

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: MARKHAMS BUILDING [Eloff Street]



Left: view of the *Markhams Building* and its neighbour to its left, the historic *H.W. Marham Building*. Remaining photos taken from different positions in Eloff Street.

Previous/alternative name/s :

LOCATION: Street : Eloff
 Street number : 81
 Stand Number : 4563
 Previous Stand Number: by 1976: 4563F
 Block number : AD
 GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :
 Levels above street level :
 Levels below street level :
 On-site parking :

During the June 1976 RAU survey the building is recorded as having eight levels above street level and a wave-pattern applied to the plasterwork on the façade, this however is not the building standing today?

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls:

Roof:

Windows:

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

(1974, 2003 no extant plans record)

"The building regulations laid down that, from 5 November 1891, plans had to be handed in to the town engineer (Transvaal Publishing Co. 1905: 130). It is thus understandable that Johannesburg appears to have one of the most complete records of the pre-1900 period available in the country. However, many plans were lost because there was such a quick succession of buildings and stands. Plans can be found at the Building Survey Branch of the Johannesburg City Engineering Department and in the Africana Museum." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...). It was also noticed, however, during the Phase One Heritage Survey of Johannesburg City Buildings in 2002 (JJ and CJM Bruwer) that the chances of locating the original and even subsequent alteration plans of the City's landmark buildings or buildings designed by important architects (particularly where major alterations had been carried out to these buildings in recent times), are quite slim.

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans :
Approval of plans :
Completion date :

BUILDING STYLE:

Utilitarian.

BUILDING TYPE:

Department store.

ENVIRONMENT:

The diminutive scale of this building is complementary to the grand old *Markhams Building* and the *Royal St. Mary's Building*. The façade of the building lacks any distinctive qualities, allowing the building to go completely unnoticed. The trees add a more environmental friendly quality to the building, softening the harsh and cold appearance of the façade.

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:

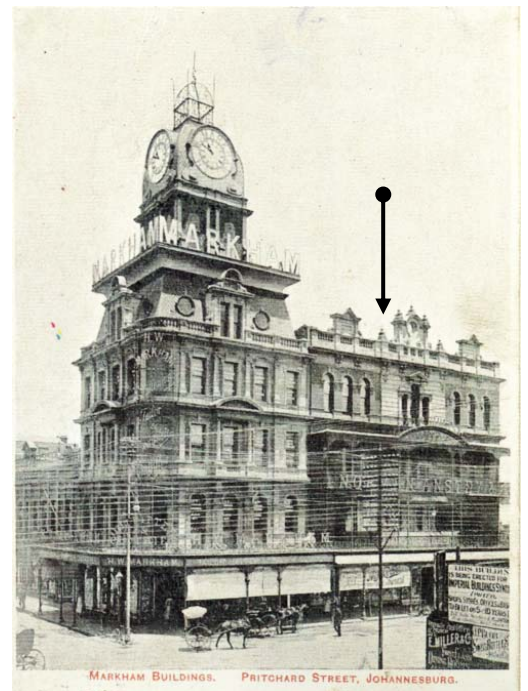
Original ownership:

By 1976: Aurora Investment (Pty) Ltd, PO Box 1447 Cape Town.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

GOCH BUILDING / NORMAN ANSTEY & CO. BUILDING:

Van Der Waal describes the *Goch Building* as follows: "One is immediately struck by the accent on visual effects in commercial buildings dating from the mid and late 1890s. 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 [see 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 [Pre-History: AC-9]; and *Goch Building* (c. 1897-8), 81 Eloff Street. Ornamentation was applied in a light projection on the wall plane, especially 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...).



Right: According to Norwich, the building retained the name of Norman Anstey. "This firm, however, moved to its own building in Joubert Street and the building became part of the Goch Building ..." (Norwich, O.I.: A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards, postcard 93).

HANNAH COURT:

Hannah Court, designed by Sinclair, Duncan McDonald, and completed during 1934, subsequently stood on the site of the current building. Reference is made to this building in the following description by Van Der Waal: "By 1930 the Traditional Style had become the basis for stylistic renewal, as was manifested by the imitation rustic work, pillars, pilasters and mouldings used together with, for example, Art Deco Form and ornamentation elements in *Astor Mansions* (1931-2), 178 Jeppe Street. The Ahistorical Style appeared on the scene shortly afterwards, but embellishments were still based on the Art Deco style medium. A good example of this was *Dunvegan Chambers* [AC-4]...with its relief panels on the lower storeys of the middle section and the ornamentation running over the top of the corner sections. The building also boasted one of the purest applications of the 'crested arch', an almost detached concrete strip centred on the gable plane, which directed the eye in a sweeping movement over the eaves. This type of upper façade accentuation was reminiscent of the Late Victorian practice of accentuating the upper portion of the façade. However, during the 1930s this was not done to draw attention to the picturesque roofline but rather to strengthen the illusion of

verticality and give a streamlined finish to the mass of the building. An early example of the use of crested arches was to be found in the second *Castle Mansions* (1930-2), 87/9.91/3 Eloff Street [AE-2], whose façade, shorn of all ornamentation, represented one of the first applications of the Ahistorical Style in Johannesburg. Compared with *Astor Mansions* and *Dunvegan Chambers*, whose bay windows still echoed the traditional (domestic) architecture, *Castle Mansions* with its singly textured façade made a particularly modern impression. Within the group in which verticality was accentuated there were two more buildings where a highly original solution was found. In the first place, the façade was constructed entirely in brick and, secondly, it was then wrapped around the reinforced concrete construction like a membrane. The most successful of the two experiments was *Lousam Building* (1931-2), 109 Bree Street, where thin bands grouped the isolated windows horizontally in the storeys, while semi-circular bay window sections were alternated with triangular ones. In the case of *Hannah Court*...the brick façade was articulated by semi-circular bay windows....Less important hotels were also located on the edge of the business district. This was in line with the tendency for residential buildings to be gradually crowded out of the city centre – a trend that was to be continued in later years. Indeed, this marked the beginning of the slow death of the city core, which would eventually contain only commercial buildings and lack all vestiges of night life." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

Tenants of Hannah Court during 1954: V & H Muller & Sons; Edgar's Fashions (Pty) Ltd; Berksely House of Fashions (Pty) Ltd; Golden City Candy and the Ladies' Hat Box.

HISTORY:

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.

RECORDED BY:

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Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.



MARKHAM MARKHAM

MARKHAM

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MARKHAM

MARKHAM HOTEL

MARKHAM HOTEL