

ISSUE TWO | 2017

THE chronicle

of the RIDGE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS

LIFESTYLE // ARCHITECTURE // LUXURY // FASHION // REAL ESTATE

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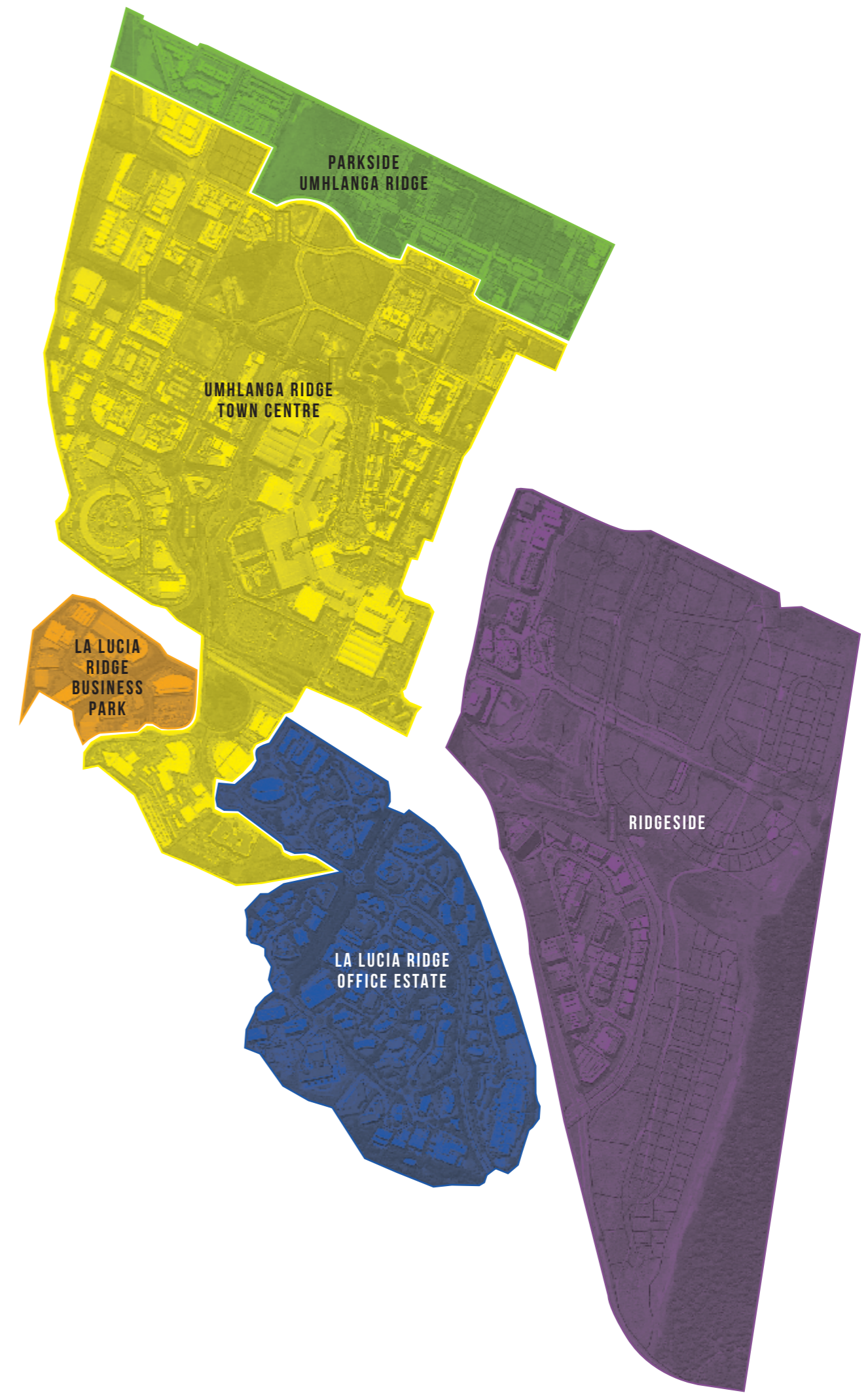
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FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER'S DESK

Our second edition of the Chronicle focuses on the pioneers who staked their claims at an early stage of the Umhlanga Ridge's development.

After the success of our inaugural edition of the Chronicle, we paused for a moment and collectively considered what more we could do to ensure that our Association Members would be kept up to date with developments during the past twelve months, as well as 'opening the window' a further notch on the astonishing history that makes the La Lucia Ridge what it is today.

Our second edition of the Chronicle focuses on a number of pioneers who staked their claims at an early stage of the Umhlanga Ridge's development. Consider this to be one of several themes running through our fascinating journey, once again underpinned by urban planner, Erky Wood's second contribution which chronicles the early days of the Umhlanga (New) Town Centre. (The good news for us is that he has not as yet seen fit to retire in Parys, and so I will unashamedly continue to extract from him the wealth of knowledge and history of the Ridge that would otherwise be lost). Of course I plan to test the authenticity of Erky's account through the lens of a few notable pioneers who resided within the Moreland structures in the earlier days!

As with our first edition, this Chronicle again serves as an opportunity to bring exposure to some of our Members who have made their home on the Ridge. We have chosen this year, to bring them to you from the viewpoint 'inside out' meaning that where possible, our photographer Nick Carroll has shot camera angles from inside their buildings lending further richness to this edition.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the support and encouragement of each Board of Directors who give selflessly of their time and significant talent to ensure that the Ridge Associations remain

strategically positioned to protect and enhance Member's investments on the Ridge. The Boards are the true custodians of the vision created by Tongaat Hulett Developments.

Of course, the various professional teams who have taken little more than an audacious dream and presided together with Tongaat Hulett Developments (formerly Morelands), and carefully woven the tapestry of the Ridge, must be singled out for special mention at this time. They are the unsung heroes who work tirelessly on both a macro and micro scale to ensure that we can enjoy the world-class environment we live, work and play in. Perhaps this deserves a reflective piece all on its own!

The engine room that keeps all of the above on track is the team that makes up Ridge Management. This small but dedicated group of individuals deserve my thanks and admiration for keeping to the script despite overwhelming odds on occasion. It is comforting to know that the architects of this vision placed sound building blocks in place to allow us to develop and manage the respective Associations in a fair and professional manner.

A quick glance at the Town Centre and soon to be, Ridgeside skyline, will be enough to convince anyone that the La Lucia Ridge is the place where the most significant development projects are happening. By the end of 2018, we will see these two nodes significantly built out. Finally, it remains for me to say that it has been a pleasure to preside over the continued development and management of the five Associations on the La Lucia Ridge.

This after all, remains a compelling story that each Member is a part of, and one worth telling over and over again.

MALCOLM ST. CLAIR

GENERAL MANAGER

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THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

featured contributor

ERKY WOOD

A key pioneer behind the Umhlanga Ridge urban design and development, Erky Wood was part of the original design team in charge of the La Lucia Office Estate, Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre, Millennium Bridge Business Park and Parkside, considering and designing an all-encompassing urban development plan, down to the last sign and unique street furniture. Erky is a founding member and director of award-winning GAPP Architects, a firm that maintains the ethos of creating better places, which he fully embraces.



featured photographer

NICHOLAS CARROLL

Having literally pounded the pavement throughout all the Umhlanga Ridge Management Associations precincts, in order to capture the best possible images for the first issue, Nick brings more of that immersion, passion and eye for dramatic hues and emotive lighting to this second edition. Having lived and breathed the area for the first issue, Nick's intimate familiarity with the Ridge from behind the lens has allowed him to draw out the latent natural beauty of the urban environment, in his own signature way.



featured production team member

SHIRLEY BERKO

Shirley created the design and layout for the first edition and has sought to ensure that the set standard has been maintained. Translating the Ridge's unique contemporary and urban influences onto print, Shirley found incredible inspiration both from the people and the developments that make the Ridge, extending that design narrative from the buildings through to the publication, both in the written words and the design.



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ON THE COVER

WORDS: SHIRLEY BERKO IMAGE: NICHOLAS CARROLL



Concrete juxtaposes on steel, as rough tactile surfaces meet polished smooth ones in this intriguing view at PwC

The front entrance to the PwC building that greets visitors and staff sets the tone for the state-of-the-art “workplace of the future”, and epitomises the forward-thinking philosophies of the multinational services firm.

PwC believes that the 4 000m² development – designed by Boogertman & Partners – has already proven that it epitomises the firm’s ability “to produce and lead high-performance teams that are capable of adding value to staff and clients!”

Read more of this article on page 102.

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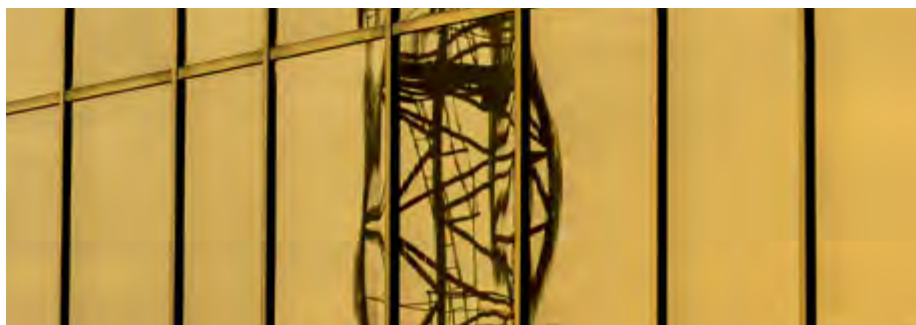
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THE RISE OF THE SKYLINE

THE PIONEERS BEHIND THE UMHLANGA RIDGE

IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL



The Umhlanga Ridge urban zone has come of age. As the building cranes disassemble, leaving behind a now-established skyline, it is hard to believe that a quarter-century ago the mixed-use node was nothing more than hectares of rolling green sugarcane



01

ERKY WOOD
URBAN DESIGNER &
DIRECTOR OF GAPP
ARCHITECTS

Looking out over
Chris Saunders Park



And before that a wild sub-tropical coastal forest mixed with open grassland, wetlands and fever trees. Yet, long before the first sod was turned in the 90s, the forward-thinking developers at Moreland (now Tongaat Hulett Developments) had set the wheels in motion – drawing up a blueprint of a groundbreaking concept of what is now Umhlanga Ridge.

As the previously sugarcane fields were released, ground was subdivided and construction began on the various business parks, the massive Gateway Theatre of Shopping, Mount Edgecombe Golfing Estate and the Somerset Park residential estate.

There were naysayers in the early days – with initial incredulous reaction at the idea of a regional shopping centre placed in the middle of the sugarcane plantation to become Gateway – now it's the dominant retail shopping centre in southern Africa.

A generation later the 430-hectare area has been labelled as revolutionary and one-of-a-kind by developers, designers and construction entities alike.



02

PRAKASEN
GOVENDER
FOUNDING PARTNER OF
PGA ARCHITECTS

THE FIRST BUSINESSES TO ESTABLISH THEMSELVES IN THE AREA IN THE EARLY DAYS RECALL BEING LONE BUILDINGS AMONGST THE SUGARCANE, STICKING OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB ON THE HORIZON



03

DOUG ROSS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF JT ROSS
Third Generation in the
construction industry

The precinct is unique in its combination of residential, retail and hospitality intersecting with top-end corporates and public open spaces – all perfectly managed by the Umhlanga Ridge Management team.

Just as their pioneering predecessors set up business in the dusty streets of early Durban in the colony of Natal in the 1800s, so did some of those corporate leaders in law and finance relocate to the Ridge – stamping their presence on the urban landscape.

The first businesses to establish themselves in the area recall being lone buildings amongst the sugarcane, sticking out like a sore thumb on the horizon in the early days.

Those pioneers who initially bought into Tongaat Hulett's vision, chose to migrate from Durban and play a role in the creation of Umhlanga Ridge. In doing so, they led the way for other businesses to follow. The area's success story has drawn visitors from afar

on fact-finding missions, attempting to unlock the development's secret – in the hope that the model can be replicated elsewhere in South Africa.

Town planning of old has now morphed into urban development in the 21st century.

DEVELOPERS HAVE ADHERED TO DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND AN ARCHITECTURAL CODE WHICH IS UNIFORM YET ALLOWS EACH BUILDING TO REMAIN INDIVIDUAL IN CONCEPT. OTHER ELEMENTS ARE WHITE ARCHITECTURE, PUBLIC ROADS BEING KEPT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND THE VARIOUS ZONES BEING EFFECTIVELY MANAGED BY THE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATIONS.

Ever looking to the future and evolving urban-development trends, all eyes are now on Cornubia and the construction of the Interchange linking Umhlanga Ridge, the Northern Urban Development Corridor and Go! Durban Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network.

Erky Wood of GAPP Architects & Urban Designers, as a consultant to Tongaat Hulett Developments (THD) and the Ridge Management Associations, has been responsible for much of the detailed planning, design and on-going design review of the development of the Ridge (La Lucia Ridge Office Estate, Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre, Parkside and the Millennium Business Park).

The firm has also been responsible for many of the iconic features on the Ridge, including the Moreland Millennium Bridge, the features on the North and South Circles on Umhlanga Rocks Drive in the iconic 'fever tree boulevard', all the lighting, the paving, the street furniture and bus shelters – all this over a period exceeding 20 years.

The Ridge Chronicle has asked Erky to contribute a series of articles reflecting on this work. In his first contribution, he dealt with the making of the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate. In this second article he reminisces about the coming into being of the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre phenomenon.

As ever, the article is far too long for publication in this magazine and what appears here is an edited version. For the unexpurgated version of any of the articles, please visit www.gapp.net



THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIDGE

THE UMHLANGA RIDGE TOWN CENTRE

PHENOMENON

WORDS: ERKY WOOD IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

It's 12 years ago now that it was officially decided to drop the "New" out of the Umhlanga Ridge New Town Centre title. We had thought that what we'd rather self-importantly proclaimed and named as a new town centre that would grow out of nothing but sugarcane fields (truly a "greenfields" development) in about 1998 would still be fairly raw and new in 20 or 30 years-time.

But remarkably, within about seven years we'd found that it had grown so robustly and with such self-confidence, that it was no longer necessary to be thinking of it as a "new" thing. How did this phenomenal growth happen and how was that growth energy captured and channelled into what is now such a complete place in so many respects, even though it still has such a long way to go?

For me, it all started when I was doing nothing but minding my own business working on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate in about 1998. Being in and around the offices of Tongaat Hulett Developments (THD, then Morelands), I'd heard corridor talk and references to a new town centre proposal being put together somewhere on the Ridge. Remembering that Umhlanga at that time still fell under the North Local Council and was not then part of the Ethekewini "UniCity", the view seemed to be that Umhlanga Rocks itself, wedged as it was between the seashore and the M4 Highway, was not able to grow sufficiently to cope with a demand for new commercial development that the North Local Council wanted so badly to provide a much-needed rates-base. At that time, I'd myself been part of a group putting together a scheme for the redevelopment of the Council-owned land, including the Umhlanga Country Club site, in Umhlanga Rocks (what are now the Beacon Rock and Oceans developments) but I'd been unaware that the Council had been talking about a new Civic Centre up on the Ridge.

It transpired that there were already plans for a Civic node in a plan that Willy Vandeverre had put together for Moreland and that this made provision, amongst other things, for a 12 000m² neighbourhood shopping centre, a civic centre, a library, a concert hall and an art gallery. In all my work on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate at that time, I'd been working with Ken Forbes, the Moreland Director of Commercial and Industrial property and I hadn't really had much to do with Helgaard Botha, Director of Special Projects (Zimbali being one that he was spearheading at the time) and Neels Brink, Director of Planning. These were, as I came to see it, the formidable trio of lieutenants that sat directly below the late Gordon Hibbard, the remarkable gentleman that had driven so much of Tongaat Hulett's property strategy north of Durban. As I later found, Helgaard had been tasked with this new "town centre" project.

Unbeknownst to me at the time, was that Peter Blankenberg, a property man, and Andrew Murray of Johnson Murray Architects had, as I understand it, dreamed up the notion of a seriously big, super-regional shopping centre rather than the piddling neighbourhood centre that was being thought of. They had introduced Moreland and Old Mutual Properties to RTKL (a massive architectural practice out of Baltimore) and that thinking was quite advanced, with OMP's Ian Watt as its champion, along the lines of Mizner Park, a scheme in Boca Raton in Florida, USA, which had a large shopping centre (with offices and apartments) fronting onto a very formal boulevard.

ALSO UNBEKNOWNST TO ME AT THAT TIME, TONGAAT HULETT DEVELOPMENTS HAD SPONSORED THE VISIT OF TONY NELESSSEN, THE PROFESSOR OF URBAN DESIGN AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY IN NEW JERSEY, TO PRESENT HIS WORK IN THE NEW URBANISM TO THE ANNUAL SAPOA CONFERENCE THAT WAS HELD IN DURBAN ABOUT THAT TIME.

Part of the deal, it seems, was that Tony's firm (A. Nelessen & Associates) would also spend some time on the idea of this new town centre on Umhlanga Ridge. Tony was accompanied by Melissa Saunders who was, as I recall, an art historian with an incredible interest in and grasp of cities through history and place-making in cities.

They apparently ran a workshop with various interest groups to gauge what kinds of urban environments people subliminally related to best and what elements made up these environments. I knew nothing of this and was not part of the workshop although I was extremely immersed in the New Urbanism Movement myself and well-knew the New Urbanism Charter that drove it (if a not a little sceptical of the many "zealots" that seemed to me to surround it). My first tangential involvement with this proposed new town centre, therefore, I suppose, was when Melissa stayed on for an extra week and wanted to see Johannesburg and Helgaard asked me if I would host her in that regard. She and I really clicked urbanistically and we had a great week driving around Jo'burg and talking about cities, urbanism and what makes places great or poor.

I then found that Tony and Melissa had been appointed by Moreland to work with Willy Vandeverre on the proposed new town, with Andrew Murray, in parallel, working with RTKL for OMP on what was to become The Gateway Theatre of Shopping.

One day, I was approached by Helgaard in the Moreland offices to sit in on some work sessions in Willy's offices with Tony and Melissa to try and 'smooth out' some tensions that appear to have arisen. I did so but was surprised to find Willy absent from these sessions (other than to drop in for a moment now and then). The net result was that: (a) I never saw any supposed 'tensions'; (b) I never really interacted with Willy at that time; and (c) I had a hellava good time working with 'the Nelessens', as I referred to Tony and Melissa, on the early new concepts for the town centre and the radical re-jigging of what had already been proposed. My sense was that we were really talking of two different kinds of schemes: a "civic design" predicated on set-piece, programmatic, architectural layouts (which is what I think Willy had on the table) versus "urban design" dealing with high-intensity, mixed-use, complex city systems driven by non-programmatic principles of urbanism (which is what the Nelessens were advocating).

IT WAS IN THOSE SESSIONS THAT THE SINGLE TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURE OF NOTE ON THE SITE, APART FROM ITS ROLLING HILLS, BECAME A FOCAL PIECE OF THE OVERALL LAYOUT: A BAND OF NATURAL COASTAL FOREST COMPRISING MOSTLY VERY OLD, VAST FIGUS TREES, HAD SURVIVED THE SLASH AND BURN OF HISTORY AS ENDEMIC NATURAL FORESTS WERE CLEARED FOR SUGAR FARMING.

This, together with the other set-piece elements of boulevards, avenues and circles, making what is essentially quite an heroic urban layout, was consciously part of creating a system of

distinctive landmarks and place-making devices across what would no doubt be a wide, mostly empty landscape for several years to come. We figured it would be necessary for this new town centre to form around these elements of a public environment that would give a clear sense of what was to come and create a legible urban layout whilst we waited for the city's development to catch up with us. Sadly, I heard there was later a serious dust-up that saw the parting of the ways between Willy and the Nelessens – the sort of tiff, I suppose, Willy Nelson might have made famous in a song (sorry, couldn't resist that) – and Willy, as I understand it, withdrew from the job.

Had I mentioned that, until now, I'd been minding my own business working on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate? Well, that's true, and apart from the few working sessions I'd had with the Nelessens, I had little or no involvement with the 'New Town Centre', as it was now being labelled, and certainly knew nothing of all these undercurrents.

As it turns out then, when the Nelessens were asked to carry on with the job and who they'd like to work with locally (bearing in mind they were essentially quite a small practice with Tony's main vocation being holding down the Chair of Urban Design at Princeton), I was completely blindsided when they said they'd want to work with GAPP and, because they hadn't met anyone from GAPP other than myself, that boiled down, initially, to working with me. So there I was working with the Nelessens



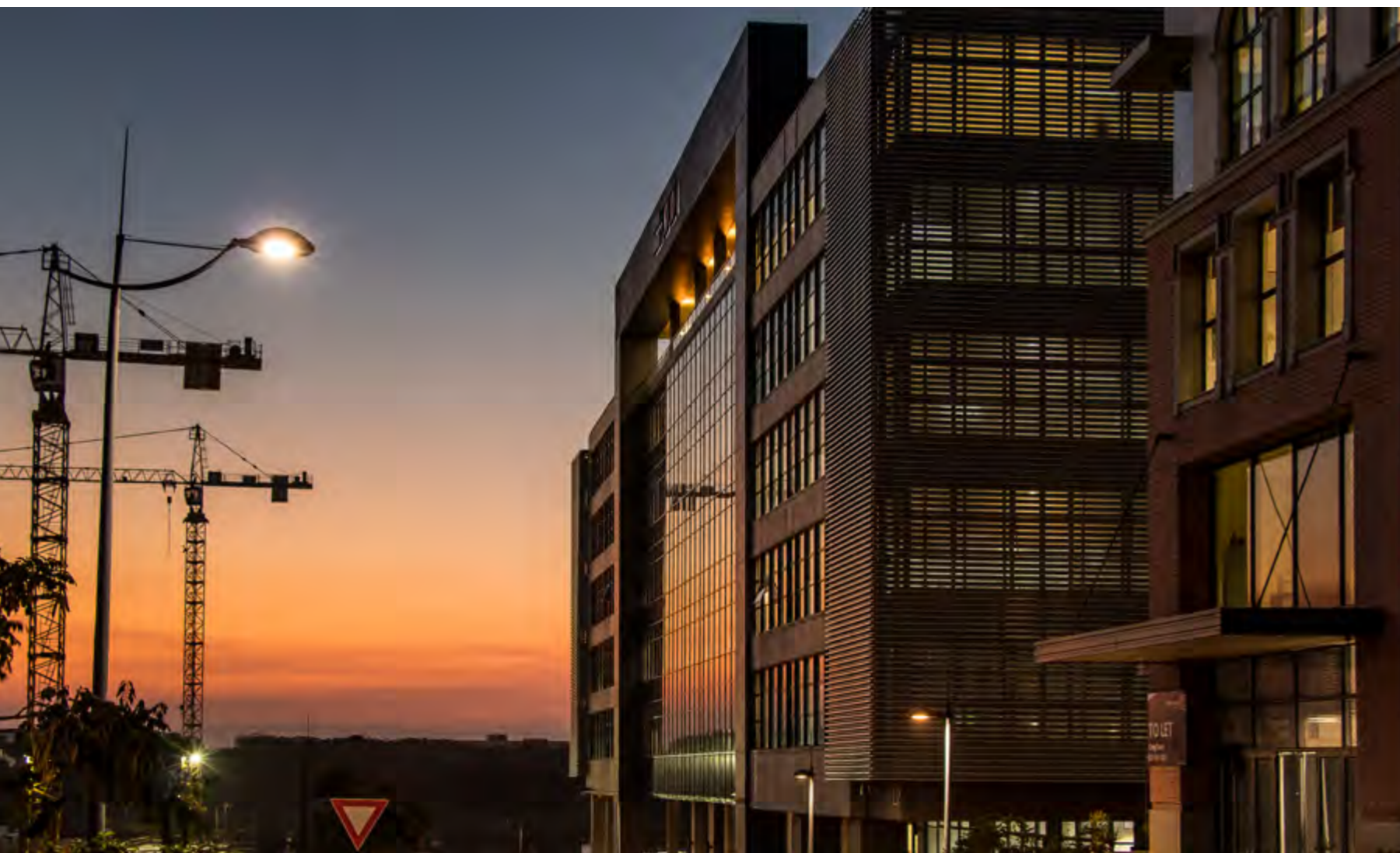
(with my fellow GAPP director, Barry Senior, joining me on occasion) but my involvement was cut short temporarily with the news, in a work session, that my Dad had passed away back in Johannesburg. Wierdly, in that daze, I just remember, firstly, how incredibly empathetic and comforting Tony Nelessen was, and secondly how Barry, who was supposed to only be down in Durban for the day, just dropped everything in Jo'burg and stayed on to see those few days of working with the Nelessens through.

As it turns out, our working relationship with the Nelessens was doomed to be rather brief: they only came out for another short working session and, even in my rather unconscious way, I was aware of what seemed to be some undercurrent of discontent between Melissa and Tony and by the end of that trip, we heard via the grapevine that they were having some business relationship issues and had split and could not proceed with the project.

So there I was: I had honestly been minding my own business throughout and now found myself squarely at the centre of a vortex of mayhem, having just been given custody of this unborn child, the Umhlanga Ridge New Town Centre. Now, with GAPP as the sole design lead for the town centre, Moreland assembled a full professional team comprising in-house planning capacity and engineering input from then Vela VKE (now SMEC). A remarkably young (as well as remarkable) planner at that time (and now Director of Planning at THD), Rory Wilkinson, under the direction of Neels Brink and TC Chetty, made extraordinary in-roads with the North Local

Council in how the town planning aspects of the project were assembled. This was based loosely on an approach we'd pioneered on the Victoria & Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town some time before.

Development rights are not vested into a one-to-one relationship with the land but are rather held by a 'Primary Developer' (in this case, Moreland) and referenced to a 'Package of Plans': a 'Contextual Framework' sets out the role of this new node in the wider region and the infrastructural commitments of the various agencies, including the Primary Developer; a 'Development Framework' defines the development vision of the node, its fundamental design precepts, its public environment components, and range and quantum of development rights attributable to the overall framework; 'Precinct Plans' set out the detailed layout of each precinct (roughly 14 in all) in terms of subdivisions, servitudes, development intensity, heights, coverage, development directives and design guidelines; when a parcel of land is sold by the Primary Developer, the 'Secondary Developer' is then required, with that developer's professional team to prepare a 'Site Development Plan' (SDP), indicating how the site's development is to be resolved, how the intentions of the relevant precinct plan are being met, and how the development meshes with its existing or prospective neighbours; on approval of the SDP, the secondary developer then prepares 'Building Plans' in the usual manner for submission to the local authority.



The latter two levels of this Package of Plans requires to first be scrutinised and approved by a Design Review Panel. In addition, any owner in the Town Centre is required to become a member of a Lot Owners Association and is bound by the rules and articles of that Association: there is no facility for ever resigning from this Association and membership is binding on all successors in title in perpetuity.

All of this was set out in the founding Urban Design document and embedded in the rezoning document that Rory so meticulously prepared. It has proved to be a groundbreaking approach in so many ways, most notably the flexibility it afforded Moreland in tailor-making development packages for the market as it evolved within the rigour of the development vision set out in the Development Framework.

Work on the ‘new town centre’ aspect of the project was effectively moving in parallel with the Gateway project, itself a vast undertaking with local OMP personalities such as Brett Wiltshire and Geoff Bright and the Johnson Murray team of Andrew Murray and Bharti Vithal. Luckily the Mizner Park model had already presupposed a 55m x 270m formal boulevard frontage to the shopping centre (which would be part of our town centre and not the shopping centre) and the centre was cracked open to engage with this. We were therefore not working with that awful model of a shopping centre sitting in splendid isolation in a depressing sea of parking. Our involvement with the Gateway team was straightforward and the levels of cooperation when required were very good. I had little to do directly with Andrew and Bharti but I was amazed at how together Bharti was and who, as I recall, also managed to have her own baby while also giving birth to this shopping juggernaut.

Working with the wider professional team was a pleasure and encompassed Vela VKE (Ralph Beykirch and Dave Duke) as civil engineers; Bosch Projects (Derek Serfontein and Sudesh Sunderlall) as electrical engineers; Anderson Associates (Rob Anderson) on security; Charles Prewell and Di Hansen (in-house horticulturalists from Tongaat Hulett Developments); the late Peter Dayson (landscape architecture). The team was led, from a project management point of view, by Dominic Singery from Morelands (whom I’d worked with and befriended as project manager on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate).

As much as I enjoyed Ralph, we often butted heads because I declined to follow a rigorous, straight-line engineering approach because the design process doesn’t work that way. A symbolic truce was made official when Ralph made a formal speech and presented me, at one of Vela VKE’s very frequent and fun site braais, with one of a pair of Stars-and-Stripes boxing gloves with the name “Ralph” emblazoned on it and “Erky” on the one he kept: I still have that glove somewhere...

I soon christened Ralph “Rod” which was short for “Lightening Rod”: he was incredibly diligent and always had his stuff together for professional meetings but had an uncanny way of always saying something that put his foot in it and either Ken Forbes or Dominic (or both, as was often the case) would pick on him, thereby deflecting all sorts of issues away from the rest of us who were less well-prepared and were dreading being found out. Somehow, Ralph always seemed to take the fall for us and I soon learned that the safest place in a meeting was right next to him, where I found the best level of protection by this Lightening Rod. I once suggested he wear red shirts



to meetings (rather than the snappy white ones he seemed to prefer) because they’d reveal less of the blood stains from wounds to the head he sustained in meetings.

We developed a very close and enduring association with Vela VKE which endures with them now as SMEC: between us, with Dave Duke and Jonathan Ellis, we documented every single piece of detailed street furniture design, kerb detail, planter, sidewalk and paving layout throughout the entire centre, including Palm Boulevard and the Chris Saunders Park. Early on I came upon a real gem in their project team, Ross Lumsden, an architectural technician employed, in my view, as a round peg in the square hole of an engineering practice. When I heard he might be leaving them, I was only too happy to snap him up as a part of GAPP and he went on to do exemplary work, most notably on Precinct 3 and Chris Saunders Park.

Sadly, he has now been snapped up by Australia – a great loss.

The GAPP team I assembled was beautiful: Max Voigt, who had been so central to the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate conceptual and detailed design, continued to amaze with his command of detail, computer modelling and presentation work; Michelle Le Roux stayed on for a while from the Office Estate team but, when she left to do her Masters at Oxford Brookes, was replaced by Julia Williams who, with Max, did so much of the detailing of Palm Boulevard; Sarvin Naidoo, who ran the Durban GAPP office and project managed many aspects of our work, including Chris Saunders Park and Gateway Private Hospital.

Relatively early in my involvement in the New Town Centre project, Helgaard moved on to other things and Ken Forbes

became the Moreland director in charge of the project and Brian Cole was embedded in the sales side of things.

It was like old times for me from our La Lucia Ridge Office Estate project team (we were still basking in the glory of a project that, although still underway, was proving to be a spectacular success in every possible way) and now we were just reaching higher and further. By September of 1999, Ken felt we were about ready to push the button on bringing this bold, very big new idea to the market.

Before doing so, he wanted to do a final reality check and suggested we do a tour of new urbanism projects in the USA (including Mizner Park in Boca Raton, Florida).

Melissa Saunders (of A. Nelessen & Associates fame) was asked to put together the most wonderful and hectic itinerary of various projects: Miami, Coral Gables, Palm Beach, Mizner Park, Savannah, Key West, New York, Boston – all within 12 days! We'd also added on an 'old urbanism' European leg of the trip over the next 7 days (without Melissa, who Ken and I dubbed "The Princess") that saw Tubingen in Germany, Paris, London and Canterbury. All up, Ken and I worked out we'd done 17 flights in 19 days and, with the sun only going down at about 10pm in the European summer and us shooting on conventional film (rather than digitally, would you believe), we were on the go typically for 14 hours a day. With the loss of light and no more photography being possible, 10pm sundown was always our knock-off time and we'd look for what we regarded as a 'movie-set' sidewalk café to have the best sun-downers ever. We saw and learned so much and came back (a) with the conviction that the Umhlanga Ridge New Town Project was 'good-to-go' and (b) with a good business relationship that had now become a seriously strong friendship.

Getting the market to understand and buy into this new mixed-use, high-intensity, very compact and complex urban development offering proved harder than anticipated and I came to realise that we were having to "wean developers off the voluptuous, full breast of low-intensity, rolling-landscaped office estates and onto the cold witch's tit of urbanism"! It was that awkward time between hand-rendered drawings and computer modelling (much less computer animation and virtual reality) and, until then, we'd made use of hundreds of images of the kinds of urban environments we had in mind, mostly referring to examples from Europe and the States. The breakthrough came when we set up a series of cobbled-together perspectives of the proposed new town centre itself that Garth Dyer was able to make plausible and, at last, the Market appeared to be seeing the movie in our heads.

Slowly, the pioneers in the market emerged and we'd created a system where developers could buy a minimum amount of floor area (that would still yield an urban scale of development) without having to commit to, but having future access to, additional floor area.

IN EFFECT, WE REALISED THAT WE COULDN'T EXPECT THESE PIONEERS TO GO OUT ON A HIGH-WIRE OF FULL BULK WITHOUT A SAFETY-NET IN SIGHT.

We nevertheless understood that mixed-use developments are much more efficient in their parking needs than mono-use schemes so we made parking a 'punitive' instrument for under-achieving on bulk: the more mixed-use a scheme, the less parking was required, relatively speaking. As always, Brian Cole had been spectacular not simply as salesman extraordinaire but as an integral part of the design team, with that uncanny way of his of seeing the world through a buyer's eyes and moving the design language and offering in that way. The real estate around the Town Gardens (Chris Saunders Park as it was eventually dedicated) we all knew had to show serious value-uplift on the particular value proposition offered by the park and Brian was not going to let that happen by chance: he stepped in and remorselessly drove a special design code that he personally coaxed the market into. Notwithstanding the fact that the world effectively ended in

2008 (the Global Financial Crisis), enough had already been put in place and we now approach, with the recent addition of JT Ross's CCI building and its extension and now the Park Square development, the completion of the work surrounding the park started by Lincoln on Lake, Mayfair, Liberty and Protea Hotel.

ONE OF THE MOST PROFOUND ADDITIONS TO THE TONGAAT HULETT TEAM EARLY ON IN THE TOWN CENTRE PROCESS WAS A NEW PROJECT MANAGER, MIKE DEIGHTON.

After some time of weathering Dominic Singery's withering glance at non-performance (as project manager on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate), he and I had got to a lasting friendship and had, in the early part of the town centre's planning life, found ourselves going forward together again. It was with some trepidation then, just when I thought I'd reached that important milestone on any project of 'breaking the project manager in', I found he was leaving and he was going to be replaced with some tough guy from Group 5. I needn't have worried: I don't think I've worked before or since with someone who has the ability, apparently simultaneously, to focus on minutia without ever forgetting the bigger picture and then remembering all that detail and thought process for years to come. He also had an extraordinary way of giving someone a real dressing-down for erring in some way (myself often included) and then, having got that out of the way, moving on without harbouring any grudge nor any being held by the subject of his ire.

Fundamentally, he was always solution-oriented, positive and fully committed with his team in the trenches. We've come so far together in this commitment to the urban agenda as we keep referring to it and, notwithstanding his being booted up the organogram in THD, I value being able to call on him for comment or to give him comment and observation with the 'open door' status with which he honours me.

I guess I've seen my fair share of THD project managers move through the system: Stewie McCowen; the late Gerald Waller (whose little white fluffy dog Cody, who followed him everywhere and whom Gerald eventually buried beneath the great ficus trees that form the median of Centenary Boulevard); and Dominic before Mike. Mike moving up through the system brought Sithembiso Mthembu onto the scene as the town centre's project manager - a nicer person would be hard to find. Ste is for me, in all respects, a 'universal donor', an all-rounder who in a laid-back way, gets on with everybody and everything with a self-contained sense of competence. His progress onto new projects in Cornubia, Sibaya and Ntshongweni opened the door for Andile Mnguni who, with the expanded portfolio of the higher-density residential enclave of Parkside, had also had to add a significant focus on sales to his project management portfolio. More recently, with Andile taking over the Ntshongweni portfolio, Lawrence Kirkman has taken over the town centre portfolio with his existing commitments to Ridgeside.

Whereas the Design Review process we pioneered on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate has been extremely successful, its value on the Town Centre has been incalculable. In this regard, Keith Pearson, who had been a project architect on the Gateway site (an 'architect's architect' in terms of his

thorough understanding of the business of architecture and construction), became the Management Associations' General Manager for both the Office Estate and the Town Centre. He reported to a Board chaired by Paul Benham in respect of the Town Centre and a great deal of its early success is owed to these two. In my view, it will always be a pretty thankless task trying to manage something as complex as a town centre and doing so through the messy times of construction in an emerging place and institution still trying to find its feet according to rules that don't normally apply in other areas meant that for Keith it must have been a really lousy job. Special mention in all of this must obviously go also to all the developers who've put their trust and resources into making the Town Centre what its turning out to be.

I noted in my reminisces on the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate, which I wrote for the inaugural Ridge Chronicle, that none of this could have been possible without Colleen Harborth who

seems to have been the engine-room of the whole thing as the Ridge Management Associations has emerged from behind the skirts of THD to become the real authority of the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre and all the areas that have been included under this umbrella. Now headed by Malcolm St.Clair, Colleen, the Associations' team of people and the Design Review Panel (still with Scott Phillips and now Chris Winterbach in tow) continue to delight me and make this work an honour and a privilege.

I ended that previous article by saying that the Associations as now constituted, directed and managed in Malcolm's suave, dynamic style, is a formidable institution that is worthy of a recollective piece all of its own. That remains so, but the telling of this 'no-longer-new' Town Centre story had to be told first, as might some others yet, before we get to that. So that, as they say, is another story...



A CASE STUDY OF URBAN TRANSFORMATION *PEERING THROUGH THE SUGARCANE WITH TONGAAT HULETT DEVELOPMENTS*

WORDS & IMAGES: SUPPLIED

Michael Deighton, Managing Director Tongaat Hulett Developments and Erky Wood, Director GAPP Architects & Urban Designers, are at the epicentre of a fascinating narrative on urban transformation and catalytic land conversion. Louise Hunt speaks to these thought leaders who share key insights into the transformation of the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast.

KwaZulu-Natal's meandering and uninterrupted coastline is something to behold and quite comfortably qualifies as one of Africa's most richly endowed natural and economic assets. The 65 kilometre stretch between uMhlanga Rocks, Ballito and through to the Tugela River, paints a particularly spectacular picture. Regarded as the region's golden corridor, the North Coast is not only immeasurably scenic, but is today one of the Province's primary investment zones, boasting some of the most desirable land in the country. The uninterrupted stretch of beach and sea flanked by an abundance of teaming coastal forest and undulating agricultural land defines this spectacular

landscape and for those familiar with the territory, they will have witnessed an extraordinary transformation over the past 20 years where a wholly new urban tapestry has evolved into what has been described as a remarkable case study in land conversion and urban transformation.

uMhlanga Ridge, South Africa's new Sandton

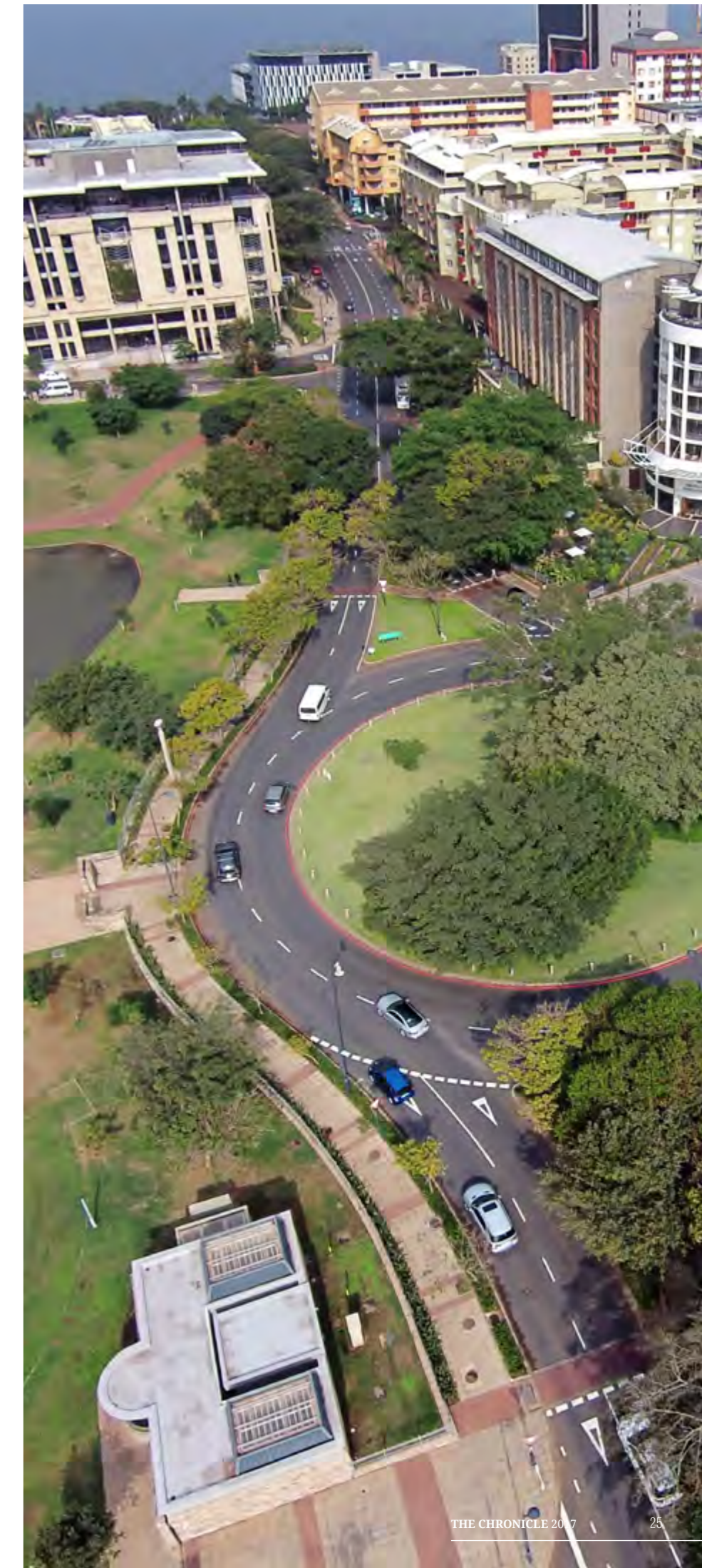
From the upper-level of Tongaat Hulett Developments' building on uMhlanga Rocks Drive, one is afforded a rather breathtaking snapshot of this beautiful landscape. Bands of dense coastal and urban forest populate undulating hillsides with an endless seascape on the horizon and the City of Durban to the not-so-distant south. That one finds themselves in the thriving residential and commercial nucleus of uMhlanga Ridge – a place commonly thought of as South Africa's 'new Sandton' – is quite incidental, so elegant and sublime in design is this commercial powerhouse that arose from the expansive cane fields that were here not very long ago.

Now vastly different, it remains to say that the thriving uMhlanga Ridge defies the typical highly sprawled and motorised cities of the past. Rather, the sense of environmental connectedness and considered contemporary architecture offer a seamless integration with and pay homage to the landscape. Erky Wood, who has been integral to the spatial planning and urban design of the environment created here, speaks to the consideration that was given to the planning of the space, long before the first buildings began to appear. Although Erky only became involved with the corridor in 1995, when his firm won a limited design competition for what is now the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate that straddles Umhlanga Rocks Drive, he is aware of a conscious strategy by Tongaat Hulett prior to that, in the early 1990s, to "Start conceptualising a solution that dealt with creating a new value node north of Durban," he says. "This was by-and-large kick-started by an upgrade to what is today Tongaat Hulett's enormously successful Mount Edgecombe Country Club Estate in 1992," he reflects. Moving beyond this, "Extensive research and inspiration came from developments and urban spaces around the world where the concept of new urbanism gave rise to sustainable, social integration and development that focused on compact, integrated nodes where people, as opposed to private car-based transport, were at the very core. Drawing from these successful examples, we were given the opportunity to move forward, on this greenfields palette of sugarcane, to consolidate on the strategic foundations laid in the early 1990s".

Pioneers of the 'Estate'

Zimbali Coastal Resort Mount Edgecombe, a wholly unique and pioneering initiative, was the first of its kind in South Africa (with Dainfern happening more-or-less contemporaneously north of Johannesburg).

"EXTENSIVE RESEARCH AND INSPIRATION CAME FROM DEVELOPMENTS AND URBAN SPACES AROUND THE WORLD WHERE THE CONCEPT OF NEW URBANISM GAVE RISE TO SUSTAINABLE, SOCIAL INTEGRATION"



While converting end-users to the notion of living in a security controlled and managed gated environment translated into a reasonably poor uptake in the early days, a shift in sentiment soon resulted in Mount Edgecombe being regarded as one of the most successful land conversion initiatives in property development in recent times.

At approximately the same time, in the mid to late 1990's to be more precise, Tongaat Hulett began development of South Africa's premium residential and leisure golf estate, Zimbali Coastal Resort. Separated by a mere 30 kilometres, these two developments have since played a fundamental role in linking greater Durban to the North Coast.

Reflecting on the significance of these catalysts Deighton says, "It was a combination of visionary urban planning, significant public-private partnerships and synchronous timing that ultimately led to unlocking the potential of the

northern corridor. In both uMhlanga and Ballito, we have seen significant commercial development in response to the demand created by the growing residential infill at the time." That the King Shaka International Airport relocated north just ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup, was another fortuitous and timely drawcard which has since given rise to the emerging aerotropolis region. "The King Shaka International Airport and the Dube TradePort play a critical role in attracting local and international investment into the region," says Deighton, "We have seen an increase in direct international arrivals from 135 000 in 2010 to 345 000 and are steadily moving towards the goal of 500 000 arrivals per annum in the short term."

Back to the Future: uMhlanga New Town Centre and uMhlanga Ridge

The first work on what was then the old uMhlanga Rocks Drive, began in the mid 1990's with a major infrastructural upgrade, the implementation of turning circles and uMhlanga Ridge's

iconic Fever Tree boulevard. Deighton also confirms that there was no specific catalyst that led to the conceptualisation of the commercial development to uMhlanga Ridge, "By the mid 1990's, together with the very well executed Mount Edgecombe Estate and growing residential suburbs in the area such as Sunningdale and Somerset Park, commercial need was evident and was by and large a natural extension of the residential infill." He acknowledges that, "It was unique partnerships that enabled Tongaat Hulett to take a bold and clear vision and convert it into reality." He emphasises that, "Private-public partnerships remain a fundamental value within Tongaat Hulett with sustainability and socio-economic transformation being key pillars to the company's land conversion operations."

Staying with the development of uMhlanga New Town Centre and the Ridge, Erky Wood says that it is the multi-billion rand Gateway Theatre of Shopping complex that, when completed in 2001, stood proud at some 140 000 square metres that was

at the heart of this development and accelerated the success of the area, "A far cry from what was originally conceived as a 12 000 square metre retail centre," he says,

"THE IDEA OF CHANGING GATEWAY INTO A SUPER-REGIONAL SHOPPING CENTRE WAS PRESENTED TO OLD MUTUAL, WHO TOOK THE CONCEPT AND DEVELOPED IT INTO WHAT IS STILL ONE OF THE BIGGEST RETAIL ASSETS IN THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE AND GROWING."

Deighton concurs that Gateway's development was a significant milestone for the uMhlanga New Town Centre saying, "Gateway, which has driven a uniquely urbanist concept that generates and attracts energy into an area, was always part of the originally-conceived plan for uMhlanga New Town Centre, but was developed with a fair measure of risk at the time." With the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate well-advanced by 1999 and important corporates such as Deloitte and Business Connexion in place, but very little else within a 1 kilometre radius of the centre, the prospect of Gateway acted as a major drawcard to a number of other regional head offices in the area, including Robertsons and Unilever. "La Lucia Ridge Office Estate was the first commercial solution for us to bring to market," he says. "Given an uncertain market climate in the days of pre-1994, and that the concept of a secure office environment was, much like Zimbali and Mount Edgecombe, a completely new one, made development on the uMhlanga Ridge somewhat uncertain." La Lucia Ridge Office Estate, was, according to Deighton, the residential estates' commercial equivalent of a prestigious address and offered investors a novel and considered investment opportunity that created the first of what would ultimately become Durban's 'Sandton' parallel."

Uptake of this new concept of urbanism reached a peak in the mid-2000's and while, after the crash of 2008, there was a downturn in the economy, the evidence of investment in the uMhlanga Ridge continues to yield extremely healthy returns. From a regional investment perspective, the value that uMhlanga Ridge alone has created and continues to do so, is staggering. The area has significantly contributed towards a world-class infrastructure while having a key influence on new development opportunities along the North Coast.

"We set out to create an environment that attracted head offices and affable, live, work, play experiences. This has resulted in creating a momentum that we could never had anticipated," says Deighton. He adds that, "It is only through working off a sound and competent base that Tongaat Hulett continues to realise a vision that didn't necessarily respond to a direct demand, but rather drove an aspiration."



To calculate the job creation numbers he says, “Would be a near impossible task. One needs to consider the socio-economic opportunities created through the construction process and then the ongoing job creation that is resultant of property development of this magnitude to get a sense of the long-term impact and value-creation.”

Consolidating on the success of the Ridge

It was a very clear intention that the uMhlanga Town Centre, the Office Estate, the high density residential area of Parkside and the ocean-facing Ridgeside projects, collectively referred to as “The Ridge”, would be a springboard that would help drive a transformed urban system. Deighton says that in the early 2000s, Riverhorse Valley had already taken a position in the emerging northern corridor that would bring further, considerable job opportunities north of the Umgeni.

Cornubia, which Wood has been integrally involved in, will be a major consolidation in growing the northern corridor and, of course, has a very significant lower-income housing component that presents an integrated socio-economic profile going forward. He says, “This transformation was also at the core of Tongaat Hulett pioneering the notion of Integrated Housing Units (IHUs) into the Parkside high-density residential development in the core of the Town Centre where a minimum of 10 percent of the units has to be IHU compliant.”

Possibly the most bold step in urban structuring and transformation taken by Tongaat Hulett to date, in

collaboration with their public-private partners, stakeholders and clients, has been the development of the Bridge City project in KwaMashu. Here development principles of uMhlanga Ridge Town Centre have been replicated in order to provide integration of a previously marginalised urban periphery.

The Next Phase: Sibaya Coastal Precinct and Beyond

Over the next 15 – 20 year period, Deighton is optimistic that the North Coast is going to see an acceleration in property development and investment. He says, “The landscape between the Ohlanga and uMdloti River estuaries will undergo a similar but even more significant transformation with us bringing to market the highly anticipated Sibaya Coastal Precinct.”

Still in its early phases of development, Sibaya Coastal Precinct was officially launched in the latter part of 2016 and has seen a good up-take of interest and investment to date, with construction activity to the tune of R685 million currently underway.” With a healthy balance of residential components set to deliver an initial 1 092 units in the first phase, a major retirement scheme together with two private schools have also been secured. “Added to this is a combined hospitality and leisure component,” Deighton comments, “And we estimate the value of construction work to be undertaken purely from the sale of land already concluded in the development, to represent a further R1,67 billion,” he says.

Premised on the concept of “Reconnect. Rediscover.” Sibaya Coastal Precinct is one of the largest and most significant place-

making endeavours of its kind and is setting a new benchmark in integrated urban design. “We aim to transform the way in which people engage with their environment by providing a unique and beautiful place that is defined by a visionary urban tapestry,” comments Deighton. Situated just 25 kilometres from the Durban CBD, eight kilometres from uMhlanga and 10 minutes from the King Shaka International Airport, Sibaya Coastal Precinct represents a critical link between the City and the aerotropolis region. Deighton says that Tongaat Hulett see this as a place where nature, home life and business will converge in a unique and spectacular environment and, “will contribute to the creation of a vibrant, growing and integrated provincial economy where different business operations complement each other to make an exciting mix of market offerings particularly to those interested in investing in diverse sectors such as tourism, hospitality, recreation, retail, education and residential developments.”

With over 60 percent of 1 042 hectares dedicated to rehabilitated agricultural land and existing coastal dune forest, the over-arching framework for Sibaya Coastal Precinct has been conceptualised so that it works with the spectacular landscape found here. Deighton says that, “A new concept in urban living is being brought to life through a deeply considered architectural code that seeks to embed itself into the pristine natural environment as opposed to imposing upon it. We will honour the environment here by concentrating development on the hilltops and preserving the valleys and coastal forest in this undulating topography. This will translate into a unique open space lattice, where people are connected

to nature and each other,” he says. Much like the vision for the uMhlanga Ridge, where public space and non-motorised transport play an integral role in creating liveable and accessible urban spaces for people, Sibaya Coastal Precinct will feature over 75 kilometres of natural pathways, raised boardwalks, cycling trails and green boulevards.

Commenting on sustainability, Deighton is confident that the region hasn’t yet begun to see the impact of the aerotropolis or KSIA. He also says that beyond Sibaya Coastal Precinct, Tongaat Hulett are looking even further north to Tinley Manor as the next development node, “We will soon see a major international resort development being launched in Tinley Manor, the first for the region, and this coupled with the execution of a major interchange just north of Salt Rock, will see a further regional injection into the economy which bodes extremely well for those currently seeking to invest here.”

Erky Wood, as a professional who has been inextricably linked and responsible for influencing the urban experience so unique to this stretch of coastline, says that when one looks at urbanisation in a new way, “We seek to meet the needs of the people who live and work in these places and we are given the opportunity to create important catalysts of our own.” Echoing this sentiment, Deighton affirms that Tongaat Hulett’s intrinsic value of “Better Together” speaks to creating value for all stakeholders through the full property development value chain, and this applies long after the last bricks and mortar have been laid.

“WE SEEK TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN THESE PLACES AND WE ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE IMPORTANT CATALYSTS OF OUR OWN.”



UMHLANGA RIDGE TOWN CENTRE

A FOREWORD

WORDS: MALCOLM ST. CLAIR IMAGE: NICHOLAS CARROLL

This edition of the Chronicle holds Erky Wood's fascinating account of the conceptualisation and establishment of the Umhlanga Ridge (New) Town Centre. In my opinion, the visioning and delivery of an Office Estate (as shared by Erky in the first edition of the Chronicle), is a relatively simple affair when compared to the complexities associated with the creation of what was essentially a green field start-up of a mixed use new town centre! Development disciplines considered when conceptualising the Office Estate would take on a whole new meaning with regard to ensuring that the open access New Town Centre functioned efficiently. A challenge that GAPP certainly rose to.

The catalyst was, of course, the planned super regional shopping centre that would eventually become the Gateway Theatre of Shopping. It must be said that Old Mutual Properties are to be lauded for their vision and commitment to what could have been a serious miscalculation on their behalf should the New Town Centre have failed. Fortune does indeed favour the brave!

We all enjoy what Gateway Theatre of Shopping has to offer, little realising what resources and management are required to keep this massive facility running. We peeped inside the engine room of the centre, sometimes in "no access" areas to bring you some of the fascinating facts and figures associated with the shopping centre. Some of which will leave you with new found respect for their professional team. Nicholas Carroll captures an amazing fold-out mood shot of one of the shopping centre's interior engine rooms that leaves you with a desire to "run your fingers" over the multi-coloured and intricate pipe work on the page.

From the article, Members will learn that every facet of the Town Centre is the product of conscious design. Nothing is left to chance. The traffic circles, sidewalk detail and unique street furniture all carry the GAPP hallmark of excellence.

Of course, the early days of the Town Centre's development was presided over by the same panel of passionate people that delivered the Office Estate. Certain individuals have moved on but Members can be assured that even through this more difficult stage of the Town Centre's life namely, the management of construction sites and the expectations of people living in completed developments, there is a strong team of professionals looking after their best interests.

During 2016, and the early part of 2017, management has continued to develop the very popular children's playground. A water fountain and the first of two pergola structures has been delivered for the benefit of our Members. A pay-ablution facility has now been approved by the Town Centre Board and will be installed in the 2nd half of 2017. The 3rd set of children's play equipment is on order and will also be delivered later this year. This set of equipment will cater for the slightly older children who love to climb and swing. It will have the mandatory safety mats to ensure that the installation complies with all safety regulations.

Development continued at a reasonable pace during the period under review. The completion of the first phase of Central Park on Umhlanga Ridge Boulevard has generated renewed interest in this area of the Town Centre. Opposite to Central Park is the new Park Avenue development which is scheduled for completion in the 2nd half of 2017. The mixed-use development known as The Zen located on the corner of Centenary Boulevard and Zenith Drive completed late 2016.

Looking forward, the Town Centre skyline is currently dotted with tower cranes like no other area in KZN. The new Nedbank development known as Park Square features a number of office towers holding the corners of a very impressive central piazza area which will be open to the public. The Design Review Panel is working with the architects to ensure a cohesive connection between Park Square and the Chris Saunders Park on Park Avenue.

Members may be aware that the Gateway Theatre of Shopping is also expanding with 40 000m² of additional space being added. Work is progressing well and with minimal disruption to traffic and shoppers alike. A well-managed project which will ensure that our very own super-regional shopping centre remains at the forefront of similar centres in South Africa.

Phase 2 of the CCI campus commenced in June 2017. This new phase will complement their existing facility which overlooks the Chris Saunders Park. It is anticipated that the two buildings will be linked by a sky bridge over Park Avenue. Exciting times!

We dedicated an entire section last year to the beautiful Chris Saunders Park. Perhaps we could just add that this facility remains a true gem in the Town Centre's portfolio and will be featured in several articles over the next few editions of The Chronicle. After the Starlight Pops, the park is closed for a number of weeks in order that the annual spring treatment program is implemented and completed. Please bear this in mind. We expect the park to be reopened early September.

Near the park, we also feature two excellent businesses in the area that have recently opened in the Town Centre. One is distinctly home-grown and the other is an international franchise brought to South Africa in 1996. Afro's is located just north of the Chris Saunders Park, and has established itself as one of the best places to have a relaxed "chicken & tjips".

Seattle Coffee Co. has fast become the place for coffee aficionados to get their daily caffeine dose, or make that two! Both are worth a visit.

We field a number of calls with regard to the severe traffic congestion in and around the Town Centre. This has been exacerbated by the construction of the new Mount Edgecombe interchange and even though the project is around six months behind schedule, we can look forward to the considerable easing of traffic flow once completed. The project team expect construction to be completed in December 2017 – just in time for the holiday season!

Of perhaps greater gravitas, is the new bridge rapidly taking shape over the N2. This will link Umhlanga Ridge Boulevard and by implication, the northern areas of the Town Centre and Parkside, to Cornubia and the N2 north. In addition, traffic will be able to enter the Town Centre from the N2 north via an off ramp. We again expect the current traffic bottleneck through the Town Centre over the Millennium Bridge to be greatly eased. Completion of this bridge is expected in 2018.

One final note...

Management thank FNB for the Starlight Pops tickets offered on a first come first served basis to the residents of the Town Centre. This annual event is now synonymous with the Chris Saunders Park and the 2017 performance was nothing short of spectacular!





THE GREATEST SHOPPING SHOW ON EARTH

A CLOSER LOOK AT ONE OF THE 50 BIGGEST MALLS IN THE WORLD

WORDS: ROBYN NEL IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

Gateway Theatre of Shopping is located on Umhlanga Ridge in Umhlanga, north of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Gateway Theatre of Shopping is the second largest mall in Africa and one of the top 50 largest malls in the world. Construction commenced on 3 March 1998 and the mall officially opened in September 2001.

Gateway has almost all of South Africa's and many international retail stores. The centre was modelled on the Mall of America and West Edmonton Mall centres and was developed by Old Mutual Properties.

The construction and opening of Gateway Theatre of Shopping has also been the driving force for many new developments in the area. Originally a sugar cane plantation, the establishment of Gateway on the site has led to the development of a new town centre and both commercial and residential developments within the region.


Today, the airy halls of Gateway Theatre of Shopping host throngs of visitors, weaving their way through shops, eateries, cinemas and activities. They're all looking for an unforgettable experience in the largest shopping complex in the Southern Hemisphere.

Gateway truly fits its title as a theatre of shopping; the mall is a spectacle in itself. Far from the isolated building it was when it dominated the open fields, Gateway's extravagant décor extends all around the precinct, with cobbled boulevards lined with palm trees leading to the eye-catching main entrance. Here, effortlessly chic Durbanites and tourists relax outside just some of the mall's many restaurants, to the sound of the waterfall flanking the glass entrance.

This water feature pales into insignificance, though, compared to the newly refurbished fountain circle facing the entrance, and the indoor fountain, which rockets a jet of water up past all three stories of Gateway and into the glass domed ceiling. It's these ceilings, vaulted and glass, that give Gateway an airiness so rare in shopping malls. No matter how crowded the building gets, it still manages to feel spacious and bright. Luckily so, because this theatre is always a full house. At its busiest times, Gateway, which boasts over 400 stores and, manned by up to 7 500 staff, hosts up to 107 000 visitors every day. That's around 2.3 million people a month, which climbs up to 3.2 million in December.

They come to surf at the Wavehouse, ride the supertubes, catch the latest movies, run wild in the arcade, skid around the Go-Karts, and refuel with delicious food and drinks from over 70 eateries.

AT ITS BUSIEST TIMES, GATEWAY HOSTS UP TO 107 000 VISITORS EVERY DAY. THAT'S AROUND 2.3 MILLION PEOPLE A MONTH, WHICH CLIMBS UP TO 3.2 MILLION IN DECEMBER.



**200 000 LITRES OF WATER A DAY
CIRCULATE THROUGH THE PIPES
AT A RATE OF 5.5 LITRES PER
SECOND TO REGULATE THE BUILDING
TEMPERATURE.**



Keeping it Cool

Deep down under the stage, 200 000 litres of water a day circulate through the pipes at a rate of 5.5 litres per second to regulate the building temperature. All the water comes from Gateway's own borehole, keeping things water-wise. The brains behind this behemoth of a project is Ken Davidson, the Technical Services Manager. Ken's technical and engineering expertise are evident in the hidden infrastructure that keeps the show running like clockwork.

A True Power House

Apart from the impressive waterworks, Gateway has an electrical system built to withstand anything. The infrastructure utilises a two-phase approach for electrical load control, managed by a normal ring and a power ring, which includes 18 substations, 48 transformers and 2 reactors situated beneath the surface. This minimises power interruptions to the mall, which is kept running by 11 000 volts of power, channeled directly from Eskom.

In the event of a power dip or interruption, a computer monitoring system ensures the generator kicks in within three seconds. Blink and you'll miss it. The generator, tested monthly, is double supercharged, and uses 300 litres of diesel per hour.

Going Green

But don't let that fool you into thinking Gateway is carelessly corporate about the environment; Gateway recycles up to five

metric tonnes of waste per month, and it's the only centre in South Africa to achieve a 49% rate of waste recycling. Gateway takes its cues from a project commissioned from Sweden, a country renowned for its green ways, and developed an 18 tonne composter that takes food waste and combines it with woodchips to create fertiliser for the plants surrounding the precinct.

Looking to the Future

What started out in 2001 as 110 000m², the mall, like its surrounds, has grown, with new plans currently underway for a further expansion. In line with Gateway's vision to remain the greatest shopping and entertainment complex in the southern hemisphere, the centre has commenced with an exciting development and expansion project – which aims to further enhance the retail, leisure, food and entertainment offering.

The project will add and extend a number of stores as development gets underway over the next few weeks. Gateway is a leisure and entertainment destination catering to locals, domestic tourists and international visitors alike, attracting well over 27 million visitors per annum.

The project is in response to ongoing demand from both local and international retailers wanting to either expand or open premises at Gateway. The upcoming development will bring about a new era for Gateway as we push the boundaries of South African retail.

GATEWAY RECYCLES UP TO FIVE METRIC TONNES OF WASTE PER MONTH, AND IT'S THE ONLY CENTRE IN SOUTH AFRICA TO ACHIEVE A 49% RATE OF WASTE RECYCLING.





“Most motor dealers tend to stick together,” Danie remarks. “And when one does successfully the others follow suit. This ground was available, visibility from the freeway was a plus and the land was the perfect size to accommodate our needs – 6 000m². At the time property prices were also relatively inexpensive – compared to today’s market.”

INITIALLY THE HONDA DEALERSHIP ONLY SOLD MOTORCYCLES, QUAD-BIKES AND HONDA CARS.

“In the early days, there were still vast undeveloped areas around and beyond Prestondale and quad-biking was very popular,” remarks Danie. However, trends have changed in the past decade, the area has been developed and motorcycle and quad bike sales have declined significantly.

A decision was made in 2014 to grow the business by adding Citroen to the franchise followed by Peugeot a year later in 2015. “Since these two brands have come onboard the three buildings consist of the motor showrooms, the bike shop in the middle and the workshops and Service Centre at the end,” Danie says.

REFLECTING ON THE AREA’S TRANSFORMATION FROM THE EARLY DAYS DANIE SAYS IT HAS BEEN INTERESTING TO WATCH AS THE AREA HAS EVOLVED.

HONDA

REVVING UP FOR THE FUTURE

WORDS: SHIRLEY BERKO IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

Honda Umhlanga opened in 2005. With vacant lands and only Gateway Theatre of Shopping in the nearby distance, over a decade ago the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre hadn’t yet developed into the trailblazing metropolis it is today. However, it was identified early on that the area would evolve and develop into a prime position for a ‘motortown’-style vicinity.

“It’s amazing – if one looks back – at how the Umhlanga Ridge area has transformed from the beginning of the 2000s,” remarks Danie Snyman, dealer principal for Honda Umhlanga situated on Meridian Drive, Gateway – and one of the pioneer retailers in the area. “The owners of MEKOR Motors identified this area as a perfect springboard for future success. We were one of the first retailers to build around Gateway and it was quite lonely in the beginning – even the trees were just small saplings back then,” Danie laughs, reminiscing.

The visibility from the freeway, the positioning and the proximity to Umhlanga made it an optimal area for launching a vehicle dealership. Recognising the future potential of the location MEKOR Motors elected to establish a flagship Honda dealership on a prime site on the emerging Ridge.

Building began on the Honda showroom in 2004 and it opened to the public in April 2005. Initially it was the only auto retailer in the Ridge area – and one of only a few buildings – but as time went on additional motor dealers moved into the burgeoning business district.



01

DANIE SNYMAN
Dealer Principal of
Honda Umhlanga



"It has taken nearly 20 years to get to this point – almost an entire generation has grown up. The early days weren't easy and had their challenges. Initially there was very little passing traffic and we had to do a lot of advertising. It took a good few years to establish and grow the after-sales service. As the surrounding retail area expanded so did Honda's share in the market. But we are now an established auto dealer in the area and proud of how far we have come."

Danie believes that Motortown on the Ridge now has a decidedly upmarket feel to it (Porsche and Ferrari are neighbours).

"Signage and street-front appearance is closely monitored by the local urban management to maintain the upmarket feel of the surrounds. And this has paid off as the Umhlanga Ridge area is now an aspirational shopping destination."

A lucky 13 years on Danie still believes that Honda Umhlanga's location is a key factor in its longevity in the area.

"IT'S AMAZING – IF ONE LOOKS BACK – AT HOW THE UMHLANGA RIDGE AREA HAS TRANSFORMED FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 2000S,"

"Once the surrounding roadworks are completed it will streamline accessibility. The transport improvements will be incredibly beneficial and an advantage for business in the area."

MEKOR Motors is proud to be associated with, and for being there from the very start, the Umhlanga Ridge Management Associations – a professional partnership that has had many advantages."



UMHLANGA'S CHICKEN AFRO-DESIAC

WORDS: SHIRLEY BERKO IMAGES: SUPPLIED

"Afro's is the brainchild of a food lover, a minimalist designer, a musical insurance broker and a well-travelled chef. It started with a chicken sauce that was too good not to share, and as the idea grew the Afro's shape took form: a proudly-local food offering that is mobile enough to serve the best chicken to any area of the city."

Setting the bar for street food high enough to attract the attention of CNN reporters, locals and tourists alike, Afro's brings the lekker to the locals, and in the most effusive way. Originally starting out as a sunshine yellow container at a Durban Day festival in 2012, it became an iconic beachfront landmark that mushroomed into nine branches, with one of its latest opening in the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre.

With its cheerful décor and amusing application of a vernacular unique to South Africans, it's becoming an ingrained part of the Durban food tapestry.

The menu is as simple and fun as the design encompassing the brand. Chicken strips and tjips, bacon and egg roll, soft serve, koffie – just a single plateful of options all done well. Local designer, Kevin Boyd, self-described minimalist and extremely talented interior and graphic designer, is behind the look of the brand and the stores. Being involved from the beginning, he has assisted in establishing and curating an iconic look and feel for the now much-loved local brand.

NOT JUST WINGING IT WITH CHICKEN

It's not just about the food. There's a sensitivity towards eco-mindedness that is an extension of the community-influenced eatery. Recently, Afro's announced that they would be dispensing with the single-use dispensible, namely the plastic straw. The initiative was broadcast on social media platforms, challenging others to follow suit. And other restaurants did!



NO SKINNERING
NO BEEF
NO CHEESE
NO PERI-PERI
NO LEMON AND HERB
NO SUPERSIZING
NO FREE LUNCHES
NO BARGAINING
NO SHADY BUSINESS
NO LOTTO
NO DEPOSIT
NO SKYF OR LOOSE
NO BEGGING
NO SLEEPING ON THE TABLES
NO GYMING ON THE BENCHES
NO FOOD FROM OUTSIDE
NO HAWKERS





PARK OFF

The location for the Umhlanga branch was identified for its convenience and accessibility to the beautifully appointed Chris Saunders Park. Eschewing away from having stores open in mass retail spaces, the places that attract the Afro's spirit are the ones that embody it. And the locals love it.

It is the only one of the eight stores that offers picnic baskets, and it's a great treat. Order your food and drinks at the counter, pay a deposit for a blanket and basket, grab your chow, and chill at the park.



SEATTLE COFFEE CO. WHERE BUSINESS IS BREWING

WORDS: SHIRLEY BERKO IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

SEATTLE COFFEE COMPANY WAS CREATED BY A HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM – ALLEY AND SCOTT SVENSON – WHOSE INSPIRATION WAS BORN OUT OF THEIR EXPERIENCE OF SPECIALTY COFFEE BRANDS IN THEIR HOMETOWN OF SEATTLE. THEY HAD BEEN LIVING IN LONDON FOR YEARS, MISSING THE SEATTLE WAY OF LIFE, AND FRUSTRATED THAT A CONCEPT THEY TOOK FOR GRANTED BACK HOME WAS NOT AVAILABLE IN THE UK. IN 1993 THEY OPENED THEIR FIRST STORE IN LONDON, AND THREE YEARS LATER THE FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN STORE OPENED IN CAVENDISH SQUARE, CAPE TOWN.

Follow your nose along Umhlanga Ridge Boulevard in Umhlanga New Town Centre and be assailed by the aroma of roasted coffee beans and freshly-brewed coffee wafting out of the Seattle Coffee Company Café Store. Situated on the ground floor of the Medstone Medical Centre and centrally situated to colleges, corporate groups, call centres and Chris Saunders Park, the coffee outlet is a magnet to many wanting their caffeine pick-me-up.

“Business is booming in Umhlanga New Town Centre – and it was a no-brainer to set up shop on Umhlanga Ridge Boulevard,”

says Warren Broad, who owns the Seattle franchisees in KwaZulu-Natal.

“The Umhlanga Café Store is one of 15 outlets in the province. This is the fourth Café Store (it opened in November 2016) – the others are in Durban North, Shelley Beach and at the Cascades Mall in Pietermaritzburg. There are also 11 Caltex Fresh Stops at Caltex Service Stations,” Broad adds.

The Seattle Coffee Company footprint will be expanding over the next six months with “another three or four Café Stores and



eight or nine Caltex Fresh Stops opening in KZN.”
The Seattle outlet is a hive of activity from 6am until closing time at 5pm – “but our busiest time is definitely between 6 and 9 in the morning,” says Broad.

The Café Store is a favourite with Umhlanga’s early birds – the runners, cyclists, gym-goers who pop in before or after a workout as well as the work-force grabbing a pick-me-up before the day gets going. But back to the coffee. Like all other Seattle Coffee Company outlets the store has access to the best Arabica coffee beans grown around the world – especially from Ethiopia and Brazil. Seattle Coffee Co. boasts being able to purchase the top one percent of Direct Trade beans in the world and hand-roasting them in Cape Town.

The beans are hand-picked and hand-roasted with optimum roasting methods bringing out the best with the end-result being the distinctive Seattle coffee taste.

“Our baristas at every single outlet are properly trained during an intensive three-week course before being allowed to step up and add that distinctive element to the variety of coffees on the menu. Customers just keep coming back for more!”

Apart from Seattle’s famous ‘coffee on-the-go’, the fan following also returns to enjoy the muffins and croissants which are freshly baked every morning on-site – adding to the delicious aromas. The Café Store serves sandwiches, cakes, wraps and a variety of pastries of the highest quality, generous portions and offering good value. The free wifi in-store makes this coffee spot the perfect rendezvous for catching up on social media, news on the internet and wrapping up a report for clients. Welcoming yet stylish décor also adds to the vibe which makes The Seattle Coffee Company the perfect meeting place for business deals, coffee with friends or just time-out over an excellent cup of coffee.

SEATTLE COFFEE COMPANY PRIDES ITSELF IN PURCHASING THE TOP ONE PERCENT OF DIRECT TRADE BEANS IN THE WORLD AND HAND-ROASTING THEM IN CAPE TOWN.



JT ROSS

LAYING FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

WORDS: FRESHPRESS IMAGES: TW PHOTOGRAPHY

01

PART OF THE
JT ROSS
EXECUTIVE
MANAGEMENT
TEAM

L-R: John Ross, Doug Ross
and Melanie Gillespie

With various projects still ongoing in the Umhlanga Ridge area a final tally has not been done on the tons of soil excavated, concrete poured and the millions of bricks laid in the many developments which JT Ross have been involved in since the outset of the development of the Umhlanga Ridge nearly 20 years ago.

JT Ross was established in 1902 by James Taylor Ross and traded as a specialist building contractor. Today, the company remains family owned but has successfully evolved into a significant property investment and development business. Over the past 115 years, the company focus has grown substantially, and today commands a comprehensive range of property investment, development and management skill sets, including an extensive portfolio, both on the Umhlanga Ridge and far beyond it, encompassing national and international developments.

JT Ross has been involved in a number of projects on Umhlanga Ridge, as contractors and developers.

THE COMPANY'S FIRST INVOLVEMENT ON THE RIDGE WAS THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERS & LYBRAND - ONE OF THE ORIGINAL BUILDINGS COMPLETED IN 1996 IN THE AREA; FOLLOWED BY THE ORIGINAL OFFICE PARKS ON ARMSTRONG AVENUE AND BEING THE DEVELOPERS, AND CONTRACTOR AT GLASS HOUSE AND THE SUBSEQUENT BUILDINGS.

JT Ross' map of projects on the Umhlanga Ridge - past, ongoing and those in the pipeline - has at times resembled a Monopoly board! From the start, Doug Ross and the team saw the strong vision and commitment of Tongaat Hulett Developments, led by Gordon Hibbert, Ken Forbes, Brian Cole and Erky Wood. The team recognised that the developments were evolving into something substantially different. JT Ross also had a strong idea of where it was going and invested into that context. The company made it its mission to see out their vision and contribute to putting the pieces of the puzzle together.

"What we see now is a testament to their vision. We resolved to see that dream be delivered, and in turn, we were determined to make a difference."

Grant Smith, property development director at JT Ross, remembers that initially the first lone buildings "looked very much like goldfish which had fallen out of the bowl." Now more than a decade later some of the developments are seeing a new generation of tenants moving in, bringing with them a breath of fresh air and introducing new trends to meet advancing requirements.

"The Ridge is now an excellent investment destination for all involved and is an exciting place to live. The area reflects the reality of urban living and is unique with its mix of corporate office estates, medical, retail, golf-course, senior-citizen and top-class living environments. Tongaat Hulett Developments has managed to successfully develop this into a world-class suburban area. I doubt we will see anything of this magnitude repeated elsewhere in the country."



Grant attributes the success of this massive growth – and the Ridge being well-managed and spotless – to Malcolm St.Clair, his team and the directors they report to. “They have shown what the original vision of an urban environment should look like. The vast expansion in the area has been unprecedented yet very well-managed. This is largely due to the strong management and design credentials and well-managed maintenance associated with the different parks. The planners knew in which direction they wanted to go.”

The JT Ross team emphasise the strong pioneering role played by the string of properties, in the early days, that link onto Armstrong Avenue in the development of the Glades, which includes corporates such as Derivco, PwC (Then Coopers & Lybrand), Aspen, RMB, Momentum, SA Home Loans, First Technologies, Vodacom and Cox Yeats.

Apart from the various corporate developments, JT Ross also developed and built the Crescent Shopping Centre and more recently added the new Gateway Hospital to the mix in the area north of the Gateway Shopping Centre/Umhlanga Hospital node.

“AS TIME HAS GONE ON WE HAVE PLAYED A PART IN LINKING THE VARIOUS AREAS (ARMSTRONG AVENUE – MT EDGECOMBE AND THE GATEWAY RETAIL BLOCK). THE NEW GATEWAY HOSPITAL WAS A VERY STRONG PIONEERING INITIATIVE ON OUR BEHALF AND WAS PART AND PARCEL OF UNLOCKING THE SECOND TIER OF DEVELOPMENT.”

The linking of the developing Cornubia business and high-density residential area via a bridge, road network and transport hub is spearheading the next wave of development. The interchanges, bridges and transport system are complemented by landscaping, paving, cycle paths and green spaces.

“Already, more areas are being unlocked for development and once completion of the new freeway interchange occurs more movement will happen.”

As in the pioneering days of the Ridge nearly 20 years ago, JT Ross has a finger on the pulse, looking towards the future. Tongaat Hulett Developments has recognised the potential of the area between Umhlanga Ridge and King Shaka International Airport and Ballito.

Looking ahead, JT Ross believes that a new stage of pioneering the redevelopment of various projects has been reached and that developers have to respond to what the market is demanding.

“In the past ‘mixed-use’ development was a swearword,” Grant says. “Now this trend is being injected into the Ridge and ‘mixed use’ is the norm – for example, a coffee-shop below an office block for the convenience of the area’s work force.” Other trends are pushing buildings to the perimeter of a property and creating inner space for staff, which is also associated with pedestrian movement and the principle of having carparks within. A precedent has been set for how mixed corporate and retail sectors should look. This includes creating and incorporating public open spaces into the mix; pockets of green spaces which will not be developed.

“We have joined Tongaat Hulett Developments in their broader, worldlier vision of what a good strong urban environment should look like. Being exposed to that urban trend is what drives us to understand things differently.”

Looking to the future, the team at JT Ross are excited with various projects still in the pipeline – one of which is the ‘revitalising’ of The Iconic Glass House on Umhlanga Rocks Drive.

“Corporate clients are creating relationships and aligning themselves with the right developers who share values such as trust, reputation and integrity,” says Grant.



02

GRANT SMITH
Development
Director
JT Ross

03

THE JT Ross OFFICES
Lion Match
Office Park



LA LUCIA RIDGE OFFICE ESTATE

A FOREWORD

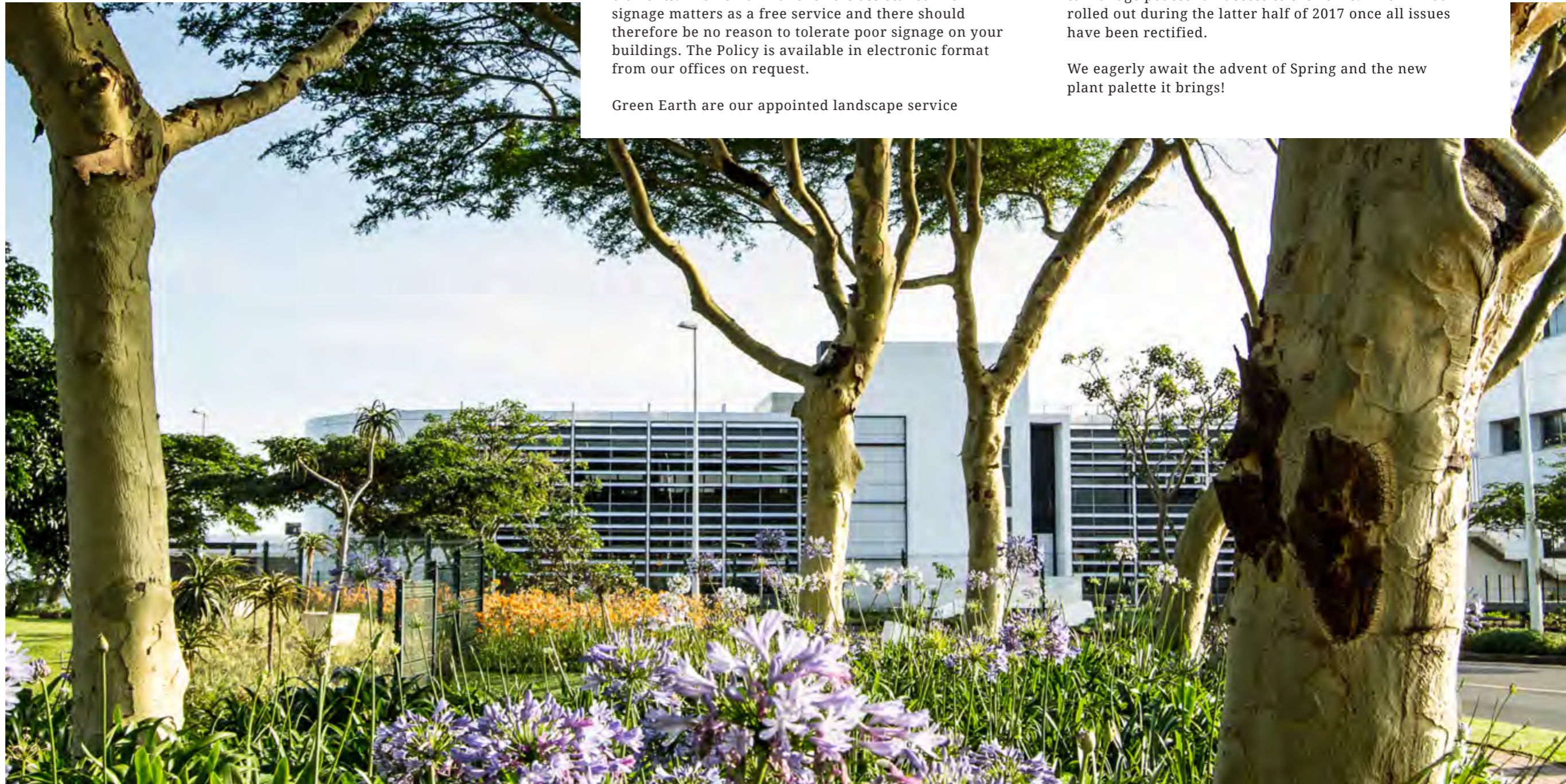
WORDS: MALCOLM ST. CLAIR IMAGE: NICHOLAS CARROLL

Walking through the Office Estate on a crisp winter's morning, I was again visually reminded of how true the saying, "*majores partes suas*" (the whole is greater than the sum of its parts) actually is. Even though the crisp white architecture, the verdant green landscape palette and the obvious order of urban planning have been exquisitely observed as individual disciplines, the overall picture that greets you is greater than the sum of its parts.

In this edition of the Chronicle, we feature Deloitte as one of the true pioneers, not only in the Office Estate, but in fact, on the entire La Lucia Ridge. There is a fascinating account of how the decision was made in the early 90's to relocate to the rather remote area of the Ridge. Remember that construction on the Gateway Theatre of Shopping had not even commenced as yet! Special arrangements had to be made to assist staff to get to and from work. It is hard for us to imagine that time!

With KPMG as the last of the 'big four' international accounting and auditing firms now relocating to new offices under construction in Ridgeside, we can now say that all four are represented on the Ridge by the placement of no less than their regional offices in our surrounds.

The Board of Directors, through the management team, has ensured that the La Lucia Ridge Office Estate is and remains the benchmark for similar schemes throughout South Africa. Not content to rest on past achievements, we continually seek innovative new technologies that can be supported within the framework of the Development Guidelines. The Design Review Panel was exposed to new solar energy solutions that are increasingly efficient and aesthetically pleasing. South Africa is an energy intensive country and we fully embrace the move toward partial or full solar power solutions, but with the caveat that they should observe the guidelines and principles we have.



During the year under review we witnessed the fairly major redevelopment of the Ernst & Young regional facility in Pencarrow Park. A strong, yet sensitive approach by the architect Paul Nel, on behalf of the Owner, has resulted in a thoroughly modernised building which holds the very important Armstrong East corner off the North Circle with great authority. The landscape elements around the building will also be updated. We wish the EY staff well in their new facility.

Turning my attention to one of the critical success factors of the Office Estate, I wish to remind all of our Members that the observation of all provisions of the Signage Policy is of great importance to ensure that aesthetic standards are maintained. There are very few examples of non-compliant signage in the Estate and I would encourage all Members to again inspect their buildings paying particular attention to signage elements. The Review Panel offers assistance with signage matters as a free service and there should therefore be no reason to tolerate poor signage on your buildings. The Policy is available in electronic format from our offices on request.

Green Earth are our appointed landscape service

providers and they achieved a Gold Award from SALI (South African Landscape Institute) in May 2017. This is a tremendous achievement, but they will be hard pressed to keep up the standard we require. Water is becoming an increasingly valuable commodity and across the Ridge, we make use of non-potable water drawn under licence from the Ohlange River. This water would otherwise have been lost through the Ohlange lagoon system to the sea had we not assisted eThekweni by drawing some of the excess through the main water pipeline to the Town Gardens dam. We do not make use of any potable water across the Estate.

Security has and always will remain one of our priority issues in the Office Estate. The phased introduction of the scanners at our gate entrances has not been without its problems, but we continue to fine tune the system to avoid unnecessary delays for our visitors to the Parks. We have recently introduced a pilot project to manage pedestrian access to the Parks. This will be rolled out during the latter half of 2017 once all issues have been rectified.

We eagerly await the advent of Spring and the new plant palette it brings!



DELOITTE KZN

One of the first giant corporates to move onto Umhlanga Ridge in the late Nineties – knows just what being a pioneer is all about.

WORDS: SHIRLEY BERKO IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

“Our business connections with, and in, the city of Durban stretch back 110 years,” says Ruwayda Redfearn, Deloitte KZN’s Office Managing Partner. “Over the decades, trends in the business world and workforce have changed exponentially and our firm is continually evolving with the times.”

The firm’s move to the Ridge in 1996 was the first of the large corporates to do so and the eye-catching building has stood out like a beacon in the area ever since.

“I will never forget the day we moved in – on 16th June 1996 – in heavy unseasonal rain,” Guy Brazier, a partner at the time, remembers. “The roof had not been sealed yet and the ground floor interior was completely flooded. All the carpets had to be replaced and the red mud then became red dust that covered everything. However, the next day the switchboard was connected and the firm was back in business.”

Previously in Devonshire Place in Durban’s City Central, the move north was mainly triggered by unsafe conditions for staff getting to work, inadequate parking, as well as the staff complement outgrowing the city premises.

“We looked at a number of sites in and around the city, but chose Umhlanga Ridge because we had faith in Tongaat Hulett’s vision,” Brazier adds.

Within a month of the move to the Ridge, it became evident that more office space was required and the second floor was re-designed to accommodate the staff.

“In those early days the roads were less developed, single-lane, there was very little traffic and also no transportation for staff!”

Staff formed lift clubs and Deloitte provided taxis for commuting staff to and from the city centre. The building was surrounded by sugarcane and there was very little infrastructure. Because there were no substations in the area to service the new building one was installed on the premises in the basement and this public facility still services the Pencarrow Office Park.

"IN THE LATE 90S THE ONLY OTHER BUILDINGS ON THE RIDGE WERE TONGAAT HULETT'S GLASS HOUSE, ECR HOUSE AND THE SHARKS BOARD - GATEWAY WAS STILL BEING BUILT!

"Now all the major corporates and major businesses have followed us from the CBD to the Ridge, even significant legal practices - notwithstanding the fact that the law courts are still based in the city centre."

Deloitte prides itself on constantly providing the very best working environment and infrastructure for its staff. A vast parking area and staff restaurant facilities are two major factors for keeping staff satisfied.

"A design prerequisite was a restaurant to service staff - this encourages staff to remain in the building at lunchtime and interact with each other on an informal level." Generational and technological changes over the past 21 years - since the company's move to the Ridge - have required extensive refurbishments and modernising of the building inside and out.

On the exterior, the company's carbon footprint was significantly reduced when the entire exotic garden was ripped up and replaced with indigenous plants and grasses and the irrigation system was removed. This resulted in savings of R15 000 per month. Major recycling programmes are also in place. Other energy-saving methods involved removing 20% of the light fittings and using more of the natural light. The interior layout of the building has also been vastly altered due to changes in the workplace.

"Nowadays, because of staff requirements and technology, the number of offices were reduced from 64 to 24 and shifted to the middle of the building to allow natural light to penetrate the work place," Redfearn explains.

"Half the space is required even though the employee numbers have doubled - due to different working trends. Many staff work from home and then go directly to clients."

With modern technology some staff are only required to come together to reinforce company culture or for monthly training. The focus is more on performance management and the individual.

"The one-team approach is a step away from the previous compartmentalisation," Redfearn explains. "The present open-plan scenario brings the staff together in an inclusive culture."

Deloitte is an auditing firm - not a static auditing office." Décor has seen a shift from the stereotypical grey carpets to an interior with a bright, contemporary appearance. Boardrooms received a makeover and were re-named to reflect the company's values and included titles like Reputation, Talent, Recognition and Passion.

"The culture of the organisation had to shift with the new South Africa," Redern says. "The revamped décor was not just window dressing as there was a transformation in staff infrastructure, culture and environment as well." Due to an increased percentage of Muslim staff, a prayer room facing east has been built plus provision made for custom ablution areas. An Halaal-accredited corporate restaurant caters for the Muslim staff.

Through the decades, ever-changing trends and advances in technology, Deloitte remains dedicated to looking after its people.

Health and fitness-minded programmes include yoga, aerobics and beach-runs for staff.

"The next step has been to include the 60% of the work-force which belongs to the Millennial generation," Redfearn says. Deloitte has formed an African Millennial Board which advises the main board on changes and requirements in the office environment - regarding culture, transformation and the new generation of staff.

"Unlike previous generations where staff would retain their loyalty to one company, Millennials will move on after two to three years," Redfearn explains.

"Although Deloitte's values and principles remain the same, a working environment has been created to attract and retain what our Millennial staff has to offer. Our biggest challenge is to create such an environment and attract and keep the best of the best.

"Our challenge is to attract applicants with huge potential - but we need to provide an environment for them to thrive." Deloitte prides itself on being more than just a tax auditing firm.

DELOITTE BELIEVES THAT TO REMAIN PIONEERS HEADING INTO THE FUTURE, IT NEEDS TO KEEP USING FORESIGHT AND THINKING AHEAD 10 TO 15 YEARS IN ADVANCE.

"We keep looking out for opportunities. The future all depends on what happens to the economy - that will determine how we will continue to thrive for the next 100 years," Redfearn said. "But key is to instill values and principles amongst our staff and teach them how to make the right decisions and choices; Get the principle right and the practice will follow."

On the exterior, the firm's carbon footprint was significantly reduced when the entire garden was ripped up and replaced with indigenous plants and grasses and the irrigation system was removed.



VERITAS WINE AWARDS

WORD & IMAGES: SUPPLIED

The Deloitte Veritas Awards, hosted by Deloitte in KZN, is the longest running and most prestigious wine and brandy competition in South Africa and is synonymous with excellence in wine and brandy.

The Veritas Awards started in 1991 and has been sponsored by Deloitte for the last 13 years. The sponsorship of the Veritas wine industry awards is the result of a long standing relationship between Deloitte and Veritas. It gives recognition to wines and brandies of exceptional quality and the distinctive Veritas symbol of excellence serves as an authoritative quality guideline for wine and brandy connoisseurs. Gold and Double Gold awards are of significant value to the wine industry as well, as it offers a prestigious image for the wine, winery and winemaker, brandy and brandy masters and contributes to growth in sales.

More than 120 international and local judges gather every year during September in the Cape winelands to judge the entries that cover the full spectrum of different styles and vintages. Wines and brandies are tasted blind by panels that consist of seven experts judging 10 wines/brandies at a time.

The results are announced at a glittering gala dinner in Cape Town during October, often referred to as the "Oscars" of the industry. Following the awards announcement, tastings are held in the major cities in South Africa where the public, members of the trade and restaurateurs can taste the Double Gold and Gold winners. The event is hosted by Deloitte nationally, in the KZN, Cape Town and Johannesburg offices.

VERITAS INITIATED THE LIVING LEGENDS AWARD IN 2009 TO HONOUR THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO MADE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE INDUSTRY DURING THEIR LIFETIME.

The Young Wine Writers of the year competition was launched in 2013 as an initiative to encourage young people to write and communicate about wine.

The Veritas Young Wine Writer competition is presented annually by the South African National Wine Show Association (SANWSA). The first competition was held in 2013.



The objective is to identify exciting new voices from within and outside the industry that can communicate an original and innovative message to raise public interest in wine and the responsible use thereof. It also provides a springboard to launch the careers of talented young writers. The competition is open to South African citizens/residents between the ages of 18 and 35. Entries open in August and are judged by a panel of distinguished South African wine writers. A cash prize of R15 000 for the winner and R7 500 for the runner-up are at stake. The winners are announced during the first week in December.

The Veritas Living Legend award is about recognition of, and giving back to, those who have served the wine industry over the years; to acknowledge their commitment and pay homage to the marks they have undoubtedly made. Veritas chooses to honour these legends by means of this special award so as to thank them for their invaluable contribution towards growing and promoting the industry. The honour of being hailed a legend goes to prominent retired wine makers, viticulturists, industry leaders, wine writers, wine ambassadors and wine personalities who have, through their passion for wine and brandy, contributed to the creation of a vibrant and dynamic industry. The first awards were made in 2009, when the SA industry celebrated 350 years since the first wine was made in the Cape.

History

The South African National Wine Show Association (SANWSA), that represents the full spectrum of the wine industry, was tasked at the end of the 1980's to investigate a wine show aimed at the consumer. The result was the introduction of the first National Bottled Wine Show in South Africa in 1990 and renamed the Veritas Awards from 1991.

In its first year in 1991, 96 wineries participated and 801 wines were entered with 74 Double Gold and 134 Gold wines. Five years later the entries hit the 1 000 mark and by 2007 there were 327 participants and 1 904 wines were judged. Brandy was added as a category in 2010 to also award the finest standard and pot still brandies of world class standards that are produced in South Africa. Veritas celebrated 25 years of excellence in 2015 with 1 863 wines entered and Double Gold and Gold winning wines brandies. As the longest running and biggest competition in South Africa, the Veritas Awards has earned its reputation as one of South Africa's most authoritative and credible competitions for market ready wines and is backed by a stringent judging system.

THE AWARDS WITH ITS COVETED VERITAS EMBLEM, HAS BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH TOP QUALITY WINES.

The results are trusted implicitly when international as well as local wine buyers use them to assist in their buying decisions and also when the ordinary wine lover simply selects a bottle from the shelf to enjoy with dinner. Veritas is the only wine competition in South Africa for the industry by the industry and there is no commercial gain for the organisers, the South African National Wine Association (SANWSA). The Veritas website features a comprehensive list of results dating back to the start of the competition as well as a useful search facility. This has great significance to follow the success story of the hundreds of participating wineries since the inception of Veritas.



AS THE LONGEST RUNNING AND BIGGEST COMPETITION IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE VERITAS AWARDS HAS EARNED ITS REPUTATION AS ONE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S MOST AUTHORITATIVE AND CREDIBLE COMPETITIONS FOR MARKET READY WINES AND IS BACKED BY A STRINGENT JUDGING SYSTEM.



Ruwayda Redfearn, Managing Partner at Deloitte KZN





THE DELOITTE CHALLENGE

WORDS: SUPPLIED IMAGES: SUPPLIED & BIGSTOCK

Third annual Deloitte Challenge a resounding success

DURBAN, 7 MAY 2017 – THE THIRD RUNNING OF THE DELOITTE CHALLENGE WAS ANOTHER RESOUNDING SUCCESS, WITH A RECORD FIELD, BUMPER PRIZE POOL AND STAR POWER IN THE FORM OF TWO COMRADES WINNERS, DAVID GATEBE AND GIFT KEHELE, FURTHER CEMENTING THE EVENT'S STATUS ON THE KWAZULU-NATAL ROAD RACING CALENDAR.

This year's race, run between Ballito and Durban on Sunday 7 May, attracted 6 500 entries and had a prize pool of R85 000. The Deloitte Challenge is sponsored by Deloitte KZN and hosted by the Dolphin Coast Striders running club "The Deloitte Challenge is a young race, but it was clear from the record field, the enthusiasm of the participants and the social media buzz that it's well on its way to being a fixture on the local road running calendar," said Deloitte KwaZulu-Natal's Office Managing Partner, Ruwayda Redfearn who completed the 21km event again this year. The event consists of a marathon, half marathon, 10km and 5km fun run in addition to a 40km cycle, making it perfect for individuals and families who identify with this year's race theme, **#ChallengeYourself**.

Redfearn said the idea behind the Challenge was to make an impact on the lives of the global professional services firm's staff, clients and society through encouraging a healthy lifestyle, as well as on the community through raising funds for LIV Village, a non-profit organisation for orphaned and vulnerable children. A total of R30 030 was raised for LIV Village through donations from Deloitte Challenge participants.

"As this event grows, both in size and stature, we also aim to make an increasingly positive impact on the province's economy through an increase in sport tourism and on East Coast residents by encouraging them to live life to the full and enjoy our beautiful climate and scenery.

"HAVING RUNNERS OF THE CALIBRE OF GIFT KEHELE AND DAVID GATEBE AMONG THE FIELD WAS THE CHERRY ON TOP," REDFEARN ADDED. THE PAIR DID NOT COMPETE IN THE MARATHON BUT USED THE DISTANCE AS A TRAINING RUN FOR COMRADES.

Kelehe and Gatebe, respective winners of the 2015 and 2016 Comrades, are currently training at high altitude for the 2017 running of the ultramarathon and made the descent to sea level for the Deloitte Challenge, providing entrants and spectators with a rare opportunity to see the pair in action.

They lauded the Challenge as a welcome change of scene from their training base of Dullstroom in the Mpumalanga Highlands, describing the scenic, ocean-hugging route as the perfect location for a training run.



DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

THE STYLE NETWORK

WORDS: FRESHPRESS IMAGES: SUPPLIED

Creating and refining image and style amongst their exclusive clientele on KwaZulu-Natal's east coast is what Sita and husband Jits Hiralal of Style Network do best.



The stylish couple have built their identity and that of Style Network – based at The Square on Umhlanga Ridge since 2010 – on their combined, driven passion for exclusive fashion. Since identifying the gap in a niche market of high-profile families, celebrities, iconic personalities and Bollywood stars, Sita has continued to attract the elite clientele that benefit from their services.

"WE PLAY AN INTEGRAL ROLE IN PEOPLE'S LIVES, MANAGING THEIR WARDROBES AND CREATING A SPECIFIC IMAGE THAT REPRESENTS THEIR LIFESTYLE AND POSITIONING IN SOCIETY – WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE THE TIME IN THEIR BUSY SCHEDULE TO DO IT ALONE."



"Our clientele are very select and occupy a premium role in society. Lifestyle and representation of their individuality plays an integral part of how they portray their status. Dressing correctly sends a message to the public and their peers on how they want their status to be perceived."

Sita believes that how she has marketed and presented the brand locally has made all the difference. "We educate the client about the exclusive ranges available and style the client accordingly to distinguish them from the rest at any occasion – be it a party, wedding, award ceremony or events such as the Durban July." Style Network is proud to be the official KZN stockist of Versace "it's the biggest brand in the world" now available in KZN. The store stocks clothing items, bags and jeans from the coveted Versace Collection and Versace Jeans as well as the exclusive homewear collection. The salon also carries a comprehensive selection of day and evening wear suitable for a specific style and image and classic luxury wardrobe investment.

One of the highlights of Sita's career has been meeting top international fashion celebrities one-on-one, such as the designer



Roberto Cavalli in 2010 in Monte Carlo. She has also developed a revered relationship with the House of Versace, resulting in her being gifted with a personally-signed book from Donatella Versace, whom she admires.

“Donatella is so inspiring – she has fought hard battles to be successful and is so passionate about making her brand work,” Sita says.

“Style Network shares an integral role with the Versace fashion house – we have a strong relationship with them and attend all the functions and fashion shows when visiting Italy. A trip to Milan always re-ignites my passion for the brand – which I then share with my clientele when I return to South Africa.” Sita regularly presents style events in and around Durban – at

the store and various locales such as exclusive hotels – and also collaborates with different brand dealerships in the area. “It is important to represent the brand on different platforms and align with the right people.”

Sita believes that Style Network’s services are more than just a personal shopper and personal stylist – “it is an exclusive service that is totally unique from shopping in a mall. I have developed a personal relationship with my clientele over the years – they are more than just a number. I assist them when they do not have the time to create their own brand and image – and this can even extend to helping them co-ordinate events and functions. It is all part of the package.”

The ethos ties in with their philosophy, “We style you famous.”



01

DINE in
DECADENCE

Versace Home plates highlight prestigious style settings in the home. The unique choice of shapes and sizes, cater for all who dine with elegance. Setting a luxurious mood for Versace fine dinnerwear.

ALL IN GOOD TASTE

Feast like royalty with Versace's range of tableware

02

SIP in
STYLE

The refined Medusa range by Versace offers a refined high tea experience like no other, with designs emulating the baroque iconography that the fashion house has made its own



03

CURATED
cutlery

Medusa silver - Rosenthal meets Versace. The finest cutlery adorned with Medusa’s head, the distinctive and refined motif of Versace’s Milan studios. All parts are lavishly silver plated.



ALL ITEMS
AVAILABLE AT
STYLE NETWORK
La Lucia Square

SKIN RENEWAL INSTITUTE

A proud and holistic approach to anti-ageing and aesthetic treatments.

WORDS: SUPPLIED IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL & SUPPLIED



RENEWAL INSTITUTE IS WELL POSITIONED TO OFFER WORLD-CLASS TREATMENTS AND PROGRAMMES TO ITS CLIENTS.



Skin Renewal was founded by Dr. Maureen Allem, who started the specialist aesthetic centre after several years of providing injectable aesthetic treatments such as Botox® and dermal fillers to her patients. The need for a fully fledged aesthetic centre came about as a result of the advances in aesthetic technologies, which provided alternatives to the more traditional surgical procedures that had been practised for the preceding decades. The development of the new laser, light, radio frequency and ultrasound technologies specifically provided a cost effective means to improve the condition of the skin and also treat a wide range of skin and body concerns.

Soon one practise became three. At this stage the rapidly evolving aesthetics company was in need of an objective identity. Skin Renewal was born and Victor Snyder – Dr Allem’s partner - took on the role of CEO. Together they grew the company beyond even their expectations. The first Skin Renewal opened in Rivonia, Sandton at Senses corner in 2005 and was followed by 15 more branches located in Western Cape, Gauteng and KwaZulu Natal.

THE EXPANSION AND GROWTH OF THE BUSINESS HAS BEEN FACILITATED BY THE DEDICATION AND EXPERTISE OF AN EXCEPTIONAL COMPLEMENT OF DOCTORS, THERAPISTS, NURSES AND SUPPORT STAFF AND SKIN RENEWAL HAS CONTINUED TO ATTRACT SOME OF THE BEST AESTHETIC STAFF IN SOUTH AFRICA.

All staff are fully trained in a wide range of technologies, products and therapies through a combination of distributor-based training, as well as Skin Renewal’s dedicated in-house training programme and protocols. The Renewal Institute encapsulates a holistic approach to skin and body rejuvenation. The aim is to identify the root cause of underlying concerns and treat the body in totality for optimal wellness. The clinics are managed by doctors experienced in cosmetic dermatology, aesthetic medicine and anti-ageing treatments, along with a support team of experienced nurses and therapists.



The Renewal Institute specialises in medical anti-ageing treatments including injectables and thread lifts, strictly administered by our experienced doctors, as well as a wide range of medical grade technology including lasers (Fraxel and Cutera), Radio Frequency, Light, Carboxytherapy, Mesotherapy, Microdermabrasion, Laser Hair Removal, facial rejuvenation and skin resurfacing. The Umhlanga branch is located at La Lucia Square.

The Skin Renewal institute has been situated at the Square for just over two years. The Square location offers easy accessibility to the business parks and is a prime and central location for our Umhlanga, La Lucia and Durban North clients.

While clients are predominantly female, there is a noticeable increase in male clientele too. The aesthetic centre proudly offers treatment and solutions for all skin types and ethnic groups.



PGA

DESIGNING THE SKYLINE - A PARTNERSHIP

IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

“THE JOURNEY HAS BEEN MORE THAN JUST DESIGNING PRETTY SPACES, IT HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY REWARDING TO PLAY A ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING TONGAAT HULETT’S ORIGINAL VISION,” GOVENDER SAYS.

Umhlanga Ridge’s burgeoning skyline is the result of plots, plans, plenty of creativity and burning the midnight oil over the past two decades or more. One architectural practice has been a founding force in reshaping this urban landscape.

01

PRAKESEN
GOVENDER
CEO, PGA

Prakesen Govender opened his consultancy in 1996 and PGA’s landmark buildings along Umhlanga Rocks Drive and throughout the Ridge include Grand Floridian, Coastlands Hotel, Urban Park, Millennium Towers and One on Herrwood. “The journey has been more than just designing pretty spaces and it has been incredibly rewarding to play a role in implementing Tongaat Hulett’s (Morelands) original vision,” Govender says. His company submitted its first plans in 1996 to build a home in Addison Drive – “it was an exciting time post-apartheid, the property market was booming and there was a catalytic emigration by many out to the La Lucia/Durban North and Umhlanga area. “Where previously new home-owners were demolishing and rebuilding old Durban North properties – this changed and the trend was to build a house from scratch as land was released for sale.” Grand Floridian was one of the first multi-level apartment blocks developed on Umhlanga Rocks Drive which was designed by PGA.

Development boomed in the area after the first office blocks took shape and the commercial and corporate market began relocating northwards. Govender believes that there are a number of fundamental factors which contribute to the popularity of the area as a desired address: “To live, play and work in this environment is what makes it such a drawcard. The beach nearby, clean air, landscaping (retaining trees and vegetation), security and organised infrastructure all contribute to this ethos.



He remembers that design review by Ridge Management was only introduced when the Ridge sites were released for development.

“MANAGEMENT IS VITAL TO MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS WHICH MAKE THIS URBAN NODE SO SUCCESSFUL.”

Govender chuckles when he recalls the initial reaction from the public concerning the mix of luxury golf-residential estates, corporate neighbourhoods and retail rubbing shoulders with each other.

“THE SCEPTICS DIDN’T THINK IT WOULD WORK AND CALLED THE VISION ‘PIE-IN-THE-SKY’.”

“The architectural practice became developers by default and were landmark developers in Parkside and Umhlanga New Town Centre and had stakes in a number of mixed-use, commercial and residential projects. These developments are not without their challenges – such as last-minute plan-redesigning to meet authority approval or battling to find quality workmanship and tradesmen,” says Govender.

"Developers have to take chances and are very brave. Quality is paramount but sadly the quality assurance mechanisms that were prevalent in the 80s are not what they were. "If there are changes in design to be made or a service-provider needs to be replaced, the architect (as principal agent in matters of design) has to fix the problem."

Govender believes that tradesmen and architects have had to step up more than "in the old days", keeping a stricter and more jaundiced eye over the developments.

"Developers are also always under pressure in terms of pricing. Checks and balances need to be done as there is always the

possibility that there may be discrepancies in what was designed and the final result. These are crucial to ensure the Umhlanga Ridge Town Centre's high standards are maintained and the final vision is delivered as was promised."

Prak Govender is proud of the journey from the early days – as true pioneers, being one of the first non-white practices to establish in north Durban.

"Collaborating with Ridge Management, Tongaat Hulett and Ethekweni Municipality – in the process to get developments approved – has been nothing short of amazing."

02

ONE on
HERRWOOD
Designed by
PGA for
Trapezoid Investments

"LOOKING AHEAD, I BELIEVE WE ARE GOING TO SEE AMAZING GROWTH."





"I HAVE RETAINED FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES THROUGHOUT, NEVER EMPLOYING ANYONE WITH LESS THAN SIX OR SEVEN YEARS' EXPERIENCE. THESE PROJECTS REQUIRE DEALING WITH INCREDIBLE, INTRICATE DETAIL – AND MY STAFF HAVE ALWAYS DELIVERED, DESPITE CHALLENGES ALONG THE WAY."

Over the years PGA Architects has formed a strong creative team. Prak is joined in the practice by his wife who assists on the financial side, and one son has already followed his father into the world of architecture.

The family live in one of the apartments in The Executive – on Umhlanga Rocks Drive with 180-degree views of the Indian Ocean – "it's like living in Malibu!"

Two decades after PGA's first designs were submitted for Umhlanga Ridge, Prak says he would like to see the vision for the business-node completed as well as more nightlife and street cafes introduced into the area.



03

INSIDE the
PGA OFFICES
Umhlanga
Ridge Town
Centre

"Looking ahead, I believe we are still going to see amazing growth, especially with the introduction of the Rapid Transport System, the development of Cornubia and beyond. The north Durban area is one of the rapidly-developing areas in the country – it is exciting to be right at the pulse of it all."



PGA

ARCHITECTS

COMING SOON...



DBN- PTA-CPT

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PARKSIDE

A FOREWORD

WORDS: MALCOLM ST. CLAIR IMAGE: NICHOLAS CARROLL

The residential precinct of Parkside has continued to develop since our last report.

Many new developments are in the planning phase and the Design Review Panel has been fairly active! Rodney Choromanski joined the Review Panel some time back and we now have a well-balanced professional Panel to both assist potential developers and simultaneously, to ensure that the ethos of Parkside remains true to its roots. Trapezoid Investments completed yet another high quality development known as Savannah Park during the early part of 2017. It was immediately followed up with the Twilight development which is in build at the time of this report. The demand for high quality residential apartments appears to continue with at least another two developments somewhere in the planning and development process.

Members will note that the Management Associations together with the Primary Developer Tongaat Hulett Developments, is currently busy with the installation of sidewalks adjacent to completed developments as well as new irrigation and landscape elements. In addition, the Management Associations is busy with a betterment project along Autumn Drive that will eventually extend the entire length of Parkside's nominal Northern boundary. We are planning to exchange the wooden light poles installed by the City, to the Parkside specification units. As you may well imagine, this does take time but will be well worth it when completed.

Members can expect at least one of the savannah parks to be landscaped during the next few months. The central theme will be an interactive space which will be safe and allow children who live in the area to play and enjoy the outdoors. The two savannah parks are located in Summer Way and are in the order of 1 400m² each. You may have noted the delightful Children's Playground the management team created in the Town Centre opposite the Fire Station!





We believe that the pipeline project that affected both Autumn and Herrwood Drives is now completed. The Association has already commenced with the placement of bollards along both roads to ensure that new landscape planting is not damaged by vehicles. Herrwood Drive is earmarked to be widened but the date is not currently known.

The development of Parkside has led to the eroding of indigenous bush which was home to a number of mammal and reptile species.

The Association is acutely aware of this inevitable reality and will seek to preserve whatever small natural habitat may remain. Vacant plots are not levelled but cleared to a height which allows these small creatures to still navigate relatively undetected. We are currently cataloguing the various fauna found on the Ridge and this will no doubt be the subject of a further article in the next Chronicle!

A CELEBRATION OF SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE



To mark the 150th anniversary of leading law firm **Garlicke & Bousfield** and, in remembrance of the thousands of lives that have been positively impacted by the Firm's work, celebratory events and activities focusing on employees and clients are being planned and executed throughout 2017. These activities are aimed at bringing to life the company mission, "to serve our clients' needs with legal excellence, efficiency and integrity" or, as the anniversary theme describes it, to perform "Beyond Expectations". On the 03rd September 1867, 150 years ago, Harry Escombe, who was later to become one of the leading figures in law and politics in

what was then called the Colony of Natal, established the firm which today operates proudly from its building at La Lucia Ridge. In 1893, Escombe was appointed Attorney-General and became Prime Minister a few years later. He retired from private practice but continued to make the occasional appearance as an advocate, such as representing Gandhi on the occasion of his admission as an attorney. The firm he had founded continued under the names of Thomas Garlicke, with whom Escombe had been in partnership since March 1885, and Escombe's son-in-law, Henry Richings Bousfield.



Garlicke & Bousfield has always been in the forefront of change required to meet the demands of the 20th and 21st centuries. In this respect, the firm was among the earliest legal entities to relocate from the centre of the City of Durban to La Lucia Ridge. This move followed the opening in 1995 of a small satellite office in the Umhlanga

"village" devoted principally to property and conveyancing transactions which gave the directors clear insight into the future development of the Ridge, where it now practises, as a professional company with 20 directors, a number of senior and junior practitioners, and a support staff of 85



Remaining versatile, flexible and current, Garlicke & Bousfield continues to provide specialised services covering most areas of practice in the fast-paced, modern world. Furthermore, through its exclusive membership of Multilaw, the firm is able to provide clients with expert legal services on an international basis. Multilaw is a leading global network of independent law firms, which facilitates access to over 8 500 professional attorneys in 150 commercial centres throughout the world. The Chambers Global Guide has awarded Multilaw an "elite" ranking, making it one of the top ten global legal networks and at the recent Lawyer European Awards ceremony it was voted as the Global Network of 2017.

Garlicke & Bousfield's internal policy is egalitarian, facilitating an eagle-eye focus on relationship building and nurturing - one of the cornerstones of its success. Bongani Mgaga, CEO of Garlicke & Bousfield sums this up: "My objective is to maintain a harmonious balance between serving clients with excellence, growing the firm

and continuing to drive the transformation agenda that Garlicke & Bousfield has been embracing for quite some time now."

However, it is not only its clients that the company serves. Recognising the need for social and environmental upliftment, Garlicke & Bousfield participates in various community engagement activities with the intention of promoting positive change in the areas in which it operates. These activities include business mentoring through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Durban Chamber of Commerce & Industry, pro-bono services to a number of charitable organisations, an internal "Give Back" campaign, which offers hands-on as well as financial assistance and support to certain NPOs, including the SPCA, ICare, and the Durban Child and Youth Care Centre.

For 150 years Garlicke & Bousfield has helped people in many ways - successfully bridging an efficacious past to an even brighter future.

"My objective is to maintain a harmonious balance between serving clients with excellence, growing the firm and continuing to drive the transformation agenda that Garlicke & Bousfield has been embracing for quite some time now."





01

BONGANI GUMEDE and NOSIZWE MBUNQUKA

02

AGRICULTURAL GRADUATE WELILE ZIKHALI and her TEAM OF EMERGING ORGANIC FARMERS



BUILDING TOMORROW TOGETHER

TONGAAT HULETT'S SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME

WORDS: FRESHPRESS IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL & SUPPLIED

There is another success story waiting in the wings, following on that of the Ridge development of the past two decades. It's the creation of something positive that pools people, economy and environment together to form a sustainability model for and by the people in the Greater Umhlanga area.

The analogy of the new bridge connecting Cornubia to Umhlanga comes to mind when understanding the reasoning behind Tongaat Hulett's Socio-economic Sustainability and Innovation Programme (SSIP).

"The Greater Umhlanga is inclusive of many diverse communities within the region," explains Bongani Gumedé, corporate director of Tongaat Hulett Developments and the innovator behind the SSIP. "The Ridge consists of more than just buildings – it's the people who bring the precinct to life. However, a large sector of the community comes from very different socio-economic circumstances which we can't ignore. The Cornubia bridge ties the urban knot by linking the social diversity of the Greater Umhlanga area."

Bongani summarises the project's framework:

"WE AIM FOR COLLABORATION AND SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INCLUSIVE VALUE CREATION, TRANSFORMATION AND EMPOWERMENT THROUGH LAND USE AND CONVERSION."

As vast areas of former sugarcane land are sold by Tongaat Hulett, converted and developed, so it has a major impact on the communities involved.

"Our aim is to transform the relationship between that agricultural land and neighbouring communities and involve the entire socio-economic ecosystem in that particular area," Bongani explains. "There is an entire community just a kilometre away from the Ridge which could be a potential resource for employment in all sectors if allowed the opportunities."

Identifying a key opportunity in vast areas of open land lying vacant and undeveloped, the SSI programme addresses both the social and environmental challenges by converting these spaces into managed agricultural ground. This is achieved by empowering and training local communities in environmental stewardship and organic farming.

The neighbourhood transformation programme requires a joint partnership and collaboration between the informal settlements and the business sector, to be successful.

"Communities are organised differently – whether it be a body corporate, ratepayers' organisation, managed precinct, elected leadership or other organised structures. These groups need to engage with various communities and their issues to implement successful projects.

"For example, Umhlanga and The Ridge area provides various potential sectors of employment: construction, retail, hospitality and domestic. Skills training and facilitation can be provided to residents from economically-disadvantaged backgrounds via a database – to access these employment opportunities. And the blueprint can be used in the future depending on the nature of planned developments on the Ridge and further north," Bongani adds.



“WE NEED TO LEAVE A LEGACY BEHIND THAT REFLECTS THE ASPIRATIONS OF COMMUNITIES AS A COLLECTIVE – NOT DEVELOPING PROPERTIES AS A COLLECTIVE.”

A database has been created by the iThuba Procurement Process and will align the unskilled candidates with training programmes and link up those with skills to available employment.

Conversely – with the involvement and collaboration of the business sector – prospective employers will also be able to access the database when there is a need to recruit staff.

Potential candidates on the database would be drafted from the immediate surrounding areas. The close proximity to employment would mean very little commuting (and less drain on income) as well as less time spent away from families.

“Management of open space is another critical issue addressed by the SSIP,” says Bongani. “Open tracts of land are very inviting to the homeless looking to set up potential informal settlements – especially if it is close to areas of employment. These informal settlements usually lack an effective waste management infrastructure, resulting in an unsanitary environment and surrounding wetlands or catchment areas becoming severely polluted.

“One of the aims of the SSIP is to change the mindset of this socio-economic sector to the advantage of all. The plan is to introduce farming as an intervention of an open space, thereby creating opportunities for those who can be trained in land and environmental stewardship.”

The programme involves enlisting the residents of informal settlements to eliminate alien plants and replant open space. “Once they have demonstrated their commitment to the project, they are then allocated a small footprint that can be used for small-scale farming; an allotment where fresh produce can be cultivated and sold to the Umhlanga (or neighbouring) markets.

“Once successful it could result in empowering small enterprises and individuals by providing economic opportunities to supply the hospitality and retail trade in the area. The allotment farmers would earn a living to support their families and the result would be the creation of an interdependent, functional ecosystem.”

A third element of the SSIP is the nurturing and protection of future generations. Analysis and data-collection has established



03

FRESH PRODUCE
Empowerment at literal root level

04

OTTAWA FARM
Organic Urban Farming co-op land area, part of the open space management program in collaboration with Wildlants Trust

that there is a large number of young children under the age of six who are left unattended in Cornubia without adult supervision.

“They live in child-headed families, the parents/guardians are at work and there are no childcare facilities. We need to do the research and obtain the data so that provision of daycare and/or educational facilities can be provided for these little ones. They are our future and we need to look out for them.”
Bongani is passionate and positive that the aim of the SSIP will see fruition in years to come just as the initial vision of the

development on The Ridge has played out.

“The SSIP emphasises the essence of transformation and the need to be relevant and sustainable in what we do. The collaboration of developers and stakeholders is vital to the success of the project.

“If we want a different outcome to the land-development issue, we need to do things differently. We need to leave a legacy behind that reflects the aspirations of communities as a collective – not developing properties as a collective.”



RIDGESIDE

A FOREWORD

WORDS: MALCOLM ST. CLAIR IMAGE: NICHOLAS CARROLL

Ridgeside has witnessed a tremendous increase in development planning during the latter part of 2016 and does not appear to be diminishing any time soon. While Precinct 3 marches toward completion with regard to a fully developed node, we learnt of a number of new development projects in Precinct 1 that will add over 200 000m² of new bulk when completed. To place this in context, the Gateway Theatre of Shopping complex in the Town Centre is currently undergoing a major extension and will approximate 200 000m² once completed. New Precinct 1 development will centre around one private street known as Piazza Place.

The new regional headquarters of ABSA Bank commenced early 2016 and is scheduled for completion by October 2017. This important addition to Precinct 3 will welcome over 500 staff members who will make this precinct their place of work. We would hope to approach the ABSA management team at some point to share their development experience with our readers. The building is another Elphick Proome design and sitting in Design Review sessions with the professional team, the Panel members were encouraged to see where the final approved designs landed in preference to earlier renders.

Shreeprop commenced with building operations to the new Regional Headquarters of accounting and auditing firm KPMG early 2017. This will mean that all of the "big four" international auditing firms will now be located on the La Lucia Ridge. This development is expected to complete in 2018.

Precinct 4 situated below the Office Park component of Ridgeside, is also currently being offered to the market. The Precinct's exclusive residential component will nestle up close the coastal forest strip on the M4 and will consist of free standing homes and other mixed-use elements. The coastal forest strip will certainly be included in the Association's future planning and will be kept pristine.

Speaking of the Ridgeside Design Review Panel, this very important body has been strengthened with the appointment of Erky Wood, Sithembiso Mthembu and Guy Gordon all of whom have excellent credentials to assist Monica Albonico, Lawrence Kirkman and I with the complexities of the new Precinct 1 project. This Panel has reviewed no fewer than five distinct developments recently that will kick start this node. In this edition, Members will have an opportunity to learn about the exciting new development titled The Arch which will commence shortly.

The Primary Developer Tongaat Hulett Developments, is currently busy with extensive civil works below the Holiday Inn which will allow access to the new sites. The work is expected to be completed in the first or second quarter of 2018. The proposed developments feature mixed use approaches with retail, office and apartments all comfortably co-existing which will

ensure that the area will be highly sought after by speculative investors and residents alike.

The appointed landscape contractors to Ridgeside Country-Line Horticulture, achieved a SALI Gold Award of Excellence for their Landscape and Turf maintenance in 2017. This is a prestigious award and we congratulate them on their achievement. It is notable that Country-Line were also commended on the water-wise plant palette and sound irrigation practices introduced. Well done!

Lastly, news is that the Primary Developer Tongaat Hulett Developments, is in the process of awarding the contract to install certain landscape and sidewalk elements in Precinct 1. The Landscape Architect is sure to specify yet another great installation which we can all enjoy.



ALBONICO SACK

BUILDING RIDGESIDE

WORDS: ROBYN NEL & SUPPLIED IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL



01

MONICA ALBONICO
Principal Partner and Urban Designer of
Albonico Sack Metacity Architects

Albonico Sack, trading as Albonico Sack Metacity Architects and Urban Designers (ASM), was originally established in 1986, and is built on the solid experience of the founding members. In 2003 the practice became a closed corporation and currently consists of two principal members and a dynamic core team of architects, town and regional planners, urban researchers and urban designers. The company, which is based in Newtown, Johannesburg, boasts a diverse and multi-disciplinary studio environment which provides a solid platform and a flexible framework for innovation and creative input. ASM are actively involved in both public and private projects in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mozambique, Kenya, other African countries and further afield. The principal members behind the practice are urban designer Monica Albonico Sack, and Nicolas Sack, lead architect.

The precursor to ASM's appointment in the Ridgeside precincts development was the company's success in a limited 'competition', in which Tongaat Hulett Developments invited a number of consultants to participate. The aim of the competition was to generate ideas, philosophies and principles that would guide the site development in the most sustainable and appropriate manner, in order to maximise its natural attributes and realise its inherent value, while at the same time acknowledging its sensitivities and the relationship with its surroundings.



03

RIDGESIDE
precinct **THREE**
Streetscape

"Urban design isn't just about making pretty streets and landscaping," says Monica. "It's about finding value in investment. It's looking at how you can bring a balance between what development can yield, but also what development can offer and leave behind. This is our concern and focus; finding that meeting point."

That meeting point is exactly what Monica is looking for in the Ridgeside Development Project. Ridgeside itself exists as a balance. It's the meeting point for indigenous coastal forest and a rapidly-emerging urban node.

02

RIDGESIDE
precinct **ONE**
Urban massing diagram
courtesy Albonico Sack
Metacity

It's a merging of residential and commercial infrastructure, and an integration front for more traditional La Lucia office estates and new Umhlanga Ridge workspaces. Ridgeside is envisaged as a unique district within an emerging urban node, bringing together the indigenous coastal forest with planned ecologically sensitive precincts for working and living. The resulting coastal lattice becomes a strategy for tying together the interrelated layers of Umhlanga Ridge New Town Centre, La Lucia Ridge Office Estate and surrounding neighbourhoods, work and

residential communities, regional economies, indigenous landscape, and the infrastructure that links them into a new emerging urban ecology.

THE RIDGE DEVELOPMENT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE HARMONY IN WHAT COULD BE A CONFLICTED SPACE.

“Our vision is to build a multi-dimensional, sustainable, human community within a harmonious and balanced built environment,” she says.

One of these many dimensions includes a focus on respecting the unique ecology of the Ridge, which means that all ASM’s development plans call for the use of energy-saving technologies and moving toward a green and environmentally sustainable architecture.

It’s not just the environment that Monica wants to flourish, but its residents, too. Her aim for the Ridgeside Development is to create, “a people friendly environment that takes advantage of Ridgeside’s unique setting and provides a new destination and meeting places within the city to promote social integration and public engagement that is safe, well managed, and distinct to KZN.”

The Ridgeside development is to reflect contemporary thinking by promoting diversity and plurality and establish a new reality based on ecological principles and values. In pursuing these aims, and in understanding the need to build more compact and dense urban environments, which are walkable, and support a diversity of activities which means, in part, establishing development that focuses on safe, accessible, environmentally-responsible pedestrian areas. This has created challenges for ASM as they come up against developers looking for short term gains rather than future proof plans, resistance to new ideas for mixed-use spaces, and lack of accessible public transport leading to cars ruling the Ridge. Ridgeside is at a critical stage of its development, and the temptation is often to cut corners, stick to tried and tested methods, or focus on fast delivery. But Monica stands firm.

“The intention is to work in close collaboration with the developers and their professional teams involved in delivering the next commercial and mixed-use components, so as to strengthen the principles embodied in the ‘new urban agenda’.” It’s this agenda, of balancing the new and old, work and home, creation and consciousness, that has seen Monica and Albonico Sack Metacity Architects and Urban Designers flourish time and time again.

It’s an agenda that the Ridge is delighted to be a part of.



OUR VISION IS TO BUILD A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL, SUSTAINABLE, HUMAN COMMUNITY WITHIN A HARMONIOUS AND BALANCED BUILT ENVIRONMENT

LOOKING TO THE SEA

WITH PWC

WORDS: FRESHPRESS IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

"When the vision for the future of the then-undeveloped Ridge area was presented to us by Morelands in the late 90s, we knew that it dovetailed with our ethos and the dynamic of the majority of our staff," says Peter Bailey, previous financial director of PwC.

Formerly Price Waterhouse, it was one of the first large national corporate firms to move into the area – at the top of Armstrong Avenue and Umhlanga Rocks Drive – in 1997. "It has been astounding to see the growth in the area," Peter Bailey explains. "Yet the business district still looks new, and continues to expand! The increase in traffic is the major indicator of continuing development on the Ridge." The professional services firm was a pioneer when it moved into the area in the late 90s and again last year when the company merged to become Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) and relocated to newer, larger and innovative premises further along the Ridge.

"The directive to our designers and landscapers was to incorporate innovative green technology in every aspect of the development, specifically to reduce the new building's carbon footprint," explains Peter.

The design of the new PwC home aimed to provide a healthier and more productive environment for its staff and decrease the consumption of energy and other resources. After a corporate merger, PricewaterhouseCoopers moved into the brand-new premises in the Ridgside Precinct 3 node in January 2016 with magnificent views from Umhlanga to Durban City to the Bluff.

So successful was the mandate for an innovative design, PwC's new home soon achieved a 4 Green-Star rating from the Green Building Council of South Africa for its sustainable initiatives. These include such progressive features as a thermal storage cooling plant which freezes ice in tanks at times when electricity is plentiful and then uses the ice for cooling at peak times, instead of running the chiller. This not only reduces electricity usage during peak-demand periods – thus reducing pressure on the supply grid – but also results in significant cost-savings to the company.

THIS PIONEERING 'BUILDING OF THE FUTURE' ALSO BOASTS OTHER GREEN ELEMENTS SUCH AS PROVIDING GOOD DAYLIGHT LEVELS FOR STAFF, AN ACOUSTIC DESIGN WHICH REGULATES SUITABLE INTERNAL NOISE LEVELS AS WELL AS THE INSTALLATION OF METERING SYSTEMS THAT MONITOR AND MANAGE WATER AND ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION.

The surrounding park space and exterior continues the theme of 'keeping it green' with the use of indigenous flora and optimum water-saving conditions. "We believe that our new address in Ridgside has created an impact with its visibility from the outset," says Peter Bailey. "PwC is also now more accessible, better situated to service and give improved value to all our corporate clients and the entire building package fits the image of the brand." The Ridgside office's reception area and furnishings reflect the worldwide brand by incorporating décor elements found in the international firm's other offices around the world.

"It has been a very exciting year after our merger and then moving into this building designed for the 21st century," adds Kishore Kooverjee, PwC Durban Partner in Charge.

Emerging trends indicate that digital communication is being merged with physical space and interactions between colleagues are being encouraged with new internal office design. "Offices of the future could include multi-purposed spaces that redefine the boundaries in the office environment and improve everyone's performance. Our workspace is very open plan and we are encouraging more across-the-table situations."



01

EXTERIOR
DETAILS of the
NEW PwC
OFFICE
FACILITY

"WE ARE AIMING FOR A MORE CREATIVE AMBIENCE IN THE WORKPLACE WHICH ISN'T RESTRICTIVE AND ENCOURAGES STAFF TO WALK AROUND, INTERACT WITH COLLEAGUES AND NOT SIT BEHIND THEIR COMPUTERS ALL DAY!"

However, there are still areas provided for an element of privacy, space for staff who need to connect for informal meetings or catch-ups and lounge areas for staff members for semi-private occasions.

"We are aiming for a more creative ambience in the workplace which isn't restrictive and encourages staff to walk around, interact with colleagues and not sit behind their computers all day!"

The state-of-the-art 'workplace of the future' has other advantages which includes more efficient usage of space, additional parking and improved access to public transport.

PwC believes that the 4 000m² development – designed by Boogertman & Partners – has already proven that it epitomises the firm's ability "to produce and lead high-performance teams that are capable of adding value to staff and clients!"



THE STATE-OF-THE-ART 'WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE' HAS OTHER ADVANTAGES WHICH INCLUDE MORE EFFICIENT USAGE OF SPACE, ADDITIONAL PARKING AND IMPROVED ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT ALL DAY!"



02

INTERIOR
DETAILS of the
NEW PwC
OFFICE
FACILITY

"IT IS ALSO VERY EXCITING TO BE A PART OF THE BURGEONING GROWTH IN THE AREA AND SHARING RIDGESIDE WITH QUALITY NEIGHBOURS!"



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ICONIC DEVELOPMENT CONFIRMED FOR UMHLANGA UMHLANGA ARCH

WORDS & IMAGES: SUPPLIED

A one-of-a-kind development to hit Durban shores, Umhlanga Arch is proudly introduced by The Multiply Group, a Durban-based global investment company offering access to proprietary transactions on the African continent. The Group has a 30% stake in Imbewu Capital Partners, a company founded by CEO Gcina Zondi some 11 years ago, and an encouraging example of what can be achieved with skill, hard work, and integrity. Led by CEO Craig Coombe, The Multiply Group is also a major investor in technology, with a focus on changing the lives of people across the continent through improving the ease of transacting, and seeing more communities connected and served in the business-to-business and business-to-consumer spheres.

Prominently positioned on the slopes of Umhlanga's Ridgeside, this R1.3 billion development is one of the largest mixed-use developments in the province and will undoubtedly bolster tourism, stimulate investment into the region, further elevate Umhlanga and greater Durban to a world-class standing, and facilitate significant job creation.

Not only has Umhlanga Arch already sold 80% of the residential component prior to launching to the public, but it has also already attracted R350 million in foreign investment to the region, confirmed an international hotel operator, and engaged with a number of the country's top retail brands.



The design began with the unique arch providing the gateway into this premier people-centred development, and is divided into four key components; upmarket offices, first-class retail, a superior hotel, and contemporary apartments. It will offer everything you need in one location, including some trendy restaurants.

"Expect the likes of a concierge service that will handle your laundry and deliver your groceries, a high-tech business centre to host meetings, a well-recognised gym, top-end retail stores, a leading car dealership, and a premium 4-star hotel," shares Terry Rosenberg, Chairman of The Multiply Group.

He continues, "Umhlanga Arch is going to be a place where you can live a full, productive day without having to venture from your address. Our vision for this development was to create a lifestyle for emerging entrepreneurs, serious business people who are trying to establish a balanced home/work lifestyle, and those individuals who frequent this area and aspire to live within it".

AMIDST THE POCKETS OF NEGATIVE PUBLICITY WHICH ALL SOUTH AFRICANS HAVE HAD TO ENDURE, BOTH LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY, THE GROUP REMAINS EXCITED AND WELL-GROUNDED ABOUT THE POTENTIAL OF THE REGION.

"We believe strongly in the need for economic transformation, and the creation of jobs. In this regard, we continue to be focused on the importance of Private/Public Partnerships. We have worked closely with the Durban Investment Promotion arm of the City Council under Russell Curtis who, together with the guidance of Phillip Sithole, has helped us to engage with Madam Mayor Zandile Gumede, a lady with a sincere vision to

bring our city to new heights through projects such as this," says Rosenberg.

"As a company with its roots firmly entrenched in this province, we remain actively engaged with our city leaders, business, and community, to ensure that local and foreign investors realise the vast potential that KwaZulu-Natal has to offer. We are highly motivated by the sentiments expressed by CBRE, the leading global real estate services provider, who commented that Umhlanga is one of the top 20 real estate regeneration projects in the world".





What makes our region so exciting? Take a look at these facts:

- CNN voted Durban/Ethekwini as one of the world's most underrated cities;
- Durban Harbour is the busiest shipping terminal in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 4 500 commercial vessels per year moving 74 million tonnes of cargo;
- The Ethekwini Municipality has one of the best credit ratings in the Municipal sector (A1+ short term and AA- long term);
- The City has an unqualified auditor report;
- Has laid 2000km of broadband fibre;
- The Dube Tradeport, now a special economic zone with real corporate benefits, is ideally positioned for new generation manufacturing, warehouse, logistics and distribution. It has a capacity to handle 100 000 tonnes of cargo and is located 45-minutes from the city and port. Please see the video link included in the press packs.
- At 3.7km long the King Shaka International Airport runway can accommodate the world's largest aircraft with meaningful excess capacity to handle over 5 million passengers. Don't forget we're on the route to the East (one of the markets with the highest potential for us) as well as the Gateway to Africa.
- Knight Frank International Residential City Index 2016 placed Durban in the first position for residential investment performance for the whole of Africa, and one of the top 50 cities globally.

TO ADD TO THIS EXCITING PICTURE, UMHLANGA ARCH IS COLLABORATING WITH TONGAAT HULETT, WHO HAVE THE MOST ENVIABLE REPUTATION FOR SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFORMING AGRICULTURAL LAND INTO SUPERIOR REAL ESTATE.

The result is a region of great promise. "Due to the fact that our project will be creating a significant number of jobs, we have made the decision to support and holistically integrate Tongaat Hulett's Socio-Economic, Sustainability and Innovation Programme (SSIP) into all pre-and post construction and socio-economic related activities stemming from this progressive development," confirms Rosenberg.

Commenting on the traction achieved with this one developer in particular, Sithembiso Mthembu, Tongaat Hulett's Executive Head of Development, noted, "While the SSIP is still in its infancy, in just the area of job placements alone, we have successfully made over 2 000 placements in the last 12 months, and this relates specifically to just Tongaat Hulett's activities. If all our development partners were to embrace the programme as robustly as The Multiply Group has done, we would comfortably achieve 10 times this amount in the same period."

He continues, "The commitment to drive the SSIP through Umhlanga Arch's development process is reflective of a developer who is progressive in thinking and committed to making an impact both within the industry and in the lives of the people in the surrounding communities. The Multiply Group must be commended for embracing the powerful platform that the SSIP creates, and heralded as an outstanding example of taking property related economic transformation seriously".

Conceived in 2014 by Tongaat Hulett, the SSIP was established with the key purpose of facilitating and creating local, community-based social and economic transformation across the full value-chain of property development. The initiative is premised on 5 key pillar; Social and Economic Opportunity Analysis, Skills Development, Enterprise Development and SMME Business Incubation, Opportunity Linkages and Sources of Income Opportunities.

In recognition of the value of this leading transformative programme, Rosenberg affirmed, "We have embraced Hulett's vision of 'Better Together' and we look forward to seeing the local communities benefit for many years to come, not only

through the immediate construction opportunities that exist, but in the post construction phase too, where retail, hospitality, open space management, security and many opportunities will become available in time".



LA LUCIA RIDGE BUSINESS PARK

A FOREWORD

WORDS: MALCOLM ST. CLAIR IMAGE: NICHOLAS CARROLL

In this edition of the Chronicle we focus on two business entities located in the La Lucia Ridge Business Park precinct (also referred to the Millennium Bridge Business Park).

The first property to be developed in the Business Park precinct was the Hirsch's Home Store and the story is of course the subject of a pioneer piece all of its own. The Hirsch family have become synonymous with quality home appliances at keen pricing throughout the country and there can be very few homes on the La Lucia Ridge that do not have at least some items purchased from a Hirsch store!

Weylandts is the second contributor this year and once again we uncover a fascinating story of the origins of this national business and why Chris Weylandt chose to invest on the Ridge. The range of bespoke furniture, extraordinary furnishings and home décor offered by Weylandts are truly inspirational. Plan to spend some time with the dynamic Chris Weylandt in the article dedicated to this entrepreneur and his business.

Jack's Paint and Hardware made their appearance in the Business Park during the early part of 2017. This is of course a national business and we welcome them as a complementary business to the many home improvement and décor stores already resident within the Park.

I am always struck at the many nationally represented stores that we find in the Business Park. The variety and quality of home improvement items on offer must surely satisfy the most discerning tastes. There are no fewer than 5 tile outlets in the Business Park each offering exceptional sanware and every bathroom accessory available. The biggest problem is what to select from the vast range on offer!



Bearing Man disposed of their property during 2016 and we welcome Redefine Properties onto the Ridge. Redefine is a listed entity on the South African Stock Exchange and we trust that this is but their first of many property holdings to come.

Lastly, I am able to report that the Tetford traffic circle and surrounding landscape elements recently underwent a major upgrade to a more water-wise plant palette. We expect this new installation to take some time to fully mature and make a difference to the entrance to the Business Park.





Illuminated baobab tree feature installed at the Fountain Circle for the festive season by MK Illumination in December 2016

IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

HIRSCH'S

LINKING THE PAST WITH THE FUTURE

WORDS: FRESHPRESS IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL



Hirsch's history with the north Durban area stretches as far back as 1979 when Alan and Margaret Hirsch opened their first appliance store on Umhlanga Rocks Drive. Back then – north of the Umgeni River – there was Durban North and the tiny village of Umhlanga Rocks and not much else really except for sugar cane fields as far as the eye could see. Fast forward to the late 90s and the beginnings of the vision for the Ridge area as mapped out by Tongaat Moreland. Hirsch's flagship store opened on the Ridge in September 2001, just north of Somerset Park, but before the residential suburb was developed.

"We opened on the first Saturday after the tragic Twin Towers attack in New York City so there was a strange mood on the day," remembers Richard Hirsch – son of Alan and Margaret – who spearheaded the developing and launch of the Superstore from the beginning. "It was quite a big move, but the perfect one as we had run out of space at our existing store in Durban North. For a while we were the lone building on the south side of the M41, with just a dirt road to gain access!" The store initially also had its own power station attached to the building.

HIRSCH'S

Number 1 Independent supplier
of  **BOSCH** appliances



01

INSIDE of
HIRSCH'S UMHLANGA
Building designed by
George Elphick

"AS THE NEW HOMES WERE BUILT, SO THE RESIDENTS BEGAN MOVING IN, NEEDING APPLIANCES AND FURNITURE. WE WERE PERFECTLY PLACED."



"There were critics who thought the store would be a white elephant," Richard remembers. "So while initially, the building stood out in the undeveloped suburb, very soon we were perfectly placed as surrounding suburbs began mushrooming."

"As the new homes were built, so the residents began moving in needing appliances and furniture. We were perfectly placed. Our location was in the right place at the right time. In fact, we now use this theory when looking for new areas to place another store. Look for suburbs about to experience a building boom and that could be the perfect locale." Richard acknowledges that it took a while for Durban residents to find the new store – "GPS wasn't really a thing then and our customers often got lost!"

Move to the present day and the traffic jams linked to the Ridge's massive growth are the biggest challenge – "now customers often battle to get to us in the late afternoon!" Initially the Hirsch's store had satellite tenants as neighbours in the small shopping centre but as time passed Hirsch's growth and increased number of brands and stock in store created a need for a bigger footprint.

"AS THE SATELLITE SHOPS MOVED ON, SO WE TOOK OVER THE EXTRA SPACE AND EXPANDED! WE WERE THE FIRST STORE IN OUR CHAIN TO COMBINE ALL THE ELEMENTS AND BRANDS UNDER ONE ROOF."

There are no immediate plans for further expansion but an ever-increasing trend by home-owners for gardening has necessitated the introduction of a nursery for shoppers' convenience.

George Elphick of Elphick Proome Architects designed the Ridge store which then became the model for all 19 stores in the group countrywide. "I like to think that our store is now easily recognizable from the freeway and has become a bit of a landmark in the area," Richard adds.

The store has hundreds of loyal customers who regularly patronise the store and a number of the 100-or-so staff members have been with the store since Ridge Hirsch's opened its doors 16 years ago.

Not only has the Superstore expanded but Richard remarks that so has the size of appliances – "fridges and TV's are massive now – yet the prices of many appliances have also dropped dramatically over the years!"

"THE RANGE OF ACCESSIBLE BRANDS HAS ALSO MULTIPLIED. CUSTOMERS ARE TRULY SPOILT FOR CHOICE."

Richard attributes the family-firm's longevity in the market to the fact that "clients know we aren't going to disappear any time soon and are available to provide any after-service down the line."

THE HIRSCH'S BRAND PRIDES ITSELF ON INTERACTING WITH THE PUBLIC ON OTHER LEVELS VIA NETWORKING AND HOSTING WOMEN-IN-BUSINESS BREAKFASTS, NETWORKING BREAKFASTS AS WELL AS PROVIDING DOMESTIC-WORKER TRAINING INSTORE.

The company is also involved in various fundraising and social initiatives including Margaret Hirsch's campaign for providing reusable sanitary pads for schoolgirls in underprivileged areas. A junior school in the Point Road area of Durban has also been under Hirsch's wing since 1998, where the store assists with funding teachers' salaries, water and electricity. "We were very proud when one of its ex-pupils was recently made head prefect of a top school in Durban, after receiving a bursary to complete high school there!" Richard comments that an impressive feature of the Ridge business district is that it is so well maintained by Ridgeside Management.

"Hirsch's has been an active stakeholder on the body corporate since the beginning and we have had quite a journey over the past 16-plus years."

02

Hirsch's
MANAGING
DIRECTOR
Richard Hirsch





WEYLANDTS

THE HOUSE THAT CHRIS BUILT

WORDS: SHIRLEY BERKO IMAGES: NICHOLAS CARROLL

Dressed casually, with a tape measure protruding from his back pocket, Chris Weylandt is an unassuming contrast to the arresting furniture pieces displayed in his Umhlanga store. A soft-spoken man with an eye for the exquisite and the unique, Chris has been involved in his eponymous business for nearly three decades.

Originally started as a traditional furniture manufacturer in Windhoek, Namibia, in 1964 by his father, Edgar Weylandt, the furniture store has established itself as a definitive home decor inspiration template in Southern Africa. The Weylandts aesthetic, initiated by Edgar Weylandt then later refined and curated by Chris, marries Scandinavian design-mindedness with an African heartbeat, and has, as Chris Weylandt explains, “A distinct Southern African signature.”

The brand specialises in iconic timeless pieces, “Customers are more informed and engaged with the objects they want to invest in, they seek long-lasting pieces.” says Chris. And he is not wrong – customers flock to the busy Umhlanga Ridge store from all over the province, earmarking unique furniture pieces for their homes and businesses that are a departure from the mass-produced items found elsewhere.

The Edgar Chair, created in memory of Chris’s father who passed away in 2014, is one such piece. Edgar Weylandt had an original Kilin Armchair in his collection, designed by the famous Brazilian furniture designer Sergio Rodrigues in 1973. The Scandinavian-style chair, made with oiled ebony and hand-stitched leather, is testament to the timelessness that Weylandts subscribes to and the story behind it is a representation of how an object can be more than just that, but become a distilled narrative in one piece.

Chris finds inspiration in tactile immersion, seeing and touching and meeting the designers and manufacturers behind the products, “That’s why I don’t look at catalogues.” The Umhlanga store, in Tetford Circle, thus also functions as a platform to inspire, with bolts of fabric and leather hanging on rails nearby, educating or exposing consumers to the hand made, quality raw elements utilised in the making of the furniture and other pieces.

01

CHRIS WEYLANDT SEATED PENSIVELY
In the Edgar Chair, created in memory of his father



OF PIRATES & PARADISE

AT ILE AUX NATTES

WORDS & IMAGES: SHIRLEY BERKO

Finding pirate treasure, hidden travel gems and secret escapes on the remote East Coast of Madagascar



If you want to flee the confines of the urban jungle, to pack up and escape to a remote unspoiled island paradise, you could do little better than Île aux Nattes. It's a small, but breathtakingly beautiful tropical island, positioned a splash south of a slightly larger island, Île Sainte Marie, off the east coast of Madagascar. Three flights, a tuktuk, and a pirogue bring you to its palm tree-lined shores. At just 3 km in diameter, the island has no use for roads or cars, with transport provided via wooden dugout canoes called lakana, bicycles or the occasional scooter (which is brought across in said canoes).

A small channel separates Île aux Nattes from Île Sainte Marie, where the little local airport is, and it's through this azure crossing that you and your luggage are transported whilst seated in a lakana. When you land on the shore, it's hard not to be in awe of the surrounds. Powder white sand emerges from the turquoise waters, punctuated by swaying palm trees, scurrying crabs and unfurled tendrils of wild vanilla.

There are a few lodges dotted around the island, operated by locals and foreigners, and occasionally visited by one of the friendly and curious black and white ruffed lemurs (sifaka). Electricity is a luxury provided by generator at some lodges for only a few hours a day. This means that there is little around to invade your sense of tranquility and peace.

If that doesn't prove quiet enough or far enough away from crowds, book a boat trip out and maroon yourself on Île aux Sable for a few hours, a sandbar just a few kilometres away, and surround yourself with nothing more than the sun and the sea.





Seafood and T-Punch

There are no convenience stores, no mass produced food delivered by cold chain suppliers. There aren't many fridges around, and not much power to keep fridges cool. This means that the philosophies of eating local, fresh food that ethical eating practices of the Western world aspire to is the lifestyle here. The fish you eat it is what was just caught. Little restaurants tucked away in nooks, beneath trees or in little villas lure you in with irresistibly delicious smells. The food is a fusion of Malagasy and French, dominated by seafood caught nearby and brought in by local fisherman, and basted in coconut or vanilla sauces. Food is prepared on order, so at a little spot called Maningory, right on the edge of the beach, when you order your whole fish with coconut sauce, don't be surprised as you watch someone climb the nearest palm tree and hack a coconut down to take to the kitchen to make it.

Rhum is offered everywhere, and is the tippie of choice on the little island, especially in a saccharine cocktail called T-Punch, which is little more than rhum, sugar and water. In each small lodge, cafe or hut, there's a few rhum bottles steeping with whatever flavour is available nearby - honey, vanilla, cinnamon bark, coffee beans and even bananas.



Pirate Treasure

It's little wonder legendary pirates had a fondness for a place so remote! An estimated 1 000 pirates, some such as the notorious brigands, William Kidd and Thomas Tew, made the neighbouring Île Saint Marie their home during the 17th and 18th



centuries. A map from 1733 refers to the location simple as “The Island of Pirates”.

Grab a lift on a lakana, hail down a tuktuk and make your way to the world’s only pirate cemetery just by the bay of the main village of Ambodifotatra. It’s a crumbling relic, scattered with tombstones adorned with either the skull or the crossbones trademark. After centuries of weather-wearing and cyclones, about 30 tombstones remain. Legend has it that William Kidd was buried in a large black tomb in the cemetery, sitting upright as punishment for his sins; his ship was the Adventure Galley, was left docked in the island, and his booty is rumoured to be buried in the ocean nearby.

Things to Do

Aside from pirates and lemurs, the island is most well known for whale watching season. From July to September, humpback whales migrate to the shallow waters of the island to breed. This kicks off the whale festival, and its celebration is even commemorated as a whale sculpture that greets you at the little airport.

As it is largely unspoiled, snorkeling and diving are considered ideal. For such a small, remote place there is so much exploring to do. At the northern tip of Île aux Nattes is its one landmark, Fanilo Blevec lighthouse, built in 1914 and operates on two car batteries.

What to Bring

While accommodation is clean and comfortable, it’s best to pack a few extra towels. Bring bug repellent and antihistamines, as a few sandy spots have sand fleas which can cause nasty bites. Torches always come in handy. At night, it’s safe to walk in the dark anywhere, and it is quite dark without ambient city light, but in summer the pathways are literally lit with fireflies! A constellation of them fly in the darkest of spots and it is an unforgettable site to behold. Snorkels and reef shoes are always a good idea. There are some exceptional swimming spots all around, but there are urchins in the less frequented nooks, so mind those.

How to Get There

South Africans do not need visas to travel to Madagascar. SA Airlink and Air Madagascar fly direct from Johannesburg to the capital of Madagascar, Antananarivo. From there, a local flight will take you to Île Sainte Marie. Flights to the remote island can be pricey, but once there, even with the Rand, the rate of exchange is favourable and everything is cheap. Euros are preferred to exchange over Dollars, and the local currency is Ariary. A tuktuk trip from the shore to the nearby village is about 5 000 Ariary, which works out to about R25, and three people fit.

Visas are not required for South Africans, but yellow fever shots and vaccine booklets are recommended. Madagascar is a malaria zone so bear that in mind and plan accordingly.



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INTERCHANGE



HISTORY IS MADE AS MT EDGECOMBE GAP IS CLOSED

*Image above by Nicholas Carroll
Words and image below by Gert van Schalkwyk, SMEC Consulting Engineers*

There were cheers all round on Friday, 4 August when the north and south decks of the one-kilometre ramp of the Mt Edgecombe Interchange were joined, just two-and-a-half years after they first started moving progressively towards each other.

The one-kilometre long bridge forms part of the improvements being undertaken by the South African National Roads Agency SOC Limited (SANRAL) at the N2/M41 Mt Edgecombe Interchange north of Durban, connecting Phoenix and uMhlanga with Durban and the North Coast of KwaZulu-Natal.



Incremental launching is a relatively recent method of building a complete bridge. It involves casting 12-30m long sections of the bridge superstructure in a stationary formwork behind an abutment and pushing a completed section forward along the bridge axis. The sections are cast contiguously and then stressed together.

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THE NORTH CIRCLE exhibits a jewel-like quality during the annual decorative lights program from November to January





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