

The *Belgica* Expedition Centennial: Perspectives on Antarctic Science and History

Hugo Declair & Claude De Broyer (eds.)

On 16 August 1897, captain Adrien de Gerlache left Antwerp for the Antarctic with an international crew on a robust three-master, the *Belgica*. This expedition was the first Antarctic expedition of a purely scientific nature and was also the first to overwinter in the austral polar night.

On 10 March 1898 and for twelve months the *Belgica* got imprisoned in the ice. The icebound ship drifted over 3200 kilometers and was finally released on 14 March 1899 after great efforts. The *Belgica* expedition returned with an important scientific harvest and a complete annual cycle of observations.

The '*Belgica* Expedition Centennial' discusses the historical context of the expedition as well as the actual research programme of Belgium in Antarctica.

Hugo Declair is a glaciologist and Antarctic expert. He is professor in physical geography at the 'Vrije Universiteit Brussel' (Belgium) where he teaches climatology, glaciology and cartography.

Claude De Broyer is a marine biologist at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels. His scientific interests cover biodiversity and ecology of crustacean, biodiversity of polar seas and conservation of subterranean habitats and karstic sites.

They met for the first time in Antarctica during the Belgian-Dutch Antarctic Expedition 1965-1966 and are respectively president and secretary of the Belgian National Committee on Antarctic Research.

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