

NEWSLETTER OF THE MAGALIESBERG BATTLEFIELDS TOURISM ROUTE

18 NOVEMBER 2019

REPORT-BACK ON THE UNVEILING OF A BLUE PLAQUE FOR THE BATTLE OF DWARSVLEI

On 11 July 2019, the Magaliesberg Association for Culture & Heritage (MACH) unveiled a blue plaque for the Battle of Dwarsvlei at the Bru House & Diner, just east of Maropeng. The plaque was unveiled by Okkie Oosthuizen (a relative of General Sarel Oosthuizen, who was mortally wounded during the battle), assisted by Vincent Carruthers of MACH and Rory Taylor, owner of the Bru House & Diner.

The blue plaque was unveiled 119 years after the battle, which was fought on 11 July 1900. The battle was characterised by acts of bravery on both sides, with two Victoria Crosses being won by British officers, and General Oosthuizen being mortally wounded as he led his men in a charge to try and capture the British guns. More than 160 people were present at the blue plaque unveiling.



Vincent Carruthers, Rory Taylor and Okkie Oosthuizen with the blue plaque

120 YEAR COMMEMORATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR AT KEDAR HERITAGE LODGE

11 October 2019 marked the 120th anniversary of the beginning of the South African War. To mark this anniversary, a commemorative conference was held at Kedar Heritage Lodge north of Rustenburg on Saturday 19 October 2019. The conference featured eight speakers including Mr Tokkie Pretorius (director of the War Museum of the Boer Republics in Bloemfontein), Prof Bernard Mbenga (Professor Emeritus of History at North West University in Mafikeng) and Prof Fransjohan Pretorius (Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Pretoria). The occasion was also marked by the unveiling of a memorial to renowned Boer leader General Koos de la Rey. Kedar Heritage Lodge now features memorials to more than a dozen significant individuals from the South African War.



Prof Bernard Mbenga speaking on the role of the Bakgatla-baga-Kgafela during the South African War.



Brig-Gen Dr Gerhard Kamffer speaks after unveiling the memorial at Kedar Heritage Lodge to General Koos de la Rey.

BLUE PLAQUE UNVEILING ON 13 DECEMBER 2019 FOR THE BATTLE OF NOOITGEDACHT

On 13 December 1900, 1500 British soldiers under the command of Major-General Ralph Clements were attacked at Nooitgedacht in the Magaliesberg by 2500 Boers under the command of Generals Beyers, Smuts and de la Rey. Clements was forced to evacuate his force to a low hill in the valley. The Boers then began looting the British camps, and Clements was able to retreat eastwards with about half of his force. It was one of the most significant Boer victories during the guerrilla phase of the South African War.

On 13 December 2019, to mark the 119th anniversary of this battle, the Magaliesberg Association for Culture & Heritage (MACH) will unveil a blue plaque at Askari Game Lodge near Hekpoort. The event will begin at 10:00 am. Admission to the event is free, but for catering purposes it is essential to RSVP to andrewedepohl@rali.co.za if you would like to attend.

After the unveiling of the blue plaque, Andre Wedepohl will give a presentation about the Battle of Nooitgedacht. Guests at the event will also be able to visit the extensive museum at Askari Game Lodge, which is filled with fascinating exhibits. We are very pleased that this significant battle in the Magaliesberg is being commemorated in this way.



British sangar (small fort) still to be seen on top of the Magaliesberg at Nooitgedacht.



During the battle, some of the British soldiers died after being forced back over these cliffs.

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