

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

Compiled by: Dr JJ Bruwer, 2002-07-29

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NAME OF PLACE: FOSCHINI BUILDING [Joubert Street]



Left: corner President and Eloff Streets.

Centre: President Street elevation.

Right: Joubert Street elevation.

Previous/alternative name/s :

LOCATION: Street : cnr Joubert, President
: [40 Joubert; 101, 103 President]
Street number :
Stand Number : 5283
Previous Stand Number: by 1976 - 1755, 1756; by - 1998 RE/666
Block number : AC
GIS reference :

ZONING: Current use/s :
Previous use/s :

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height : (original plans not found)
Levels above street level :
Levels below street level :
On-site parking :

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls :

Roof:

Windows:

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans : (original plans not found)
Approval of plans :
Completion date :

BUILDING STYLE:

"Architectural Merit: Nineties renovation to the building was well done. The new corner tower is particularly attractive within the city." (Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City).

BUILDING TYPE:

Shops to street.

ENVIRONMENT:

CONDITION:

Good.

URGENT ACTION:

SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:

PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Heritage Resources Act, 1999)

General protection:	Section 34(1) structure/s	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal protection:	provincial heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	national heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	provisional protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
	heritage area	<input type="checkbox"/>
	listed in provincial heritage resources register	<input type="checkbox"/>

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

FORMER PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Monuments Act, 1969)

NOTES:

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership:

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

E. K. GREEN BUILDING:

Van der Waal describing the *E. K. Green Building* situated on the 101 President and 40 Joubert Streets portion of this stand: "One is immediately struck by the accent on visual effects in commercial buildings dating from the mid and late 189s. The façades were busily ornamented through variations in texture and colour as well as capricious roof lines. Examples of this were: *Markham Building* (c. 1896-7), 67 Pritchard Street [AD-7]; the second *Thorne & Stuttaford Building* (1896-7), 56 Pritchard Street [see Pre-History: T-2]; *E K Green Building* (1896-7), 101 President Street; and *Goch Building* (c. 1897-8), 81 Eloff Street [see Pre-History: AD-6]. Ornamentation was applied in a light projection on the wall plane, specially in the form of mouldings and window frames. The multiplicity of projections and the isolation of planes by the underlying grid structure prevented a clearly defined articulation. This means there was no focal point and the viewer's attention was diffused over the entire surface. The projection of the façade was therefore sensory to a high degree. The eye, and to a lesser extent touch, played the most important role in perceiving the effect. In this respect it was typically late Victorian." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

"Selling liquor was extremely profitable and the retail liquor trade continued to expand. E.K. Green & Company, on the corner of President and Joubert streets (sic.), were Wine and Spirit Merchants, who specialised in 'well-matured stocks of colonial wines and brandies and a full range of leading brands of imported liquors stocked at the lowest market rates.'" (Palestrant, E.: Johannesburg One Hundred).

By 1954 EK Green & Morris Ltd was a tenant at 40 Joubert Street with Sterns Jewellers at 40a Joubert Street.



53 YEARS SERVICE TO SOUTH AFRICAN HOMES

1903—1956

ORIGINALLY established in 1903, Ellis & Co. have grown with Johannesburg. Specialising in all types of home furnishing and electrical appliances, the policy of Ellis & Co. has always been "the best at a competitive price." Catering for all sections of the population, Ellis & Co. have established branch firms in the main suburbs of Johannesburg and are represented in many country towns.

ELLIS AND COMPANY, LIMITED

HEAD OFFICE:
103 PRESIDENT STREET Phone 23-8521
JOHANNESBURG

PRETORIA: 239 Andries Street, Telephone 2-0171.
KLERKSDORP: 51 Plein Street, Telephone 1714.
GLENCOE: 83 Karel Landman Street.

MANSFIELD BUILDING

This multi storey building previously stood at 101 and 103 President Street. It was a shops and office and was designed by J.C. Cook & Cowen; date on plan 28 February 1930. The nine storeys and basement building was a flat roofed reinforced concrete structure with cast iron railing to the balconies. The original owners were Goldberg Bros.

Left: Mansfield Building by 1956. (Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years...).

"A Truly Pioneering Organisation. For Over Fifty Years Barnett's (Pty.) Limited And Associated Companies Have Been Serving The Homes Of South Africa. The development of Johannesburg from a small mining camp over seventy years ago into the modern city of today (i.e. 1956) is in many ways illustrative of the City's industrial and commercial life. In all spheres of economic activity, Johannesburg has indeed made swift strides since the beginning of the century. In step with the progressive city where it has its roots is the firm of Barnett's (Pty.) Limited and Associated Companies – a truly pioneering organisation. The organisation, as at present constituted [i.e. 1956], stems from two very old established firms, one of which originated as a family furniture in Cape Town, the other starting here in Johannesburg in 1903, in Fordsburg. 'Ferreira's Camp' in those days prided itself on the various iron-bricklined [sic.] premises and the ensuing years saw the rapid development of the city. In 1909, when Krugersdorp was nothing but a dot on the map the firm established a branch there under the style of Goldberg Brothers. Pioneer furnishers then, the Company has grown and flourished with the town and is today the leading furniture dealer there. The various vicissitudes encountered in Johannesburg by the community was, if anything, reflected on the

business activity of the pioneers, but nevertheless, the Company continued expanding and in 1911 opened another branch on the corner of Market and Sauer Streets, trading under the name of Central House Furnishers. Six years later, yet another branch Mansfield & Company, was opened in 1917 in President Street. The busy, dusty and growing city continued to develop at a rapid rate and in 1932 Mansfield & Company acquired the old-established business of Barnett's Limited, of 64 Eloff Street, and the Company traded under the name of Barnett's Limited (incorporating Mansfield & Company, Established 1898. In 1941, after the removal of Central House Furnishers to other premises, the Company opened Brooklyn House Furnishers at the corner of Market & Sauer Streets [see Pre-History: C-1]..." (Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years...).

The information below comes from an internet article, titled "Rebirth Of SA's Oldest Furniture Retailer". The Barnetts chain is 101 years old and appears to be the oldest name in the South African furniture retail business and, with 64 outlets across South Africa and neighbouring countries, it is thriving. The first Barnetts store was opened in Johannesburg by Ben Barnett in 1896. Brothers Abraham, Elias and Louis Goldberg bought the company in 1931. At the time, Barnetts was in Eloff Street, opposite the old Carlton Hotel. The Goldberg brothers also owned Ellis & Co Furnishers, which traded from 103 President Street, Johannesburg. The company is now known as Morkels, but it still operates from that address. German entrepreneur Claas Daun, who today controls Morkels, is also a large shareholder in Profurn and, thus, Barnetts. When Abraham Goldberg and his two sons, Harold and Jules, took over Barnetts in June 1944, they had grand plans for expansion. They opened two branches in 1945: Brooklyn Furnishers at 64 Market Street - opposite the Johannesburg Library - and Goldberg Bros at 43 Commissioner Street in Krugersdorp. When South Africa's economy began to pick up after World War 2, Barnetts' activities spread into the Transvaal, Free State, Natal and Swaziland. In 1968, when the Goldbergs sold 60% of their interests to Currie Motors, Barnetts had 17 branches. By 1970, it had 50 stores. Currie Motors took full control of Barnetts in 1972 and retained Jonny Goldberg as its managing director until 1983, the year it bought the ABC furniture retailing group in a bid to strengthen its management. Barnetts had been struggling and its store numbers had plummeted to 35. Myron Lewkowski, who ran and partly owned the ABC group, took over the group's leadership. Stores were opened in the Cape and in Botswana and, by 1984, the company had 50 outlets. That year, however, the furniture industry faced a serious setback when the government introduced laws to curtail consumer spending. Currie decided to withdraw its funding and the group closed 21 branches and limited activities at the rest. In a bid to get moving again, management bought out Barnetts from Currie in August 1987 and listed it on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in November that year. Earnings picked up, new stores were opened and others were relocated. Management was, however, unable to contain operating expenses and made an unfortunate foray into the synthetic marble gravestone business. By September 1989, Ellerines was in talks to take over Barnetts, but that came to nothing. Barnetts' fortunes turned once again and new stores were opened. Within a few years, however, a number of stores were incurring losses, operating margins were declining and company morale was deteriorating. By the time Profurn bought Barnetts in July 1994, it owned 49 stores. Profurn boosted the number of stores under its umbrella from 78 to 127. Of these, 102 were in South Africa and 25 were elsewhere. Profurn emerged as the biggest furniture retailer in Botswana with Barnetts catapulting its number of stores in that country from 10 to 26. The two companies merged their head offices within a month of the deal, knocking down expenses and the names of the ABC stores were changed to Barnetts or Protea Furnishers. The synergistic benefits and improved economies of scale of the enlarged group soon started to show in Profurn's results, with its earnings doubling in 1994."

In a letter to Mr J Hugo, Director: City Planning, City of Johannesburg dated 25 May 1992, Mrs Flo Bird, then Chairperson of the NMC's Transvaal Plans Committee, wrote as follows: "We have been asked to approve the demolition of yet another block of flats in the CDB. This is Mansfield House (101 President Street), on the north-east corner of President and Joubert Streets. The developer has purchased the entire block (the city block bounded by President, Eloff, Pritchard and Joubert Streets), having been warned in advance of the historical importance of a number of buildings on it. These include Cutherths (AC-7), Penlan (AC-2), Hilson (AC-6), The Royalty (AC-5), Dunvegan Chambers (AC-4) and possibly Ranath House (AC-8)...When that assessment was made some years ago, Mansfield was not considered of great significance. It is a good substantial building, with relatively modest Art Deco facades, designed by the same architects as Hilson, the (sic.) Royalty and Dunvegan ie (J.C.) Cook and (sic.) Cowen, but less lavishly – presumably because it was done in the Depression (during the early 1930s). A case can be made to some extent for its conservation in terms of the National Monuments Act, but it is not of such outstanding significance as to be worth retaining if that is the only contribution it makes. The NMC has always tried to work with the City Council in terms of planning policies, because it is our belief that conservation is most successful where it is integrated into planning. According to numerous press statements the Council is deeply concerned with increasing the residential component of the CDB. We understand it is fundamental to all proposals for revitalising the City Centre. If this is the case, is the City Council opposed to the demolition of

Mansfield House? Is there a plan which deals with maintaining or increasing the residential stock in this sector? And if there are plans for this what incentives are being offered to landlords and/or developers? The redevelopment of the block as outlined by the developers exclude any residential component. It is proposed to erect two stories of retail space, with a floor of offices above. They are prepared to retain the facades and a certain module of the original building behind (at least up to the pitch of the roof where applicable) in respect of Hilson, the (sic.) Royalty, Ranath and Penlan. Cuthberts will be retained intact since it is already a fully declared National Monument. But is it proposed to remove Dunvegan Chambers, as well as the two newer buildings, Fine Arts (AC-3) and Franwell (AC-1)."

HISTORY:

Helen Grange in a most informative newspaper article (name of the newspaper and date of publication not known), titled "Graceful old stores have all gone", on the history of department stores in Johannesburg, states as follows: "Of all the character changes which have left their mark on Johannesburg none has been more noticeable than the disappearance, in the 1970s, of the graceful old department stores. Its contemporaries – Ansteys, Belfast, Ackermans, Paramount and Stuttafords went too. So complete was the rout that Stuttaford's building in the city remained derelict for years. Some would even remember the firm of Blinman, Holwell and Islip – a department store with style and panache in the British manner in Eloff Street on the site now occupied by the OK. The OK was one of the stores which stayed – and flourished. Historically, these stores all stood relatively close to each other, in the city's prime spots. Their siting was considered to be of huge significance in terms of fashion appeal – and only very few streets were regarded as fashionable. These streets were all north of Commissioner Street – that part of the city which the Transvaal Republic auctioned to the public in 1886 when Johannesburg was born. South of that street on what was historically mine-owned land, are the grandiose old mining and financial houses. John Orr's had been a pioneer department store. Stuttafords had also been a household name since early in the century. But when Sam Cohen launched the cash-and-carry store called OK Bazars in 1927 he was told it would fail – it was, people said, on the 'wrong side of Eloff Street'. Not only did the Eloff Street store do a roaring trade, it triggered a new age of cash stores and remained a powerful force even when similar cash stores were floundering. Instalment credit Because large department stores occupying four to five floors presented management difficulties, speciality department stores emerged – and quickly grew. One of the earliest speciality stores to open its doors was Hepworths, a menswear [sic.] retailer launched in 1894 in Harrison Street [on the corner of Eloff Street]. Edworks, the country-wide shoe chain opened its first Johannesburg shop on the corner of Joubert and Pritchard streets in 1924 – Foschini's clothing outfitters started in 1925 (in Pritchard Street) and Truworhs opened soon afterwards in 1926 (on the corner of President and Eloff). But the most noteworthy speciality store was Edgars, which started in 1939 as a tiny business specialising in giving instalment credit to typists and shop assistants when John Orr's was serving the upper end of the market. Since then, Edgars has established the largest and most successful speciality department store in Market Street (where the Belfast used to be) while also spreading its chain into shopping centres and other central areas nationwide. Its subsidiaries [sic.], Sales House and Jet Stores are major chains in their own right, each aiming at identifiable segments of the market. It was management difficulties which saw the closure of the old-timer, Greatermans, in 1982. The space vacated was promptly taken by Dions, a very successful speciality store dealing in furniture, sporting and photographic equipment and appliances...While some department stores went to the suburbs some, like Ansteys whose tall stepped building was the city's highest for years, and the bargain-basement shop, Paramount, simply disappeared. Ackermans, a giant in the 1920s, was bought out by Pep stores and today exists only as a supplement to Pep."

During the 1970s, Johannesburg lost many of its valuable old buildings. It was indeed a black period in the history of the City's architectural heritage. Lucille Davie in reporting on an interview on 4 October 2002 with Mrs Flo Bird, former NMC Councillor, wrote as follows: "Bird believes that the then National Party city council made a conscious effort to 'smash the heart of British liberalism in the city.'"

Van Der Waal believes that "Johannesburg...has always striven for 'renewal'. In the course of the century most of the sites in the centre of this 'instant' city have been built upon at least three or four times. Although one's view of the city is therefore of necessity foreshortened, one is aware of particularly complex strata of development which may in fact compensate adequately for the city's lack of ancient history roots. The problem, however, is that very little has been salvaged in the city's present urban limits which could facilitate one's understanding of this fascinating process. The historically valuable city centre is, owing to continual 'renewal', disappearing at an alarming rate. (The cogent remark has been made that, while Europe's cultural heritage was destroyed by bombs, in the Second World War, we have destroyed our own heritage through sheer ignorance.)" (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

Buildings mentioned in the above article by Helen Grange are:

NAME:	STREET ADDRESS	DOCUMENT	STATUS
<i>Ackermans</i>		S-2	Demolished
<i>Anstey's Building</i>		AF-2	See Document
<i>Belfast</i>		H-2	Demolished
<i>Blinman, Holwell and Islip</i>	78 – 84 Eloff Street		Closed
<i>Dions</i>		T-1	Moved
<i>Edgars</i>		H-2 & U-1	See Documents
<i>Edworks</i>			
<i>Foschini's</i>		AC-1 & AC-9	See Document
<i>Greatermans</i>		T-1	Moved
<i>Hepworths</i>		E-3	Demolished
<i>Hepworths</i>		AC-6	Closed
<i>Jet Stores</i>			
<i>John Orr's</i>	73, 75 Pritchard Street		Unknown
<i>OK Bazaar</i>	78 – 84 Eloff Street		Existing building
<i>Paramount</i>		AE-1	See Document
<i>Stuttaford</i>		T-2	See Document
<i>Sales House</i>		AN-7	See Document
<i>Truworths</i>		AB-3	See Document

John Orr's had two buildings, the first (designed in 1904) was completed during 1906 at 73 Pritchard Street, and the second *John Orr's Building* (1935 – 1936), is situated at 73, 75 Pritchard Street. Included in the article by Helen Grange, is a photograph of the first *John Orr's Building*: "John Orr's in 1923 – before the Supreme Court was built in the background. Fifty years later it was abandoned in the flight to the suburbs."

Whilst typing the above list a flood gate of memories was opened. So many buildings were well known to my meagre salary and I. It was highly fashionable in the Seventies to collect trousseau and I still posses some of the articles collected during those years; a wooden cutlery-holder bought at the main OK as it was known then; pieces of a dinner-set from *Greatermans* with the words 'Microwave oven safe' printed on the bottom – keeping in mind that microwave ovens were not a household name in the 70s in South-Africa; a rose-pattern stainless steel kitchen utensil set from *John Orr's* at a sale price of R25.00 – remember the rose-pattern, it was on everything such as glasses, dinner sets, carving sets and cutlery. Every Easter season a special stand was allocated for Easter eggs in *Greatermans* at the entrance on Rissik Street, the eggs I remember were the size of an ostrich egg, hand decorated with icing sugar and by special request, a name was iced on the egg. The best place to have breakfast on a Saturday morning was at the restaurant located on one of the upper floors in *Greatermans* – their scrambled eggs and toast was well known. My first account was opened at *Edgars*, the manageress was a Mrs. Van Den Heever, and with her help the account was opened without the permission of my parents, keep in mind that during the 70s women had fewer rights than now! The amount I could buy for was a staggering thirty rand! *John Orr's* had a Jucy Lucy bar and it was very vogue to say 'O, I went to John Orr's today.' The clothes sold at *Foschini's* and *Truworths* were more expensive but their window dressing was always very tasteful and nice shops to do window-shopping at. (Catharina JM Bruwer).

GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building : (original plans not found)
 Estimated cost of drainage :
 Accommodation approved :
 Valuation at completion :
 Occupied :

CURRENT TENANT/S:

SOURCES:

For additional illustrative information, see relevant supplementary photo album in electronic format.

See SOURCES DOCUMENT for information on sources consulted with reference to this document.

Below, left: The Outspan, March 29, 1946. Below, right: The Outspan, July 31, 1953.

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Historic Value:

- Associated with historic person, group or organisation
- Associated with historic event or activity

Architectural/Aesthetic value:

- Important example of building type
- Important example of a style or period
- Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics
- Work of a major architect or builder

Social/Spiritual/Linguistic value:

- Associated with social, spiritual, linguistic, economic or political activity
- Illustrates an historical period

Scientific/Technological value:

- Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement
- New, rare or experimental building techniques

RECORDED BY:

Heritage Resources Management team Johann J and Catharina JM Bruwer.
Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.

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