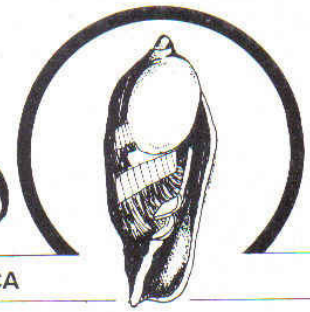


# The Strandloper

BULLETIN OF THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN AFRICA



No. 192

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1978

Page 1

## LINNAEUS BICENTENARY 1778 – 1978

To celebrate the bicentenary of the death of Carl von Linné of Sweden (1707–1778) the Cape Times published an editorial on Saturday 15 July. They have generously given us permission to reproduce it, which we now do, using the newspaper's own headline.

### A SECOND ADAM

Gardeners, foresters, flower-arrangers and simple lovers of nature may be forgiven if some of their thoughts about systematic botany are a bit sour in this year of the bicentenary of the death of Carl Linnaeus, often respectfully dubbed the Father of Modern Botany, and revered wherever men of science are concerned about the identities of plants, insects, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals as the man who invented the modern method of naming these creatures. The sourness mixed with reverence for the memory of Linnaeus is however due to the very complex of causes which made Linnaeus the man who was called to meet a need that had by his time become overwhelming, and has not diminished since.

In earlier times, before the amazing expansion of the borders of the known world in the 17th and 18th centuries, the identification of things was reasonably simple, especially for the devout: After Adam was modelled from the clay of Eden, "the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them before Adam to see what he would call them: And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof." And in the small community of Eden there could be no arguing or uncertainty. Even after the expulsion this nomenclaturally idyllic condition remained. Communities were still small, language groups were limited, the borders of the known world, until Marco Polo and Columbus, were just across the horizon. The Hebrews knew that Tamar was a date palm. The Greeks knew that Helleboros was an effective but dangerous drug plant. The Romans knew that Quercus was an oak. And so on for most things. There was little confusion.

But when travellers came back from the ends of the earth with all sorts of new things, confusion began at once to arise. Some called the new plants one thing, others another. Some of the names were corruptions of misheard native names in their lands of origin, others were given according to real or fancied resemblances to plants in the namers' fatherlands. What made it worse was that many of the names were long, cumbersome, Latin descriptions



Carl Linnaeus (1707 – 1778)

rather than real names; and to complicate things further, savants in different countries might give different names to the same species. Since many of the new species, especially of plants, were of real economic importance, the continuance of this confusion would have been a grave brake on progress. What Linnaeus did was as important to science as the introduction of the Arabic system of writing and manipulating numbers in place of the clumsy notation and reckoning systems of the Greeks and Romans.

What exactly did Linnaeus do? In the first place he demonstrated that by careful observation of truly relevant detail you could correctly place all living creatures in correct relationship with others in their orders. Among mammals, for example, the numbers and arrangement of teeth were of paramount importance; in plants the numbers and arrangement of the sexual parts, that is the pistils and stamens. In the second place, instead of the verbose system of writing a description and calling it a name, he established the binomial system, that is a scientific replica, as it were, of our Christian and surname method of identifying people. Apart from the classes, orders and families which comprised the greater classifications each individual kind was given a generic name (surname) and a specific epithet (Christian name) identifying it exactly.

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

Since no man has ever been a prime cause, Linnaeus had some previous work on similar lines to go on. His greatness was that he worked it all out logically and with his vast industry was able to make a reasonable attempt to classify all the known living creatures, plant and animal, of the then known world. Yet this stupendously learned and industrious encyclopaedist had been described by his teachers in his senior school days as unsuitable for a scholar's life. They said he could never be a clergyman, as his parents ardently hoped, but might make a good carpenter. Fortunately one of them did recommend that he could perhaps become a doctor, and he was given a chance of taking medicine. Here botany entered, for medicine was still firmly based on plants.

It would be untrue to say that he never looked back, for the poor chap had many setbacks and disappointments. Those impressed by old wives' tales might well consider that his mother, although she so keenly wanted him to become a priest, applied an irresistibly plant-orientated antenatal influence upon him: In the parental garden there was a raised circular bed planted in the perhaps absurd fashion of the time with flowers to represent dining table place settings and shrubs around to represent guests; she spent hours admiring this feature. More credible perhaps is that Linnaeus was blessed by nature with an extraordinarily methodical and systematic mind. He hated confusion; all that came within his observation must be properly arranged and systematised. Add an ability to make influential friendships (although he was also accused of coldness and selfishness) plus the need throughout his life to earn his living, and you have the raw material of the Great Classifier. Unfortunately some confusion remains because industrious disciples even today still find reasons valid to themselves to revise names; hence the layman's sourness. But this takes nothing from Linnaeus's greatness.



#### ALBINO SHELLS FROM TABLE BAY

Clarice Connolly has reported the following albino specimens from Table Bay, dating back to 1976. Will readers please report any additions to this list:

- Lienardia grayi* live taken and now in S A Museum.
- Drillia hottentota* live taken and now in S A Museum.
- Marginella neglecta* rather smaller than the East London shells.
- Marginella rosea* not quite pure white but with pale axial markings.
- Conus mozambicus mozambicus* a few only.
- Patella miniata* one specimen only, pure white.

Clarice also reports that some *Chitons* are paler in the cold water on the west coast of the Peninsula but this is not a general tendency as normally coloured specimens are commonly found.

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## LOOKING AHEAD

Several very interesting articles are to be published shortly, so please make sure you continue to receive your copies of STRANDLOPER by renewing your subscription without delay if you haven't already done so. The following are in the pipeline:

- A revision of the South African *Tellinidae*.
- A series on South African *Muricidae*.
- Name changes for *Muricidae*.
- Behaviour of *Cymatium parthenopeum* in an aquarium.
- Articles from the journal of a German shell club.
- A series explaining technical terms in conchology.
- And for our 21st birthday, a special issue with an article on South African *Conidae* illustrated in colour for the first time. This article alone should be worth the full year's subscription, so don't miss it.

One colour plate adds R100 to our printing costs, but if we have your continued support we can produce the occasional special issue without cutting back on the quality of the remaining issues to make up for the expense. The more members we have paying their subscriptions, the better our magazine can be.



#### CHANGES TO JANUARY, 1978, MEMBERSHIP LIST

##### NEW MEMBERS:

- S Mr T.S. Bethel, 207 Brand Rd., Glenwood, Durban 4001.
- Mr B.F.C. Alexander, Allas Garden, Sampalathivu, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka.
- Mrs J. Morris, 11 Lens Rd., Delville, Germiston 1401.
- S Mr D. Fabrie, 2 Ferndale Ave., Morningside, Durban 4001.
- S Mr L.J. Pereira, 28 Eureka Court, Berea Rd., Durban 4001.
- Mrs J.H. Sonnenberg, 112 Northlyn, Somtseu Rd., North Beach, Durban 4001.
- Mr J. Hubbard, 37 Timavo Dr., La Lucia, Durban 4051.
- Mrs J. Hubbard, 37 Timavo Dr., La Lucia, Durban 4051.
- Mr M.I. Ebrahim, 96 Crescent St., Overport, Durban 4001.
- Mrs E.R. Bowker, Victoria Hotel, P.O. Box 17, Stanger 4450.
- Mr D. Oosthuizen, 514 Windermere Centre, Windermere Rd., Durban 4001.
- Miss H.B. Smith, 11 Lothian Court, 208 Tenth Ave., Durban 4001.

##### CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

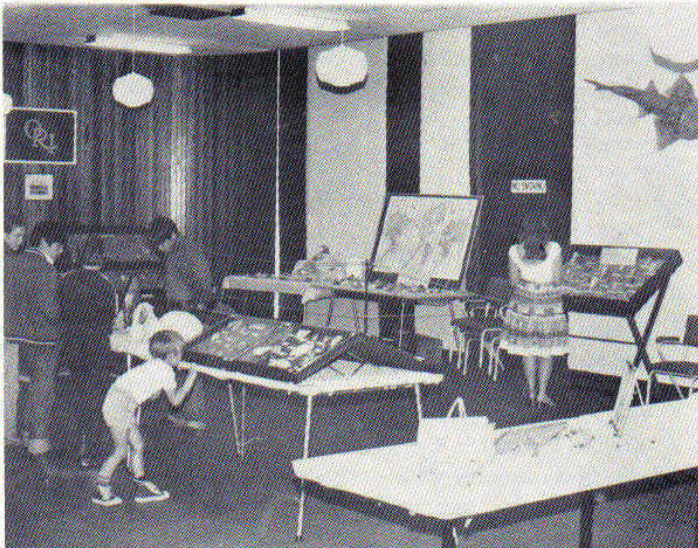
- Mr G. McEwan, Taunton, 120 Camp Ground Rd., Rondebosch 7700.
- Mr D.J. Bosman, P.O. Box 4255, Bloemfontein 9300.
- Miss G. Lambert, 13 Cyrilla Court, Payne St., Pinetown 3600.
- Mrs D. van der Spuy, 704 Clarendon Heights, 6 Bruce St., Hillbrow 2001.
- Miss C.H. Scott, 27A Western Road, Port Elizabeth 6001.

##### RESIGNATIONS:

- Master A.P. Carlsson, Cape Town
- Master S.R. Carlsson, Cape Town
- Mrs. R. Weeks, Cape Town
- Mr F.J. Farrell, George
- Mrs. T. du Preeze, Port Elizabeth
- Mr A.G. Enslin, Pretoria.

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## SHELL EXHIBITION



We of the Natal Group enjoyed planning our show and were very proud of the finished product. We decided not to hold it on a competitive basis as this would have limited both our scope and enthusiasm. As it was, shells were loaned left, right and centre for the common purpose of putting on the best possible show by all the available members, including our newest recruit. This policy paid dividends when one looked at our visitors book and noted the comments. The objectives of our display, i.e. to promote knowledge and interest about shells among the public and to enroll new members, were well realized.

We wish to thank all the members, committee members and friends whose hard work made it such a great success as well as those of the Natal Group who a few years ago made twelve magnificent display stands. Without these we could never have presented such a polished display. Local firms were very kind in supplying us with items such as glass, signs, posters, etc. Special thanks to the Director and Staff of the Durban Aquarium who enabled the whole thing to be made possible and whose ready co-operation helped smooth away many obstacles. Plans are already underway to have our group display an annual part of the Durban holiday scene.

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Maureen Quickelberge reports from Durban:

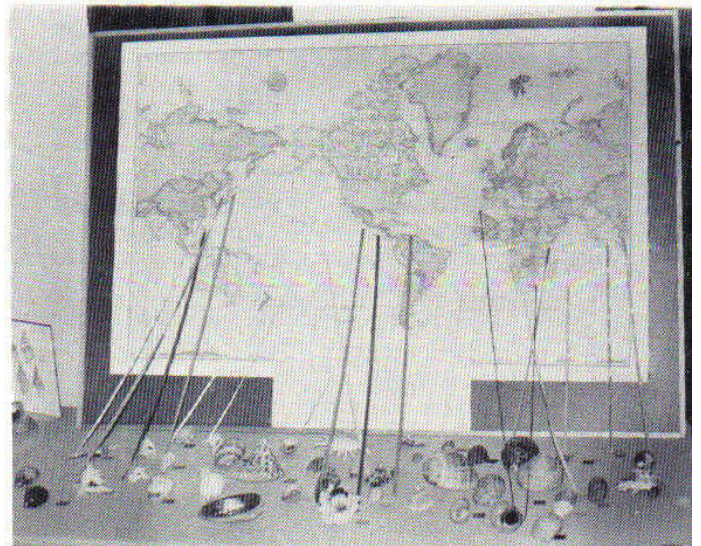
From the morning of Friday 21st July to Sunday evening 23rd July the Natal group exhibited their shells. Held in the Lecture Hall of the Oceanarium of Durban's beachfront, the display proved a great success.

Attendance figures topped the 500 mark and just over 2000 shells were on display. All major shell families were represented, and a tank of living Cowries and Thais was on display.

A magnificent double-banked Cowrie display proved eye-catching. Beautifully presented, this almost complete collection of all the *Cypraea* in the world included gems such as *Cypraea broderipi*, *fultoni*, *barclayi*, and *lisetae*.

The Volute section of our exhibition was well represented and there were many general exhibits displaying representatives of most of the larger groups of shells.

Apart from the family displays other exhibits included a world-wide distribution map linked to colour-coded typical examples. Locality displays showed samples from East Africa, West Africa and South Africa. One displayed shallow water species and another deep water species including *Pleurotomaria africana* Tomlin, *Aporrhais pesgalinae* Barnard, *Benthovoluta krigiei* Kilburn and *Astraea tayloriana* Smith. A small display of Algoa Bay shells including a fine *Marginella nebulosa* Röding was sent from Port Elizabeth. Gaily coloured land snails from the Philippines and Cuba contrasted well with the marine displays. A number of fine water colour paintings of sea shells by Lois Martin Povall imparted a fine touch of variety to the décor.



## SEYCHELLES HOLIDAY JUNE 1978

by  
**MARY LUDGATER**  
 Bindura, Rhodesia

We have just returned from a holiday in the Seychelles, truly a paradise on earth. These islands are the only mid-ocean granitic islands in the world. They rise steeply from the sea to an altitude of 2993 ft and are clothed with coconut and other palms including the fabled Coco de Mer. Huge trees with white stems grow on the mountain slopes and most trees seem to have vivid seeds or flowers. The undergrowth is cinnamon, with cloves and nutmeg being grown commercially. Wild vanilla orchids climb the trees and we lost count of the different varieties of bananas. Tea is also grown.

The spreading Takamaka trees fringe the bays and this is the only place I know where one can swim in the ocean at high tide in the shade of trees.

The Seychelloise are friendly and all have gardens in some form or another. It is a pity that more is not done to discourage litter. I had heard reports that many bays and reefs were protected areas but I was in for a shock. There were masses of beautiful shells, but all in the shops or street markets, with vendors pestering one on the beaches or at the big hotels, and the prices are high. There are also items made from shells, mostly very gimmicky. Imagine my horror on seeing a *Cypraea depressa* stuck to a board as a base of a hideous "flower" picture. There must be tons of shells used in this way. In one shop there was a huge basket filled with *Oliva episcopalis*, and another had half the floor space of one room piled with *Lambis lambis* and *L. truncata*.

Very diligent shelling at high and low water rewarded us with a few shells. Snorkelling proved no better, nor a search of the exposed reef at low spring tide. My interpretation was that the inshore reefs at Mahé were dying or dead through pollution, sand, and the systematic robbing of the coral and shells.

On the lovely unspoilt island of La Digue I did dive for shells and was delighted to examine and put back *Cypraea caurica*, *vitellus*, *histris* and *arabica*. In profusion were *Turbo argyrostomus* with its orange-eyed operculum and green ribs. My Mozambique *Turbo*'s are mainly brown, so perhaps this is another species? (If the aperture is tinted with orange, it could be *Turbo chrysostomus* - Ed.) We also found big lumps of red, blue and green coral on the beaches there, which do not lose their colour. A little oil brings out their full beauty.

The pink granite boulders of La Digue have to be seen to be believed. In fact all the boulders looked as if they were trying to imitate the fluted edges of the giant clam.

My impression was that the Seychelloise are denuding the reefs and bays of their natural heritage. The economy of the islands is very shaky and tourism is the only big source of revenue, so everybody is trying to get in on the act. Shells and shell "art" along with coral and tortoise-shell are the main tourist "buys".

On a more cheerful note, the fish seen while snorkelling were wonderful and so tame that some would come and

nibble at our hands and legs. A shoal of big blue and silver *Carangues* at our favourite snorkelling site were entranced with my blue and white gloves and blue flippers. The rest of the party wore black flippers. Each time we met, they would circle round me three or four times before resuming their feeding. The shapes and colours of the fish and corals were fantastic and we spent hours snorkelling in really deep water admiring nature's beautiful underwater handiwork.

If only man would see fit not to destroy it!

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## CALLUM AND BETTY GILES

Readers will be very sorry to learn that recent illness has obliged Betty and Callum to withdraw from the Council of the Society. Happily, both are remaining members of the Society and intend keeping up their interest in group activities at the Cape, as well as their activities at the South African Museum in Cape Town, where they are now the only ones doing any work on mollusca.

The Conchological Society owes much to both of them. They joined in 1965 and were elected to the Council in 1966 where they served in various capacities, with Betty as Secretary and Callum as Treasurer for several years. Since 1974, Betty has been Vice-President and she and Callum have given unstintingly of themselves to the cause of Conchology in South Africa, in spite of severe illness at times.

On behalf of members everywhere, the Editor wishes them well.

Baie hartlik dankie vir alles wat u oor die afgelope twaalf jaar vir ons gedone het, ons waardeer dit ten seerste. Wees verseker van ons beste wense vir beterskap, voorspoed en baie jare van gesondheid en geluk vir die toekoms.



## A KEY TO SOUTH AFRICAN CHITONS

by PROF. J.H. DAY

A re-print of special publication No. 3 of June, 1963.  
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P.O. Box 98 - Howard Place 7450 - South Africa

## SCIENTIFIC NAMES —

## THE RULES EXPLAINED IN SIMPLE TERMS

In this bicentenary year of Linnaeus's death 1778 — 1978 we are starting a series of articles to explain in simple language the rules governing the system of scientific names as applied to animals.

Technical terms used in the classification of species will be explained and some of the common Latin word endings decoded. We aim to show that the whole system is fairly easy to follow once certain basic rules are understood.

The general chaos and lack of scientific and logical classification up to about 1750 is well recounted by S. Peter Dance in his book, SHELL COLLECTING, AN ILLUSTRATED HISTORY. Get hold of this book if you can, it is excellent.

Although Linnaeus was not the only one working on a systematic classification at that time, and his rivals had many supporters, the followers of the other systems eventually found themselves obliged to fall into line (one might almost say, fall into Linné) and the Linnean system is now generally accepted.

Knowledge of the animal kingdom expanded for the next century and the new taxonomy flourished. The development of microscopes in the mid-19th century further extended the study of animal life and provided the means for a more detailed definition of species. Names were published in all sorts of papers and books, some of which were not easily accessible. Consequently problems arose as to what exactly the correct names were for many of the forms (species) especially in the larger groups.

Britain, America, France and Germany drafted their own codes for the naming of animals but the need for an international code was recognised towards the end of the 19th century. In 1901 agreement was finally reached at an international conference in Berlin, and the first international rules were drawn up in 1905.

An international commission on zoological nomenclature was set up and the official test of the Code for naming animals was approved by the 15th international congress of zoology in 1958.

This series of articles in the Strandloper will summarise a selection of definitions taken from the Code and will also cover other related points that might interest conchologists.



## PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

The Society has copies of the following publications for sale at the prices stated:

A Preliminary list of S.A. Marine Shells found on the Natal/Zululand Coast by B.L. Cock	<b>R0,50</b>
Additional list of S.A. Marine Shells found on the Natal/Zululand Coast by B.L. Cock	<b>R0,50</b>

Write to the Secretary, P.O. Box 98, Howard Place 7450.

## AROUND THE GROUPS

**EAST LONDON:** We celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Border Group on 11th August 1978. The Minutes of the first meeting chaired by D H Kennelly were read (see circular No. 44 — Ed.). This first meeting was held over the long weekend of 6th — 8th July 1963 and there were 14 members present. Some of the members attending that meeting were Mrs Clarice Connolly, Hazel Jefferies, and Connie Hulley.

Members participated in a competition naming S A *Marginellidae*. These competitions are benefiting all, old and new; our youngest member has the highest points so far. Field day on 20th August at German Bay was a washout as a result of illnesses. Our September meeting had members naming Olives and Ancilla (but they never look the same as the ones one studies at home!)

**DURBAN:** Field day scheduled for 20th August at Umtwalumi proved to be quite successful with some *Cypraea* being found. Hopes of finding a *Cyp. fultoni* did not materialise.

Members in Port Shepstone (lower South Coast) have decided to meet once a month in Port Shepstone and hope to pool transport to attend meetings in Durban once a quarter. A slide show at our August meeting was on rare S A and world-wide shells and there was also a slide show lent by Victor Millard of Cape Town on the effect of ultra-violet light on fossil and recent shells.

**PORT ELIZABETH:** At the August meeting the discussion was on *Mitridae*. While one member read notes, another pointed out the various parts on a large *Mitra*. The Director of the Museum thanked our group for assisting in the rearranging of display cases and for the many shells donated. Members reported finding live specimens of *Cypraea annulus*, *Conus tinianus*, *C. mozambicus lautus*, *Bursa granularis*, and *Morula margariticola* at Noordhoek (Marine Drive) and a dead *Cyp. fimbriata* at Kini Bay.

**PRETORIA:** In Augustus het Laurie 'n interessante praatjie oor die *Pectinidae* gelewer. Anne het pragtige landskulpe wat sy in ruil ontvang het getoon, en melding is gemaak van 'n nuwe groep wat deur mnr Hyatt in St Michael's On Sea begin is; ook van 'n voorgestelde toer deur Suid-Afrika; van die nuwe uitgawe van die "Standard Catalog of Shells"; van die erratalys vir Kensley se boek; en die uitnodiging na Lizeke en Han Vandenberg se Bring-en-Braai op 10 September. The September meeting saw a display and discussion of Nassariidae. Next year's shell show was discussed and fundraising methods considered.

**CAPE TOWN:** At the August meeting, Mr Sirgel of Stellenbosch University gave an alarming account of how human irresponsibility has caused the spread of the African land snail *Achatina fulica* across the world. The Society's Annual General Meeting took place in September. Professor Brown described an experiment conducted jointly in South Africa and India, using species of *Bullia* to compare their oxygen consumption in their different environments, and so possibly to arrive at an index of pollution, among other things. A shell show is being organised in the city for early January, at Stuttgart.



## EXCHANGES WANTED

Mr M (Mac) McDowell; P O Box 4608 — ASC; Patrick AFB; Fla. 32925 U S A is stationed on Ascension Island and offers unique varieties of *Cypraea* and *Harpa* in exchange for South African shells, cowries preferred.

David L McLean; Mailefihi College; Vava'u; Tonga; South Pacific; wants to trade cowries and other families;

Gie Luyts; Zilverberkstraat 13; B — 2300; Turnhout; Belgium; offers to compensate cost of shipment of S A shells to add to his African natural history collection. He is Dutch-speaking and understands English or Afrikaans.

A C Sinclair; 120, Dalmahoy Crescent; Kirkcaldy; Fife; Scotland; wants to swap for Cape Patellas.

Mrs Janet K. Butchko; Colonial Arms Apts H.1; Blackstone; VA 23824; U S A; offers Florida and Caribbean shells, especially those from Sanibel Island.

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**THE CONCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF  
SOUTHERN AFRICA**  
(Founded 1958)

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*Subscriptions:*

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The Financial Year runs from 1st July to 30th June, and members joining after December need only pay one half the subscription to ensure membership to 30th June. Members joining after March are expected to pay a full subscription which will be carried forward to the following year.

An Entrance Fee of R1,00 (U.S.A. \$1,50) is payable by all applicants except Student Members.

The Society's Bulletin, *The Strandloper*, is issued free to members.

The Society has active groups in the following areas:—

<b>Cape Town:</b>	Secretary: Mrs G. Whitehead, 44 Monte Vito, Rosemead Ave., Kenilworth 7700. Tel.: 61-1580
<b>Port Elizabeth:</b>	Secretary Mr F. Graeve, P.O. Box 2054, Port Elizabeth 6056. Tel.: 54-3374
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<b>Durban:</b>	Secretary: Mrs P. Daigarno, 25 Stephen Road, Scottburgh 4180. Tel.: 2-1576
<b>Pietermaritzburg:</b>	Secretary: Mrs M.I. Armstrong, 195 Boom Street 3201. Tel.: 2-5553
<b>Johannesburg:</b>	Secretary: Mr K. Brown, 1 Arend Ave. Windsor Glen, Randburg 2194. Tel.: 678-5060
<b>Pretoria:</b>	Secretary: Mrs A. Wilson, 283 Silver Street, Muckleneuk 0002. Tel.: 44-4495

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**INTERTIDAL TALK**

Phillip Clover reports the rediscovery, after a century, of the rare *Conus cervus* Lamarck 1822. Trawled in deep water in Indonesian waters. Illustration to follow.

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A new book on Cones is in the press; author J G Walls, available soon from T.F.H. Publications inc, Neptune, New Jersey, U S A.

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Alan Hinton, author of *Shells of New Guinea and the Central Indo-Pacific*, has published another book and we hope to have details for our next issue.

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Sea-Shells of Southern Africa by B Kensley: an errata list covering about 200 species and an extensively revised section on locality and range of species may be ordered from the Cape Town group at 80c per copy.

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*We would welcome any article of interest to  
Shell Collectors for future publication.*

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Copies of back numbers of the Society's circulars are available at 10 cents each or in sets, complete with index, at the following prices:—

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