

Wednesday August 31

Ken was up first, showered and shaved and did some outlining for today and tomorrow for our workshop with teachers and school officials. We had breakfast and Robert picked us up at 9:00. Debbie Botha was waiting for us when we got there. She has been hosting us since Burtus wasn't there. Each of their secretaries has been very helpful as well. We are constantly being served tea.

We went to our respective offices to do email. At 11:00 we went to Cynthia's office where we talked with her for about 1 ½ hours. They have a huge project with the education department of Gauteng province, which includes Johannesburg and Victoria. It is a massive staff development program. Debbie sat in on the meeting and took notes. She is in charge of materials and course development for Read. We talked about professional development, how to help the teacher trainers work with teachers. We told them about CELT, suggested and talked about people like Brian Campbell and Jan Turbill; Margaret Spencer, Henrietta Domby, Myra Barrs. We promised we would get Henrietta to write to her about her study of working with remedial readers. Cynthia seemed pleased with our interactions. We had wonderful food again for lunch with Cynthia and Debbie. We then went off to do our workshop at 2:00.

The teachers were given a snack and drinks. There was a display of Read materials and they were for sale. And we started our workshop.

The first part of the workshop focused on multiple roads and early literacy development. Ken played the short video clips he downloaded from the camera the night before. We had a little trouble getting the sound going but eventually it worked. The participants were engaged and enjoyed and understood the samples we used. We used letters written by the Soweto kids and there was quite some interaction about the power of the letters. We talked about invention and convention, making sense of reading and kidwatching.

The second part of the workshop focused on the reading process. They did Boat in the basement and Ken took them through the two views of reading. Cynthia and Debbie were very pleased with the responses.

Robert took us back to Irene's house. We had tea and dinner. Irene went out for dinner. We watched the terrible damage to New Orleans and the southern coast of the U.S. on t.v. and had more tea. We wrote in the diary and then planned for Thursday afternoon's workshop.



Thursday September 1, Johannesburg and Read Foundation

According to some it is the first day of spring here. It has been pleasant during the day and a little chilly at night. We got up about 6:30, got dressed, had breakfast. Ken worked on downloading pictures and Yetta organized overheads and worked on one of her articles. We went into Read with Irene who had a meeting with the Advisory (Budgetary) board. We went with



Edward to the Apartheid Museum. It seems to be on the grounds of the Gold Reef theme park but it is a separate building and entrance. Thomas took us there and picked us up after.

The building is a very unique one. There are segregated entrances for white, colored and black. Then you go through an area where there are life size photographs encased in clear plastic. Each of these represent one ethnic or racial group in South Africa and when you enter the museum

each has a shadow box representing that person's group family history and influence on South Africa. There is a representation of the Jewish community. They say that there were 6,000 Jewish people in the olden days. The museum is organized more or less chronologically. Edward shared many of his personal experiences as we went through. In addition to the history on the walls, there were video displays throughout that showed real life experiences that had been originally done in film or on video.



A key point in ending apartheid was when the government tried to impose Afrikaans into the township schools. The students rebelled and developed their own revolutionary organizations in response to the apartheid government. Edward was principal of a high school in Soweto and head of the principal's organization there. There were impressive walls with the many posters that were used in the propaganda war during the insurrection. Irene Manell's cousin, Helen Sussman, is represented in a couple of places including being a voice of dissent in Parliament. Irene ran her campaign .

We returned to Read and had a well prepared lunch with the Advisory board. Irene asked us to say a few words. We told them we were impressed with the children that we worked with and the Read staff. They were interested in what we had to say and asked various questions. A high school principal from KwaZulu-Natal asked about assessment and teacher's responses. Other members wanted to know about our view differed from the traditional. There was a thoughtful discussion.



We then went to do our second workshop with the teachers. We focused on How to Build on the Strengths of the Learners. We got the group to meet in groups to list the strengths of their children. With few exceptions the groups produced outstanding lists of their learner's strengths. They talked about the ease with which they used and learned multiple languages; their almost naive eagerness for learning; their abilities with drama, art and music; their tendencies to be well behaved and cooperative

and more.

Ken did his Easy/ Hard for language learning. We shifted to roles of teachers and discussed teacher's as kidwatchers and curriculum supporters. The teachers were served lunch before they came and we ended about 5:00, went back to Irene's and had dinner, watched the devastation of New Orleans on TV. We downloaded pictures worked on papers and went to bed.



Friday September 2

We worked together with the materials development staff until lunch time, when Cynthia joined us. They shared their projects us and we reacted to them. Our discussion ranged from materials development, multiple languages and cultures, supporting teachers through professional development, bringing others such as Brian Cambourne and Jan Turbill to Read to keep their momentum going. They seemed to be appreciative of our responses and very responsive to our suggestions.

Robert took us to the African Market where we had been the previous Sunday with Jim. There had been a shooting at the Mall and the Mall had been closed all day since. It opened up as we arrived. We spent an hour in the Market finding additional presents. Ken looked for a walking stick. We bought necklaces, imbeli dolls, and earrings, etc. We then went back to Irene's to rest up for about an hour.

We had called Pippa Stein for theatre tickets. Her husband is the artistic director for the Market theatre and he directed a version of an old play called Sophia Town. We were to meet her for tickets at the theatre at 7:30. Since we heard that there were restaurants near the Theatre, we decided to eat there. Robert drove us. He made sure we were in the right place. We found the Market Theatre. There were two restaurants in the same complex as the theatre. It is a structure built from the old vegetable market. We had dinner at MoMo's which serves up scale African food. Ken had a lamb dish and Yetta had chicken. We were served four tiny little loaves of bread with small dishes of dips (humous, olive oil, a chili paste and a pepper nut dish).

We just stepped down into the theatre area and Pippa was there with tickets. We also met Yvonne and Michael Reed who would drive us back to Irene's after the play. Yvonne set up our presentation at Wits. Hillary Jenks who we also met at Wits, who knew our work and knows Jerry Harste, sat next to us during the play interpreting when she thought necessary. Early in the play it was hard to follow the multi-lingual dialogue but we got used to it as we went along.

The play was a period piece that grew out of experimental theatre. It's called Sophiatown because that is an area where intellectual, artistic and gangster blacks and some whites and colored lived prior to apartheid. The play is funny and caustic. There is good music and dance totally a capella. The play is in English although music and code switching in Afrikaans and African languages occurred. Essentially the play is about the forced removal of blacks from the cities to

townships in this case from JoBerg and Sophiatown to Maryland. In the play a journalist writing for Drum Magazine advertises for a Jewish girl to come to live in town so he could do a story about that. The cast includes eight people consisting of the mother and her daughter, a precocious 16 year old school girl. Her son who supports the family by being in a gang called Americans and his girl friend, the journalist, the Jewish girl and a friend of theirs who is a number runner. Charlie is a colored gofer for the gangster. It was opening night for the play, there was an exposition of the history of Sophiatown and the play on the second floor. The audience was very mixed but like almost all the venues we've been in the majority of people are black.

We got about 11:15 and went to bed.

Saturday September 3

We got up without an alarm about 7:00 and had breakfast. We gave Faience \$20.00 American and Wilhelmina R200. Yetta gave her one of the conference bags which she appreciated very much, too. Irene took us to a local mall and then to another African crafts shop. We bought more gifts. We came back to the house. We had lunch with Irene and her step brother, who owns radio and t.v. stations in France. He lives in Florida too.

We worked on the diary and otherwise spent a quiet afternoon. When we sent a message to the family before we left asking whether anyone knew family members in South Africa, Stanley Robboy said his step daughter was working with orphans in South Africa. Her name is Tanya Meyer. We called her earlier in the week and since she keeps the Shabat, we arranged to meet her at a kosher restaurant at 8:00 tonight. We invited Irene to join us.

We met Tanya at the BarRio restaurant. It didn't look like any kosher restaurant we'd ever seen. When we arrived we had to ask the person at the door if they had a reservation for Tanya and if we were in a kosher restaurant. The waiter/maitre de said yes and sat us at our table. Tanya was a bit late. The waiters were all black Africans with hats on their heads. We saw a few men with yarmelkes on their heads. Over the evening the restaurant filled up with couples and groups and the many men had yarmelkes or hats on their heads.



The group looked more modern orthodox than Hasidic. When I asked Tanya what she believed in, she said she was working that out and didn't know yet how far she will go into orthodoxy. Being in South Africa away from people who know her she can explore that issue better. She has many friends in South Africa and seems committed to what she



wants to do. Although she is also interested in Israel and Switzerland, too. She seems to be working in social service agencies but also interested in the management side of the process. She is a very pretty woman, friendly and outgoing. We had good food (lamb, mutton, chicken, pumpkin ravioli), good conversation and stayed around until after 12:00. We came back to Irene's and went to sleep.

Sunday September 4

Breakfasted, packed and spent the time reading newspapers, writing in the diary and talking to Irene. Her son Rick and family came for lunch. Both of Irene's daughters-in-law were much interested in our ideas on education. Robert picked us up at 3:00.

We got to the Johannesburg airport and boarded our plane that evening without much trouble and no delay.

The plane was very full for the six hour flight to Accra Ghana but no new passengers boarded there so it was less full to Dulles in Washington. We slept fitfully in the cramped seats for a good deal of the 10 hour flight.

Monday September 5.

We flew on American airlines to DFW and then on to Tucson. We got a slightly earlier connection in DFW arriving about 4:30 pm in Tucson.

Impressions of Johannesburg and Read Foundation

There is a lot of use of servants mostly black. Irene has butler and cook, a maid and a gardener. She also has a staff at her house at Capetown and a part time secretary. Cynthia also has a male cook, and a maid. We don't know how prevalent this is in all economic classes. We are picked up by a contract driver daily. Read also has people who cook and clean and drive folks around. They also have staff members who are black and colored. One of the things that is very obvious and that several people have told us is that you can't judge relations between the races here from perspectives of race relations in the U.S. All of our experiences have shown people to be open and very friendly. There seems to have been dialog between the various ethnic groups even during the worst part of apartheid.

There is great concern always about security. Homes are behind electric gates and cars are kept empty and parked in carefully guarded places to avoid theft. As in Latin America there are self appointed car watchers who will watch cars for a few rand.

Irene Menell as we've probably said already is a fascinating woman. Her guest book and the people who have stayed in the bedroom where we are include many famous folks. She has talked about Bobby and Ethel Kennedy and still maintains contact with Ethel. She and her husband were good friends of and visited Max Fisher in Detroit. She met Coleman Young, Henry Ford II and his obnoxious Italian wife. In every conversation not only is she knowledgeable about many topics but knows the leading people in those areas.

We found out that the government is elected by proportional representation of each party which produces racial balance but leaves each member without a constituency. The liberals who

played a role in Parliament prior to the end of apartheid seem to have become irrelevant to the process. There are many parties although the main two are the ANC in a coalition with the communists and the Trade Union Council and the Democratic National Party also in a coalition.

Although many older people did not get an education it seems that all children are in school through secondary school even if they fail, especially in the big cities. Rural areas have more complexity and more problems in terms of schools and languages and curriculum.

We have a more complete view of the Read Foundation than we did when we were planning to come here. As Jim tried to explain, it does very good work with teacher education, follow up and materials development. There are teacher leaders who visit schools fairly regularly to keep the new ideas going. They are writing materials in English and African languages although much of their work are translations of the Sunshine books and others. Joy Cowley and Margaret Spencer have been here.

General reactions to the trip: South Africa is certainly an exciting place now. We got a real sense of optimism. They have somehow managed to find a balance between their revolutionary goals and the maintenance and building of a strong economy. It is strange that all groups including the CPSA (communist party which is part of a ruling coalition) and the corporate interests seem to be able to work together for common goals. There are good highways and infrastructure at least as we experienced them. There are lots of late model cars of Asian, European , and American manufacture. Prices for us were moderate. They have certainly made progress in integrating the African population and respecting language and cultures. Their goal is a rainbow society. The game parks (judging by Kruger) are wonderful and easily accessed and used. There are not very good adjustments for handicapped folks in the Parks or in South Africa in general. South Africa can make a difference for all of Africa.