

# Shell Museum News

Number 49

[www.shellmuseum.org](http://www.shellmuseum.org)

Summer 2002

## From the Director

The start of summer 2002 was marked by the premature loss of the president of the Museum board, Philip Tock. Phil served for several terms as a board member and executive officer and, among other achievements in his career with our institution, was instrumental in guiding the Museum on the path to its endowment. Phil, who has been replaced as president of the board by Sam Ford, is and will be sorely missed by the Museum family. This loss, associated with a drop in attendance because of a slow economy, made for a difficult summer in our Museum community.

On the bright side, I participated in the 2002 meeting of the American Malacological Society (AMS) in Charleston, South Carolina, in August. The meeting was great, with a number of very good professional papers presented. The featured symposium was titled "The Biology and Conservation of Freshwater Gastropods." In addition, a second special session, "Multidisciplinary Approaches to Molluscan Phylogeny," was held.

As president-elect of AMS, I have accepted the offer to hold the 2004 meeting on Sanibel, with the Museum as the hosting institution. I have already received pledges of support from the board, staff, and volunteers. The Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club will also play a prominent role in helping host the event. The Museum is negotiating with a beachfront resort to ensure that AMS and the meeting participants will profit from the best compromise between prices and the resources at their disposal.

The meeting will present a great opportunity for students and scientists working in malacology to convene in one of the world's best shelling areas and to get acquainted with the Museum. On the other hand, the local shelling and nature-oriented folks will certainly benefit from the presence en masse of malacological specialists from the United States and around the world.

On a different note, the Museum is now engaged in the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) conducted by the American Association of Museums. A surveyor will visit the Museum in late January 2003, and stay for two days, interviewing staff, board members, and volunteers. Based on his/her visit, the surveyor will prepare a report containing recommendations that will ensure we are complying with basic practices for an operation of our  
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## Explore Museum Collection Holdings Online

Malacological researchers and the general public are increasingly visiting the Museum Web site, [www.shellmuseum.org](http://www.shellmuseum.org), to explore its online database. Cyber visitors perform searches using a number of possible combinations of taxonomic categories, geographic location, and/or donor.

The electronic records are comprised of collection holdings that have been catalogued to date. Sanibel-Captiva mollusks, chitons, some cones, slit shells, Strombidae, cowries, Haliotidae, Turbinidae, and Trochidae are included, according to collection manager Dr. Jon Greenlaw.



Staffer Tina Petrikas enters collection data upstairs in the Museum.

Photo: José H. Leal

The ongoing online project is a reality thanks to the dedication of Dr. Greenlaw, volunteer Dick Willis, staff member Tina Petrikas, Vince Mariner of the Southwest Florida Library Network, and Florida Gulf Coast University.

Collection Department volunteers logged nearly 2,000 hours last year. Much of their time was spent, and continues to be spent, curating Museum holdings.

Museum director Dr. José Leal is ever appreciative  
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## Museum Dealt Double Blow

Museum family was dealt a double blow in late spring with the deaths of board of trustees president Philip A. Tock and longtime volunteer Ed Goldstein.

Mr. Tock, 65, who had recently retired as senior vice president at First Busey Trust and Investment Company in Fort Myers,



Philip Tock

passed away on June 6, 2002. Mr. Goldstein, 85, of  
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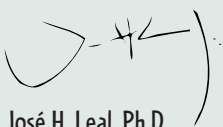
New Wish List

## Director...from page 1

kind. It will also help us perfect and streamline daily operations. Although not mandatory, the MAP is recommended and very useful for institutions seeking future accreditation.

In August, we received the preliminary designs for our new exhibit, "Calusa: The Original Shell People," which is being constructed in Pinellas Park, Florida, and British Columbia. We are very grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Joseph T. Mooney of Kimberton, Pennsylvania, for partial funding for the exhibit.

I hope readers enjoy the enclosed new version of the Museum handout. It is part of an ongoing project to inventory and provide information on shallow-water mollusks of Sanibel and Captiva.



José H. Leal. Ph.D.  
Director

## Schools Keep Booking Field Trips

Group tour and education coordinator Anna Marie Nyquist reports that 2,314 schoolchildren participated in field trips to the Museum during the 2001-2002 academic year. Of that number, 1,951 were Lee County public school students hosted by the Museum.

For the 2002-2003 school year, Mrs. Nyquist is primarily scheduling fourth-graders. "They study Florida and most teachers believe our Museum program works best with that grade," she explains. "We invite 6- to 7-year olds on a limited basis and host three high school classes."

She adds, "Most Lee County public elementary schools have five or six classes of fourth graders. We are limiting the number participating in the Museum program to three fourth-grade classes from each school. The remaining three classes are put on a waiting list."

The Museum is able to schedule so many field trips, Mrs. Nyquist says, "due to the wonderful help of the people who donate their time as student educators. I cannot say enough about them."

The student educator volunteers during the 2001-2002 school year were Ginny Avery, Peg Bisignani, Dotty and Lowell Devasure, Judy Goldenberg, Wendy Harriman, Tanya Hochschild, Joyce Matthys, Nancy Prevedel, Howard Schroeder, Ann Tenny, and Diane Zimmer.

Dr. Leal expresses his gratitude to Mrs. Nyquist, who is now busy training some new education docents for the 2002-2003 school year.

## Bivalve Specialists, Students Attend Workshop in Keys

Dr. Leal participated in the International Marine Bivalve Workshop in the Florida Keys from July 19-30. The workshop was organized by Dr. Paula Mikkelsen of the American Museum of Natural History and Dr. Rüdiger Bieler of the Field Museum of Natural History.

Its purpose was to bring together a mélange of bivalve specialists and students from around the world. Twelve scientists and 12 students were invited to study current issues involving species from the Florida Keys. The students benefited from the expertise of the participating scientists.

"It was a tremendous learning experience for everyone," says Dr. Leal. "We had the leading bivalve specialists sharing the same working space during almost two weeks. People came from Australia, England, Austria, Brazil, Hong Kong, Wales, and of course the United States. The facts were just flying around."

The event was underwritten by a grant to Drs. Mikkelsen and Bieler from the National Science Foundation, under the Partnership for Enhancing Expertise in Taxonomy (PEET).

The workshop consisted of data-collecting trips to several locations in the Middle and Lower Keys, sessions of laboratory work with bivalves, and nightly lectures. The lectures



Dr. Leal discusses the anatomy of tellinid bivalves from the Florida Keys during the International Marine Bivalve Workshop held in July. Photo: Osmar Domaneschi

centered on findings from the workshop's field and lab work. Scientific results will be published in a special issue of the prestigious journal *Malacologia*.



From left: Drs. J. Leal, Osmar Domaneschi, Paula Mikkelsen, Jay Schneider and Rüdiger Bieler in Key West.

## Museum Dealt Double Blow...from page 1

Fort Myers, passed away June 1, 2002. He had lived with his wife, Vera, on Sanibel since 1980 until moving to Fort Myers in 1999.

"I am deeply saddened by the passing of Phil and Eddie," said Museum director Dr. José H. Leal. "Phil was a longstanding member of the Museum community, having served on the board as a member for two successive terms. He had a deep understanding of the Museum mission and the means to better fulfill the mission."

"Eddie was one of the essential members of our Museum family. Not only that, he was a close friend to all of us. Eddie and Vera put together the school shell kits - one of the most successful components of our educational programs. I always looked forward to Wednesdays when he and Vera would come in. We and other volunteers would have lunch

together and try to solve the problems of the world."

Mr. Tock, who assumed the presidency of the board in January 2002, was devoting his efforts to raising funds for the Museum Cultural Endowment Fund. A goal of \$3,000,000 has been established. He had recently spearheaded a comprehensive investment policy for the Museum.

The school shell kits the Goldsteins worked on are sent around the world. Vera Goldstein continues to volunteer in that post.

In addition, Mr. Goldstein was widely known for his "shell critters," which were for sale at the annual Sanibel-Captiva Shell Fair and Show. He also gave many away, and staff members at the Museum have to look no farther than their desks to fondly recall their wonderful friend.

## Dr. Thorsen Sponsors New Library Project

It's always wonderful when longtime friends and volunteers return to help the Museum. That's especially true in the case of Dr. Margaret "Thor" Thorsen of Sanibel, who, in the Museum's early years, devoted much of her time setting up the library. The library is named in Thor's honor.

Because of other commitments, she had been away from the Museum for a while. This past year, Thor has shown her continuing support of the library by embarking on a new project: donating funds to bind many of the Museum's quality scientific journals.

Thor is working with John Ravenhill, a bookbinder who works for Fort Myers-based Davall and Chown. Ravenhill learned his trade in his native England.

"We've wanted to do this for so long," Thor explains. "I'm doing it as a tribute to my Dad, as our family name, Thorsen, is of course on



This plaque near the door to the Museum library honors longtime volunteer Dr. Margaret "Thor" Thorsen.

the library. He loved shells but didn't live to see the Museum's completion."

And now that she's back, Thor already has another project in mind for the future: restoring and preserving the Museum library's old and rare books.

## Drs. Geiger and Kohn Awarded Visiting Curatorships

Two malacologists have been awarded R. Tucker Abbott Visiting Curatorships for 2002. The recipients are Dr. Daniel L. Geiger, who is affiliated with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, and Dr. Alan J. Kohn, professor emeritus of zoology at the University of Washington.

The curatorship, which is a collection-based research award, was established by the board of trustees to memorialize the Museum's founding director. Each year, malacology scholars apply for the weeklong curatorship. Recipients are provided with an honorarium of \$1,500.

Dr. Geiger will visit the Museum from Nov. 2-9. His area of malacological expertise focuses on Vetigastropoda. He will work with the Museum's

Halitoidae, Scissurellidae, and Fissurellidae. Dr. Geiger also hopes to take the opportunity to do field work and collect Scissurellidae and Fissurellidae. His evening lecture is tentatively titled "Sea Food from a Biologist's Perspective: The Evolution of Abalone and Their Relatives."

Dr. Kohn will visit the Museum from Nov. 16-23. His objective is "to determine the feasibility of a manual of Atlantic Conidae." In 1995, he co-authored *Manual of the Living Conidae: Volume 1 – Indo-Pacific Region*. He plans

to investigate "undertaking the Atlantic regional portion of the series."

During his visit, Dr. Kohn will give an evening lecture to the public on the biology of *Conus* on Nov. 19. The lecture will be held under the auspices of the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club and the Museum.

Continued contributions ensure that the Museum is able to award the R. Tucker Abbott Visiting Curatorship on an annual basis. Persons wishing to help may send their tax-deductible donation to the Museum.

### Explore...from page 1

of the dedication shown by collection volunteers. In addition to Dr. Greenlaw and Mr. Willis, they include Rodger Bunnell, Herb Chapin,

Phyllis Diegel, Richard Duerr, Linda Kramer, Dr. Baxter Leonard, Gloria and Kermit Pearson, and Marguerite and Hal Pilcher.

## Museum News

Marguerite Howard, a Fort Myers resident who died in 1999 at age 101, has left more than a million dollars to the Southwest Florida Community Foundation to create a fund benefiting four area organizations, including the Museum. Foundation officials report that Mrs. Howard created the Marguerite and Guy Howard Fund from the proceeds of a charitable remainder unitrust. Proceeds will amount to more than \$45,000 in its first year, to be distributed in equal parts to the Museum, Florida Gulf Coast University, St. Luke's Episcopal Church of Fort Myers, and the Salvation Army of Lee County.

Several hundred reprints of manuscripts from various European journals have been donated to the Museum library. They are a gift from Dr. Leal's colleague, Dr. Matthias Glaubrecht at the Museum für Naturkunde at Humboldt University in eastern Berlin. Many of the works are by well-known German malacologists who are now deceased, including Prof. Dr. Franz A. Schilder and Dr. Maria Schilder of the University of Halle in the former East Germany and Dr. Rudolf Kilius of the Museum für Naturkunde.

The Museum has recently given a small collection of Florida Pliocene fossil shells to the world-renowned Museu de Zoologia in São Paulo, Brazil. The shells were sent to Dr. Luiz Ricardo L. Simone, a long-time professional and personal friend of Dr. Leal, to be included in a new exhibit on the evolution of mollusks, which is scheduled to open in early 2003.

Store manager Pat Jones attended the Museum Store Association annual meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina, at the end of April. She says, "It was both a learning experience and a buying trip. I exchanged ideas with other museums as well as going to classes." In July, she purchased books and gift items during her semi-annual trip to the Atlanta Gift Mart.

Dr. Leal, public relations manager Libby Grimm, and several Museum volunteers attended the 31st annual convention of the Conchologists of America during July in Sarasota, Florida. More than 30 of the attendees took part in a post-convention field trip to Sanibel. Participant Marsha Darcy wrote in the August 2002 issue of *Central Florida Shell News*: "The highlight of the trip for me was our visit to The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum, with a special tour of the private upstairs offices and storage and work areas."

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## The Bailey-Matthews Shell Museum

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### Museum News...from page 3

The Children's Learning Laboratory is home to a terrific variety of mollusks. Many do not normally wash up on Lee County beaches as they are usually found in the Florida Keys. Three Fort Myers Beach-based volunteers deserve all the credit: On several weekends during the past months, George Nyquist has taken his boat many miles out in the Gulf of Mexico with deep-sea divers Lisa and Rick Oxton. They dive as deep as 70 feet and have returned to shore with thorny oysters, rough file clams, deer cowries, and a milk conch, vase, Atlantic trumpet triton, and helmet shell.

No admission was charged by the Museum on Wednesday, Sept. 11, as part of an American Association of Museums' initiative known as "Celebrate America's Freedoms: A Day of Remembrance." The AAM stated: "Working together, museums can make a powerful

statement about the richness of the American experience in communities across the United States. Museums are centers of community life with programs and services for families, lifelong learners, schools, and others."

Museum members and the public are invited by the board of trustees to attend a tribute to the late Dr. Harold M. M. Tovell. It will be held at the Museum on Monday, Oct. 14, from 5 to 7 p.m. and the favor of a reply is requested. Dr. Tovell, who passed away in May of 2001, became a member of the board in 1992 and assumed the presidency of the board in July of 1994. His term as president ended in December of 1997 and he stayed on as a board member.

Dr. Leal will give a PowerPoint presentation on gastropods at the Florida Association of Benthologists' annual fall workshop in the Florida Keys. The "Mollusks, Polychaetes, and Crustaceans" workshop will be held at the Keys Marine Laboratory on Long Key from Oct. 16-18. Benthic ecology is the study of aquatic bottom-dwelling organisms. Dr. Leal, who has been busy creating PowerPoint presentations, uses the Museum's new digital slide scanner to migrate existing slides into digital format.

Tuesday, Oct. 29 is the date of the Sanibel-Captiva Shell Club's first meeting of the 2002-2003 season. Dr. Leal will speak on "The Seashells of Sanibel-Captiva Project." The meeting, which is open to the public, will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Museum.

The Museum has lost three dedicated supporters. **Phil Allen** was a longtime member. His wife, Francie, is an exhibit docent in the Great Hall of Shells. **Doris Christensen** volunteered on the telephone desk during the Museum's early years. **Doris Frey** was the wife of board member Bill Frey.

The Museum would like to thank the following people who have joined as Life Members since spring: Mrs. Noranette Lear and Ms. Ann Ramsay.

The Museum would like to thank the following donors who recently contributed more than \$1,000 in designated and undesignated funds: the estate of Elizabeth "Mike" Friedmann, friends of the late Ed Goldstein, Mrs. Sue Ann Pirsch and Seagull Estates' friends of Odette and Charles Veysey, the Southwest Florida Conchologists' Society, and Dr. Margaret Thorsen.

### Our New Wish List!

As the Museum grows, so does its Wish List! Current needs include sponsors to help defray costs of printing *Shell Museum News*. Dr. Leal reports that a freezer would come in handy for the Collection Department. An automated door for the handicapped/baby stroller entrance downstairs will make the Museum even more accessible.

Persons wishing to help may contact the Museum by calling 239/395-2233 or 888/679-6450, or e-mailing shell@shellmuseum.org.

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