

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: GEEN & RICHARDS HOUSE

Top right: view of upper part of main elevation; note the damage already caused to the building due to defective rain collector. Bottom right: the building, and its neighbour, the *Price 'n' Pride Building*, as seen from the southeast corner of Pritchard and Rissik Streets.

Previous/alternative name/s : originally - MacKay Bros. Ltd.
 : by 1941 – The Allies Club of South Africa;
 : by 1956 - Barons Furnishers

LOCATION: Street : Pritchard
 Street number : 47
 Stand Number : 831
 Previous Stand Number: 1557
 Block number : V
 GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height	:	
Levels above street level	:	five-storeys (i.e. including Attic Floor)
Levels below street level	:	none
On-site parking	:	none

This four-storey Edwardian style building with prominent end gables, richly ornamented main façade with street canopy and former graciously glazed shop fronts, was built for Messrs MacKay Bros. Ltd. Of interest are the gabled windows on Second Floor, the use of a stringcourse to define the Fourth Floor with deep recessed windows and columns, cornice, and dentil insets beneath the ornamental entablature. According to the original plans of the building, the Ground Floor was intended to be used as a Piano Saloon and the First Floor as a Gramophone Saloon. The Third Floor was allocated for Stringed & Brass Instruments whilst the Second Floor was to be used as offices.

"While the commercial buildings were vertically orientated, especially in the upper portions of their facades, they did not entirely escape the force of the strong horizontal lines and planes of the display windows and pavement hoods. Verandahs with their pillars began to be replaced by cantilever pavement covers in the early 1930s, but such hoods were first used in the *Paramount Building* (see AE-1) as early as 1911. In Johannesburg this change-over was more gradual than in Sydney, Australia, where new building regulations introduced in 1912 banned verandahs altogether...Initially, Johannesburg's hoods were fitted with bearer beams on the underside. Later however, beams were placed on the upper side of the hood to leave an uncluttered ceiling over the pavement. The effect of this practice was that the hoods, together with the long bands of display windows, reinforced the suggestion of horizontal movement in the smooth street and pavement surfaces." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: reinforced concrete framed structure with stucco brick walls.

Roof: corrugated iron with roof lights and dormer (glass louvered) windows.

Windows: fixed sash windows with cottage pane fanlights over.

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

Conversion of freestanding toilet block at rear of building into a boiler house.

Architect: Robert Howden. Plans approved: 22 March 1926.

Construction of new Ladies toilet room on reinforced concrete stanchions on top of Boiler House at rear of building to service Second Floor.

Architect: Robert Howden. Plans approved: 27 November 1929.

Alteration of existing shop front and installation of a new internal service passage at Ground Floor and bricking-up of all window and door openings in east façade. By this time, the original fire escape had been relocated to the rear of the building as quarter-turn stairs surrounding a goods (service) lift tower which by then, had also been constructed in the same position.

Architects: Howden & Stewart. Plans approved: 17 September 1934.

Construction of new "Natives W.C." at rear of building between existing Boiler Room and Ladies W.C.

Architects: Howden, Stewart & Middleton. Plans approved: 20 August 1937.

Installation of soil pipes from wash basins in Kitchen (Ground Floor), and hand wash basins in Men's Ablutions (Third Floor) and Staff Restroom (Fourth Floor).

Architects: J.C. Cook & Cowen (address: 28/36 National Mutual Buildings, Rissik Street, Johannesburg). Plans approved: 7 January 1941.

Removal of existing island shop front and minor internal alteration on Ground Floor.

Architects: Charney & Margoles (address: 407 Fanora House, Johannesburg). Plans approved: 11 August 1959.

New Strong Room on First Floor for Barons Furnishers (Prop. Lewis Stores Ltd). Plans approved: 28

August 1964.

Alteration of shop front of building for Geen & Richards Pty Ltd. Architect: S. Kregel. Plans approved: 7 May 1979.

INTEGRITY:

The exterior of the building (except for the shop fronts) has remained relatively intact. This is remarkable, considering that the building was completed more than 80 years ago. Worth mention in particular, is the fact that the original sash windows of the building have been retained.

INSCRIPTION:

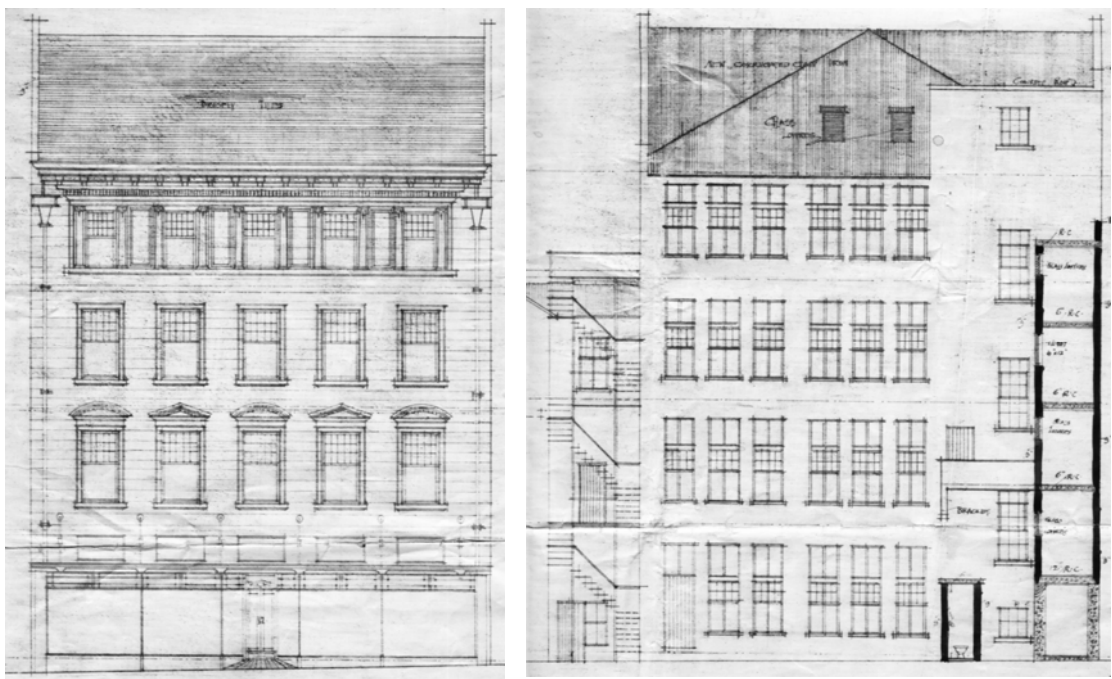
ARCHITECT:

Howden, Robert (address: SA Mutual Buildings, Harrison Street, Johannesburg).

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans : April 1923
Approval of plans : 17 March 1923
Completion date : October 1923



Extracts from original architectural drawings by Robert Howden. Left: Pritchard Street elevation. Right: North elevation.

BUILDING STYLE:

Edwardian (1900 to 1914).

BUILDING TYPE:

Show room and warehouse building.

ENVIRONMENT:

This building, a reminder of a long past era in the development of the City, stands proud amongst its new modernistic neighbours.

CONDITION:

Neglected: the exterior of the building requires attention, albeit of mostly a cosmetic nature.

URGENT ACTION:

The defective rain collector should be replaced with a similar collector as soon as possible and repairs to the roof should also be considered a prioritised 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: Messrs MacKay Bros. Ltd.
By 1941: The Allies Club of South Africa.
By 1956: Anglo American Distributors (Pty) Ltd.
By 1979: Geen & Richards (Pty) Ltd.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:**HISTORY:**

Donald W. MacKay, one of the original owners, was the Mayor of Johannesburg in 1936-37. (Information sourced from JOHANNESBURG'S MAYORS.htm).

It appears that the Ground Floor of the building was used as a café and restaurant at the time of the Allies Club of South Africa's ownership of the building. The First Floor was the "Club Floor" (presumably a dance hall).

By 1956, the building appears to have been leased by Anglo American Distributors (Pty) Ltd to Barons Furnishers.

GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building	: £18 000
Estimated cost of drainage	: £80
Accommodation approved	:
Valuation at completion	:
Occupied	:

PREVIOUS TENANTS:

By 1954: Baron's Furnishers Ltd. See attached copy of relevant advertisement of 1956.

CURRENT TENANT:

Geen & Richards.

Below: advertisement of 1956 - Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years....

Building the future . . . on the best of the past

The one bit of advice that Oom Paul Kruger loved to give people was: "Build the future on the best of the past". And now both Johannesburg and Geen & Richards Ltd. can look back over quite a lengthy period of doing just that. And they have every intention of continuing . . . because, after all, a city is composed of *people* . . . young, growing families for instance. So many Johannesburg families have grown with the help of Geen & Richards . . . relying on them for all kinds of furniture of the right quality at the right price. And Geen & Richards have grown along *with* these families, from a tiny little shop opened 46 years ago by two young men, to their impressive four-storey premises on the corner of Von Brandis and Market Streets. There, old and new customers alike are sure of a welcome . . . and growth goes on.

J o h a n n e s b u r g
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G E E N & R I C H A R D S
1 9 0 9 · 1 9 5 6

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

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Left: Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years....

RECORDED BY:

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Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.



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