



# ART / KRT Newsletter



In this issue - AGM news, New staff appointments, the Neil White Bursary, Kuruman office asbestos scare, Ex-Mineworkers Union; read on...

## Annual General Meetings of the Trusts

The KRT and ART Annual General Meetings were held back-to-back at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg on 21 August 2007. It was the KRT's 1<sup>st</sup> and the ART's 4<sup>th</sup>. Brian Gibson (Chair of the KRT Trustees) delivered the KRT report, which was well received. The percentage of compensable claims was 48% - a lot higher than the ART. The explanation for this is that there were some 400 claims with dual ART/KRT qualifying service that had already been adjudicated when the KRT began, and so were compensated immediately. The KRT report can be found on the KRT half of the website. The audited financial statements will be loaded soon.

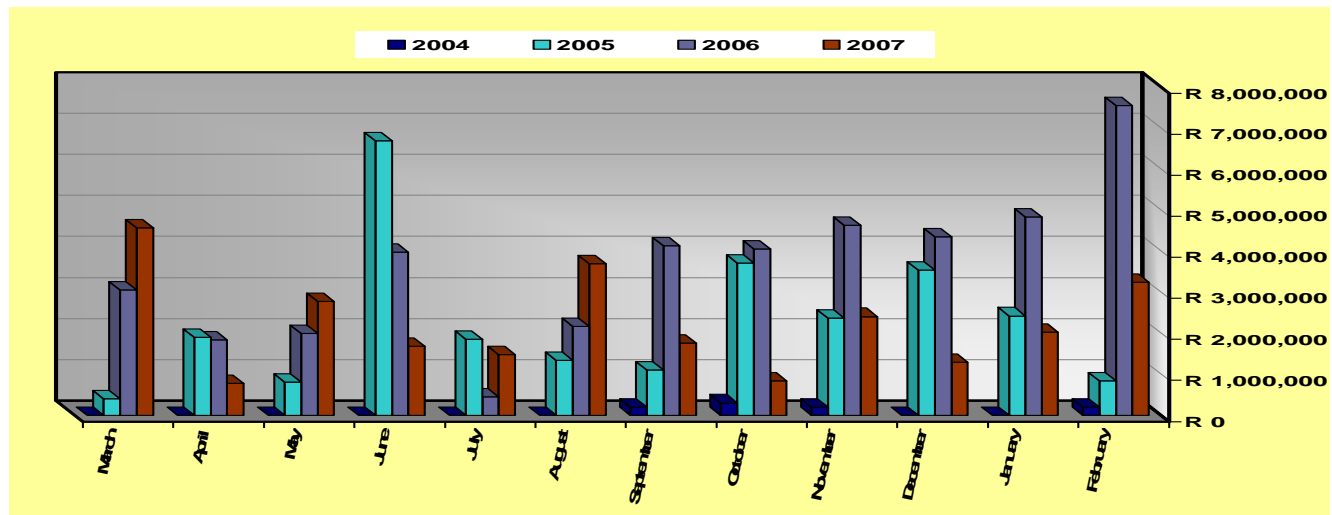
In the ART AGM, Trustees' Chair Phiroshaw Camay gave a short introduction, followed by staff reports from the Kuruman, Cape Town and Johannesburg offices, who spoke about how the Trust went about its day-to-day business. The full AGM reports and the audited financials are loaded on the ART half of [www.asbestostrust.co.za](http://www.asbestostrust.co.za) under News.

The second Neil White Bursary for doctors to study for a Diploma in Occupational Health at Wits in 2008/9 is currently being advertised on [www.asbestostrust.co.za](http://www.asbestostrust.co.za). Please apply by 15 October 2007



AGM faces: Dr Osei-Fofie, Faieza, Phemelo; Phiroshaw Camay, Feirouz; Sharlene, Tshidi, Mr Boniface Karanja; Lynette

The graph below shows by month the amounts paid out by ART since its inception. The highest amount paid was R7.5M to 113 claimants in Feb 2006. The 3<sup>rd</sup> highest total of payments made in a month was achieved in August this year, when ART paid 122 claimants R5.3M in all. Brian Gibson reported that the KRT had total payable claims of an estimated R19M in compensation, while Lynette Byrne reported that the ART's cumulative total was R108M, with R10M pending.



### Staff News

**Johannesburg:** Tshidi has sadly left our service for a large multinational, where she will brighten their lives as well. We wish her all the best and a great future. The previously outsourced finances will now be moved in-house with the appointment of Jane Gama (Financial Manager) and Precious Nkabinde (Junior Bookkeeper) – welcome to you both! Our claims administration team is now Sharlene, Amanda and Baso.

**Kuruman:** The office has been closed for approximately six weeks due to testing that showed high levels of fibres. This investigation followed the legitimate concern by staff that they might be exposed to asbestos fibres from the work-record files that had previously been housed at the mines. Re-testing included scanning electron microscopy and x-ray spectroscopy, and these proved that the fibres were not asbestos. The level of asbestos in the office environment was found to be similar to that of the surrounding baseline levels. The office is now open and fully functional. We would like to thank the Kuruman staff for bearing up under such difficult circumstances

**Msauli:** Congratulations to Walter whose daughter is getting married on 15 Sept 2007.

### Environmental mesothelioma

A recent journal article "Modeling Mesothelioma Risk Associated with Environmental Asbestos Exposure" describes the risk of mesothelioma for non-occupationally exposed residents of a town in Northern Italy, Casale Monferrato, which used to operate an asbestos cement factory. The risk of mesothelioma was very high for those within a 5km radius of the factory, and significantly high for those within 11km. It was published in July 2007 in *Environmental Health Perspectives*, with MM Maule as first author. This study provides more strong evidence that asbestos pollution from an industrial source greatly increases mesothelioma risk.

The South African born Dr Molly Newhouse, a pioneer in researching environmental mesothelioma, studied women who washed their husbands' overalls. She also showed that while smoking and asbestos exposure had a multiplicative effect on the incidence of lung cancer, there was no such effect of smoking on mesothelioma.

Both ART and KRT compensate environmental mesotheliomas.

### IMPORTANT MEETINGS

- ART subcommittees on 18 Sept
- MBOD, CCOD and ART on 26 Sept – this meeting will explore synergies between Government and Trusts working together.



**Epidemiology: A Research Manual for South Africa, 2nd edition. Oxford.** This compact book was co-edited by Professor Rodney Ehrlich - senior member of the Specialist Occupational Medical Panel employed by the Trusts. Using local case studies, the book describes the importance of epidemiology in public health in South Africa, and guides the aspirant researcher from conception to completion, using modern epidemiological concepts and methods. Covering quantitative and qualitative research methods, users are enabled to evaluate data critically and to report their findings lucidly and accurately. The chapter on occupational epidemiology discusses the landmark South African study of Wagner, Marchand and Sleggs, the first to link asbestos and mesothelioma. The ART Medical Office has ordered a copy for their growing resource library run by Mr Thandikhaya Mgoqi. **Professor Ehrlich delivers his inaugural address entitled "The body as history: on looking at the lungs of miners" on 26 September at the medical campus of the University of Cape Town.**

Members of the Ex-Mineworkers Union from Khayelitsha have asked the medical office to address them on the work of the ART and KRT. This welcome contact will provide another platform to launch the Trusts' outreach programmes for migrant claimants who had moved away after previously having worked at asbestos mining towns.

**We would like to wish all our Muslim staff, service providers, clients, readers and their families a soulful Ramadaan Mubarak, which starts with the New Moon in mid-September. At the same time we wish our Jewish community a blessed Rosh Hashanah for the year 5768.**

"There is hunger for ordinary bread, and there is hunger for love, for kindness, for thoughtfulness, and this is the great poverty that makes people suffer so much" --Mother Teresa of Calcutta/Kolkata, who died 10 years ago, on 5 September 1997.