



SHELL•O•GRAM

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Harry G. Lee, Dr.

Harry Lee passed away on January 8, 2024 in Jacksonville, Florida, from complications related to a stroke he suffered a month earlier; he was 83 years old. He was born in Newark, New Jersey to Robert E. and Isabel Hamilton Lee. He is survived by his wife, Sarah Lee (Kitty); three children: Johnny (Ashley), Bob, and Claire; and three grandchildren: Anna Lee, Morgan White, and Hadley White. He is also survived by his brothers Robert and Frederick (Madonna) Lee and sister, Karen (Danny) Perry. A graduate of Millburn High School, Williams College, and Cornell University Medical School, Harry began his medical career in 1974, practicing internal medicine for 31 years. His retirement afforded him the ability to focus on his lifelong passion of shell collecting. Harry was widely acknowledged as one of the world's top amateur experts in the study of mollusks. He is the author of several books and countless scholarly articles related to the field of malacology and paleontology, including research of microscopic fossilized shells and land snails. He was admitted in 2013 as a Fellow to the Linnean Society of London, having discovered and named 36 shells, with 18 more named after him by other scholars. His personal shell collection was estimated to be the largest private collection in the world, and - over the course of more than a decade - he donated this collection (nearly 1 million shells in total) to the Florida Museum of Natural History. Those wishing to contribute a charitable gift in Harry's memory are encouraged to consider the Williams College 1962 Memorial Scholarship Fund. A private family remembrance will be held at a later date.

Published in the Times Union

I don't think anyone in the world-wide family of shellers and collectors has not come across Dr. Lee's name or articles related to shells. He was a "titian" in the modern Conchologist family and will be missed greatly. As a member of the shell club, he was a walking historian and a major force within the club serving in nearly every leadership role. He was always willing to share his love of shells from the beginner collector to those who were involved in writing their own shell articles. He will be missed.

Upcoming meetings

The Jacksonville Shell Club, Inc. (JSC) customarily meets on the **fourth** Thursday of each month except for November (a week earlier due to Thanksgiving) and December (traditional Xmas get-together/TBA) in Function Room D of the Southeast Branch, Jax Public Library

<https://www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/locations/southeast-regional>. The main program on February 22nd will mostly consist of a discussion of the future of the club. Notice of recommendations will be included in the next Shell-O-Gram. Voting on changes will occur at the March 28th meeting. If you cannot make the meeting in February and have suggestions or comments you may email me at edwar1@hotmail.com and include a title of Shell Club Concerns so your email won't be trashed as junk from unknown sender.

Membership Dues are payable in September each year.
Many of you have complied, but if you're in arrears, please send in your dues:
Individual \$15.00; Family \$20.00, to
To be determined after reorganization

Jacksonville Shell Club, Inc.
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Editor-in-Chief: To be determined
Managing Editor: Rick Edwards ... Email: edwar1@hotmail.com

The club customarily meets monthly at the Southeast Branch of the Jacksonville Public Library, 10599 Deerwood Park Blvd., Jacksonville, Florida <https://www.jaxpubliclibrary.org/locations/southeast-regional>.

Please address any correspondence to the club's address above. Annual membership dues are \$15.00 individual, \$20.00 family (domestic) and \$25.00 (overseas). Lifetime membership is available. Please remit payment for dues to the address below and make checks payable to the Jacksonville Shell Club. The club's newsletter and scientific journal, the *Shell-O-Gram* (ISSN 2472-2774) is issued bimonthly and mailed to an average of 15 regular members and friends by specific request and no less than ten scientific institutions with permanent libraries. An electronic (pdf) version, identical except for "live" URL's and color (vs. B&W) images, is issued about two days later and sent to about 200 individuals who have demonstrated an interest in malacological research and/or Florida mollusks. These pdf's (ISSN 2472-2782) have also been posted to <http://jaxshells.org/letters.htm> since November, 1998. We encourage members and other friends to submit articles for publication. Closing date for manuscript submission is two weeks before each month of publication. Articles appearing in the *Shell-O-Gram* may be republished provided credit is given the author and *Shell-O-Gram* Editor-in-Chief. As a courtesy, the editor and author should receive a copy of the original and republication version respectively. Contents of the *Shell-O-Gram* are intended to enter the permanent scientific record. The club is a chartered corporation in the State of Florida and a non-profit educational organization under the provisions of Section 501(c)(3) of the US IRS Code

Shell Club Future
Rick Edwards, President

Due to Dr. Lee's passing and our small number of active members, it has become necessary to address the future of the club. Because of Dr. Lee's long-time involvement with the club, he wore "many hats" including programs, the making of the SOG, shell of the month, treasurer, and secretary for correspondence and education exemptions. He was the "glue" that kept the club going.

To keep the club functioning, either members will need to become more involved or procedures in the By-Laws will need modification. I ask, you as members, to consider our future and what we can do to insure the club continues. Please attend the February meeting if you can. If not email your concerns to Rick.

Below are several considerations that need to be addressed and will be addressed at the February meeting.

1. Are we to continue and in what manner?
 - A. Meeting frequency
 - B. Meeting location(s)
 - C. Meeting time and date(s)
2. Officers and duties
 - A. Which officers are needed based on our size
 - B. Treasurer
 - C. Filling other positions
3. New Treasurer
 - A. Transfer of accounts
 - B. Critical forms
 - C. Audit
4. Shell-O-Gram
 - A. What kind of product do we want?
 - B. An editor
 - C. Costs
5. Programs
 - A. Meeting member's desires
 - B. Scientific and Crafts balance
 - C. Field Trips

"Why We Collect, Responsibly: A Conchological Badge of Honor"

by Richard Goldberg

Call it a hobby, or call it an obsession. For some, collecting shells overshadows and ameliorates the stress brought upon us by the day-to-day rigors of life. How so, you say? That is a good question and one with motivating factors that are more personal than can be answered in a few paragraphs; but I'll try.

Many people at some time in their lives collect something; figurines, stamps and coins, baseball cards, magazines, post cards, Pez dispensers and bottle caps to name a few. You won't have too much competition if you collect lint; yes a rarefied few collect buckets of lint!

From autographs to Zorro figurines, collectors become focused on amassing items of the same ilk. But are all collectors of the same ilk? Maybe not...

I divide humankind into two categories -- collectors and non-collectors. Among the collector set are yet two more divisions; those that collect man-made objects and others who are enamored by objects in nature. The gene that makes us collectors is sometimes inextricably connected to the gene that gives us an artistic perspective on life; the art of nature.

As children we might have collected leaves and rocks from the garden and filled shoe boxes full of interesting and unusual objects. That early exposure often carries on as we grow older when our collections head in a more cosmopolitan and organized direction. Natural history collectors, those who are drawn to collecting

objects in nature such as rocks, minerals, fossils, shells, butterflies and insects have more often been influenced by those early years of shoe box collecting.

My first exposure to seashells came at a very early age when my grandparents brought back beach shells from their travels around the world. In my early teens I had the opportunity to swim and snorkel in the West Indies. After surfacing with exotic shells of all kinds I was hooked on shells and shell collecting. The collectors that I know best are those who collect shells; we're referred to as conchologists. We find our way into this obsessively satisfying hobby from an infinite number of directions.

Take for instance Richard Taylor, a collector I met many years ago. Richard had little, if any exposure to the ocean until he did a military tour of duty on Kwajalein Island in the Western Pacific. Scuba diving opened up a whole new world for him. His collection of self-collected shells was diverse. He immersed himself in shell identification books and learned everything he could about the shells and also the ocean environment. He said that collecting shells filled a void for him; until that time he was yearning to collect something. He had an acute awareness of nature and the environment that harkened back to his childhood. For him collecting shells was a natural fit.

On the flip side are "armchair collectors", those who dive into this hobby without ever getting their feet wet. From the comfort of their homes these shell collectors satisfy their need to collect by purchasing shells, either from mail order shell dealers, shell auction sites or shell shops. For as many field collectors as I have met during my past four decades as a conchologist, I believe I have met and know twice as many arm chair collectors, each finding their way into the hobby either from a happenstance encounter or a more focused path.

Artists, photographers, writers, actors, business people, educators, students, politicians, house wives and house husbands; people from all walks of life have found a life-long hobby as field collectors and arm chair conchologists. No matter what aspect of conchology floats your boat, one thing seems to bond conchologists together. The love of shells seems to stem from a love of nature, and more importantly, an outward concern for preserving our natural environment from over development and destruction.

My point in defining why and how we collect is that on the whole, collectors of natural history objects all seem to understand the pressures of a modern society on our environment. Yet it is the collector of natural objects that is often blamed for species extinctions; ironic when one considers that so many field and arm chair collectors have a far better feel for the pulse of our environment than those who point the finger and blame us for the rapid loss of living organisms. Environmental impact is a complex subject that cannot be fairly debated in one article or even one book. What can be debated, however, is the way we present ourselves as shell collectors.

Given these facts, and knowing how attuned collectors are to the environment, it is important that we do not send the wrong message to those who do not have our genetic predisposition for and love of what I call "responsible" collecting. Among other things, responsible means not showing pictures on social media of hundreds if not thousands of one species of shell dumped into a pile and purport this to be a shell collection or talk in terms of finding and collecting dozens of one shell collected during a dive or outing on a low tide reef. Take only what you need for your collection and maybe a few for exchange with other collectors. Don't let greed drive your love of conchology. An irresponsible picture begets a thousand rebukes! Also, avoid collecting juvenile specimens to allow populations of mollusks to proliferate.

Responsible collecting is job one for field and arm chair collectors alike; to promote and practice. Natural history collectors are an easy target and scapegoat for those whose own direct and indirect actions lead to environmental degradation (a discussion outside the scope of this article). Habitat destruction has a greater impact on the flora and fauna than any perceived pressures from responsible collectors; plain and simple! Yes, conchology "is" our escape from the day-to-day rigors of life... let's make sure we are afforded the opportunity to continue collecting shells unfettered from governmental regulation by policing our own activities and setting an example of being good stewards to the living and breathing environment; and that starts by being responsible shell collectors.

No matter how you classify yourself, as a field or arm chair conchologist, you should now add "responsible" to that badge of honor!