

OPENING OF "OUR BLIND WEEK - ONS WEEK VIR BLINDES" : FRIDAY, 3RD MAY 1968, 3 PM

MNR. CUTTEN, (MEDE RAADSLEDE?), DAMES EN HERE:

Mrs Le Grange A3/82

MAG EK U ALMAL VANMIDDAG NAMENS DIE STAD JOHANNESBURG HARTLIK
VERWELKOM BY DIE OPENING VAN „ONS WEEK VIR BLINDES“. DIE PRYSWAAARDIGE
WERK VAN DIE „SUID-AFRIKAANSE NASIONALE RAAD VIR BLINDES" HET, NA MY
~~AANSIENS~~, GEEN VERKLARINGS OF VERDUIDELIKKINGS NODIG NIE.

JOHANNESBURG VERWELKOM ALTYD ALLE POGINGS OM DIE LAS VAN DIE
BLINDES TE VERLIG. SODOENDE DEUR U SKEMA „ONS WEEK VIR BLINDES" KAN DIE
PUBLIEK SELF SIEN WAT ALLES GEDOEN WORD EN BEREIK WORD IN VERBAND OM
~~ARBEID~~, MEER EN BETER HOSPITALE EN MEER NAVORSING IN VERBAND MET BLINDES
TE VERSKAF VIR BLINDE MANS EN VROUENS VAN ALLE RASSE.

NOT MANY PEOPLE REALISE THAT FROM THIS VERY SPOT WHERE WE ARE NOW
STANDING THE FIRST UNIT OF THE BUREAU FOR THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS OF THE
SOUTH/...

SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND WAS LAUNCHED ON OCTOBER 16, 1952. SINCE THEN THE UNIT HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED IN JOHANNESBURG ON THREE OCCASIONS - NOT COUNTING TODAY. ADVANTAGE WAS TAKEN OF THOSE OPPORTUNITIES TO EXHIBIT PHOTOGRAPHS OF WORK DONE BY THE MOBILE UNIT IN THE BANTU RESERVES.

THE FIRST MOBILE UNIT SET OFF IN 1952, ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FOR EYE TREATMENT AMONG BANTU IN RURAL AREAS. SINCE THEN THERE HAVE BEEN 113 OF SUCH NATION-WIDE TOURS.

SO FAR 170,674 EYE EXAMINATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.

BY FAR THE MOST PREVALENT IS "TRACHOMA" : 33,561 CASES.

10,187 CASES OF INFLAMATION OF THE EYES, 8,391 CASES OF CATARACT DIAGNOSED RESULTING IN 4,296 OPERATIONS BEING PERFORMED.

THE/...

THE UNIT HAS BEEN BETTER FAVOURED BY FORTUNE THAN EFFORTS SO FAR TO OBSERVE "OUR BLIND WEEK - ONS WEEK VIR BLINDES" IN JOHANNESBURG. THE ATTEMPT IN 1951 TO ESTABLISH THIS ON A TRIENNIAL BASIS FAILED, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF THE TIME LAG BETWEEN THE PROPOSED OBSERVANCES. THE PRESENT EFFORT IS TO BE ON AN ANNUAL BASIS AND, IF THE FACT THAT THE PRESENT WEEK EXTENDS OVER 12 DAYS IS ANY CRITERION OF THE ENTHUSIASM OF THE PRESENT COMMITTEE, THE WEEK HAS COME TO STAY THIS TIME.

CONTRARY TO GENERAL BELIEF, "OUR BLIND WEEK" IS NOT AN INTERNATIONAL OBSERVANCE AND ITS HISTORY DOES NOT GO BACK VERY FAR. THE INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE ROYAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND
IN/...

IN BRITAIN SAYS THAT IT OWES ITS ORIGIN IN BRITAIN TO THE DETERMINATION OF THE JEWISH BLIND SOCIETY THERE TO TELL THE BRITISH PUBLIC OF THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF ITS WORK. THIS IS THE ONLY BLIND WELFARE ORGANISATION IN BRITAIN TO HOLD A "BLIND WEEK" REGULARLY.

WHEN LAST A "BLIND WEEK" WAS HELD IN JOHANNESBURG FOUR LOCAL BLIND WELFARE SOCIETIES CO-OPERATED. THIS TIME THERE ARE TEN AND THE SPONSORS ARE PARTICULARLY PLEASED ^{BY} ~~AT~~ THE FACT THAT BOTH THE ST. JOHN EYE HOSPITAL AND THE COL. ROWLAND HOME FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND AGED AT BEDFORD VIEW ARE TAKING PART, ALTHOUGH NEITHER IS AFFILIATED TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND, AS THE OTHER EIGHT ARE.

NOT ONLY ARE LUNCH-HOUR TALKS BEING GIVEN IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO LET THE PUBLIC KNOW WHAT THE BLIND ARE DOING FOR THEMSELVES AND WHAT THE PUBLIC/...

PUBLIC IS HELPING THEM TO DO, BUT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ARE BEING GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY OF SEEING FOR THEMSELVES BY MEANS OF A SERIES OF "OPEN DAYS" WHERE WHAT IS BEING ACHIEVED AND WHAT MORE COULD BE ACHIEVED BOTH IN THE WAY OF SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT FOR BLIND MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL RACES AND ALSO IN THE OPEN LABOUR MARKET.

THE VARIOUS BLIND WELFARE SOCIETIES WORK IN CLOSE CO-OPERATION WITH THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS - THE DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PENSIONS, BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT, COLOURED AFFAIRS, INDIAN AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND EDUCATION.

THE PREVIOUS "BLIND WEEK" COMMITTEE INVITED REEF MAYORS AND MAYORESSES TO THE OFFICIAL OPENING AND APPEALED TO THEM TO GET SIMILAR COMMITTEES/...

COMMITTEES GOING IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS. NOTHING CAME OF THAT.
ON THIS OCCASION THE REEF IS NOT REPRESENTED BUT IF THE COMMITTEE FEELS
THAT IT IS SUFFICIENTLY WELL ESTABLISHED IN JOHANNESBURG IT MIGHT CONSIDER
GOING FURTHER AFIELD AS THERE IS NOT ONE REEF TOWN THAT IS WITHOUT ITS
QUOTA OF BLIND PERSONS OF ONE COLOUR OR ANOTHER.

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