

**History (Evolution) of the  
*American Malacological  
Union (Society)***

By

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**Prepared for the**

**July 1999  
*American Malacological Society*  
Annual Meeting  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.**



# HISTORY (EVOLUTION) OF THE AMERICAN MALACOLOGICAL UNION

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## Preface

At the 1996 Chicago meeting, Bob Prezant asked me to prepare a history of the AMU for 1999, the year of his presidency. After considerable contemplation, I turned him down. However, Bob improved his "arm twisting" technique, and I acquiesced at the Santa Barbara meeting in 1997.

This is, therefore, a record of the evolution of AMU, particularly the last 35-40 years because I have attended every meeting since 1964 and because I have served on the Council as a Councillor, an officer, or an invited guest for most of those years.

History is the result of the actions of people, individually or collectively. This document will, therefore, use names of the actors with no attempt to offend, will try to express the human emotions involved, and will endeavor to clarify certain events that are misunderstood or misinterpreted by some amateurs and professionals. Some dates of events are specific, but many dates are general because those events evolved slowly with an unclear origin.

I accept full responsibility for interpretations and intent but hope this record will enhance the personal part of AMU.

## Commencement

The following is a summary of the early history of AMU as reported by Keen (1981) and Teskey (1981).

Keen (1981) documented an earlier organization, American Association of Conchologists (AAC) as started in 1890 by John H. Campbell of Philadelphia. The list of members, dated April 26, 1890, included 29 members with such notables as Frank C. Baker, William Dall, William McGinty, Charles Torey Simpson, Bryant Walker, and, most importantly, H. A. Pilsbry, but it did not include Normand Lermond the founder of AMU.

A few years later, the AAC disappeared for reasons unclear but ill health of Campbell and his death in 1897 probably contributed (Keen, 1981).

At this point, I turn to Teskey (1981) to tie the AMU to the earlier AAC. The idea of a molluskan organization was started by Norman Lermond of Thomaston, Maine, an amateur like Campbell. Lermond discussed the idea of an organization with his good friend Bill Clench, "over a bowl of chop suey" according to Clench (Teskey 1981). Lermond sent letters to persons interested in mollusks with favorable responses and named the organization American Association of Conchologists. Lermond called a meeting of the group, now having 169 persons in Philadelphia in

April 1931 at the invitation of Pilsbry, some 40 years after the demise of the earlier AAC (Teskey, 1981).

Confusion exists as to the origin of "Union" in AMU, and many have charged that Lermond was responsible since he was a committed socialist. Martin (1995) detailed the early malacological history of Maine, and included biographies of numerous early malacologists, including Lermond. In addition to publishing a socialist newspaper, Equality, Lermond unsuccessfully ran for Congress as the People's Party representative in 1898, and he also ran for governor of Maine in 1900 as the Socialist party's candidate (Martin, 1995).

This suggests that Lermond was indeed responsible for "Union"; however, he sent out the invitation calling the first meeting of an organization under the name AAC (Teskey, 1981). The official name AMU was adopted in 1931 at the first meeting; however, Teskey (1981) did not know whose idea it was. Clench told me sometime in the 1970's that it was Pilsbry's name, and Clench further said "whatever Pilsbry wanted, Pilsbry got". Clench did not say this as being critical of Pilsbry, but as a reflection of Pilsbry's eminence and importance during this era of malacology. Did Clench remember the events clearly or did Lermond influence Pilsbry? We may never know.

Table I is a summary of Presidents, meeting sites, meeting dates, and secretaries/treasurers of AMU from 1931-1981 as recorded by Teskey (1981). I have incorporated the same information for the years 1982 to 1999.

### Metamorphosis

The change of the AMU from an organization of both amateur and professional malacologists to one composed mostly of professionals is an issue froth with controversy, misunderstandings, and emotions. Further, the changes that occurred are complex interrelationships of meeting formats, meeting presentations, publications, governance, Pacific Division of AMU, Western Society of Malacologists, and the Conchologists of America.

There have been and still are amateurs in the AMU some of whom are equal to (maybe better than) some professionals. Any attempt to define an amateur and a professional is laden with pitfalls; therefore, I leave the readers to their own definitions.

In 1972 Arthur Clarke became editor of the AMU Bulletin (called AMU Reports for 36 years; changed to Bulletin in 1971) and requested a review board for articles to be published. Arthur wisely recognized that this could have a negative impact on amateurs who delighted in having their articles published along with noted malacologists, such as Tucker Abbott, Bill Clench, and others. In Arthur's letter (dated October 2, 1972) to Council he discussed the need to upgrade the Bulletin and felt that rejected articles written by amateurs could be placed in the Newsletter (started, 1968), along with notes, news, and other general information.

This, however, left the awkward situation of a presentation given at a meeting but later rejected when the person(s) assumed it publishable. Long forgotten is another event which helped mitigate this problem. Dee Dundee (President, 1973), for the first time, required all abstracts for presentation to be screened by an anonymous committee of three. This placed the burden of decision at the beginning

Table I. AMU Meeting Dates, Sites, Presidents, and Secretaries/Treasurers from 1931-1999

Year	Meeting Site	President	Secretary(S)/Treasurer(T)
1931	Academy of Natural Science, Philadelphia	Henry Pilsbry, elected 1931, served through 1932	Lermond(S) inactive Imogene Robertson (S+T)
1932	U.S. National Museum, Washington, D.C.	Henry Pilsbry	I. Robertson (S+T)
1933	Harvard University	Paul Bartsch	I. Robertson (S+T)
1934	Stanford University	Julius Henderson	I. Robertson (S+T)
1935	Buffalo Museum of Science	William Clench - out of the country; Calvin Goodrich presided	I. Robertson (S+T)
1936	St. Petersburg, Florida	Calvin Goodrich	I. Robertson (S+T)
1937	University of Michigan	Joshua Baily, Jr.	I. Robertson (S+T)
1938	University of Havana, Cuba	Carlos de la Torre	I. Robertson (S+T)
1939	Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada	Maxwell Smith	I. Robertson (S+T)
1940	Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia	H.B. Baker	I. Robertson (S+T)
1941	Rockland, Maine	Harold Rehder	I. Robertson (S+T)
1942-1945	World War II - no meetings		
1946	U.S. National Museum, Washington, D.C.	Louise M. Perry who resigned with Henry van der Schalie presiding	I. Robertson (S) Harold Robertson (T)

Table I. AMU Meeting Dates, Sites, Presidents, and Secretaries/Treasurers from 1931-1999 (continued)

Year	Meeting Site	President	Secretary(S)/Treasurer(T)
1947	Asilomar Pacific Grove, California	Henry van der Schalie	I. Robertson (S) H. Robertson (T)
1948	Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	A. Myra Keen	I. Robertson (S) H. Robertson (T)
1949	University of Miami	Elmer Berry	I. Robertson (S) H. Robertson (T)
1950	Chicago Museum of Natural History	Fritz Haas	I. Robertson (S) H. Robertson (T)
1951	Museum of Science, Buffalo, New York	J.P.E. Morrison	Margaret Teskey (S+T)
1952	Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard	Jeanne Schwengel	M. Teskey (S+T)
1953	University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas	A. Byron Leonard	M. Teskey (S+T)
1954	University of New Hampshire	Joseph Bequaert	M. Teskey (S+T)
1955	Wagner College, Staten Island, New York	Morris K. Jacobson	M. Teskey (S+T)
1956	San Diego, California	Allyn G. Smith	M. Teskey (S+T)
1957	Peabody Museum, Yale University	Ruth D. Turner	M. Teskey (S+T)
1958	University of Michigan	Aurele La Rocque	M. Teskey (S+T)
1959	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	R. Tucker Abbott	M. Teskey (S+T)
1960	Redpath Museum, McGill University, Montreal, Canada	Katherine V.W. Palmer	M. Teskey (S+T)

Table I. AMU Meeting Dates, Sites, Presidents, and Secretaries/Treasurers from 1931-1999 (continued)

Year	Meeting Site	President	Secretary(S)/Recording Secretary(RS)/Corresponding Secretary (CS)/Treasurer(T)
1961	U.S. National Museum, Washington, D.C.	Thomas E. Pulley	M. Teskey (S+T)
1962	St. Petersburg, Florida	William K. Emerson	M. Teskey (S) Jean Cate (T)
1963	Buffalo Museum of Science, New York	Albert Mead	M. Teskey (S) J. Cate (T)
1964	New Orleans, Louisiana	John Q. Burch	M. Teskey (S) J. Cate (T)
1965	Wagner College, Staten Island, New York	Juan J. Parodiz	M. Teskey (S) Mae Dean Richart (T)
1966	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Ralph Dexter	M. Teskey (S) Mrs. H.B. Baker (T)
1967	National Museum of Canada, Ottawa, Canada	Leo G. Hertlein	M. Teskey (S) Mrs. H.B. Baker (T)
1968	Corpus Christi, Texas	Arthur H. Clarke	M. Teskey (S) Mrs. H.B. Baker (T)
1969	University of Wisconsin, Marinette	Joseph Rosewater	M. Teskey (S) Mrs. H.B. Baker (T)
1970	Key West, Florida	Alan G. Solem	Marian Hubbard (RS) Mrs. H.B. Baker (T)
1971	Cocoa Beach, Florida	David H. Stansbery	M. Hubbard (RS) Mrs. H.B. Baker (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)

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Year	Meeting Site	President	Recording Secretary(RS)/ Corresponding Secretary CS)/ Treasurer(T)
1972	Galveston, Texas	Arthur S. Merrill	M. Hubbard (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1973	University of Delaware	Dee S. Dundee	M. Hubbard (RS) Myra Taylor (T) P. Jennewein (CS)
1974	Museum of Sciences, Springfield, Mass.	Harold Murray	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) P. Jennewein (CS)
1975	San Diego State University	Donald Moore	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1976	Ohio State University	Dorothea Franzen	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1977	Naples, Florida	George M. Davis	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1978	University of North Carolina, Wilmington	Carol B. Stein	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1979	Corpus Christi, Texas	William E. Old, Jr.	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1980	Louisville, Kentucky	Clyde F.E. Roper	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)



Table I. AMU Meeting Dates, Sites, Presidents, and Secretaries/Treasurers from 1931-1999 (continued)

Year	Meeting Site	President	Secretary(S)/Recording Secretary(RS)/Corresponding Secretary (CS)/Treasurer (T)
1981	Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	Richard Houbrick	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1982	New Orleans, Louisiana	Louise Russert-Kraemer	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1983	University of Washington, Seattle	Alan J. Kohn	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1984	Norfolk, Virginia	Robert Robertson	Connie Boone (RS) Myra Taylor (T) Paul Jennewein (CS)
1985	University of Rhode Island, Kingston	Melbourne Carriker	Connie Boone (RS) Anne Joffee (T) Paula Mikkelsen (CS)
1986	Monterey, California	James Nybakken	Connie Boone (RS) Anne Joffee (T) Paula Mikkelsen (CS)
1987	Key West, Florida	William Lyons	Connie Boone (RS) Anne Joffee (T) Paula Mikkelsen (CS)
1988	Charleston, South Carolina	Richard Petit	Connie Boone (RS) Anne Joffee (T) Paula Mikkelsen (CS)
1989	University of Southern California, Los Angeles	James McLean	Connie Boone (RS) Anne Joffee (T) Paula Mikkelsen (CS)
1990	Woods Hole, Massachusetts	Roger Hanlon	Clement Counts (S+T)

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Year	Meeting Site	President	Secretary(S)/Treasurer (T)
1991	Clark Kerr Campus, University of California, Berkeley	Carole Hickman	Richard Petit (S+T)
1992	Sarasota, Florida	Robert Bullock	Richard Petit (S+T)
1993	Nordic Empress-Cruise, Miami, Florida to Bahama Island	Fred Thompson	David Hargreave (S+T)
1994	Hyatt Regency, Houston, Texas	Constance Boone	David Hargreave (S+T)
1995	University of Hawaii, Hilo	E. Alison Kay	David Hargreave (T) Caryl Hesterman (S)
1996	Chicago Museum of Natural History (Field Museum)	Rudiger Bieler	David Hargreave (T) Caryl Hesterman (S)
1997	Radisson Hotel, Santa Barbara, California	Eugene Coan	Eugene Keferl (T) Roland Anderson (S)
1998	Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.	Robert Hershler	Eugene Keferl (T) Roland Anderson (S)
1999	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	Robert Prezant	Eugene Keferl (T) Roland Anderson (S)

rather than in the middle. Abstract screening continued for a period of several years by which time fewer amateurs were requesting presentation time at meetings. During this period, research in malacology, as in other disciplines, shifted more and more to areas of karyotyping, electrophoresis, electromicroscopy, biochemistry, and other such methodologies which amateurs (maybe some professionals) found hard to understand. The combined effect of Bulletin upgrade, abstract screening, and types of presentations using more modern methods left the amateurs disenchanting. I was sitting behind some amateurs during one esoteric presentation. When the paper was finished, one turned to the other and said, "I didn't understand a word he said, did you?" The other said "no". "Let's go outside for a while for the next paper looks the same".

Before the reader leaps to a false conclusion concerning the upgrade of science in the AMU, let me assure everyone that not once did Council discuss or comment on how to eliminate amateurs in the AMU. In fact, Council regularly discussed, at length, how we could enhance programs to keep more amateurs in the organization.

In 1948 a Pacific Division (PD) of the AMU was started (the approval was at the 1947 AMU Council meeting in Asilomar in Pacific Grove, California with van der Schalie as President). A geographic region could have a meeting under the aegis of the AMU; however, PD was the only region ever organized. In retrospect, it is clear the PD was destined to fail for a variety of reasons which are clearly documented in the letter of resignation of all officers of the PD sent to President Arthur Clarke on January 15, 1968. First, few west coast members could attend AMU meetings in the east which was a major reason for the PD in the first place. Second, in paying AMU dues the PD could assess a .50 fee for their use (dues \$2.50 to AMU). The retained fee was too small to support PD meetings; therefore, PD had to have high registration fees. A third problem was AMU's charge in 1966-67 that the PD was preempting more than its share of the space in the Annual Reports (now Bulletin). Fourth, some persons were assessed the \$.50 fee because they lived in the geographic area of the west but had no interest in PD. Several years earlier the AMU Council had approved that nobody was forced to pay the fee. The billing did not come from PD but from AMU.

The above when combined with a few things best unsaid led to the resignation of officers of the PD in 1968. In September 23, 1967 various PD members met in California starting the formation of the Western Society of Malacology (WSM) which ended the PD with their resignations. The first President was Dave Mulliner. Other aspects of meetings leading to their incorporation, other officers of the first meeting, and other events will be left to the Western Society and their archives.

Following is a tape forwarded to me by William Emerson July 13, 1998. It is a recording of the proceedings which organized the WSM September 24, 1968. The tape is self-explanatory; however, one should read this carefully noting the careful selection of words that explain their reasons for a new organization.

"Today, Sept. 23, I believe, 24, oh my, a group of interested people met at the home of the Cates in Los Angeles to discuss the desirability of forming an organization of interested malacologists from the Western Hemisphere to provide means and facilities for meeting of people who are working in one way or another with mollusks or related organisms to achieve a mutual exchange of ideas in a way which heretofore has not been possible. An organization

which would be more or less home governed rather than having to take directives from a distant parent organization. I believe that is essentially the consensus, isn't it?"

"Among the objectives of the new group would be to facilitate a variety of programs to institute means of getting new people interested in the field of malacology, any part of the field of malacology and especially make a drive in one way or another to get students, beginning students of malacology, to come out and participate in the meeting or meetings of that new organization. After considerable discussions, er, it was decided to form an incorporating committee to which Mr. Mulliner of said San Diego Shell Club was elected Chairman, Mrs. Hughes of the Long Beach Shell Club, Secretary, Mrs. DuShain of the Conchological Club of Southern California as Treasurer, Mrs. Wolfson of San Diego, Skippes Institution in San Diego State College and...of the Santa Barbara Shell, no, oh you are not, well that's alright, Mr. Sphon of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. In the following discussion after the election of these officers, it was decided to offer Charter membership in the new organization. This charter membership will be open for one year up to but not including September 24th, 1968. Charter membership fee is five dollars. It was decided that the regular membership fees of the new organization will be two dollars and fifty cents per calendar year. A student membership of one dollar was suggested. It was decided to incorporate the new society. The incorporating officers have been mentioned before. A Bylaws Committee was appointed by President Mulliner consisting of Mr. Hanselman, and Mr. & Mrs. Cate. In the discussion following afterwards, it was stressed that many activities will be possible in the new organization which heretofore had been forbidden in another organization which somewhat parallels the new organization. It is not necessary here to mention what organization we were having in mind at the time. I believe it can be stated that deadlines have been set, the bylaws should be in a presentable form by the end of October, articles of incorporation should be presentable before that, efforts will be made to enlist the services of a lawyer at the minimum rate for the purposes of incorporation. Attentively it has been suggested that we will have a meeting open to the public at large in June of 1968, as of the date, to be determined at a later time. One important aspect perhaps of the new organization is the enlistment of the presidents of all shell clubs of the Western area in an advisory capacity to the new organization. Do we have anything else that should be added? Oh, yes, the name. The name that was adopted was Western Society of Malacologists. Is there any other point that should be mentioned? Yeah, lots of tape, go ahead."

"I think we covered everything as far as I am..."

"Alright, let's see..."

"It was decided to send an informing letter to the various shell clubs in the area. One as soon after November 1st, or if possible, even before November 1st, giving a general outline of the purposes of the new organization and one to follow sometime after January 1st giving more specific information. Anything more than that? Is that it?"

In 1968 several west coast AMU members attended the Corpus Christi meeting and approached several Council members hoping that all could be resolved. Too much had transpired with

individual opinions and feelings of AMU Council so mixed that an impasse was reached.

Starting in 1971 discussions at AMU Council meeting were initiated on how to "mend the fence" between east and west. Some, of course, were opposed to any association with WSM. These discussions continued at the 1972, 1973 and 1974 AMU Council meetings. In 1974, Council finally agreed to meet on the west coast jointly with the WSM at San Diego State University with Don Moore President of AMU. Since 1974, AMU and WSM have met jointly in a variety of places.

In 1984 the AMU removed from its Constitution and Bylaws the provision allowing a geographic division to exist under its aegis. The demise of the PD and the start of WSM is a classic example of poor communication by AMU, professional differences between selected individuals in the east and west, and personal differences on meeting operations. The overall impact WSM had on AMU membership was minimal as most professionals in the west maintained their membership with AMU. There was a small loss of amateurs as they related better to WSM.

Unquestionably, the one event that dramatically changed the AMU was the start of the Conchologists of America (COA) in 1972. By 1998 the COA had about 1500 members composed mostly of amateurs with some professionals. As the AMU began upgrading the scientific part of its publications, improving the presentations at meetings, and initiating world class symposia, many amateurs found the COA met their needs in ways the AMU had and did not. During the late 70's and into the 80's, the AMU Council discussed at length ways to attract and keep amateurs. Efforts were made to increase workshops in the evenings with other special events.

In the late 1980's it was apparent that AMU could not serve two masters: the scientist and the amateur. This was first pointed out by Arthur Clarke in his letter to Council in 1972 (see earlier comments).

The creation of COA, followed by a major exodus of amateurs from AMU, presented a new, unexpected problem for AMU. Historically, the AMU was highly dependent on amateurs to help organize local meeting sites (often in conjunction with local shell clubs), to help defray some costs of a meeting, and to entertain attendees. In the 1960's and 1970's, the Council usually had a waiting list of shell clubs wishing to host an AMU meeting. Today, those instances of having a shell club host an AMU meeting are usually the results of individual Presidents convincing a local group to host (Chicago, 1996, as a recent example). Without shell club(s) as host, each President had to be more critical of costs and registration fees, and spend an inordinate amount of time on local arrangements that before were left to shell clubs and their committees.

Prior to 1986 the Executive Council of AMU was composed of its officers of which there were usually ten (President, President Elect, Vice President, one or two Secretaries, Treasurer, and four Councillors-at-Large) plus all Past Presidents. A Council meeting might have 40 or more present with each having the right to make motions, to discuss, and to vote. Council meetings would start at 7:00 p.m. and often continue until 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. with an occasional need for a second Council meeting in order to conclude the business.

Until the mid-1980's all business conducted by the Council required approval by members at the Annual Business Meeting. This created two problems. First, when Council had 40± voting

approval on an issue, those same 40± persons were at the Annual Business Meeting at which there might be 15-20 non-council present. A motion was, therefore, almost guaranteed approval. However, the "almost" created a second problem by potentially placing the Council and business meeting in adversarial roles. This finally happened in 1983 when, after several years of changing its position on the sale of shells at an annual meetings, the Council prohibited the sale of shells; however, the Annual Business Meeting reversed that Council decision. The sale of shells continued to be controversial at each Council meeting. In 1994, Houston, Texas, Fred Thompson presented a resolution to Council to ban shell sales at meetings. The resolution was strongly debated from opposite poles of opinion with the Council tabling (postponed indefinitely the resolution) the motion. In Hawaii in 1995 the Thompson resolution was reconsidered with little change of polarity of Council, but on a close vote by Council the resolution was defeated. At the Annual Business Meeting in Hawaii, there was a motion from the floor to ban shell sales. After discussion there was a strong, majority vote by members to ban shell sales. Technically, this floor motion had no control over Council because Council could do whatever it wished (see below). Council, however, clearly recognized the strong opinions and votes on this floor motion in Hawaii and in 1996 (Chicago), Council approved the following motion, "The American Malacological Union does not allow selling, buying, or trading of shells or shell products at its annual meetings." This finally established an official policy prohibiting the sale of shells.

Clearly, such a large governance body was unwieldy to handle and slow to conclude issues. I am aware of at least four attempts (one as early as 1970) to reduce the Council membership; however, all attempts failed to obtain Council approval; therefore, the issue never came to the membership. In 1985 Council finally voted to proceed with a change in Council membership. The Council minutes of 1985 did not record the official vote for or against the change; however, I clearly recall it was a close vote and won by about five votes. This was one of the most vigorously discussed issues that Council ever debated. After a vote in the Annual Business Meeting of 1985 and a mail ballot to all members, the change was officially enacted for the 1986 meeting. The new Council was restructured so that the total number of voting members was reduced to 17 of which only seven (not 30-40) were Past Presidents. These Past Presidents were allotted in the following way: three were the most Immediate Past Presidents, two were presidents more than 4 but less than 10 years ago, and two were presidents more than 10 years ago. Further, the less than and more than 10 year presidents were elected for two years and then had to be off Council for one year. The elimination of all Past Presidents, except the four elected disenfranchised many of the Past Presidents and some were rarely seen at later meetings.

Today, the Council is the governing body with general membership (at an Annual Business Meeting) voting on but three issues: election of officers, changes in Constitution and Bylaws, and budget approval for following year. All other matters of business are delegated to Council.

Although the earlier Council (40+ members) was a cumbersome body, there were some interesting events. It was a thrill, as a younger malacologist, to sit in a room with all the "old timers" and hear them reminisce about their field trips, deceased members, and various personalities of the AMU. Of course, while this was going on, no business occurred. There was an additional interesting polarization in those large Council meetings which centered on those past presidents who had been van der Schalie's students and those who had been Clench's students. These were loosely identified camps. Normally, business proceeded without incident; however,

two things were often hotly debated. One was the Law of Priority of scientific names versus long-term use of a name that did not have priority. This invariably came to rest on unionids described by Rafinesque which were judged unrecognizable by the van der Schalie camp with the Clench camp on the opposing side. A second controversy, with a vein of humor in it, was the disagreement about how Corbicula sp. was spread so rapidly from downstream to upstream against the flow of current. This debate was in the early years of the Asiatic clam's introduction into U.S. waterways. At the Ottawa, Canada meeting (1967) van der Schalie argued that fishermen spread the clams by dumping their bait in uninfested areas. Conversely, Clench argued that waterfowl were responsible by being either passive carriers with clams on their feathers or by passing the young clam in their droppings. They never, to my knowledge, resolved this issue. Incidentally, this reminded me of the philosophers sitting in a room arguing how many teeth were in a horse's mouth with no one going to get a horse and count the teeth!

Since the mid-1960's there have been no less than five attempts to change the name of AMU from a "Union" to a "Society". This issue surfaced about every five to six years and each time it was soundly defeated by Council based on the heritage of the organization. Prior to the 1986 governance change any discussion concerning name change lasted but a few minutes. After 1986 such discussions became more serious and lasted 20-30 minutes. Finally, at the 1998 AMU meeting in Washington, D.C. the Council and Annual Business Meeting finally approved a name change. As I write this, it is likely that the name change to American Malacological Society will be effective for the 1999 meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania as the only stage left is a vote by general membership.

I have attempted to present my perceptions of the AMU meetings and its changes through my eyes and ears starting at my first meeting in 1964 (joined in 1960) in New Orleans. I hope the reader can now understand my comments in the first paragraph under metamorphosis: the evolution of the AMU is a case of punctuated evolution and has been both convoluted and complex.

### Potpourri

There are many stories to tell for my 34 consecutive years of AMU meetings, but one should not overly bore the reader. I will, however, present the three following events. One was almost the financial ruin of AMU. The second was the most repugnant event at an AMU meeting. The third is, without a doubt, the funniest thing ever to happen at a meeting.

The 1970 AMU was in Key West, Florida with Alan Solem President. The site was a motel with most rooms as cabin-like quarters. The focal point of the setting was a swimming pool which had a small snack bar to the side offering sandwiches and drinks. The snack bar was not open for breakfast, and there was no place for most to obtain breakfast. About 30 yards from the motel there was a large restaurant, but it too was not open for breakfast. After complaints from various attendees, Alan convinced the restaurant owner to open for breakfast since we had about 125 people and most would want breakfast. The owner brought in his entire staff, purchased necessary foods for a breakfast menu, and opened for breakfast. In spite of Alan's announcements of the availability of the breakfast only a couple people showed up the first morning and about the same number the second. Needless to say, the owner was irate wanting compensation for his financial losses. Armed with a lawyer he threatened a suit; however, smooth talking Alan got us

out of the bind by paying him a small amount (I never knew how much). In 1971 our total assets were \$5,000.00 and a litigation could have been the ruin of AMU.

This second event, if not repugnant, was definitely embarrassing, particularly to Clyde Roper, President in 1980 at the Louisville, Kentucky meeting. I apologize to Clyde, but this is a classic case of what can happen to any president. The Annual Banquet was in the Canterbury Room of the hotel. The after dinner speaker was William A. Conklin, Chief Radiologic Technologist at the Orangeburg Regional Hospital in South Carolina. The presentation was titled, "Inner Dimension", with the promise of x-ray photographs of mollusks. Obviously, the speaker was unknown to Clyde and had been recommended by someone else. Indeed, the first several slides were artistic, beautiful x-rays of gastropods, and were enjoyed by the 150± attending the dinner. The remaining slides will be described as delicately and politely as possible to avoid offending the reader. The slides were x-ray photographs of objects that people (male and female) had inserted into their orifices below the waist line, including bottles, nuts, bolts, coat hangers, etc. I shall belabor this point no further. Within minutes people left the room, and most of us remaining were in disbelief. No one knew what to do, and Clyde was trying to disappear under the head table. At the conclusion of the talk, the applause was less than enthusiastic, and it was the quickest end to a banquet I ever experienced.

I leave this historical recount on a light note which I feel is the funniest thing to happen at an AMU meeting. It was Cocoa Beach, Florida, 1971, with David Stansbery President. The opening session was to start at 1:30 p.m.; however, they had changed the meeting room and were busy with last minute touches to the projection screen and public address system which seemed to be a problem. The 125± people were, however, busy talking to their long time friends. Finally, it was felt the microphone was working properly, and David approached the lectern with a hush falling over the audience. David was unsure of the quality of the speaker system and his first words to open the meeting were, and I quote, "How do I sound from the rear?" Without hesitation and without thinking, Dorothy Raeihle of Elmhurst, New York from the back of the room in a clear, powerful voice permeating the quiet of the facility responded, "Turn around and we'll find out."

The laughter was instantaneous, loud and uncontrollable for 10 minutes with tears of laughter from all eyes. After 10 minutes quietness began to occur, then someone, somewhere would snicker, just a little, and the whole room was set off in another roar of uncontrolled laughter. During this time David left the lectern for a chair on the platform adding his laughter to the rest. After about 15 minutes it seemed we (as an audience) had gained our composure, and David got up to the lectern. As he stood there with the audience stabilized, he smiled. That did it: the laughter started again. The third time to the lectern he started the opening comments and inadvertently made a small (very small) chuckle. It happened again. Well, finally after about 20 minutes the meetings were started without further disruptions.

#### Acknowledgements

I wish to thank six of our more mature AMU members who have supplied me with ideas, dates, and events which I have intertwined into the above account without quoting each. Bill Emerson obtained valuable information relating to the start of WSM including the transcription of



the tape here included. Richard Petit forwarded valuable materials relating to the trouble times of AMU due to the inactivity of the Secretary/Treasurer in the 1990 period. Dick took over the books and secretarial functions until the AMU could recover.

I now quote three individuals who capture an essence of AMU that I may not have addressed. Melbourne Carriker, "I count AMU and NSA as the associations that have supported me most over the years, each in its own unique emphasis and direction. I keep telling young malacologists they can do no better than be affiliated with AMU--and many have". Constance Boone, "After 29 years I can say that this organization is open to anyone. There are no requirements except to pay dues. What you get from AMU is often what you contribute and what you gain from association with professionals, serious amateurs and anyone else attending meetings." And finally, Dorothea Franzen, "It was enjoyable to see 'old-timers' at the AMU meeting--though the numbers are decreasing from year to year". Each has found something unique and important in their associations with AMU.

Finally, Donald Moore agreed to participate with those listed above; however, his unexpected death this past year prohibited his involvement.

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