



President's Report – AGM 2021

November 2021

Dear Members,

It has been a while since I have had the opportunity to pen a President's Report, not having an AGM in 2020 adding to this. But in all honesty, the global pandemic has not only put the whole world on pause, but our official shelling matters, too. Our 2020 AGM was cancelled, along with the suspension of all Club-related activities and most of the regular Societal "regulars", which has led to a really inactive 1.5 years on the shelling front.

Of course, the above does not apply to those who have managed to continue with Conchological research and related projects – I will elaborate on this further down in the Report. In fact, the pandemic and lockdown has afforded some of our Members the opportunities to study, collaborate and deliver some good work from an academic point of view.

Past Goals

But, it appears as though we are finally managing to get the virus under control, and in the latter part of 2021 Pretoria Club meetings resumed – albeit with a fresh face at the helm. Long-serving Member and former Pretoria Club Chairperson Mr Maurice Evans handed the baton to Mr Gordon Webster in August 2021, following relocation to George for retirement. Current meetings remain small in numbers, but are sure to increase in the New Year.

Some of the other regional Clubs have suffered similar fates, but the Committee will strive to strengthen the regional Clubs and provide the necessary support to see them grow again in 2022.

Our other main goal prior to lockdown was the establishment of a regular school-centred outreach to try and entice the younger generation to gain interest in Conchology. It started well with a Committee visit to St Stithians College and plans to do a shell-based presentation and "show" in March 2020. But we all know what happened a few days later, so as things are now, all such plans have been temporarily put on ice. We are hoping that the New Year will offer new opportunities to reach the youngsters and add a few new younger member to the Society.

International Reach

As noted above, the lockdown has provided opportunity for some of our Members to put pen to paper and write. Here is a concise summary of some of the academic works prepared by our Members since our last AGM:

- Roy Aiken & Alan Seccombe: Five new Gastropoda (*Casmaria*, *Sassia*, *Kilburnia*, *Quasimitra* and *Callistoma*) from the Eastern seaboard of Southern Africa, and a revision of *Mitra boswellae*. Published in the journal *The Festivus* no 51(3), 2019.
- Roy Aiken: Description of 10 new species of *Marginella* from the Eastern seaboard of South Africa, with comparatives of specimens in certain groups. Published in the journal *Visaya* no 5(3), 2019.
- Roy Aiken: Description of 4 fossil species of *Marginella* from the Neogene beds of Algarve, Portugal and Port Elizabeth, South Africa, respectively. Published in the journal *The Festivus* no 52(2), 2020.

- Andrew Childs, Roy Aiken and Patrice Bail: Investigation into the identity of the taxon *Callipara (Festilyria) festiva* with description of 2 new species. Published in the journal *The Festivus* no 52(4), 2020.
- Roy Aiken: Description of 2 new cone species from the Eastern Cape, South Africa, in the subgenus *Sciteconus*. Published in the journal *The Festivus* no 53(1), 2021.
- Roy Aiken: Revision of the (*Turrid*) genus *Psittacodrillia* with the description of three new *Turrids* from South Africa and a validation of 2 species. Published in the journal *Visaya* no 5(5), 2021.
- Ken Brown: A Guide to the Hunter Shells, Volume 1 (*Streptaxoidea – Gulellinae and Primigulellinae*). Book published by *ConchBooks*, Germany, 2021.
- Ken Brown and Maurice Evans: The *Achatinid* Landshells of Southern Africa. Book to be published by *ConchBooks*, Germany, December 2021.

Unfortunately, all shell shows were cancelled in 2020 and for the majority of 2021, so our regular duo of dealers (Roy and Alan) could not represent South Africa in this capacity. It does appear as if the shows are slowly starting up again – most are pre-scheduled for 2022 already.

The Future

It is still too early to speculate at this point in time what the future of the Society will look like. The past goals still remain, those being to establish and build more regional Clubs and to increase the number of younger members. These are sure to remain top priorities for the newly elected Committee for the foreseeable future.

But only time will tell if these are achievable goals or not.

We should, however, not let this detract us from enjoying our hobby. It has been a tough couple of months for many, but let us keep enjoying the love for shells and look forward to rekindling the relationships that have suffered along the way.

The outgoing Committee does have one plan on the table to see this through in the New Year. I cannot divulge much, aside from saying: start saving and learn to snorkel! 😊

I thank all for your support and loyalty to the Society over the course of the past tenure.

Until next time, happy shelling!



President, SCSA
22 November 2021