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**Rorke's Drift Hotel (Pty) Ltd**

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**August 2018**

## **THE NEWS HEADLINES - 32**

*Welcome to our roundup of news, from the banks of the Buffalo River*

**EXPANDED ACCOMMODATION:** Our last newsletter some six months ago gave news of our increase capacity with the second accommodation unit, and a great success it has proved to be. We enjoyed five capacity bookings for both of our accommodation 'Forts' during the following six months, with just our mid-season quiet month of December failing to maintain the flow.

**UPGRADED BATHROOMS:** the bathrooms in Fort 1 have received a makeover with new tiles and glass shower doors making the rooms more light and open and raising them to the same standard as the new build. Overall redecoration has given the rooms rich African colours, with all the work carried out by our own and local craftsmen.

For the record we now offer 15 double/twin rooms. Six command a small premium as River View Rooms and of the remaining nine, three can accommodate young families in the installed bunk beds. Additional rooms are available for guides and drivers.

We appreciate the group tour bookings that are in place for our new season.

**MEDIA EXPOSURE:** We were pleased to welcome Henry Cole with his team to include Rorke's Drift as a part of his bike tour around South Africa to be part of World's Greatest Motorcycle Rides series showing on the Discovery Channel in the near future. Henry and his team also produce *Shed & Buried*, as well as *Find It, Fix It, Flog It* on Channel 4

It was a surprise to be contacted by the BBC with regard to objections to the charity screening of *Zulu* in Folkstone at the end of June. The film was accused of being racist, a comment that quite surprised me, unless it referred to the Welsh. It was good to hear a robust statement in the UK press by a descendant of King Cetshwayo, stating the magnificent portrayal of the warrior nation taking on the isolated British outpost. [http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5953537/Zulu-chief-defends-Michael-Caine-film-saying-British-tribal-warriors-respected-other.html?ito=amp\\_email\\_share\\_bottom](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5953537/Zulu-chief-defends-Michael-Caine-film-saying-British-tribal-warriors-respected-other.html?ito=amp_email_share_bottom). How we love the BBC!

**WATER:** With rainfall a continuous topic in South Africa, our annual measurements also start on 1 July. Obliging we had a shower of 4mm on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> to start our annual total which reached 694mm in the year to 30 June 2018, a bit better than the 651mm of 2017, but insufficient to raise the average of the last three years to excess of 700mm which would be normal for our area. Springs here are still not running, and with increasing demand from our population that is growing in size and consumption, plentiful water is becoming a memory.

While Cape Town has had headline attention for its shortage during our Southern Hemisphere summer, here in KwaZulu-Natal we have rain at that time and clear dry days in our winter - the converse of the southern tip of the continent. We enjoyed more than a few Cape Townians enjoying a hot shower!

The Hotel water supply remains excellent and with increased storage capacity to match the accommodation increase, we remain confident in avoiding restrictions to our guests.

Directors: C D Aikenhead (British); P J Maguabne (CPA Chair ex officio)

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**PIANO:** *Music be the food of love* is part of what Shakespeare wrote and the wonderful acoustics of our open plan public rooms have fuelled a search for a piano for a considerable time. The accompaniment of our electronic sound system called for something more. In June we were able to acquire a Bechstein upright in Durban which has pride of place between the Bar and Dining room in the centre of the main building. On the first Monday of each month we have initiated Piano Sunday Lunches to encourage neighbours and friends to gather with our guests to the sound of traditional music played on a very traditional piece. Its provenance? Teutonic efficiency from the archives in Berlin show 1893 as year of manufacture, with initial delivery to Leipzig, whence we recently welcomed a family group.

**CAPE TOWN MARKET:** After receiving visits from several Cape Town tour operators who were searching for places to send their clients, it seemed a good idea to increase their knowledge of Rorke's Drift Hotel. The recently completed tour made a lot of new contacts and confirmed our marketing cooperation there with CTC Marketing <https://www.ctcmarketing.co.za>.

**FLY TO DURBAN FROM LONDON:** British Airways have now scheduled direct flights from Heathrow direct to Durban from the end of October; on alternate days allowing visitors to enjoy the Province without changes and transfers. We are ideally placed to add a destination to a round-KZN tour that includes the Elephant Coast, The Drakensberg and Durban. The available game parks, culture presentations and historic destinations will fill an itinerary with minimum travel time spent between attractions.

**REALITY TOURISM:** Visits to homes of real Zulus increasingly feature in the requirements of visitors, particularly from Europe. We are pleased to arrange such visits to our neighbours who are pleased to show their modest homesteads. A village walk is now also available at Isandlwana when several homes are visited. These are all local excursions.



Charles Aikenhead, Rorke's Drift Hotel, August 2018