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(Incorporated Association not for gain)

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Newsletter 1 – March 2015

Dear Members!

On behalf of the Committee and the employees, we wish you a productive and successful 2015!

After the resignation at the end of the year of Eberhard Mercker as the Chairperson of the Committee the necessity arose to fill the open posts within the Committee.

The following positions were newly filled:

1. Chairperson : Joachim von Wietersheim
2. Vice Chairperson : Karin Gebhardt

Seeing that a vacancy opened for a new committee member, we decided to co-opt a new member. It is with great pleasure that I can inform you that Mrs. Nadine Moroff-Kohlstaett accepted this post. After she completed her studies in Germany as a Marine Biologist, she worked for a couple of years at the Ministry of Fisheries in Swakopmund. Presently she is a full-time mother of two children, whilst also undertaking small scientific commissions for different firms.

In February we had to say an unexpected and sad farewell to our dear friend and Committee member Heinz Remmert. An unfortunate and tragic car accident took him from our midst. Our deepest condolences go out to his wife and son.

The Committee members and employees have already given much thought to a “new” strategic plan for the Library. After some discussions it became clear that the Sam Cohen Library should specialize in making itself available as a **Scientific Public Library**. A specific direction, for example, would be to specialize in becoming an information center for all coast related subjects.

At the same time we realize that we have a responsibility to secure all the information we already collected over the years and make it available to the interested public. This means digitalization of all these treasures. We have already started to find valuable contacts to help us with this huge task at hand.

Additionally we have found a reasonable priced possibility to present these catalogues and digitalized data “online.” With this step the data of the Sam-

Cohen-Library would then be available not only nationally, but internationally as well.

Yet, before we can take the step "online", we need to make necessary amendments to the catalogues we like to make available. The first step entails some 20.000 catalogues.

Some positive developments: all the necessary approvals for the "Omeg-Haus" and the "Otavi-Bahnhof" renovations are now available. Two building contractors made it to the final round. As soon as all the financial and technical details have been finalized, the renovations will start. We hope that the renovations will begin during March and we expect completion of this project in about 6 months.

The Building Committee also presented plans for Erf 927 (now Namib Flora Nursery), but this has not yet been discussed by the Committee. We would like to complete the planned renovations, before we start with new ones.

In February we hosted a presentation about Angola, accompanied by a slide show at the Museum. Due to a misunderstanding of the announcement we would just like to inform you of the following:

The presenters of the Angola slide show rented the Rössing room from us, thus it was a private presentation, not one held by the Scientific Society Swakopmund. However, the delay at the beginning, due to technical problems, was our fault. Please accept my apologies.

The Geological Exhibition at the Museum is nearing its completion. We hope to have the official opening in the near future.

Just before completing this Newsletter we received a generous donation of N\$ 750.000! On behalf of the Scientific Society I would like to express my appreciation for this generous support.

At the same time we don't want to forget all our other sponsors. We really appreciate your help, no matter how much you donated. Every donation we receive will help us in the future developments of the Library and the Museum.

If you would like to support the Scientific Society Swakopmund, please don't hesitate to contact us. We have some projects lined up for which we urgently need sponsors.

Finally, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to my colleagues in the Committee and also to all the employees of the Scientific Society, who welcomed me as the new Chairman and support me in a most positive way.

Best wishes,

Joachim von Wietersheim