

Holgate off to 'string the pearls'

Guy Rogers

ENVIRONMENT & TOURISM EDITOR

EXPLORER Kingsley Holgate set out from Durban yesterday on his new Boundless Southern Africa expedition aimed at "stringing together the pearls" – the region's seven trans-frontier parks – and raising awareness about the potential of sustainable tourism.

He was seen off by a tumultuous crowd which included Indaba delegates, Zulu dancers, political dignitaries and Miss South Africa Tatum Keshwar as well as a cavalcade of Land Rovers and a team of mountain-bikers

which will be accompanying him on the first leg of his journey to Lesotho and then through the Maloti-Drakensberg Trans-frontier Conservation Area, which South Africa and Lesotho share.

Together with a "scroll of peace and goodwill" and 48 litres of his favourite Captain Morgan rum stowed with the spare parts in one of the Land Rovers, he will be carrying thousands of mosquito nets, spectacles, portable libraries and "life straws" – portable water purifiers – to distribute to disadvantaged deep rural communities.

A satellite team will be tra-

velling ahead and upgrading existing soccer fields and building new ones in communities on the edge of the park, as well as distributing balls to raise awareness about the 2010 World Cup.

Travelling initially in a Land Rover, he will switch to a pony or walk or paddle on rivers depending on the terrain he encounters. From Maloti, he will travel to Lubombo Trans-frontier Conservation Area, Great Limpopo Trans-Frontier Area, Zimbabwe (Limpopo-Shashe), Zambia and Angola (Kavango-Zambezi) and lastly Namibia and Botswana (Kgalagadi and /Ai-/Ais-Richtersveld).

