



Reflections

A Note from the President's Hand

Dear shell friends,

First off, I wish you a prosperous, healthy, blessed and successful New Year! I trust everyone reading this first letter of 2019 managed to get some rest during the festive season – even if you only did the “garden route” (as we did...). But for most the holidays are now over and it is back to the grind – and back to school for kids and parents alike. I challenge all our Members (including myself) to forge ahead into 2019 with new resolve to make the best of the time we have been given – to make a success of everything we put our hands to.

As we move into the new year it would be wise to reflect a bit on some of the successes (and failures) of 2018. Successes need to be celebrated and built upon, and we need to learn from – but not dwell on – our failures. From a Conchological (and Societal) point of view, 2018 saw a bit of both.

We celebrated our 60th Anniversary during the 2018 AGM, which also saw the election of a new Committee. The brunt of the celebrations played out in the form of a major post-meeting auction, which saw the transfer of many beautiful shells from the Du Preez Collection to new homes – including a magnificent near-100mm *Harpa costata*. One of our failures was the realisation of more 60th Anniversary ideas (we had quite a few) – but hopefully we can squeeze in a couple more before the next AGM.

The Committee also undertook a journey to KwaZulu-Natal in November with the express purpose of meeting some of our existing KZN Members, while setting up ties with prospective new Members. Whilst partially successful (we did spend some quality time with some of our Members, and we signed on one new Member), we did not see the levels of success we were



hoping for. However, we did learn from the experience and will be applying the lessons learnt when preparing for the next such endeavour.

On the flipside, Mr Anton Groenewald (our Society Secretary) managed to convince a group of shell enthusiasts and current Members to start a Jeffreys Bay Club whilst on a visit there during his annual vacation. We therefore managed to establish a second official Club in 2018.

We continued working on our standard of communication by developing and publishing two new Strandloper magazines in 2018. A heartfelt thank-you must be extended to our Editor, Mr Ken Brown, and our Scientific Officer and Adobe *InDesign* guru, Mr Alwyn Marais, for the collation and editing of articles, and the preparation and formatting of the magazines in question. The end results are always informative, polished and professional. While on this point, I wish our Editor a speedy recovery following a gall bladder operation in December.

The Committee also managed to improve administrative matters in the Society through adjustment of the Constitution, development of two new Guidelines and distribution of a handful of Memos and Letters to keep everyone informed and abreast with matters in the Society. We will be building on this in the New Year by adding in a new “regular” in the Strandloper magazine – keep a lookout for it in the next one, probably due around March 2019.

From a financial point of view the Society is looking stronger than ever – the various Du Preez Collection auctions, as well as income from sales of the new Shell Posters, adding significantly to this success. One of the ideas put forward by our Treasurer, Mr Maurice Evans, has also boosted our funds; a portion of Society funds was invested, and the dividends have been surprisingly positive. We will continue to do so within this Financial Year and we are sure to see more growth in this regard.



We also managed to kick-start a new Society Library and we are in the process of centralising all Society books, magazines, journals, papers and other forms of correspondence at the new Library, which is being developed and graciously hosted by Mr Henk Smit. We will keep you informed as matters progress – and will soon be issuing a new Guideline explaining how you will be able to borrow items from the Library.

I suppose I could ramble on indefinitely about our past failures and successes, but I think it is time to wrap things up by simply encouraging you to continue contributing in whichever way you can to our beloved Society. We are always looking for new ideas and for contributions to the Strandloper. Please support the Society in this and in any other way you feel could improve it even further.

As a Committee we are also looking forward to the new year; we have a few ideas up our communal sleeve that will hopefully lead to growth and an increased interest in our hobby, pastime, business and passion.

I wish you a great start to the new year!

Till next time,

Happy shelling!



Andre Meredith
President, SCSA

10 January 2019

