

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: FATTI'S MANSIONS

Left: Jeppie Street elevation.
Centre: corner, Jeppie and Loveday Streets. Right: view of *Fatti's Mansions* in the right background next to its Loveday Street neighbour, the second International House.

Previous/alternative name/s :

LOCATION: Street : Loveday
Street number : 65
: [140, 142, 144 Jeppie; 65, 67 Loveday]
Stand Number : 5185
Previous Stand Number:
Block number : AH
GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height : (original plans not found)
Levels above street level : 12
Levels below street level :
On-site parking :

This building in a typical Art Deco idiom, is in many ways, of most unusual design. Its street facades comprise a variety of not only interesting, but contrasting, and at the same time, interconnected features. The strong horizontal lines manifested in the exterior design are anchored in the pavement canopy with convex-concave corner; the broad band of the canopy is mirrored in the smooth plastered continuous balconies above, also with rounded corners; the stepped-back un-plastered brick sections between the broad horizontal balcony bands and the central rounded corner, afford the latter with

maximum prominence; the plastered First Floor successfully bridges the difference in projecting widths between the canopy, and the upper floors. The original coping and the distinctive eaves undoubtedly identify the top floor as a later addition.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: face brick; plastered brick.
Roof: concrete, flat.
Windows: steel casements with fanlights over.

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

No plans record found.

INTEGRITY:

Notwithstanding the fact that no plans record of the building could be located, it is believed that the exterior of the building has remained largely unaltered. The *Fatti's Mansions* is a well-proportioned building, with its top floor addition, having been executed quite successfully.

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

Reid & Martin.

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans :
Approval of plans :
Completion date : circa 1937

BUILDING STYLE:

Art Deco idiom.

BUILDING TYPE:

Residential and shops to street building.

ENVIRONMENT:

CONDITION:

Fair: requires cosmetic repairs.

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



Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

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

NOTES:

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership:

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

"The History of Fatti's & Moni's - From very humble beginnings as a tiny grocery store at the turn of the century to becoming South Africa's largest pasta manufacturer was a long road for Fatti's & Moni's, but a fascinating one. The company was born in the turbulent days of the Witwatersrand gold rush and is as old as the city of Johannesburg itself. The Moni family came from the city of Lucca in Northern Italy where their hereditary family home, the Casa Moni, has survived to the present day. Back in the 1860s Giovanni Moni was a successful merchant trading in olive oil, wines, chestnuts and silk. As was common in Victorian times he had a large family...three girls and six boys. The family prospered until around 1895 when Italy was hit by a recession and a disastrous war against the Abyssinians. The Moni boys began to look to pastures greener for their livelihood. News of the enormous wealth being discovered in the new Witwatersrand goldfields sent one of the sons, Guiseppe Moni, off to South Africa in 1896, along with many other of this countrymen. To cater for the many hundreds of Italians in this roaring and hard-drinking community, shops and businesses sprang up selling food and specialities they were accustomed to...macaroni, olive oil and wines from Italy. Guiseppe found his first employment attending to wine sales with one of these establishments at 63 Marshall Street. Business came to an abrupt halt with the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899. The war still had two years to run, when in 1900, after the occupation of Johannesburg by the British, a limited number of civilians were allowed to resume trading. Guiseppe Moni set up his own business selling imported goods from Italy, such as Parmesan cheese, Bologna sausages and pastas. In 1904 two other members of the Moni family arrived in South Africa, Giacomo and Pietro, then only 18 years of age. In 1906 Moni Brothers Ltd was established as a private family business and, via this company, they controlled all their interests over the years. With more Italians than ever working on the Rand and with the British garrison still stationed in South Africa, the demand for Italian delicacies and beverages had risen sharply. So much so that Moni's established a rifle-shooting gallery and Italian club with a membership of some 400 to 500 people. Business flourished until 1913 when rioting broke out. The original Johannesburg station was burnt to the ground, as were the offices of the Star. Troops were called out and martial law was proclaimed. Within yards of the premises of the Moni brothers, pick handled charges by mounted police were in progress and fusillades of bullets were loosed down Commissioner Street with considerable loss of life. In 1914 World War 1 began, which made the importation of goods practically impossible. This was the deciding factor which persuaded the Moni brothers that it was time to start manufacturing their own goods locally. In 1915 the Italian Warehouse Company was registered in Johannesburg and the Monis [sic.] installed their first machines at the back of their premises on the corner of Fraser and Jeppe Streets. Shortly afterwards they opened a branch in Cape Town. The war was over, but it was to be another four years before the company showed its first profits of £1 000,00."



Far left: "1906 - This small iron-roofed building was the original grocers and general merchandise business owned by Pietro and Giacomo Moni." Left: "1918 - Business was prospering and the Monis needed a bigger building."

Meanwhile, Luigi Fatti also arrived in South Africa via the Argentine and, in 1897, he was the sole agent here for Gio & F Buitoni, at that time the largest pasta manufacturers in the world. By 1907 Fatti's was incorporated as a limited company with agencies in London and Hamburg. While a friendly

rivalry existed between Fatti and the Monis [sic.], who were operating only a few yards away, Fatti decided in 1911 to steal a march on his competition, by building a big new factory. By 1917 Fatti had grown to such an extent that he had a staff of 31 people, with customers as far afield as the Belgian Congo and British East Africa. Rivalry between Fatti and the Monis [sic.] grew steadily keener by cutting prices, expanding the premises and expanding trade in the surrounding countries. In 1925 a peace treaty was signed between the two families which resulted in the formation of an entirely new concern, known as the United Macaroni Factories. The advertisement at the time read "- operating in Johannesburg and Cape Town, manufacturers of macaroni, spaghetti, vermicelli and soup pastas in many varieties and shapes. Loose and in packets." In 1930, in spite of the difficult times brought about by the Wall Street crash the previous year, the Monis [sic.] opened their first wheat mill in Cape Town, to safeguard the supply of their raw materials. The company was known as the United Macaroni Factories, Bellville. The new wheat mill and macaroni factory were far ahead of anything of its kind in the country. Its range of products included semolina, infant breakfast foods and ice cream cones as well as all the pastas. In 1931 Luigi Fatti retired from the board of his company, although he remained chairman. It is interesting to note that during the last war, in the official records of the Director-General of War Supplies it was mentioned that 113 tons of macaroni were sent to East Africa and the Middle East from the Union for consumption by the Allied Forces. Virtually all of this was from Fatti's & Moni's. In 1953 the Moni brothers secured the controlling Fatti interest in the business, and Pietro Moni became managing director. In 1967 the large wheat mill and pasta complex was built in Isando, and two years later the old factory in Selby was moved across to the new premises. In 1982 Tiger Oats took over the controlling interest and the United Macaroni Company became known as Fatti's & Moni's."



Left: "1896 - Luigi Fatti first opened the doors of this modest little shop in 1896 to do business with the citizens of young Johannesburg." Right: Tuscany / Fatti Building: "1905 - In 1905, Luigi Fatti moved into this fine-looking building in Jeppe Street." (Information sourced from http://www.fattis.co.za/history/our_roots.htm.)

TUSCANY BUILDING:

The three-storey *Tuscany Building* of Luigi Fatti - designed in Neo Italian Renaissance style and completed during 1905, was also called the *Fatti Building*. This building was situated at 140, 142 Jeppe Street. By 1954, the Fatti's Bottle was located in this building at 142a Jeppe Street.

FATTI'S MANSIONS:

By 1925, *Fatti's Mansions* was situated at 65 Loveday Street. Fatti & Co Ltd was the owner and one of the tenants during the same period. Another tenant at the time was the United Macaroni Factories Limited; this, presumably, was the amalgamated Fatti & Moni enterprise.

L FATTI & CO'S BUILDING:

In 1926, the architects Reid, W & C W designed this corner building for L Fatti & Co which stood at 144 Jeppe Street and 67 Loveday Street.

HISTORY:

The Building of a Business



The story of a growing business is clearly written in the changing face of the building in which it lives. This is especially true in the case of Fattis & Co., a firm who's phenomenal growth from a small family grocer to a vast organisation over the last 60 years, is faithfully reflected in the pictures on this page.

Left: extracts from (Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years...).



1896

Louis Fatti first opened the doors of his modest little shop to do business with the citizens of young Johannesburg. From the very beginning it was a truly family business for Mrs. Fatti worked alongside her husband in those early days.



1905

In this year Fattis moved into a fine new three-storey building on their present site in Jeppe Street. It was called "Tuscany" Buildings and included a bottle store.



1911

Business was prospering and Fattis were becoming famous for the quality and variety of foods and wines they imported from Italy and many other countries. A big new section was now added on to the original building and Mr. Fatti started up his own Macaroni Factory.



1923

With the taking over of a site on the corner of Jeppe and Loveday Streets adjoining the old building, Fattis expanded the business to include glass, china and fancy goods. This same year saw the amalgamation of the Fattis and the Moni Maaroni factories.



1937

By this time the volume of business had grown tremendously, and it was time for bigger premises. Down came the old building and up in its place went a fine new modern store containing 100 flats. . . In the next fifteen years the business boomed at a great pace and in 1952 the entire two firms of Fattis & Co. Ltd. and Moni Bros. Ltd. amalgamated, and are now under the direct control of Monis and Fattis Industries Ltd.



1956

Another corner site has been taken over on Harrison Street and this year Monis and Fattis together are in process of erecting an immense new building—13 floors and 2 basements which will extend along Jeppe Street from Loveday to Harrison. This is to be the new administrative home of Monis and Fattis Industries Ltd.



L. FATTI & CO. LTD.

Now Incorporated in **MONIS & FATTIS INDUSTRIES LIMITED**

50 YEARS REPUTATION FOR IMPORTED QUALITY FOODS

"Apartment living" according to Van Der Waal, "reflected a specific attitude and a preference for a particular lifestyle. Blocks of flats were built to be let (there was as yet no question of the sectional titles of today), so that occupation was always temporary. In addition, apartment buildings met the accommodation requirements of the lower to middle-class sections of society only. The most affluent and poorest sections preferred detached houses. At the same time there was no concerted effort by friendly societies or any other agency to provide housing for the poorer sections of the community on the model of developments in Europe. By their location near the city centre, these buildings brought their middle-class occupant conveniently close to their places of work and relieved them of the bother

of caring for either house or garden, so that they could devote their energies to earning a living. Since the apartment buildings were put up on or very near the street line and the busy streets afforded no place for children to amuse themselves, there was little opportunity to develop a healthy family life. Human interaction was also severely inhibited by the isolation of the flats as closed units next to or above one another, as well as the absence of communal social areas, such as recreation halls. Financial considerations were the only criteria applied in selecting tenants for the apartments. Thus personal income, not a propensity to fit in with a particular group, was the deciding factor. A prominent feature of apartment buildings was the general block form with a certain degree of mass articulation, mostly in the central sections, which suggested an illusion of depth. This treatment created an impression of friendly accessibility – probably a reference to domestic architectural styles, in which the function of the building was expressed in a traditional form. A second important common feature of these blocks was the use of balconies, by which these buildings came to be identified. Referring to the social aspect of flats, these balconies constituted a link between the interior and exterior and were reminiscent of the Edwardian verandahs. Built in the same materials as the face, the balconies were visually an integral element of the whole, but were at the same time more isolated in terms of function: only one balcony was allocated to each flat. This meant that the need for social space was gradually changed from the communal to the individualised. The balconies were not only inaccessible to neighbours but they could also be furnished to suit the taste of the individual tenant. It is interesting to note that the balcony appointment mostly contained arrangement of plants...in separate pots, which probably reflected a need to retain some kind of bond with the natural environment from which the tenants originated. The construction and provision of services in apartment buildings followed a course of development parallel to that of office and commercial buildings. After the late 1920s reinforced concrete frame constructions were used to an increasing extent, and in a few exceptional cases this permitted a free arrangement of interior walls. In most cases, however, one floor was usually an exact replica of the next, with rectangular rooms. Elevators were fairly common. They were linked to the lobby and the passages built on each floor on the longitudinal axis of the building. As was to be expected, property developers provided built-in cupboards and a bathroom for each flat only in the more luxurious blocks, which were also equipped with the most modern domestic appliances available at the time, including an electric stove and refrigerator...In some cases parking for tenants' cars was provided in the basement...However, the average block of flats supplied only the protection of a roof and walls and tenants had to make do with communal ablution and toilet facilities on each floor. Such asocial effects were common where the profit motive was the major determinant." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

GENERAL NOTES:

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

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.

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

RECORDED BY:

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Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.



28 9 2003



WEEK
09:00-16:00



WEEK
07:00-09:00
16:00-18:00

DALES
DALES
DALES

KALSH BAKERY
BREADS & PASTRIES

DE
100%

MINI MARKET
KORNER STORE

2003 9 28

Morkels

Morkels

28 9 2003



CENTRAL PARKING
90 per hr. 8:30-6:00

Morkels

Morkels

DAIRY
DAIRY

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