

ISANDLWANA

LODGE

Newsletter

JUNE 2009

MESSAGE FROM OWNERS & STAFF

The days fly by at Isandlwana because we have been reasonably busy. But, never too busy to enjoy the wonderful people who come to stay with us or the magnificent view of the Isandlwana Battlefield and Plain. Our guests talk about how architecturally appealing the Lodge is and always comment on the attention to detail, the friendliness of the staff and their good service. They rave the most about the view from their private

bedroom balcony and every vantage point in the lodge.

The heart-warming part of this story is that so many our guests are repeat visitors. We just had Gordon Leatherdale from the UK back for his 4th visit and Ron and Renee' Mills from the US by way of Lesotho, for his 12th and her 10th stay with us. Ron has brought his business associates here for planning sessions on a couple of occasions, one being just recently. This says we must be doing something right, but we won't rest on our laurels.

Our goal is to provide a warm, friendly atmosphere with unobtrusive service to all who cross our threshold. We want to know guests are leaving this magical place having had a great experience and many happy memories.

We are pleased to share the latest "happenings" at the Lodge through this newsletter.

With much appreciation from Pat, Maggie, Rob, Andre and all the staff.

ISANDLWANA WREATH LAYING CEREMONIES – 22 JANUARY 2009

Isandlwana Lodge guests, led by resident historian, Rob Gerrard, had a brief Ceremony of Remembrance on the Battlefields of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift on the 22nd of January 2009, the 130th anniversary of the first two major battles of the Anglo Zulu War. At each monument, a guest of the Lodge spoke about his emotions as a result of the occasion and what his participation in the ceremony meant to him.

Wreaths were laid at monuments on each battlefield with the following ribbons affixed to them:

WE FEW, WE HAPPY FEW
WE BAND OF BROTHERS;
FOR HE TODAY THAT SHEDS HIS
BLOOD
WITH ME THALL BE MY BROTHER

Presented by guests staying at Isandlwana Lodge for all those who died at Rorke's Drift 22/23 January 1879

THE COLOURS
YOU CANNOT CHOOSE THE
BATTLEFIELD
GOD DOES THAT FOR YOU;
BUT YOU CAN PLANT A
STANDARD
WHERE A STANDARD NEVER
FLEW.

Presented by the Owners,
Management and Staff in Honour of
ALL those who died at Rorke's Drift
22/23 January 1879

ONLY THE DEAD HAVE SEEN THE
END OF WAR.

Presented by Rob Gerrard, FRGS,
in honour of ALL those who died at
Isandlwana on the
22 January 1879.



Lodge Guests at the Wreath Laying Ceremony at Rorke's Drift

ISANDLWANA LODGE HONOURS DESCENDANTS OF VICTORIA CROSS RECIPIENTS

Isandlwana Lodge was pleased to host a luncheon for descendants of three British soldiers who were awarded Victoria Crosses for their heroic deeds in the Battle of Rorke's Drift, the second major battle of the Anglo Zulu War in January 1879.

The luncheon was held on the 22nd of January, the 130th anniversary of the battle, and was attended by family members and friends of Colonel John Chard, Corporal John Williams (Fielding) and Private Frederick Hitch.

Also in attendance was foremost authority on the Anglo Zulu War who has written some 30 books on the subject, Ian Knight, from the UK. His great uncle, Sargeant Thomas Cooper of the 1st 24th, was killed at Isandlwana. Dalton Ngobese, a Lodge staff member, was also present. His great, great grandfather was Sihayo who was a major player in the Zulu War.

The descendants' trip was organized by Campaign Trails, a Durban based tour operator headed by Nicki von der Hyde. The company was represented at the luncheon by Charles Aikenhead and Jennifer Russell.



The decedents on the Isandlwana Lodge balcony

ROB GERRARD INVITED TO JOIN GUILD OF BATTLEFIELD GUIDES

Rob Gerrard, FRGS, author and resident historian at Isandlwana Lodge recently joined The Guild of Battlefield Guides, a distinguished organization now in at least eight (8) countries whose purpose is to analyze, develop and raise the understanding and practice of battlefield guiding, provide an environment to meet fellow Guides and share information, expertise and knowledge on a wide range of issues.

The Guild was formed in 2003 and has grown, both in members and stature, since that time.

ROB GERRARD LECTURE TOUR IN THE UK

Rob will once again be giving a series of lectures from 23rd to 25th July 09 in the UK.

Locations are in the areas of Hunderford, Berkshire; Christchurch, Hampshire; and Sturminster Newton, Dorset.

If you would like information on his talks, please contact Ged Argyle on +44 (0) 125 881 8114, gwargyle@hotmail.com, visit www.angloafricanvoices.com or write to info@isandlwana.co.za.

TONY AND HEATHER GATES RETURN TO ISANDLWANA LODGE

We were pleased to have former guests Tony and Heather Gates from Casa Del Sol, Spain for a six night stay in February, their second visit to the lodge.

While on their first visit, Tony and Heather adopted two young boys in the village and have paid school fees and sent gifts to them over the last two years.

On this trip, they had a happy reunion with their two "adopted" sons and were pleased to see how well they are doing in school as evidenced by their report cards. Their gifts this time were shirts from various sports teams in Casa del Sol and soccer balls, both favorites with the young people in the village. The Gates also brought along an extra suitcase of stylish clothes for the young people and adults in the village which was a big hit!

The Gates have been collecting donations from customers of their business back in Spain and were pleased to donate nearly R20,000 for refurbishing a computer room at the Isandlwana Primary School. Through other donations from Lodge guests, the school has six (6) computers with which to start training students as soon as the room has been prepared.

CHALLENGE AT ISANDLWANA

Lodge guests have been so generous over the years and many children have had school clothes and fees as a result of their interest in extending a "hands up" to children here.

Two couples from the UK, Ian and Margaret Duncan and Alison and Richard Hilken, organized a Charity Ball late in 2007 that raised enough money to fund a Food Parcel Programme for nearly 100 orphaned children in the village for one year. That fund is almost finished and the challenge is where do we get additional funds to keep the Food Programme going?

An amazing thing happened a few days ago. Jo and Mike Drake from the UK offered to make a generous

Just prior to going to press with this newsletter, Mr. Gates called to say his customers would like to start a fund to take care of one year of varsity for a deserving student from this village. What a great thing to do. There are scholarships or grants for students beginning in the second year of their higher education, but nothing available to help with the first year's cost.



The Gate's with their two adopted children



Elizabeth Dlamini the Wild Foundation Coordinator in the village and Heather Gates



yearly contribution to the Food Parcel Programme which will cover at least one delivery each year.

The Lodge has always been careful not to put pressure on any guests for contributions, but this need is so great, you'll have to forgive us for bringing attention to it.

When the children come to the Food

Parcel Delivery point with their caregivers, you can see the excitement on their faces. It is a joy to be a part of this programme which helps children who have lost both parents to Aids. Sadly, some of them are victims themselves.

The fund is administered by The Wild Foundation, a US based conservation and sustainable development group. They allow our guests to deposit money into their account because we are not set up to take contributions. Donations to their account are tax deductible and may also be made through Wilderness Foundation UK, with whom Wild is closely aligned.

The Foundation employs a competent local person who co-ordinates their work in the Village on community gardens, craft making, chicken farming, and other projects, including the Food Parcel Programme.

Should you be interested in helping this cause, please write to pat@isandlwana.co.za who will send you full information and banking details.

SILK ZULU WAR MAP

Rob Gerrard was pleased to have been given a copy of a Silk Zulu War Map by John Marwick on his recent visit to Isandlwana Lodge. Mr. Marwick is the great-grandson of Assistant Commissary EE Marwick – later Colonel EE Marwick, CB, CBE-RAAOC, who was given the map on his arrival in Natal (via Durban) in June of 1879.



Rob Gerrard being presented the Silk map by John Marwick.

CHRISTMAS TRADITION AT ISANDLWANA LODGE

Since Christmas 2000, Isandlwana Lodge staff and guests have executed a “candy run” in the village. It is actually not a run, but a drive because of the large community and distance between homesteads. Bags of sweets are given to the children and one guest this past Christmas said, “Now this is what Christmas is all about... making the children happy.” It is a joy to see the million dollar smiles of the children and hear their shouts of glee when the vehicle approaches them.

The children are very clever. If they are close to another homestead, they run behind the houses and show up

at the next one as though they were there for the first time. After several incidents like this, one little girl was bumped by another child and several bags of sweets fell on the ground. The expression on her face was priceless. In her defense, she had several younger siblings who were not there and we assume she wanted the extras for them.



Lodge Guests & Staff handing out bag of sweets on Christmas day to the local children.

EARTH HOUR AT ISANDLWANA LODGE

On the 28th of March, 2009, Isandlwana Lodge, the Holts Military History group, and guests Janet and Mark May joined World Wild Fund South Africa and people across the world in the fight against climate change.

From 8:30 to 9:30 the lights went out with the exception of a few emergency lights and candles. The Candlelit dinner seemed to make the occasion special for our guests who were pleased to be participating with approximately One Billion others in support of the biggest threat facing humanity at the start of the 21st century. It was the single most

powerful demonstration of Global Solidarity on any matter in the history of the Planet.

Governments will meet in Copenhagen in December to debate, and hopefully agree on, measures to slow down and reverse climate change. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) along with other environmental organizations wants to influence the course and outcome of this meeting.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu was Patron of Earth Hour and to show South Africa's support for Earth Hour, the lights illuminating Table Mountain were switched off from 8:30 to 9:30 PM.



Do stay in touch with us and please don't hesitate to let us know if we can do anything for you. There seems to be a “fraternity” of former guests who have experienced the energy of this place and we are glad that our lodge family is growing steadily.

ISANDLWANA LODGE
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