

Editorial to Journal 27.

The past three months have been very busy. The 2010 Society exhibition was held at Tenterden Museum in Kent from the 26th March through to the 12th April, which included the Easter Bank Holiday period. The event was launched before a packed audience with an opening address by Ian Knight and during the period over 800 visitors attended the event, including a number from abroad – and a registered battlefield guide from Dundee (near Rorke's Drift) who was on holiday in London and saw an advertisement for the exhibition.

Over 200 items from the Anglo Zulu War were on display and most had not previously been seen by the public; they included items taken from King Cetshwayo by Lt. Harford when he escorted the king into exile to Capetown. Other items displayed included part of the David Smith collection along with medals, weapons from both sides, and artefacts from the battlefields.

Once the exhibition was closed, I was accompanied by Society accountant Dr David Payne on a visit to the David Rattray Lodge at Fugitives' Drift, just five miles from Rorke's Drift. The purpose of the visit was to monitor progress at the Zulu Village built by the Society and to present the annual Prince Buthelezi awards for service to the Zulu people. This year the awards were presented mainly to Zulu dignitaries from the Rorke's Drift community and to Stephen Coan, the deputy editor of the *Natal Witness* newspaper. The event is dealt with elsewhere in this Journal.

The Zulu Village at Rorke's Drift is positively thriving. We now employ four regular staff and any number of senior pupils from the local school for evening and weekend displays. On our arrival we found a bus full of visitors having the role of the village explained and there were visitors present throughout our stay. The village is also hosting a national cycle race this month by providing B&B and camping accommodation for fifty cyclists and their back-up teams. The plumbing and toilet facilities will be adequate but further work will commence shortly to improve the situation. Since my last visit a traditionally thatched open air lecture theatre has been built. All in all, the village is a great success and a credit to those Society members who generously contributed to its construction.

Another object of my visit was to verify further information that has now come to the Society relating to the presence of August Hammar, mistaken by most authors for Otto Witt, at Rorke's Drift at the time of the battle. We have positively confirmed the location from which Hammar witnessed both the attack at Isandlwana and then Rorke's Drift. The location gives a clear view of both and explains why he was able to depart the scene unnoticed by the advancing Zulus – this will be detailed in the next Journal.

Finally, most members will know that following a South African government decree three years ago, only registered South African battlefield guides may take visitors to the battlefields of Zululand. This has seriously affected my activities and that of other notable guest speakers such as Ian Knight. We have always accepted the legislation but I am delighted to report that following representations to government officials, both Ian and I have been granted official exemption from the restrictions.

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