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INFORM

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Waltloo Group Training Centre is in the east of Pretoria, in the industrial area near Mamelodi. It is one of eight centres in South Africa to train the employees of, especially, small industrialists. The other centres are in Benoni, Bloemfontein, Krugersdorp, Port Elizabeth, Pinetown, Vanderbijlpark and Boskop (already featured in Informa â\200\224 Ed.). At Waltloo alone 2 700 people were trained for better positions in the industry in 1981, while 3 200 students are expected in 1982.

The Waltloo Group Training Centre became a reality after the Chamber of Industries had approached the Government at the request of various industrialists. It was difficult for small industrialists to establish their own training facilities while the bigger industrialists could easily do their own training. The government voted the money for the plot and buildings. The plot was, however, later given by Chrysler. Planning and building started in 1975 and on 1 April 1977 the first course started at Waltloo In-service Training Centre (now Group Training Centre).

The centre is managed by a board representing the various industrialist organisations, such as the Building Industries Federation, Civil Engineers Federation, Motor Industries Federation, Iron and Steel Federation, Chamber of Industries, Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (Institute of Commerce) and co-opted members such as Siemens and Mercedes Benz who gave vehicles.

The centre is based on an open system. The various organisations can run their own courses, using their own lecturers, or they can request the centre to start a course. Lecturers from the University of Pretoria, for example, run a supervisor's course and a course for storemen which they have planned themselves. The centre has nine White and three Black instructors.

Article: lise Davis
Photos: Ruby van Collier

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The training offered is registered under the Training of Manpower Act. The centre runs 28 basic courses, including: Building trade â\200\224 steelfixing, concrete assistant, concrete mixer operator, concrete dumper operator, and carpentry; motor industry â\200\224 repairshop assistant, service bay attendant, forecourt attendant, small plant maintenance, fork-lift operators, and professional driver; general courses â\200\224 clerk, security officer, and salesman; iron and steel industry â\200\224 various welding courses and basic hand skills. Other courses include tractor maintenance, pipe-fitter and pipe-welder, and first aid and safety. A training course for radio and television technicians is starting soon.

1. Mr Sarel Swanepoel helps a student in the welding hall
(82-281-1)

2. The director of Waltloo centre, Mr J. J. Potgieter, and the training manager, Mr H. J. L. Badenhorst, at a vehicle used for training (82-282-9)

3. The driving instructor, Mr K. Pieterse, performs an eye test on a candidate (82-282-2)

4. Students on the repairshop assistant's course receive theoretical training. The room is filled with tools and spare parts since students receive their practical training there as well (82-281-4)

INFORMA July, 1982 11

The courses are compiled by the various industrial organisations in consultation with industrialists. All the courses are approved by the Department of Manpower. They are brought up to date and revised to meet the many needs of industrialists. Recently the motor industry, for example, withdrew their courses for revision.

The motto of the centre Discendo Crescimus (Growth through knowledge) is not only applicable to the students who leave the centre better equipped but also to the number of students and courses. Students and courses grew from 146 and nine, respectively, in 1977 to 2700 and 311 in 1981. The welding courses were the most popular in 1981. It seems the professional driver courses will be the most popular this year, since 62 men registered in the first two months of 1982.

Although the Government voted R1,4-million this year for extensions, the centre is self-supporting with the course fees the largest source of income. The salesman's course, for example, runs for two weeks and costs R200 a candidate. Accommodation is available, at R30 a week, for the students in the new hostel in Mamelodi.

Most students attend the centre at the expense of their respective employers. An increasing number of candidates, however, register at their own expense. For example, eight out of 100 students enrolled themselves for a week's course. The Director of Waltloo Group Training Centre, Mr J. Potgieter, is most enthusiastic about the training of the unemployed which starts soon. The Government will pay all the expenses.

Since 1981 all races have been trained at the group training centres. The majority are Black men. There is no discrimination against women wishing to attend a course at the centre. The Government uses the centre's training facilities. The Department of Environmental Affairs and the Department of Posts and Telecommunications have sent candidates. Each candidate who

passes the course receives a neat certificate.

Any employer who sends some staff to the centre is entitled to a tax concession of 200 per cent for transport, accommodation and training expenses. According to Mr Potgieter, this is to stimulate many firms who are reluctant to send their employees for training. They reason that in times of affluence there is not time for training as the work cannot come to a stand-still, and when the economy is bad they reason production must continue, therefore training cannot be done either.

There are, however, many industrialists and firms who have the perspective to evaluate their own needs and thereby provide their employees with the opportunity for a better future and an easier way to earn their daily living. O

5. Students at Waltloo centre are thoroughly trained to handle machinery and tools (82-51-4)

6. Students on the carpentry course are taught the basics of wood work (82-281-9)

7. A student on the masonry course. Alevelis always athand (82-283-10)

8. The timber shuttering course lasts three weeks. Those on courses are provided with overalls and safety helmets (82-283-1)

9. The professional driverâ\200\231s course is most popular this year (82-51-2)

INFORMA July, 1982 13

Sowetoâ\200\231s
school for
gifted
children

Article: Irma Engelbrecht
Photos: Leon Sachse

The Soweto Saturday School
was officially opened on 1 May in
the Soweto Teachersâ\200\231 Training
College. On this cool autumn day
there was joy written on the faces of
about 200 children who gathered
round for breakfast before the start
of the proceedings.

The Soweto Saturday School is
an enrichment school for gifted
children. Who is the gifted child? In
his D.Ed. thesis, Dr J. K. Craig
said this in 1976: â\200\234To equalise the
term â\200\230giftedâ\200\231 with â\200\230highly intelligentâ\200\231,
is to do injustice to â\200\230giftedâ\200\231 because
â\200\230giftedâ\200\231 is a far broader concept. To
be â\200\230highly intelligentâ\200\231 is without
doubt an important factor of â\200\230giftedâ\200\231
but it is also without doubt not the
only one. A total profile of the child
or adult is needed to determine if a
given child or adult is â\200\230giftedâ\200\231, as
much as it is needed when it has to
be determined if a child has to be
classified mentally retarded or not.

â\200\234Some of the other elements
that have to be considered, except
for a series IQ-counts of an
individual intelligence test, are ori-
ginality, spontaneity, creativity,
perseverance, social adaptability,
scholastic achievement and artistic
talent in the broadest sense.â\200\235

Mr J. Strijdom, director of the
Transvaal branch of the Depart-
ment of Education and Training,
whose brainchild the school was,
said at the opening that children
were most important. For him it was
the biggest challenge of his long
career in education to achieve
something in the Soweto region.
There was need for a development

14 INFORMA July, 1982

teachers are paid by Barclays Bank. Mr Strijdom thanked Barclays at the opening, because, he said: "without financial backing a project like this is not possible."

The teachers are Miss J. Dunne, Miss B. Goldstein and Mr N. Taylor, who respectively teach science, English and communication, and mathematics. Mr Edkins teaches general knowledge, which includes chess, how to use a library, public speech, etc. He also invites guest speakers to address the children on a given subject in the general knowledge class.

The purpose of the school is not to give extra school lessons, but rather to stimulate the pupils. Therefore the English class includes communication. The pupils are also taken to movie shows and theatrical productions. Furthermore

16 INFORMA July, 1982

they work with applied mathematics and science, and are also taken on excursions to learn more of these two subjects as they are applied in the modern world.

The pupils have already been on two camps. The purpose of these camps is to motivate the pupils, give guidance and to discipline them. They also learnt how to play chess.

Dr J. K. Craig said the following in his article "The treatment of the gifted child", published in 1979: "As for the gifted child himself (and the other sex is included everytime) it is most important that he is taught to accept himself for what he is, to accept his giftedness with modesty and pride as a gift out of God's hand." During the opening of the Soweto Saturday School this fact

6. Pupils of the Soweto Saturday School have their breakfast in the early morning-sun

was stressed. An attempt is made to guide the pupils in such a way that they will one day be both leaders and responsible citizens who care for their fellowman and environment.

Mr Edkins said these pupils were probably the businessmen, engineers and technicians of the future. He also said: "Even if only 100 of our 200 starters turn out as doctors, dentists or businessmen, that will be tremendous; at least we will have given them the opportunity to go beyond their normal schooling."

programme that would change the face of education of this region. Mr Strijdom started his scheme with a development programme for teachers.

Furthermore, he found that there were children among the youth of Soweto who were ready and mature for enrichment. He realised there was a need for an enrichment programme for the pupils of this area. He contacted Mr Sellschop of Star Schools and together they started the Soweto Saturday School. The principal of the school is Mr S. Edkins, principal of Port Elizabeth's Grey High School before retirement. Mr Edkins was so enthusiastic about the project that he again started working.

In 1981 a selection process was started. As there does not exist an IQ-test for Blacks, academic achievement, as well as achievement in other areas were especially taken into consideration. About 12 000 St 5 pupils wrote aptitude tests. There were then 200 pupils selected to become pupils of the school for gifted children in St 6. At the moment there are four classes with 50 pupils each, which will every year increase with 200 standard sixes until there will be 1 000 pupils in 1986.

At the moment there are three teachers, who, as numbers increase, will grow to 20. The

1. The Soweto College of Education's choir sang beautifully at the opening of the school on 1 May (82-414-6)

2. Mr Watson, of Barclays Bank, said at the opening they were glad they could play a part in the leadership of the country by financing the project (82-415-6)

3. Mr Msisi, master of ceremonies at the opening of the Soweto Saturday School, said brilliant children were a gift of God that should be fully developed (82-415-5)

4. Mr S. Edkins, headmaster of the school, was so excited about the project that he came out of retirement to direct the project. Right is Mr Strijdom (82-414-1)

5. Mr Jaap Strijdom, director of the Transvaal section of the Department of Education and Training, at the opening of Soweto's school for gifted children (82-414-9)

INFORMA July, 1982 15