

# THE TUBULAR BELL

**FESTIVE  
SEASON  
EDITION**

The editor wishes our readers a happy, safe and enjoyable festive season.

While it may be a time to be jolly and party, we urge our readers to do so safely and responsibly, whether at home or travelling.

It is also a time to reflect; be thankful for what we have. It is a time to unwind, relax and re-energize for the next year.

May 2023 be a prosperous year for our employees, customers and suppliers alike.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**



**Did you know that CTA**

Is piloting a solar geyser solution for households using CTA products and ancillary fittings

That the company is exploring overseas markets and expanding Regional Continental opportunities

Has achieved level 5 BEE status

## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE

The team extends their thanks to employees, customers and suppliers for their support in 2022.

We wish you, your families and friends a happy, safe and enjoyable break.

While it may be a time to be jolly, unwind and relax, we ask only that you do so safely and responsibly. We look forward to a prosperous 2023!



## **Every Cloud has a “Copper” Lining - Mark Wynn, Managing Director**

South Africa is going through difficult times with many challenges. At the same time there will also be opportunities:

### **Electricity**

Electricity supply and the cost of electricity is something that is uppermost in our minds and part of our daily lives. CTA started with testing the flat plate collector for water heating from one of our suppliers however we were not achieving the required temperatures.

We are currently testing the PowerOptimal **Elon 100** Solar PV Water Heater from Kwikot with very good results. JP Noack is heading up the project and although we have a minor setback with a lightning strike damaging the installation the prospects look promising. Our overall goal is to be able to sell a range of products with every Solar PV Water Heater: copper tube, fittings, valves, perforated copper strip and Coplon.

### **Housing**

South Africa has a housing shortage and in need of a substantial investment in low- cost housing. It is therefore important that we recognise that not every person can afford copper tube for potable water installations in their homes.

CTA sells the Unitwist product range that makes it easy for DIY plumbers to be able to do plumbing installations. The Unitwist Fittings are easy to use and require no tools. They have no scrap value and therefore not worth stealing. When used with Monogold it is a system that can be used for both hot and cold water. The fittings can be used on any type of water pipe. Included in the range is the ClickClose Tap range and EasyBat an innovative pipe clip.

The system is gaining more recognition in the market as a quality system at an affordable price and we look forward to growing our sales of this product range.

### **Africa is getting hotter and the population is increasing**

The need for refrigeration in retail stores like Checkers, Pick n Pay and SPAR rises as the number of stores increase to cater for a growing population. Further, as average temperatures rise more and more households and retailers are likely to spend more on refrigeration and air conditioning.

CTA has a small percentage of the Sub- Saharan refrigeration copper tube market and this represents a significant growth opportunity for our refrigeration product range.

### **The Rand is weaker**

We all feel poorer as the Rand weakens, however for CTA this represents an important growth opportunity. Our cost of manufacturing compared to developed economies like USA and Europe is lower due to the weaker currency. This then represents an opportunity to export into these markets.

CTA Medical tube is of a high quality and contractors know that they are receiving tube that is medically cleaned, meets specifications and is able to bend without cracking. We aim to export this high -quality tube into various markets.

I look forward to working with you in 2023 so that we can take advantage of our various opportunities.

All that remains for me to say is have a safe, blessed and happy festive season and to extend this to our customers and suppliers as well.



## **Message from our Chairman – Robert Spoon**

We are touching the end of 2022. Once again, we reflect back on the year that has passed and see what lessons we have learnt and possibly still have to learn. We thought that 2020 was a difficult year but then 2021 became even more of a challenge with waves of Covid-19, rampant copper prices, violent protests, a NUMSA strike, shipping delays to name a few. But the business did very well in dealing with all the challenges.

Now 2022 came along and it did not get easier at all. War broke out in the Ukraine which messed up the whole global economy. The world has changed in unprecedented ways. Rising inflation, supply chain slow-downs, geopolitical tensions, the effects of climate change, political uprising, Environmental, Social, and Governance activism, amongst many others. On the local front our Chinese supplier refused to come and assist with the commissioning our new Up-caster (UCC) because of their insane Covid-19 policy. This required the CTA technical team to install and commission the machine ourselves. Congratulations a stunning achievement. Floods occurred in KZN, the construction market softened by nearly 20% and on top of this copper reduced in price by 20% globally, requiring the CTA business to manage the pressure of falling prices while at the same time reduce copper inventory by 200 tons. Eskom did not do the country any favours and loadshedding has tripled in the number of hours of outage compared to 2021.

Despite the above CTA has over the recent year again achieved such a lot. With so much turbulence and uncertainty, the speed and agility with which our CTA management have responded to such unprecedented challenges has determined the continued success of the business.

In manufacturing the UCC has been installed and commissioned with home grown modifications to make the machine more effective, a copper scrap compactor for effective introduction of scrap into the UCC commissioned, new compressor installed, UPS driven safety water cooling system installed for protection against water supply interruption, in house designed hand protection system for drawbenches and now the mother of all generators is being installed for protection against loadshedding.

A new IT system Syspro has been implemented and all staff have developed significant capability in using and understanding the system. The business has been restructured with all the non-core businesses sold and moved out. The space created has enabled the packaging department to flex their wings. New vehicle tracking security and driver management has been implemented. The housekeeping in all areas remains at a high level. IT, preventive maintenance, HCM, Health, Safety, Quality, Laboratory Services and Security have been revitalised. The management team has been part of a self-development and team integration program with Dare-2-Be which also encompassed a more integrated meetings, conferences and dialogue to ensure communication and sharing ideas for the ongoing strategic development of the business. There have been some departures of key individuals and a robust process of recruitment is underway.

Our continued focus will be to strengthen our fittings and plastics sales drive and developing the capability to deliver demand on time in full when the customer requires at short notice. This applies specially to the branches. Asset management, reporting dashboards and material planning will be an ongoing project. Finalisation of the branch structures and performance will also be a dominant theme. We have shown that as a team we are agile and effective. I saw a recent suggestion to business management to help deal with all the turbulence around us. We need the B-Factor – Be Bold and Brave – to take us forward. Lets adopt this B-Factor while we we continue to focus on our BHAG's (Big Hairy Audacious Goals) for 2023.

I believe that we can do anything with the help of you, our staff, our suppliers, our shareholders and partners. Be vigilant and keep safe over the festive season.

Robert Spoon  
Chairman  
2022



## BEYOND THE BOTTOM LINE - Greg Kietzmann, CFO

### WORKING SAFE

The culture of an organisation together with its systems and structure have been key to the organisations success. It has allowed people to take responsibility for their functions and that of the business. People thrive in such a climate.

One of our pillars is to “work safe”. There are many aspects to working safely. I am going to interpret this from a financial point of view. Not all financial decisions can be made from management or a head office structure, because they might not understand the all the operations on the ground or in the regions. So we employ people with the right values and skills to make decisions and we put systems and resources in place so businesses can run their finances with speed and efficiency. For example, our computer systems enable us to control financial data and information from remote regions and locations (eg home). Systems help to create transparency which grows our culture of trust and helps the business to gather pace. Financial information moves in all directions and the result is that we “work safe”.

Ownership and responsibility of all functions of finance cannot be delegated to all areas of the business. Executive management, as a unit, fulfils the role of governance. That role must ensure the business, as a whole, complies with all the relevant laws, regulations, policies and procedures. An important aspect is accounting standards and audits. In collaboration with the business we develop standards, controls and reports to ensure we comply. Governance also ensures consistent standards are applied throughout the business of Copper Tubing Africa. This helps us all to “work safe”.

Management and business (the “financial community”) meet regularly to share information and solve problems that may hamper our business culture and efficiency. We deal with issues through collaboration and consensus. When we work together we “work safe”.

Here is an equation to ponder on around the economics of trust and speed. If trust goes up, speed will go up and costs will go down. If trust goes down, speed will go down and costs will go up.





Zama with the hand safety device that she designed and built for the draw benches.



Tsipang with the crusher named CROCODILE



**THINK  
SAFETY**  
it couldn't hurt



**Report it**  
for everyone's sake



**SOME TOOLS ARE  
IRREPLACEABLE**

**PROTECT YOUR  
HANDS | SO THEY  
LAST A LIFETIME**

**Share  
ideas  
Start  
something  
good**

## ABAFANA BOMLAYEZO

Founded by Samhelo and two friends while at high school in rural KZN., band leader Samhelo says he has always been a bit of an entertainer and has transformed the band with humble beginnings into what he calls a side hustle. Originally the band was formed to socially influence youth in the area through music not to abuse substances such as alcohol and drugs.

Upon moving to Soweto after high school the project became a way of making a living as well. Samhelo and his band are available for any functions people hold and has released a new album called "Slave". Samhelo and his band are very proud of their accom-

plishments thus far. He says making a difference in people's lives matters and that if they can, mission accomplished!

The formative years were a bit of a struggle but courage, ambition, hard work and a little help from benefactors have led them to being what and where they are today.

Follow them on Facebook to make booking for weddings and any other events.

Samhelo works in our Tubemill Department at Cleveland and is pictured in the middle of the photo.



## INNOVATOR, PROBLEM SOLVER - Meet Lewis Herbst

Lewis heads up our Technical Support team by managing the Toolroom and Maintenance Departments.

Working as a team they have notched up some remarkable achievements this year with their solutions to some very unique problems encountered by the company, ranging from safety devices on the lines to dyes on the UCC to a crushing machine used compound scrap for reuse in our furnaces.

*“Training people has its rewards as it inspires more creativity and innovation”*

Lewis started his career at CTA as an apprentice in January 1982 qualifying as a tool and die maker in 1984. Moving quickly through the ranks due to not only hard work, but because he has a passion for excellence and achievement, he became a supervisor in 1989 and foreman in 1991, Toolroom Manager in 2006 and Technical Support Services Manager in 2020, a role he still holds.

**Creativity is thinking up new things. Innovation is doing new things - Theodore Levitt.**  
**Anything is possible if you have got enough nerve. JK Rowling**

Under Lewis's steerage his team have had a hand in designing and making a CTA sign next to the Toolroom above the noticeboards (also an innovation driven by this team), sprucing up around the yard by revamping the reception area (thank you Zama), designing and installing a ventilation system at the UCC (thank you Louis), developing a hand safety system on the draw benches in Tube Mill, (thanks Zama)

designing and building a crushing machine, named the Crocodile for its ability to compound scrap into neat little parcels for insertion into the UCC, (thank you Tsipang) solving the water pressure problem on the UCC (Thank you Lewis, Louis, Etienne, Keegan, JP & William).

Lewis himself is busy refining some dies he designed for the UCC, Keegan

is busy experimenting with designs to speed up the process on the UCC.

Lewis also had a brief stint managing SW Products until that business unit was sold.

Lewis has been witness to the original Brass and Alloys morphing into a steel company and then the development into a copper tubing manufacturer.

Great to have you on board still Lewis!

## Meet Jonathan Lyons - “jack of all trades”

Jonathan started his career at the company 28 years ago as an operator in the Tubemill; he worked night shift for two years, one year on dayshift before moving into sales where he was trained as a data capturer.

During his tenure here he has been involved in procurement, invoicing and some internal sales.

In his spare time Jonathan is very involved with his church and is also a community activist. Jonathan is a bereavement counsellor and also assists people with life counseling.

Jonathan is married with one child.

As if this is not enough to keep him busy outside of work, Jonathan is also team Manager of the Popcorn Valley Football Club in Reiger Park.

Jonathan has three absolute passions, work, family and helping people. He is very proud as well as satisfied that he is making a difference in the world, and that's what we need—less selfishness and more selflessness!

Well done Jonathan, we are proud of you and the work you do at CTA as well as in your community.



This edition is focusing on people who work at CTA. Two managers, Hassen and Lewis, both featured, have worked for the company for 41 and 40 years respectively. A third, Gary Laing, has 28 years.

Golden Mdlalosi, supervisor in Tubemill, has been with CTA for 29 years  
Lucky Mamba, Foreman in Tubemill has been with CTA for 28 years.

Loyalty and commitments such as these fellows is highly appreciated and to be admired !

“The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing.”

“Just when the caterpillar thought the world was ending, he turned into a butterfly.” —  
*Proverb*

“Successful entrepreneurs are givers and not takers of positive energy.” —*Anonymous*

“Good things come to people who wait, but better things come to those who go out and get them.”  
—*Anonymous*

**“You can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow**

**connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.”** —*Steve Jobs*

## Strategy

What is meant by a strategy?

A strategy describes how the ends (goals) will be achieved by the means (resources). It is important because strategy help us define our business, gives it a set of values, and gives it purpose. It helps us understand what success actually looks like. It provides a roadmap for our business by showing us our destination.

As such, a strategy is just one element of the overall strategic direction that leaders must define for their organizations. A strategy is *not* a mission, which is what the organization's leaders want it to accomplish; missions get elaborated into specific goals and performance metrics.



*“To improve the profitability and quality of the CTA business by balancing volumes versus margin, reduce costs and increase fitting and accessories sales, delivering on time in full while at the same time ensuring a safe and sustainable based working environment.”*



A strategy also is *not* the value network — the web of relationships with suppliers, customers, employees, and investors within which the business co-creates and captures economic value. A strategy is *not* a vision, which is an inspiring portrait of what it

will look and feel like to pursue and achieve the organization's mission and goals. Visioning is part (along with incentives) of what leaders do to motivate people in the organization to engage in above average effort.

At CTA the management team have strategized and produced the middle of the page statement. Aligned to the main expression vision and mission statements plus core values have been developed. These were publicized in our previous issue and are repeated further on in the newsletter, on the next page.

## VISION

**CTA strives to be a world class manufacturer and supplier of copper tube and ancillary products for Africa and specialized world markets**

CTA has adopted these [shared values](#) as a behavioural yardstick in all we do:  
[Integrity and Mutual Respect](#)

We act with integrity and engage with mutual respect

[Performance and quality of work](#)

We prioritize quality and encourage high level performance

[People](#)

We promote teamwork, embrace diversity and are passionate about co-creating a positive workplace

[Sustainable Development](#)

We promote wellness, work safely with passion, commitment and attention to detail, driving change to meet and exceed customer requirements

CTA has also defined its **mission**; this is a description of our culture and how we choose to operate:

Promote a clean, safe & healthy Environment;

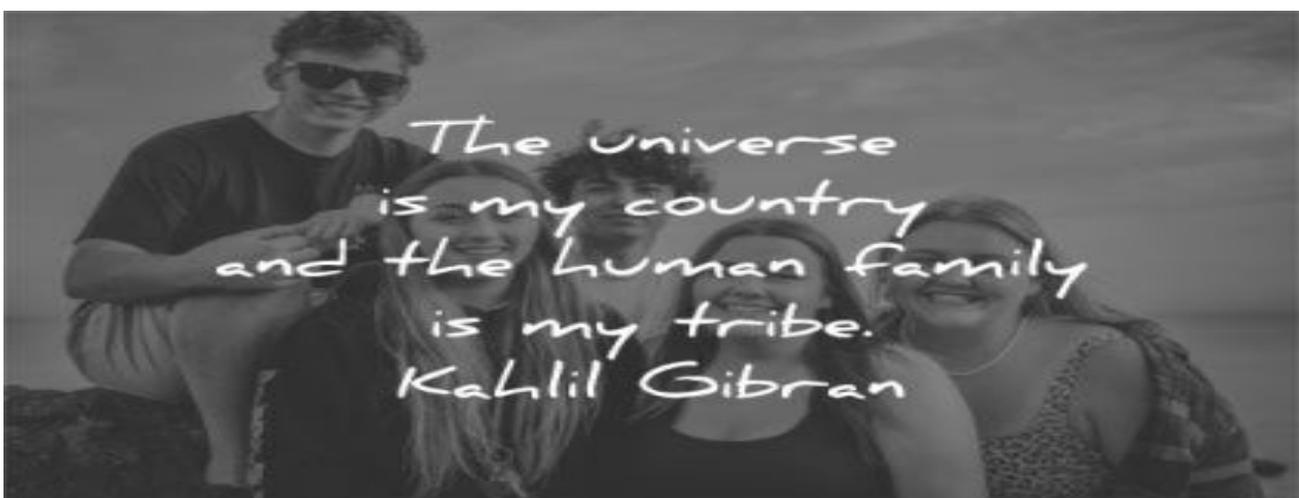
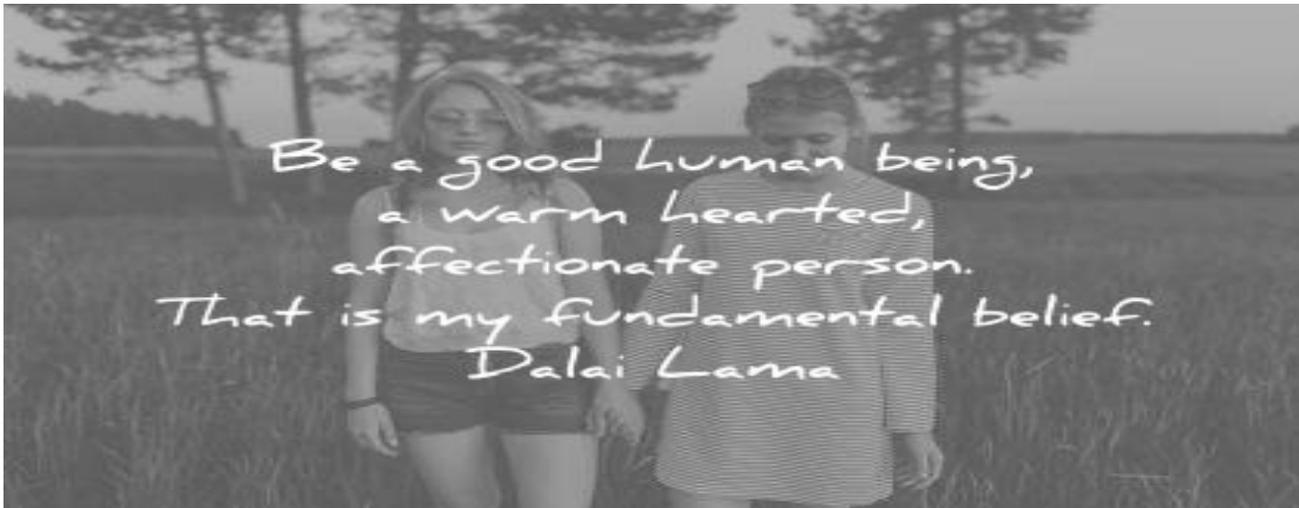
Make people our greatest asset by harnessing their skills and dedication;

Focusing our efforts towards profitable growth;

Continuously improving skills development, operational efficiencies & business processes;

Succeeding in local and regional markets to secure our future;

Ensuring that our work is rewarding and enjoyable



## Gary Craig Laing – The full Circle

My career at Copper Tubing Africa started off a little differently to how most people would start at a new company. I first met Dave Machet while playing in a social soccer team. “Who has a job interview on the soccer field”, Dave asked if I would be interested in working for his company.

I felt that a change would be good and accepted his offer, he explained that my direct superior would be a gentleman named Hassen Goolam. So, on the 5<sup>th</sup> May 1989 my CTA journey began.

I slowly worked my way through the different departments, from internal sales to sale rep, from sales rep to sales manager, at that time there were five managers at CTA. A production manager a casting manager, a maintenance manager, quality control manager and a sales manager.

Each manager was put on standby for a week at a time where you could be called out at any time to attend to a range of different problems, this gave everyone on the management team a really good understanding of how the different departments worked.

As mentioned early I was a keen soccer player, in 2001 I captained the South African Maccabi soccer team at the 16<sup>th</sup> Maccabi Games in Israel, after taking a beating on the soccer field I turned my sporting attention to running and cycling, unfortunately an overdose of exercise was not so good for the body and I managed to fracture my hip and was unable to drive for a number of months.

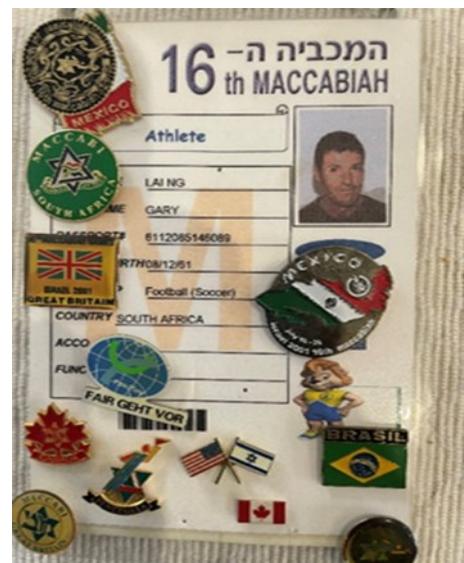
This then moved me in a different direction within the company, I took over the buying from Hassen Goolam who was transferred to Durban to run our new branch. I spent a number of years in the buying department.

In 2006 and I was given the opportunity to join Nando's as a franchisee partner, this was one of the hardest decisions I have had to make. In June 2006 I joined Nando's as the part owner of the Blackheath store. The food industry is a far cry from manufacturing, what I did find was that if you want to achieve something it can be done with the right attitude and training. I spent three hard years of extremely long hours, 7 day working weeks, being held up at gun point, being stabbed by a drunk staff member, I felt I was becoming a little disconnected from my family, so three years later I decided it was time to move on. This had been a huge learning curve for me but I was grateful for the time I had spent at Nando's.

I then joined Busa Plastics they are a plastic injection moulding company, the world is a small place, as it turned out Busa Plastics supplied the end caps for CTA's domestic copper tube, they also supplied all the major fast-food suppliers and airlines with plastic cutlery and glasses. I was now in constant contact with CTA, and was dealing with Jonathan Lyons who had taken over from me as the buyer at CTA.

In May 2012 I got a call from Dave Machet, the short version was that he asked if I would be interested in coming back to CTA as their Operations Manager, at that time the dreaded Load Shedding was in full swing and the owners of Busa Plastics, who are based in Australia were not prepared to install a generator, this made production extremely difficult. Based on this it made my decision to leave Busa Plastics a lot easier.

So, I have come the full circle, from 1989 to 2006 and then from 2012 to 2022, It has been an amazing journey, and I am truly privileged to have been a part of CTA's beginnings and how it's has been brought into the present, it is exciting to see where CTA is headed in the future. I have worked with some amazing people and have learnt a lot from them both past and present.



## My CTA Journey —Hassen Goolam, Branch Manager, Durban

My CTA journey started in 1981 at SW Products, where I was employed by Sarah Machet. I was 18 years-old and just out of school, meeting Mrs Machet by chance and afforded this opportunity. My duties allowed me to learn the overall business of the company. I worked together with the elderly Machet's and sons-in-law, until Dave Machet joined and started CTA. A new venture with interesting developments and new experiences and new ventures. I have witnessed the building structure of CTA from beginning to date.

My work experience in CTA includes working with 3 generations of Machets, father, son and grandson. I assisted with staff hiring and promotions, some of whom are still with CTA today. Many memorable times were made with colleagues and their families at company get togethers.

Working as salesperson for both CTA and SW for 23 years, I was then approached by Mr Dave Machet and his wife Judy with the offer to be the Branch manager at the Durban office.

At the beginning of 2005, along with my family of 6, we relocated. Several challenges faced us on arrival. With a team of 4 staff that included 2 drivers, 1 receptionist and a packer, we rose to each of these challengers.

Another challenge was working on increasing our product range, stock levels and to building onto our existing client list. This was done by increasing our product offering, then ensuring the warehouse could cater for our additional products by arranging a new mezzanine level and further maintaining the premises. We also promoted, rewarded and changed-over staff, having the necessary talents for specific tasks. Most importantly these changes led to an increase in turnover and more clients.

My journey at CTA also includes a change in ownership and management. These changes have led to a continuous growth and improvement. Implementing new computer and telephone systems, as well as monitoring deliveries has improved our services. We continue to focus on property and equipment maintenance as well as client relationships.

The past 2 years have been very difficult on all, especially residents of KZN, with Covid-19, looting, and devastating floods all having a major impact. Competitor pricing, market changes, new players in the market and importing of products by locals have also contributed to challenges faced.

New plans are in place for our branch for the coming year, implementing them correctly will result in new clients and an increase in turnover.

This month, December 2022, I will have spent 41 years at CTA/SW Products, I have grown together with my family and the CTA family, all while increasing my knowledge of the products and the business.

May we see the new year with good health and good news and good opportunities.

Keep safe and rest well.

Hassen Goolam



GLARING PERSONAL DIFFERENCES