

Buthelezi statue is unveiled at Ulundi

August 27 2013 at 09:00am

By VIVIEN VAN DER SANDT



Sandile Makhoba The Reverend Thabo Cecil Makgoba, Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, unveiled a sculpture of the IFP founder and leader at the Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi Museum and Documentation Centre in Ulundi on Monday. Picture: Sandile Makhoba

On the eve of his 85th birthday, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, founder of the IFP and inkosi of the Buthelezi clan, was honoured on Monday at the unveiling of a sculpture depicting him as an African statesman.

The sculpture forms the focal point of the newly constructed Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi Museum and Documentation Centre, built a stone's throw from King Mpande's grave in Ulundi.

The position of the statue, facing the gate of the centre, was meant to say: "Come in, and let me take you through my life," said the chairman of the museum and centre trust, Buthelezi's son, Ntuthukoyezwe Zuzifa Buthelezi.

The bronze sculpture is one and a half times life-size, about 2.5m high, and was created by Midlands sculptor Peter Hall and cast at the Goodwin Foundry.

Hall also created the sculpture of King Dinuzulu and the Spirit of eMakhosini memorial, and is now working on the massive planned statue of King Shaka at the Tugela River mouth.

Hall said that, when creating the image, he thought about how Buthelezi was seen by the public.

The trustees had opted for Buthelezi to be in Western dress, but the artist added traditional touches, such as the Zulu headdress and staff, to depict the way Buthelezi embraced both cultures.

The official unveiling was done by the Reverend Thabo Cecil Makgoba, Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town.

The event was half an unveiling and half a tribute to Buthelezi, with his achievements – such as his stance on Aids – being lauded, which led to his joking that the ceremony was like attending his own funeral.

The ceremony was attended by members of the royal (Buthelezi) family, three mayors, councillors, several members of Parliament and a Jamaican diplomat.

Lifetime friends of the family added a personal touch.

The IFP leader in waiting, the party's deputy president, Inkosi Mbongombongweni Buthelezi, was also there.

Although the plan for the sculpture had been conceived in the Ulundi Municipality, the organisers emphasised that no public money had been spent on the R1 million work.

The plan was pushed by Zanele kaMagwaza-Msibi, who left the IFP to start the rival NFP.

She attended Monday's function.

The Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi Museum and Documentation Centre will open later this year, and will house the politician's collection of papers and memorabilia, gathered over his 38-year career.

<http://www.iol.co.za/dailynews/news/buthelezi-stature-is-unveiled-at-ulundi-1.1568519#.VCEpzhacxfg>