



Mutatio necesse est

A short year-end note from the President's hand

I am no linguist, and my Latin is restricted to conchological nomenclature, but, as they say, “Google is your friend”, hence the high-flying title. But, before I get into the details, perhaps it would be a good time to reflect on a very busy, yet rewarding year. From the Society's point of view, we saw a number of highlights worth mentioning, including:

- Two of our members, Roy Aiken and Alan Seccombe, attended and exhibited at the 2016 Antwerp Shell Show;
- We witnessed a very enjoyable and well-attended Annual General Meeting, accompanied by an exciting shell exhibit by our members;
- We witnessed the election of a new Committee;
- The Society officially repositioned itself to the more approachable Shell Collectors SA (SCSA);
- We enjoyed the development and production of Sea Bones no 8, penned by Roy Aiken;
- We had the pleasure of seeing the development and release of a new Strandloper publication, edition no 291.

This was just the frosting on the conchological cake, and many other notable highlights can be mentioned, probably too many for a short note like this.

I am sure many of our members can attest to personal highlights, attributable to individual achievements within our hobby. Perhaps you managed to obtain that one specimen you had always been waiting for and dreaming of, perhaps you managed to complete a study within a particular conchological field and broadened your knowledge base, or perhaps you finally completed that article you have been mulling around in the back of your mind for so long (which we would love to see in a future edition of *The Strandloper*, of course). Whatever the achievements, I am sure, if we all look back on 2016, we will see many personal achievements, joys and pleasures reached within our lovely hobby.

Of course, 2016 also saw a number of challenges and “low points”; from a conchological point of view, we saw the passing of our dear Medea Evans, to name but one. Hopefully, looking back, the highs outweigh the lows, but this brings me to the crux of this note- and the meaning behind my high-flying title: “mutatio necesse est” – *change is inevitable*.

At the closing of each year, it is traditional to take the time to reflect on the preceding highs and lows, and plan ahead by conjuring up a list of “New Year's Resolutions” to “rights the wrongs”, so to speak. It is in our nature as human beings to self-assess and try to improve, which, in all cases requires change. Such change is planned and premeditated. Sometimes change come without

notice, without prior knowledge and without our approval; such change is often hard to accept, but could be equally rewarding.

Of course, the degree of change required in our lives may range from the simplistic (changing an eating habit) to the complex (relocating to a new town), but sometimes if we want to see different results, we may have no choice but to embrace change. This holds true for our hobby as well. As an example, I collected Strombidae for many years and at some point, I realised my passion for collecting had become stagnant. Change was required. So, in March this year I switched to the collecting of Cowries from Africa; I had set myself a new challenge, and the results are self-evident – a rejuvenation of the love for shells.

I invite all our members, and all who read this note, to do some introspection at this time and reflect on the highs and lows of 2016. We need to be thankful for the highs, and perform some self-assessment to determine if change is required. It could be on a personal level, but, since we share a common passion, interested and love for shells, my immediate encouragement is from a conchological perspective. Perhaps you need to invoke some changes in your collecting or, as a dealer, kick it up a notch – the Paris Bourse beckons...

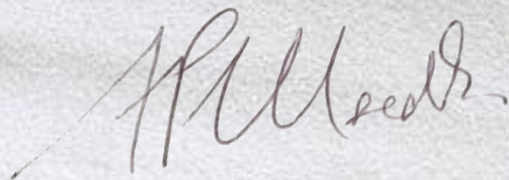
Such changes could take on many forms, including:

- Developing a new shell data base or labelling system;
- Developing a new shell storage system;
- Altering your shell collecting preferences;
- Switching from collecting to dealing;
- Expanding an existing dealership footprint;
- Focusing more on shell-related research and article development...

... to name a few.

I am certain we could all find at least one area within our fascinating hobby to improve on. Let it be a joy, not a burden, to identify areas requiring improvement, remembering that the fruits of our labour will yield great and rewarding results if we persevere.

And, since it is a fact that change is inevitable, let us embrace it, hold on, and enjoy the ride!



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