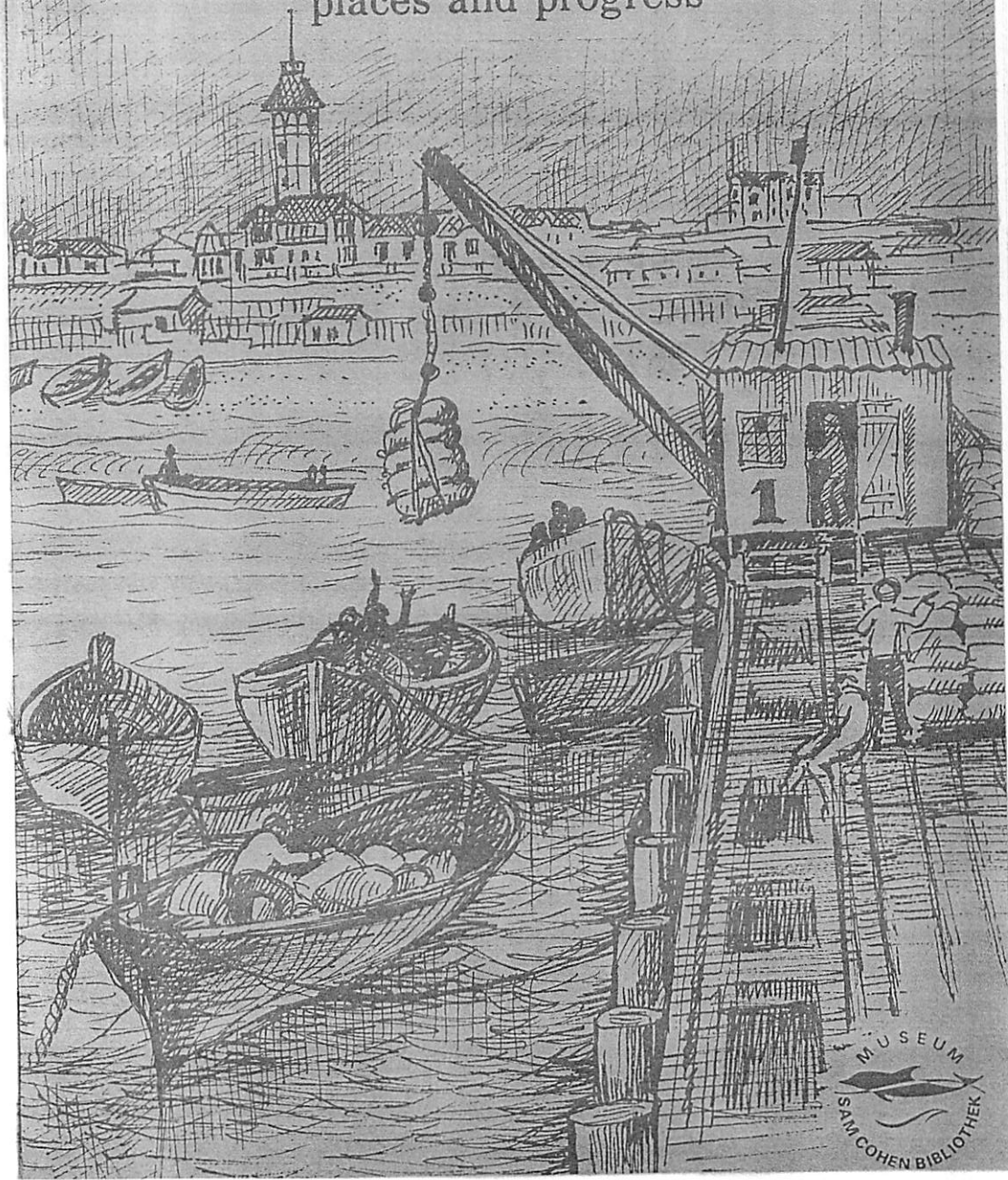


SWAKOPMUND

A chronicle of the town's people,
places and progress



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places and progress

Compiled by
URSULA MASSMANN



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1983

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ROTARY CLUB OF SWAKOPMUND



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F O R E W O R D

As a contribution to the 90th anniversary of the town of Swakopmund, the Management Committee of the Society for Scientific Development in Swakopmund presents a short and handy account of the town's history which fills an existing gap for the interest of fellow citizens, friends, guests and visitors.

All contributors to this publication have worked with dedication and enthusiasm for which they deserve thanks and recognition.

Mr and Mrs Trethewey kindly undertook the major task of translating the chronicle into English for which we are most grateful and indebted to them.

Mrs White has our warm appreciation for typing the English manuscript.

Mrs Christine Marais sketched the cover and we thank her very much for her kind contribution.

This review of the so-called old times has reconstructed the pioneering years which are falling more and more into obscurity, and yet they are of fundamental significance to the development of the town as we see it today. It is through this solid foundation that the town - built on desert sand - has managed to withstand various problems and continue to progress.

The historical dates have been worked out to the best of the author's knowledge and ability using the Sam Cohen library and our Society's small archives which were at her disposal. As usual, a few discrepancies

occur in which the details could be debated but the general historical picture has hardly been altered or distorted by them.

The people of our land and all readers of this chronicle may take as an example the perseverance and tenacity of the "old folk" who founded the town and left it to us as a heritage and obligation.

Swakopmund, October 1983.

Dr A M Weber
Director of the Swakopmund
Museum
Chairman of the Society for
Scientific Development
Swakopmund.

THE HISTORY OF SWAKOPMUND

1. INTRODUCTION

On August 7, 1884, South West Africa - the future Namibia - was declared a German Protectorate. Through this action, the German Reich acquired control of land which had been purchased originally by Adolf Lüderitz. Prior to this, parts of the country had been visited by explorers, hunters, traders, adventurers and gold-seekers, and missionaries had been active as far back as the beginning of the previous century. However, because of the inhospitable nature of the countryside, apart from a few half hearted attempts, no European nation showed interest in establishing a firm foothold. In the 15th Century, daring Portuguese sailors were the first Europeans to enter the waters of the extensive South West African coastline where they erected a number of stone pillars - Diego Cão at Cape Cross in 1485 and Bartholomew Diaz in 1488 at Angra Pequena (narrow bay), later to become Lüderitzbucht.

The German Reich now intended to settle and develop the Protectorate. This could be achieved only through close contact with the mother-country and, for this, a harbour was necessary. Along the entire 1400 km long coastline there were only two bays which were suitable for the construction of a harbour, namely Angra Pequena and Walfish Bay. However, both suffered the disadvantage of being set against an almost insurmountable dune belt which hampered travel into the hinterland. In addition, Walfish Bay had been a British possession since 1878 and, through the introduction of various restrictions, had interfered with the development of the German colony. Consequently, the Germans had to look for another possible harbour site situated centrally in German territory.

Over the next few years, ships of the Imperial Navy investigated smaller bays south and north of Walfish Bay (e.g. Conception Bay, Sandwich Harbour, Rocky Bay, Cape Cross and Cape Frio) to try to identify possible landing sites. All of these bays were rejected, however, either because of a scarcity of water or because of the unacceptably poor roads to the interior. Finally, in spite of differences of opinion, it was decided to choose a spot north of the Swakop river mouth. Not only was there fresh water both here and in the Swakop valley further upstream, but also there were no dune ridges to cross so that a freight service inland could be guaranteed.

On August 4, 1892, the gunboat "Hyena" marked the landing spot by erecting two beacons at the same place that Curt von Francois had envisaged during his overland scouting trip in 1889. The first beacon was positioned on the spot of the present Mole and the second on top of a dune slightly inland, probably where the lighthouse stands today.

2. HARBOUR

The erection of the beacons symbolised the laying of the foundation stone of the town. However, the development into a harbour town was to be characterised by many difficulties and sacrifices; a constant stubborn battle of the inhabitants against the natural forces of the rough Atlantic Ocean.

Woermann-Linie.

Regelmäßige
Postdampfschiffahrt
zwischen
Hamburg
und
West-Afrika.



Linie V.:
Nach
Deutsch-
Südwestafrika
mit Anschluss
nach
Port Nolloth und
Kapstadt.

Abgang von Hamburg am 25. jeden Monats.
Extra-Dampfer nach Bedarf.
Nähores wegen Fracht und Passage bei der
Damara- und Namaqua-Handels-Gesellschaft
(m. b. H.)
Zweigniederlassung Swakopmund.

The first notable landing of people and goods took place on August 23, 1893, when the "Marie Woermann" offloaded 120 Schutztruppe (colonial troops) together with their equipment, as well as 40 settlers with their household effects and other goods including breeding cattle, without any incidents using four landing boats. This exercise was accomplished by the "Harbour" staff of 10 men, assisted by soldiers from the Schutztruppe as well as the ship's crew.

The unenviable lot of these first settler families is described here out of interest. For a start, they could not find any accommodation in their port of arrival because there was no hotel or other similar lodging place in existence at the time. In addition, they had to wait many weeks, in some cases up to two months, before an opportunity arose to continue their journey inland. Furthermore, at about the same time, the Nama leader Captain Hendrik Witbooi carried out a raid on two heavily laden wagon trains comprising 17 ox wagons near Horibes and Diepdal in the Swakop valley. The raiders slaughtered 25 Baster attendants and all the native drivers with the exception of two who managed to escape the massacre. The trek oxen, so valuable to any freight carrier, were all driven off and everything that did not appear to be useful to Witbooi was burned. After this incident, an order was issued that in future any transport inland had to be accompanied by a military escort which was not easy in view of the limited number of Schutztruppe available (250 men).

The settlers built "caves" on the beaches, according to F J von Bülow, in order to obtain a degree of protection against the weather conditions. The high expectations which these original pioneers brought with them to the land of their dreams must have been close to zero by this time, and yet they did not give up as the descendants of some of them are still living in the country today.

After the initial successful landing, more and more steamers were prepared to risk landing their goods at the "Tsoakhaub" mouth rather than at Walvis Bay. In 1894, four ships offloaded, followed by five ships in 1895; in 1896 a bi-monthly service was introduced by the Woermann Line, and this was extended to a monthly service in 1899. The first ships were steamers of about 2000 g.r.t., but later ships of 5 - 7000 g.r.t. were put into the Africa service.

It is fascinating to recall how landings took place at that time. A steamer would be anchored in the

roadstead about one kilometre from the shore. When the seas allowed it, surf boats set off from the beach manned by Kroo tribesmen and were manoeuvred skillfully through the rough surf to the ship. There the cargo was transferred to the boats by the steamer's cranes and then had to be rowed back, once again passing through the dangerous breakers. Once ashore the boxes and crates were carried to a higher spot, stacked up and later placed under shelter.



Landing of mules by raft.

Livestock was brought ashore by means of a raft which was towed towards the beach using steel cables. The animals were driven off the raft in the calmer shallow waters, although on some occasions they still had to swim to the land. This method of landing continued to be used even after the construction of the Mole and the Jetty. Between 1904 and 1906, 11 065 horses were shipped out from Hamburg alone using the above method, in addition to horses imported from Argentina and South Africa. Prior to the First World War, a total of some 31 000 horses and 34 000 mules were landed at Swakopmund.

It is difficult for us today to imagine how hundreds of passengers together with items ranging from pins to windmill pumps, machines, household goods, and virtually all foodstuffs and other provisions (since practically nothing was manufactured in the country) could have been landed in this primitive way. Even more incredible is the fact that heavy equipment for the construction of the railway, which commenced in 1897, including rails, locomotives, wagons, etc. were off-loaded in the same way over a period of ten years.



Surf boats and Kroo tribesmen in action during a calm sea.

Of course, these events did not occur without mishaps and losses including some human lives unfortunately, complete boat loads of cargo, and some ships which ran aground near the harbour.

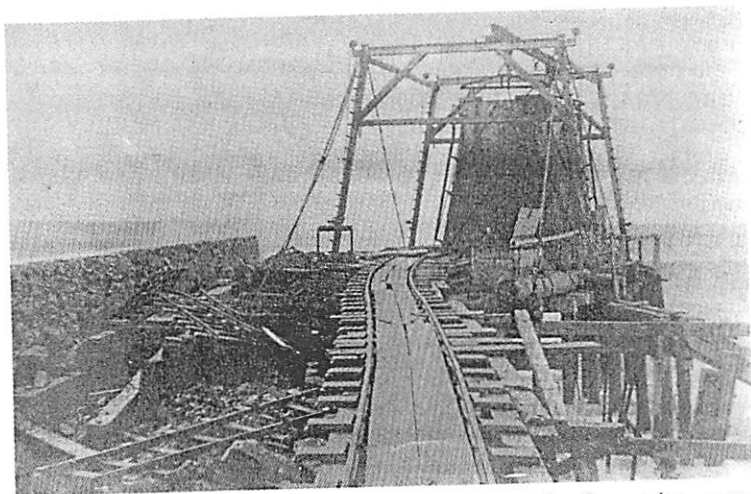
At this point, the role played by the landing crews deserves special mention. They were members of the Kroo tribe from Liberia who, because of their experience in their coastal homewaters, were the only people capable of guiding the boats safely through rough surf. Consequently, they were engaged on the West coast by steamers for the specific purpose of offloading in Swakopmund and, once they had completed this task, they were taken back to their home country. Possibly because of the vast difference in climate, they were not interested in long term contracts and had to be carried to and fro for every shipload by the shipping line. On occasion, the Woermann Line had as many as 500 - 600 Kroo tribesmen in their employ, and altogether a total of 12 000 of these men are mentioned as having served during this period of surf offloading. As late as 1913, there were still 74 members of the Kroo tribe employed by the shipping line.

One factor which tended to be a drawback for shipping companies serving the newly constructed harbour in Swakopmund was the fact that all their ships had to return empty to their home ports. This was in contrast to harbours along the more northerly west coast of Africa since South West did not have any export goods worth mentioning at this time. However, the situation changed in 1907 when the Otavi Mine came into production and regular ore exports commenced. The position

improved further in 1911 when shipments of marble from the quarries near Kubas and Karibib began to be made.

a) Mole

Construction of a proper harbour became an increasingly urgent issue due to the steady rise in shipping traffic as a result of the rapid development of the interior of the country. Once again, there were differences of opinion between those in favour of a jetty and others whose preference was for a stone breakwater or mole. Eventually it was decided to construct an artificial harbour basin.



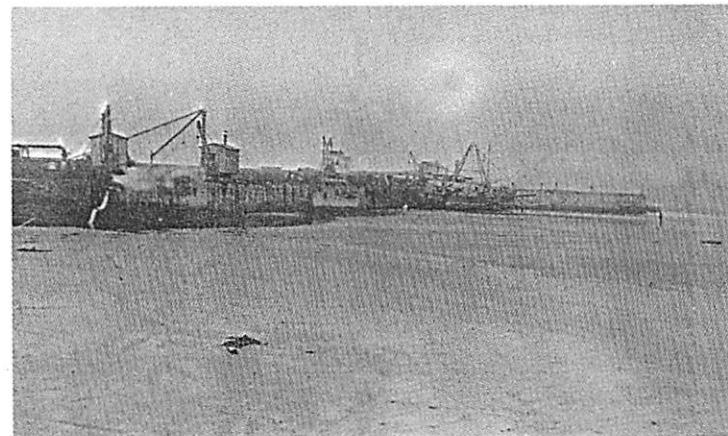
Construction of the Mole - framework for the manufacture of concrete blocks.

Finally, at the end of 1898, the government architect F W Ortloff arrived in Swakopmund and started work at once on preparations required for the project, such as the construction of a water pipeline from the Swakop river to the building site (for the manufacture of concrete blocks weighing six hundredweight each). Prior to this, the townfolk had to make their own arrangements for drinking water. A quarry was found nearby and a small railway track was laid down from there to the building site. Workers, both European and indigenous Africans, were signed on and arrangements had to be made for their board and lodging. All this preparatory work took almost ten months to complete.

On September 2, 1899, the foundation stone for the Mole was laid. It is not possible to give a detailed description here of the tremendous difficulties which had to be overcome during the construction of the Mole although there is ample literature available on the subject to provide a comprehensive picture. At last, on February 12, 1903, the Mole was opened officially at a ceremony worthy of the occasion. For those interested in statistics, the stone pier extended 375 m into the sea, the cross piece at the end of the pier was 35 m in length, and the total cost came to 2,5 million Mark.

It was for a relatively short period of time, however, that this structure which had been wrested from the ocean managed to fulfil its objective, although in the interim it eased considerably the burden placed on the landing services. The basin enabled tugs and their barges to land goods which had been taken off the ships lying at anchor without difficulty. From these, three stationary steam powered cranes and a small railtrack moved the goods onwards.

During the planning stages, insufficient attention was paid to the south-north drift of the Atlantic ocean. As a result, large amounts of silt began to build up almost immediately against the south side of the stone breakwater and extended out beyond the head of the Mole. Eventually a sand bank began to form



Silting up of the Mole basin.

at the entrance channel and, by July 1904, tugs and barges could enter the basin only at high tide. It

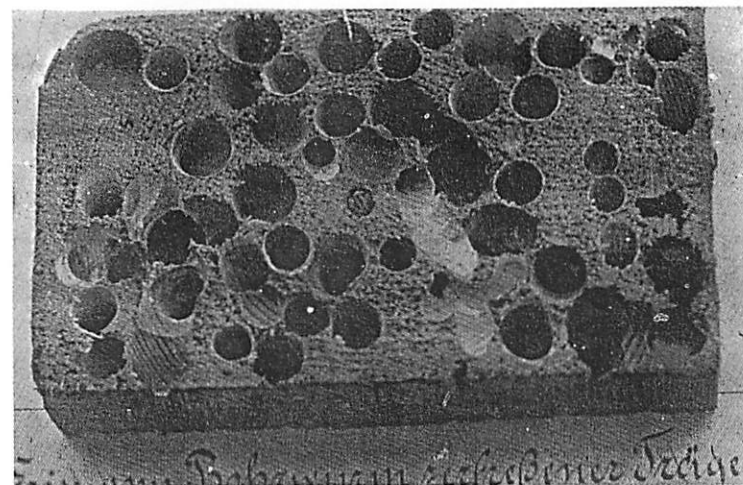
is reported that around this time there were up to 20 steamships on occasion lying at anchor waiting to be serviced which necessitated the introduction of a day and night offloading service to cope with the volume. Concurrent with these activities, dredging equipment was used to fight a losing battle against the steady advance of the sand. By 1905 the landing service was brought to a total halt and by 1906 the Mole had silted up completely.

b) Jetties

At about the time that the Mole began to silt up, the country was at war (the Herero uprising) and, in addition to the goods needed for the civilian population and the administration, large quantities of war supplies had to be brought ashore including urgently required manpower and animal reinforcements. Over and above this, construction of the Otavi railway line had commenced by the end of 1903. Under these circumstances, it became of vital importance to ensure that the landing service did not fail since this could have led to serious consequences for both the civilian population and the Schutztruppe.

It was against this background that the decision was taken to build a temporary wooden landing jetty and an immediate start was made on this in November 1904. The task was carried out by troops from the Second Railway Company and was ready to be commissioned by April 1905, just in time to replace the Mole which had become completely unusable. The first section of the Jetty to be constructed was 275 m in length and had a width of 9 m. Later, around 1907, the Jetty was extended by 50 m, widened by 5 m, and the entire structure was strengthened. In spite of this, occasional spring floods caused considerable damage although this was repaired rapidly. To add to these problems, in 1906 the wood was attacked by the so-called borer worm - a boring mollusk (*Teredo Navalis*) - so that the pillars of the Jetty frequently had to be replaced.

Steamships were still unable to offload directly at the Jetty and they continued to lie at anchor as they had done previously with their cargoes being brought to the Jetty by means of tugs and barges. Notwithstanding numerous obstacles, the wooden Jetty stood defiantly until 1914 - a full ten years - thanks to the hard work and determination of all concerned.



Damage caused by the borer worm.

The Jetty can no longer be seen today as it was dismantled in 1916 by the South African occupational forces. However, right from the beginning the erection of the wooden Jetty was intended to be nothing more than a temporary measure and ongoing thought had to be given to improving the harbour installations.



Removal of offloaded goods from the wooden jetty.

In 1912, a start was made on the construction of an iron jetty which was planned to be 640 m long. The contract was awarded to two firms based in Mannheim, Germany (Flander A.G.; Benroth and Grün & Bilfinger). Major problems were encountered during construction due to the rocky substrata but these were overcome through an involved drilling programme. The Jetty was planned on a large scale and the quality of work was of such a high standard that the structure withstood the rough Atlantic for more than seventy years without requiring even minor repairs. Unfortunately it was never finished, and only 262 m had been completed when the First World War began and all work came to a stop. "The Jetty still stands - but for how much longer?" (H Rautenberg).

Right up until 1922, Swakopmunders still hoped that their town would continue to exist as a harbour, but in vain - instead Walvis Bay was developed as a harbour.



On the right the old wooden jetty, on the left the iron jetty under construction.

c) Appendix :

A few interesting statistics are given below :

Shipping

April 1902 - March 1903 : 28 ships called at Swakopmund
 1903/4 : 31 ships
 1904/5 : 128 ships
 1909 : 180 ships

+++++++

Losses during landing operations

In the period between 1904 - 1906, the Woermann Line lost the following vessels through sinking, stranding and damage by heavy seas:

No	Type of Vessel
3	tugs
7	launches
12	30 ton barges
10	10 ton barges
2	beach barges
4	landing rafts
3	pontoons
<hr/>	
Total 41	landing vessels

Considerable damage was suffered by more than fifty other vessels although these could be refloated.

+++++++

Volume of goods landed between 1904 - 1906 (in m³)

	<u>1904</u>	<u>1905</u>	<u>1906</u> <u>(8 months)</u>
Mole	127 600	71 600	-
Beach	5 700	53 100	50 900
Jetty	-	79 400	143 700
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	133 300	204 100	194 600

Total : 532 000 m³

+++++++

A table from the Woermann Line shows that in one period from January until August, on no less than 83 days nothing could be landed because of heavy seas.

3. TRANSPORTATION

a) Transport Routes

Through its harbour, Swakopmund became the gateway to South West and transport routes developed naturally from this. Previously, travel into the interior of the country had started off from the lower Kuiseb at Walvis Bay, across the Namib Flats up to the Swakop valley, through to Otjimbingwe - the so-called Bay Road (= road to and from the Bay), and from there continued onwards to individual settlements and mission stations. At this point it is worth noting that the powerful Nama leader Jonker Afrikaner had established the southern Bay Road through Tinkas, Tsaobis, Heusis to Windhoek as far back as 1843/4. Captain Ludwig von Estorff was given the nickname "Old Roman" in 1895 when he improved the northerly Bay Road because he used his soldiers in times of peace to carry out road construction amongst other things, in spite of their understandable grumbling. However, Estorff replied that the old Romans had always attached great significance to road construction and from then on he was referred to by the Schutztruppe as "the old Roman".



Section of the Bay Road.

At that time, the freight service to the interior was limited to ox wagons and a trip from Swakopmund to Windhoek took about 2 - 3 weeks. Single travellers - officers, officials, etc. - went by horseback and took about 3 days over the same route. In 1895, a regular mailcoach service was introduced between Swakopmund and Windhoek which reduced the travelling time of the

ox wagons by about 10 days. However, all these methods of transport proved to be inadequate for the more extensive development of the country. In addition, the difficult trails through the dry and barren stretches of the Namib desert often resulted in considerable losses amongst the trek oxen. Nevertheless, in 1896 some 880 laden ox wagons were despatched from Swakopmund. In 1901/2, 216 wagon loads were sent off in spite of the railway.

In 1896, through the bold action of First Lieutenant Troost, the first step was taken to find an alternative solution to the transport problem and this is described in more detail in the chapter headed "Martin Luther" (p 47). At the beginning of 1897, in spite of all preventative measures that had been taken, the dreaded Rinderpest disease swept through the country from neighbouring Bechuanaland. This brought the freight service to a virtual standstill and the German Parliament in Berlin (Reichstag) was forced to grant funds which had already been requested earlier for the construction of a railway.



Fully laden ox wagon ready to depart for the interior, 1899.

After the railway had taken over the job of the ox wagons, the old route along the Swakop valley steadily diminished in importance. The main traffic route to the interior gradually shifted until it ran almost

alongside the railway line. This move gained momentum in the 1920s when the motor car made its triumphant entry. The road led over hills and rocky mountains, through deep stretches of sand and over rivers lacking in bridges. Even after the road had been surfaced, a journey to the coast was a nightmare.

The construction of the road was in dire straits at this time. In 1930 the Administration's budget earmarked a sum of only R800 (£400) because of lack of finance. This can be compared to R2,2 million set aside for public roads in 1955/6, and the sum of R23 million in the budget plan for 1969/70 for the construction of tar roads. Consequently, the opening of the completely tarred stretch of road between Windhoek and Swakopmund at the beginning of 1967, work on this having commenced in 1961, was an event of considerable importance for the town which had been remote for so long.

For the inlanders, a weekend trip to the coast was no longer a problem, and the distance of 365 km could be travelled in comfort without dust or the notorious corrugations which were encountered previously. A big demand developed for plots on which to build holiday houses. For many inlanders, the town became their second home. In addition, the stream of tourists steadily expanded in number.

After Walvis Bay became the main port of entry for South West Africa in the 1920s, the road from there to Swakopmund gained in importance. At first the road ran behind the dune belt. However, in February 1956, construction commenced on a hard surfaced salt road running in front of the dunes, close to the coastline, and this was opened to traffic in 1959.

Traffic on this important connecting road was interrupted frequently by the flooding of the Swakop River which made any passage across the river bed impossible, often for a considerable period of time. Exceptionally strong floodwaters were experienced in the years 1923, 1931 and 1934, in which the Swakop flowed for four months on end with the water level intermittently rising and falling and causing great devastation. These drastic interruptions to the movement of traffic were overcome once and for all on June 6, 1969, when the former State President of South Africa Advocate C R Swart officially opened a large and stable road bridge over the river. The bridge cost R1,3 million, and its 687 m length is not only the longest in South West Africa but at the time was also the biggest concrete

arch structure in Southern Africa. The foundations of the 15 pillars carrying the bridge were anchored onto solid rock by means of caissons (sunken wells), with the deepest going down 27 m.



Devastation caused by floodwaters of the Swakop river, 1934.

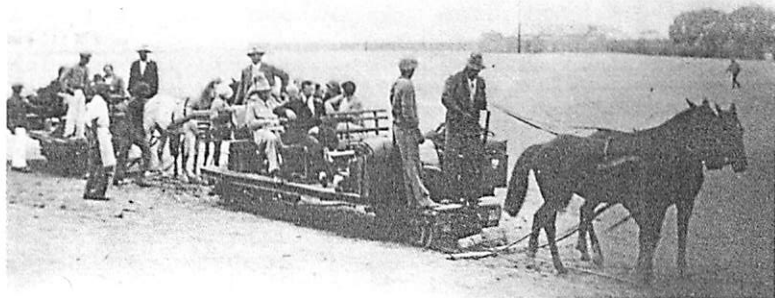
At about the same time, the coastal road between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund was tarred, and this was opened for use in December 1970. These developments represented important milestones in the establishment of effective traffic routes. By stages over the next twelve years, the tar roads were extended until it became possible to cover the full 1200 miles (1920 km) between Walvis Bay and Cape Town in comfort on a permanent road surface.

A description of transport services in Swakopmund would not be complete without mention being made of the old Swakopmunder "trollies". A significant feature of roads in Swakopmund during the early days was sand, sand and yet more sand, which made travel for ordinary vehicles virtually an impossible task. It was for this reason that the town was provided with an extensive network of rail tracks on which the trolleys could run. The trolleys were very simple and consisted of wooden boards covering a low platform mounted on an old railway carriage chassis which was drawn by horses or mules. Chairs and benches were placed on the platform for passenger transport so that travellers arriving on the bi-weekly passenger train - the "Desert

Express" - could be taken to their destination on the open air "tramway". Freight was carried on the trolleys from the harbour, and later from the railway station, to different trading companies who had laid down their own private tracks.

Traffic on the trolley lines continued to operate even at night, when the trolleys were converted into so-called "Violet Wagons" to carry night soil buckets away from the houses in the town.

In 1905 there were 21 trolleys operating in the town and, by 1910, the number of trolleys had increased to 34 (later figures could not be found). During the 1930s when the streets began to be surfaced with salt and gravel, the trolleys gradually faded from the street scene.



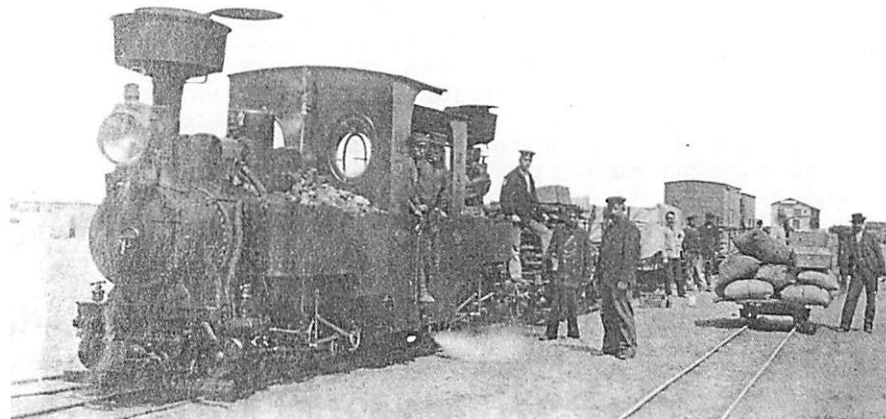
Swakopmunder Trolley.

b) Railways

In September, 1897, construction of a railway line by the military First Railway Company commenced. This led to rapid development of the town since all the materials that were required for the railway, as well as supplies and provisions for the construction personnel, passed through Swakopmund and this necessitated the erection of storage sheds and workshops.

The railway line was narrow gauge with a width of only 60 cm and at first reached only as far as Jakalswater (100 km), but later was extended to Windhoek (382 km). Nonidas was reached after two months, Jakalswater in

May 1899, Karibib in July (194 km), and on June 19, 1902, the first train arrived in Windhoek.



Early goods train with twin locomotive.

Several historians have gone into considerable detail on the story of this first railway line and it is a fascinating tale, particularly in view of the considerable difficulties which needed to be overcome using the primitive resources available at that time. It was also a tremendous achievement to have kept the tiny railroad operating even during times of crisis. The service provided by this state railway was discontinued in March, 1910.

The town received another stimulus at the end of 1903 when construction began on the Otavi railway line. The Otavi Mine and Railway Company - O M E G (= Otavi Minen-und Eisenbahngesellschaft), which was founded in 1900, had started extracting ore from the copper mine in Tsumeb and needed to provide transport for the ore from the mine to the coast. Initially, thought was given to constructing a railway line from Tiger Bay in Angola to Tsumeb, but finally a decision was made in favour of using the harbour in Swakopmund. Because of various shortcomings in the existing state railway, OMEG decided against making use of this service and preferred to construct their own railway which also had a 60 cm narrow gauge. The construction contract was awarded to the firm Arthur Koppel A.G., Berlin.

The route followed by the OMEG railway line through the Namib up to Usakos was far more favourable than that of the state railway and the foundations of the track were more stable. On November 12, 1906, the full stretch of track up to Tsumeb (567 km) was opened to traffic, making it the longest narrow gauge line in the world at that time. The railway was taken over by the government in 1910, and it was only in 1960 that the line between Usakos and Tsumeb was widened to the standard Cape track gauge of 106,7 cm.

Traffic between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund up until the outbreak of the First World War was confined to the occasional mule wagon or horse which travelled along the beach. This situation changed on December 25, 1914, when troops from the Union of South Africa together with large quantities of war materials of all kinds were offloaded at Walvis Bay from four warships and nine transport vessels. The Witwatersrand Rifle Regiment rapidly constructed a railway line in Cape gauge running close to the coast which was completed on February 11, 1915. In addition, a low bridge was erected across the Swakop river which lasted until 1917 when it was washed away by floodwaters of the Swakop.

In 1922, the railway administration introduced a motor trolley service on the line between Swakopmund and Walvis Bay which ran twice daily between the two towns carrying mainly passengers. The time taken by the motor trolley for a single trip was 45 minutes. It is reported that the trolley was powered by a 50 H.P. Mercedes engine which came from the first privately owned car in Swakopmund and had been imported in 1912 by the firm Woermann, Brock & Co. The car was requisitioned by troops in 1914 and later was handed over to the occupational authorities.

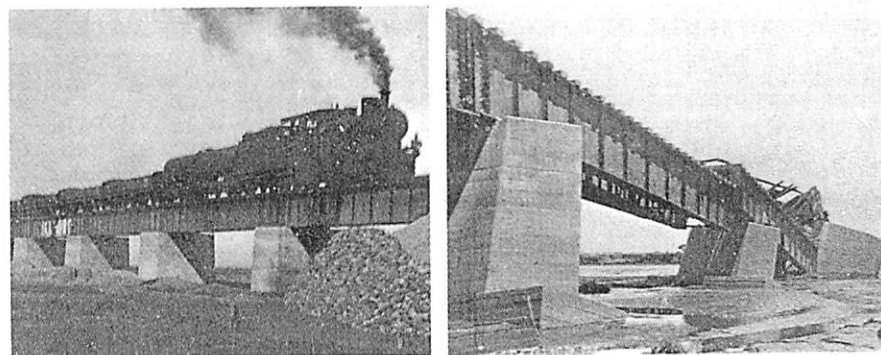


First railway line between Walvis Bay - Swakopmund (1915), showing a fortification built to protect the line.

In September 1914, German troops dismantled the tracks of both the state and Otavi railways for a distance of 20 km inland and, as they retreated further, blew up many sections of the railway line to hamper the advance of the enemy and to prevent reinforcements being moved up. For the advancing troops from the Union, it was a fairly simple task to rebuild the railway following the route of the Otavi line because of the 6000 men available to assist in the work. This railway was also constructed in Cape gauge and was protected against German demolition commandoes by a series of strengthened fortifications.

After the Peace of Versailles, control of the railway line running from Walvis Bay via Swakopmund to the interior was taken over by the South African Railways and Harbours administration (S.A.R. & H.) without any compensation being paid. During the years that followed the railway service was improved and extended, and this has continued steadily to the present day.

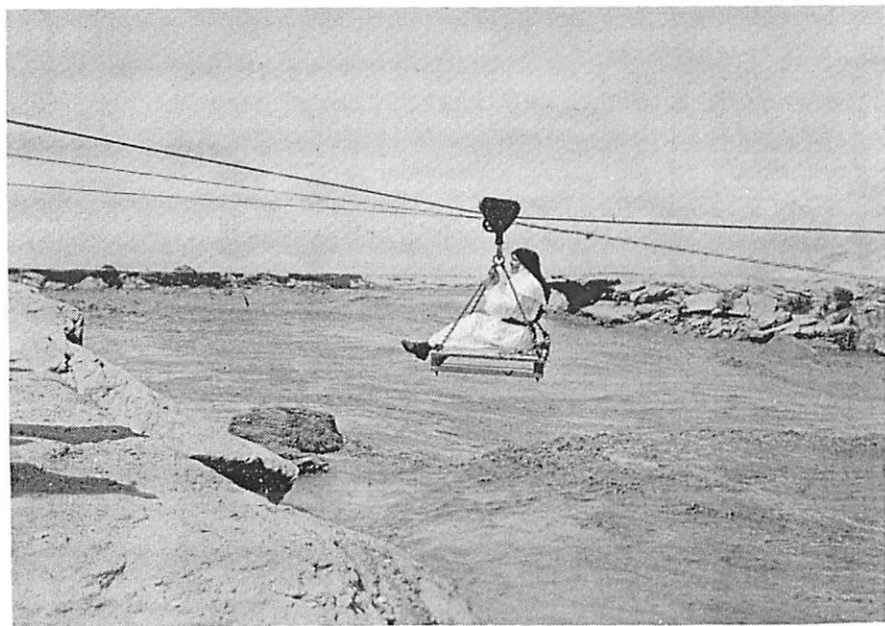
Traffic into the interior of the country ran the continual risk of being brought to a complete standstill through the occasional heavy flooding of the Swakop river. As a result, in 1925, work commenced on the construction of a railway bridge, approximately 300 m long, over the mouth of the Swakop and the bridge was opened to traffic in April 1926. Unfortunately, the strong concrete supports were not stabilised on the subterranean bedrock and, when the Swakop came down in flood in January, 1931, the supports sank into the sand snapping the steel rail tracks like matchsticks. Some of the concrete pillars from this illfated bridge can still be seen today.



Swakop bridge before and after 1931.

Exceptional rains were experienced between January and April in 1934 leading to widespread damage and disruption of traffic routes. The rail service between South West Africa and South Africa came to a standstill and operations were only resumed at the beginning of May. The connecting line between the harbour in Walvis Bay and Swakopmund again became impassable due to the Swakop river coming down in flood. To overcome this serious problem, barges and tugs from Walvis Bay were used as in earlier days to unload the basic necessities of life at the Mole in Swakopmund and these were then transported inland by rail. This was a bad time for the area and resulted in many victims and heavy losses.

As a result of the misfortunes which they had experienced, the railway authorities set out to find an alternative crossing spot which was less exposed to the forces of nature and eventually they found a suitable site about 5 km upstream. Shrewd Swakopmunders had erected a cableway across the river at this site already in 1934. In 1935, a railway bridge was built spanning the 80 m width of the Swakop between the ridges of the two rock faces and this structure has withstood floods successfully up until the present day.



Cableway across the Swakop, 1934.

The construction of this rail bridge created a storm in a teacup. Swakopmunders feared that their trade links would be placed at a severe disadvantage as a result of the bridge being built so far beyond the town that traffic would pass directly inland without going through Swakopmund. A stubborn fight was put up which included protest demonstrations and was taken as far as senior railway management in Johannesburg and the South African Prime Minister. The outcome was that the System Manager in South West Africa gave his assurance that the train from Walvis Bay to the interior would continue to call at Swakopmund. The unusual shunting system used in the town dates back to this event and explains why Swakopmund has a cul-de-sac station.

The railway line running close to the coast between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund continued operating from its construction in 1915 right up to 1980 when it was moved behind the dunes because of the continual sand drifts which kept on covering the lines.

To complete this short review, it should be mentioned that the first railway in South West Africa was put into operation in 1896. It was a 20 km long field railway at Cape Cross which was used to gather guano. The railway was discontinued in 1903 when the Damaraland Guano Company closed down their guano workings.

4. DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF THE TOWN

a) Pre First World War

The first building to be put up in Swakopmund was a barracks for troops in September, 1892. This was followed closely by the construction of a number of equally primitive dwellings and storehouses. A detailed description of the rapid growth of the new settlement up to the turn of the century and later lies beyond the scope of this chronicle and only brief mention can be made of the highlights (further details are available in the book written by H Rautenberg : Das Alte Swakopmund). However, a few population figures bear testimony to the developments that were taking place :

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Inhabitants</u>
1892	7
1894	19
1895	32
1896	84
1897	113
1898	281
1901	442



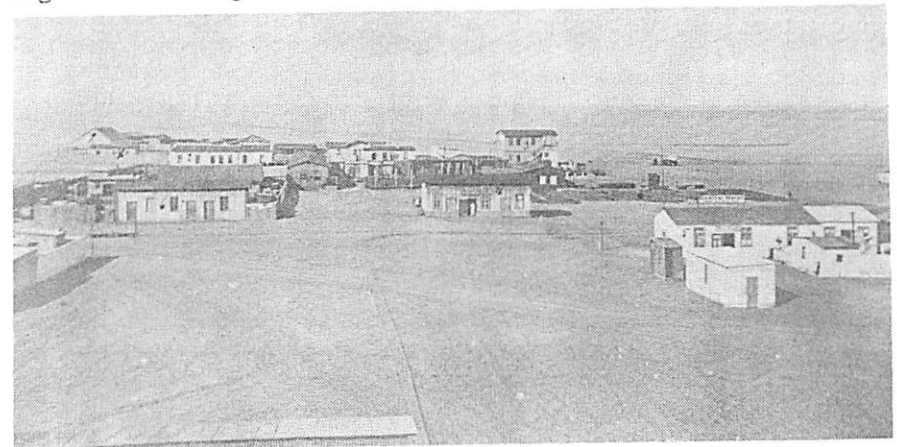
The first trading establishments.

The initial growth was based solely on the development of the harbour and for this reason commercial undertakings began to assume significance. The buildings erected by these trading establishments were at first relatively improvised but by the beginning of the new

century they began to be replaced by fairly large and imposing structures. Without doubt, the most famous of these buildings was the Woermann House which stands today as the jewel of the town (see p 50).

The land on which Swakopmund was founded belonged to the German Colonial Company of South West Africa (= Deutschen Kolonial-Gesellschaft für Südwestafrika) who, in 1885, took over the land which had been bought originally by Adolf Lüderitz. This included the coastal strip (excluding the British territory of Walvis Bay) which the Topnaar Captain Piet Haibib had sold to Adolf Lüderitz in August, 1884. The Company sent their representative Dr Max Rhode to Swakopmund at the end of 1894 to look after their interests. It was Dr Rhode who drew up the first building plan for the future town.

With the commencement of construction on the state railway in 1897 and the Mole in 1898, Swakopmund received a tremendous boost. The number of officials, merchants, craftsmen and labourers rose rapidly and an energetic building programme was initiated. Prefabricated wooden houses were imported from Germany, some of which were double storey. In 1899, the first large stone buildings were erected and these were followed by others at the beginning of the century which changed the panorama of the town very rapidly. Some of these buildings have been preserved up to the present day and help to give the town its special character. "With their striving for beauty and representativeness, the builders of the town have given their bleak surroundings a charming element." (W Peters)



Panorama around 1900.

When construction of the Otavi railway commenced in 1903, the town experienced yet another upswing. In 1905, the number of inhabitants topped the 1000 mark for the first time to reach a figure of 1433.



Panorama around 1916.

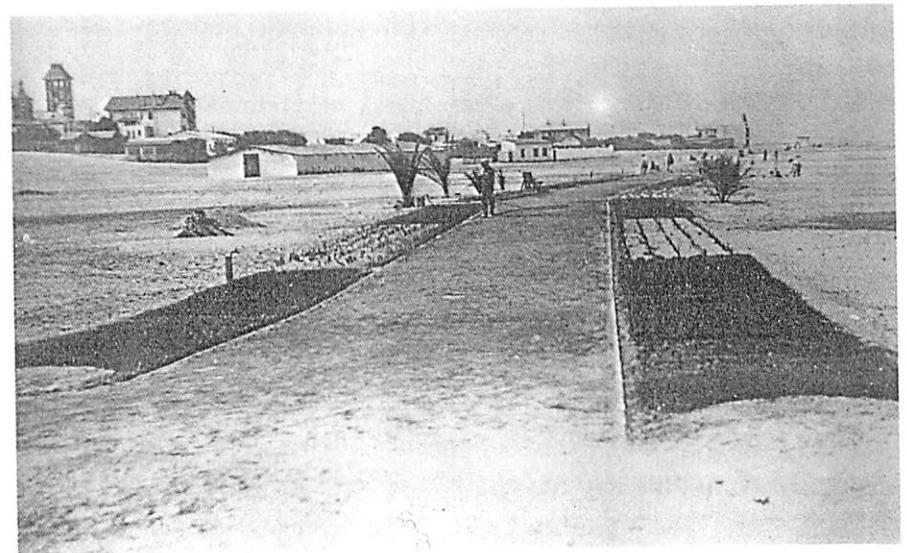
The harbour area with its numerous storage sheds stretched from the Jetty to the Mole and was separated from the town by a wooden fence. Rail tracks ran from here to both of the stations as well as to the commercial area. Often there were as many as 10 - 20 or even more steamers moored offshore waiting to offload their cargoes. In 1904/5 alone, 1200 people were employed in various landing service activities. By 1900 a brewery was already in existence - the first in South West Africa. In 1901 a printing works and telephone network were established; in 1907 the first electrical power station in South West was erected, and so one could carry on.

By 1907, Swakopmund with its 1682 whites had the largest European population of any German colony in Africa, although later this diminished a little (1912 : 1394 Europeans and 2300 other race groups). In 1914, the town had 38 craft works and 8 industries in existence as well as 51 commercial undertakings and shops, 4 banks and 18 hotels and inns. The town pulsed with

life. There were a number of active clubs, festivals were celebrated, and many cultural activities were organized to brighten the everyday life of the populace. A smart town had emerged out of the desert sand.

b) Post First World War

In the midst of all this activity, the First World War broke out in 1914. The exposed town was bombed on numerous occasions in September and October from the sea by an English auxiliary cruiser which led to a general evacuation by the inhabitants. The precious food supplies and other provisions were transported inland because all supplies from outside were cut off abruptly. On January 15, 1915, troops from the Union of South Africa entered Swakopmund. After an armistice was declared in July 1915, the Swakopmunders returned to their now lifeless town to eke out a more or less miserable existence. The once flourishing town had slumped to become nothing more than a fishing village. Building activities came to a virtual standstill until almost the end of the 1920s. Property owners abandoned their claims to undeveloped ground because they could no longer afford to pay rates on them. In 1923, no less than 23 houses and 40 flats stood empty in the town, and no thought could be given to maintaining the existing buildings because of the costs involved.



Commencement of the Schad promenade.

However, Section 8 of the London Agreement signed in October 1923, guaranteed that in the future the town would be developed as a health and holiday resort for the South West African people, as well as becoming an educational centre. This lifebelt was grabbed immediately by the Town Council which fought to have these pledges realised through innumerable pleas and petitions.

After the harbour and customs service fell away, the Mole basin and beach was developed into a swimming area. Amongst other things, change rooms, a swimming pool, parks and tennis courts were established. A music pavilion and a café were built and a permanent promenade was laid down between the Mole and the Jetty. The Mole, which had suffered badly through the constant pounding it had received from the rough Atlantic, was repaired and extended to become a promenade. The last subsidized payment received from the government in terms of the agreement to develop the town as a holiday resort was for £150 (R300) and was paid out in 1932/3. All these efforts were rewarded eventually. Many inlanders began to seek out the new holiday resort during the hot summer months between November and February because of the pleasant facilities which were available.



The German School, 1914.

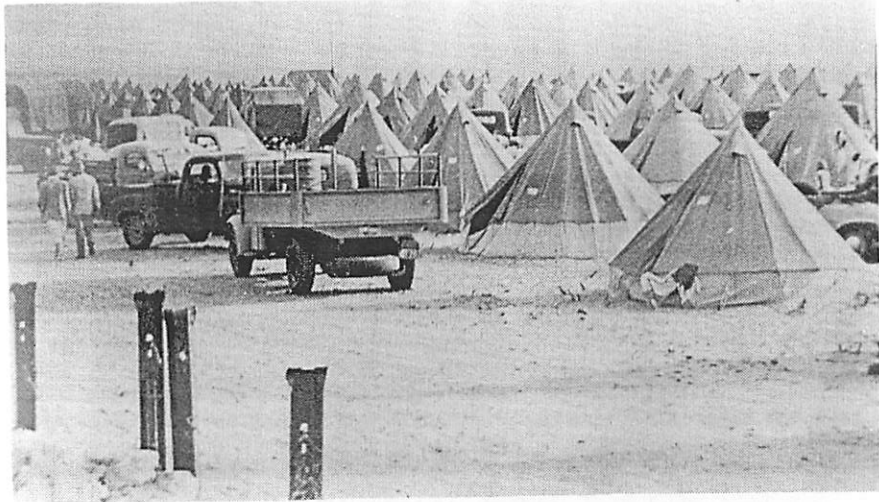
Almost nothing was done to develop the town into an educational centre as laid down in the terms of the London Agreement. Whatever development did take place was much later and was not so much due to the Agreement

but rather as a result of the growing numbers of residents, as well as the decision of parents in the interior of the country to send their children to Swakopmund rather than Windhoek because of the healthier climate. After the war, South African children were accommodated in the existing school buildings, and German speaking pupils, who were in the majority, had to make use of vacant buildings which were converted into schools and hostels (e.g. Wille-Hause, Kaserne, Woermann-Haus, Ritterburg, Amtsgericht). In addition, several private hostels were established to cater and provide a home for non-resident children. In 1920, all German schools and hostels were taken over by the mandated administration. The first new school building was put up in April, 1930, close to the Jetty - the so-called 'Primary School'. Significant extensions to the educational facilities only commenced in the middle of the 1950s but have continued up to the present day with the construction of very impressive, though often ugly, building complexes in the town. Currently, some 1400 pupils of the three European language groups (German, Afrikaans, English) are provided for by the existing schools. Additional schools have been built in Tamariskia for Coloured residents and Mondesa for African residents.

c) Modern Times

Swakopmund became well established as a holiday paradise in the years leading up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. By comparison to the First World War, the Second World War had virtually no effect on the remote town. The Administrator, many civil servants, as well as the civilian population, continued to escape from the heat inland during the summer months to spend their holiday in the cooler coastal town.

As Swakopmund grew in popularity so the accommodation available in hotels and private lodgings could no longer meet the demand, which led to the town erecting 12 tents in 1940 on an experimental basis. Arising from this, a large tent town took shape on South Beach which was known as "Lappiesdorf" and which housed 788 holiday visitors in 1947 and no less than 1056 in 1950/51. Out of these primitive beginnings, over the next 20 years from 1952 - 1972, a bungalow section was developed not far from the Swakop mouth consisting of 200 accommodation units and, in addition, a large caravan park was established north of the town in 1971 containing approximately 500 stands.



"Lappiesdorf".

No discussion on holiday facilities in the area would be complete without mention being made of the fishing village of Wlotzka-Baken which has a unique character all of its own. There are no electric lights and fresh water needs to be transported to the village in tankers. The "streets" are outlined by means of white-washed stones. However, the anglers who have built their simple wooden cottages there love the isolated life that it offers and see it as a haven of peace and tranquillity.

At "Mile 14" to the north of Swakopmund a stretch of gravel over one kilometre in length was established adjacent to the beach providing stands for both caravans and tents. Apart from braaivleis sites, toilets and showers, as well as a small shop, there are no trappings of luxury. Similar camping sites are also found further to the north. As a result of all the efforts made by the local authorities, holiday visitors can find a wide range of accommodation available to them both in Swakopmund and its environs.

A special attraction in the town for both residents and visitors is an Olympic-sized heated swimming pool which was opened for use in December, 1971. At the official inauguration in January, 1972, a highlight of the occasion was an exhibition by Karen Muir, the then South African and World backstroke record holder. The pool is an all-weather one and has been constructed

in such a way that sections of the walls and ceiling slide into one another to convert it into an open air pool.

The general improvement in roads and transport facilities has resulted in not only South Westers, but also many holiday makers from South Africa, choosing to spend their summer vacations in Swakopmund. The latter are attracted by the opportunity to get away from heavily overcrowded, ultra-modern holiday resorts as well as by the reputation of the local coastal waters as an angler's paradise.



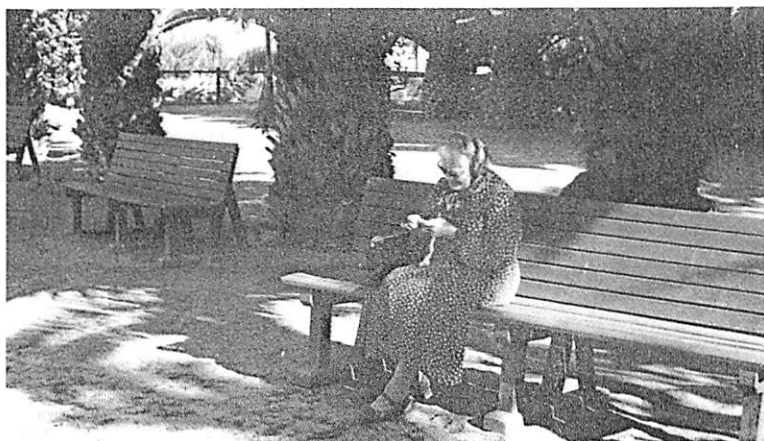
Holiday bungalows.

The continual and steady demand for suitable plots on which to erect holiday homes and chalets led to the establishment of a new suburb called "Vineta". Today it is no longer the quiet and remote holiday area which was planned originally. In the middle of the 1970s, a mining company by the name of Rössing Uranium appeared on the scene and selected Vineta as the place in which to build houses for its officials and other employees. Virtually overnight, hundreds of new houses mushroomed out of the ground, considerably changing the landscape of the town and almost making Vineta a separate town in itself.

The beautiful garden suburb of "Kramersdorf" was extended in 1969 and forms an entrance to the town. Many local inhabitants have chosen to live in this area

and enhanced its attraction through building well designed houses and attractively laid out gardens.

That Swakopmund has maintained itself as the foremost resort in the country can be attributed not only to the never ending efforts of the local Council and residents, but also to a gift from God - the unique climate. The considerable variations in temperature which are encountered inland ranging from a few degrees below zero in winter to 30 - 40° C in summer are not experienced at the coast. Consequently, many retired farmers, businessmen, civil servants and other pensioners have chosen to spend the well deserved evening of their life in the healthy climate. Even when banks of fog envelop the town or the notorious hot East Wind blows for a few days during the winter months, one cannot but agree with the views of the perspiring inlanders that Swakopmunders do not appreciate just how fortunate they are.



A contemplative evening of life.

The rapid development of the town through the dual influence of mining and holiday making activities has resulted in the expansion of facilities for residents of all race groups. In 1960/61, the so-called "Alte Werft" in which black residents lived was relocated to the newly established suburb of "Mondesa". Today the suburb has some 1200 living units, administration buildings, shops, schools, churches and sporting facilities. Also in the 1960s, the suburb of "Tamariskia" was established for Coloureds and presently has 460 houses, similar facilities to those found in Mondesa, as well as a large and attractive community hall.

Racial segregation of the residential suburbs has declined slowly in recent years as skilled and professional coloured and black residents have been attracted to the formerly white suburb of Vineta.

Approximately 65 km inland, the Rössing mine has established a model town for its lower grade employees consisting of three and four bedroomed houses, flats, schools, churches, shopping centre, hospital, as well as social, recreational and welfare facilities.

A noteworthy feature in Swakopmund was the decision taken by the Town Council in their building regulations to restrict the height of new buildings to no more than two storeys to prevent the construction of 'skyscrapers'. These restrictions have ensured that the face of the town, and hence its character, could be preserved, and the soulless uniformity found in so many other holiday resorts avoided.

The table below provides an estimate of the population figures for Swakopmund in 1982.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Number</u>
White	8 000
Coloured	3 000
Black	6 000
<hr/>	
TOTAL	17 000

d) Commerce and Industry

Over the years, comparatively little industry has been established in Swakopmund. Initially, because of the position of the town as the entrance to the country, the emphasis in development was directed towards commerce. After the First World War, the development of the town as a health and holiday resort became more prominent and laid the base for the modern day tourist industry. However, even in the pioneering years a mineral water factory was opened in 1899, the first brewery was built in 1900, and in 1907 the first power station in South West came into operation. Prior to the First World War, other industries which were established included a distillery, an iron foundry, factories for matches, brushes, cigarettes and tobacco, and an ice manufacturing factory.

Overshadowing everything else was the fact that the brewing industry found a permanent "home" in Swakopmund. After the industry's roots were laid in 1900, a larger brewery was opened in 1905 - the "Swakopmunder Brauereigesellschaft". In 1912, Johann Heuschneider built the "Kronen-Brauerei" from which the well known Hansa Brewery developed in 1929 to become one of the most important industrial enterprises in the country.

Another industrial undertaking in the town is the Tannery, which was founded as a small company in 1937 by Ewald Schier and, in the face of strong competition from South Africa, developed into a large enterprise. The Kudu leather shoes which are manufactured in the Tannery and are known as "Swakopmunders" have become well known products of the country.

On the outskirts of the town, a few small industries were established which have grown into notable enterprises through courage and hard work to become important economic factors not only in Swakopmund but also in the country as a whole. For example, the plant which Rudolf Klein set up in 1936 on the northern side of the town to extract salt from sea water, today produces more than 100 000 tons of salt a year. The Company was honoured by a special commemorative stamp issue in December 1981, in recognition of its contribution to the economy.

In 1930, Adolf Winter - a master carpenter - erected a 16 m² platform in the sea between Swakopmund and Walvis Bay, not far from the beach, in order to collect guano. A year later the platform was enlarged to form a 256 m² base. Today the artificial guano island measures approximately 17 000 m², stands on 1607 iron supports, and produces more than 1 000 tons of guano annually. The valuable guano fertilizer is produced mainly by Cape cormorants (*Phalacrocorax capensis*). Initially, Winter's idea was laughed at and ridiculed by his fellow citizens, but later his ingenious invention was copied by others and today there are a number of guano platforms found along the coast as far as Cape Cross.

Early in the 1920s, Hermann Offen obtained a concession to cull seals at Cape Cross. Prior to this, the rights were held by the German Colonial Company and were then taken over by the South African Government, although neither of them displayed much interest in them. Offen built his enterprise into a model factory in which nothing went to waste and every part of the seal was used - skin, meat, bone, fat, etc. In addition, there

was no ruthless exploitation of the seals as often took place elsewhere in the world. The seal colony lies 128 km north of Swakopmund and has a population of about 120 000 animals - South African fur seals. (*Arctocephalus pusillus*). These days it is a major tourist attraction although it can only be visited at certain times of the year.

Inland from Swakopmund in the Namib Desert, prospecting was carried out for all types of minerals and valuable semi-precious stones were found which were processed in a number of small businesses. Copper was also discovered but the deposits were not large enough to warrant any large scale exploitation.

In 1928, Captain Peter Louw and his wife Margery discovered the presence of radioactive minerals in the desert east of Swakopmund. Although various exploratory studies were undertaken, little serious interest in the discovery was shown until August, 1966, when Rio Tinto South Africa Limited acquired the mineral exploration rights. After extensive field studies, the decision to mine the resource was taken and in 1974 the first ground was broken in what was to become an open pit. The new mine, known as Rössing Uranium Limited, produced its first uranium in June, 1976, and today is the largest producer of uranium oxide in the world. The mine is an industrial giant in South West Africa and has had a tremendous influence on the life, structure, and business of Swakopmund, stamping its mark indelibly on the town.

Apart from the enterprises which have been discussed, craftsmen and professionals from almost every trade and walk of life were involved in the early development of the town. Some managed to develop their skills into small businesses e.g. the Butcher who established a tinned food factory. Many of the older buildings which date back seventy years or more, as well as bridges and other examples, remain as memorials to the quality of their craftsmanship. In most instances, it is only the exteriors which have required attention because of their exposure to the harsh weather conditions; the structures of the buildings have lasted for many decades and resisted the ravages of time.



Illustrative craftsmanship.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

a) Postal Services

South West Africa joined the Universal Postal Union on July 1, 1888, and the first post office in the country was opened a week later on July 7, in Otjimbingwe which was then the capital of South West Africa. On May 30, 1895, a postal agency was established in Swakopmund with the storekeeper Otto Erhard acting as the post officer in a part time capacity. When a ship arrived bringing with it the overseas mail, Erhard was responsible for sorting out the contents of the mailbags including all items addressed to the interior of the country. However, he was often disturbed in his sorting task by people curious to know whether they had received any mail. To overcome this problem, Erhard decided that he would let everybody know when the sorting had been completed by firing a few pistol shots into the air outside his building. The arrival of the mail continued to be an important event in the life of the town even after the postal agency was replaced by a permanent post office run by a full time post official in September, 1897. When the flag of the German Reich was hoisted on top of the post office building, the people of Swakopmund knew that the mail had been sorted.

In 1906, construction commenced on the building of a large, double storey post office which came into operation on April 1, 1907. To mark the event 'Schlucht' street was renamed 'Post' street. This post office remained in use for sixty years until a new, modern post office was opened on March 31, 1967, and the Municipality then moved into the old building.



26. Registered letter, 1904.

Both in shore landings and general transportation, mail delivery enjoyed priority over all other goods. Thus, in 1914, the last two ships to enter the harbour called in only to offload mail and then steamed off again. It is said that when the Swakop was in flood in January, 1931, the mail was passed over the riverbed by means of a rope which had been shot across the Swakop using a rocket.

It is also interesting to note that the first private airmail in South West Africa was despatched from Swakopmund on May 18, 1914, in an aircraft called the 'Rudolf Hertzog' which was piloted by Bruno Büchner. Documents relating to the flight are prized highly by philatelists today.

When a regular air service was introduced in South West Africa in August, 1931, using Junkers aircraft, the so-called West flight also served Swakopmund and Walvis Bay but was discontinued on December 14, because the route was unprofitable.

b) Telecommunications

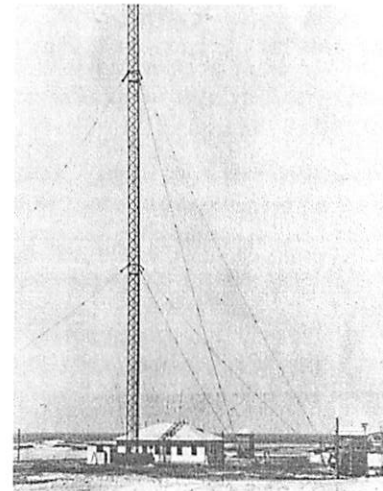
It is remarkable to think that already at the beginning of this century when Swakopmund had a European population of only 2872 (1899) and 4682 (1903), efforts were being made to install the latest technical achievements in what was then a remote corner of Africa.

In 1899, a start was made on the construction of a telegraph link between Swakopmund and Windhoek. The wires ran alongside the railway line and reached the capital in July 1901, one year before the railway was completed.

On April 13, 1899, Swakopmund was connected to the overseas cable running between Cape Town and England. An extract from a report on this notable event is provided in the newspaper cutting below.

I. Jahrgang.		Windhoek, 27. April 1899.	
<i>Das Kabel ist in Swakopmund am Abend des 13. April dem Verkehr übergeben worden. Die erste abgesandte Depesche war ein Telegramm an den Kaiser folgenden Wortlauts:</i>			
„Euer Majestät entbieten die Deutschen der Kolonie bei der Eröffnung des Kabelverkehrs mit dem Mutterlande allerehrbietigsten Gruss mit der Versicherung unwandelbarster Treue.“			
Gouverneur Leutwein.			
<i>An demselben Abend wurden noch mehrere Privattelegramme nach Deutschland abgeschickt. Die erste Depesche aus Deutschland traf am 14. April abends 8 Uhr in Swakopmund ein. Sie war am gleichen Tage nachmittags 3 Uhr²⁵ M. in Braunschweig aufgegeben worden.</i>			
<i>Es ist nicht nöthig, über die Wichtigkeit der vorstehenden Nachricht viele Worte zu machen. Wir wünschen einander Glück zu diesem weiteren Schritte auf dem Wege der Entwicklung und sagen unseren Dank denen, die das Werk angeregt, die es ermöglicht und die es ausgeführt haben!</i>			
		<i>geruchlos, ohne B Menge vorhanden grösserer Ausdehnung werden kann. Die bände an die W sind bereits in Be das Wasser von höchsten Punkt vo voir hinaufdrücker stellt sein. Die e deren Entwurf zu nach erfolgter Gen Bau der projectie kann. In der Zw die zur Sicherung von denen jeder Man hofft, dass se Jahres Leichter a können.</i>	
		<i>Die Lan ist am 5. April ber“ hatte zuvor, gentlichen schwer</i>	

Because the cable was English owned, the telegraph service was provided by an English company known as the "Eastern and South African Telegraph Company". The company erected an impressive building in Swakopmund which still exists and has retained its original name of "Kabelmesse".



Radio mast.

The first telephone service in South West Africa was established by the post office in Swakopmund on October 1, 1901, to which 40 subscribers were connected. In December 1911, South West also received its own radio station for overseas transmission of communications. To accomplish this, an 85 m high steel mast having a diameter of 3 m with stabilizing cables fastened securely to the ground was erected in Swakopmund. Three small towers which provided the supports for the cables can still be seen today on the south beach near Swakopmund and pose the onlooker with a few unanswered questions which need explanation.

Three mooring or stabilizing cables were fastened at the 34 m and 68 m marks respectively on the mast and were then anchored 2,5 m deep into the ground. The small towers were built above these anchor points and were filled with sand to a height of 6 m. It is surprising that these towers were not constructed in the form of square concrete blocks but rather in the shape of attractive buildings whose architecture is reminiscent of the style of that time. The three towers were restored at the end of the 1970s and recommendations were made for them to be proclaimed as national monuments although no decision has yet been taken.

On September 14, 1914, an English auxillary cruiser - the "Armada Castle" - fired seventeen cannon shots at the radio mast although none of them succeeded in hitting their target. However, the mast had already been taken out of service on August 13, and all the instruments and equipment had been moved inland. After the bombardment from the ship, personnel from the radio mast cut through two of the mooring cables with an oxy-acetylene torch, thus allowing the structure to collapse in an effort to prevent further shots being fired at the town.

c) The Press

The first newspaper to be printed in South West Africa, the "Windhoeker Anzeiger" appeared on the streets on

October 12, 1898, and was published and edited by an attorney Georg Wasserfall. Later on, Wasserfall moved to Swakopmund in September, 1901, and renamed his paper the "Deutsch - Südwestafrikanische Zeitung" (D-SWAZ). The paper ceased publication in October, 1914.

Over the years there have been three different "Swakopmunder Zeitungen". The first one was published by Peters & Stolze on December 2, 1911, and then subsequently merged with the D-SWAZ in October, 1912. The second "Swakopmunder Zeitung" initially appeared on November 21, 1919, having evolved from the "Kino-Anzeiger" which was published by Ferdinand Stich in March, 1916. This "Swakopmunder Zeitung" was run by a number of different editors up until 1938. The third and last "Swakopmunder Zeitung" appeared for a short while in 1958 as a German language supplement to the "Namib Times".

Ferdinand Stich was also responsible for founding an English newspaper in October, 1928, the "Walvis Bay Messenger", which was printed in Swakopmund. The name was changed in May, 1929, to the "South West Times" but the paper closed down in December, 1933.

The tri-lingual "Namib Times" was established in December, 1958, by Paul Vincent and was printed in Swakopmund prior to moving over to Walvis Bay where it is housed presently.

Nearly all of the newspapers which have been described above appeared on a weekly basis.

DEUTSCH-SÜDWESTAFRIKANISCHE ZEITUNG
Gegründet 1898 durch Dr. Kaspar von Gumbert
SWAKOPMUNDER ZEITUNG
Erscheint Mittwoch u. Sonnabend Abends.
Verantwortlicher Schriftleiter: Arthur Mylo, Swakopmund
Telegraphische Adressen: Zeitung - Postfach 55.
Druck- u. Expedition: Swakopmunder Buchhandlung G. m. b. H.
Verlag: Zeitungs-Verlag, Ges. m. b. H., Swakopmund.

17. Jahrg. | Mittwoch, den 27. Mai 1914. | Nr. 42

Kabelnachrichten.
Die Juleitov der Schütztruppe - Aus dem Schütztruppen-Lokal - Schiffsnachrichten - Aus Deutschland - Eine Abreise nach dem Inlande - Die Zeit vor dem Lande - Nächst - Koloniale Nachrichten - Gegen die Eingeborenen-Verhältnisse - Die Konkurrenz der Lebensmittel - Das afrikanische Hebe der Zukunft - Dreihand und Dreihand - Die Dampfer-Klasse - Flugwesen - Sportnachrichten - Humor - Dr. Seitz, Hauptmann und Richter

ausstehende Platzanweisung - Klagen, wie sie mit mehr oder minder Berechtigung noch bei jeder Ausstellung in der Welt laut werden - Man denkt über den Wert von Ausstellungen in den Kulturländern heute im allgemeinen genau so skeptisch, wie man früher, als das Ausstellungswesen sich erst zu entwickeln begann, enthusiastisch darüber dachte. In der Tat haben sich die „großen Jahrmärkte“ in den Gebieten abendländischer Kultur wohl überlebt, auch der Wert von Weltausstellungen ist mit der Entwicklung der Großindustriebetriebe zu wettlaufspannenden Unternehmungen mit eigenen Niederlassungen und kaufmännischen Vertretern in aller Herren Ländern recht recht natürlich geworden. Und Landesausstellungen haben aus ähnlichen Gründen in der Kulturwelt kaum noch eine Diskussionsberechtigung. Nur die

wird sich auch hier bewahrheiten, nicht nur in dem Sinne, daß die Betrachtung der Leistungen der Konkurrenz für manche hiesigen Aussteller zur Anspannung der eigenen Leistungsfähigkeit anzuregen wirkt, sondern auch in dem Sinne, daß mancher Südwestler von dem landesüblichen Vorurteil gegen die hiesige Produktion und den hiesigen Handel bekehrt werden wird. Das scheint ein Widerspruch, ist es aber nicht. Denn so gut wir hier landwirtschaftliche, gewerbliche und kaufmännische Betriebe haben, die mit der Überseekonkurrenz nicht Schritt gehalten haben, also von ihr lernen müssen, so gut haben wir hier auch landwirtschaftliche, gewerbliche und kaufmännische Betriebe, die es an Leistungsfähigkeit mit Übersee ohne weiteres aufnehmen. Das hat sich schon auf der vorjährigen Winternachstellung gezeigt, warum sollte es sich

6. THE ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE NAME "SWAKOP"

The majority of towns and villages in South West Africa have grown out of settlements established by the indigenous population and situated generally close to waterholes or natural springs. The original inhabitants gave the settlements very descriptive names which were retained in most cases by the subsequent European settlers although the names tended to be simplified (e.g. Outjo, Otjiwarongo, Okahandja). There were a few places which were renamed and these include Windhoek, Keetmanshoop, and Gibeon. However, the locations where the towns of Swakopmund and Lüderitzbucht were founded were the only two places in the country where the white settlers did not encounter an established indigenous settlement.

Contact was made on occasion with small nomadic groups in the lower Swakop valley who were probably Bergdama. Hereros were also encountered periodically who subsisted on hunting rather than pastoral activities. Amongst the latter people was the Herero Chief Tjiponda who called the Swakop mouth "Otjozondjii" which means the "place of the shells". Shells were considered to be very attractive jewellery amongst many indigenous people in Africa and were also a sign of status and wealth. It is possible that the Topnaars who stayed in the Kuiseb valley may have visited the Swakop valley from time to time, but it is unlikely that any of these people established a permanent settlement in the area since the conditions were not favourable for grazing. The lower Swakop valley was also visited by American whale hunters in the eighteenth century to replenish their supplies of fresh water.

In historical records dating back to the last century, frequent mention is made by the early travellers, explorers, hunters and missionaries, of the local name for the river. The name had a clicking sound to it and the records spelled it in a variety of ways including: Tsawayawip, Twayaup, Zwachaup, Tsoa-chaub, Tsoá-chaub or Tsoa-chaob, Tsoa-xaub, etc. All these names stem from a common root.

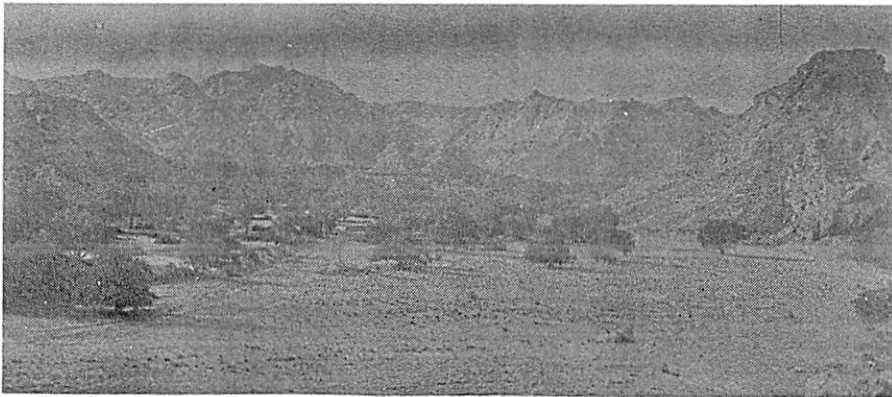
The missionary Knudsen gave the Swakop the proud name of "Rhein" and in 1845, Lieutenant Ruxton named it the "Somerset River". W. Moritz mentioned the names "Mons" and "Buruxas", the latter name meaning 'strange' and referring to the fact that a harbour had arisen out of the desert sand. It is remarkable that almost all of the English travellers used the present day name of Swakop. Charles Andersson in 1850, described it as "the river to which the natives give the name

Schwackaup or Swakop, as Europeans call it", and Francis Galton (1853) and Tindall (1855) used the same name. However, some 30 - 40 years later, when the Germans began to take an interest in the Swakop, they used either the name "Tsoakhaub" or "Swachaub" in their reports and records. With the proclamation of Swakopmund as an independent district in 1896, the present way of writing "Swakop" came into standard usage.

Language experts point out that the word 'Swakop' is derived from a Nama name and Knudsen says that "it is not possible to translate it in a respectable way". The word "Tsoa(s)" means anus, and "Xoub" means excrement, therefore the literal meaning of the two words together is "excrement opening". James Alexander, in 1837, translated the name as "Bowel River".

Apart from the offensiveness of the name, it is a strikingly accurate and well observed description. When the Swakop comes down in flood, it carries in its turbulent waters large quantities of mud, sand, bushes and other pieces of vegetation as well as animal corpses, and empties them into the ocean which then takes on a brown colouring. The whole process and appearance is similar to when humans and animals empty their bowels.

Whilst on the subject of the Swakop mouth, it is worth noting in passing that as recently as 1793, the prospector Sebastian van Reenen and the hunter Pieter Pienaar found rich vegetation and large numbers of trees, as well as considerable game including elephant and rhino in the lower reaches of the Swakop. They tried to land at the mouth of the river by boat which was unsuccessful. Later, they searched for a landing site at the mouth by land, but also in vain.



The Swakop valley.

7. THE "MARTIN LUTHER"

It is fitting that a special chapter should be dedicated to the unusual monument which stands at the entrance to the town because it poses a number of riddles for the visitor, both through its connection with the great German Reformer, as well as the purpose for which it was acquired originally which is often misrepresented. Understandably, the inscription which is fixed to the base of the monument can provide only a limited historical background.

The early freight service between the harbour in Swakopmund and the interior of the country was hauled inland using ox wagons on a route which generally led through the Swakop valley. However, frequently there was insufficient grazing and water available because of drought or seasonal conditions, and many of the draught oxen failed to survive the long, thirsty route and died a wretched death on the way.

For First Lieutenant Edmund Troost of the Imperial Schutztruppe, who was probably a great animal lover, the deaths of all these animals was a thorn in the flesh and he thought of ways and means of trying to remedy the situation. This could only be achieved through some form of mechanization such as a railway, but in 1896 there were no plans for a project of this nature and therefore Troost had to look around for an alternative. While on a trip to Germany, Troost discovered a mobile steam engine in the engineering works of Fr. Dehne in Halberstadt which matched his idea of what was required and he purchased it from his own pocket. At the beginning of 1896, he embarked on a ship in Hamburg together with his "street locomotive", but when the ship arrived in Swakopmund it was found that the offloading facilities could not cope with the 280 cwt mass of the machine and therefore the ship had to proceed on to Walvis Bay. There the steam engine stood idle for four months because of other obligations on the part of Troost.

Meanwhile, the limited five month contract for which Troost had engaged the services of an engine driver had expired and the driver returned home without having fulfilled his task. This meant that Troost had to look around for another driver to transport the steam engine from Walvis Bay to Swakopmund. An American goldseeker who claimed to have worked with similar machinery previously was engaged for a short time but he was replaced fairly soon by a Boer. Nevertheless, the American succeeded in bringing the traction-engine

over some of the worst stretches between the two towns even though the machine sank deep into the sand almost every 50 m and had to be dug out with the holes being filled in with rocks and logs before it could continue on its way. Another source of concern was the water supply for the steam engine since it required large quantities of fresh water to operate and this had to be transported from some 30 km away - at this time 1000 litres of the precious liquid cost 30 mark. For the engine to be able to operate on a Saturday, water had to be carried in from Monday to Friday. Troost reported of the journey : "No wonder that the trip needed a quarter of a year to get through the dune sand". In spite of all these difficulties, he did not give up.

When the big paddle wheels of the traction-engine eventually reached hard ground in Swakopmund three months after leaving Walvis Bay, it appeared as if all the problems had been overcome finally. However, this was not to be, and the new transport vehicle continued to be plagued with various setbacks which hampered its normal operation. These included inadequate maintenance of the engine as well as a lack of important spare parts. Nevertheless, the traction-engine managed to transport a few loads of freight to Nonidas, which was the first source of water inland, whilst towing its three trailers. It also made two trips to Heigamchab. Altogether it transported 30 000 lbs of freight.

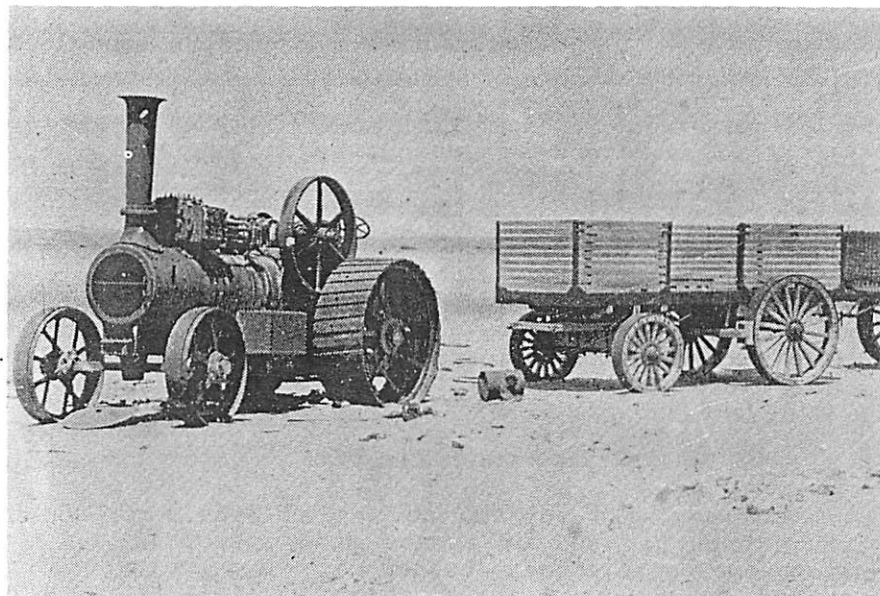
When the tribesmen who worked for the freight drivers saw the engine for the first time as it advanced across the Namib towards them like a big, black phantom, they fled from it screaming loudly in terror. It was only after a freight driver explained to them that the machine was a strong steam ox from Germany which was meant to bring the freight to them that they calmed down again. Thereafter, they admired the monster from a respectful distance and news of the new steam ox spread like wildfire.

At the beginning of 1897, the Swakop came down in flood and became impassable. In addition, the traction-engine was so ruined through incorrect handling that it was no longer capable of running regularly and so Troost was forced to give up his venture.

Shortly after this, at a boisterous gathering in the Bismarck Hotel, Dr Max Rhode is reputed to have said to those present : "Did you know that the steam ox is called 'Martin Luther' now because it can also say - 'Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise' ?" This is a famous quotation made by the great reformer in April

1521, in front of the German parliamentary buildings in Worms. The name 'Martin Luther' has stuck to this day.

There is a lovely little anecdote about the name. Some 50 years later during a Sunday School lesson, Pastor Schmidt - the long serving and much loved minister of the Evangelical-Lutheran congregation - asked the children present : "Have you ever heard of the famous Martin Luther ?". He received the prompt reply : "Yes, it stands just outside Swakopmund."



Martin Luther (c. 1905)

8. NATIONAL MONUMENTS IN AND AROUND SWAKOPMUND

The following monuments and buildings in and around Swakopmund were declared national monuments by the National Monuments Commission on the dates alongside their names.

Portuguese Cross - 1.11.1968

A replica of the cross (padrão) erected at Cape Cross in 1485, by the Portuguese navigator Diega Cão. The original cross was discovered in a state of disrepair in 1893, by the Captain of the cruiser "Falke". He dismantled and transported it to Wilhelmshafen where it was put into safe custody. On the orders of Kaiser Wilhelm II, a replica of the cross was made out of granite in 1894, and was erected on the same spot as the original cross on January 24, 1895, by crew members of the cruiser "Sperber".

Marine Memorial - 2.1.1969

An impressive monument which commemorates the deeds and the fallen of the First Marine Expedition Corps during the Herero uprising in 1904/5. It was designed by the Berlin sculptor A M Wolff and cast by the firm Gladenbeck A.G., Berlin. The statue shows a marine standing ready for action alongside a wounded or fallen comrade. The monument was donated by the Marine Infantry based in Kiel and was presented to the town of Swakopmund by the crew of the gunboat 'Panther' at a formal ceremony held on July 26, 1908.

Woermann House and Damara Tower - 10.12.1971

These buildings were designed by the architect Friedrich Höft. They were built in 1905 and, after the rooms had been furnished, were occupied in 1906. They served the dual purpose of providing headquarters and residential accommodation for officials and other employees of the leading trading company in South West Africa - the Damara and Namaqua Trading Company (later to become Woermann, Brock & Co. in 1909). In 1924, Woermann House was taken over by the Administration who converted it into a school hostel and it was used in this capacity until 1972. However, the building had been neglected and allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that it was decided to demolish it. Fortunately, the townfolk were not prepared to accept the decision and they mounted a determined, and ultimately successful, campaign to protect the building from the hands of the demolishers. Mrs Olga Levinson and Dr A Weber played leading roles in this campaign. The building

was restored in 1975, and the public library was housed in it. In addition, the top floor was converted into an art gallery by the Swakopmund Art Society.

Railway Station (state railway) - 27.10.1972

The building was designed by the architect C Schmidt, who incorporated a number of features typical of the Renaissance period, and was built in 1901. The tower was added by the architect W Sander. Shortly before and during the First World War, the station was closed down but reopened again later and continued to be used for its original purpose. The station building is maintained in a good state of repair by the railway authorities.

Prison - 24.8.1973

Designed by the architect O Ertl, the prison was built in 1907. The main building was intended to provide accommodation for the prison authorities and cells for the prisoners were housed in the side buildings. At the time that it was built, the prison stood some distance outside the town.

Kaserne - 2.11.1973

The building was put up in 1906 to serve as barracks for the Second Railway Company who were involved in construction of the wooden jetty on which work commenced in 1905. From 1927 to 1975, the Kaserne was used as a school building and today is utilized as a youth hostel (the building in the courtyard is new).

Martin Luther - 21.3.1975

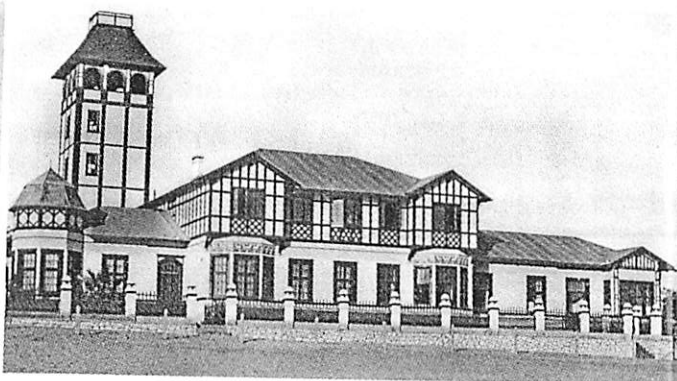
(The history of this monument is described on p 47). The steam engine was restored by the municipality in 1973.

Omeg House - 3.10.1975

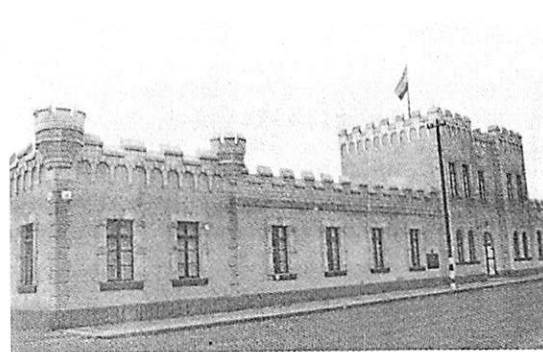
The building served originally as a goods shed for the Otavi Railway Company. It was saved from ruin by the Society for Scientific Development and on September 27, 1969, was opened to provide accommodation for visiting scientists. The name OMEG is an abbreviation for 'Otavi Minen und Eisenbahn Gesellschaft'.



eplica of Portuguese Cross.



Woermann HUse.



Kaserne



Omeg House during restoration.



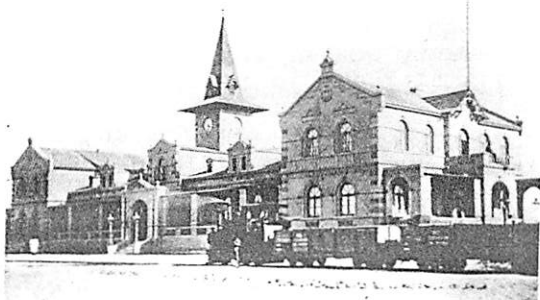
Marine memorial.



Princess Rupprecht Home.



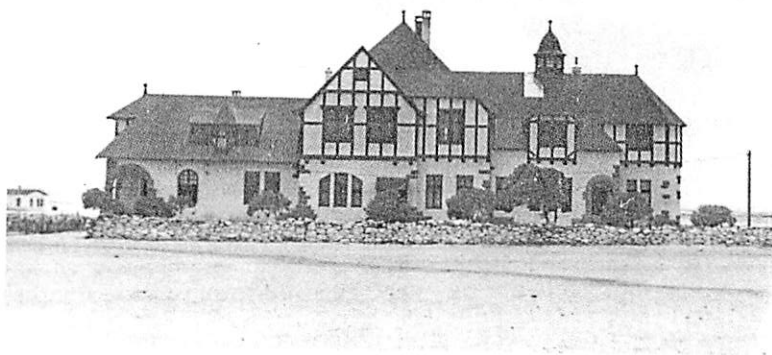
Scultetus House.



Station building.



Lutheran Church.



Prison - administration and living quarters.

Princess Rupprecht Home - 12.11.1976

Built as a military hospital in 1902, the building was handed over to the Swakopmund municipality in 1911 on the understanding that it would be run as a convalescent home. In 1913 it was taken over by the Bavarian Women's Association of the Red Cross and rebuilt to include the gables and roof which can be seen today. It was opened as a convalescent home on January 7, 1914. The home is named after the patron of the Bavarian Association, the wife of the heir to the Bavarian throne.

Lutheran Church - 21.9.1978

Designed by the architect O Ertl, the building was inaugurated in 1912. This beautiful neo-Baroque building was intended to be the crowning glory of Post Street. The upkeep of this church, as well as other historical church buildings in the country, entails considerable sacrifice on the part of members of the congregation and constitutes an almost insurmountable problem.

Scultetus House - 23.12.1977

The building was put up in 1912 as the home of the engineer F Kramer. At the time that it was built, it stood outside the town near the premises of the technical department of the firm Woermann, Brock & Co. Before long, the area became known as 'Kramersdorf', and the name was retained when the area became a residential suburb in 1969. After the First World War, the house was used for a considerable period of time as a boys' hostel under the care of Major O Scultetus. Today the building is owned privately.

9. HISTORICAL TABLES

a) Harbour

- 1890 June - Gunboat "Hyena" investigates amongst other things the suitability of the Swakop mouth for seagoing traffic.
- 1892 4.8 - Gunboat "Hyena" erects two beacons to mark landing spot.
- 1893 26.1 - A Surfboat with 11 Kroo tribesmen arrives to establish a landing station.
23.8 - First landing of 120 Schutztruppe and 40 settlers from the "Marie Woermann".
- 1894 4 steamships of the German-Africa-Line land cargo and passengers;
1895 : 5 steamships call at the town.
- 1895 4.6 - Boating accident in which 5 sailors are drowned. These were the first people to be buried in the local cemetery.
- 1896 Regular bimonthly shipping service to Swakopmund instead of Walvis Bay.
- 1898 27.11 - Preparatory work commences on the construction of the Mole.
- 1899 24.5 - Second boating accident in which 3 soldiers were drowned.
2.9 - Foundation stone of Mole laid.
Establishment of a monthly shipping service between Hamburg and Swakopmund.

1900 1.7 - Landing service taken over by the Woermann Line.
25.8 - The "Recovery" shipwrecked near the Mole.

1901 30.1 - First landing of 6 passengers in a launch at the unfinished Mole.
From 1.5 - passengers and mail were landed at the Mole.

1902 July - Lighthouse built (11m high), 1910 a further 10 m added (an accurate reproduction of the dome at the top could not be constructed in 1981 using modern techniques!)

1903 12.2 - Formal inauguration of the Mole.

1904 July - Sandbanks create problems in the basin at the Mole.
4.11 - Construction commences on the wooden Jetty.
20.11 - The "Gertrud Woermann" shipwrecked north of the harbour.

1905 29.4 - Landing services commence at the Jetty
Suspension of landing services at the Mole.

1906/7 Widening and extension of the wooden Jetty.

1907 Start of regular copper shipments

1911 Nov. - Preparation for construction of the iron Jetty. Shipping connection with New York introduced.

1912 Construction commences on the iron Jetty.

1914 7.8 - The last steamships ("Arnold Amsinck" and "Eturia") arrive and offload mail only before setting course for South America.
Sept/Oct. - Shelling of the harbour area and the Jetties by English naval cruisers.

1919 Wooden Jetty dismantled by the occupying forces.

1924 Cranes removed from the iron Jetty.

b) Transportation

1893 Aug. - Hendrik Witbooi attacks 17 ox wagons at Horibes and Diepdal.

1895 Regular mail coach service between Swakopmund and Windhoek introduced.

1896 March - "Martin Luther" arrives in Walvis Bay.
880 freight wagons handled in Swakopmund.

1897 Beginning of the year - outbreak of rinderpest.
Sept. - Construction begins on the state railway line.
20.11 - Railway reaches Nonidas.

1899 1.4 - Railway open as far as Jakalswater.

1900 1.7 - Railway line to Karabib completed.

1902 19.6 - Full distance between Swakopmund and Windhoek (382 km) open for traffic.

1903 1.10 - Construction begins on the Otavi railway line.

1906 12.11 - Opening of completed railway line between Swakopmund and Tsumeb (567 km).

1907 March - Station for Otavi railway line commissioned in Swakopmund.

1910 State railway services suspended, government takes over Otavi railway line.

1914 14.5 - Aircraft "Rudolph Hertzog" undertakes first trial flight in Swakopmund.
Sept - German troops destroy a section of the railway lines near Swakopmund.

1915 Feb. - South African forces construct a railway line between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund and continue the construction of the line to the interior.

1917 Feb./March - Flood waters of the Swakop lead to repeated interruption of traffic between Swakopmund and Walvis Bay.

1922 9.9 - Regular daily motor trolley service to Walvis Bay established.

1923 25.1 - 20.4 - Swakop floods interrupt traffic

1926 April - Railway bridge over the mouth of the Swakop opened to traffic.

1931 15.1 - Railway bridge destroyed by floodwaters of the Swakop.

1934 10.1 - 27.4 - Exceptionally heavy flooding by the Swakop paralyses traffic for four months.
Three aircraft establish a passenger service between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

1935 Railway bridge constructed 5 km upriver from the mouth of the Swakop between two rock ridges.

1956 Feb. - Construction commences on a salt road to link Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

1959 28.8 - Salt road opened to traffic (the Jan Loopuyt coastal road).

1961 639 motor vehicles registered in Swakopmund.

1966 13.8 - Tar road between Windhoek and Swakopmund connects with the salt road near Rössing mountain.

1967 Tar road from Windhoek finally reaches Swakopmund.
Jan. - Construction begins on the Swart Bridge over the Swakop river.

1969 6.6 - Official ceremony to mark opening of Swart Bridge.

1970 9.12 - Tar road between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund opened to traffic.

1969/70 Kaiser Wilhelm Street tarred (completed in November 1970).

1973 1.12 - First three traffic robots installed.

1980 3.5 - Railway line to Walvis Bay moved behind the dunes and opened to traffic. Coastal railway line dismantled.

1982 5800 motor vehicles registered in Swakopmund

c) Growth and development of the town

1793 Sebastian van Reenen and Pieter Pienaar explore the lower Swakop valley and mouth of the Swakop.

1884 12.8 - Gunboat "Wolf" hoists the German flag at the Swakop mouth.

19.8 - Ratification of the sales contract in which Adolf Lüderitz acquires ownership of land in the middle coastal regions, between his deputy Ludwig Koch and the Topnaar Captain Piet Haibib.

1892 12.9 - Under the command of Curt von Francois, accommodation and storerooms are erected north of the Swakop mouth.

1893 Dec. - First trading post : Mertens & Sichel of Walvis Bay establish a branch in Swakopmund

1894 19 inhabitants

1895 5.1 - Damara & Namaqua Trading Company erect three buildings and establish a landing service.

Early in the year, the first town building plan drawn up by Dr Max Rhode.

Oct. - Start of guano works and seal culling at Cape Cross (discontinued in 1903).

Businesses : Erhard Schultz; Hotel Fürst Bismarck.

32 inhabitants

1896 1.9 - Swakopmund becomes an independent district (previously it fell under the district of Otjimbingwe).

Businesses : von Tippelskirch; Wecke & Voigts Boysen; Wulff; "Deutsche Kolonial Gesellschaft"; Heinemann Inn.

First prefabricated wooden house built - "Schweizer Haus" (demolished in 1972), as well as a wooden building for the Building Society which was used later as a post office and demolished finally in 1969.

84 inhabitants.

1897 113 inhabitants.

1898 1.1 - 12 firms established including three hotels.

281 inhabitants

1899 9.10 - Water pipeline from the Swakop, on which work commenced in April, put into operation.

New wooden buildings : "Kolonial Gesellschaft" (Colonial Company)⁺; Port Authorities offices (near the Mole)⁺; Chapel and house for the Catholic Mission⁺.

First stone buildings : Kolonial Gesellschaft (later a bank); dwelling of von Tippelskirch; Hotel Germania.

Military hospital, laundry, dairy, and soda water factory established.

Woermann Line establishes an agency and puts up an office and living quarters.

1901 New buildings : Magistrate's Court⁺ (extended in 1905); office and accommodation for the Eastern and South African Cable Company ("Kabelmesse")⁺; state railway station⁺; additional living quarters for the Port Authorities.⁺

1902 May - New military hospital occupied (later to become Princess Rupprecht Home)⁺.

Customs Shed completed (now used as the Museum)⁺.
Regular garbage removal service introduced.
617 inhabitants.

1903/4 Business premises for the Damara & Namaqua Trading Company (demolished in 1967), and a second dwelling for the Woermann line ("Altona Haus")⁺ were built.

1903 The first wooden pavements were laid down (the last of these disappeared from the scene as late as the 1950s).

1904 653 inhabitants (excluding troops)

1905 20.3 - building ordinances are changed.
Hotel Kaiserhof⁺ (14th May) and Hotel Eggers⁺ opened.
Woermann House⁺ (occupied in 1906) and Schmerenbeck House⁺ were built.
Advertisement Pillars⁺ (Litfass - Säulen) introduced.
Introduction of street names.
1433 inhabitants (excluding troops).

1905/6 Hohenzollern House⁺ built as a hotel and later in 1909 became the Municipal offices.

1906 Feb. - Hotel Zum Reichsadler opened (on 1.4. 1908 it was renamed the Europahof Hotel).⁺
April - voluntary fire brigade established.
1.11 - street lighting introduced.
Kaserne⁺ (completed as a barracks in August) and Ritterburg⁺ were built.

1907 2.2 - Power station of the Damara & Namaqua Trading Company taken into service.
March - Otavi Railway Station completed.

1907 1.4 - New post office building opened to the public (today it is used as municipal offices)
April - first section of the Amtsgericht⁺ building put to use as a school building.
In 1908/9 the building was completed for use as a Magistrates Court.
The prison⁺ was built.

1908 8.3 - Opening of the Antonius Hospital⁺.
26.7 - Unveiling of the Marine Memorial.⁺
Oct. - Ice and mineral water factory (powered by steam) opened by Backhaus & Stendal.

1908 Schnaps Distillery taken into service by F Behncke.

1909 Feb. - Swakopmund becomes an independent municipality.
15.7 - First election of a municipal council with Dr J Kötze as a full time mayor.
6.8 - First municipal council meeting.
4.10 - New building of the Africa Bank⁺ occupied (currently owned by Barclays Bank).

1910 19.6 - Ceremonial opening of the Faber Saal which served as a town hall at that time.
July - Start made on landscaping of the cemetery.
2792 inhabitants of which 1129 were whites.
43 new buildings.

1911 Feb. - Start made on landscaping of roads.
New buildings : J Kronheimer & Co.⁺; Rudolf Hertzog (burnt down in May 1915); Swakopmunder

Bankverein⁺ (Swakopmund Bank Society now Photo Electra); altogether 58 buildings constructed.

1912 1.1 - 1394 white inhabitants.
4.5 - Cinema in Central Hotel (Ohlmann) opened. G Schluckwerder elected as part-time mayor. Kronen-Brauerei established by J Heuschneider (closed down in 1922).
Cold storage and ice factory established by Woermann, Brock & Co.

1913 Strand Hotel⁺ opened by Meisel.

1913/14 Schröder House⁺ built to provide premises for a land bank.

1914 7.1 - Opening of Princess Rupprecht Home⁺ as a convalescent institution.
May - Reconstruction of Hotel Fürst Bismarck⁺ although incomplete.
End of Sept. - Swakopmund is evacuated and all inhabitants move inland.

1915 15.1 - Occupation of town by South African forces. General Botha establishes his headquarters in the Ritterburg.
Aug - Gradual return of residents.

1916 Start made on development of the swimming beach area.

1919 20.2 - All authority exercised by the municipality is taken over by the military magistrate (F.W. Bult : 24.8.1914 - 10.12.1920)
1.10 - 828 white inhabitants : 708 German and 120 English.

Jetty is covered with wooden planks to serve as a promenade.

1920 Dec. - Music Pavilion near the beach is completed.

1921 26.9 - National (Barclays) Bank moves into the Africa Bank building.

1921 Repair work is carried out on the Mole.

1922 Oct. - First festive season programme is drawn up by Publicity and Tourist Committee. 1125 white inhabitants.

1923 Re-establishment of a voluntary fire brigade.

1925 10.4 - Reconstruction of Hotel Fürst Bismarck completed and hotel opened for service.

1929 19.1 - Opening of Hansa-Brauerei.

1930 Mar. - First artificial bird platform constructed in the sea to collect guano.

1940 First 12 tents erected to accommodate holiday visitors.

1942 11.9 - Atlanta Theatre (cinema) opened.

1947/8 788 visitors make use of the tent town. This increases to 907 in 1948/9, and 1056 in 1950/1.

1949 Printing works opened up by Schnelle.

1950 1.9 - The town takes over the Damara Power Station.

1951 Jan. - Competition organized by municipality to obtain suggestions for improving the tourist industry (Dr A Weber was the winner

with his idea of establishing a museum.)
 28.12 - First 14 plots sold in the new holiday suburb of Vineta.

1951/2 Repairs carried out on the Mole at a cost of £8,000.

1953 13.5 - Power station destroyed by fire.
 End of the year - mineral water factory taken into service by Müseler.

1955 The first 26 holiday bungalows are built.

1957 Swakopmund sewerage works come into operation.

1958 "Haus der Jugend" is opened.

1960 Census figures for the town : 4,701 inhabitants (2,419 white, 2,120 black, 162 coloured).

1961 23.9 - Mondesa opened officially as a suburb for the black population.

1962 11.1 - Swakopmund is connected to the Rooibank water supply system.

1966 23.12 - New magistrates building is completed and handed over.

1967 31.3 - official opening of new post office.

1968 Jan. - The first 10 flats of the Lions Old Age Home are occupied (today there are 65 flats)
 28.12 - 77 plots are sold in the new suburb of Kramersdorf.

1969 27.9 - Omeg House is opened to provide private accommodation for visiting research workers and scientists.

1970 Nov. - Kaiser Wilhelm Street is tarred.
 Construction starts on the indoor swimming pool.

1972 8.1 - Official inauguration of the indoor swimming pool although it was opened for use on 4.12.1971.
 Dec. - 50 luxury bungalows are completed and handed over.

1973 1.2 - The Administration takes over various tourist projects from the municipality including the swimming bath, caravan park and bungalows.
 March - The S.W.A. Water and Electrical Supply Corporation (SWAWEC) takes over responsibility for the supply of electricity.
 Oct. - Rössing Uranium Mine acquires 260 plots in Vineta and expands on this number at a later stage.

1973/4 A project is carried out to repair and upgrade the beach area.

1976 22.10 - The renovated Woermann House is handed over and used to house the public library. Amtsgericht is restored and used as municipal offices.
 (+ = buildings still in existence)

d) Communications

1888 1.7 - German South West Africa becomes a member of the Universal Postal Union (U.P.U.)
 7.7 - First post office is opened in Otjimbingwe.

1895 30.5 - Postal agency established in Swakopmund and a regular mail coach connection with

Windhoek introduced.

1897 Sept. - First post office in Swakopmund opened

1898 12.10 - Publication of the first newspaper in South West Africa - the "Windhoeker Anzeiger".

1899 13.4 - Connection with overseas cable and introduction of a cable-telegraph service.

1901 July - Telegraphic connection with Windhoek established.
 Sept. - Editor of "Windhoeker Anzeiger" moves to Swakopmund and renames his paper the "Deutsch - Südwestafrikanische Zeitung".
 1.10 - Telephone service established with 40 local subscribers.

1903 Weekly postal link on horseback between Swakopmund and Walvis Bay introduced.

1907 1.4 - New post office opened having 120 post boxes. Today the building houses municipal offices.

1910 Connection made with the South African telegraph network.

1911 2.12 - Oct. 1912 - First "Swakopmunder Zeitung" (newspaper) published by Peters & Stolze.
 14.12 - Roof wetting party to celebrate completion of radio mast.

1912 4.2 - Opening of an overseas radio telegraph service.

1914 18.5 - First private airmail flown out of Swakopmund in a plane piloted by Bruno Büchner.

1914 14.9 - German troops cause radio mast to collapse.

1919 21.11 - Second "Swakopmunder Zeitung" published by F Stich.

1928 5.10 - "Walvis Bay Messenger" published by F Stich and printed in Swakopmund.

1931 10.8 - First official airmail between Windhoek and Swakopmund.

1958 5.12 - "Namib Times" founded by P Vincent and published in Swakopmund until 15.9.1961

1967 31.3 - New Post Office opened to the public.

1972 Automatic telephone exchange comes into operation.

1981 1.4 - Vineta Post Office opened.

e) Schools, Parishes and Missions

From 1895, missionary J.A.F. Böhm of Walvis Bay took over parish duties in Swakopmund.

1899 Oct. - Father Nachtwey establishes a Catholic station and builds a chapel and residence.

1901 First schooling established by Frau E Lehrke for 15 children. Father Biegner succeeds Father Nachtwey.

1902 1.2 - Schooling stopped because of a lack of interest.

1903 3.3 - 30.4.1904 - Krause, who was a government teacher, taught 10 - 20 children.

- 1904 Missionary Hammann of the Herero mission took care of the evangelical congregation until 1905.
Erection of a church school for Africans by the Catholic Mission.
- 1905 17.1 - "Rheinische Mission" founded by missionary Heinrich Vedder who stayed there until 20.11.1910.
3.10 - The teacher Herlyn establishes a school with 30 - 40 children.
Start of Catholic mission activities amongst the African population.
Founding of a Jewish religious congregation.
- 1906 7.1 - Heinrich Vedder founds a Lutheran congregation.
Aug - "Rheinische Mission" church is inaugurated.
20.10 - Compulsory school attendance for white children introduced.
Catholic Mission church school is converted into a parish church for whites.
- 1907 Teacher Herlyn provides schooling for 51 children with ages ranging from 7 - 15 years old in one class.
- 1908 Feb. - Pastor J. Hasenkamp takes over the Lutheran congregation.
8.3 - Opening of Antonius Hospital run by Franciscan sisters.
(The foundation stone was laid on 16.3.1907).
Apostolic congregation founded with 15 members.
65 schoolchildren and 2 teachers.

- 1909 13.9 - Opening of a private secondary school with Langenhorst as the principal (the school was taken over by the municipality in 1910)
- 1910 30.1 - Lutheran Kindergarten opened by the "Swakopmunder Frauenverien" (Women's Association) with an intake of 50 children.
20.11 - Missionary W Eich takes over the Herero Mission until 1927.
18.12 - Laying of the foundation stone for the Lutheran Church.
90 Children in 3 schools with 5 teachers.
- 1911 July - Lutheran parsonage completed.
87 children in 2 schools with 4 teachers.
- 1912 7.1 - Inauguration of Lutheran Church.
107 children in 2 schools with 4 teachers.
- 1913 18.10 - Inauguration of a municipal secondary school containing 4 primary and 4 secondary classes with Dr E Wallberg in charge.
Catholic Mission takes over incomplete "Turnhalle" (gymnasium) to establish a hospital for the African population which existed until April 1950. 133 scholars in 2 schools with 6 teachers.
- 1914 27.5 - Laying of the foundation stone for the Georg Ludwig Kindergarten.
Sept - Closure of schools because of evacuation of town population.
- 1918 Re-opening of a primary school in the German school buildings.

1920 April - All German schools and hostels taken over by the mandatory authorities.

1920 - 1935 German school located in "Haus Wille" and in the "Kaserne".

1924 Woermann House established as a government school hostel.

1927 1.2 - Re-opening of Kaserne as a German school

1930 17.4 - Official opening of primary school. German High School develops out of the Secondary School and becomes the German section of the Swakopmund High School.

1932 1.7 - 186 scholars from out of town. German government school hostel "Sahnerheim" established.

1938 Extension of Antonius Hospital.

1945 11.2 - Laying of foundation stone of the Catholic Church for Africans in Bäcker Street. 10.11 - Headmaster O.P. Tarr drowns while carrying out a rescue mission.

1946 German abolished as a medium of instruction; the Administration takes over the German High School.

1950 German reintroduced as a medium of instruction

1951 4.8 - Dutch Reformed Church inaugurated.

1956 Extension of High School in the same style. Girls School hostel opened.

1957 High School has 350 scholars and 18 teachers.

1958 21.8 - "Haus der Jugend" inaugurated. 30.11 - New Catholic church consecrated.

1961 868 scholars in 2 schools.

1963 21.6 - Fiftieth anniversary of German High School.

1972 28.12 - New Primary School hostel occupied.

1973 New High School built.

1974 17.7 - New Hofmeyer Hostel occupied by Afrikaans and English schoolchildren housed previously in the Woermann House.

1975 5.12 - Kaserne closes down as a school and becomes a youth hostel.

1976 19.1 - German school newly founded with 400 scholars. Jan - 1350 scholars in 3 schools.

f) Clubs, cultural activities, special events and sport

1485 The first Europeans set foot on land in South West Africa under the leadership of the Portuguese navigator Diego Cão and erect a pillar at Cape Cross.

1884 7.8 - German Reich proclaims a Protectorate over land purchased by Adolf Lüderitz - founding date of South West Africa.

1885 3.4 - Founding of "Deutschen Kolonial Gesellschaft für S.W.A." - (German Colonial Company)

1898 War Veterans Association (Dr M Rhode) and Male Gymnastics Club (O Günther) founded.

1902 25.10 - Male Choral Society established (C Hagemester). This is the oldest existing club in S.W.A.
First school library established (65 books).

1904 12.1 - Outbreak of Herero rebellion.

1905 9.1 - Founding of "Swakopmunder Bürgervereins" (Citizens' Club) and the Swakopmund Football Club (December).

1906 6.5 - Founding of Rifle Club and Association of Swakopmund Innkeepers.

1908 July - eight members of Gymnastics Club take part in a German Gymnastics Festival held in Frankfurt in company with 42,000 other participants.
21.8 - Visit of State Secretary from German Colonial Office - B Dernburg.
9.9 - First cinema called "Kinomatograph" is opened in Faber Hall.

1909 1.5 - First Lieutenant Paul Graetz arrives in Swakopmund after driving a car across Africa, having left Dar Es Salaam in August 1907.

1910 March - First art exhibition (Ernst Vollbehr).
28.9 - Meeting of all South West mayors in Swakopmund.

1911 3.10 - "Swakopmunder Bankverein" (Bank Association) founded.
Founding of a church choir by the teacher Herlyn.

1912 18.7 - Visit of the State Secretary Dr Solf.

1913 23.3 - Second regional gymnastics festival (the first was held in Karibib).
14.10 - Public library opened (2000 books).

1914 22.1 - Visit of German naval squadron.
6.8 - State of war declared in S.W.A. followed by general mobilization a day later.
Sept - Auxiliary cruisers "Armada Castle" (14th) and "Kinfauns Castle" (24th) bombard the exposed town.
Oct. - Further bombardment takes place on 24th and 30th.

1915 15.1 - South African troops march into Swakopmund.
9.7 - Armistice signed in Khorab.
2.11 - Governor Dr Seitz moves residence to Swakopmund.

1916 5.3 - First concert of Swakopmund Music Friends Society.

1917 11.1 - First swimming competition in the basin at the Mole.

1918 Flu epidemic claims many victims.

1919 By 1.10 - all German officials, troops, police together with their families expelled from country - a total of 5781 people.
10.10 - Visit by Governor-General of South Africa Lord Buxton.

1920 10.1 - Peace of Versailles comes into force, Union of South Africa takes over mandate.

1920 13.9 - Visit by the Prime Minister General J.C. Smuts.

1921 1.1 - Official raising of martial law.
13.1 - Administrator G R Hofmeyr stays in Swakopmund.
26.12 - First horse racing.

1922 1.8 - Visit by the Governor-General H.R.H. Prince Arthur of Connaught.

1923 Four troops of Boy Scouts established of which three were German.

1924 1.11 - visit by the Prime Minister General J.B.M. Hertzog.

1926 Start of gliding on the initiative of Adolf Winter and Paul Schneider.

1927 14 - 18.5 - Fifth regional gymnastics festival
3.8 - Visit by the Governor-General Earl of Athlone (during the course of the visit he officially opened Walvis Bay Harbour)

1929 Swakopmund Football Club (S.F.C.) founded

1930 5.12 - Crew of H.M.S. "Calcutta" (16 officers 110 ratings) welcomed by Town Council.

1935 6.5 - Festivities to mark the Silver Jubilee of H.M. King George V.

1937 25 - 29.3 - Tenth regional gymnastics festival

1947 22.8 - Visit by the Governor-General G Brand van Zyl on the White Train.
Founding of the Swakopmund branch of the Art Society.

1951 12.12 - Folk Theatre from Berchtesgaden performs by invitation of the Publicity and Tourist Committee until the end of the season on January 31.
17.12 - Opening of the Museum established by Dr Weber.
Dec. - Founding of first Angling Club.
29.12 - First angling competition held.

1952 19 - 25.10 - Sixtieth anniversary of Swakopmund.

1953 9.5 - Visit by the Governor-General Dr E G Jansen.

1953/4 Six "Kegel" (skittles) clubs in Swakopmund.

1955 1.5 - "Natal Coast" runs aground.

1956 26.12 - Horse racing - revival of the sport.

1957 22/23.3 - First horse riding and jumping tournament.

1959 16.1 - Roof wetting party for centre comprising museum, library, and reading room.
July - Lions Club founded with 16 members and H.B. Walter as the first President.

1960 5.3 - New Museum opened.
Sept - Founding of the Swakopmund Rotary Club with 24 members and Hermann Bitter as the first President.

1961 Founding of the Atlantic Angling Club with 18 members.

1962 21 - 23.4 - First Congress of the S.W.A. Scientific Society.

1962 25.5 - Inauguration of the cemetery chapel donated by Rotary.

1963 10.11 - Unveiling of War Memorial in memory of all soldiers who had fallen in the Second World War by the "Fellowship of former German Soldiers".

1964 March - The film "Sands of the Kalahari" is filmed in Swakopmund.

1967 3.3 - Opening of miniature golf course in the municipal gardens.
17.7 - Visit by the Prime Minister B J Vorster.
14.10 - 75th anniversary of Swakopmund.

1968 Founding of the Society for Scientific Development.
5.10 - Founding of the Round Table Club with 10 members and P Weakley as the first President.

1969 27.9 - Opening of Omeg House as accommodation for visiting researchers and scientists.

1970 22.2 - Founding of "Reiterverein" (horse riding club).
11.7 - Founding of S.P.C.A.

1971 Sept. - First Hobby Exhibition organized by the Round Table.

1972 8.1 - Official opening of the indoor swimming pool.
9.5 - Aristotle Onassis visits Swakopmund.
18.10 - Visit by United Nations representative Dr Alfred Escher.

1973 5 - 9.3 - National Angling Competition.
April - Yacht Club founded.
14.8 - Emmy Surén celebrates her 100th birthday.
21.12 - First Christmas Fair.
"Martin Luther" is restored.

1974 26.4 - Newly designed Swakopmund Coat of Arms officially registered.
23.11 - Memorial unveiled to commemorate South African troops who fell during the campaign in 1914/15 in the restored military cemetery.

1975 5.4 - Handing over of the Ferdinand Stich Africana Collection to the Society for Scientific Development by the Rotary Club.
20.12 - Opening of golf course near the Swakop.
26.12 - First sailing regatta between Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

1976 30.9 - The mayoral chain designed by the Swakopmund jeweller I Böhlke is first used.
22.10 - The restored Woermann House is opened as a public library.

1977 3.12 - Opening of the Sam Cohen Library.

1978 30.12 - Bomb blast in the Putensen Bakery.

All illustrations are taken from the photographic archives of the Society for Scientific Development unless otherwise acknowledged.

Photo Holler : pp 34, 36

Photo W Janorschke : pp 35.

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