



**March-April, 2004**

**Volume 45(2)**

**Editorial Board:**

**Bill Frank, Editor**

**Harry G. Lee, Asst. Editor**

**Club Officers:**

**Billie Brown, President**

**Harry G. Lee, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Pres.**

**Ellen Reed, Secretary**

**Charlotte Lloyd, Treasurer**

### **March Meeting**

The Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be held at the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Lodge in Jacksonville Beach and include a “pot luck” supper. See the Presidents Message this page for details and the reverse side of the enclosed membership list for a map.

Harry Lee will discuss his book *Marine shells of northeast Florida* and answer questions from members and guests. This project has been underway for over ten years and is approaching completion.

### **April Meeting**

The Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Jacksonville Shell Club will be at St. Nicholas Park Christian Church at 3226 Beach Blvd; this is very near where Atlantic and Beach Blvd. join and is across from the Curry Thomas Hardware Store.

Charlotte Lloyd will present “Live marine mollusks of Pacific Panama” based on her several trips to that tropical paradise – especially the latest in February of this year.

Harry Lee will present the Shell-Of-The-Month on the Panamic species *Ancistromesus mexicanus* (Broderip and G. B. Sowerby I, 1829), better known as the world’s largest limpet!

### **President's Message**

By Billie Brown

Hi Everybody. After our last meeting (February) someone suggested that it has been a long time since we had a get together. Of course, the same someone was not in attendance at our Christmas party. But, it is still a good idea - so we will be having a “pot luck” supper and meeting in March. Since we cannot meet at the Southeast Branch Library because of renovations, we will meet at the FOP Lodge in Jacksonville Beach. Come anytime after 5:30 PM and we will have dinner at 6:30 PM with the meeting to follow. You all (January meeting) asked for a discussion concerning “the book” and it will be during this meeting. Be There! We will also be going over our options for further meeting places. Coffee, tea and soft drinks will be provided at the “pot luck” dinner and the club will provide a meat dish. Bring your favorite dish. A map is included in this issue of the newsletter.

If you have any questions or get lost, call me at 241-3755 or the FOP Lodge after 5:30 PM on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

We have new members since the first of the year so we hope everybody will come so that we can all get better acquainted. Best, Billie.



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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 M. Lloyd  
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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.

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## Regional Science And Engineering Fair 2004

By George Hapsis



Claire Newsome & Miss Simmons

On February 3rd, 2004 Nellie Hawley, Claire Newsome & George Hapsis judged the 49th Northeast Florida Regional Science and Engineering Fair on behalf of the Jacksonville Shell Club. This fair is a celebration of the community efforts of the Kiwanis Clubs of Greater Jacksonville, Florida Community College at

Jacksonville and the Jacksonville corporations as well as volunteers who bring together the best young scientists and engineers in our area. The fair was open to all students in grades 6 through 12 and was held at the Jacksonville Fairgrounds. The club offered a \$100.00 cash stipend to the best science project dealing in marine studies and a \$50.00 award to the runner-up.

The First Place Award was presented to Ellie Simmons, a 10th grade student from the Bolles School, for her exhibit "The Effects of Calcium on Hermit Crab Molting and Regeneration." Ellie's exhibit was a time study showing the results of calcium in the diet of a hermit crab and the effect it had on, or did not have on the process of molting.



Claire, Miss Baljon, and Nellie Hawley

The Runner-up Award was presented to Grace Baljon, a 10th grade student from the Bolles School, for her exhibit, "Hatchling Turtle Growth in Different Environments." Grace's study showed that the larger the volume of water in which a terrapin was reared, the faster it grew. For example: an individual maintained in a 10-gallon home aquarium versus one reared in a lake or retention pond.

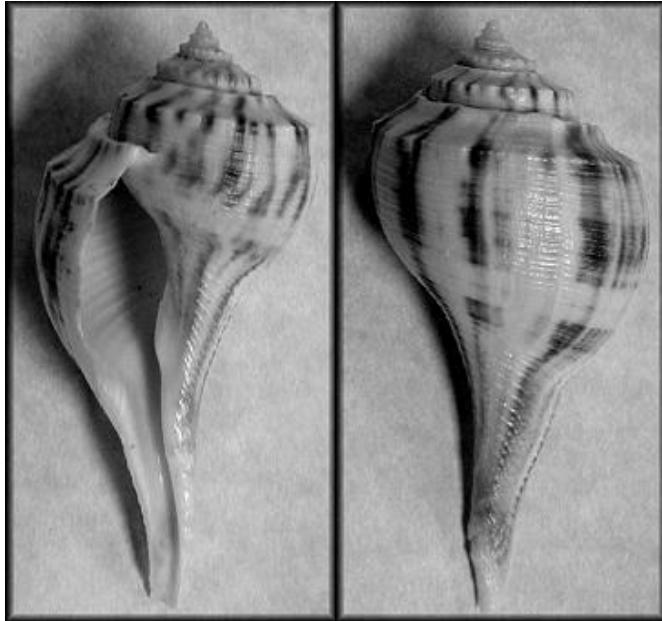
### Welcome New Members

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## One Of A Kind

This sinistral (left-handed) *Busycotypus plagosus* (Conrad, 1862) [Shouldered Pear Whelk], pictured below, may be unique. The approximately three-inch (75 mm.) sinistral shell was collected crabbed at Port O'Connor, Calhoun Co., TX in August, 1976 by Mrs. C. W. (Howard) Hanks of Houston, TX. She was gathering shells to fill a glass lamp-base and discovered that it was oppositely-coiled as she was putting the shell into the lamp! The shell is now housed in Houston Museum of Natural Science.



Digital photographs by Jerry Clampit

Adult sinistral specimens the three species comprising the genus *Busycotypus* (*Busycotypus plagosus*, *spiratus* and *canaliculatus*) are exceptionally rare if not unique with each represented by a single documented specimen. A sinistral *B. spiratus* (Lamarck, 1816) [Pear Whelk], from the Isaac Lea (1792-1886) Collection, believed to have originated in the Gulf of Mexico, is in the collection of the National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian Institution) while Assistant Editor Harry G. Lee possesses a sinistral *B. canaliculatus* (Linnaeus, 1758) [Channeled Whelk] collected at Cape Cod, Massachusetts during 1984, and he has dissected two sinistral embryos out of egg cases.

Reference: Boone, C. E., 1976. Search and seizure. Texas Conchologist 13(2):45-47. Dec.

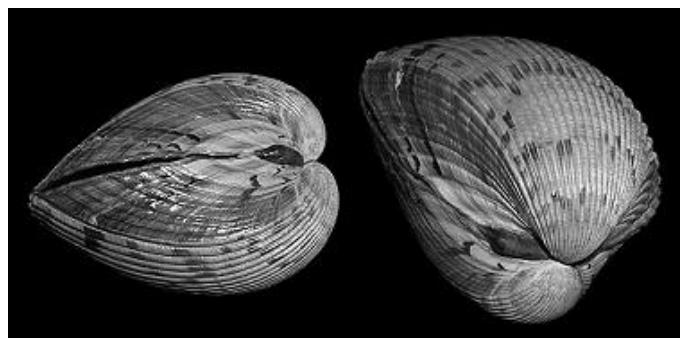
Petway, Tina, 2004. Spotlighting Mrs. Howard Hanks. The Epitonium Vol. XI(VII). Feb.

On the Internet:

<http://www.jaxshells.org/reverse.htm>

<http://www.jacksonvilleshells.org/705a.htm>

## The Atlantic Giant Cockle



The largest bivalve found both dead and alive on northeast Florida beaches is the Atlantic Giant Cockle, *Dinocardium robustum* (John Lightfoot, 1786). This species is found from Virginia to north Florida and the Gulf of Mexico to Mexico and can attain a length of 150 mm. During a March 6<sup>th</sup> visit to Little Talbot Island State Park the species was particularly common with some 20-25 large specimens found alive on a single sand bar. However, lesser numbers of living specimens, ranging from 25 mm. juveniles to 100 mm. adults, can usually be found.

Interestingly, while the species normally lives buried in the substrate with only its two siphons visible, it is not at all uncommon to find specimens sitting atop the sand, totally exposed with their valves gaping.



A typical "gaper" exhibiting its muscular foot

Despite their large size, considerable weight and massive thick shell, the Atlantic Giant Cockle is a favorite food source for hungry Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*). The gulls, using the ever-present sea breeze to their advantage, will soar to a height of some 20-30 feet carrying the shell, and unceremoniously drop it onto the hard sand breaking the shell to gain access. This feeding technique, obviously continually undergoing refinement with the proliferation of concrete and asphalt in immediate coastal areas, is also used by the gulls on other mollusks such as *Busycon carica* (Gmelin, 1791) [Knobbed Whelk].



Close-up view of the siphons

Editor's comments: According to R. Tucker Abbott in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of "American Seashells" (1974) "When the Florida Canal Project was begun in 1935, President F. D. Roosevelt was presented with a large silver platter on which was set a specimen of *Dinocardium*, encased in gold and containing a portion of the first earth excavated as a result of the blast set off by the President." This project, also known as the "Florida Sea Level Canal," was abandoned in 1943 as was its successor "The Cross Florida Barge Canal" which was officially stopped by President Bush when he de-authorized the federal project in 1990.

On the Internet:

<http://www.jaxshells.org/drs10.htm>  
<http://www.jaxshells.org/1124zz.htm>  
<http://www.jaxshells.org/0306rr.htm>

### On The Road

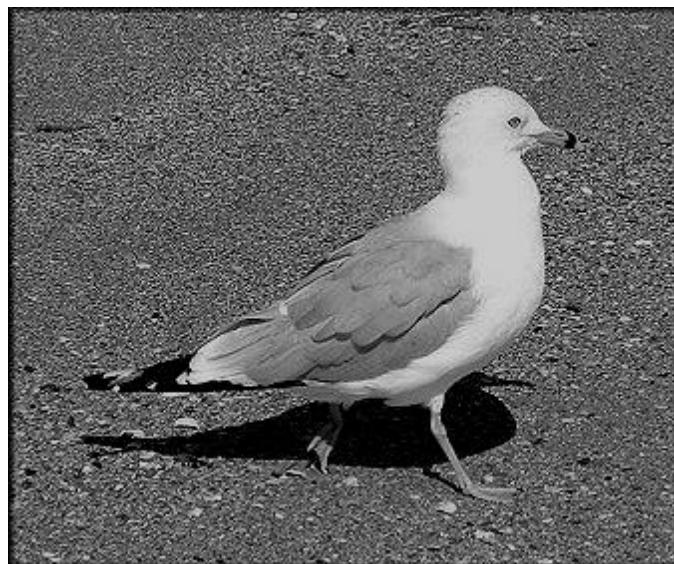
Several members of the Jacksonville Shell Club have been on the road over the past several months to include attending, exhibiting at, and judging the busy schedule of shell shows around the state.

At least five club members (Frank & Ruth Abramson, Charlotte & Frank Thorpe, and your Editor) attended the Central Florida Shell Show in Orlando on January 17-18th. Congratulations to Charlotte for being awarded the duPont Trophy for her exhibit of "Pelecypods of the World." Charlotte also won a 2<sup>nd</sup> place ribbon for her live mollusk photography and Judy Blocker won a 1<sup>st</sup> place ribbon for her "Shell Wreath" in the Artistic Category.

The next weekend Barbara Moon traveled to the Astronaut Trail Shell Show in Melbourne where she won a 1<sup>st</sup> place ribbon in the Artistic Category for her sand dollar decorated hat. During her weekend stay in Melbourne, Barbara reported that she also availed herself to the local shelling opportunities, both on the beach and in the Intracoastal Waterway, and that the hospitality of the Astronaut Trail Shell Club was outstanding. Also in attendance at the show were Ruth & Frank Abramson (dealers) and Harry Lee who served as one of the Scientific Division judges.

The Astronaut Trail Shell Club Show is the largest shell show held in the State of Florida and probably the entire country. According to Shell Show Chairman Bobbi Cordy, this year's show featured 19 dealers, 570 linear feet of scientific displays, 125 linear feet of craft displays, and was attended by about 3,000 visitors.

The third weekend in February, Harry Lee was on the road again as he traveled to Naples, where he, along with Bob Lipe of Seminole, FL, judged the Scientific Division portion of the show at the Southwest Florida Nature Conservancy Center, a favorite cause of Gertrude Moller's late friend, Julius (Junkie) Fleischmann; see <http://www.jaxshells.org/remb.htm> or Shell-O-Gram Volume 43(3); May-June, 2002.



Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*)