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Cover Picture

THE ORDINARY FACES OF WAR. Fortunate survivors. British soldiers, captured at Spion Kop, under guard in a cattle truck.

(Photograph from the collection of the Natal Museum.)
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EDITORIAL</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED PIECE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Moore writes of war</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sylvia Vietzen</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REPRINT</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Battle of Talana Hill, as described in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campaign journal of Lt. R. Ernest Reade, DSO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘It was the best of times, it was the worst of times’:</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natal and the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bill Guest</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A glimpse into Bushman presence in the Anglo-Boer War</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>F.E. Prins</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maritzburg during the siege of Natal, as reflected in</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Natal Witness</em> October 1899 to March 1900*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>W.H. Bizley</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBITUARIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daphne Child</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Johan Colenbrander</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Jeffrey Horton</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Donald Hunter OBE</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Kerchoff</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lorraine Kettley</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonakele Ntshalintshali</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Patrick Smythe</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. Jack Vincent MBE</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubert von Klemperer</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES AND QUERIES</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOK REVIEWS</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SELECT LIST OF RECENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KWAZULU-NATAL PUBLICATIONS</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Editorial

Natalia 29 is an Anglo-Boer War commemoration edition, with all five of its substantial articles related in some way to that conflict, and its book reviews reflecting at least some of the many publications marking the centenary.

When battlefield tours are the growth industry of the moment, it is easy to look no further than the Boer invasion of Northern Natal and the famous engagements that ensued. To balance that tendency Professor Bill Guest provides an authoritative account of the overall impact of the war on the Colony of Natal, whose economy did not reap lasting benefits from the temporary urgencies of wartime demand and supply.

In our Reprint section we reproduce an extract from the campaign journal of Lt. R. Ernest Reade DSO who, hardly out of his teens, experienced the Battle of Talana and the retreat to Ladysmith, survived the prolonged siege of that town but died in action in the Transvaal in the later stages of the war. Dr Sylvia Vietzen provides commentary and notes on a previously unpublished letter of the Pietermaritzburg teacher and headmistress Mary Moore. Moore's spontaneous responses to the unfolding events of 1899 (including the Battle of Talana) show how fierce patriotism and ‘instant’ unconfirmed information in wartime can influence the attitudes and utterances of ordinary civilians.

A description of how some of the last Bushmen families from the Natal Drakensberg became involved in the Anglo-Boer War is the subject of Frans Prins’s article. It is based on field work he has done among descendents of those Bushmen, most of whom are now employed as farm workers in the Ermelo district.

Bill Bizley’s selections from and comments on The Natal Witness columns during the first six months of the war provide an interesting and often amusing account of life in the colony’s capital under the threat of invasion.

*****

The year 2000 will see a new editor of Natalia. Mr Moray Comrie, a long-serving member of the editorial committee, has agreed to take over from the present editor, who about a year ago indicated that he wished to lay down the office. Mr Comrie’s willingness to do this is much appreciated by the editorial committee, which will remain unchanged next year, and by the Council of the Natal Society, in whose name Natalia is published.

J.M. DEANE

Frontispiece: THE CATTLE GUARD. One of the drawings of Capt. C.M. Dixon, 16th Lancers, contained in the album The Leaguer of Ladysmith, Nov. 2nd 1899 – Feb. 28th 1900. (Eyre & Spottiswoode. London. 1900.) The caption to this picture reads: ‘Our slaughter cattle and treck [sic] oxen (before they were all eaten) were sent out to graze just outside our defences, under small escorts, whose duty was to prevent the Boers from rounding them up and driving them off. These escorts were usually found by the Natal Volunteers or Imperial Light Horse.’ (Picture reproduced from the book in the special collections of The Natal Society Library.)
Select List of Recent KwaZulu-Natal Publications


Select List of Recent KwaZulu-Natal Publications

GUY, Rob (ed). *The naming of Hodgson's Peaks and Underberg District's Beginnings*. Underberg: The Underberg Farmers’ Association, 1999
ISBN 0-620-24586-7


ISBN 1-86840-314-9

ISBN 0-620-24257-4

ISBN 0-7541-0039-1 (A novel about schooldays at Michaelhouse)

ISBN 0-620-22978-0

JONES, A.W. *Born to be a queen: Queensburgh*. Durban: the Author, 1998

KAIGHIN, Brian. *A diary of the siege of Ladysmith*. Ladysmith: Royal Hotel, 1999

ISBN 1-85409-390-8

ISBN 1-85409-389-4


MACDONALD, Donald. *How we kept the flag flying: the story of the Siege of Ladysmith*. Roodepoort: Covos Books, 1999

ISBN 1-919789-11-1


NGCOBO, Lauretta. *And they didn’t die*: Afterword by M.J. Daymond.
Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1999
282 pp. Originally published in 1990. R89.00

ISBN 1-86840-315-7
PRETORIUS, Fransjohan, and Torlage, Gilbert (eds.). *The Hall Handbook of the Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902 by Major Darrell Hall*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1999. ISBN 0-8698-04931 *(This is a posthumous publication. See Natalia 26 p. 84 for the obituary of Major Hall, Editor.)*


Notes on Contributors

BRENDAN BELL is the director of the Tatham Gallery, Pietermaritzburg.
DR BILL BIZLEY is a senior lecturer in the Department of English in the University of Natal.
DAVID BUCKLEY is the special collections librarian at the Natal Society Library.
MORAY COMRIE is vice-rector of a college of education.
JOHN DEANE is a retired teacher, college principal and education department official.
CHRIS ELLIS is a medical practitioner.
DR COLIN GARDNER is former professor of English in the University of Natal, and a member of the Pietermaritzburg-Msunduzi Transitional Local Council.
DR BILL GUEST is professor in the department of Historical Studies in the University of Natal.
SHELIA HENDERSON is a historian, and chairwoman of the board of trustees of the Talana Museum in Dundee, and of the advisory board of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Museum Service.
TONY HESP is an industrialist and businessman.
JEWEL KOOPMAN is the manuscript librarian at the Alan Paton Centre, University of Natal.
DR MIKE PERRIN is professor of zoology in the University of Natal.
FRANS PRINS is head of the Department of Historical Anthropology at the Natal Museum.
SUSAN SMYTHE is a specialist remedial teacher.
SHELAGH SPENCER is a researcher and author in the field of Natal settler biography.
MIKE TAYLOR is a cultural officer in charge of compliance matters in the heritage body Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali.
DR SYLVIA VIETZEN is a historian, and a retired teacher and school principal.
DR JOHN VINCENT is head of the KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Museum Service.
SHONA WALLIS recently retired as director of the Natal Society Library.
DEBORAH WHELAN is an architect and works as a cultural officer in the heritage body Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali.