts. Charlotte Chauvin was in the hospital just before our show so she and Fred were not able to attend. Charlotte is recuperating at home now. Lola Josey's husband, John, was not well enough to make the trip to Jacksonville. Lola was to have judged Arts & Crafts. Craig Thorn was here but favoring a bad knee that previously had surgery. We like to think that being at the show was some sort of physical therapy. Audrey's bad shoulder didn't keep her from working at the door either. I guess lots of us (not that we are getting older) have to just keep on going. [Continued on page two.]



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The **Shell-O-Gram** is issued bimonthly and mailed to all regular members. Annual membership dues are \$12.50 individual and \$15.00 family (domestic), and \$20.00 (foreign). Lifetime membership is available.

Send dues to: Charlotte Thorpe  
1010 N. 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
Jacksonville Beach, FL 32250-2883

Closing date for article submission is two weeks prior to the first of each month of publication. Articles may be republished provided full credit is given the author and this newsletter and one copy of the complete publication in which the article appears is mailed to Editor at the above address.

### Welcome New Member

Lesbia (Petie) Graham Johnson  
340 Ponte Vedra Blvd.  
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082  
Phone: (904) 273-1554

### Address Change

Joel Wooster  
11750 Alden Rd. Apt. 504  
Jacksonville, FL 32246

### President's Message [continued]

Our news about Betsy and Bill Lyerly (from Hazel Walker, who still worries about us all) is that Bill will be having surgery about the first of September to repair a heart valve. He just needs time to gain strength to be able to be in better condition for his surgery. He will continue seeing doctors here in Jacksonville and the surgery will be at Shands Hospital in Gainesville. Probably the best way to support our dear friends is by sending your thoughts and prayers.

Our sympathy is extended to Mrs. Helen Murchison Lane. Her husband, Edward W. Lane, Jr., passed away on July 26<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Lane has sponsored our "Helen

Murchison" award for arts and crafts in memory of her mother for many years. Mr. Lane will be sorely missed by his family and all who were privileged to know him – socially and in business.

The Jacksonville Coalition for the Visual Arts recently held a show at the FCCJ South Campus entitled "Summer Sensations." Quoting from the TV "Some of the most impressive work was done in watercolor." Leigh Murphy received third place for "Bromeliad." Also mentioned is a work titled "Murex" – "A piece so crisp and sharp it almost looks like a photograph." Congratulations Leigh!

This piece has probably rambled on long enough – so, bye till next time. If I forgot someone or something, I'm sure you'll let me know. See you at the August meeting – still in St. Nicholas. Best, Billie (241-3755).

### Upcoming Events

\*\*\***September 24-26<sup>th</sup> - North Carolina Shell Show** at North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, 11 West Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27601. Contact Ann Buddenhagen, 804 Westwood Dr., Raleigh NC, 27607; Phone (919) 787-7103; Email [pabjetster@aol.com](mailto:pabjetster@aol.com).

### Shell Show 2004 (Our 38<sup>th</sup>)

By Billie Brown



**Charlotte Thorpe and her COA Trophy winner**

We did it again! We had a very successful show. After all the careful preparations there is always a nagging in the back of your mind – Did we forget anything? The planning begins months in advance and, as you go along, everything gets fine-tuned, and, as the date approaches, there is one more thing (or two) and glitch here or there that you work out. Our chairmen knew their jobs and were prepared to do them. We are lucky to be able to

stretch our members to do numerous jobs and even have friends of the club to come and help.

Set-up is a big job, and it went smoothly on Thursday evening | Friday morning. The exhibitors and dealers began appearing about noon on Friday. Everything was in place and ready to be judged except one scientific entry. That exhibitor was caught in a terrible rain storm just before reaching the venue. Our kindly judges cut him a little slack, and he made it only minutes a few minutes late although his exhibit got slightly wet. The judges were Bill Lyons and Wayne Harland (Scientific) and Eloise Stevens and Helen Kwiat (Arts & Crafts). As mentioned previously, Lola Josey from St. Simons, Georgia could not be with us as planned, so a friend of the shell club, Eloise Stevens, graciously agreed to judge along with Helen.

On Saturday night we held our dinner and auction at the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge in Marsh Landing. We had over sixty for dinner and a few people that had heard about our auction came just for that event. The auction, which featured 75 lots of shells and shell-related items, was ably handled by co-auctioneers Harry Lee and Wayne Harland.

Once again we are indebted to friends of the club for their help; specifically Lodge #17 (Paul Brown) that is always willing to provide their facilities when we need them and our chef Crickett Brown who came from Brunswick, Georgia to provide her expert services. Her helper, Chef Dave, and a grandson of a member, helped with service and clean-up. Everyone agreed that the dinner was fabulous, and the people who attended in 2003 knew they wanted to come in '04 – especially for dinner.

Have you ever seen grown people shelling on a cake? Everybody had their eyes on the colorful white chocolate seashells adorning the cake baked and decorated by Nellie Hawley!

Our new award for Arts and Crafts in honor of Gertrude Moller was announced (I like to call it, lovingly, “The Gertie Award.”). It is a beautiful plaque with a true color photograph of our club shell, *Hexaplex fulvescens*, designed by our talented Charlotte Thorpe. It is guaranteed to make non-crafters try their hand and is awarded to the exhibit that exemplifies the passion of the love of seashells and art. Our newly-designed ribbons were a big asset to our show. They also feature the murex photo and have a removable “year ribbon” so that leftovers can be used the next year, saving the club money.

We had a steady stream of visitors to our show on both days. Our dealers were not disappointed with their sales, and we heard nothing but good comments throughout the show. It was so good to see people that look forward to our show from year to year. There are

always friends who stop in to visit that you see only at shell show time. Sadly, condos have taken their toll and we have to really give thought to next year. We certainly don't want to give up having our show at the beach, so we (all of us) really have to do some creative searching to find a replacement venue.

Total paid attendance at the show this year was about 850, which represents a significant increase in the number of guests from previous years (2003 – 626 guests and 2002 – 634 guests).

On behalf of Charlotte and myself, thank you all for helping the club have another successful show. To all of our chairman who worked so hard at your jobs and the members and friends of the club who didn't hesitate to step up when asked and especially those who just volunteered: Thank you; you are appreciated!



**A view of the Arts & Crafts displays**

**Artistic Categories**  
(31 entries – 48 linear feet)

**B-1-1 Pictures:** Glass covered or open

1<sup>st</sup> – Leigh Murphy (Jacksonville)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Doris Brauninger

2<sup>nd</sup> – Leigh Murphy

**B-1-3 Christmas Related Items**

1<sup>st</sup> – Judy Blocker (Jacksonville)

**B-1-4 Mirrors:** All sizes

1<sup>st</sup> – Judy Blocker

2<sup>nd</sup> – Gertrude Moller (Jacksonville)

**B-1-5 Jewelry and Personal Accessories**

1<sup>st</sup> – Barbara Moon (Jacksonville)

**B-1-6 Paintings and Drawings of Shells**

1<sup>st</sup> - Leigh Murphy

2<sup>nd</sup> – Leigh Murphy

**B-1-7 Photography**

1<sup>st</sup> - Alice Monroe (Suncoast Conchologists)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Alice Monroe

**B-1-8 Novelties**

2<sup>nd</sup> – Barbara Moon (Jacksonville)

**B-1-9 Needlework**

1<sup>st</sup> – Jackie Warshaw (Jacksonville)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Danielle Wirsansky (Jacksonville)

**B-1-11 Home Décor**

1<sup>st</sup> – Judy Blocker

2<sup>nd</sup> – Barbara Moon

**Helen Murchison Memorial Trophy** – Leigh Murphy

**Most Creative** – Judy Blocker

**Gertrude Moller Award** – Leigh Murphy

**Judges Special Awards** (one per-judge)

--Leigh Murphy (painting)

--Judy Blocker (mirror)

**Scientific Categories**

(19 entries – 281 linear feet)

**A-1-1 Beautiful**

1<sup>st</sup> – Gene Everson (Louisville, KY)

**A-1-2 World-Wide**

1<sup>st</sup> – Charlotte Thorpe (Jacksonville)

**A-1-8 One Major Family**

1<sup>st</sup> – Joe & Robin Lampone (Central Florida Shell Club (CFSC))

**A-1-9 One Minor Family**

1<sup>st</sup> – Vicky Wall (North Carolina Shell Club)

**A-1-10 One Genus**

1<sup>st</sup> – Anne Joffe (Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Harry Berryman

**A-1-11 One Single Specimen**

1<sup>st</sup> – Marilyn Northrop (Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club)

2<sup>nd</sup> – Charlotte Thorpe

**A-1-12 Educational**

1<sup>st</sup> – Gene Everson

1<sup>st</sup> – Vicky Wall

**A-1-13 Rare**

1<sup>st</sup> – Marilyn Northrop

**A-1-14 Oddities**

1<sup>st</sup> – Harry G. Lee (Jacksonville)

**A-1-16 Related Speciality**

1<sup>st</sup> – Alice Monroe

**A-1-18A Student – Grades 1-8**

1<sup>st</sup> – Christopher Kwiat (CFSC)

1<sup>st</sup> – Danielle Wirsansky

**A-2 Non-Marine Molluscs**

1<sup>st</sup> – Vicky Wall

2<sup>nd</sup> – Alice Monroe

**A-3 Marine Fossils**

1<sup>st</sup> – Billy Aley (Deerfield Beach, FL)

**duPont Trophy** – Vicky Wall “The Internal Beauty of Shells”

**COA Trophy** – Charlotte Thorpe “Pelecypods of the World”

**R. Tucker Abbott Memorial Award** – Gene Everson “Bubble Shells”

**William Clench Award** – Vicky Wall “Invasion of the Exotic European – The Zebra Mussel”

**Shell of the Show** – Marilyn Northrop “*Babelomurex juliae*”

**Self-Collected Shell of the Show** – Charlotte Thorpe “*Panopea floridana*”

**Florida-Caribbean Shell of the Show** – Charlotte Thorpe “*Fasciolaria tulipa*”

**Judges Special Awards** (one per judge)

--Marilyn Northrop

--Gene Everson



Vicky Wall with her William Clench Award

**On a Florida East Coast Shelling Expedition  
To the Jacksonville Shell Club With Love**

Karen Vander Ven

Three days to spare in Florida? Two questions - (1) What could be better than to shell the East Coast? and then (2) Where to go to get those fabled East Coast shells such as the large Crown Conchs, *Melongena sprucecreekensis* Tucker, 1994; the rare cream and orange Eastern Banded Tulip shells, *Fasciolaria hunteria* (G. Perry, 1811), and the West Indian Fighting Conch, *Strombus pugilis* Linnaeus, 1758. The latter were often seen in South Florida as well as unusual colored forms of the Florida Fighting Conch, *Strombus alatus* Gmelin, 1791. This agenda suggested a three-stop schedule, one for each day.

I had lined up two friends, Nancy Gould and her son David, to accompany me and "all" that needed to be done was to research the locales where these unusual treasures might be found. I checked the tide tables and then the Jacksonville Shell Club web site with Bill Frank's guide to collecting spots and articles from the *Shell-O-Gram* on expeditions that had been made to them. There was one on each area: Spruce Creek near

Port Orange, Matanzas Inlet near St. Augustine, and Peanut Island in West Palm Beach.

The trip began with our rendezvous in Orlando. Soon we were on our way north to our first shelling stop - the Spruce Creek Bridge that crosses Spruce Creek south of Daytona, on Route 1 South. We leapt out of the car at a little inlet on the East side and waded in. The *Melongena* were there for the effort of bending down, picking them up, and deciding whether they were "keepers" or not. We worked our way through murky waters and mangroves around under the bridge to the west side, and by the time we were done, each of us had been able to select several sizeable specimens, both dead and alive, and in reasonably good condition. The dead ones were larger in line with the reputed size of *Melongena sprucecreekensis*. I took one dead one, which is 5", and two live ones, 4" and 3 1/2", respectively.

Deeming this first leg of the journey a success, we drove north to St. Augustine and the Matanzas area, where the unusual colored tulips had been found before, and prepared for the next day that we knew would be our biggest and most difficult challenge.

First stop was Vilano Beach, at St. Augustine Inlet, where I had read that Charlotte Thorpe had previously found the shell. We went to the shore near the Vilano Beach Bridge and walked gingerly in the schluppy black mud and oyster clumps. Nothing. Following instincts, I drove around and we ended up at Porpoise Point. The beach looked beautiful and a tempting flat had surfaced as a result of the low tide. Up and down the beach, in and out of the tide pools and we found nothing except for a little piece of broken tulip. "Well, they're here -- somewhere!" I consoled our little group.

It was time then to head south towards the Matanzas inlet. We saw some promising flats near town and were just climbing down the wall that bordered them when we were stopped. Inadvertently we had walked into military territory. We left and crossed the next bridge south to go out to the lighthouse. On to the muddiest flats I think I've ever seen. Every step required effort to pull our feet out for the next step, hoping our beach shoes wouldn't get sucked off. (Mine did). We made it back to shore, with Nancy bringing in a very nice *Busycotypus canaliculatus* (Linnaeus 1758) [Channeled Whelk], nicely colored and in good condition, and for me, a slender Thick-lip Drill, *Eupleura caudata* (Say, 1822). Tulip-wise, nothing. We continued South and Nancy suggested we try the bridge to Crescent Beach. We did and on the west side there was access and acres of the same type of muddy and oyster clump filled flat. Once again, with hope springing eternal, we lurched around the flats. Finally, each of us picked up several tulips. They tended to be clustered in the same area, not far from the bridge. There was just one thing - they were so mud-encrusted it was possible

to tell no more about them than their distinctive tulip shape. Nancy found a pair of scallops that were also hard to identify.

We needed to make West Palm Beach that night to be ready for our sortie to Peanut Island and faced a long drive. We couldn't wait to get some Clorox and see what our tulips really looked like and when we did, once at our hotel, it was most interesting. Several shells turned out to be the "ordinary" gray and dark banded *Fasciolaria hunteria*. But unmistakably - and perhaps incredibly - among our assortment each of us had one of the distinctive cream and orange tulips with dark orange bands! Sure, none were live taken and they weren't in stellar condition although Nancy's, somewhat smaller than my "main" specimen of three inches, is really quite nice and I'd say mine at least "isn't bad". To boot I also had two others, one being 1 1/12 inches long and the other a real juvenile at 1 1/4 inches. We had found some! I was thrilled, especially when it occurred to me that we were probably not there at the best time of year.

Next morning, still feeling happy about the tulips, we drove to Riviera Beach to try to find a water taxi out to Peanut Island. Because it was Memorial Day, I had expected it to be mobbed, and it was! Someone overheard us asking ourselves where the taxi might be and guided us right down the dock to one that soon deposited us dockside on the eastern inlet side of the island. By that time, flats were appearing looking north towards the Blue Heron Bridge and we could see they were covered with boats and people! How could there be any shells here?

However, we started over the first flat from shore and onto another one and here Nancy found two *Strombus alatus*. There didn't seem to be any more there so I forged on to another flat that looked darker and textured. Suddenly we were in a veritable colony of *Strombus* just popping up as the tide was turning. It wasn't long until David called out - "Here's one with a purple lip" and soon I distinguished a specimen as a *Strombus pugilis*. We spent some time carefully examining and replacing the strombs, and by the time we left, each of us had picked from the multitudes several outstanding specimens of the *Strombus alatus* with purple apertures, and of the distinct orange and wider bodied *Strombus pugilis*. David pulled out a *Strombus alatus* whose aperture was essentially all white with just a tiny splash of purple at the base of the shell. All the time we were doing this we were surrounded by people walking the flats and sunning themselves on their boats. We were totally ignored and nobody else seemed to notice the shells at all.

On a small adjacent flat I spied numerous olive trails, each made by a tiny Lettered Olive [*Oliva sayana* Ravenel, 1834]. These were all left with the exception of

one larger trail that yielded a very handsome adult specimen. We then returned to the Peanut Island shore and went around to the side directly facing the inlet where it seemed that there were rocks to turn. However, the rocks were mossy and uninviting and there was nothing under any of the ones we examined.

Still happy, however, we returned on the ferry. Reviewing this trip and its agenda, we actually accomplished it, finding at each site exactly what the guides from the Jacksonville Shell Club had suggested. So...this brief report is sent to the Jacksonville Shell Club... with love!

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### Off-Beat Shelling

Have the summer doldrums got you down? Does your favorite shelling locale currently have about the same number of specimens as the Gobi Desert? Never fear, there is some off-beat shelling you can do without ever leaving town that will not only satisfy your collecting urges but possibly expose you to new cultures and experiences. In this regard, the following suggestions are offered:

**--Go out to eat:** It would appear that the Oriental community is having a contest to see who can open the biggest and best all you can eat buffet. Some of the larger ones now feature over 100 items and have proliferated to the point where it seems like there's one on every corner. With so many items on the menu, of course mollusks are included – not as many species as would be included in the Far East - but usually at least three species [Northern Quahog, *Mercenaria mercenaria* (Linnaeus, 1758), Eastern Oyster, *Crassostrea virginica* (Gmelin, 1791) and the ever popular and attractive New Zealand Green Mussel, *Perna canaliculus* (Gmelin, 1791)]. Be forewarned though that if you plan on keeping the shells put them aside immediately or tell your service personnel of your intentions. Otherwise it's bye-bye shells. Restaurant personnel obviously don't see any redeeming value in them so don't be surprised if they give you some funny looks as you put them in your purse or pocket. Of course you could offer the explanation that the meal was so enjoyable that you wanted to keep a memento. This explanation would be more effective though if delivered in Mandarin Chinese.

**--Do some home improvement:** With Duval County's ever expanding population, home improvement mega-markets such as Lowe's and Home Depot are popping up all over, reminiscent of the Oriental buffets. Despite being different companies, the aforementioned stores have two things in common. First they have large outdoor nurseries that sell plants, and second they both get a large portion of their stock from south Florida

which has a diverse and exotic land snail population. Fortunately for the collector, some of this snail fauna gets shipped as well. Although exploitation of this resource is still in its infancy, a recent collecting trip to a Home Depot on Jacksonville's south side yielded three species (Asian Tramp Snail, *Bradybaena similaris* (Férussac, 1821), Garden Zachrysia, *Zachrysia provisoria* (Pfeiffer, 1858), and Squatty Ambersnail, *Succinea unicolor* Tryon, 1866). While two of the three species are found in Jacksonville, the find of the much larger exotic Garden Zachrysia demonstrates that anything is possible – maybe even a Florida Tree Snail, *Liguus fasciatus* (Müller, 1774). Being discrete during collecting trips is advised to avoid being taken away by the “men in the white coats” as shell collecting at home improvement stores has not yet gained wide acceptance.

**--Go Shopping:** Going shopping at a local store, although lacking the “thrill of the hunt” associated with the previous two suggestions, can also yield shells as well as a meal. Most of the larger grocery stores (Publix, etc.) sell mollusks such as the Eastern Oyster and Northern Quahog. Additionally, some of the larger Oriental grocery stores sometimes have frozen mollusks from the Far East – usually the Spiral Babylon, *Babylonia spirata* (Linnaeus, 1758). Admittedly a city such as Orlando with a larger Oriental population offers more “molluscan diversity” than Jacksonville. If observing, not eating is your game, then try any of the aquarium stores that have live mollusks for sale. Although they tend to be pricey in regards to the salt water exotics, it's hard to beat the \$1.49 freshwater operculate Banded Mystery Snails, *Pomacea bridgesii* (Reeve, 1856) available at your neighborhood Pets Mart. To add to their overall “bang-for-the-buck factor,” they come in a wide variety of attractive colors! It's urban shelling at its best – your choice of colors and size and little chance that you will involuntarily committed to the Mental Health Resource Center on Beach Boulevard.



Squatty Ambersnail, *Succinea unicolor* Tryon, 1866  
Regency Square Lowe's (about 7 mm.)