

Editorial : June 2007

Members will all have seen the array of tributes and press articles concerning the murder of David Rattray. The most relevant press articles from both the UK and South Africa are displayed on the Society web site at anglozuluwar.com

Having just returned from a visit to Fugitives' Drift Lodge and the battlefields I can reassure members who are thinking of visiting the battlefields that they will be treated most kindly and safely by the Zulu people – who were as shocked as anyone at David's appalling death. Many claim it was a 'botched robbery' but the truth will hopefully come out one day. The story of Thomas á Becket springs to mind. Meanwhile, make your plans and visit the battlefields. With regard to the recent Society battlefield tour, it was a huge success and I propose to run the same trip again next year. Provisional details are on the Society web site.

David's memorial service took place at Southwark Cathedral on the 29th May and the cathedral was packed with his friends. Members will know that HRH The Prince of Wales attended along with a long list of notables. Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Traditional Prime Minister of the Zulu People, made the journey specially to be there, and his funeral address is reproduced within the Journal. The Royal Welsh Regiment was proudly in attendance and added colour to the occasion. Also in attendance was the Deputy Lieutenant of Warwickshire, Lt. Col. George West CVO DL. All too often the history of the 2nd Warwickshire Regiment is lost behind the Welsh dragon and Col. West's presence was a timely reminder that we should not forget who actually fought at Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift.

Members will remember that David Payne and I recently discovered the previously unseen diaries and possessions of Colonel Harford CB. He was better known as 'the beetle collector'. The nine diaries are now in the process of being transcribed and we are discovering highly significant new material, which answers some interesting questions. It is hoped that the book will be available for this coming Christmas.

The Society's Rorke's Drift Zulu village is thriving under Emmanuel's stewardship and is now providing a wonderful opportunity for tourists to experience traditional Zulu culture as well as providing employment for more than a dozen local people. I am still actively collecting donations, so, if you have not yet contributed, now is the time to assist this worthwhile project to bring meaningful work opportunities to this isolated community. Subscriptions for the huts have now closed but I still urgently need funds for the other various aspects of the project including the provision of European style 'facilities'. Donors are welcome to receive a copy of the village accounts, currently being prepared.

Many of you will remember the lecture given by Mark Maplesden at the Society exhibition at Woolwich last August. Mark has kindly agreed to assist with the running of the Society and a section of his recently completed research into the adequacy of British military tactics is published within this journal.

Meanwhile, thank you all for your on-going support, especially for the Zulu village at Rorke's Drift.

Dr Adrian Greaves