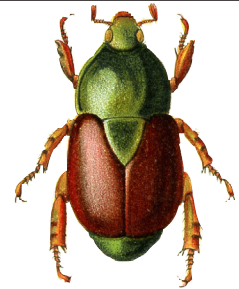


SCARABS



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WITHIN THIS ISSUE

Henry Howden Obituary 1

Remembering Henry Howden..... 6

Last Christmas Greetings from the Howdens 18

Note from the Family 18

The Unsung Hero 19

Collecting Memories..... 20

Automotive Discovery .. 22

Final Image of the Howdens 26

BACK ISSUES

Available At These Sites:

Coleopterists Society
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www-museum.unl.edu/research/entomology/Scarabs-Newsletter.htm

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Henry Fuller Howden - 1925-2014

Photo Courtesy of Vladislav Maly

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Henry Fuller Howden died 21 May 2014 in Victoria, British Columbia just 2 months shy of his 89th birthday. Working on a manuscript up until the end, he maintained his sense of humour and joked with doctors and nurses at the Royal Jubilee Hospital that they still hadn't found a cure for old age.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, 19 August 1925, Henry began collecting insects at an early age. By the time he was 12, his moth and butterfly collection was comprehensive enough to win him an honorary membership in the Maryland Academy of Sciences. A few years later he liquidated his Lepidoptera, used the proceeds to purchase his first set of Cornell drawers, and then focussed on building up his beetle collection, especially scarabs. After completing his schooling at a local military academy, he was accepted into the Department of Entomology & Zoology at the University of Maryland in 1941. His undergraduate training was interrupted in 1944 when he turned 19 and received a draft notice. Enlisting in the U.S. Army, he hoped to join their entomology corps, but instead was assigned to the Air Force as a non-commissioned officer. After completing his military service at Hamilton Field near San Francisco, he returned to Maryland to finish his BSc in 1946 and was accepted directly into their graduate program. With all of the entomology positions taken, he made a brief foray into the Zoology Department to study fish for an MSc, then returned to insects and received his MSc in Entomology

in 1949. This same year he married Anne Elizabeth Thompson, who was also an avid entomologist and recent graduate of the University of Maryland. Leaving Maryland, the newly-weds moved to North Carolina State University (NCSU) where Anne studied the succession of insects on pig carcasses for her MSc, and Henry worked on the taxonomy and biology of Geotrupine beetles under Professor Paul O. Ritcher. Anne would later switch to working on weevils, a group with more agreeable feeding habits, in the eyes and noses of many observers.

During their graduate time in Raleigh, Henry and Anne became good friends with Henry K. Townes, the Ichneumonid specialist, and his wife Marjorie. Both couples were avid collectors and would go on field trips together in the U.S. southeast. On one occasion, Howden recounts that he got a useful lesson in frugality from the elder Henry. During a break in collecting, the group headed to a local restaurant for dinner. Towards the end of the meal, Townes asked his wife to put the excess bread rolls into her purse so they could enjoy them the following day. Marjorie complied with the request, which was observed by the owner of the restaurant. The owner came over and asked if they would like any more rolls. Completely unflappable, Townes replied "yes, that would be nice", so the owner was obliged to bring over another basket of rolls. These were promptly transferred into Marjorie's bag before the bill was

paid and the two couples returned to collecting. Learning to pinch pennies in order to extend fieldwork was a foundation of the Townes philosophy, and one that Henry Howden with his Scottish ancestry, was quick to adopt.

Henry was awarded his PhD in 1953, and with it the distinction of being the first to receive a Doctorate in Entomology from NCSU. He joked that it stood for Post Hole Digger, a tool that he found useful for excavating scarabs from deep sandy burrows. With five publications completed, he accepted a teaching job at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. He taught general biology, entomology, and evolution for the next few years, while continuing his research on beetles.

Since he was only paid by the university during the academic year, he supplemented his income by becoming a consultant to the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission at Oak Ridge during the summer months, investigating the effects of radiation on insects. Henry's enthusiasm for field work, support for the newly-founded Coleopterists Society, and his publication record caught the attention of entomologists at the Department of Agriculture in Ottawa. They were keen to recruit him to work north of the border. After some negotiations, Henry accepted a position as a research scientist with the Canada Department of Agriculture and moved the family to Ottawa in August 1957. He spent the next decade building up the beetle collection at the Cana-

dian National Collection (CNC) through extensive field work, while continuing to publish on the taxonomy of scarabs and other beetle families, as well as papers on insect biogeography.

In 1967 at the invitation of Phil Darlington, Henry took a 6 month sabbatical at Harvard University. He continued to develop the concepts of biogeography as they applied to insect evolution, as a visiting Agassiz Lecturer. When he returned to Ottawa, he extended his leave of absence from the Entomology Research Institute (Canada Department of Agriculture) and began lecturing at Carleton University at the invitation of Herbert H.J. Nesbitt, the Dean of Science. Henry apparently enjoyed teaching and the academic freedom of the university, and certainly didn't miss the ever-increasing red tape and bureaucracy of government. He formally resigned his government position on 31 August 1970, having accepted a full professorship in the Department of Biology at Carleton. His position in the Department of Agriculture was promptly refilled by Aleš Smetana, who had been at the CNC for several years on a visiting fellowship.

Once established at Carleton, Henry was successful in getting NSERC grants that allowed him to purchase a scanning electron microscope, hire technicians, and carry out field work during the summer months. For the next 25 years he taught courses in systematic entomology, evolution & biogeography, and animal system-

atics. He supervised numerous undergraduate honours theses, as well as 9 MSc and 10 PhD students, and several Postdoctoral Fellows. While most of his graduate students were entomologists, a few studied fish, birds, or amphipods. The academic year at Carleton was broken up by spring break and summer holidays. In most years, Henry and Anne would arrange collecting trips to Central or South America to coincide with these breaks. The numerous insects collected by beating, black-lighting, or pitfall trapping would be brought back to Ottawa in Whirl-pak bags or glass vials charged with ethyl acetate, to be mounted up and studied over the following winter. Specimens not of interest would be passed on to other specialists in their large circle of friends. Many of these exchanges took place in person at the Entomological Society of America (ESA) and Coleopterists Society annual meetings, which both Henry and Anne tried to attend on a regular basis. Their attendance at Entomological Society of Canada (ESC) meetings was much less frequent as Henry explained, because most of the taxonomists in Canada worked in Ottawa or at least passed through it on a frequent basis. Henry's love of field work and his "itchy feet" meant that sabbaticals from teaching were taken on a regular basis, and far from home. The typical destination was Australia, where he and Anne were welcomed by the CSIRO as visiting scientists, and given logistical support to study the scarab and weevil fauna "down-under". In return, all holotypes selected from their

Australian material were deposited in the Australian National Insect Collection in Canberra.

The long-term care of insect collections was of major concern to Henry. In 1989 he represented the Canadian Society of Zoologists at a Parliamentary hearing in Ottawa into Bill C-12, the Museums Act. He highlighted the importance of collections and urged support for the Museums Act. Putting his money where his mouth was, he encouraged the director of the newly re-named Canadian Museum of Nature (CMN) to hire an entomologist by offering to donate his and Anne's beetle collection to the museum, along with a sizeable cash endowment. After all, how could the museum purport to represent nature, when it lacked insects, one of nature's most successful animal groups. Henry's argument was sound, and he got a signed agreement that the CMN would accept their collection plus the endowment. This would eventually lead Henry and Anne to donate over 463,000 specimens and \$300,000 to the CMN in the years to follow.

Henry retired from Carleton in the spring of 1995 as he approached his 70th birthday. Retirement from the university didn't slow down his research, as both he and Anne were welcomed as Honorary Research Associates at the CMN where they were provided office space and support. They worked there for the next 11 years, continuing to travel, publish and curate specimens. Details of their time at the CMN can be found in the recent article by

Smith et al. (2014).

In May of 2006 Henry suffered a stroke while travelling to western Canada to visit family. This effectively ended his field work and taxonomic research. After a period of rehabilitation, he devoted his efforts to writing up his 60 years of field notes. These were initially made available in a series of 47 installments running under the title *In Past Years* in the online newsletter *Scarabs* from May 2007 to December 2011. Feedback on the series was positive, so Henry reorganized the text into chronological sequence, adding additional images and text with the view to publishing it as a book. Like all big projects, this took much longer than anticipated, and was only completed posthumously (Howden et al. 2014). This was to be his last publication, number 186.

Henry's support to the entomological community has been long and unwavering. As a graduate student at NCSU, he joined both the ESA as well as the fledgling Coleopterists Society. He was News Editor of the *Coleopterists Bulletin* in 1953, Contributing Editor in 1954, and served two terms as President of the Coleopterists Society in 1968 and 1969. He was elected Chairman of Section A, ESA in 1965 and joined the ESC in 1970 shortly after accepting his faculty position at Carleton. He served on the Board of the American Entomological Institute (founded by Henry Townes) from 1963 to 1996, and was Vice-President of the CanaColl Founda-

tion (founded by another long-time friend Ed Becker) from 1976 to 1998. He started the Ottawa Entomology Club in the 1970's as an informal monthly gathering of people interested in insects, which continues to this day. Henry was a long-time member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Sigma Xi - The Scientific Research Society, and the Knox Presbyterian Church in Ottawa. In recognition of his support to science and entomology, he received many awards including being elected Fellow of the ESC in 1985, Honorary Member of the Coleopterists Society in 2003, and Fellow of the ESA in 2005.

Henry's frugality was only exceeded by his generosity, as he provided guidance and advice to students and colleagues, as well as funds to support field work or specimens for research. Out of town visitors in particular were often hosted or entertained at 23 Trillium Avenue, and the Howden guest book reads like a veritable "Who's Who" of distinguished entomologists. If the visitors were fortunate enough to be scarab or weevil workers, then the "indoor" collecting could prove very productive indeed! Henry's legacy will live on with his important contributions to our knowledge of scarab beetles. He is survived by his wife Anne plus their 3 daughters and families, and will be remembered fondly by many friends and colleagues from around the world.

References

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Smith, A.B.T., Anderson, R.S., and Génier, F. 2014. In Memoriam, Henry F. Howden. *The Coleopterists Bulletin* 68: 360-362.

Bruce D. Gill
Ottawa



From Jocelyn Gill: Henry demonstrating the security features of the strong box that holds the Howden family jewels.



From Jocelyn Gill: A pleasant visit from family. From left to right: Lucy (Howden) Mears, Henry, Susan (Thompson) Ballinger (Anne's sister), and Anne.



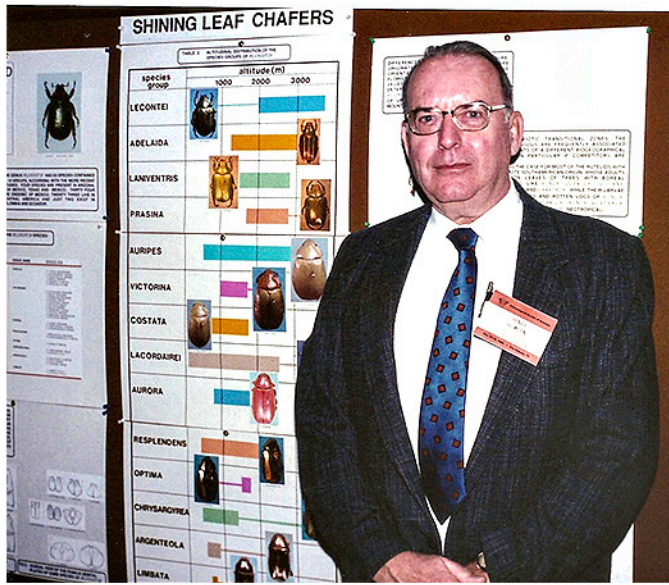
From Jocelyn Gill: A warm send off as Henry and Anne prepare to move to British Columbia to be closer to their daughters and family. Back Row from left to right: Monty and Grace Wood, Hume Douglas, Bruce Gill, Lubomir Masner, Aleš Smetana, Petr Švácha, Stewart Peck. Middle Row: Jennifer Read, Lise Robillard Smetana, Anne Howden, Jarmila Kukulova Peck. Front Row: Jocelyn Gill, Henry Howden.



From Jocelyn Gill: Henry, Anne, and Barbara (Howden) Holme come to inspect the Gill's Garagemahal.



From Bob Woodruff: I believe this was taken in Ottawa, following the Chicago ESA meeting in 1966. I rode back to Ottawa with Anne and Henry, and had a wonderful time as their guest for a week. I first met the Howdens in 1954, as a graduate student at Ohio State, and he was at University of Tennessee. They visited us in Florida many times and were always great field companions. I may not have stuck with scarabs without the help and encouragement from Henry.



From Miguel Morón: My first interview with Henry was during the ESA anual meeting San Antonio Texas, December 1989. Here, he is attending my poster presentation on *Plusiotis*, that he so called “Christmas tree poster.”



From Miguel Morón: With my wife Gloria, we were hosted at the Howden’s home for the first time during September, 1990.



From Miguel Morón: Henry offering a guided tour of Gatineau park, Quebec, during September 1998.

From Miguel Morón: The Howdens visiting our home in Briones, Xalapa during May 1999, with Gloria in the garden where Henry's light trap is hanging on the wall.



From Miguel Morón: Collecting trip near El Volcancillo, Las Vigas, Veracruz, México, May 1999. Seated: Gloria and our daughter Lorena. Standing: Anne, Roberto Arce and Henry.



From Miguel Morón: With Bruce and Jocelyn Gill celebrating my birthday during another visit to Howden's home in October, 2002.





From Miguel Morón: Henry identifying some geotrupid specimens in his nice home studio at Nepean, Ontario in September, 2005. This was my last personal contact with him.

From Osvaldo R. Di Iorio, Buenos Aires, Argentina: I met with Henry once in Rosario de Lerma, Salta, Argentina. He came with Anne and a younger Bruce Gill, for the purpose of shipping the scarabaeid collection of Antonio Martínez to Canada. We were there coincidentally because I arrived to obtain the collection of longhorned beetles that the son of Antonio Martínez had sold to me. When Henry arrived (after introductions), his first question to the son was “And the collection of Cerambycidae?”

Henry, Anne, and Bruce dedicated the next days (probably an entire week) to placing the scarabaeid beetles into pinning trays, and then into one cubic meter hardboard boxes for transportation. I never understand how the insects were transported as hand-baggage, as Henry told me! It was suggested by Henry that holotypes and allotypes of Martínez be deposited in the National Museum at Buenos Aires. So I returned to Buenos Aires in a bus with more than one hundred name-bearing specimens, waiting to arrive safe to maintain the good health of scarabaeid nomenclature!!!! During the nights in Salta, we were dedicated also to conversing about insects, insects, and more insects, as well as enjoying good dinners and drinks!

After Henry, Anne and Bruce returned to Canada, I remained in contact with Henry from time to time. The last news from Henry was given to me when Bruce came to a scarabaeid congress in Argentina in 2012, and someone took a photo to show Henry that Bruce and I were together again. I shall never forget what a gentlemen Henry was!

From T. Keith Phillips, Professor, Associate Editor of *Coleoptera, Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*, Systematics and Evolution Laboratory, Department of Biology, Western Kentucky University: My first encounter with Henry Howden was while I was an under grad at Carleton University. Henry taught courses in biogeography and insect diversity. I took his two courses he offered on biogeography but took neither his insect course, nor the one Stewart Peck offered as I thought I already knew a lot about insects! How little I knew. But Henry's courses in biogeography were a delight and very educational. The first in the series emphasized North America, while the second was global in outlook. The aspect I particularly remember were the labs,- most of which consisted of slide shows showing various places he had visited in his attempt to try and teach us something about the distributions of organisms on the planet.

After my third year, I caught wind of a possible summer job as an insect technician in the Howden lab. I went to see him and he asked me about my background in entomology. I told him about the insect collection I started with my father's encouragement when I was seven years old at the family cottage on Lake Mazinaw, a place I spent summers as a child. I sometimes wonder what I would be doing now if my insect collection hobby never occurred. Regardless, Henry hired me on the spot and I started working for him that summer as a technician. The next

summer the job started up again for me. It was quite a nice place to work with all the various people around- this included folks like the then students Bruce Gill, Mike Kaulbars, Dorothy Lindeman as well as Lew Ling, an SEM technician who functioned in part as Henry's technician as well. As well, there was Stewart Peck across the hall and Bert Nesbitt, the acarologist who, after he got to know me, would periodically say, "Keith why don't you go to grad school?"

After graduation, I continued working in the lab after the summer ended. The plan was to keep working for a year, save up money, and then travel with Linda (now my spouse) for an extended trip in Asia. As it turned out, we delayed the trip due to some good contracts my wife received for her production company. So I ended up working for about two years in the Howden lab.

Before leaving for our travels, I started sending out inquires to potential grad schools. One was Montana State, where Mike Ivie had gotten hold of my letter. He called up Henry to ask about me and who I was. Henry replied, "Well, he is in the next room. Would you like to speak to him yourself?" That started me on the path to Bozeman, Montana. Henry, of course, was the one who wrote me the needed letters of recommendation for graduate school.

One other job I did for Henry was house sit a few times while he and Anne were away on some of their

many adventures. For those of you that visited his house, you will remember the one room in particular that was filled with cabinets and specimens. I asked about taking pictures of some of the specimens while there and he readily agreed; I had been his trusted technician for a while. In particular, I remember taking pictures of



Phalacrognathus muelleri, the rainbow stag beetle



Odontolabis sp.

some of the lucanids, like *Phalacrognathus muelleri*, the rainbow stag beetle, and various dynastine scarabs.- Oh what fun that was in the evening!

One funny evening I have to mention was one time when I went over for dinner. Vegetables were being served from serving dishes. One had a broken handle but it had been glued back on by Henry. Well, this dish was passed to me and during the process the handle fell off and it landed on the table! It was a bit humorous as there was not much of a mess with an upright landing, but Anne was not amused. She cursed out Henry for attempting to do a repair instead of throwing the dish in the trash.

My interactions with Henry during later years typically involved visiting during meetings or sharing a drink with him. I fondly remember doing just that the last time I saw him in Ottawa during the summer of 2013 with his wife Anne, and Bruce and Joce Gill. It was a pleasure talking with him about some old times and adventures we had. Always the collector, he suggested that I check out an interesting sandy soil locality to collect in Tennessee near where I currently live in south central Kentucky.

Both my father initially, and Henry later during my undergraduate career were instrumental in solidifying my career goals in systematic entomology. From my first interaction with Henry at an open house session at Carleton University where he had laid out several

drawers of large beetles (I still remember the large *Odontolabis* lucanids!), to hiring me to work in his lab, to helping and supporting me so I could reach my future goals, he was critical to my success. Plus, just working in his lab and seeing what fun his grad students were having, going to seminars during work time, and getting a glimpse of the obviously great life of a systematic entomologist with a couple of adventure trips each year- wow! I know in some ways my wife would have preferred it if I had become a little more applied and hence more marketable for jobs, but the life as an insect systematist at a university is a pretty good place to end up, even in Kentucky! For this I largely have to thank Henry Howden and I will be forever grateful to him for the support and enthusiasm he passed on to me!

From Chris Carlton, Director, Louisiana State Arthropod Museum: The Howden's visited south Louisiana for a few days back in the early 2000s (can't remember the exact year). I hosted a party in their honor and helped them with some field sites north of Baton Rouge. Having them as honored guests at the Carlton Barbeque was great fun, but my most vivid recollection was at a grocery store in St. Francisville. Anne and Henry had a lengthy "discussion" over whether it was wiser to buy the smaller sized vanilla creme cookie container that would ensure they were eaten before the trip was over (Anne), or buy the larger, but very economical, bulk size to avoid risking running out of cookies (Henry). I honestly can't remember who prevailed, but as near as I can recall, no cookies remained when they left.

From Stéphane Le Tirant, Curator of the Montréal Insectarium: I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Howden a couple of times. Once it was at the Botanical Garden in Montreal. I was fascinated to encounter one of the world's most famous entomologists and scarab experts. I felt like a young baseball player in front of Babe Ruth! Speaking of baseball, Dr. Howden spent more time that day talking to me about his baseball card collection than his scarab collection. This was a precious memory for the young entomologist I was at the time. I felt privileged to exchange some beetles with him in the last few years.

From Robin Leech, Professor of Biology, and the son of beetle man Hugh Leech of the California Academy of Sciences: When I was working on the spiders of the Canadian National Collection in Ottawa, Henry came into my office. That would be either late 1965, or early 1966. He was smoking his stinky cigarettes. I recall the conversation as if it occurred earlier today.

He said, "I understand you work on spiders."

I replied, "Yes, I do."

He asked, "How come you don't work on beetles? Your father does."

I replied, "Well, the two of you, and my professor, George Ball, should have beetle taxonomy under control."

I do not think he expected that answer. He snorted and left.

INTRUDER ALERT! First Correspondence with Henry Howden

by Brett C. Ratcliffe

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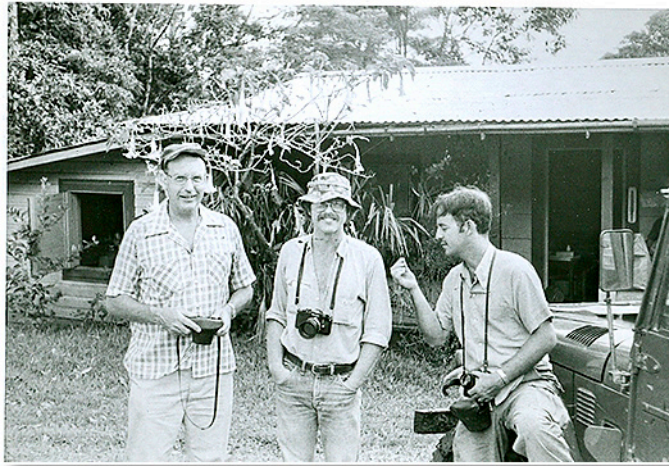
Henry Howden and “indigenous” female, Leticia, Colombia, March 1974. Photo by BCR.

Midway through my M.S. research on silphids in 1969, I wrote to the then god-of-scarabs, Henry Howden, to seek his advice on the future of scarab studies in North America. Like a *Cyclocephala* continually spiraling inwards to a light trap, I had always been drawn to scarabs. I had also just heard his scarab paper at the ESA meetings in Chicago... where, as an aside, all of us in attendance at the informal Coleopterists Society meeting became charter members of the newly reinvigorated Coleopterists Society as of that date.

A brief exchange of letters followed during December 1969 and January 1970 wherein Henry indicated that scarabs were “polluted” with younger workers (today I hope we would say ‘enriched’), job and grant opportunities were slim (still true today), and that he would offer advice whenever he could. More specifically, I should consider working on clerids or staphs, or weevils where more work was needed. Reading between the lines translated to “I should keep my cotton-pickin hands off his group!” Then, in a letter of September 1970, he

wrote "To put things briefly, you are not in a really good area for either scarabs, libraries, etc..." Of course, Henry had never been to Nebraska to know any of those things because, in fact, Nebraska had a very good collection, a diverse scarab fauna, and excellent library holdings of taxonomic literature, including complete runs of all of the principal European journals, the *Biologia*, and original volumes by Linnaeus, Fabricius, Palisot de Beauvois, etc. But, like a male major *Trypoxylus* at a sap flow, Henry's was zealously protective of "his turf."

Not to be dissuaded from my passion for scarab beetles, I continued to correspond with him while working on *Strategus* for my dissertation and in February 1974 visited his collection in Ottawa and participated on one of his class trips to Leticia, Colombia. Sleeping in the bug room in the house on Trillium Avenue, with that particularly desirable perfume of a pinned collection and naphthalene, was the first of several such visits where the generous hospitality of the Howdens was always in evidence. With Henry, one had to demonstrate that they were persistent and genuinely interested in, and capable of working on, scarabs in order to be freely accepted by him. But after that, the floodgates of advice, specimens, literature, and collegiality would open up to reveal that he had a dry sense of humor, was extremely generous and supportive, and a valued colleague and mentor.



Henry Howden, Brett Ratcliffe, and Albert Thurman at Hartmann's coffee finca, Chiriqui, Panama, May 1977. Photo by Dodge Engleman.



Henry at his 80th birthday in Ottawa, August 2005. Photo by Vladislav Maly.



Henry at his 83rd birthday in Ottawa, August 2008.
Photo by BCR.

What followed, of course, was a lifelong correspondence (this was before email, and so my file of letters is nearly two inches thick) and collaboration that continued long after his mandatory retirement in 1995. Henry was an inveterate field biologist who traveled the world during his entire career in pursuit of documenting biodiversity. His contributions to the study of scarabaeoids are numerous, important, some pioneering, and legendary for the Geotrupidae, his principal taxonomic focus.

The last time I saw Henry was 19 August 2008 at his birthday festivities in Ottawa, and my last correspondence with him was 13 May 2014, a week before he passed away on 21 May. In that last email to me, written from his hospital bed, he said “Unfortunately, the beetles are all outside and I can’t get at them, the only insects in here are flies!” A true collector, with wit, until the end. I am fortunate to have known one of the modern giants of scarabaeoidology, and his insights and energy will be missed.

From Richard Ring, Professor Emeritus, Biology Department, University of Victoria: I knew Henry only personally when he moved out to Victoria a few years ago. I certainly knew about his expertise in Coleoptera from my mentor at Glasgow University, the one-and-only Dr. Roy Crowson. I have had many distant facets of collaboration with Henry, mainly through the Biological Survey of Canada. His department at Carleton University always graciously hosted us on an annual basis with a Symposium on “Canadian Northern Insects”! I have recently met his extended family out here in Victoria, so I wish all his family, former students and friends a very happy Remembrance Day! It is so deserved on a national basis.

From Stewart B. Peck, Professor Emeritus, Department of Biology, Carleton University: I was in junior high school in the late 50's and was fascinated with insects. I was in transition from moths to beetles, and had found a copy of W. S. Blatchley's *Beetles of Indiana*. I was using it to work through the beetle collection of the Davenport (Iowa) Public Museum. A college student there, Tom Thew (University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana), working on mayflies and my insect mentor, told me that all one had to do was to write to scientists and they would send their scientific papers as something called reprints. Since I was then learning scarabs, I was given the name and address of a researcher called Henry Howden, who had recently finished graduate work. I wrote. I soon received a package of his "reprints". I was hooked.

Later, while a graduate student at the MCZ at Harvard, Henry served a year as a visiting Agassiz professor. I met him and relayed the story. He had no memory of it, but we shared some chats and beetle stories. He returned to his new position as Professor at Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. A year later he arranged for me to be interviewed for a job there in Biology. And I held this ever since until retirement last year.

So my introduction to beetle science and later career in Canada can be traced with fullsome thanks to Henry.

From Dac Crossley: Henry was a "summer participant" in our ecology group at Oak Ridge National Lab, while he was a professor at the University of Tennessee. Those were good summers. We sampled insects in a radioactive lake bed and published a classic paper on the movement of radioisotopes through a plant-insect community. Henry devised a box trap for insects, which I used for many years.



Henry and Anne in the Smoky Mountains, about 1957.
Photo by Dac Crossley.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS 2013

Welcome to sunny BC! At the end of August we moved from Ottawa to a Seniors Residence in Victoria BC, where we are near our family. The address of the place in case you use snail mail, is Sunrise Senior Living, #123 - 920 Humboldt Street, Victoria BC V8V 4W7. Our new phone number is 778-433-5815, and e-mail is hfhowden@gmail.com.

This may be the last formal Christmas letter we write since this place generates news about as quickly as paint drying. Hence the lack of news. We are still playing with Past Times trying to finish it this coming year. Past Times is the book telling about 60 years of our collecting adventures and misadventures. Things have changed over a 60 year period.

We comment mainly on travel changes and various regulations concerning collecting insects in different countries. There are many countries that have decided that there may be medicinal properties (chemicals) that can be derived from the beetles and hence may be worth money. Therefore, they no longer allow easy export of insects. This type of thing is briefly discussed in various places in the book. Except for this endeavor, things are pretty quiet. Barbara and Lucy occasionally stir us up by taking us to church or the museum. It is also nice to see our family more often and get pushed around

Our original remark about sunny Victoria is actually based on the fact that we've had only two or three rainy days since we arrived here. Which, according to local residents, is most unusual. The weather is lovely. There are Nasturtiums out in the garden in December. Enough Trivia.

May we wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and a successful 2014.

Henry and Anne

Dear Friends and Colleagues

I am writing on behalf of my mother, Anne, and my sisters, Patience and Lucy.

I want to thank all the people that wrote such kind and thoughtful notes to us regarding our father. We loved reading the emails recognizing Dad's accomplishments and connections that he had with you over the years. The recollections many of you had were great reminders to us of the very full and adventuresome life that he led and how well respected he was, especially within the 'beetle world'. It was heartening to hear from Dad's many connections, some of whom we have met, and some we have just heard stories about. We have printed the numerous emails that were sent during this sad time and have put them in an album to keep them all together, to re-read at our leisure.

Some of you may already know that Dad was working on a book, *Collecting Memories*, which he was disappointed did not get finished before he passed away. Many people are still working

on this book and the publishing date is now scheduled for August 19, 2014, which would have been his 89th birthday. Stay tuned as a number of you may be mentioned in the book!

If you would like to stay in touch with the Howden family, I would ask that you write to my email in the future mbholme@shaw.ca as Henry Howden's account will no longer be valid.

Thank you once again for your condolences, and for those of you who are not English, I am sorry for the unilingual email!

Sincerely,

Barb

The Unsung Hero of *In Past Years* and *Collecting Memories*

By Barney Streit: Bill Warner introduced me to the Howdens at the Algodones Dunes near Glamis, California.

And it was Bill who first urged Henry to write about his entomological forays. Once he had written the first installment of *In Past Years*, Henry was convinced that nobody would be interested in reading about his experiences. Bill relentlessly beseeched Henry to continue writing. This continued for several installments until Henry finally realized the popularity of the series.

After the stroke took Henry away from field work, writing this series gave Henry a new and genuine purpose in life.

Without Bill, the series and wonderful book that followed would never have been written - and for that, scarab workers are grateful for Bill's efforts.



Aurora, originally from Brazil, wearing his likeness. She is just one of Bill's many assistants.

Literature Notice: *Collecting Memories*

by Bruce Gill

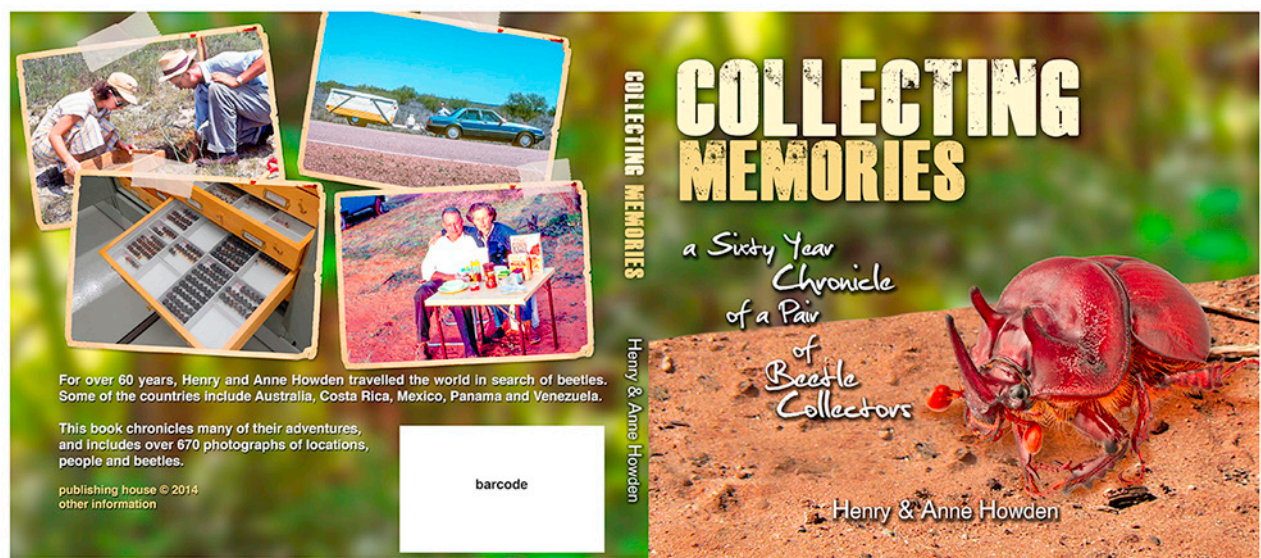
scarab57@explornet.com



The Editors loaned Marcela (normally Editor Olivier's personal assistant) to assist Bruce in the compilation and layout of *Collecting Memories*.

Behind the Scenes at *Collecting Memories*

Henry Howden spent the last half dozen years of his life reworking the text from his series "In Past Years" that appeared in *Scarabs*, with the idea of producing a self-published book that would tell the story of how he and his wife Anne amassed their impressive collection of nearly a half-million beetle specimens. Along the way he cajoled a number of close friends into providing new or improved images that would illustrate some of the amazing diversity of scarabs that he held dear to his heart. The project was nearing completion when his health took a turn for the worse and he entered the hospital for the last time in early May of 2014. Jocelyn and I flew out to Victoria, B.C. on my 57th birthday to visit and get last instructions on completing the book. Integrating the figures into the text unfortunately took a lot more time than expected, but once it was completed, we printed out 3 test copies that Barb, Lucy, and I worked over as galley proofs. By late November we had managed to reformat the captions, re-size some pesky photos, and correct most of the typos and other errors. Most, but apparently not all. The final InDesign files were then uploaded to the Blurbs website for publication. An initial



print run of 40 copies were produced and distributed to people who had helped out with the book or who had supported Henry and Anne with their field work over the years. The book was officially launched during the II Simposio sobre Escarabajos Coprófagos at the IV Congreso Colombiano de Zoología in Cartagena, Colombia on Friday December 5th, 2014. For readers who would like a copy, the book (ISBN 978-1-32-024544-9) is currently available from the bookstore at www.blurb.ca or www.blurb.com for \$125. I am gathering corrections, such as Barry Valentine being misidentified as Robert Gordon in Photo 3-29 (thanks Paul S), and the missing text at the bottom of page 128 (thanks Hume D), with the view to producing a revised edition in the coming years. I'm not sure how I will deal with the Danube River running through Basel, Switzerland. Perhaps I will just add a footnote that Henry wasn't much into aquatic entomology, nor the rivers of Europe apparently!

The covers of *Collecting Memories*.



An outtake of Marcela with the book. *Collecting Memories* is a hefty book!

An Automotive Discovery: Henry Howden was a Champion Collector and a Ford Man

by Bruce Gill

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In the summer of 2006 Henry asked me to lend him a hand in cleaning up his garage at 23 Trilium Avenue, in preparation for selling their house. But first I should give a little background on the garage and its inhabitants, as a garage can often tell a lot about the person who built it. Henry's garage was a spacious two-car affair, with the same footprint as his bug room which was located directly above in the addition that he built in 1966 with the help of Mr. Pranger, a neighbor who worked in construction. The back of the garage had a wooden work bench and shelving for storm windows, ladders, tools, car supplies, and "stuff". The bench work and shelving was built with the assistance of Jack Martin, a friend and colleague at Agriculture Canada. The front

of the garage supported a very bushy Virginia creeper that in turn supported a healthy population of *Saperda puncticollis* Say. Visiting cerambycid collectors could be assured of beating at least a few specimens from the foliage if they visited during the summer months. If they visited during the off-season, then indoor collecting would ensure that they didn't go away empty handed, as Henry always kept a few pinned specimens handy. He could always replenish his supply next season. If you were to put out a blacklight in front of the garage during July or August, you had a good chance of picking up *Dorcus parallelus* (Say), as they were breeding in the roots of elm trees that had long since succumbed from Dutch elm disease. While the above ground part of the trees had been removed years before, the roots continued to produce beetles for at least a decade or more afterwards. And if you offered to help Anne with her gardening around the front of the garage, you could collect *Dorcus* larvae and newly eclosed adults without too much effort, as long as you were mindful to not damage her plants. These were two nice beetles, but the largest beetle to actually inhabit the garage was a second-hand red 1968 VW beetle, which Henry called "a bug" and was used to teach the



Photo 1: Box of eight Champion H-10 spark plugs used in Henry's 1949 Ford coupe.

two eldest daughters how to drive (pers. comm. Barb Holme 2015). Unfortunately this red bug was written off by the eldest daughter some time later when making a left turn into Carleton University. I guess this gives Patience the dubious distinction of killing the largest beetle (or bug if you prefer) in the Howden household. Sticking with the VW brand, Henry replaced it with a NEW beige demonstrator beetle with bigger tail lights and a better gas heater to cope with the less than ideal Ottawa winters (NB: the CAPS are courtesy of Barb, who had plenty of experience with the Howden frugality while growing up).

For many years after my arrival in Ottawa in 1980, I recall the garage provided sanctuary to a pair of blue Fords: a large automatic station wagon for Anne, and a stick-shift Pinto for Henry. Apparently the pre-cursor to the Crown Victoria wagon was a second hand Gran Torino with a big V8, but it was gone by 1980, no doubt saving the Howden girls from accumulating too many speeding tickets. The Crown Vic was not only Anne's around town transport, it did double duty as a summer research vehicle carrying them as far afield as British Columbia and Baja California on various collecting trips. A more apt description might be "research vessel", as it was a luxurious land yacht from my sports car/motorcycle perspective, and was definitely in its element on long cruises. One such cruise was a 7,126 mile journey down the eastern U.S. to Texas and back in

the spring of 1985, giving Clarke Scholtz (visiting from the University of Pretoria) a taste of North American culture and collecting. The Pinto was eventually replaced by a blue Escort, also with a manual transmission, and then eventually both the Crown Vic and the Escort were sold off and replaced by a second hand 2000 Infiniti I30 in 2003, thus ending over a half century of Ford ownership.

Getting back to 2006, Henry was well acquainted with my distractions in the automotive and mechanical arts. After his stroke

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SOLD TO Barb

ADDRESS _____

MOSE. SOLD		MOSE. RET'D		REC'D ON ACCT NOTE	MISCL	PAID OUT
CASH	CHARGE	CASH	CREDIT			

QUAN.	NUMBER	ARTICLES	PRICE	AMOUNT
10	H10	spark		5.50
				17
				5.67

SALESMAN _____ RECEIVED BY _____

Phone A 200 - R. A. SALESBOOK CO. - 1743 MILWAUKEE AVE., CHICAGO 47, ILL.

Photo 2: Sales receipt for the purchase of a box of new Champion spark plugs from Solway Auto Parts, Knoxville, Tennessee.

(unfortunately of the medical type and not the measure of piston travel in an engine), he needed to downsize for their move into a retirement home. He probably figured that a fellow collector like me could use the various bits and pieces of hardware, scrap wood, plastics, chain saw oil, tools, and miscellaneous car parts that he had accumulated over the years. I was only too happy to oblige, as by now I had a three car garage and some empty storage shelves out in Woodlawn. I loaded up my Jeep Cherokee with an assortment of boards, Plexiglas window coverings, and several boxes of “stuff” that I excavated from the back recesses of his work bench. His wooden extension ladder was loaded onto the roof racks of the Jeep. This was the same Jeep that hauled away his old windows years earlier when he had them replaced with modern energy-efficient windows. With a quarter-Scots in my own family background (great, great, grandfather Peter Clark from

Comrie, Scotland), I appreciated the Howden offer of free glass, and happily hauled them away to prevent them from going to the dump. I eventually cut them down to fit into Cornell drawers that I built from basswood that my father had prepared in his workshop in White Rock, British Columbia, but I digress.

A few weeks ago (early April 2015) I was sorting through the last box of “stuff” that I had removed from Henry’s work bench in 2006, and I came across an old box of rusty spark plugs. There were eight Champion H-10 plugs in the box built for 10 (Fig. 1). The cellophane wrappers had mostly disintegrated into yellow fragments, but before discarding the lot, I looked under the cardboard separator and discovered a sales receipt that took my breath away. OMG, the receipt was dated July 26, 1957 and was issued in Knoxville, Tennessee (Fig. 2). That piece of folded paper was written when I was just over 2 months old! After working intensively on *Collecting Memories* for the past two years, I realized that I was looking at a receipt for a box of auto parts that Henry had picked up just prior to moving the family to Ottawa so he could start his new job as a research scientist with Agriculture Canada. A quick check of the Internet confirmed that H-10s were OEM plugs for vintage Fords that ran flathead V8s. A quick e-mail to the Howden daughters confirmed that the car in question was a 1949 Ford two-door coupe (Fig. 3). This was a brand new car that Henry’s mother had



Photo 3: The Howden’s 1949 Ford at home in Knoxville, Tennessee after a freak storm dropped 2 inches of snow on the ground. (Photo courtesy of Barb Holme)

given to them in 1949 as a wedding gift, to replace the well used 1929 Dodge that was Henry's first vehicle. Wow. The receipt stated that he had purchased new plugs from Solway Auto Parts for a total of \$5.50 plus 17 cents in tax (I bet he grumbled over the tax!), but there is no way to know whether he installed the plugs before leaving Tennessee or after arriving in Canada. In any case, the surface rust on the plugs led me to inspect them more closely. I removed the protective cardboard collars and did a little carbon dating of the electrodes. Yes, there were carbon deposits on all eight, so these plugs had been used (...good mechanics should know how to read plugs). He must have saved these old plugs when he installed the new ones from "Big Feet" and "Freckles". Whether he saved them for sentimental reasons, or in case he needed to clean them up and perhaps get some more mileage out of them (he did learn a lot from Henry Townes), we'll never know for sure. But one thing is for certain, these were the spark plugs that carried him and Anne around to collecting sites in the southeastern U.S. in the late 1950s (Fig. 4) and might have also delivered him and the family to Canada in August of 1957. Either way, he saved these old Champions and the documentation needed to verify their provenance.

Needless to say, I did not discard the box of old plugs, nor the sales receipt, as these priceless mementos no doubt facilitated the growth of the H. & A. Howden

beetle collection, which in turn helped spark the careers of many coleopterists! They now reside in the Gill Collection beside my 1965 Sunbeam Tiger (powered by Ford), which is in year 26 of a 5-year restoration plan. I'm not sure whether automotive work gets in the way of entomology or vice versa, but the synergy is fun!



Photo 4: Henry setting up a tent trailer for collecting around DeFuniak Springs, Florida in March 1954. (Photo courtesy of Barb Holme)



Fede Ocampo's iconic image of the Howdens, reprinted from *Scarabs* 19, May, 2007. It was part of In Past Years I.