

Culture builds civic youth links

THE YOUTH and educational committees of the Manenberg Civic Association organised a cultural youth week from June 14 to 18.

The aim of the programme was to be an alternative programme for the June holidays. It also improved the working relationship between the youth and the MEM.

The programme included films, drama and music by the Nyanga Art Centre and a workshop organised by Grassroots.

The highlight was the remembrance of June 16 1976. A speaker delivered a paper on the implications of the President's Council's proposals. A youth member spoke on the significance of June 16.

The membership increased daily.

The planning group felt that more people had been made aware of the civic because of the programme.

A member of the group said: 'By strengthening the youth and educational movements, we have also strengthened

the civic.

'We will not make the same mistakes in future. The programme was a good learning experience for the organisation. A special programme for primary schoolchildren will be planned,' he said.

The youth has meetings on Wednesday at 7.30 p.m. at the Druivevlei Community Centre. The children's workshop is on Saturdays at 12.00.

MEM invited high school pupils to tuition classes on Saturdays at 9 a.m. at Manenberg Roman Catholic Church.

800 AT BLAC HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

Not enough facilities in area

WHO could have thought that a holiday programme for primary school children could have exposed so many of the problems we experience in our townships?

Early during June the Bishop Lavis Action Committee (BLAC) decided to organize a holiday programme for primary school children. Owing to the lack of recreational facilities in the township, the programme was considered an absolute necessity by the committee.

The programme took place between June 21 and 24 and included free film shows, essay competitions, a sports day and a visit from Molo Songololo (or "Molo Tökölössie", as one child said!)

Facilities

The first day of the programme provided the organisers with a big surprise (or was it a shock?). Children turned out in the hundreds for the programme - eight hundred to be more exact.

If one asks oneself why so many children turned up for the programme, one is confronted with the problems which daily face township children.

One such problem is caused by the fact that most township mothers are forced to go out to work to help make ends meet - and thus leaving their young children to their own devices for the better part of the day.

What complicates this problem even further is the fact that absolutely no recreational facilities (such as play parks) exist in the area, thus leaving thousands of children to play on the streets.

To many of these children BLAC'S holiday programme offered a welcome escape from having to spend their holidays playing in old

One such child, in a letter of thanks to BLAC said: "Hier naby ons is nie speelparke nie. Nou moet ek net by die huis bly. Maar vir al die mense van BLAC - baie dankie vir die lekker pret wat ons het" - Anneline Schuller (6 jr).

Hunger

Another reason why so many children could possibly have turned up for the programme, is that the BLAC served free soup on two days of the programme. HUNGER IS A POWERFUL FORCE. And let us not forget that Bishop Lavis has more than its fair share of underprivileged people!

The essay competition ("Ons dorp") organized by the children went off very well. Many children showed

remarkable insight into our everyday social problems.

"Die mense het nie elektrisiteit nie dan moet hulle nog hoë-rente betaal," said Trevor Maneveldt (9), in his essay.

On the day Molo Songololo presented its programme, more than 400 children turned up. According to a spokesperson, Molo had never before worked with so many children and did not have the apparatus to do so.

From the programme, two problems emerged. One was the fact that the children attending the programme virtually showed a total disregard for authority. In many cases they simply just refused to listen to the requests of the organizers. Here one is

tempted to ask what the present social system has done to our township children.

The other distressing problem which presented itself at the programme was the inability of the organizers to cater for the needs of all the children who attended the programme.

Though Blac realizes that it would be virtually impossible to cater effectively for such great numbers, something will definitely have to be done to improve the situation.



Elsies children learn and teach

CHILDREN in Avon Estate, Elsie's River, are generally weak in maths and English.

About three months ago the Avon Estate Tenants Association decided to tackle this problem by forming a children's group.

The local youth movement assisted in arranging teaching for the youngsters in the problem subjects.

It was also decided to organise a cultural week for the children during the first week of the June holidays.

The programme included drama, art, a coffee bar, film show, games and an outing.

The theme of the week was: If you don't know, learn; and if you do know, teach."

Nearly 200 children attended. In the week a parents' evening was held.

The Tenants Association chairman told the 50 parents who attended that they should not regard the children's group as a "dumping ground". The children were busy doing something constructive and needed their parents' support.

One of the highlights of the week was a play on "Pinkeyes" which the children put together themselves.

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