
A Rocha South Africa
Annual Review
2020



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Left: The 15th Annual General Meeting of A Rocha South Africa was our first completely online and best attended AGM to date. Thank you to Ryan and Moyra Ventress for providing premises and an excellent internet connection for this online event.

Front cover: Brown Backed Tree Frog (*Leptopelis mossambicus*) photographed by Mariska de Wit in the Isimangaliso Wetland Park.

Chairman's Report

A Rocha South Africa, has, like everyone, this last year being re-thinking, adjusting, slowing down, speeding up, amending our operations in the light of the Covid pandemic that was and is the substantive item for 2020. We are grateful to God for His sustaining and protecting hand through the pandemic. As a Christian, biodiversity, conservation organisation we rest in His hands and look to Him to sustain and guide us. (Col 1:9-10). We see God's hand in helping and preparing us "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Eph 2: 10)

A major organisational item concluded in October 2020 was the A Rocha family signing a new Covenant which will govern the way the international organisation will be run. It has created a Board with Worldwide Regional Representatives and the ARI Board Trustee for Africa is Prof. Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (A Rocha Ghana). Dr Simon Stuart is steering the organisation as the new ARI Executive Director.

In October/November 2020 the Trustees did a mid-term review of our 2019-2023 strategic action document per region. Our regional Action Plans have been updated for 2021-2023 to look at an amended plan based on the global and local circumstances we find ourselves in.

As you will see from our annual financials, we are still using reserves to sustain operations. Please add this as an item for prayer and action as we need to become net zero in our use of reserves.

I have been privileged to work along side a Board of Trustees who are committed to A Rocha, participate in the thought leadership and also in practical actions and in addition provide guidance and wisdom to the National Director. Thanks to them. This report will touch on the exciting initiatives in Partnerships, Christians in Conservation, links with churches, and other actions that are happening.

Early on in 2020 I read John Piper's book titled "Coronavirus and Christ". In it he talks about what God is doing through the coronavirus pandemic and some chapters are titled "Realigning Us with the Infinite worth of Christ", "Creating Good Works in Danger" and "Loosening Roots to Reach the Nations." My prayer is that we will be used by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in all three of the above headings.

Yours in the extension of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

David Gertzen



National Director's Report

At the start of 2020 the concepts of lockdown, social distancing, mandatory wearing of masks and the liberal use of hand sanitiser were only slightly more unimaginable than the thought that our most aged generations could ever master Zoom Video Conferencing. On all accounts, the unimaginable became reality. The direct and indirect effects of the Covid 19 pandemic on South Africa have been beyond disruptive with many living through personal tragedy on their own, often isolated from support systems. To this point, and by the grace of God, the people of A Rocha South Africa have largely been spared the tragic effects of the pandemic, and like all of us, have had to adapt to a new reality.

For A Rocha SA this new reality involved the complete loss of opportunity to engage with churches and schools and radically reduced connection with our volunteers on creation care projects. Positively, however, this time gave us opportunity to forge new and valuable partnerships, notably piloting our 'A Rocha Partner Organisation' programme with Phillipskop Mountain Reserve in the Western Cape, entering into an agreement with FreeMe Wildlife KZN to partner on 'The Tortoise Project' and completing an environmental education curriculum for the Kuzuko Foundation in the Eastern Cape. Each of these valuable collaborations position us well in our goal to become a highly credible conservation organisation within South Africa.

The year also saw a change in my personal role as I relinquished my role of Chairman and was appointed part-time National Director of A Rocha South Africa. Not only has this provided me with the opportunity to focus on the operational aspects of the organisation but has also given A Rocha SA a highly skilled, experienced and strategically wise Chairman in David Gertzen. I am grateful to David for taking on this role and for the continued support from the entire board of A Rocha SA. I'm also highly appreciative of the administrative work done by Melanie Rood and value working alongside her.

It would be an understatement to say that 2020 didn't go as planned for A Rocha SA, and that's okay. It's been a reminder of the truth of Proverbs 16:9, *"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps"* and testimony of our Lord continually guiding us in each step through a difficult year. We trust Him to continue directing our paths.

The following report provides an overview of our work in conservation and the message of hope we have brought during 2020.

Murray Tessendorf



A



SOUTH AFRICA

ROCHA

Conservation and Hope

A Rocha South Africa is a national Christian organisation which equips, motivates and mobilises people to care for God's creation, through theology, education, research and projects.

Christian: Underlying all we do is our biblical faith in the living God, who made the world, loves it and entrusts it to the care of human beings

Conservation: We carry out research for the conservation and restoration of the natural world and run environmental education programmes for people of all ages.

Cross-Cultural: We draw on the insights and skills of people from diverse cultures, both locally and around the world.

Community: Through our commitment to God, each other and the wider creation, we aim to develop good relationships both within the A Rocha family and in our local communities.

Cooperation: We work in partnership with a wide variety of organisations and individuals who share our concerns for a sustainable world.

our 5 commitments

A



INTERNATIONAL

ROCHA

Conservation and Hope

A Rocha South Africa is member of the international family of A Rocha organisations.

Board of Trustees: A Rocha South Africa



Christine Cuenod

KZN Action Team &
Board Secretary



David Gertzen

Chairperson & Gauteng
Action Team



Godfrey Harris

Treasurer



James Irlam

Western Cape Action
Team



Martin de Wit

Western Cape Action
Team, Governance &
EcoYouth



Sydney Saayman

East Griqualand Action
Team & Global Church
and Theology

The Board of Trustees of A Rocha South Africa has continued to govern the organisation with distinction during a time that has required organisational resilience and agility. David Gertzen, who was appointed Chairperson at the July 2020 AGM, began his tenure by conducting a re-evaluation of the current A Rocha SA strategy plan in light of the new reality we face globally. This process has provided each provincial action team with a realistic focus in their continuing ministry of creation care. We remain appreciative of the time, effort and energy each member of the board of trustees has given to ensure the continued good governance of A Rocha South Africa.



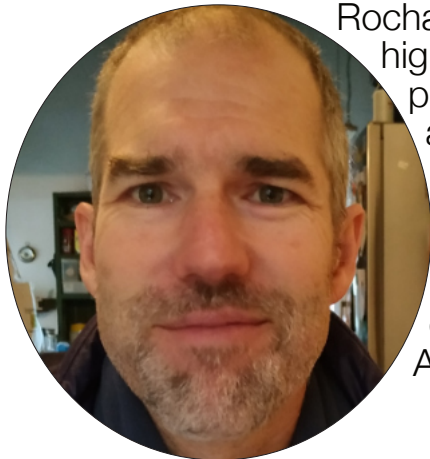
Melanie Rood continues her responsibility as part-time Administrator of A Rocha SA where she fulfills a multi-faceted role as finance, communications and social media officer. As a valuable part of the A Rocha SA team, she is often the happy face or friendly voice that greets friends and members.

Acknowledgement

During 2020, **Carl Swart** retired from the board of A Rocha SA after 7 years of invaluable service to the organisation. Carl, who served as Board Chairman during difficult years, must be credited with leadership that saw the organisation revitalised and brought on to a trajectory of increasing health and influence. Mention must be made of Carl's pivotal role in overseeing the 2018 Creation Care and the Gospel Conference in South Africa which hosted delegates from every Southern African nation, as well as some from further afield. The outcomes of this conference are still being felt to this day, most notably in the formation of the Malawi Creation Care Network. We wish Carl great joy in his retirement.



Acknowledgement must be made and gratitude expressed to **Josh Bean** (right) and **Carl Nielsen** (left) who voluntarily serve to maintain the high standards of financial reporting required for a credible NPO. Josh continues to ensure that A



Rocha SA's bookkeeping is of the highest standards whilst Carl has provided very necessary assistance with ongoing administration related to staffing and advice on tax issues. We continue to value the work and time given to A Rocha South Africa by both Carl and Josh.



A Rocha South Africa enjoys our ongoing relationship with African Enterprise. In addition to sharing office space within the extraordinarily beautiful African Enterprise Centre in Pietermaritzburg, we also enjoy participating in weekly chapel services with the staff of African Enterprise.

A Rocha Action Teams

A Rocha Action Teams are regional volunteer teams focusing on 'local expressions of creation care'. These 'expressions' often consist of environmental micro-projects linked to specific needs evident within the team's sphere of influence. With the uncertainty brought about by lockdowns and social distancing measures making it extraordinarily difficult to organise or conduct volunteer initiatives, some meaningful actions were possible.



A Rocha Action teams bring together people from across denominational lines to work together in caring for God's creation. Action Teams currently operate in KwaZulu-Natal Midlands, Gauteng, Western Cape and East Griqualand (KZN).



Top: Action Team activities seek to be child friendly and enjoyable for the entire family.

Above: Mini Bioblitz at Ferncliffe Forest (KZN).

'Church in Creation' events held in the Western Cape (Left) and East Griqualand (Below).



Church and Community

As a faith-based organisation grounded in the Christian faith, the motivation and ethos of A Rocha South Africa as a biodiversity conservation organisation emerges from a faith perspective. With a well developed biblical theology of creation care we are able to speak the faith language of the majority of South Africans and, from this common starting point, engage hearts and minds to move individuals and communities towards caring for the environment as we guide people towards the biblical mandate to be stewards of God's earth.

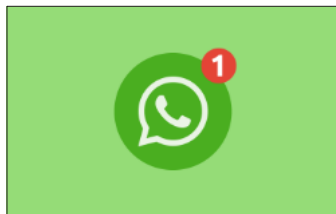
Right: In collaboration with Project Gateway, A Rocha presented workshops on 'A Biblical Response to Environmental Concern' to pastors, church leaders and municipal ward councillors from the Msunduzi area.

Below: A simple introduction to biblical creation care to the parent body of a rural school in the Eastern Cape.

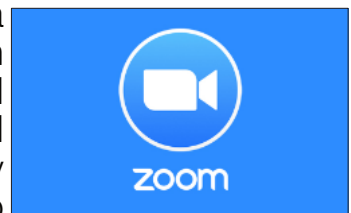


Uniquely operating as a biodiversity conservation organisation within the Christian tradition, A Rocha South Africa is strategically equipped to engage with South Africa's largest religious grouping in matters of environmental care and biodiversity conservation.

Opportunities for direct church engagement during 2020 were limited due to the planning constraints experienced amongst local churches. A Rocha South Africa was, however, able to adapt to online engagements. The East Griqualand Action Team made use of WhatsApp groups for weekly creation care updates to team members whilst video conferencing tools were used for various webinars. These



included such events as Anna Whitehouse addressing the Christian Camping International global conference on the topic of biblical creation care, while Murray Tessendorf had opportunities to



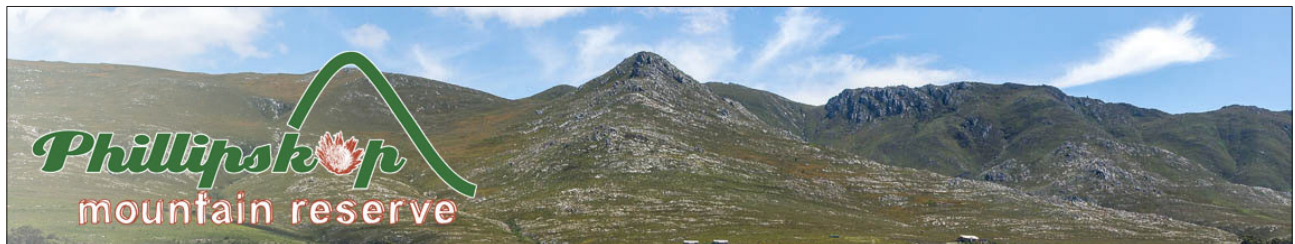
address such diverse online events as the Green Anglican Youth for KZN and Eswatini on the topic 'Lockdown Birding' and the Midlands Senior Forum on the topic of 'The Role of Faith Based Organisations in Conservation'.

Biodiversity Conservation Projects and Events

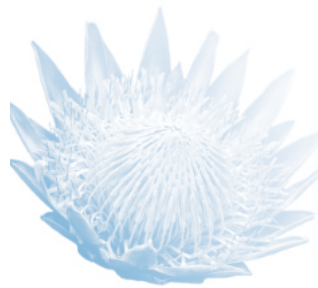
The year saw the development and piloting of the A Rocha Partner Organisation programme with the Phillipskop Mountain Reserve. These 246 hectares of Cape Floral Kingdom splendour are situated outside Hermanus, Western Cape. Owners, Drs Chris and Anna Whitehouse, are committed to caring for, and sharing this special part of God's world with others, in order to engage, educate and encourage people towards caring for God's creation. A Rocha South Africa is excited to partner with Chris and Anna in their endeavour to care for this 246 hectare corner of creation and look forward to celebrating the reserve's extraordinary biodiversity and conservation achievements.



A Rocha Partner Organisations share A Rocha SA's ethos of caring for God's creation and commit themselves to achieve measurable goals in biodiversity conservation, stewardship of natural habitats and sustainable living.



The primary community based projects conducted during 2020 included the KZN Action Team's continued forest rehabilitation within a portion of the Ferncliffe Nature Reserve (Pietermaritzburg). In this regard, a beneficial and very enjoyable mini bioblitz was conducted prior to lockdown restrictions being implemented.



The Western Cape continued their ongoing work towards the rehabilitation of a portion of the Kuils River. To this end, and despite the challenges presented in conducting volunteer orientated events, the A Rocha affiliated 'Footsteps to Good Hope EcoYouth' conducted two river clean-ups during the year.

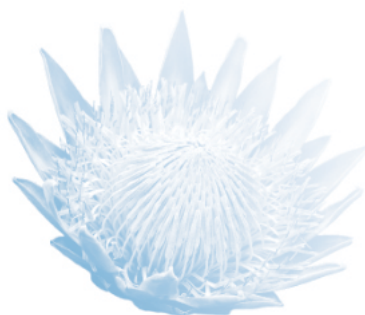
A further significant development for A Rocha South Africa during 2020 was the entering into an agreement with FreeMe Wildlife KZN on a collaborative project for the rehabilitation and release of captive held tortoise species native to KwaZulu-Natal. FreeMe Wildlife KZN is a world class wildlife rehabilitation facility and the only wildlife rehabilitation facility within South Africa permitted by local wildlife authorities to embark on a tortoise rehabilitation and release programme, subject to stringent rehabilitation protocols.



Left: Wade Whitehead (FreeMe KZN) and Murray Tessendorf inspecting a Leopard Tortoise earmarked to enter into a rehabilitation programme lasting a minimum of 9 months.

This collaborative project, formally known as '**The Tortoise Project**' will focus on the four tortoise species native to KwaZulu-Natal, namely the Leopard Tortoise, Natal Hinged Tortoise, Speke's Hinged Tortoise and Bell's (Eastern) Hinged Tortoise. With current national regulations prohibiting the release of captive held tortoise, including those that may have been removed from the wild, it is hoped that the success of this programme will pave the way for similar rehabilitation and release initiatives in other regions of South Africa and internationally.

A Rocha SA will fulfil a supporting role to FreeMe Wildlife, assisting with the construction and landscaping of rehabilitation enclosures, developing tortoise food gardens and providing assistance towards the long term success of 'The Tortoise Project'.



The Kuzuko A Rocha Memorial Bird Hide



During the early part of 2020 the management and staff of Kuzuko Lodge and a team of highly skilled and motivated volunteers from the area of Nelson Mandela Bay Metro conceived the idea of constructing a bird hide in memory of Chris and Susanna Naylor and Miranda Harris, who lost their lives in a motor accident in Port Elizabeth during 2019. Furthermore, this project sought to celebrate Peter Harris' ongoing work of championing creation care globally through the work of A Rocha International.

The project began in the first quarter of 2020 and required the excavation of the main pond, a filtration pond, the construction of a bird hide and final landscaping. Whilst construction work was done on site, a great deal of the carpentry was done in volunteers' homes, the sourcing of supplies made difficult due to lockdown restrictions. Finally, all the pieces could be brought together resulting in a tranquil bird viewing area and hide ideally designed for bird photography.

The Kuzuko A Rocha Memorial Bird Hide was officially opened by Catharina de Lange (Kuzuko Lodge) and Murray Tessendorf with a ribbon cutting ceremony on 4 September 2020.

A Rocha South Africa would like to thank Gerhard and Catharina de Lange and the staff of Kuzuko Lodge as well as an amazingly committed and hard working group of volunteers including Keith Joubert, Lesley Joubert, Wentzel Greyling and Martin Keivy.

Environmental Education



A Rocha South Africa made positive strides towards a formal and well structured environmental education programme with the completion of a series of environmental education modules for primary school learners. Importantly, these modules were developed to be in-line with and compliment the South African Department of Education syllabus for life skills and natural science and technology. Developed by Dr Friederike Voigt and made possible through funding from the Kuzuko Foundation these environmental education modules will be used as a basis for environmental education in resource poor schools initially in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.



Top: Dr Friederike Voigt conducting an environmental lesson at Project Gateway Christian School.

Above: Freddie van Ryner of the Kuzuko Foundation perusing the newly received environmental education material.



As A Rocha SA's volunteer events seek to be family friendly, ad-hoc environmental education experiences are increasingly becoming a feature of our volunteer activity. Taking an exploratory approach, these mini-adventures introduce children to the wonders of creation around them.

EcoYouth

A Rocha EcoYouth are A Rocha SA affiliated independent groups of Christian young people answering the call to care for creation and engaging their considerable energy to do so.



The 'Footsteps to Good Hope EcoYouth' is made up of teens and young adults from the Bellville area of the Western Cape.

These motivated young people have been involved in running a series of diverse events that draw people's attention to the wonders of God's creation and issues of ecological concern.

These events have included numerous river clean-ups of the Kuils River, hikes, photo and colouring competitions, information events, a combined event with the Strandlopers EcoYouth and the distribution of field guide books to resource poor game rangers in the Kalahari.



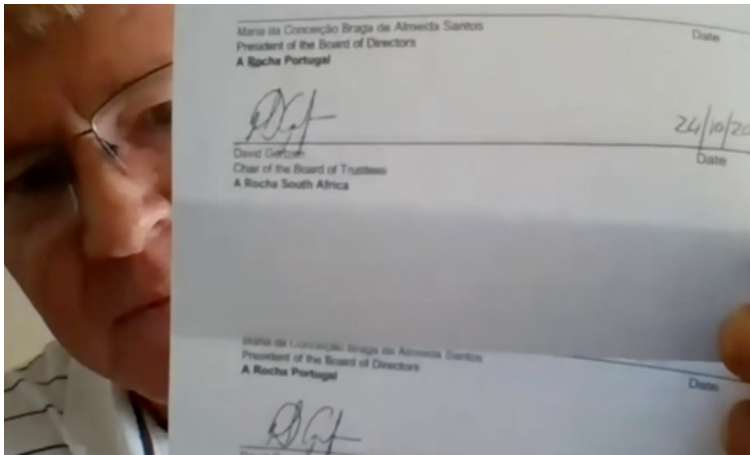
The Strandlopers EcoYouth is a group of more than 60 children and teens from disadvantaged communities active in the Overberg region of the Western Cape.

During the year this active group participated in 4 cleanups, including those held on International Coastal Cleanup Day and World Wetland Day. Additionally the group were able to attend a talk on local birding and participate in a number of online meetings with regional conservationists.

During the height of the Covid restrictions, the Strandlopers were able to assist with the distribution of food and vegetables within their community.

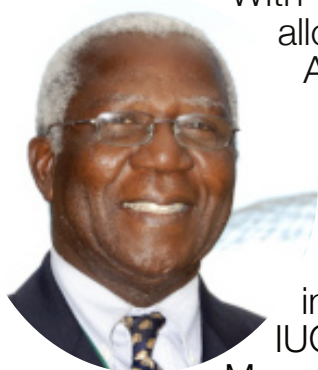


A Rocha International



On 24 October 2020, David Gertzen, Chairman of A Rocha South Africa, joined representatives from A Rocha organisations all around the world for the online signing ceremony of the A Rocha Worldwide Family Covenant and Resolution. This historic occasion within the life of the organisation marked the

beginning of a new way of working together, one that both strengthens cooperation between existing national A Rocha organisations, and sets the global organisation along a path of increased influence around the world. A Rocha South Africa values the international cooperation found within the global A Rocha family, is appreciative of the support we have received internationally and strives to play our part to build and strengthen the global A Rocha Family.



With the signing of A Rocha Family Worldwide Covenant allowing our closer regional relationship with the African A Rocha organisations of Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda, **Prof. Alfred Oteng-Yeboah** was elected as the regionally nominated trustee to the board of A Rocha International. Prof. Alfred, who has a long association with A Rocha Ghana, is both highly respected within the A Rocha family and the international community, being the recipient of the 2020 IUCN highest conservation award, the John C. Phillips Memorial medal.

Sarah French who serves as the Director of Operations of A Rocha International continues to play an important role within the A Rocha South Africa family. Attending most Board meetings virtually from her home in Geneva, Switzerland, Sarah is able to both provide guidance to the governance of A Rocha South Africa and present insights on international trends that we need to be cognisant of. Considering her responsibility to the global A Rocha family, we are very grateful for the attention she provides to A Rocha South Africa and value the ongoing relationship we have with Sarah.



Financial Statements of A Rocha South Africa

A Rocha South Africa

Detailed Income Statement for the year ended 31 December 2020

	2020 R	2019 R
Revenue	137 212	92 214
Book sales	1 090	2 490
General donations	93 129	88 424
Membership income	7 150	1 300
National director contributions	31 543	-
Restricted donations	4 300	-
Other income		
Interest income	15 002	32 345
Total Income	152 214	124 559
Operating expenses	(206 853)	(190 663)
ARI Global Service Fee	1 744	98
Audit fees	17 036	15 921
Bank charges	2 316	1 511
Books purchased	-	1 320
Computer expenses	993	2 135
Consulting fees	98 989	96 125
Depreciation	1 616	1 817
Donations paid	6 000	-
Event costs	200	11 647
Honoraria	519	355
Meeting costs	3 915	27 657
Printing and stationery	254	449
Publicity costs	3 280	12 004
Rent	12 000	12 000
Salaries and wages	55 122	-
Subscriptions	2 869	3 971
Telephone and internet	-	370
Travel and accommodation	-	3 283
Net loss for the period	(54 639)	(66 104)

Audited annual financial statements in compliance with the Non-Profit Organisation Act 1997, independently audited by Savunde Accountants / AhvRJ.

Full report available from info@arocha.org.za

A Rocha South Africa

Statement of Financial Position at 31 December 2020

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2020</u> <u>R</u>	<u>2019</u> <u>R</u>
Assets			
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	2	6	1 622
Current Assets		404 201	453 415
Trade and other receivables		16 932	5 900
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3	387 269	447 515
Total Assets		404 207	455 037
Equity and Liabilities			
Equity			
Retained Earnings		399 553	454 192
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables		4 654	845
Total Equity and Liabilities		404 207	455 037

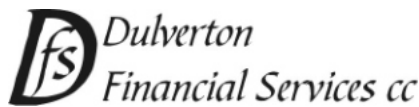
Audited annual financial statements in compliance with the Non-Profit Organisation Act 1997, independently audited by Savunde Accountants / AhvRJ.

Full report available from info@arocha.org.za

Thank you to the many who have been a part of A Rocha South Africa's story during 2020. Thank you to those who have volunteered or assisted financially to help us to further our work of 'Conservation and Hope'. Thank you to our partners who have worked alongside us during the year and we look forward to building on these relationships into the future.



A Rocha SA would like to acknowledge the following organisations which have assisted us in various ways during 2019. We are thankful for the part they have played in helping us further our work.





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Townbush Valley
Pietermaritzburg, 3241



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<https://www.arocha.org.za>
<https://www.arocha.org/en/a-rocha-south-africa/>



<https://www.facebook.com/ARochaSA/>



<https://www.instagram.com/arochasa/>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company/a-rocha-south-africa/?originalSubdomain=za>

Bank Details



Bank account name:	A Rocha South Africa
Account number:	1340528916
Nedbank branch:	Hayfields
Universal branch code:	198765
International Swift code:	NEDSZAJJ

NPO Number: 038-193;
PBO Number: 930020406

PROUD MEMBER



PIETERMARITZBURG
& MIDLANDS
**CHAMBER
OF BUSINESS**