

Reports covering the period March 2010 to June 2011

EVENING LECTURES

The big picture: Population size, culture change and the archaeology of the last 100 000 years in southern Africa (18 March 2010)

Professor Judith Sealey, Head of the Department of Archaeology, University of Cape Town

From the different ways of looking at the archaeology of the past 100 000 years, Professor Judith Sealy focused on only two, namely relative population size and culture change. Changes in population size relate to changes in stone tool assemblages and this introduced a range of topics, such as populations associated with the movement out of Africa between 100 000 and 50 000 years ago and their replacement of other populations. What drove this population expansion? Were the drivers advantages of a biological or cultural nature?

During the Middle Stone Age (MSA), tools were made in a conservative way, but within that period one also recognised change, for example at Stillbay where bifacial spear points were finely trimmed and symmetrical, and where other elegant tools were also made. At Stillbay one also found standardised large points dating to 72 000 to 70 000 BP. Backed and trapezoidal tools that were trimmed along the blunted end occur at Howiesons Poort (65 000 to 60 000 BP). These were hafted. At this time there was thus a degree of innovation, Judith said, that is only known from Africa and occurs only much later in other parts of the world. This could also point to symbolic communication, as did the increase in decorated pieces from sites such as Diepkloof and Blombos, as well as the shell beads from Sibudu. Why did we see these changes and what drove the changes from Stillbay to Howiesons Poort? It was difficult to give solid reasons for the changes, but one could consider factors such as climate and environmental changes.

Could the Last Interglacial Period have contributed to the changes? In recent years archaeologists had gained more evidence, but it had become clear that climate change was not the whole explanation. It was possible that style changes reflected the social signalling that functioned in the context of a particular community. These might have been extended beyond the group and may ultimately have resulted in changes in the organisation of communities over large areas. Sealy referred to Dr Richard Klein, who argued that population densities in the MSA were very low. He had based this assumption on the sizes of limpets and tortoises. The sizes of Late Stone Age (LSA) limpets were smaller, perhaps because they were harvested more intensively, resulting in an average size reduction. He linked this with an argument that during the MSA there was not only less harvesting, but also less effective harvesting of resources. Fishing was also not common in the MSA, although during the LSA a large range of fish was eaten, as were birds. Dangerous animals were not hunted. Klein argues that MSA people were less effective at extracting resources from the environment as they did not have the cognitive ability.

According to Sealy, entirely new evidence for population expansion in the MSA has come from genetic research, with researchers having looked at different haplotypes (genetic DNA variants) in various peoples. While five different haplotypes occur in Africa, only the L3 haplotype was carried by the early human population group that left Africa. This expanding population group was able to grow in size and extend out of Africa.

Another theme of current interest concerned ideas about evolution, taken from biology and applied in an archaeological context. It had to do with the way people learn skills from their parents and it is argued that young people learn skills from the elders and will seek out older skilled people. But copying also depended on the ability of the observer to understand the underlying principles of learning a particular skill. Some gifted learners did better than their teachers and they were better able to pass on learnt skills to others. The larger the population the more effectively a skill would spread. Thus innovations had wider applicability within larger populations, or in locations where different groups met. The question had been raised whether the beginning of Stillbay and Howiesons Poort cultures could be associated with a re-expansion of population size after the occurrence of a population crash. Since the appropriate information from this period was not available, researchers looked at a later period that showed some parallels with the Howiesons Poort situation. Such as, for example, that which occurred in the Wilton period from 8 000 to 4 000 years ago where one found segments that look like Howiesons Poort but are much smaller. These tools were quite idiosyncratic, but became widespread after 4 000 years ago. The small arrows would have been used with poison and a light bow, and were probably exchanged between population groups. Many Wilton sites were well dated and illustrated narrow stratigraphic changes in time. Some of the best Wilton sites were found in the southern Cape, for example at Nelson Bay.

An important transition had occurred from Wilton to post-Wilton about 3 000 years ago. This had been illustrated at Hoffman's Cave, where a 1,6 m high shell midden occurs. This site, which was currently being excavated by Sealy, was dated from 4 000 and 3 000 years ago and had revealed aspects of population densification. At the huge shell midden at Matjies River, the initial stages belonged to pre-Wilton, dated to between 11 000 and 5 000 years ago. This was followed by a thin layer of Wilton and a thick layer of post-Wilton. Yet Elands Bay had no Wilton from the period 8 000 to 4 000 years ago.



A publication of the Trans-Vaal Branch South African Archaeological Society PO Box 41050 Craighall 2024 Editor: Reinoud Boers Production: Marion Boers Population size during the Wilton period seemed to have been lower than in pre-Wilton and post-Wilton times (as confirmed by Prof. Lynn Wadley). In post-Wilton times there were indications of population expansion into the middle of the country. Few dates presented the period between 8 000 and 4 000 years ago, but the previously depopulated areas were re-colonised thereafter. Post-Wilton was very irregular and at Hoffman's Cave it started 1 500 years earlier than at Nelson Bay. From her excavations at Cave James in the Magaliesberg Valley, Lynn Wadley concluded that there were indications of symbolic behaviour, in addition to the manufacture of standardised artefacts. It would be interesting to see if the end of Howiesons Poort could also be associated with the same dynamic, Sealy said. If population densities were also low at Howiesons Poort, even if a higher intensity of networking could be established, this would not be the kind of indicator that would be able to be used to underpin expansion out of Africa.

Sealy concluded that while the integration of archaeology, genetics and ideas about cultural evolution was not yet within our grasp, these new approaches did help archaeologists to formulate new questions. What was required in archaeological research was a change of style and focus, and new and improved research and dating techniques to reach the promise of greater clarity.

Report by Anna Batchelor-Steyn

Discovery of an LSA stone-built hunting/ambush site in Midrand (7 April 2011)

Professor Revil Mason, Head of the Archaeological Research Unit of Wits University from 1962 to 1989, and a Honorary Life Member of ArchSoc

Professor Rev Mason had always been intrigued by the question, 'How did Johannesburg start?' He got part of the answer in 1996 by excavating five cave or shelter sites and two 'open' sites in the Magalies-Klipriviersberg area occupied by progressive Late Stone Age (LSA) people from circa 20 000 years ago. Two shelters and one 'open' site are in the Midrand area.

The 'open' ambush site on the Mia Farm was situated in the open field near the Allandale Road/N1 interchange in Midrand. The site was shown to Mason by Dirk Bouwer who found a mass of stone flakes on top of a buried dyke. Carl Anhauser, an authority on types of dykes, confirmed that the dyke was man-made. Rev thinks that the people who made the ambush site lived at the Boulders Shelter, which now forms part of Boulders Shopping Centre in the Midrand CBD. This was occupied by five or six people. They could also have been based at the Glenferness Shelter opposite Lone Hill, which was occupied by three or four people.

About 10 000 to 15 000 years ago, LSA people probably walked from one of these sites to the Mia Farm site to create an ambush. They carried or rolled 16 diabase boulders, weighing up to 24 kg apiece, about 300 m down the slope from the dyke end. The boulders would have supported a framework of poles and a roof. They then enclosed the site with a thorn bush fence. The small, 3 m² space so created would have been able to shelter two hunters. The site was protected from the south-westerly winds in winter as the hunters watched for animals coming to drink in the Jukskei River. A cluster of five stones of different materials was found. These were probably used to stabilise a support. Drawings by early explorers show San dwellings with such support poles. Rev believes that the ambush site was used for about three weeks and was never used again. The design of the shelter is similar to San hunting blinds found in the Okavango Dobe-/Du/da site reported by Yellen and Lee in 1976.

The highest density of the 9 000 stone flake artefacts made by the waiting hunters was found piled against the fireplace in the shelter. The flakes were not made from the boulders used to construct the site, but from pebbles found in the soil. They are end-struck and side-struck flakes with low cortex removal and minimum retouch. Four anvils from the site are also preserved.

The ethnographic-historic records suggest that the two hunters ambushed passing animals from the enclosure as the remains of at least 16 animal species, collected from predator kills or hunted from the ambush, were found in the shelter. The bones are identical to the remains of 35 species of animals, including lion and leopard, found at the Glenferness Shelter. Although no organic or conventional dating evidence came to light, dating could be guessed at by comparing the ambush site with Uitkomst Cave, an early C14-dating site a few kilometres east of Maropeng investigated by Rev Mason in 1951. Very few people lived in the Witwatersrand before the Iron Age.

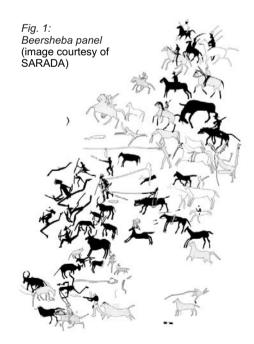
The Mia site was completely destroyed when the Allandale Road interchange was rebuilt. The Boulders Shelter still exists as part of a miniature golf course in the Boulders Shopping Centre. The Glenferness Shelter is preserved by the owners of the property, but there is no effective protection of the sites through Heritage legislation. **Report by Hilary Geber**

The impact of the horse on hunter-gatherers of Southern Africa: Rock art evidence from the Maloti-Drakensberg (19 May 2011)

Dr Sam Challis, rock art specialist at the Rock Art Research Institute, Wits University

r Sam Challis began the evening lecture posing the question, 'What is inferred when you have a horse depicted in San rock art?' Academics and archaeological amateurs tended to see panels with horses as representing everyday events. For example, the Beersheba panel (Fig. 1) was often used to demonstrate the final days of the San. From an uninformed perspective the panel depicted San individuals fleeing from colonialists or Boers. Such a view was, however, based on the assumption that any horse rider wearing a brim hat was a foreigner. People assumed that the rider with the brim hat on the right in Fig. 1 was a member of a Boer commando, but in this panel, and similar ones, there were tell-tale signs that this was not the case, Challis said.

Following the work of Patricia Vinnicombe, Challis' research area comprises all 'of the Drakensberg from Giant's Castle southwards to the Mount Fletcher district of the Eastern Cape Province' (Challis 2008:15). Within this area, Challis looks at the style,



colour and material culture depicted. He has found two distinct styles of San rock art: the traditional fine-line paintings that make up the traditional corpus of the art and another more unusual style. This style consists mainly of two-dimensional black images, although other colours are also present. These paintings are never shaded and subject matter includes images of people with topknots, saddles, horses and cows. The appearance of horses and the paraphernalia associated with them indicates that this art was created during the 19th century. Horses were introduced to the Drakensberg in the 1830s and the making of hunter-gatherer rock art ceased almost entirely by the 1880s (Challis 2008:1). This provided Challis with a 50-year timeframe in which the art was made.

Another important subject in this style of rock art in this area is that of dancing groups. Unlike the traditional San trance dancers, these dancers have feathered headdresses and other mixed paraphernalia, representing both San and Bantu-speaking peoples, and in particular the Nguni.

During the 19th century many cultures were present on the colonial frontier and along the internal African frontiers (Challis 2007:1). Forager-farmer relationships developed in the southern Drakensberg (Kwa-Zulu Natal). However, the political turbulence of the 19th century forced southern Drakensberg farmers to migrate to the eastern Cape frontier (Eastern Cape) and become *Mfengus* under Hintsa, the Xhosa paramount. During this time, raiding bands comprising different ethnicities formed around shared beliefs. Eventually, creolised multi-ethnic raiding bands move back to the Maloti-Drakensberg. Centuries of co-existence over a period of some 1 500 years indicate that the intermarriage and creolisation of some groups in some regions occurred (Challis 2008:2). Importantly, these 'populations were not necessarily culturally incoherent to one another' (idem).

One such creolised group was the amaTola, a group that had the longest and most intimate relationship with the San prior to the political turbulence of the 19th century. The amaTola consisted of a large number of Bushmen, Khoekhoen and runaway slaves (Challis 2008:4). These groups had a common economic interest: raiding. As far as religion was concerned, they also had a degree of cultural coherence. When raiding, the amaTola were reported to have worn root medicines around their necks called *so-/oa*. This consists of *U-mabophe* or *Plumbago auriculata* and is said to protect one from danger. Only a *so-/ao* man can handle the root since it has the



capacity to root a man to the spot. The root is also connected with rainmaking. The root is chewed by baboons and is believed by the amaTola to make them clever.

For many Bantu-speaking peoples the baboon is not good news and is often associated with a witch. However, for the amaTola, the baboon was a good but ambiguous symbol, much like the diviners themselves. Challis found that baboons were depicted in the background of many of these horse panels in the Maloti-Drakensberg Mountains. What was the connection between horses, baboons and the amaTola in these panels?

Fig. 2: Detail of the Beersheba panel

Challis argues that people were coming together from formerly distinct cultures sharing beliefs for some 500 to 1 000 years. The amaTola picked up the association of the baboon and the medicine root. This knowledge was used by witchdoctors to, for instance, incapacitate one's foes or to make a warrior invisible. The baboon was a totem that imbued them with the power of protection. Similar to the !Kung San absorbing the eland's potency during the hunt, the amaTola took on baboon potency.

Returning to the Beersheba panel (Fig. 2), the men in the brim hats with associated feathered headdresses are most likely these amaTola raiders and not Boer commandos as was previously assumed. In terms of rock art research, authors tend to think in deeply compartmentalised ways, with each ethnic group being a distinct and closed group. These views ignore the fluidity of such cultures and the fact that creolisation was common. Thus, observers should not assume an ethnic group merely by the material culture adopted by them. Challis is thus providing authorship and agency to the amaTola by making known the knowledge of their existence as represented in horse panels in the Maloti-Drakensberg Mountains. **Report by Law Pinto**

Reports from the Annual School 2010 *CUTTING-EDGE ARCHAEOLOGY IN AFRICA* (23 October 2010)

Palaeoanthropology at the cutting edge: Recent developments and discoveries in Africa

Professor Francis Thackeray, Director, Institute for Human Evolution, Wits University

Professor Francis Thackeray opened his talk with reference to the exciting announcement by Dr Lee Berger and his team (associated with the Institute for Human Evolution at Wits University) about the discovery of a new hominid species that had been called *Australopithecus sediba*. This discovery had stimulated a world-wide debate as to whether the two skeletons, one an adult female and the other an adolescent boy, represent *Australopithecus* or early *Homo*. There was strong evidence of *A. sediba* being a transition species. It lived almost two million years ago in a time close to the last-recorded occurrence of *A. africanus*, as represented by Mrs Ples.

Palaeontologists Tim White, Berhane Asfaw and a large international team had also reported the discovery of another hominid skeleton in Ethiopia that represented the species *Ardipithecus ramidus*, which had lived more than 4 million years ago. The discovery confirmed Darwin's view, expressed in 1871 in the book, *The Descent of Man*, that the 'progenitors' of humankind

originated in Africa. *A. ramidus* had a cranial capacity of 300-350 cc and was both bipedal and arboreal. Little Foot, currently being prepared by Ron Clarke of the Institute for Human Evolution, was also bipedal and arboreal. Other exciting hominid discoveries in recent times included *Sahelanothopus* (about 7 million years old) in Chad and *Orrorin* in Kenya. The taxonomy of *Ardipithecus, Orrorin* and *Sahelanthropus* was currently being debated, Thackeray advised.

When Robert Broom was preparing the skull of Mrs Ples, he detached several blocks of breccia. It was now possible to reposition some of these on the skull as they retained a thin layer of cranial bone. One of the pieces of breccia had been used to obtain a palaeomagnetic and faunal date of just over two million years, which was in close accordance with uranium-lead dates.

Scanning technology was continually improving and very high resolution scans of hominid fossils were being obtained from various facilities, including the Max Planck Institute in Germany. The internal anatomy of teeth could also be studied in detail, while Prof José Braga from France and Francis Thackeray had collaborated on a study of the virtual brain of Mrs Ples.



Technicians' facility at the Palaeosciences Centre at Wits University

The Institute for Human Evolution and the Bernard Price Institute were now linked through the establishment of a Palaeosciences Centre at Wits University. The Centre had recently been opened by the Minister of Science and Technology, Naledi Pandor, and was undertaking cutting edge research, including the study of fossils through the use of scanning technology.

Francis Thackeray said that he was particularly interested in Darwin's research on barnacles. Darwin had found that as his samples increased in size, so the boundaries between species began to break down. The same kind of thing was now beginning to happen in the field of palaeoanthropology as more and more hominid fossils were being discovered. The very boundary between *Australopithecus* and *Homo* was now in question. Francis had tried to address this issue by defining a species in a statistical (probabilistic) way. The mathematical definition allowed one to assess the probability that two fossils did or did not belong to the same species. He had identified a number, namely T=-1.61, which he considered to be an approximation of a biological species constant. *Report by Noni Vardy*

An Iron Age fishing tale

Gavin Whitelaw, archaeologist and Iron Age expert, Natal Museum, KwaZulu-Natal

avin Whitelaw gave the whimsical title of 'An Iron Age fishing tale' to his lecture. In the 1800s and up to the early 1900s it was the conventional view among archaeologists and anthropologists that Nguni-speakers, and indeed most other southern African Bantuspeakers, did not eat fish. The Tsonga were considered an exception. His own research had shown that in the right circumstances, as illustrated in his 'tale', this view was false, or at least only partly true. It was certainly true to say that there was no or little evidence of fish-eating from inland archaeological sites, such as in the Free State and inland KwaZulu-Natal, notwithstanding the fact that fish bones decayed very slowly. Classic ethnographies related that people associated fish with snakes, and even today some Zulu people regard fish as dirty and refuse to eat it.

However, fish bones in coastal sites north and south of Durban allowed archaeologists to question the 'held view'. And digging deeper into the historical records one found that, back in the mid-1500s, a group of Portuguese shipwrecked sailors who were trekking up the coast to reach Delagoa Bay bought fish from local people and saw fish traps in the Mhlatuze lagoon where Richards Bay is situated today. In fact, the Portuguese gave a descriptive name to the lagoon, namely 'Pescaria', meaning fishery. Further south, visitors to Natal Bay in the early 1800s, including Nathaniel Isaacs and Henry Francis Fynn, had reported on similar 'fisheries' (fish traps) in the bay.

Mr Whitelaw described two kinds of fishing. 'Complex' or 'institutional' fishing was something that involved the entire community and so had special significance for the community. On occasion the whole community might participate in fishing events or, in other circumstances, older men who owned fish traps might pass them on to their sons. Whatever the case, the entire community benefited from fishing. The other kind, which Gavin described as 'informal', involved occasional spear fishing by boys and men. It did not have the same kind of significance for the community as complex fishing.

The archaeological evidence of fish consumption came from four sites, two of which dated to around 1100 and represent Nguni-speakers. The other two sites dated back to the 600s and were situated a little inland in the Mngeni Valley. The kinds of fish identified at the older sites were the same as those most commonly caught today in fish traps in the Kosi estuary, so it was possible that the fish 1200 years ago came from fish traps in Natal Bay. It thus seemed that trap fishing in the bay might have had a long history. Like complex fishing elsewhere, it probably had great significance for the people living around the bay.

In the 1770s the Thuli chiefdom was situated inland in the upper Matikulu basin. Following conflict with the larger Qwabe chiefdom, the Thuli left their home and moved southwards to settle in the area around Natal Bay, in the process conquering the people of the bay, driving off some and subjugating others. To justify their new authority, the Thuli described the original bay people as uncivilised, or as hunter-gatherers, and thus only fit for a subordinate status. However, the Thuli did take over the fish traps and adopted the eating of fish, probably because of the significance that fish and fishing had for the conquered bay people.

The lesson of Gavin Whitelaw's 'tale' is that fish avoidance by most Bantu speakers in southern Africa is a partial stereotype. In some circumstances, even a widely despised food such as fish could be turned into something quite different, in this case a symbol of success and authority. **Report by John McManus**

Digging the slave trade

Dr Natalie Swanepoel, Senior Lecturer, University of Pretoria

r Natalie Swanepoel commenced her lecture by explaining the history of the slave trade. There was a triangle of trade in the Atlantic, the first leg of which consisted of Britain exporting manufactured goods to West Africa. These goods were exchanged for slaves, which were then shipped to North and South America, as well as the West Indies. The ships returned to Europe laden with cargoes of sugar, cotton, molasses and tobacco. This very profitable trading cycle continued until about 1840, when the trade in slaves was abolished by Britain. All in all, in the region of 10 million enslaved people were transported across the Atlantic. To counter the loss of income from slavery, palm oil plantations were started in West Africa, which employed slaves and thus negated the effects of the abolition of slavery. Slave trading across the Sahara from northern African countries to the Muslim world and Spain existed for many centuries and continued until the 20th century. Latterly the northern tribes, including the Isala people, had been heavily raided as part of the cross-Saharan slave trade.

Information on the slave trade was obtained from documentary and pictorial sources, as well as some aerial photographs. Freed slaves were also interviewed after the end of the American Civil War. Archaeology had also played an important role in establishing the history of the slave trade. Male and female slaves lived in separate quarters on estates, as indicated on maps, particularly in the Americas. In South Africa there were slave lodges in Cape Town and on wine farms such as Vergelegen. Blue trade and carnelian beads, metal bangles and rings, clay tobacco pipes, etc., which originated in the Gold Coast, have been found at archaeological sites in the Americas. However, blue trade beads were not necessarily of West African origin since they were being found all over the world, Dr Swanepoel said.

Castles were built by the Dutch and Portuguese, amongst other European countries, along the Ghanaian coast to hold slaves before transport between 1482 and 1786. Many of these sites had been preserved and Afro-Americans visited them as a form of pilgrimage, to find their roots and learn more about their history.

Natalie decided to dig in Gwellu in northern Ghana, a town well known for its 4 m high defensive wall built in the 1880s to protect the town from slave raiders. This was well after the trans-Atlantic slave trade had come to an end. Natalie found it difficult to know where to begin to dig and decided to dig test pits near the brick-making pits. She found it comfortable to excavate in an inhabited village as she was 'watched' all the time. No one could understand why she would want to retrieve broken pots and offered new ones instead! The townsfolk are extremely friendly and hospitable as she spends many months a year in Gwellu, there being so much material to excavate. The town is very keen to promote tourism and has craft projects and offers historical tours etc. to attract visitors. **Report by Graham Reeks**

For the record: The report headed 'The People of the Eland', reporting on Professor Ben Smith's talk on 4 February 2010, which appeared on page 4 of the December 2010 issue of *Artefacts*, was written by committee member Noni Vardy, not by John Wright as indicated.

FIELD EXCURSIONS AND OUTINGS

Magaliesberg, South African War and battlefields (13 April 2010)

With Vincent Carruthers, authority on the Magaliesberg and author of the book of the same name

The Archaeological Society group met at an outlook on Barton's Folly along the Magaliesberg. Vincent Carruthers pointed out the geological features in the surrounding landscape and introduced us to aspects of life and historical events along that part of the Magaliesberg. He explained that the history of this area had always been deeply integrated with its geology, which together with a specific combination of factors, including altitude, rainfall and temperature had enabled the development of its particularly diverse vegetation, while the deep valleys provided sheltered enclaves where specific plant communities flourished. Given the diversity of plant and animal life in such a concentrated area it also became a draw card for early explorers, including Cornwallis Harris and Charles Bell, who travelled as part of Sir Andrew Smith's expedition in 1839.

Vincent explained that the Magaliesberg fell within the Bankenveld as far as its vegetation was concerned. The mountain range marked the parting of the Dry Highveld Grassland bioregion to the south and west, the Central Bushveld bioregion to the north and the Mesic Highveld Grassveld region to the east. Further south lay the Witwatersberg, the edge of an uplifted sea. The wide valleys between the parallel hills of the Magaliesberg had formed as a result of differentiated weathering of the upturned alternating quartzite and shale-rich geological layers of the Pretoria Group of the Transvaal Supergroup. The valleys resulted from the rapid weathering of the shale-rich layers.

The Magaliesberg had become the preferred habitat and served as the meeting place of different peoples in archaeological and historical times. This desirable landscape had invariably also become a contested region and had witnessed many battles, and had also harboured conflict when the first white colonist settled there. British garrisons marched to Pretoria along these valleys during the First Anglo-Boer War of 1880-1881, while the Magaliesberg also saw much activity during the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). The battle of Nooitgedacht on 13 December 1900 took place at our meeting place, one of the highest points in the Magaliesberg. Here the Boer forces attacked and defeated the British while they were awaiting re-enforcement. Subsequently, enormous forces were deployed under Lord Roberts and in six months they had forced back the Boers under the command of Sarel Oosthuizen, also known as 'die Rooi Bul' (the Red Bull). Times were tough and there was great dejection among the Boer forces, with many men returning to their farms.

The Battle of Dwarsvlei was the first to have taken place in the Magaliesberg during the second phase of war. It was related that 4 000 men had left Robert's main column to for Diepsloot, where they camped on 2 June 1900. The next day they were attacked during their crossing of the Crocodile River. Although the Boers lost the battle, they got way with the ambulance wagon, slowing down the march to Pretoria, which fell on 6 June. The Boer forces reorganised into smaller units after having decided to go back to war at the urging of Rooi Bul. It was said that the aim was not so much to win the war, but to get a better deal. On 11 July the Boers were ready to

take on the British once again.

Dorian Smith was taking a column to Rustenburg, intending to join the Scots Greys under Lord Roberts. The battle of Sikaatskraal ensued at the place where Maropeng lies today. The British took their mounted guns too close to the front and could therefore not fire on the Boers. The Boers shot out the draft animals, 14 of the gunners were wounded and Dorian Smith's column was trapped. However, Oosthuizen was killed when he charged right into the British camp. The British, who eventually had to pull out their guns by hand, then headed for Olifantsnek, still with the objective of bringing about the release of Rustenburg.

The severity of the war intensified now with Lords Roberts and Kitchener introducing a 'scorched earth' policy in a drive to cut off supplies of the Boer commandos. The Transvalers became dubious about continuing the war and President Paul Kruger had escaped Pretoria by train for Machadodorp. However, President Martinus Steyn of the Orange Free State and General Piet de Wet had managed to escape encirclement at Brandwater with 4 000 men by slipping through Major-General Bruce Hamilton's forces. On the British side, Andrew Barton, in an effort to establish an administrative structure within the turmoil of war, created a network of forts, of which the fortified structure we visited at Barton's Folly formed part. The structure is in good condition and provided a good backdrop to Vincent's fascinating overview of the history of the area. It is a well-built stone structure with a roof of steel beams and concrete. This fort was manned right up to the end of the war. It predates the so-called Rice forts that were constructed of two layers of corrugated iron with an infill of stones and a corrugated iron roof.

Vincent explained that as an English-speaking person in southern Africa you were obliged to go to war. This was a drama one could not escape. Many documented and undocumented stories related to the lives of the Saunders, Heinz and Jenning families, and the exceptional adventures of Sarah Heckford. In this context, Vincent pointed to the nearby Nooitgedacht farmhouse that dated to 1864 and was the first house outside Pretoria to have had glazed windows.

The drama was not over. General Koos de la Rey held the Magaliesberg for some time and Jan Smuts came there as a fighting general. The mountain range was the backdrop to many layers of military and historic intrigue, including those related to 'hensoppers' or 'hands-uppers'. The highlight occurred when the Boers stopped and cleared a train filled with Christmas delicacies for British forces. These and other stories continue to echo through the Magaliesberg

Report by Anna Steyn

Sammy Marks House and Willem Pretorius Agricultural Museum (22 August 2010)

S anmy Marks was born in Lithuania in 1844 and at the age of 16 he went to Sheffield and worked for a cutler, Tobias Guttman. In 1868, when he was 24, he was drawn to Africa and headed for South Africa. On the proceeds of the sale of a canteen of cutlery given him by Guttman he bought stock and became a 'smous' and peddled his wares on foot round the Western Cape. Later he was joined by his cousin, Isaac Lewis, and the company Lewis and Marks was founded. When diamonds were discovered in Kimberley, Lewis and Marks set up shop in that town and moved into prospecting and speculating. Lewis later returned to England to set up a London office, while Marks founded their company, Die Zuid-Afrikaasche en Oranje Kolen and Mineralen Mijn Vereeniging in 1880. Coal and minerals proved to be a good business. Memories of the silver trade in Sheffield turned his thoughts to creating a South African 'Sheffield' and called the industrial city that he developed Vereeniging. He became involved in monopoly

licensing and together with his partner Alois Nellmapius established Die Eerste Fabrieken in de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republik. Their enterprises included a distillery, Consul Glass, a tile company, property and other business interests. He was a born entrepreneur!

Sammy Marks never forgot his roots and returned to the shtetl where he was born – Neustadt and presented it with a thousand pounds to renovate the synagogue. He put his aged father in charge of the project, giving the humble old tailor an elevated status in the village. Marks also interested himself in politics, but was careful not to take sides. He commissioned a statue to President Kruger, but at the same time earned the friendship and respect of representatives of the British Empire. He played a role in the Anglo-Boer War and was instrumental in bringing the two warring parties together, which culminated in the Peace of Vereeniging. At the age of 40 Marks married the daughter of his old benefactor, Tobias Guttman, and he and Bertha created the home known to us today as Sammy Marks House. But Bertha, with remembrance of her old home in Sheffield, called it 'Swartkoppies Hall'.

The ArchSoc group of about 30 split into two groups to tour the house under guidance of an excellent guide, Thabo. We ascended up the magnificent staircase made of Burmese Teak and were led to the billiard room where Thabo brought the Marks family alive. He told us about Sammy and Bertha and their nine children, three of whom died in early childhood. The children, after the initial education by governesses, were sent to school in England and did not play a very evident role in South Africa. One of the sons died at school of asthma, but Sammy could not return to England for the funeral because of the Anglo-Boer War. Joseph was perhaps the most involved son in that he ran the farm. The eldest son ran the business, but the heir he appointed to his team made many ill-considered judgements.

The billiard room is where the men adjourned after dinner. It is magnificently appointed with leather seats round the walls, a spittoon with a discreet cover that turned it into a footstool, and dramatic red-shaded lights. Perhaps most striking is the ceiling, painted by Italian craftsmen hired by Marks to paint the room's interior to resemble marble and granite. Later son Joseph painted over this, but everything is now slowly and skilfully being restored. Another elegant piece of furniture in this room is a specially designed cabinet for bottles and glasses. Adjoining the billiard room is the study, wood-panelled and book-lined with an imposing desk. In this room Thabo told us about Sammy Marks' complicated testament. Because most of the children had become alienated from their South African world, he stipulated that the home and its contents were to remain intact for four generations. In the third generation the property was placed under the supervision of a caretaker and became derelict. The trustees were able to make changes to the trust in 1986, which together with all Marks' papers became the property of the state. Some land was sold off to developers and only 72 ha remain.

Next to the study is the guestroom and like all the rooms in the house it was built for maximum coolness against the summer heat, with high ceilings and dark shutters that, when opened, looked out onto an enchanting garden. Opposite this room is the bathroom to which water had to be brought and removed by maids using the back stairs along a most circuitous route. Joseph's room is next – he was a great fisherman and his room was simple and utilitarian. In the hall outside his room is an elaborate weather station. At the top of the staircase is an area known as 'The Landing', which has a large table and chairs in the centre and seating along the walls. So as not to seem partisan pictures of Boer leaders covered one section of a wall and important British persons another. At the end of the landing is a long passage used for the storage of clothes that creates a sort of ventilation shaft in the house. The last room upstairs was that of John Murray, officially an employee, but also a companion and part of the family. One of his duties was to summarise important literature and read it to Marks who never became truly proficient in the English

language. There is a belief that John Murray's ghost lingers in these stately passages.

As we descended the staircase we saw a large room that was used for storing sports equipment and on the wall next to it a painting of the original clay house. The music room at the end of the passage is most attractive and looks out onto the garden. Bertha imported a beautiful piano which is still in an excellent condition. Resplendent on the piano is a photo encased in a frame made of elephant tusks and above it a glittering chandelier. A music box was able to play, very tactfully, both national anthems. The master bedroom is undoubtedly the most attractive room in the house. Spacious, with French windows opening onto the garden with a view of the fountain, it was clearly Bertha's special room. In this room stand a beautiful armoire and bed made of olive wood imported from Italy. Its brass headboard has a special groove for the Bible and, perhaps most important of all, a slot for glasses. On the washstand are lovely pieces of Royal Dalton. Bertha's breakfast was served at a small table near the French windows. The large bed had a goose down cover that required two maids to shake it into position, so resting during the day took place on the day bed. Adjoining this room is Sammy's dressing room with a bed for when he was required to sleep alone. His clothes were in an elegant cabinet and his copy machine was an elaborate press that took many hours to replicate an image.

A favourite room was undoubtedly the dining room. No detail was spared and the extravaganza of crockery, silver and glassware is delightful. The chandelier is fringed with glass beads and bits of the frieze frescos are still visible. The 368 piece cutlery set was imported from England monographed with a capital SM and a small B. When Bertha returned from a trip overseas with new pieces of silver and china the monogram had a big B and a small SM! Plates were lifted with silver tongs. At the end of the room there was a sitting area for the ladies when the men 'withdrew'. Several rather small rooms beyond the dining room were given over to the children, nannies and governesses. The kitchen is enormous with every type of pot and pan, jelly moulds, irons and other things, including a large ice box, required to feed this large family and their enumerable guests. In the passage was found a large board for the bell system and a display of Bertha's many awards for her poultry, since she was an intense and active poultry farmer. In this house of many rooms about 92 per cent of the furniture is original.

Here our tour ended, but the farm offers much more for a more leisurely visitor to see: the dove cote, the crochet lawn, farm buildings and the lovely Victorian garden. In the days that the Marks were in residence the flag of the main visitor was flown. So Oom Paul, for example, seeing the Union Jack, would have the opportunity to quietly go home!

From Sammy Marks House we continued along the R104 until near Bronkhorstspruit to visit the Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum. This old farm is most attractively set at the end of an avenue of trees, and the garden at the entrance is a wonderful example of tropical gardening. Inside, the display of carts is a must for lovers of Edwardian and Victorian literature and the historian. A huge hall houses a vast collection of agricultural machinery, but unfortunately the artefacts are not well displayed and signage is sadly lacking. The buildings are very pleasant, in particular the Prinsloo farmhouse, which contains some very good pieces of period furniture. But again there was no signage. Later we went down to the end of the farm for a picnic in an area of picnic tables and braai facilities. It was charming, with a large duck pond and ducks and geese and cows wandering around – an ideal place to visit with family and friends and children of all ages for a relaxing Sunday picnic.

Although this visits on this day could not be called an archaeological experience, it certainly was an historical one and it enabled people to get to know each other in these most pleasant and relaxed museums, not too expensive and not too far from home. **Report by Gerry Gallow**

Mpumalanga Escarpment experience (17 to 20 September 2010)

With Dr Alex Schoeman, lecturer in archaeology, University of the Witwatersrand

n the first evening of our stay in one of the delightful crofts at Verlorenkloof in Mpumalanga, Alex Schoeman projected aerial photographs and Google images of the area from Ohrigstad to Steenkampsberg and Nelspruit, and highlighted several Bokoni sites, the Kwena Dam close to Verlorenkloof, Boomplaats, the remains of a British encampment at Lydenburg, and followed the flow of the Olifants, Komati and Crocodile rivers through the area. Alex explained that she had come to realise during her years of research among the Ndzundza (Ndebele) in the Steenkampsberg that complex inter-group relationships had existed in this area between the Ndzundza and the Pedi polity, among others. Yet the Koni remained elusive, even though it had been documented that 5 000 Koni had, for example, joined the Ndzundza at the capital KwaMaza. Her research at Badfontein had also pointed to an association with chief Tulare, but Collett, who had previously done research in the area, had been convinced that the terraces were associated with the Pedi.

The Koni project was initiated when Alex met historian Peter Delius, a Pedi specialist working on his Mpumalanga book. It was during that weekend that Peter met our hosts, the Johnsons of Verlorenkloof. Referring to the projected photographic imagery, Alex highlighted areas of intensive agriculture around the Kwena dam. She pointed to recurring features within the settlement patterns, and followed the walled pathways that had been established to channel herds of cattle through the settlements. In this way the agricultural fields and vegetable patches could be protected and the cattle kept out of the domestic areas. Alex explained how certain 'contrary researchers' such as Cyril Hromnick, had misconstrued facts and misinterpreted certain regularly recurring stone-walled features as being 'Dravidian Temples'. Such romanticising, decontextualising and misrepresentation had recently culminated in the kind of 'fables' that feature in Michael Tellinger's book *Adam's Calendar*.



Alex acknowledged the valuable contribution by Prinsloo, who had written a Masters degree on the Koni language at the University of Pretoria in 1930s. He had compiled a map of the occurrence of the Koni language, along with a cultural sequence. He had also referred to the complexities that occurred in the area, including the presence of Sotho and Nguni people. Tim Maggs' maps of stone-walled settlements of the Greater Highveld, based on aerial photographs, provided the only other resource. A comparison of the map sets provided by Maggs and Prinsloo revealed a close match. Up to then all archaeologists and historians had were dots on a map, but once the language maps and settlement maps were combined it was realised that the walling could largely be associated with people who spoke Bokoni (even though one cannot speak of a cultural unit called Bokoni). The map correlation did, however, not hold for the south of the region, which was presumably influenced by Ndwandwa expansion.



A typical Boomplaats rock engraving appearing to map out roads and homesteads associated with the Bokoni (phote: Noni Vardy)

Other researchers, such as Collett, who undertook mapping of the area with Revil Mason, identified clusters of sites in different localities, from valleys to flat and mountainous areas. Alex pointed out other features, including the region where Marandwana had lived. He had caused devastation just as Shaka had done. She also projected photographs of the corbelled hut at Verlorenkloof, which presumably could be attributed to Bokoni, along with a key Bokoni feature, namely terraces. Terraces of this nature also occurred in other parts of Africa, such as at Nyanga in north-eastern Zimbabwe and extensively in Kenya, Ethiopia and parts of West Africa. Terraces were used for growing crops as part of the intensive agricultural activity required to provide for trade with areas such as Sekukhuneland, where the soil was far less fertile and far less rain was received.

She pointed out the carefully planned networks of roads connecting settlements and grazing areas, including branching roads to individual homesteads. Unlike the case normally, cultivation seemed to have taken place up-slope, while cattle grazed along river banks in the valleys. Fodder could possibly have been stored for winter use. She projected examples of the multitude of rock

engravings found on bolders in the region and drew attention to the correlation between the rock art designs and the patterns of rivers, roads, homesteads and walling associated with Bokoni. It was as though the engravings represented conceptual maps of real-life situations, reflecting that which was most important to the people in their world. It was possible that the engravings were the work of initiates, perhaps even a continuation of the 'late white' painting tradition that had been associated with boys initiation schools. The designs associated with these initiation ceremonies include 'spread-eagle' or lizard-like designs, which were also well represented in the engravings of the area.

What did their houses look like? Tim Maggs had assumed that they were beehive huts, but during excavations archaeologists had found much dagha, unlike what would be expected to be found in the remains of beehive huts. The huts were mostly round, but square houses had also been encountered within the perimeters of the stone walling, with some square houses occurring among the predominantly round ones.

The history of Bokoni was complex and it was not clear why life in this extensively populated area had come to an end and where the people had gone to. Van Warmelo mentioned in the 1930s that some people had migrated to Sekukhune and some to the area of Polokwane, while others had remained behind. What was clear, Alex said, was that the region at that time had not been inhabited by a culturally homogeneous group and that the Pedi polity, which consisted of diverse peoples, played a dominant role. The ceramics that were manufactured by the Ndebele in the 1940s and 1950s were reminiscent of Koni ceramics. The style, known as Maroteng pottery among archaeologists, was commonly used and characterised the utensils of the diverse groups that had resided in the area. It was clear that there had been a complete destruction of the political power of the Koni in the 1830s and that this had had a devastating effect on the trade to the coast in which they played such a prominent role.

Alex referred to the valuable research that was being undertaken in this area by Tobias Coetzee. His extensive surveys have revealed clusters of localities along rivers, extending along the Komati and Crocodile rivers. The Koni polity was effective and extensive. Evers had estimated that 50 000 people had lived around the Dorpsrivier near Lydenburg. Alex also mentioned the oral tradition that referred to slave raiding by people with white dresses with guns. This could possibly be linked with the Ndwandwe state, which had initiated aggressive expansion at the time of the Koni polity in the 1700s.

Alex Schoeman's introductory talk provided us with valuable background information that enabled us to understand the significance of the stone walled features better as we walked among them during the next two days. **Report by Anna Batchelor-Steyn**

Visit to Boomplaats in the vicinity of Lydenburg

The next morning we drove to the Lydenburg Museum to pick up JP Celliers, the curator, who was to be our guide for the day. From here we drove to a boulder-strewn farm known as Boomplaats to view what turned out to be some extraordinary collection of rock engravings. Boomplaats, which covers a huge area, lies at the northern edge of Bokoni. We spent quite a few hours wandering to various sites on the farm.

Boulder would have a lines engraved from ground level to the top of the rock. Leading off this line would be a series of concentric circles. We were told these engravings were made by the Koni people in the last 700 years and depicted settlement patterns. That is to say, the lines indicated roads and the circles homesteads, with the outer circle showing the placement of huts and the inner circle indicating the cattle kraal. However, they could not be considered realistic depictions.

There were literally hundreds of such engravings. Equally fascinating were designs that made use of tiny and perfectly bored holes to outline an engraving. We also saw engravings of spread-eagled lizards, which indicated that initiation ceremonies had taken place here. Engravings of more recent times showed men in trousers with large hats. Even churches were depicted. Some of the engravings had been vandalised, with pars of rocks having been sawn of in order to remove engravings.

We understood that Boomplaats was one of the first farms in South Africa to be handed back to local communities as part of the land claims process and that only visits organised through the Lydenburg Museum were encouraged. Because of its great significance, Boomplaats will ultimately be fenced and an application for proclamation as a heritage site is in progress. **Report by Anita Arnott**

Bokoni ruins

After a picnic lunch taken under the trees next to the Lydenburg Museum, we proceeded towards Machadodorp and after leaving our vehicles we walked a short distance along the valley slopes. We soon found ourselves clambering over the remains of numerous low walls. We were in a Koni town as described to us the previous evening by Alex Schoeman. The entire hillside was literally covered with stone terracing and walling. We later walked along a former road, some 3 m wide and with double side walls half a metre high.



The stone-walled structures at Blouwbosch (photo: Reinoud Boers)

The Koni sites, which cover a distance of 150 km, generally occupy the watershed slopes of the Mpumalanga escarpment from Ohrigstad through Lydenburg (Mashinini) to Carolina. If one looks carefully at hillsides in this area the Koni remains are identifiable when driving along present roads. They appear as distinct parallel lines interspersed with concentric stone circles. Their existence was first discovered by Van Hoepen in 1935, but archaeological research only followed 40 years later when Evers (1975) and Collett (1982) studied the sites. In *The Digging*

Alex Schoeman in front of one of the magnificent examples of stone walling (photo: Reinoud Boers)



Stick 24(2), August 2007, Tim Maggs wrote an article describing the sites and confirming the mystery that still surrounds them today. Alex Schoeman in her explanatory talks confirmed that there was much still to be learned and that further work on the sites was being planned for the future.

The people of Bokoni no longer exist as a united group, but until 200 years ago there clearly was a thriving and relatively prosperous community living along the escarpments in dense settlements. It is believed that this conglomeration of people predated the Mfecane period, but that they were eventually conquered and absorbed by the Pedi polity. Apart from intensive farming, they would have been involved in trading since they were ideally placed along the Crocodile River route to Delagoa Bay. Their pottery was not distinctive and is considered to follow a regional ceramic style.

As referred to above, the settlements comprised terraces of irregular shapes and sizes. In between the terraces are to be found the concentric enclosures connected by narrow walled pathways to a road network. Assuming the concentric rings were homesteads, each had a 'private path' leading on to the main connecting road. It can easily be imagined that an owner's cattle were led from the grazing fields in the valley along the town road and off to his private kraal without causing damage to the crops growing in the adjacent terraces. The concentric homesteads are an enigma in many respects in that they differ from the typical Iron Age hut/kraal layout. They comprise a large central or 'primary' ring with typically two entrances. Assuming this area was for cattle, it would normally have only one entrance. Abutting the primary enclosure are smaller 'secondary' circles looking like the petals of a flower which appear to have been huts. Around the rings would be an enclosing wall.

The odd pattern of dwelling is also associated with an 'inverse' farming system. Instead of the usual practice of running cattle in the hills and growing crops in the valley, the people of Bokoni grazed their cattle on the valley floor, presumably because the land near the rivers contains rich grasses and sedges. Also, the escarpment slopes are composed of dolomite, which contain very high levels of magnesium that would have been leached out by rain into the soils in the valleys. Crops require the correct ratio of magnesium to calcium and without measures to correct the chemical balance by providing lime as is today's farming practice, this could have resulted in stunted crops. This, one presumes, led to the terrace crop-growing technique, which would have been necessary for drainage as well as soil retention since the soils tend to be loamy. Here they

would have grown vegetables, millet and sorghum, although the density of occupation could indicate that they grew maize as well. However, further study is required to determine this.

The Koni and their culture were a fascinating revelation to the ArchSoc participants, but who they were, what they did and where they went to remains an enigma and a challenge for archaeologists. *Report by John McManus*

Reference: Van Hoepen, ECN. 1939. A pre-European Bantu culture in the Lydenburg district. Argeologiese Navorsing van die Nasionale Museum, Bloemfontein 11(5), 47-74

Excursion to Blaaubank Gold Mine, Magaliesburg (7 November 2010)

With Tony Jamison, geologist

The historic Blaaubank Gold Mine is situated just outside the village of Magaliesburg. The buildings and mine entrance lie at the top of a hill and enjoy a panoramic view of the valley below. The mine, like other small mines in the area, has had a chequered history. It is situated on a wrench-fault and sheer-vein hosted mineralised body in the Transvaal Super Group.

Our organiser for the day, Graham Reeks, introduced us to Tony Jamison who has been deeply involved in the Blaaubank mine project for the last 15 years. Tony is a geologist and has worked in Canada and Zambia's Copper Belt. When he retired he was asked to use his exploration skills to assess the feasibility of reopening the Blaaubank mine. A Zimbabwean entrepreneur put up a new processing plant. A close analysis of the mine's records, plans and history brought to light that the mining methodology employed in the 19th century was very crude.

Early prospectors, Hartley and Jennings, indicated that there was gold mineralisation in the area. In 1870 the Department of Farm Registration of the South African Republic (ZAR) registered the location and ownership of the farm. Four years later, Henry Lewis, an Australian prospector and the two Jennings brothers who owned the Zuikerboschfontein farm on which the mine stands found alluvial gold in the stream and then gold-bearing quartz veins in the hills. In 1875 the Nil Desperandum Gold Mining Company was formed to mine the deposit. At least six other companies explored the area and in 1880 they merged to form the Blaaubank United Gold Mining Company. Mining activities came to a halt at the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 and marked the end of the first phase of mining in the area.

Various schemes aimed at restarting mining at Blaaubank in the 1930s and 1940s and during the Second World War came to nothing. The plans that were drawn up were very sketchy. In the 1960s, other attempts to recommence operations were made by Gold Fields, JCI, Anglo American and others. Rio Tinto Zinc also made a concerted effort to survey the area, but all these efforts were hampered by the farm's multiple ownership, which made the tracing of mineral rights ownership difficult. Rio Tinto Zinc gave up and JCI and Anglo American considered a tonnage of below seven million tonnes too small for one of its operations. In 1995 Tony organised a team from Wits University to survey the mine and they found the geology interesting, with the Rietfontein fault running right through the structure. There is a zone of breccia that has been folded in cusp folds and it is these cusps that contain high-grade gold. The development by early miners was poor and some of the tunnels had collapsed. Of archaeological interest are remains of old working pits that can be linked back to the Tswana people who inhabited the valley prior to 1800.

The mine property was subsequently bought by a property developer, John Leo. He still has faith in making the mine productive and is looking for financial backing, but in the meantime he

started a 'mine school' which gives trainee miners an opportunity to work in a small-mine environment and learn about geology and other practical aspects of mining. He also developed a tourist attraction so that visitors can see a working mine, pan for gold and enjoy other hands-on activities, such as crushing ore with an old mortar and pestle. He has created a tavern and set up a camp site, hiking trails and a conference centre. He is also trying to develop a housing estate on the property.

We donned hard hats and walked into the mine where Tony and our very able guide, Miriam, explained to us all the intricacies of the workings of a mine. We looked at stopes, cusps, faults and seams of quartz with free gold in them. Bent double at some points we wondered at the tenacity of those who worked in an environment such as this everyday. Even for a non-technical person the thrill of seeing this underground world was beyond description. The rock faces in the tunnels showed the bent and folded strata, as well as faults. It was amazing to learn that the Rietfontein fault stretches from St Lucia to Swakopmund on the Namibian coast. Above ground again, Miriam showed us how to pan the crushed ore and how the free gold comes lose from the quartz. For lunch we picnicked on the lawn, relaxed and enjoyed the beautiful views – a happy and interesting day indeed!

From city to village: A tour of Ferreirasdorp (20 February 2011)

With Peter Rich, architect and Honorary Fellow of the American Institute of Architects

Initial hassles with street name changes and parking problems sorted out, the group of 40 ArchSoc members and friends assembled in Gerard Sekoto Street (formerly Becker St) in Ferreirasdorp. To our surprise this normally vibrant part of Johannesburg was almost devoid of traffic and hawkers on this bright Sunday morning. Being on foot, this proved to be of advantage in following our guide, architect Peter Rich, who is well known to residents of this area. In his more than 30 years of work Rich has focused on the creation of spaces that respond sensitively to the cultural and ecological contexts in which they are located. He has acquired extensive experience in relation to design and implementation of projects that involve community empowerment and participation, poverty alleviation and cultural tourism. His design for the Interpretation Centre in the Mapungubwe National Park won him the World Building of the Year Award at the World Architecture Festival in Barcelona in 2009.

Ferreirasdorp, an area of six city blocks is mostly inhabited by the Indian and Chinese communities, who were granted ownership rights by Jan Smuts and have retained these till today. Both communities welcomed new Indo-African refugees from countries such as Pakistan, Sudan and Malawi, and made them part of their neighbourhood.

Peter told us something of the history of architecture of Johannesburg. The huge building boom in the 1930s allowed local architects, free of Europe's architectural dogma, to shape the city. The Killarney Film Studios, for instance, were developed on a bigger scale than studios in Hollywood. Peter then propelled us across Sekoto Street to Orient House, designed by architects Kallenbach and Brocco Bros in 1939. Below street level are situated the warehouses of predominantly textile merchants, which now also house Malawian tailors. At ground level are the shops and above these the flats and courtyards. Orient House boasts a lift, but participants puffed their way up the six storeys to get a better impression of this U-shaped building, with all landings facing into the courtyard, allowing sun to filter into the flats. This design, also referred to as

'streets in the air' creates the ideal platform for social interaction. From the roof top there is a grand view of the ultra-modern diamond-shaped Anglo American Properties Building, now owned by Absa Properties, with its reflective glass mirroring the once handsome Victorian houses in the streets below. Our guide reminded us that in earlier years Zulu 'flat boys' had inhabited the roof floors of Johannesburg's buildings, which in most cities around the world were prime penthouse locations. In contrast to Zulu dominance in Johannesburg, in other towns, such as Alberton, the 'flats in the sky' were the domain of Xhosas.

Before continuing towards the Chinese area near what was formerly known as John Vorster Square Police Station, we rang the bell of the DI Dadabhay Wholesale Cash & Carry Shop, stockists of Da Gama textiles, school wear, wools, etc. offered at killer prices, a haven of delight for the female participants, an experience enhanced by a huge tray of free samoosas and tea offered to all by the owners. Between 1904 and 1910 about 63 000 indentured Chinese labourers were brought to South Africa to work on the Witwatersrand gold mines. They did not like the experience and many returned to China, but others stayed, especially the contingent that arrived to service the Chinese miners. The Cantonese Club, the Chee Kung Club and the United Club served their needs for social interaction. With introduction of the Pass Law, both the Indian and Chinese communities became increasingly infuriated, with Mahatma Gandhi at the forefront. Many burnt their passes in defiance, but not Gandhi. Once, when visiting the offices of Mr Kallenbach, an ardent admirer of Gandhi, he threw his pass on top of a cupboard when the police happened to raid the premises.

From the Chinese quarter Peter Rich guided us past former Victorian buildings, pointing out bay windows, balustrades and light fittings of that era, until we reached Patidar Mansion, unusual in its mix of curved, rounded and square styles and not standing at 90 degrees to the street. It was designed by the Polish architect, Wilhelm Pabst, who is best known for his exploratory style and mastery of Johannesburg's post-art deco facades. Our enlightening tour ended here, although many hungry participants went back to Chinatown to crowd out the Chinese Noodle Bar where Sizzling Beef rounded off the morning for some. **Report by Ingrid Wustrow**

The rock art and heritage of Lydenburg (18-21 March 2011)

With Marius Brits, cultural tour guide and devoted rock art amateur in Lydenburg

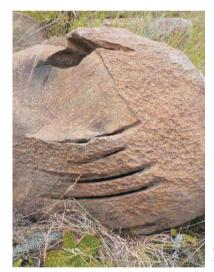
Arius Brits, who has had a lifelong interest in the archaeology of the Mashinini district, was our host and guide for the long weekend. He met us at Klitzgras on Friday evening and gave us a well-illustrated talk on the rock art in the area. There are five distinct types of petroglyphs in the area, namely incised rock engravings that depict animals, humans and grids; pecked engravings; scraped engravings, normally employed to fill in an incised outline; drilled holes, found particularly in the Lydenburg district; and finally rubbed boulders. Unfortunately the planned braai with 'pap en sous' prepared by Marius was washed out by pouring rain, so some had their 'padkos' in their chalets, while others met at a restaurant in town.

Saturday 19 March: Having grouped together at Klitzgras, we began the day's tour with Marius, first to Boomplaats and then to Klipfontein for lunch. Marius spends much of his free time walking the Lydenburg area and has found and is continually finding new petroglyph sites. He has captured these in a manuscript, which he hopes to publish. The variety and number of peckings at

both Boomplaats and Klipfontein surprised us all and suggests that the sites must have been of great significance. It is thought that many of the engravings are very old, possibly in excess of 10 000 years, although no dating has been done as yet. We saw many boulders with pecked concentric circles, the outer circles being joined by lines, giving the impression of maps of homesteads connected by roads. Sometimes the lines end in cupules, the purpose of which is not understood. The circles within circles appear in many different designs and there are also many examples of half circles starting with a dot, or sometimes two, in the middle and radiating out, which are not dissimilar to the beehives painted by the San.

We saw 'cuts' in the rocks that are thought to have been made to extract 'power' from the stone. Cut lines are often found in conjunction with peckings. In addition, many of the boulders had been rubbed so that a highly polished area was created. Credo Mutwa has suggested that there is so much lightening in the area that the energy from these storms is absorbed by the stones.

A stone with cuts (below) and another with a drilled-hole design (photos Noni Vardy)





Rubbing and cutting the stones could release energy for healing. We also found peckings of various animals at Boomplaats, including a rhinoceros, similar to the one found at Echo caves, and antelopes and an elephant. Also fascinating were the many peckings of 'spread-eagle' or lizard-like designs, which are a typical Tswana symbol.

At both sites we also came across rare examples of drilled-hole designs. The holes are perfectly drilled. We were invited to have lunch in the garden of the farm owned by the Steenekamps. Here we were amazed to see

a huge number of bored stones strung on four long vertical poles stuck into the ground. When we enquired about their origin we were told that they had all been plowed out of the ground on the farm. The bored stones found in the area all weigh in excess of a kilogram, which is double the weight of those found in the Western Cape. By the end of the day we had seen an enormous selection of petroglyphs of great variation and interest. The day ended with a really excellent dinner at Okus Restaurant owned by a Finnish chef.

Report by Noni Vardy

Sunday 20 March: This morning we visited the ruins of the Berlin Mission Station near Lydenburg. The mission was founded in the 1860s and an old cemetery tells the story of the

Remains of the house used by the missionaries at the Berlin Mission Station near Lydenburg (photo: Alan Woodman)



people who once lived there. The useable components of missionary church and the many mission buildings have mostly been carried away, and the thriving community that boasted a blacksmith, agricultural training and productive fields is abandoned and in ruins. We were delighted to meet a Mr Carl Schulze aged 86, his son Ludwig and two relatives or friends who happened to be visiting the site at the same time as we were. Carl, who now lived in the Cape, had been a friend of the missionary Gueldenpfennig's children and visited there often from his home in Lydenburg, and he viewed with dismay the ruins of the buildings he last saw in 1944 when this was still a thriving and prosperous community of missionaries and converted Christian believers. The well-watered land had been given back to the community, which now lived in shacks nearby. We were told by one of the leaders that they were waiting for the Department of Agriculture to come and give them advice on what to plant and how to restart the farm.

Afterwards we drove to up Long Tom Pass. The summit (2 150 m) is one of the highest points reached by a major road in South Africa. Here is found the Long Tom Monument with a replica of one of the two Creusot guns used here by the Boers for the last time during their retreat from Pretoria to the Lowveld in September 1900. The friendly owners of the café allowed us to have our picnic lunch there. On the way back to Lydenburg we snaked our way down the mountain through pine forests on a dirt road. At one point we had a wonderful view of a double waterfall surrounded by the indigenous forest on the opposite side of the valley. At the foot of the valley we parked and proceeded into the forest on a little used path in true Indiana Jones style, with one member waving away all the spiders and their webs with grass swatches. We saw evidence of horizontal stone walling in the undergrowth. After more bundu bashing and removal of spiders we found stone walling that appeared to be terracing. We climbed about four of these shallow terraces and proceeded back to the cars along one of them. At one point we saw a large monolith lying in a horizontal position. We met a local who runs adventure experiences in that area and he told us that there are many stone circles in between the terraces and roads in the forest. By this time it was raining quite hard so we decided not to start looking for these stone circles. We drove back to Lydenburg through beautiful scenery, rain and swirling mists on the Long Tom Pass.

Monday 21 March: We all met on the well-maintained lawn outside the imposing Dutch Reformed church in Lydenburg and were welcomed by Oom Kerneels and Tannie Katrien Coetzee, the caretakers of the church. Oom Kerneels showed us around and told us the history of the church. The cornerstone of the church was laid on 12 April 1890. Two days later the church council decided that dressed stone from Pretoria would be used for the walls up to window height and also for the tower. The stone was transported from Pretoria to Lydenburg by ox wagon. The beautiful pulpit was built with kiaat wood from the Abel Erasmus Pass area, where it had been cut and dried. The wood was donated by Abel Erasmus. The age of the wood was estimated to be between 450 and 500 years old. The carpenter went on horseback all the way to Stellenbosch to make sketches of the pulpit in its Moederkerk. The Lydenburg pulpit is thus an exact replica of the Stellenbosch pulpit. It took two years to build. The beams for the magnificent high ceiling were

cut and shaped in Germany as that was the only country that had a saw that could handle a whole tree trunk. They were then shipped to Lourenco Marques and transported to Lydenburg for assembly. The wood used for the doors, pews and floor also came from the Black Forest in Germany. In front of the pulpit stands the font, a beautiful old silver bowl. During the Anglo-Boer War the church was used as a hospital. During that time the pews stood outside and were affected by the weather, damage amounting to £118/15/00. Many bottles were found under the floorboards after the war.

The Erasmus family donated an impressive organ to the church in 1925 in memory of their grandfather, Gerhardus Cornelius Schoeman. The organ was bought in Germany and shipped from Hamburg to Port Elizabeth in 1927. Port Elizabeth harbour was chosen because the rail charge from there was just 9 shillings per 100 pounds, compared to 15 shillings and 6 pence from Durban harbour. The oil lamps attached to the walls and on stands in the aisle used for lighting the church during the early years were eventually replaced by gas – the gas pipes still run



The NG church in Lydenburg, with the magnificent organ (photo: Alan Woodman)

under the floorboards. During the restoration of the church in 1986 new electrical wall lamps were made according to the design of the first old lamps. The church bell that was used until 1986 was the 1875 church bell that was used in the original little church. This church offers simplicity, loftiness, beauty and peacefulness.

Lydenburg was founded in 1850 by a group of Voortrekkers led by Andries Potgieter. The name means Place of Suffering and the town was so named to commemorate the many deaths from malaria the trek party suffered after their initial settlement at Ohrigstad. Construction of the first church, known as the 'Voortrekker Church', started in 1851 and was completed in 1853. A list was sent round to collect money and building material. That church had a thatched roof, a reed ceiling, dung floors and Cape Dutch gables at each end. The Dutch schoolteacher, Willem Poen, led the services until the church was completed. The first permanent preacher, ds. Van Heyningen, arrived in Lydenburg in 1858. The church was declared a National Monument in 1973. The Trekkers had trekked for more or less 12 years, during which time the children's

schooling suffered. They only received a bit of tutoring from their parents and from travelling teachers. The building Lydenburg's first school started soon after the founding of the town and was completed in 1851. The school was built in the style of a typical farmhouse in the Transvaal: walls of raw clay brick with clay plaster whitened with whitewash and a dung floor. The thatched grass roof created the need for a fireproof attic, which was made by plastering the reed ceiling with a few thick layers of clay. The attic also served as a place of storage. The first school teacher, Meester Willem Poen, arrived from Holland with two younger teachers in 1851. During a visit from the Orange Free State in 1852, the Rev. Andrew Murray Jr and JH Neethling resided at the school, which was used until the Anglo-Boer War broke out in 1899. It was restored and declared a National Monument in 1961. On 6 February 1873 alluvial gold was discovered in the district and the Lydenburg goldfields were proclaimed three months later. Today the gravels of the Spekboom River are still being washed for alluvial gold.

We also saw the Burgher monument in the Church grounds, which was erected to commemorate the Boers from the Lydenburg area killed in the Anglo-Boer War. We then visited the old Lydenburg Cemetery, which is a record of the history of the town. Amongst the many graves we saw graves of young Lydenburg soldiers killed in the Bush War, Voortrekker graves, Freemason graves, the grave of Arnold Jansen, the first Landdrost in 1842, many graves of British soldier who died in the Anglo-Boer war (one with the simple inscription: 'For King and Empire. Here Lies a British Soldier'), many Irish graves, the graves of Meester Willem Poen, the Boer Commando doctor Carl Menning, the Schultze family whose descendants we had met at the Berliner Mission Station the day before, and Willie Steyn, one of the five prisoner of war who jumped ship near Ceylon in January 1901 (see the book *Die Vyf Swemmers* by CJ Barnard), graves of. The oldest grave belonged to the Voortrekker Gabriel S Mare, 1790-1852, and his wife Anna, 'Die Eerste Graf in hierdie Kerkhof'. We even saw a Mozambican Spitting Cobra lying next to a grave far from impressed at being disturbed!

We drove past St John's Anglican Church, the building of which was started in 1884. The first minister was Alfred Roberts who took position in 1886. His son is Austin Roberts of bird-book fame. We ended the weekend excursion with a delicious lunch under a large jacaranda tree at 'Vroutjies Coffee Shop'. *Report by Jo Earle, with contributions by Alan Woodman*

Walking tour of Church Square, Pretoria (10 April 2011)

With Dr Don Roos, Pretoria historian and guide

ur morning began with a talk by Don Roos in the back room of Café Riche, a very old inhabitant of Church Square, built in 1905. The room is attractively decorated with the original Art Nouveau tiles and its window frames come from the old demolished church in the square.

Dr Roos began with a brief history of the square. From the beginning of the 18th century, missionaries and explorers wandered northwards across the Vaal River. The Voortrekkers, after expelling Mzilikaze in 1838, began to lay out farms and settle in what was then called Philadelphia. One of the first settlers, Lucas Bronkhorst, sold his farm to Martinus Wessel Pretorius, the son of the Voortrekker leader Andries Pretorius, who named the settlement after his father and so the budding community's home was called Pretoria from 1855 onwards. Church square became the centre of this community, being both the market place and the place where families made their monthly visit for Nagmaal. Pretorius agreed to have a church built on his farm

Elandspoort. This first thatched-roofed church, built in 1856, burnt down following a lightning strike in 1882. A second church housing a thousand people was then built in neo-Gothic style. This cruciform church had a tower surmounted by a steeple at the east end and was therefore named Toring Kerk, but informally it was called after the builder, Franken. It was demolished in 1904 and replaced by a new Nederlands Gereformeerde church in Bosman Street.

Following the discovery of gold in 1886 people flocked to Johannesburg and Pretoria flourished as well. Many fine buildings were erected around the square after that time. Dr Roos told us about the architects and the various building styles. There are three gothic gables on the Law Chambers Building, the oldest building on the western side, which was built for the African Board of Executors and Trust Company and designed in Flemish style by architects Carmichael and Murray. It has attractive brickwork of bacon stripes of red brick and ochre. The Nederlandsche Bank building to the left of it was built by a Dutch architect, Willem de Zwaan. This building, completed in 1897 and built of red brick and sandstone, is in Flemish Renaissance style. It has stepped gables and cast iron gates and balustrades that were manufactured in Delft and influenced by the Jugendstil (i.e. Art Nouveau) style. The bank occupied the ground floor until 1953. Initially a dynamite factory occupied the first floor and in 1914 the top floor was gutted by fire. During restoration in 1988 the original stonemason's marks were discovered on sandstone blocks that had to be replaced.

Further left and slightly set back from these buildings is the Capital Theatre built in 1931, now sadly a car park! Older members of our group sighed nostalgically as mention of this 2 000-seat theatre took them down memory lane. The interior was bedecked with fine ornamentation, had a sweeping upper gallery and stars that came out when the theatre dimmed, like the old Coliseum in Johannesburg. In the same block lies Café Riche topped by a statue of Mercurius designed by Anton van Wouw and the main room designed by Frans Soff.

Crossing Church Street to the north-western side of the square, the first building is the General Post Office built in 1910. While postal services reached the Transvaal in 1850, it was five years before Pretoria was part of the postal route. This building was designed by William Hawke, a protégé of Herbert Baker, in a mixture of styles. Four stories high, it is fronted by Doric columns and has ornamental relief work and art deco. Inside the main entrance is an ornate clock with a large sculpture of a naked couple. There is much speculation as to the sculptor. Some say the man's face is like one of the burgers around the Kruger statue and the girl looks like Anton van Wouw's daughter. Next to the Post Office lies the symmetrical building of the First National Bank of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR), completed in 1890 in neo-Classical style. The bank acted as the mint and administered the government's funds. Between the bank and the mint there is a beautiful wrought-iron gate. It was from here that 500 0000 Kruger Rands were removed five days prior to Lord Roberts marching into Pretoria in 1990.

Crossing Palace Street in an easterly direction one comes to the Palace of Justice, built on the site of the first house of MW Pretorius in 1896. This imposing building was designed by Sytze Wierda, also from the Netherlands, and the foundation stone was laid by President Kruger. It is built in the Italian Renaissance style and is lavishly appointed inside. Large colonnaded balconies and an elegantly curved staircase face Church Square. This building is linked by an underground tunnel to the new High Court situated opposite of it in Vermeulen Street. The Palace of Justice was used as a hospital by British forces in 1900 and subsequently it was the scene of many famous trials, such as the Rivonia Trial in 1963 and the Daisy de Melker murder trial.

Next to the Palace of Justice stands the old Reserve Bank. This granite and sandstone building was Herbert Baker's last big work. Built in a fortress style it has elaborate wrought-iron work. The entrance is through a central arch set in high rusticated walls. Above the entrance is the head

of Moneta, the mythological Roman Goddess in whose temple coins were stuck. The main hall is encircled by a gallery which rests on black granite pillars covered with black Belgian marble. The 17th century bell at the back of the hall was a gift from the bank of England.

On the north-eastern corner of the square we find the building of the Eerste Volksbank built in 1939, which later became Volkskas and then Absa. Built in mixed Cape and Transvaal brick architectural styles it was established to strengthen the Afrikaner economy and culture. Next to it is the First National Bank building designed by Gordon Leith. He tried to combine typical South African architecture with British Colonial style. Although enlarged in 1960, its original style was maintained. It stands on the site that previously served as the offices of Sammy Marks. Across Church Street to the south we find the Tudor Chambers. Built as the offices for the coaching business of George Hey of Melrose House fame in 1934, it was designed by John Ellis. It has five richly decorated storeys and the pinnacle on top was once adorned by a huge dragon weathervane. It is the only central city building that has been preserved in its original condition. Diagonally opposite from Tudor Chambers is the Standard Bank building completed by 1934 on the original site of the Grand Hotel.

On the other side of Paul Kruger Street is the Raadsaal, the seat of the ZAR Parliament from 1890. Designed by Sytze Weirda in 1887, the foundation stone was laid by Kruger in 1889. It originally had two storeys, with a third added later, and it is topped by a statue of Minerva. The building has a splendidly designed interior with a flight of stairs that leads through the vestibule to the Raadsaal with its walnut furniture and panelling, brass fittings, drapery and upholstery that contrast effectively with the ornate plaster work dome. This was the second Raadsaal building. The first was a thatched roof structure completed in 1888. The new baroque-style building taken into use just two years later was a symbol of wealth and independence after the discovery of gold in the Transvaal.

Lastly, Dr Roos told us about the statue of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, which is the focal point of the square. He was born in 1825 and spent a lot of his childhood on trek with his family. The statue stands on the site of the Toring Kerk and replaced an elaborate cast-iron fountain donated by Sammy Marks, which was moved to Pretoria Zoo when Kruger's statue was erected in Church Square in 1954. Marks commissioned Anton van Wouw to sculpt the Kruger statue. It was first erected, without the four accompanying burgers, at Princes Park in Church Street in 1912. In 1925, the statue, this time with the accompanying figures, was re-erected in front of the Pretoria station. ...

Following this detailed introduction, Dr Roos took us on a walking tour of the square. We were able to see close up the wonderful brickwork of the Law Chambers and the old Nederlandsche Bank Building, and gaze in awe at the erstwhile magnificence of the Capital Theatre. We were able to peek at the clock and statue in the Post Office and walk past the National Bank. We walked to the Vermeulen street side of the Palace of Justice and looked at its equally imposing other side where prisoners entered and lawyers rushed in and out. Along this frontage are planted Ginkgo trees, which if the leaves are sucked are supposed to make you wise! We were able to get a good view of the Tudor Chambers and then we entered the square and admired the towering figure of Kruger, surrounded by his four trusty burghers. Dr Roos told us that the modelling clothes sent to van Wouw in Italy were far too big for the Italian models, but the burghers looked imposing just the same.

The Raadsaal was the only building we could enter on our tour. On the left side of the entrance in the foyer lies a large chunk of stone from Robben Island. We turned left into a long passage. The carpet had the ZAR crest woven into it at intervals, with the eagle facing the wrong way. Dr Roos indicated a small rod under his feet that was the starting point for the standard measurement



Reinoud Boers posing in Paul Kruger's chair in the Raadzaal on Church Square

of the old Cape rood (about 20 m). After visiting one of the smaller chambers we sat for a while in the Upper House. Paul Kruger had sat imposingly in the centre while his wife had the use of a balcony on the left of the chamber. Another balcony was reserved for the press. This is a beautiful hall and sitting there one was quite overwhelmed with a feeling of the words spoken, policies proclaimed and decisions made.

Don Roos led us round this square of our history with a master storyteller's skill and made the morning most stimulating and interesting. Paul Kruger Square is part of our heritage, the scene of many famous trials and other events. Its architecture, though eclectic, embraces many styles that somehow blend together as they face the focus of the gardens and the statue of Kruger. The warm autumn sunshine enhanced the pleasure of this interesting outing. *Report by Gerry Gallow*

Bergendal: Anglo-Boer War battle site (26 June 2011)

With Huffy Pott, amateur historian specialising in the battle of Bergendal

'History will tell of a British victory without glory and of a Boer defeat without shame.'

n the 26 June a group of ArchSoc members and friends travelled by coach to the area around Dalmanutha, close to Belfast in Mpumalanga, where the last set-piece battle between the Boer and British forces took place towards the end of the first phase of the Second Anglo-Boer War. The outing was conducted by Huffy Pott, who was both entertaining and instructive as he took us across veld and up krantzes to examine the Boer positions that were cleverly positioned to ambush the oncoming British. Huffy is a chartered accountant by profession, but whilst he was inspecting the area for a prospective trout fishing farm a chance discussion with a farmer Van Wyk, a descendent of the original farm owners on whose land the battle took place, caught his imagination. The tragic anecdotes so intrigued Huffy that he started his own research and the event and its combatants became a lifetime passion.

Paul Kruger had left Pretoria to Lord Roberts and his British Army and made a train stationed in Machadodorp his centre of government. Realising that he must drive Kruger out of the Transvaal, Lord Roberts sent French and Buller's armies off to finish the task. However, Generals Louis Botha and Ben Viljoen had two weeks to prepare the defence ahead of Kruger's location, and this they did with consummate skill in the broken escarpment terrain into which they managed to steer the advancing British. It was across this terrain that we walked and drove.

General Botha had about 4 000 men spread across an 80 km front. This force consisted of several commando units, a German volunteer artillery unit and a contingent of the ZARP

(Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek Politie), who distinguished themselves in particular at Bergendal, in fact at the site of the monument that commemorates the battle. The generals also had a number of Long Toms Creusot guns placed strategically in the rear and these maintained an artillery duel throughout.

Roberts had two substantial armies – his own and that of Buller, which was brought up from Ladysmith and did most of the fighting. The latter comprised about 10 000 men of which only 1 900 were cavalry. Roberts own army consisted of about 8 000 men, so there were in all 18 000 British troops in the vicinity. Many diaries of infantryman complained of the dust and the blackened soil they had to traverse on their march as the Boers burnt the veld in front of them as they retreated towards Belfast. Robert's regiments were the Devons, Manchesters, Gordon Highlanders, Liverpools, Leicesters, Rifle Brigade and Inniskillings. Cavalry comprised Lancers, Hussars, SA Light Horse and Strathconas Horse (Canadian). Artillery included 10 Howitzers, four Naval 12 Pounders, 24 field and horse artillery guns, and four 'Pom Poms'. These produced what is alleged to have been the heaviest concentrated artillery fire ever to be experienced on one position, in this case on the ZARP's Bergendal position.

Botha and Viljoen set up headquarters at Dalmanutha with 12 tents and six carts. However, these were soon lost in a veld fire together with all goods and clothing. A defensive line was set up on ridges and ravines with open veld ahead thus offering open fields of fire and the British advance was awaited. Well-preserved sangars (defensive stone walls) can still be seen on the ridges. Kruger had inspired his men to make this determined stand after which, if they lost, he promised to resort to guerrilla warfare.

We were able to see where the action took place on the first day, namely 21 August 1900. This was in the Frischgewaagd area on the eastern part of Van Wyk's farm. Here the Bethal and Carolina Commandos were in position, well hidden and waiting. Ravines behind the ridges provided ideal ground for holding their horses. The 18th Hussars and 5th Lancers, unaware of what was waiting for them, attacked across open ground and soon got into difficulties. They had to be reinforced by the Manchesters, Gordons and Leicesters. The cavalry was 'rescued', but only after suffering 44 casualties. The next day Buller again tried to penetrate with two battalions of infantry and four squadrons of the SA Light Horse, but these were repulsed after losing 10 men. Buller came to the conclusion that the defensive line was not worth fighting for.

So, on 23 August he moved 8 km north to the farm Geluk, which we also visited. After a short hike we were able to get perspective and an appreciation of the day's fighting from the krantzes and untouched sangars. It was here that the Liverpools got into terrible trouble. Once again the British soldiers seemed unaware of the defence line and moved forward in open formation (one commentator at the time wrote 'carelessly') and faced withering fire. The many anecdotes and diaries quoted by Huffy Pott showed that although they fought with bravery the Liverpools had to retreat with the loss of 28 men killed, 46 wounded and 32 taken prisoner. A monument covering a mass grave commemorates the action.

One anecdote that is worthy of mention concerns the artillery duel between the German volunteer artillery unit commanded by Von Dalwig, which was inflicting damage on the British 21st battery commanded by a Lieutenant Hannay. Hannay had lost many of his crew and was running out of ammunition. Without 'runners' he was unable to replenish. As it happens, his father, Colonel Hannay, who was convalescing, was observing and noting the predicament made several sorties himself carting magazines for the guns. 'Such an event was without parallel in the history of the regiment.' Unfortunately Von Dalwig was badly injured and had to be transported to the Russian volunteer field hospital at Waterval Onder. He did, however, recover from his ordeal.

Following his setbacks, Buller stayed at Geluk from Friday 24 to Saturday 26 waiting for Roberts army under General French to arrive. In the meantime, the artillery of both sides remained busy. One was able to imagine the British army with its 330 wagons ponderously settling down on the blackened veld. On Sunday 27 Buller moved to Vogelstruispoort farm, south of Bergendal, under heavy artillery fire and it was here that the ZARPs distinguished themselves the following day.

On Monday 27 August, over 60 heavy British guns situated across an 8 km front concentrated their fire on the little koppie held by just 74 ZARPs. It is on this site that the 'rocket' shaped memorial has been erected as a tribute to their courage. It was a salient point in the Boer line and the fierce artillery barrage that lasted for three hours left the defenders isolated without reinforcement. Buller sent in 1 500 infantry, including the Rifle Brigade and Inniskillings, to take the position. Although most of the British losses were from the Rifle brigade, the Inniskillings lost men whose remains were not identified. Huffy Pott has endeavoured to identify these men who are probably interred in a mass grave. In recognition of his efforts he was recently honoured by being invited to the Inniskillings regimental dinner. The ZARPs fought gallantly, only abandoning their position when the overwhelming enemy were upon them. They lost 40 men killed, wounded or captured, and Conan Doyle is quoted as saying: 'No finer defence was made in the war'. British losses over the 7 day period are estimated at 385 men and those of the Boers at 78 men.

Despite losing the last set battle of the Anglo-Boer War, the Boers remained in the field as promised and conducted a guerrilla campaign for another 21 months until the peace treaty, the Treaty of Vereeniging, was signed on 31 May 1902. The Bergendal Monument was erected in 1910. Its four legs represent the four provinces. **Report by John McManus**

Artefacts

The Trans-Vaal Branch of the SA Archaeological Society produces a newsletter twice a year with reports by committee and ordinary members on the lectures and outings arranged by the branch in the previous period.

The aim of *Artefacts* is to ensure that the fascinating information provided in up to ten annual evening lectures by the branch's expert speakers, and the information learnt during about eight or nine day and longer outings is not lost to posterity. The branch's full-day Annual School, a seminar in which seven speakers address one general topic, which is held in October of every year, is also reported on in full, as are the branch's longer annual tours to African and overseas destinations.

Artefacts is free to members of the Trans-Vaal Branch of ArchSoc, but is available to interested society members in other branches at a small annual Trans-Vaal Branch 'Country Membership' fee.

The editor of *Artefacts* is Reinoud Boers. He may be contacted by e-mail at fox@boers.org.za, by tel/fax on 011 803 2681, or by cell on 082 566 6295.