



# The Epitonium

## HCS BANQUET AT BRADY'S LANDING

By Rusti Stover

Once again, our banquet will be held at Brady's Landing, on **Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup>, starting at noon**. Cost for the banquet is \$20.00 per person. The restaurant has an excellent buffet of wonderful offerings, as many of you know who attended our last banquet. If you have not already made a reservation, contact Rusti Stover at: 713-660-6446 (home) or 713-614-4882 (cell). Reservations already made cannot be cancelled, but one or two may be added, and you can pay at the banquet.

There will be a very short meeting and installation of officers. Some other fun things have also been planned. Come and enjoy our last gathering before summer.



### National Seashell Day

The tourism industry in Fort Myers/Sanibel, Florida has declared that **June 20** is "National Seashell Day." This is not in conjunction with the any seashell organization such as a shell club or the Bailey Matthews Museum. They are simply trying to lure more tourists to their beaches, but we can each have our own celebration at a beach, in our shell room, in a museum, etc. Enjoy National Seashell Day!

### President's Message

By Leslie Crnkovic

Greetings Fellow Shellers!

It was great to see so many of you at the Jam-boree! The SSS did a great job of hosing this event.

The HCS Spring Banquet - **Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup>**: Please reserve your ticket with Rusti by the 11th for \$20 or unreserved at the door for \$23. - Brady's Landing: 8505 Cypress St, Houston, TX 77012, provides a full buffet with desert and drinks, and water-front dining. - Easy directions: 610 to 225 west, right on Broadway, cross under RR tracks, 1st right (Cypress), end of street on left.

Summer Sheller's Activities:

**May 21-22** - West Coast Shell Show, San Diego

**June 11th** - Texas Hill Country Sheller's BBQ & Shell Sale, Fredericksburg

**June 17-19** - Gulf Coast Shell Show, Panama City, FL; Field Trip on **June 20**

**June 20th** - National Seashell Day

**July 27-31** - COA Convention, Chicago

**Aug. 16th** - HCS Dinner, 7 pm Katz Deli (tentative date)

**Sept. 20th** - HCS Meeting, 7 pm HMNS.

Since the April meeting was canceled due to the flooding, I will present at October meeting. The program has evolved since April, ...greatly improved, a win-win!

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Visit HCS online at

[www.houstonshelleclub.com](http://www.houstonshelleclub.com)

## CALENDAR

<b>5-21</b>	<b>HCS Banquet</b>
7-27	COA in Chicago
<b>8-16?</b>	<b>HCS Dinner</b>
<b>9-20</b>	<b>HCS Meeting</b>

## 2016-17 Dues

**The HCS year ends on May 31.** If you have not renewed your membership and you read the newsletter on the Web site, you will receive an email with a membership form attached. If you are mailed a paper copy and you have not paid, a renewal form will be included in your mailing. Thank you for paying in a timely manner.

# April Minutes

There was no April meeting because of the flooding in the Houston area.

## Margate Grotto

Mary Harris shared a Website about an amazing grotto in England. Below is a little information. If you click on the link, you can read more and see pictures of the magnificent art work. The Flickr Group link on the bottom right of the Web page has some really nice pictures.

“Buried deep underground in small English town of Margate, Kent; is a grotto shrouded in complete mystery.

Adorned with 4.6 million shells and 70ft of winding underground passages leading to a rectangular chamber, this shell grotto is undoubtedly a remarkable site to behold.

Story has it that in 1835, a laborer was going about his usual field work, but when he struck the soil with his spade, it sank into the earth. The farmer realized that he was standing on something hollow, but was unable to see anything from the surface. Word spread around town, and a local school teacher volunteered his young son, Joshua, to be lowered into the hole with a candle. Upon emerging from the mysterious cavern, Joshua described rooms filled with hundreds of thousands of carefully arranged shells...

Nobody knows how old the grotto is, but some theories about its origin date its constructions as far back as **3,000 years** ago.

Another theory holds that the grotto was created as an aristocrat's folly sometime in the 1700s. This proposed explanation is validated by the fact that shell grottoes were actually quite popular in Europe in the 1700s, especially among the wealthy. The only catch to this theory, though, is that the grotto's location was on farmland - a land that had never been part of a large estate where follies would have been satisfied.

Others believe that it may have been used as an astrological calendar in the past.

There are those also, who say that the grotto must somehow be connected with the **Freemasons** or the **Knights Templar**. Others believe that the grotto may date as far back as **12,000 years** ago, maintaining that it is connected to a mysterious Mexican culture.

**Margate Grotto—continued from page 2**

Since its discovery, the [Margate Shell Grotto](#) has been opened to the public, first by Joshua's father, the school teacher. In 1835 he quickly bought up the land and began renovating the grotto to make it suitable for visitors. Two years later, in 1837, the grotto had been opened to the public for the first time, and still enjoys visitors today.”

**COA**

The Conchologist of America 2016 convention will be in Chicago July 27-31. Registration forms are available at: <http://www.conchologistsofamerica.org/conventions/Conventionregistration2016.pdf>. More details about the convention, hotel, and field trips are available at:

<http://www.conchologistsofamerica.org/conventions/COAMagazine2015.pdf>

**Texas Jamboree**

Over 30 Texas shellers gathered in Clute for the 2016 Jamboree. The Sea Shell Searchers hosted another wonderful event. A special thanks to Patty Humbird for her dedicated work to make it a success.

Participants enjoyed several interesting programs. HCS members Leslie Crnkovic told about his China adventures, Rusti Stover shared pictures from her birding and shelling trips along the Texas coast, and Alan Gettleman shared shelling stories including shells that have flown in space. Rosalie Prestigiacommo presented a fascinating program about Sailor's Valentines, and Jim Brunner talked about tangle netting for shells.

The seashell exhibits were judged by Linda and Jim Brunner from Florida. Several HCS members won awards: Janey Cormier won both Linda's Judges Choice Award and the Yellow Rose Award for her self-collected Queen Conch. Wayne Humbird won Jim's Judges Choice Award.

Thanks to Harry Sharp's generous donation there were lots of great silent and oral auction items.

The posed picture of most of the attendees was taken by Harry's daughter Joyce Rencurrel. Other pictures were taken by Rusti Stover and Mary Harris.



# Texas Jamboree 2016 - continued.

Viewing one of the several interesting programs.



Judge's award (Jim Brunner) to Wayne Humbird.

Judge's award (Linda Brunner) to Janey Cormier.



# Texas Jamboree 2016—continued.



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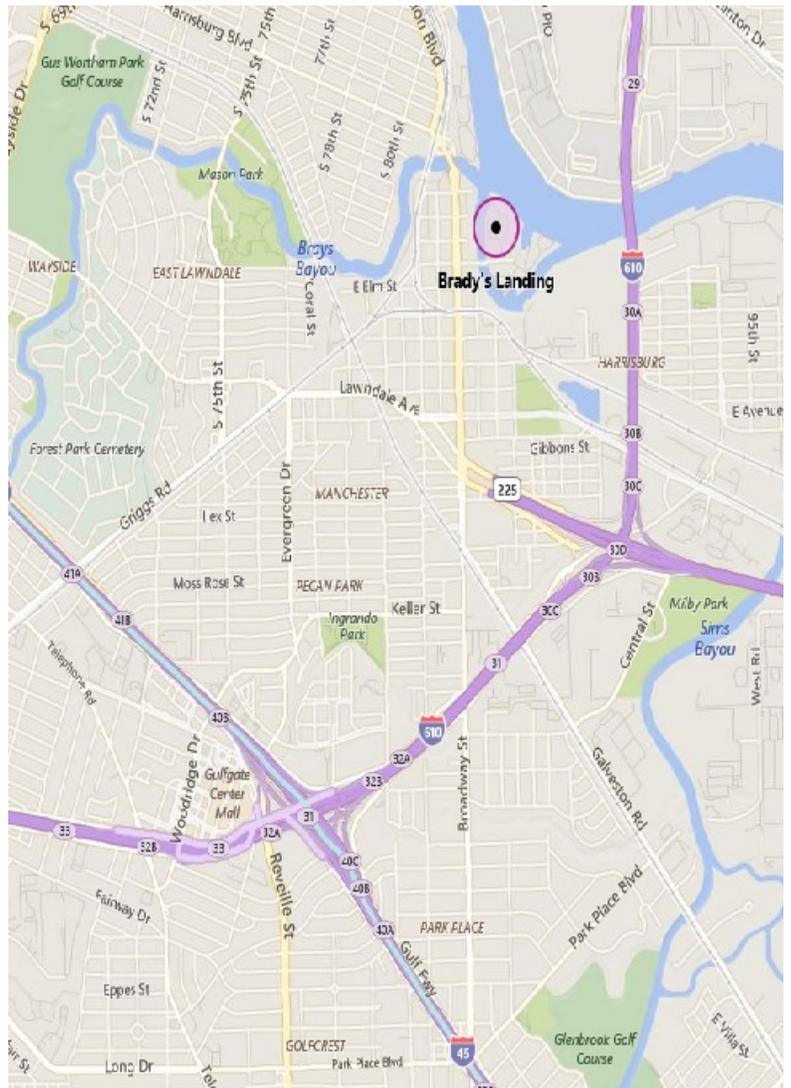
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The Society holds regular meetings on the third Tuesday of August, September, October, November, January, February and April. There are seasonal events and a yearly shell auction scheduled in the other months. Meetings start at 7:30 PM at the Museum of Natural Science, 5555 Hermann Park Drive.

VISITORS WELCOME!!!

Membership year extends from June 1 through May 31. Annual membership dues: Family \$12; Single \$10; Junior (under 18) \$6; Subscriptions only (Museums, Corporations) \$12; Foreign postage add \$8.

Make checks payable to Houston Conchology Society and send to Nancy Mustachio, 1932 Bissonnet, Houston, TX 77005.



## HOUSTON CONCHOLOGY SOCIETY

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