

On a ten-year high

directed by Hinkson.

And in 1984, the Pinelands residents in particular were anticipating another entertaining drama from their own players. They were not disappointed. The curtain opened on *Teacher Teacher*, a splendid show of theatre craftsmanship and wit.

They were back again with *Idlers Hall* in 1986, and *High Rise* the next year. Of the latter, so powerful was the message that the *Daily Nation* noted in its February 3 edition: "... the folk from the

area have a new medium of self-expression to say what they feel, the best way they know how and in more profound language than associated with sport and other fields of endeavour (of the Pinelands people)."

Big moment

That year, some people might have said that the big moment for Pinelands Creative Workshop came when it was included in the Central Bank of Barbados' arts festival *City Nights* at which

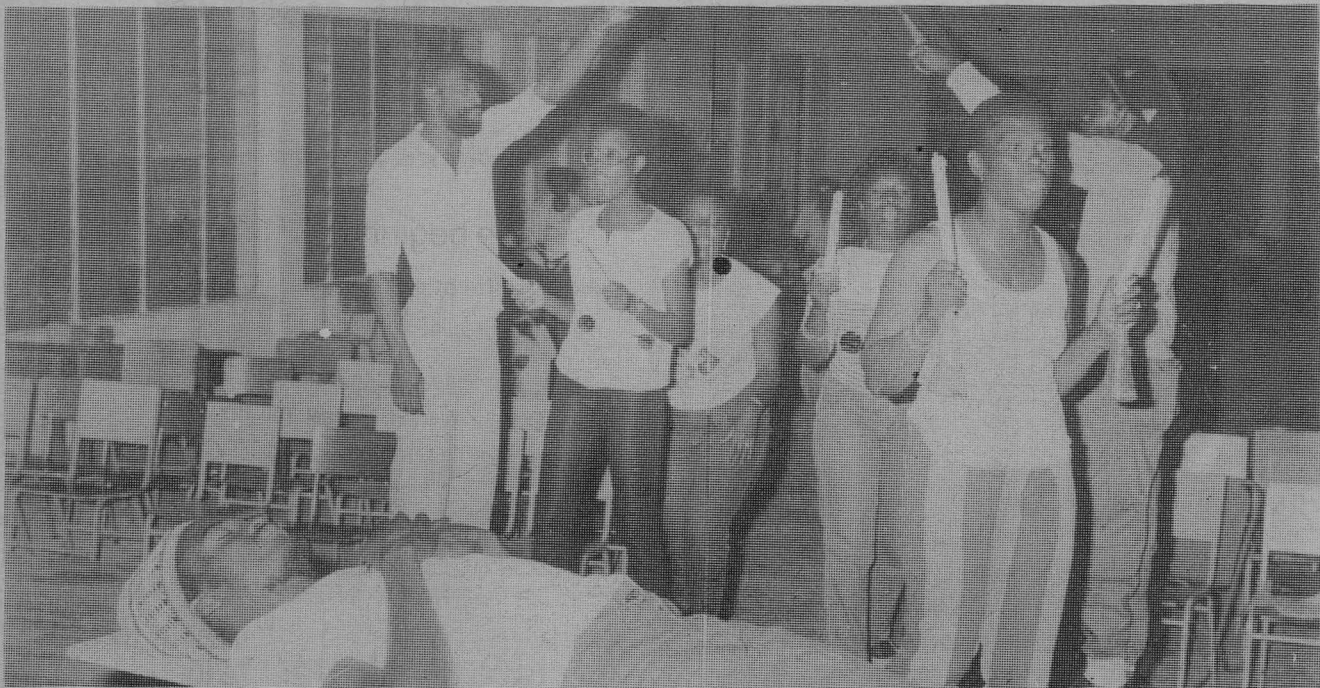
they performed the much acclaimed *Night Errand*.

Last year the workshop staged a two-hour drama entitled *The Interview* which examined the various ways in which youth are frustrated when seeking jobs, and bold attempts by some employers to exploit their desperate situation.

They will be back this year in drama and dance, fulfilling the role set for themselves. They will stage a revised version of *God's Daughter* and a dance dubbed *Exodus* on

March 6.

This show will be a celebratory one, featuring several groups and individuals who contributed to development of the workshop. Among these will be Country Theatre Workshop, Barbados Dance Theatre, Sargeant Village Dancers, Heather Forde, Parkinson Folk Dancers, Ruk-a-Tuk International, St. Barnabas Folk Group and Chanting Archie.



A TOUCHING SCENE from the play *Idlers Hall* during rehearsal.

It all rose from among the folk

EDUCATION, drama and community development have formed the basis of an experiment carried out by the Pinelands Creative Workshop in an effort to mobilise the residents of Pinelands, Wildey and St. Barnabas primarily.

But the benefits have had a spin-off effect on other neighbouring and distant districts by way of stage and television.

Perhaps it could be asked what made the workshop so popular over the last 10 years, and how were they able to do so many television productions?

Firstly, it had something to do with the relevance of their messages. Through the medium of community drama, the group has successfully identified and highlighted several problems affecting the community and have offered solutions. Themes touched areas such as peer group pressure, family problems, garbage disposal, neighbourliness, unemployment, the school system, dishonesty, love affairs and gambling.

And few people could deny that it is important that people could see their friends and relatives taking part in drama and dance with such ease and magic and that this further boosted community morale.

Cultural centre

But what is also significant is that out of this exercise Parkinson Memorial Secondary School, home base of the workshop, developed as a cultural centre for the area to which families go for entertainment during the drama and dance festivals, or educational public lectures.

Part of the workshop's success is evidenced by its dedicated work, high artistic achievement and an impressive philosophy of community development. No wonder the Pinelands Creative Workshop became the first local group to have its play shot full-length on location and the first to have

four of its plays televised. Those were *Nigger Yard*, *Price of Progress*, *Footsteps In The Sand* and *Bussa*.

Last year the workshop went to St. Vincent on a cultural exchange programme in which the group's expertise served to enrich similar work being undertaken there. It also provided an opportunity for Pinelands' players to learn more of the hosts' folk expression.

Those placed in leadership and who have to be proved hard workers are Rodney Grant, coordinator; Wayne Ridley, assistant coordinator; Andrew Greene, secretary; Kim Sealy, assistant secretary; Glenroy Gittens, treasurer; and Hamilton Lashley, public relations officer. The two advisors are Frank Grimes and Winston Walker.

When the workshop's anniversary celebrations start next month, a grand award ceremony will be high on the programme. It will show extracts from previous productions and bring together all those who have contributed to the group's development.

Books, credit

A textbook scheme for children in Primary Schools will be implemented; a credit scheme within the group will be formulated to assist members to pursue certain careers; the Golden Rock Day Nursery will be painted during Child Care Week; and assistance will be given to the Golden Rock Senior Citizens Home.

As the group looks towards more fruitful years, Lashley assures that the group's basic ideals will remain: "The workshop will always serve the role as from its inception as a community theatre workshop, and will continue to project issues in all its productions that affect the community and the people socially and politically.

"The common denominator of the Pinelands Creative Workshop is to educate and develop, also to build character and well rounded individual personalities. Because of our cause, we will work with persons who share the same philosophical concepts as those outlined in our policies."

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