

Sew out instead of newsletter to
All members March 1976.

Comment on Photographic Exhibition
in large Court Room

BACK SASH CAPE WESTERN REGION

ANNUAL REPORT MARCH 1975 TO FEBRUARY 1976

OFFICE BEARER

Chairman	Mary Burton
Vice Chairmen	Barbara Brock Noël Robb
Alternate Vice Ch.	Ann Stekhoven
Secy. Secretary	Margaret Barker
Ex. Treasurer	Diana Andrews

REGIONAL COUNCILLORS

Dorothy Hacking, Mary Birt, Mary Coke, Anne Browne, Sheila
Flesch, Bergliot Dallas, Lily Herbstein, Candy Malherbe,
Mary Schurr.

MEMBERSHIP (at Feb. 1976) 434

BRANCHES

Town	Claremont	Rondebosch
	False Bay	Rosebank
	Gardens/Sea Point	Simon's Town
	Plumstead/Constantia	Wynberg
Country	Elgin	
	Somerset West	

Since the heady excitement of being host region to the 20th Anniversary National Conference, we have settled down to a busy routine. The Regional office sees a weekly meeting of the Regional Council, and a fairly steady stream of branch committee members keeping their branches in touch. Our all-branches meetings have been held monthly, and most branches meet once a month as well. We wish more members would attend the all-Branch meetings - we have tried holding them at different times of day, we have fascinating speakers almost every month, and yet still only a few members come each time. Branches can usually be depended on to send one or two representatives, but it would be far more encouraging to see more of all our members.

All-Branch speakers this year have been:

Dr. van Zyl Slabbert, M.P. on the franchise
Dr. A. Boraine, M.P. on Détente
A group of residents of Crossroads
Shirley Turner on International Women's Year - "A Step
towards Human Liberation"
Prof. Ivor Prinsloo on Housing
Mrs. Ann Russell of NICRO

The following speakers have addressed branch meetings:

Sister Doreen of the Order of the Holy Paraclete
Mrs. Herbstein on the Ciskei
Mrs. Zora Mehloakulu on Labour Problems
Rev. David Russell on Crossroads
Rev. David Russell on Detainees
Mr. David Dallas on legal aspects of squatting
Miss Dorothy Aitken on Housing in Somerset West
Rev. Des Adendorff on the Churches Urban Planning Commission
Mr. Brian Stuart on the rôle of the press in forming public
opinion
Mrs. Judy Greenlees on Australian Aborigines
Judy Davies and Laurine Platzky on Feminism

I am very grateful to ~~the branch committees~~ for their hard work during the year, in planning and carrying ~~out~~ their branch activities, in all the ~~effort~~ that went into the National Conference, and also to all those who worked so hard for our Morning Market, particularly the heroic convener, Buntj Aitchison. The final total was R5964,98.

Particular thanks must go to all our Regional Councillors, to Noël Robb and Ann Stekhoven who took over while I was away, and to them as well as to Barbara Brock for their unfailing support and advice. Margaret Barker as Hon. Secretary has been largely responsible for the work of the region for this past year as for many previous ones, and her resignation this year (to give more time to her teaching commitments) is a serious loss. Diana Andrews has handled the unenviable job of Treasurer for us and we are very grateful. Mary Graham, our office secretary, has seen us steadily ~~through~~ the year, and we are very sorry that she too has resigned - but we hope to welcome her on to the Regional Council.

We do indeed hope to have many more members on the Regional Council this year. Candy Malherbe and Anne Browne, who were both new members this year, have been invaluable, and since they are standing for re-election they can't have found it too taxing! We really need new members urgently, and half a dozen at least would mean a lighter load for everyone.

At the end of February we shall be moving into our new office at 5 Long Street, Mowbray, in the building recently purchased by the Institute of Race Relations. We look forward to the move and to being in close touch with the Advice Office.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION - FOCUS ON HOUSING

This collection of remarkable photographs, mainly taken by Caro Andrews, and the accompanying information collected by Anne Finsen, was shown for three days in October 1975 in the Cathedral Hall, Cape Town. The film "Notice to Quit" was shown on the opening night and a variety of speakers on different aspects of housing were invited to address audiences during the other two days. Margaret Barker and her team of organisers performed wonders to make this a very professional exhibition. In February 1976 the same exhibition was mounted in St. Martin's Church Hall, Bergvliet, C.P. thanks to the organisation of Bridget Scoble and members of the Plumstead/Constantia and False Bay branches. Jane Prinsloo, one of the speakers during the first showing, came again to talk to a new audience, and Mary Birt carried out a project relevant to the photographs with the Sunday School of St. Martin's. We hope to take the photographs with us to National Conference.

DRILL HALL EXHIBITION

This has been well reported on in the October regional newsletter.

NATIONAL CONVENTION OF WOMEN

Noël Robb and Eulalie Stott attended the conference. Noël Robb will report on her impressions at the March All Branches. Sheena Duncan's report appeared in the latest issue of SASH.

PROJECTS

After National Conference we set ourselves some fairly high goals. Towards some of these we have gone a long way - the work on housing and squatters has been a strong thread running through the whole year's work, and the study group formed to look at African Nationalism has done some interesting reading, attended lectures by Prof. David Welsh, and produced a report for National Conference.

We paid our official visit to the University of the Western Cape - and very interesting it was - and we played our part in a large non-racial ecumenical service at St. George's Cathedral on Mothers' Day. The 'literature table' held in Claremont on 19th September proved a valuable way to disseminate our publications, and we plan to repeat it. On the other hand we made no progress on a study of Social Benefits, and Pensions, nor on working for literacy, or on getting young people of all races together, nor on involving Black people in our projects. We talked last year at Regional Conference about an "Operation Country Districts" but that too remains on our "pending" list.

This brings me to one project which we feel is very important - the regular visiting of the Courts. As long ago as June 1975 Moira Henderson was urging members to attend the Langa Courts; Bergliot Dallas and Mary Birt planned a chart and a system for organising volunteers to go, and yet there was a dearth of volunteers. Appropriate to this appeal is the following quotation from Cherry Michelman's book "The Black Sash of South Africa":

"The Black Sash has appealed to those who support it precisely because it is safe, conservative, and respectable. They are middle-class women who, although they have enlarged their social vision and deepened their political awareness far beyond the South African average, are not prepared for different or greater commitments. Most of them are no more professional politicians than they are martyrs or philosophers. They are housewives and career women whose organizational responsibilities must fit in with domestic and community responsibilities. As liberals, they actively support the other surviving liberal organizations which, in turn, support their efforts. But they cannot initiate large-scale, ambitious projects even if they are feasible under the law. Black Sash leaders believe, for instance, that the Black Sash members could still serve a valuable purpose by attending the magistrates' courts and trying to get more than summary justice for Africans who are victims of mass arrests. Such a programme is not considered feasible by the leadership, however, because the Black Sash cannot get volunteers for it. Attendance at these courts is depressing, boring, frustrating, and difficult; and women are not ready to volunteer to attend their sessions even though they may be sincerely and deeply opposed to mass arrests, mass trials, and all injustice. This is a practical example of how far short of martyrdom their commitment stops."

We do ask everyone who possibly could, to give up one morning a month to attend either the Langa Courts or, if there is an Advice Office case being heard somewhere else, to be willing to go to that. It may be boring, hard to hear, difficult to understand, but your very presence makes a difference.

GRAPEVINE

Mary Coke, our central grapeviner, is a key person in our organisation. She starts the messages about stands or other projects on their way to all our members. If branch grapevine contacts are going to be away, if only for a few days, please will they find a replacement, and let Mary Coke know in advance - it would save her time, money and trouble. This is a very vital link and it must be kept operative at all times.

LETTERS TO THE PRESS

Coloured Representative Council Bill
Indian Students at Hewat Training College
Squatters
Race Classification
Le Grange Commission and the Christian Institute
Re the banning of the Black Sash from the Drill Hall Exhibition

Terrorism Act
 Drill Hall Exhibition
 Terrorism Act
 Terrorism Act
 "Black Sash Focus"
 Squatters - Lilian Peters (in Afrikaans)
 Human Rights Day
 Opening of Parliament

STANDS & WALKABOUTS

Banning - posters and pamphlets
 Coloured Persons Representative Council - pamphlets only
 Détente - posters and pamphlets
 Banning - posters

Terrorism Act - posters and pamphlets
 Detentions - posters and pamphlets
 Opening of Parliament - posters and pamphlets

M. Burton

16th February 1976

Mrs. H. Burton
Chairman

*Piscom - walkabout
 Banning stand*

NOTICES

CHANGE OF REGIONAL OFFICE ADDRESS Please note that the office is moving on Thursday 26th February to 5 Long Street, Mowbray, 7700. The telephone department has not yet told us if the number will be the same nor when the telephone will be transferred. The Institute of Race Relations no. is 6-6645 and we can be reached, if it is urgent, on that number.

MINI-MARKETS - Greenmarket Square has been provisionally booked for a mini-market on 9th April and 10th September. Volunteers are required to man the stall on 9th April. Branch Chairmen are requested to notify the office of the names of those willing to help. All members are asked to collect rummage for the sale.

Collection Depot: Candy Ma lherbe, Rooi Dak, Baker St. Kenilworth.

INFORMATION TABLES - a tentative booking has been made for 6th April to set up an information table in Claremont (10am - 1pm). Publications and pamphlets may be distributed but not sold unless special application is made to hold a street market. Volunteers are needed to serve at the table. Mrs. Stokhoven will convene this. Her telephone no. is 77-1855

ALL BRANCHES MEETINGS FOR 1976 - please diarise now

March 1st	Callow House	9.30am	Mrs. Robb - International Convention of Women
April 12th	Mrs. Robb's	8pm	Report back on National Conf.
May 3rd	Callow House	2pm	
June 7th	Mrs. Burton's	8pm	Peta Lomborg on PARPA
August 2nd	Callow House	9.30 a m	
Sept. 6th	Callow House	2pm	
October 11th	Mrs. Robb's	8pm	
November 1st	Callow House	9.30am	
November 29th	" "	2pm	