

Tuning in to today's teenagers

THE Western Cape region of Idasa continues with its tradition of placing a strong emphasis on work with school pupils.

Thirty pupils from Fezeka High School in Guguletu, Langa High, Sizamile High in Nyanga and Guguletu Comprehensive joined 40 Milnerton High School pupils at the University of Cape Town for a day of discussion, sport and culture.

The morning session was taken up with introductions. Each pupil was asked to speak to someone they didn't know and then introduce that person and say a little bit about them to the whole group.

The exercise produced some funny incidents and helped break the ice. It was clear that,

no matter which side of the railway line you live on, teenagers are teenagers. Everyone liked to talk on the phone; the question of whether people had boy-friends and girlfriends was a prominent one; a surprising amount of people liked ice-skating and music, sport and TV received a high rating.

After sharing a meal and playing some soccer, the pupils watched an audio-visual presentation by Clyde Broster, a prominent Cape Town educationist, on interpreting the me-

dia.

Having learned how many preconceptions are established, the pupils were able to move on to an afternoon of South African culture.

Capab producer Johann Esterhuysen ran a drama workshop, the black pupils taught gumboot dancing and Amajingqi, a marimba band, taught and played marimbas.

The day ended with the pupils presenting what they had learned and then with an assessment of the proceedings.

Follow-up has included an invitation to all of the township pupils to the Milnerton school play - which they thoroughly enjoyed - and a morning assembly gumboot demonstration at Milnerton by the participants.

The assessment is best illustrated by the words of one of the Milnerton pupils in a letter to Idasa: "I thoroughly enjoyed being with the other black children. I also made a lot of friends. That day I sure won't forget. It was a new experience for me. Whenever there is another function or getting together like that one, call Mr Young and he will inform us ... Hope to see you soon."

Nic Borain
Regional Director

Feminist addresses Pretoria women

FEMINIST author, Professor Diana Russell addressed a group of 120 Pretoria women (and a few men) in May on her new book, *Lives of Courage: Women For a New South Africa*.

This meeting was part of Idasa's on-going women's project which aims to get people, especially women, engaged in current political debates and to consider the contribution they can (and possibly should) make now towards the kind of democratic future we want to secure for all who live here.

Underlying this project is the belief that we should be concerned not only with national liberation, but also with the liberation of women, if we are to be part of a democratic society.

Diana Russell, a South African by birth, returned to this country from the US in 1987 to undertake the research which culminated in *Lives of Courage*. She interviewed 60 women political activists in the South African anti-apartheid movement - women from all racial and ethnic groups who ranged in age from 18 to 82. Twenty four of these interviews were selected for inclusion in the book and represent many different organisations.

Russell looked at how women's experience of struggle differed from the experience of men; how women often had to work against sexism before their contribution could be effective. In particular, women face the emotional trauma of trying to hold together families, jobs and political activity.

Among those who have com-

mented on the book is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who said of these women: "They are not prepared to wait for matters to be decided for them. Their stories utterly refute those who believe an individual cannot make a difference."

Dr Mamphela Ramphele, co-author of *Uprooting Poverty* had this to say about the book: "By focusing on women as individuals rather than as mothers,

as wives, and as daughters, *Lives of Courage* makes a valuable contribution. In doing so, it differs from the usual way that women are perceived in South Africa and puts the issue of women as people on the national agenda."

Russell concluded her talk with a quote from her interview with Helen Joseph: "Out of my participation in the struggle, I have received so many incred-

ible riches in the way of friendships and sharing. It is all these experiences that have made me so convinced that we are walking toward the light at the end of the tunnel."

Jennifer Ferguson began and concluded the formal part of the evening in song, closing with her very moving and beautiful tribute to Irene Mkwai.

Kerry Harris
Regional Co-ordinator



The Pretoria team: Newcomer Kerry Harris (second from left) with Paul Zondo, Andre Zaaiman, Elizabeth Mahlangu and Ethel Ranamane



On course

THE Pretoria office is back to full strength with the recent appointment of Kerry Harris as regional co-ordinator.

Kerry replaces Lou-Marie Kruger who has received a Fulbright scholarship for study in the United States.

A former teacher and currently chairperson of the Black Sash in the Northern Transvaal, Kerry is a welcome addition to the Pretoria team.

Cholo better

IDASA'S Pretoria regional co-ordinators, Paul Zondo and Kerry Harris, recently visited Soshanguve community leader Theo Cholo at his home where he is recovering from a spell in hospital (See picture bottom left).

Mr Cholo, a leading ANC figure in Pretoria, spent 17 years on Robben Island. Idasa was pleased to hear that he was progressing well after receiving treatment for his leg - and we wish him a speedy recovery.