

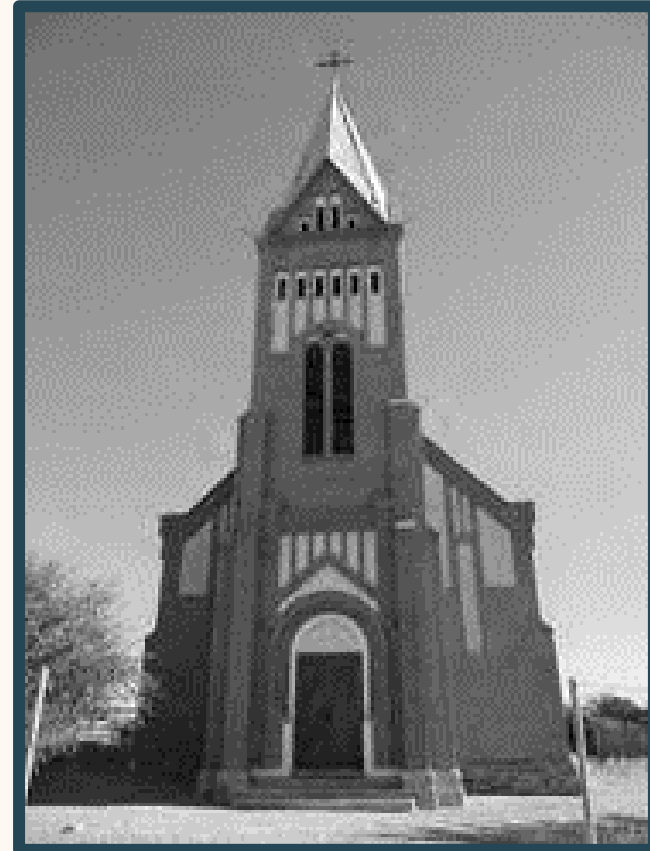


THE FIRST SCHOOL IN KARIBIB

From: Rheinische Missions Berichte Juli 1903 - S. 212 quoted by Klaus J. Becker – 10.3.2015

Missionary Elger in Karibib writes that he held a house collection for the building of the mission church among the whites in the area, which resulted in the pleasant sum of over 1,600 Marks. With this, the construction fund has reached a total of 4,500 Marks. As soon as he can secure the mason (Brother Diehl), he hopes to begin with the construction.

Missionary Elger also writes: "In a communion service in February, 20 white people and 38 natives participated. School and classes were held regularly. However, the longer it goes on, the less satisfied I am with my schoolmaster, who is clearly not up to the task. If the children would at least learn to read, I would be satisfied. But they do not learn. That is why I go to the Damara school in the mountains for 2 hours per week, especially to teach the children some German. For several weeks now, the number of white children I teach has increased to 7. Initially it was only one boy, a son of the Hälbich family. However, I could no longer resist the requests of other parents to include their children as well. With full right, these people argued that their children were worse off than the blacks. I dedicate 10-12 hours per week to this German school. Fortunately, it is expected that I will be able to hand over the white children to a German teacher appointed for this area in the near future."





PRIVATE SCHOOL KARIBIB: THE SCHOOL THAT FUNDED A TOWN

Borrowed by Project Lily in 2015 with permission from the website "Henckert Online" and translated into German. Visit the website of the new Karibib Private School.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Karibib was a trading post, water source and a small supply point for the surrounding farms. On the 1st of July 1900, the railway line officially opened, which was supposed to connect Swakopmund and Windhoek, making Karibib a hub of hectic activities. Cities are made up of families, and families are primarily made up of children. On the 1st of June 1902, a small school opened for the children of railway workers. The school had 8 to 10 children with their teacher Missionary Elger. In 1904, a school building was erected, which later was converted into a military hospital during the Herero uprising. It is assumed that, similar to many other schools at that time, lessons were interrupted. In December 1905, the district administrator of Karibib was informed that the government intended to open a school in the building.

However, since the building was not available, it was decided in 1906 to erect a new school building, which was supposed to be completed

in the same year. Due to some delays, the school was only opened on the 1st of April 1907, and lessons could begin the next day. Initially, the school consisted of government teacher Mr. Berger and 18 students aged 10 to 14. By 1910, the school already had 36 students, and by 1911, this number had grown to 42. By 1915, the school had 69 students and two teachers, Mr. Herlyn and his assistant, Mrs. Heuer.

In 1907, the school merged with the small family school of the Hälbich family in Otjimbingwe. After World War I, the government withdrew financial support from the school, and the school was forced to operate as a private school again. At that time, the school had 4 classrooms. By 1967, the school had grown to 291 students in 11 classrooms, 120 girls, and 171 boys. An expansion phase began, during which a new hall was built with sports equipment and a cinema room including projection equipment.



The old school buildings were renovated and supplemented by modern ones. The school soon had, among other things, a workshop for carpentry work, a household classroom with sewing and cooking equipment, a music room, a reception, and finally a language laboratory. The school operated as a pure private school until 1982, when it was able to celebrate its 75th anniversary. Changes in the Namibian economy and strong competition from other German schools eventually led to the final closure of the school in 1986, with only 4 students remaining.

The alumni of the Privatschule Karibib still have a strong influence on Namibian society, and the spirit of the school lives on in Project Lily, an organisation that promotes the German language and culture, as well as those who are shaping the future: the teachers. The school buildings are currently rented out to the Karibib Private School, which, like its predecessor, the Privatschule Karibib, has made a name for itself as an institution with excellent academic standards and produces graduates who could potentially be the leaders of the future.

