

THE SYDNEY SHELLER

Newsletter of the Shell Club of Sydney
NSW Branch, The Malacological Society of Australasia Limited ACN 067 894 848

Shell Club of Sydney Mission Statement:

To appreciate, understand and preserve shells and their environment and to share this with others.

Next Meeting:

Date: 28th August 99
(normally 4th Saturday)

Location: Ryde Eastwood
Leagues Club
117 Ryedale Rd
West Ryde

Time: 1.30 for 2.00pm

Seminar: Michael Keats
More about China

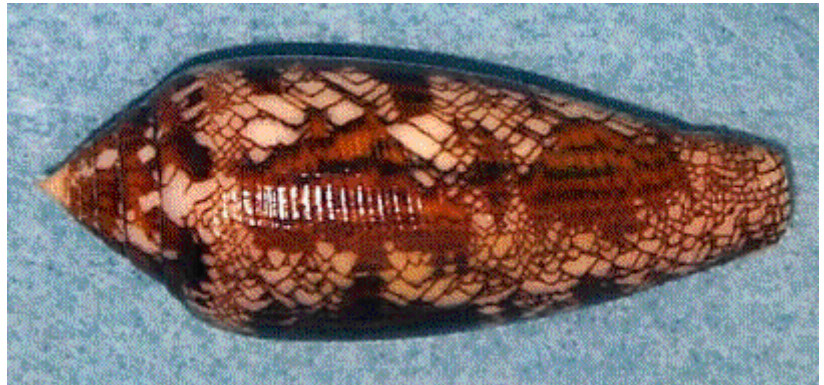
Contributions:

Please send contributions to:
Steve Dean
166 Narrabeen Park Parade,
Mona Vale NSW 2103
Photos, and disc files of articles by mail,
or preferably by email to
steve@easy.com.au

If you cannot get your text onto disc,
then **Karen Wadwell** may be prepared
to type it for you - send material to:
1/7-9 Severn St
Maroubra NSW 2035

Office - Bearers:

President: Patty Jansen
Vice Pres: Des Beechey
Secretary: Chris Barnes
Treasurer: Peter Pienaar
Sheller Editor: Steve Dean
Meeting Raffles: Maureen Anderson
The full executive plans the field trips.



Aureus, Cebu 56mm



Crocatus, Cebu, 53.7mm, 48.8mm

Some of the topics inside:

- Bishop Museum - good news
- Neptune Seashells web site (cover photo)
- Shell Collector Lorna Marrow
- **Vote on shell club meeting time -last page**
- China Shells - land and freshwater
- Puzzles, Gossip and Classifieds

Minutes of the AGM of the NSW Branch of the Malacological Society of Australasia Limited ACN 067 894 848 held in a meeting room at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club on 26/06/99

The meeting was opened by the Chairman D. Beechey at 2.22pm.

Apologies were received from D. & E. Woodhouse.

The minutes of the previous AGM held 27/06/98 were taken as read,

(Published in the August 1998 "Sydney Sheller") Moved by R. Moylan, seconded by M. Keats.

Chairman's report pending.

The Treasurer reported a current end of year balance of \$569.96 and handed out a report to the meeting. M. Keats moved that the treasurers report be accepted, seconded D. Woodhouse.

M. Keats agreed to investigate the audit status of The Second National Shell Show Sydney and report.

M. Keats volunteered to act as Returning Officer, seconded by R. Moylan.

The meeting was then handed over to the Returning Officer, M. Keats.

Nominations for Office Bearing Positions were called for, the results of the elections were declared by the Returning Officer as follows:

P. Jansen - president, unopposed.

D. Beechey - vice president, unopposed.

C. Barnes & K. Wadwell - Secretary unopposed.

S. Dean - "Sheller" Editor unopposed.

K. Wadwell - "Sheller" Assistant Editor unopposed.

P. Pienaar - Treasurer unopposed.

M. Anderson - Raffles Officer unopposed.



*** Note - Committee to consist of all office bearers, to meet every three months.**

It was agreed by the meeting that the committee would be given the responsibility of organising at least one quality field trip a year. It was agreed that the President or vice President would chair the monthly meetings. It was also agreed that a General Business heading is required at said meetings.

Des also prepared a program schedule for the year ahead of proposed speakers.

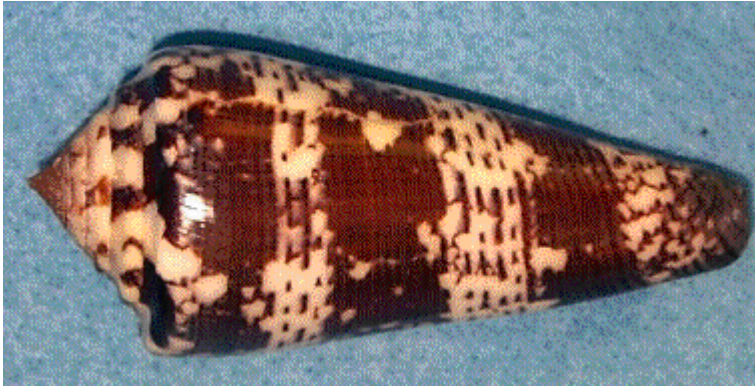
(Editorial note -The list below is based on Des' list, as revised at June and July meetings)

<u>Month/ Year</u>	<u>Meeting Speaker</u>	<u>Proposed Subject</u>
July 99	Des Beechey	Genus Fulgoraria (Volutidae)
August 99	Michael Keats	Land Snail collecting in China
September 99	Ashley Miskelly	TBA
October 99	Ron Moylan	Annual Shell Show
November 99	Peter Middlefart	Thai mollusca
December 99	Christmas	Christmas Trip
January 2000	Stephanie Clark	Shell Quiz
February 2000	Chris Barnes	Cypraeidae of Little Bay
March 2000	Meeting cancelled/postponed	Third national shell show
April 2000	John Dunkerley	to be announced
May 2000	TBA	TBA

M. Keats requested that we check if we are in compliance with the MSA National in regard to reporting etc, and that this be recorded in the minutes.

The meeting was closed at 3.15pm

C. Barnes
Secretary.



Thomae, Philippines, Cebu, 71.5mm

Neptune Seashells

Another web site selling shells

There is a large selection, some good quality photos, and interestingly web page backgrounds that in most cases is a representation of the shell photo on the page. The site is easy to use and images load quickly - at least when I was looking. The email from the owner follows, and selections of photos from the site are included. Editor

Neptune Seashells Web Site Update is posted.

My name is Mark Scott and I want to let you know my July Web Site Update is complete. I have just updated the list and photos as I will continue to do every 60 days. I have many new specimens from my June trip to the Philippines and some exciting items fresh from Western Australia. I also have select items just arrived from South Africa, Madagascar and a few from Indonesia and Hawaii.

Although many of the shells on this site do not have photos, you may request e-mail photos of any specimen. I will attach photos to my reply. Visit me at; http://www.molluscs.net/Neptune_Shells/index.html

Neptune Seashells
1246 Firethorn St.
San Diego, CA. 92154
Phone or Fax (619) 662-2773
shellman@home.com



Excelsus, Philippines, Balute Is, 80.6mm, 83.3mm



Amoria exoptanda, Port Lincoln, Sth Aust, 105mm



Nodiplicata

South West
WA

350mm

From
Neptune
Seashells

Previous
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Lorna Marrow & her shells.



*Frendii
insulata*
Esperance
,S.W. Aust.

This is the
true form
insulata,
Heavy, big
fat shell with
wide flat
bases and
margins,
Almost
black except
sulcus.
79mm

From
Neptune
Seashells -
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Taken from newspaper coverage of a press release that went out at the time of the Melbourne Shell show. Summarised by Steve Dean

Lorna Marrow has some of the biggest and best seashells in her collection. The news article suggests her collection is one of the largest private scientific collections in the world. I assume this is 'PR speak'. She is 79 and has been collecting for 75 years.

Her collection contains about 13,000 computer catalogued different species, so it is indeed large. There are shells from Australian, Pacific Island, Philippines, Canada, PNG, New Zealand, Asia, America, India and Europe.

Lorna's mother was a school teacher and got Lorna collecting in Brisbane at age five by encouraging her to help find specimens for the school's nature study classes. Her shell collecting grew into a hobby, and later became her life. Lorna now collects mainly at shows rather than the beach.

In 1974 Lorna established the Port Phillip Bay Shell Club. The club boasts 35 members.

Land and Freshwater Shelling in the Peoples of China

By Michael Keats

Land and Freshwater shell collecting in a country, which is so developed, is a challenge. China has been intensively cultivated and farmed over much of its huge area for more than 5000 years. It is not easy to find anything even remotely resembling a natural environment throughout the settled areas.

The exception is in the Southern provinces, which border Vietnam, Burma, India and Nepal. Here, the complex eastern end of the fold mountain ranges of the Himalayas has produced a rugged terrain, which still challenges man.

It is in these areas where the spectacular Karst limestone formations provide both obstacles to total cultivation and an environment where land shells can remain undisturbed or at least be out of reach from predators, including humans.

The city of Guilin in the Province of Guangxi Zhuangzu Zizhiqu is the closest I came to a good field trip in China for land snails. The limestone monoliths rise almost vertically out of the rice paddies to a height of 600–700 metres plus. Because of the strategic nature of these outcrops many have been used as lookouts and havens. Many are topped with temples and other dramatic buildings.

The precipitous nature of the limestone cliffs has ensured that there are, even today, spots where no person has been. On the precarious, winding tracks and paths there are frequent resting points. It is near by these spots, under the lush growth, where there is an opportunity to collect.

For the record, the material is not very exciting. For my efforts I collected one specie of *Clausillid* and one specie of *Camaenid*. I suspect they are common

through the area although I only sampled one 600m outcrop. When climbing starts at 2,800m the last 600m are tough. I would like to have the chance to visit other outcrops. It is the sort of country where genetic variations in populations could have developed differently on each outcrop – anything is possible.

The other shelling adventure in China which was noteworthy was the freshwater pearl farms in Hangzhou, south of Shanghai in Zhejiang Province.

The pearl farms consist of a series of artificial lakes about 1 m deep. The water flow (and nutrients) is controlled. Each lake is about 1 hectare in area. Across the surface are suspended rope cables buoyed up by large styrene balls.



From the rope cables the aquafarmer suspends specially implanted, 2 year old female freshwater mussels. A *Unionidae* species type shells with a pronounced keel like structure to the anterior end is used. The keel or wing is drilled to provide the point of attachment.

The material used for implanting the mussel is selected pieces of material from male specimens. After implanting the lip of the mussel is partly sewn closed. This is presumably to prevent the animal from ejecting the implants. The number of implants varies but can be as high as 30 per shell.

Harvesting is carried out from a small rowing boat. 4 year old shells are selected and brought into the workroom. Here they are opened and the animal massaged to discharge the pearls. The animal dies in this process.

I was invited to harvest my own shell and find my own pearls. I took up the offer! In the workroom I recovered 23 pearls of differing size, shape and colour. I now have the shell and pearls in my collection.

Commercially the pearls are washed and dried then graded before being turned into jewellery and other artefacts. Pearls, which are very small or too irregular, are ground up for cosmetic use as face powder or sent to the herbalists for incorporation in medications.

The retail area of the business did a great trade while we were there. The necklace, which my wife Jenny bought, is a beautiful example of, cultivated freshwater pearls.

Some 85 km east of Guilin lies the famous Stone Forest. The forest is the product of selective erosion of a large lenticular limestone deposit. In places the "limestone trees" are over 30m high. The lens is roughly circular in shape and about 5km in diameter. There are a number of similar sites in the Province. The scenery is dramatic and attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year.

With visitors are the inevitable traders selling every imaginable item. At the Stone Forest these are the Yi people from the village of Ashima. As well as stunning works of embroidery they also sell fossils from the forest. I bargained for four *Brachiopods* for the equivalent of 80 cents. The data is non existent but the specimens look good!

June Meeting Minutes

Held in the Rutledge Room at Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club on 26/06/99.

The meeting was opened by P. Jansen at 2:02pm.

Field Trip Reports M. Keats reported he had renewed his collecting permit with Fisheries, though two new restrictions were imposed; no weekends and no intertidal protection zones. Once the two new restrictions were questioned, Fisheries removed them.

Michael added he was planning a visit to Shark Island on Tuesday 29th June and stated that any interested parties were most welcome to accompany him.

A. Miskelly mentioned he'd been to Shoal Bay and Sydney Harbour recently and would display some photos for the meeting.

P. Jansen described a visit to the rock platform at Long Reef where she was able to observe many species, including *Cypraea moneta* Linnaeus, 1758 and *Cypraea hirundo* Linnaeus, 1758.

New Shell Acquisitions M. Keats reported on his visit to the auction of the collection belonging to the late Claude Fahey. Michael stated that much of the material had been obtained via Lance Moore and Ron Moylan, though the collection had been neglected.

Michael was able to acquire a lot containing a number of *Cypraea venusta* Sowerby, 1846, one apparently collected by Barry Wilson in 1932.

R. Moylan also attended the auction and said that the bidding was quite hectic, and that beginner shell collectors were buying most of the lots at high prices.

Book Reviews P. Jansen reviewed the June 1999 issue of American Conchologist which contains some very interesting articles, one by Neil Fahy, titled "Madagascar, Landsnails, And A Dream Come True". Another by Patty, titled "Have You Got What It Takes... To Be An Author" describing her experiences with the publishing and book industries.

Patty also reviewed "A Conchological Iconography Vol-1, Family Harpidae" by Guido. T. Poppe & Klaus Groh. Patty stated that Vol-2 would cover the Family Strombidae.

2.22pm * Note- The monthly meeting was closed at this point and the AGM opened.

3.15pm * Note- The monthly meeting was reopened at the end of the AGM.

General Business M. Keats tabled a letter from Jan Dunn, Manager of The KIDSEUM at Merrylands. The letter was to thank Michael for his efforts with poster "Common Sea Shells Of Sydney" and it was mentioned what a great tool for learning the poster had become.

Presentations Ron Moylan gave a lecture on Clam Farming in the Solomon Islands. Ron updated the group on happenings since his last presentation.

Ron discussed the symbiotic relationship between the giant clams and a zoo plankton which lives on the clams mantle. Ron discussed the byssal threads used to anchor the clams to the substrate, and how the byssal gape - the gap or notch in the valves margin through which the byssal threads pass, can be used to identify or differentiate certain species of clam (Ron mentioned there are eight known species of giant clam).

One of the largest clams, *Tridacna gigas* (Linnaeus, 1758) can apparently attain a size of 1.5 metres and approximately 500kg. Ron described the average growth rate of the clams as 4-7mm per/month. One of the biggest problems with clam farming is the predators who could easily kill or damage young and juvenile clams. The method most effective in overcoming this was to have divers or snorkellers regularly patrolling up until the clams were old enough to fend for themselves.

C. Barnes, Secretary

Bishop Museum

Des Beechey comment

The Bishop Museum is the natural history museum in Hawaii. It is important because it has a very large collection of Indo-pacific mollusca, comparable with the Australian Museum. It is good to see it is being properly resourced again.

Allen Allison Vice President Science, & Neal Evenhuis Chair Natural Sciences

In late February of this year we advised colleagues throughout the world that due to the Bishop Museum receiving less than anticipated support from the State government of Hawaii and other sources, we implemented a Museum-wide cost-reduction plan that involved staff layoffs, reduced access to collections, and a temporary moratorium on loan transactions.

We are pleased to report that recent support for the Bishop Museum approved by our State Legislature has doubled over last year's appropriation. Additional development and grant activities have resulted in an enhancement of the Museum's endowment by more than \$1 million. This additional revenue has allowed us to increase Museum support to collections-and we have been able to raise several part-time collections management positions to full time. We are pleased to report that we will be reopening all collections on 1 July 1999 and continuing normal loan activity.

We thank you all for your patience and understanding and for your strong support of Bishop Museum - it really made a difference!

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<http://hbs.bishop.hawaii.org/cowie.html>

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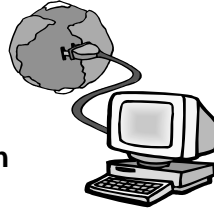
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02 9829 2226

Ron Moylan**Solomon Island****Specimen Shells**

02 9949 4241 Tel.

02 9907 9523 Fax.

David Tarrant**Specimen & Commercial Shells****Retail & Wholesale**

Stock includes representatives of
most families. No lists at present.

4 Gillies Close
Coffs Harbour 2450

02 6652 6104

Sydney Shell Club Membership

\$15 for each calendar year.

It includes these newsletters, and
entitles you to borrow or hire club
assets (when we get some).

The Sydney shell club is a branch of
the MSA You are required to be an
MSA member as well. You need to
organise MSA membership yourself.

MSA fees are around **\$30** for
Australian adults, due each February.
To join the MSA call 0293206275

**Members News, &
Buy, Swap & Sell:**

Wanted contributions to this classified
section of the sheller. Please get
contributions to Steve Dean or Karen
Wadwell if typing is required (See front
cover for contact details)

Wanted gossip for this section of the
sheller. Please get contributions to
Steve Dean or Karen Wadwell.

Fort Denison Low tides:

No more Sydney daytime 0.2m tides in
1999.

Sun 11 th July	1213	0.3m
Mon 12 th July	1306	0.3m
Tue 13 th June	1359	0.3m

Next year the annual shell show will be
in Adelaide, 25th to 26th March

I'm Kornel Kovacs from Hungary. I'm
collecting marine shells, but I'd like to
exchange using land shells. I'm interested
in these families: Patellidae, Acmaeidae,
Fissurellidae, Ranellidae, Haliotidae,
Strombidae and Volutidae, but I'm also
interested in every beautiful species. I
could give you land shells from the
Balkan: from Bulgaria, Romania,
Yugoslavia, Croatia, and Greece.
Most of these are endemic and rare.
But I could give you Hungarian species,
also. If you're interested in this exchange,
please send me your answer, and I'm
send you my list at the some time

Best regards, Kornel Kovacs
korkov@freemail.c3.hu

Ron reported that the Yepoon Shell show
was good, with a couple of interesting
overseas visitors.

**Sydney Shell Club
Meeting times:**

Some members are keen to change our
monthly meeting time from the 4th Sat.

during the day, to the 4th Tue. during
the evening 7.45pm start. This is to
avoid encroaching on weekends, with
the potential for more people to attend.

Others members are keen for
meetings to stay as they are. This is to
avoid having to travel at night, and
allow safe public transport options for
potential new members. (None of the
current attendees seem to come by
bus or train)

There will be a vote at the August
meeting, with the aim of making a
choice that enables the maximum
number of members to attend
subsequent meetings, with any change
hopefully increasing numbers able to
attend.

If you will not be at the August
meeting, send in your vote or let
someone know your vote for the
following 4 questions:

Can you get to 4th Sat. afternoons Y/N
Can you get to 4th Tue. Nights Y/N

Do you prefer one or the other?
Are other times OK/better?