**North Carolina Shell Club Quarterly Meeting; Ocracoke, NC**

**March 21-22, 2025**

**March 21, 2025:** 49 people attended tonight’s meeting. Registration, social time and silent auction opened at 6:30 pm at the Ocracoke Community Center. President Dan Minior welcomed everyone at 7:00 pm. After last year’s meeting cancellation due to bad weather, it was wonderful to be back on Ocracoke for our Spring meeting. Mark Johnson gave an update on the Saturday field trip to Portsmouth. As of tonight, the trip is still planned, although our boat Captains will be watching the weather/wind tonight and in the morning. There will be two boats, first boat leaving at 8:30 am and the second boat leaving at 9:30 am (due to the impending winds projected for Saturday afternoon, the boats left a bit earlier and less time was allowed on the island). The cost per passenger is $25 plus tip.

For those staying on Ocracoke for the day, Peter Vankevich will be opening the Ocracoke Museum located at the ferry terminal Saturday at 10:30 am and Sunday at 11 am. Peter said the museum includes Ocracoke history and also a collection of shells from the area. Door prizes were awarded…prizes included shells from the Everett Long Collection and donations from Amy Howard, owner of The Village Craftsman shop on Ocracoke. Vice-President Scott Foxx introduced tonight’s speaker, former club President, Dora Zimmerman, our “Dora the Explorer”! Dora gave a slide program about the trip she and husband Paul took in 2023 to Australia. Dora and Paul were in Australia for 3 weeks and were able to snorkel at the Great Barrier Reef, spend a few days in Southern Australia and then a 5-day Shelling Safari run by Australian Shell Dealer Merv Cooper, on the west coast of Australia at 80 Mile Beach. The huge tidal changes at the beach bring in huge piles of shells each day, including several species of volutes and the classic Australian Trumpet Snail, ***Syrinx aruana***. This was a more demanding trip than most shelling trips, as the group camped in tents on the beach.

**Old and New Business:** Karlynn Morgan and John Timmerman gave an update on the club’s upcoming Annual Shell Show, to be held May 2-4, 2025 at the Civic Center in Morehead City. Set up for the show will be May 1. On Saturday we will have an Awards Banquet with guest speaker, Dr. José Leal, Collections Curator at the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum, in Sanibel, Florida. Our Scientific Judges for the shell show will be Dr. Leal and Richard Goldberg. Artistic Judges will be Kimberly Nealon and Nancy Timmerman. A new addition to the shell show will be two seminar sessions for school aged children. Dan Minior will give short presentations about shells and mollusks.

Dan gave an update on the financial plans for an operating fund for the club, with investments that would grow over time to help fund club expenses. Upcoming meetings include a Shell Sale/Swap at Dan’s home in Swansboro, on August 3rd; Annual Club Auction September 19-20, and our Fall meeting/Shackleford Banks field trip November 7-8. The auction meeting and Shackleford Banks meetings have been switched due to poor weather the past two years in September that resulted in the field trip to Shackleford being cancelled. We hope that early November will be a better bet on the weather to have the field trip. More meeting details are available on the club website and will be included in future newsletters. Maria Lloyd gave a report on the recent club field trip to Bulls Island in South Carolina in February. 19 people attended the trip, with 3 hours on the beach. This trip might be planned again for 2026. Maria also completed work to have our club join the Carteret County Chamber of Commerce. This designation provides free services for the club and exposure to the community of club activities and events. Maria is hoping that such exposure will result in local businesses becoming sponsors for our shell show. In April, for Earth Day Celebrations, Dora Zimmerman, Dan Minior and Diana Yeames will host a club table at the celebration at the Core Sound Museum at Harker’s Island. Dora, Dan and Diana will present information about the environment and shells to school-aged children. Mark gave an update about the two scholarship programs our club supports for marine biology students…..one at UNC-Wilmington and another at Cape Carteret Community College. Our Club Sales Tables at the shell show support these scholarships and the club also receives donations from friends of the club.

Members Dan Minior, Ed Shuller and Jeannette Tysor joined club member Dr. Art Bogan at the North Carolina Museum of Natural History in Raleigh for the museum’s “Mollusk Day”. Ed and Jeannette displayed their award-winning self-collected exhibit “Meet Me at the Bar”. This exhibit included shells they found on oyster beds and information about the ecology of this ecosystem within Back Sound, Shackleford Banks.

Mark and Dan help to measure shells for our North Carolina Shell Size Records. The club keeps records on both live and dead collected shells. Mark said that club member and scuba diver Joyce Steinmetz achieved 26 new records, with 3 of the shells potentially being of world record size. The club now has a membership with the World Registry of Shells size records. If anyone has what they think might be a new world record, contact Mimi Dill, Karlynn Morgan or Dan Minior and they will look up the information. The NC Records list is available on the club website. Dan reminded everyone of the special oral auction on Saturday night, featuring 63 lots of shells from the Everett Long Collection. A huge thank you to Dora Zimmerman for producing the full color auction catalog, available on the club website. Final bidding on Silent Auction items concluded the evening.

**March 22, 2025:** 42 people attended tonight’s meeting. Before the meeting started, we celebrated Dan Minior’s 51st birthday!

Newsletter Editor Mimi Dill announced that submission of articles/photos for the newsletter are appreciated. Dan gave a huge thank you to Diana Yeames for providing the refreshments for the meeting and to Mimi Dill for her donation to the club of a Keurig coffee machine. He also thanked Peter Vankevich for opening the Ocracoke Museum today for visitors. Mark Johnson reported that the field trip to Portsmouth Island was a success, with two boats of happy shellers. The winds did pick up as predicted but everyone made it back to Ocracoke safely. The Find of the Day awards were presented by Judge Karlynn Morgan and Dan Minior. The prize for the Best Scotch Bonnet for Adults went to Gayle Hughes for her live-collected shell. The prize for the Best Scotch Bonnet for children went to Lila Buffington. The Find of the Day for other shells went to Maria Lloyd for her gem condition Giant Atlantic Murex. Lila received a club t-shirt for her prize. Maria and Gayle received $20 gift certificates good for items from our Club Sales Tables at the shell show.

The mini Oral Auction was comprised of 63 lots of shells from the Everett Long Collection. Auctioneers Dan Minior, Mark Johnson, and Bill Bennight did a great job promoting the items and bidding was brisk! The Silent Auction total was $ . The total from the Oral Auction was $3804.00.

Thank you to everyone for a wonderful shelling weekend.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicky Wall, Secretary