

POLISH POLAR RESEARCH	14	2	213-214	1993
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CHRONICLE

Antarctic Exhibition in Warsaw

On December 9, 1993 an exhibition entitled "*The Arctowski Station in the Antarctic ecosystem*" was opened in Warsaw. The exhibition prepared jointly by the Department of Antarctic Biology and the Institute of Paleobiology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, is located in the Museum of Evolution in the Palace of Science and Culture.

Opening the exhibition, Professor Stanisław Rakusa-Suszczewski, Head of the Department of Antarctic Biology, explained that it was not considered as a museum exposition, but rather as a presentation of results of the long standing research work performed for years by Polish scientists in Antarctica. He pointed out that at the very outset in 1973, there were only five Polish research workers in natural sciences, while today they count in hundreds and are visiting Antarctica perennially, bringing home numerous valuable exhibits and items. The exhibition came into being from the desire to present all what is beautiful in Antarctica, exciting us and awaking our emotions.

Professor Hubert Junosza-Szaniawski, Director of the Institute of Paleobiology, who took the floor next, referred to the history of Polish biological and geological Antarctic investigations, which started long before the opening of the *Arctowski* Station.

The exhibition opening ceremony became an occasion for a social meeting of a large group of Polish polar researchers.

Although the exhibition was accommodated in a single museum hall, Mrs. Grażyna Doba-Wolska managed not only to provide it with a suitable interior decoration, but succeeded in presenting the numerous items in a clear and instructive manner.

At the entrance the visitors were welcomed by a stuffed penguin and scenes of the daily life on the *Arctowski* Station projected on a video screen. Inside the exhibition hall they were met by a large portrait of the patron of the station Professor Henryk Arctowski (1871-1958), painted by Mrs. Ewa Rakusa-Suszczewska and hanging in the center of the front wall.

The exhibition was divided into two distinct sections: geological-paleontological and biological.

The aim of the former was to present the geological evidence of the Antarctic past. It contains numerous and diverse collections of Antarctic rocks, minerals, paleoflora, microfossils, invertebrate and vertebrate biota gathered during the Polish and joint Argentine-Polish expeditions. They are now subject of studies of Polish and foreign scientists.

In the biological section, numerous exhibits of Antarctic fauna and flora were displayed, including the bottom fauna of Admiralty Bay (King George Island), stuffed nesting birds and seals and also examples of various Antarctic lichens, mosses and vascular plants.

Alongside those items, the exhibition includes sections containing copies of the numerous scientific publications of Polish authors and researchers on the Antarctic environment and its ecosystems. There is further a show-case filled with Antarctic philatelic and sphragistic items, including stamp-collections, stamped envelopes and badges of Polish Antarctic expeditions.

The walls of the exhibition hall are richly decorated with maps of Antarctica drawn by Polish cartographers, big size colour photos of the *Arctowski* Station and its environment, posters and diagrams illustrating the past, present and perspectives of the station.

The opening of the Antarctic exhibition in Warsaw was an important event in the life of the scientific community in Poland involved in polar research. The hope is cherished that it also will play an important role in the education of the youth and students, as well as in the training of the future generations of Polish polar explorers.

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