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Re : Memorial to the Volunteer Stretcher-Bearers

This article refers to a project, which has been initiated by Raymond Heron, the erection of a Monument to the Volunteer Ambulance Corps, who participated in the Anglo- Boer War (South African War) of 1899 –1902.

I am sure you are aware Spionkop was the scene of one of the bloodiest and perhaps, most futile battles fought during the South African War of 1899-1902. During this war men, women and children representing all races living in South African lost their lives not only in battle, but also in concentration camps and disease. This theatre of war, was to bring together three of the most significant characters in the annals of modern history, namely, **Mahatma Gandhi who was a stretcher -bearer with the Volunteer Ambulance Corps. - Winston Churchill, a 23 year old war correspondent, Louis Botha who was to become the first Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa in 1910.**

Raymond and Lynette Heron recently returned from a Trip to the UK. Whilst there, they met with Baroness Flather at the “House of Lord’s”. The Baroness, whose father happened to be a Stretcher-bearer himself, is very excited about this Project! The Baroness is the first Asian women to become a member of the “House of Lord’s”, She was in South Africa as an observer during the elections of April, 1994 – and she has agreed to be the Patron for the project, a bronze memorial to recognise the Volunteer Stretcher- Bearers of the South African (Anglo-Boer) War of 1899-1902, included amongst these courageous volunteers was, Mahatma Gandhi – who was at the Battle of Spion Kop. These men have never been recognised.

If you read Thomas Pakenham's account of The Battle of Spion Kop, the scale of the battle, the folly, and the casualties are almost unimaginable. The scene must have been almost surreal and very gruesome. Yet, amongst it all, great courage and compassion by those tendering to the sick.

After the initial meeting, the Baroness arranged a meeting at the "House of Lord's "with the South African High Commissioner the Right Hon Lindiwe Mabuzza. At that meeting, the High Commissioner agreed to support this project and is arranging a Reception at South Africa House in London, and we have just received confirmation that the reception, to launch this fund Raising Drive in the United Kingdom, will be held on the 04 February, 2009 –

The British High Commissioner to South Africa, The Right Hon. Paul Baotang has also agreed to support this Project.

It is planned to have the unveiling of this Monument in 2010 in order to coincide with the 110 commemorations of the Battle of Spion Kop and the Year of The World Cup Soccer being hosted by South Africa.

Anyone interested in this project please contact Raymond or Lynette on the contact details below.

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Your support will be greatly appreciated.

