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Cover illustration

Some of the well-known individuals to whom the Zulus gave names,
as discussed in one of the articles in this issue of *Natalia*.

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Editorial

NATALIA 43 appeared last year without an editorial. Any such essay would have done no more than tell readers what the journal contained, information which they could have acquired simply by consulting the index.

But *Natalia* 44 is different as, in a way, it marks the end of an era with the retirement, on grounds of poor health in each case, of two long-serving stalwarts of the editorial committee – Dr Shelagh Spencer and Dr Bill Bizley.

Shelagh Spencer's membership of the editorial committee goes back as far as the sixth issue of the journal in 1976 under the editorship of the late Dr John Clark. Indeed, she is now the only survivor of the team of those days which produced the journal. Basil Leverton, Margery Moberly and June Farrer have also died. Her life's work, in which she is still engaged and for which she has been recognised by the University of KwaZulu-Natal with the award of an honorary doctorate, has been the compilation of a biographical register of the early British settlers in Natal. It has given her an encyclopaedic knowledge of the province in the second half of the nineteenth century, from which *Natalia* has benefited immeasurably. Many a time her editorial colleagues have been astonished by her picking up and correcting errors in obscure references buried deep in the endnotes of an article.

But the journal has benefited in another way from her skills. As a qualified librarian, she has used her expertise to compile the annual list of Natal publications. The issue of Nos 36/37 which appeared in 2007 was the first in which the compiler was acknowledged, but Shelagh Spencer was at work years before that, ever since the retirement of June Farrer as deputy director of the Natal Society Library (in which capacity the latter was a member of the very first *Natalia* committee in 1971 and the secretary of the committee for many years). We are grateful to Mrs Jewel Koopman, another qualified librarian and until her retirement the director of the Alan Paton Centre, for now undertaking our bibliographic compilation.

Bill Bizley's name first appears on the list of the editorial committee in issue No. 11 of 1981. In the 33 years which have followed he has provided the journal with a number of substantial articles, the last of which was published in No. 43. His article "U-boats off Natal: the local ocean war 1942-44" made the issue which featured it, No 23/24 of 1994, a sell-out. Bizley's speciality was poring over old newspapers in what was then the Natal Society Library collection to evoke an incident or a more substantial historical event as seen through contemporary eyes. Sadly, ill health has necessitated his retirement from the editorial committee of *Natalia*. The contribution by Professor Paul Thompson in this issue – "The outbreak of the Great War: How Pietermaritzburg reacted" – is a tribute to him in consciously employing the Bizley technique.

A regular contributor to recent issues of the journal has been Duncan du Bois. In this issue we have "A sketch of colonial Umzinto". His articles have sprung from the research in which he has been engaged for the past three years. He has now been awarded a doctorate for a thesis entitled "Sugar and Settlers: the colonisation of the Natal South Coast 1850-1910", which is due to be published under a modified title.

Another indefatigable contributor is committee member Professor Adrian Koopman. This year we carry his "Zulu nicknames for whites", and we already have an article from him ready for our issue No. 45 in 2015.

Two years ago we published an article by Stephen Coan entitled "A tale of two phoenixes: the Colonial Building and its architect William Powell". This year he carries the Powell story further with a piece on William's son, Sydney, entitled "Sydney Powell's adventures in Natal".

Another contributor of two years ago is Anil Nauriya. Counsel at the Supreme Court of India and the High Court of Delhi for many years, he is currently on sabbatical and, arising from his historical researches, offered a note on the little-known visit of Willie Pearson to Natal. This we have decided to upgrade to a short article.

After a couple of issues in which our unpublished piece/reprint slot was unfilled, we are grateful to Pietermaritzburg resident Val Ward for putting together a package culled from the *Government Gazettes* of 1853 and 1871 on "Roads over the Drakensberg".

For the rest, our mixture is much as usual: notes, obituaries, book reviews and the list of recent publications already referred to. We hope that our readers find it all of interest and value.

JACK FROST