
JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

NAME OF PLACE: Meischke's Building

Previous/alternative name/s : 1890 - Guildhall
Meischke's House (reference of 1995)

LOCATION: Street : Harrison
Street number : 40, 42
Stand number : 195, 196, 5022
Block number : F

ZONING: Current use/s : Business one
Previous use/s : Bar, shops and offices (1918)
flats and shops (prior to 1976)
flats, restaurant, pub and small shops (by 1976)

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Five and a half storeys; one basement level; the flattened corner section at ground level (a pub) is flanked by single shops.

Basement originally comprised storerooms and a cellar.

This building, according to Van Der Waal, was designed in the same style as the third Corner House, "but in a more abstract way. The traditional articulation of the façade was completely absent. The design with the flush brick wall surface and incised window apertures was however not used in Johannesburg again."

The building has an array of interesting aspects worth mention, some of which are as follows: the colonnaded canopy with finely spaced thin cast cement posts; the glazed ornamental sections in the top parts of the openings between the columns; the wrought iron railing on the balcony (extended for safety reasons with different pattern railing); the hand painted ornamental panels beneath the eaves; the large arched window with lead glass fanlights, at ground floor level facing Market Street next to the corner entrance; the timber double composite doors with glazed panels opening onto the balcony.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls : steel frame construction and brick.

Roof : flat, concrete.

Windows: wooden frame; lead glass panels.

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

Mention is made of alterations to the dormer (RAU Report, June 1976).

Plan for verandah approved.

On plan : 20 May 1912

New section through cellar flap to store, plate wall inserted.

Plan date : 16 April 1914

Passed : 18 April 1914

Fanlights over all corridor doors for cross ventilation (note on plan: no restaurant).

Plans passed : 25 June 1918

Steps to storerooms in basement.

Plans passed : 11 July 1918

Easy Eat Automatic Serving Shop. Architect's note: "shop exists existing shop fronts removed Floor Area 450 Sq ft app. Public have no access to shop". There were six rotary tables in shop.

Architect : J.C. Cook & Cowan

Plan date : 10 July 1942

Plans passed : 12 November 1942

Conversion of existing shop in the basement to a tea room, new kitchen, scullery and storeroom.

Architect : John Shaw & Philpot

Plans passed : 23 July 1947

Internal alterations to ground floor and basement.

Architect : J.C. Cook & Cowan

Plans passed : 11 August 1949

Alterations to existing shop, new partition and part of shop converted to change room for '*Snappy Snacks*' Milk Bar.

Architect : M.D. Silverman

Plan date : 8 September 1951

Plans passed : 2 October 1951

New servants quarter on the roof.

Architect : J.C. Cook & Cowan

Plans passed : 9 October 1951

Addition to first floor. Restaurant connected to ground floor bar by (new) internal stairway and food hoist installed.

Architect : Bizzel, Amoils, Katz & Rippon
Plans passed : 24 February 1966

New stairs, partition, ceiling and shop front (on Harrison Street) for *Dena's Coffee Bar*.

Industrial Designer: B.B. Wainer
Plans passed : 23 February 1962

Deviation plan for first floor (corner stand on Market Street). Existing door becomes public entrance to restaurant.

Architect : Alan Amoils
Plans passed : 23 February 1968

Existing shop converted to take away for *Honey Hush Foods*. Approved by the City Health Department 24 July 1978.

Architect : Howard W Johnston
Plans passed : 28 July 1978

New kitchen for *Honey Hush Foods*, external window removed and replaced with new shop front and door.

Architect : Edser (Pty) Ltd
Plans passed : 9 June 1980

Storeroom in basement converted to change room; disused stairway blocked-off at slab for *Jaydees Take Away*.

Architect : Alan Amoils
Plans passed : 31 October 1984

INTEGRITY:

No major changes have been made to the building and its appearance remains largely true to the original design.

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

Architect : None of the original plans of the building nor the early alteration plans show the name of an architect. It is believed that the owner, M.C.A. Meischke might very well have been responsible himself for the design of the building, considering his record as a talented builder of that period. (jjb)

Builder : M.C.A. Meischke

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Plans passed : 26 June 1912

Completed : 1913

BUILDING STYLE:

Edwardian (1900-1914)

BUILDING TYPE:

ENVIRONMENT:

Notwithstanding the use of different materials in the adjacent old Natal Bank building, there is a clear connection between the two on account of their Neo-Classical elements. The two buildings were the same height prior to the removal of the Old Natal Bank building's balustrade.

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 checked="" 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: M.C.A. Meischke

Stand No. 195 (previously 755) and Stand No. 196 (previously 754):
G64/1937 Meischke Pty Ltd
I-3250/1977LG Heathgate Pty Ltd

Stand No. 5022 (previously Ptn1 of 195)
G64/1937 Meischke Pty Ltd
B3330/1962

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

A single storey corrugated iron structure stood on the corner of this site by 1888. The structure had a saddleback roof and a verandah. It was the shop of S. Jacobs & Co. By the 1890s the Guildhall, an undecorated brick structure with flattened corner, was located on this corner site. It remained unaltered according to 1910 photos.

HISTORY:

Meischke's Building was erected by the builder for himself while he was constructing the City Hall. It became the meeting place of the racing fraternity with the pub becoming the largest in Johannesburg. In those days, it was conveniently situated opposite the tram terminus. Today it is the oldest pub in Johannesburg with gas lamps at the entrance and antique tables and counter. The restaurant upstairs has photographs and sketches of old buildings, personalities and scenes of early Johannesburg.

Town Valuer's Department: value of property -
25.10.1912: £ 5,000 part complete
13.12.1912: £ 5,000 part complete
23.05.1913: £12,250 part complete
23.05.1913: £ 1,000 verandah

It appears that the building was constructed in two phases: First phase - basement (storerooms and cellar), on plan: 26 June 1912; Town Valuer's Department valued this phase at £5 000; Second phase - ground floor and four storeys. The site was passed 19 August 1912, valued at £5,000.

GENERAL NOTES:

The retention of this building was recommended in the RAU Report, June 1976, as the building was considered to be of contributory value to the historical character of this part of Market Street.

SOURCES:

Opname Historiese Geboue In Johannesburg, Second Report June 1976, Inner City, RAU

Photographs (coloured) north elevation ca. '88 : NMC File 3/1/3/Joh/124

The Johannesburg Historical Foundation (Norwich, I ; Grant, B.L. ; Saul D) Some Historic Drives & Walks of Johannesburg Framic, no date

The Market Square Of Johannesburg: Catalogue of buildings on and around the square till about 1920 (Compiled by G.M. van der Waal), Public Library, Johannesburg, 1971

City Engineering Department, Stand Nos. 195, 196, 5022, Township Johannesburg (Planning Dept., City of Johannesburg)

Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis, The buildings of Johannesburg 1886-1940, Chris Van Rensburg Publications, 1987

South African Architectural Record, December 1946

Registrar of Deeds, Johannesburg

RECORDED BY:

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Photographs by Chris JH Coxen (unless otherwise indicated).

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

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