

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

NAME OF PLACE: Vacant Stands



Jhb Metro - Cool Factory

LOCATION: Street : President
Street number : 83, 85, 87
Street : Loveday
Street number : 44, 46, 48, 50
Street : Pritchard
Street number : 48, 50, 52, 54
Street : Rissik
Street number : 47, 49, 51

Stand number : 5286 (previously 689, 690, 694, 4809-4811)
Block number : S

ZONING: Current use/s : Business one
Previous use/s :

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

This is the wasteland and graveyard of some wonderful shopping venues. Standing vacant for nearly ten years, it is hard to find sufficient reasons for the destruction of the former buildings. (cjmb)

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT/BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

BUILDING STYLE:

BUILDING TYPE:

ENVIRONMENT:

The Barbican Building effectively stands as a memorial to the buildings formerly situated on this site.

CONDITION:

URGENT ACTION:

SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:

The NMC during 1991-3 issued permits in respect of the demolition of the Palace Building, Henwood House, the Paul Henwood Building, the Jacobson's Building as well as the Ackermans Building. These permits were issued on condition that any new development of the city block would have to meet certain requirements, as laid down at a meeting of one of the former NMC's local committees held on 20 February 1991. The minutes of this meeting reads as follows: "...in respect of Jacobson's Building there was no objection to the demolition provided the owner undertook that the new building would retain the following features of Jacobson's in relationship to the Barbican Building:...match the pavement edge (no set backs which would destroy the sense of contained space around the City Hall Square...retain the canopy and scale (the height should not exceed that of Barbican's top floor)...building materials to relate in colour and texture to the Barbican and City Hall...the new development on Henwood's site should also have similar design controls to those detailed for...(the site of the Jacobson's Building)..."

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

- General protection: Section 34(1) structure/s
- Formal protection: provincial heritage site
- national heritage site
- provisional protection
- heritage area
- listed in provincial heritage resources register

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

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

NOTES:

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Previous Stand Nos.: 513-514, 1656-1658
Original ownership: Henwood Props Ltd
By 1976: 691F [sic.] - Real Estate Corp of SA
691F [sic.] - Solsons Inv Pty Ltd

Previous Stand No.: 517
Original ownership: Harrowes
By 1976: Ackermans Ltd

Previous Stand Nos.: 689, 694
Original ownership: Harvey Greenacre & Co

By 1976: Ackermans Props Pty Ltd
Previous Stand No.: Consolidated lot 695
Original ownership: Real Estate Corp of SA
By 1976: Real Estate Corp of SA Ltd

T64546/1999 South African Mutual Life Assurance Soc
T64546/1999 Old Mutual Life Assurance Co South Africa Ltd

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

The city block bounded by Rissik, Loveday, Pritchard and President Streets has a most colourful history. Besides the Barbican Building, it was occupied by some of the city's most well-known business enterprises. This should be noted in order to meaningfully contextualise the former significance of this area of prime city land.

The earliest recorded information pertaining to the western half of this city block dates from 1889. On the north-west corner of President and Loveday Streets by that time, stood the Southern Auction Mart, a low corrugated iron structure with verandah. This structure was replaced during 1903 by the Henwood's Arcade, which was to remain a great shopping venue for many years. The architect W. Leck attended to some alterations to the building during the same year and might possibly also have been the original designer of the building. Above the wide entrance of the arcade was a wide turret with double tiled roof; the building had a balcony with verandah on Loveday Street. By 1900, an addition to the old Arcade had been built on the south-east corner of Pritchard and Loveday Streets.

On the stand next to the Henwood Arcade (i.e. facing President Street) stood by ca. 1889 a double storey structure with verandah and arched windows at first floor. This building was replaced in 1892 by the Henwood's Building. The latter was designed by the architect W.H. Miles for Paul Henwood, Son, Souter & Co. This was a three storeyed building with large house type windows at ground and first floors, something extraordinary for those times in Johannesburg. It looked more like a house than a shop, Characteristic were the vertical bands of stratified white sandstone and brick together with a small pediment above the entrance. When Henwood opened this branch of his enterprise, it was thought to be too big for the population and were promptly nicknamed 'Henwood's Folly'. His descendants nonetheless in later years, successfully carried on this business.

In 1941, the old Arcade / Henwood's Building was replaced by a new building which was also known as the Henwood Building. The latter was designed by the architects Reid, Martin & Partners and was a two and a half storeyed building.

Situated on the stand (previously Stand No. 516) immediately west of the Barbican Building at 87 President Street by 1890, was the Harvey Greenacre & Co. Building. This building was replaced in 1944 with a nine storeyed building which became the premises of Harrowes. The architect was Harold H. le Roith. Six storeys were added to this building during 1946. By 1995, it was occupied by the Highveld Technical College and in later years, it was also known as the Jacobson's Building.

By 1920, the stands immediately north of the Barbican Building (i.e. Stand Nos. 517 and 1661) at 47 and 49 Rissik Street, were occupied by the Harvey Greenacre & Co. Building. It appears that this building by McIntosh & Moffat was constructed in 1902 and was then known as the Newham House. It was a five storeyed plastered brick building with gables. Alterations to this building in later years entailed the removal of its gables and the addition of steel frame windows. The building eventually became the Ackermans Building.

Situated on the south-west corner of Pritchard and Rissik Streets (at 52 and 54 Pritchard Street / previously Stand No. 695) during the formative years of the city, was certainly one of the most interesting structures of its time in Johannesburg. This was the first Palace Buildings, better known as the 'Eiffel Tower of the Rand' by the early Johannesburg pioneers. When it was demolished in 1957, it was the first time ever Johannesburgers really voiced their protest albeit in vain, against the destruction of a city building.

Even in the early days, in a mining community not quite three years old, there started a tendency for the shopping centre to move away from the business part of the town in Commissioner Street near the Stock Exchange and the banks. Retailers started to open stores nearer the best residential areas, and Pritchard Street began to outbid Commissioner Street in its appeal to women shoppers. It was within the context of this outward movement that the pioneer William Gwynne Evans (later Sir William) commissioned the construction of Johannesburg's first skyscraper which was to eclipse all other buildings in the mining camp. He chose as his architect the Bloemfontein-born John Stanislaus Donaldson who proceeded in 1889 to design a building in a highly ornamental style...It was a three-storey structure (a French Renaissance-styled opus) with two towers on the roof, the one at the corner of Pritchard and Rissik Streets having a flag-staff on top which reached to a height of 93 feet above street level. The fabric was bizarre in the extreme, being covered with bulging balustrades, pediments and urns, plaster curlicues, cornices and cupolas, pilasters and mouldings...to give an effect that would impress the passer-by. The structure was long regarded as the handsomest building in town...Before it was built (at a staggering cost of £16,000), Pritchard Street was regarded as being rather far out of town...With the new shops in Palace Buildings attracting the public, the retailers in Pritchard Street embarked upon a bolder policy. A writer describing the Christmas season of 1889 said: 'Pritchard Street is rapidly becoming the street of streets in Johannesburg as far as retail business is concerned.'

The architectural authority, Professor Niklaus Pevsner, subsequently singled out the building for special mention in an article in Britain's *Architectural Review*: "Palace Buildings is sweetly provincial. With its two and a half storeys and its confectionery turret at the corner, it was no doubt an ambitious piece of display in a town three years old...It was out of date five years later."

After the demolition of Johannesburg's first skyscraper in 1957, came the new Palace Buildings – a modern reinforced eleven storeyed concrete construction with a flat concrete roof and steel window frames. The architects for this were J.C. Cook & Cowen. By 1976, the building was still used as offices with shops at its lower levels.

Today sadly, nothing tangible remains of this illustrious history, not even of the new Palace Buildings. Somebody later came to wonder what had happened to the plaque impression of the first Palace Buildings that was displayed in the ground floor at the entrance of the new Palace Buildings?

GENERAL NOTES:

SOURCES:

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Stoloff, C.A.: The Students Forum – The Historic Buildings Of Johannesburg – 18, Office Buildings (SA Architectural Record, September 1947) This article contains an interesting picture of the old Henwood's Building)

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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

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

City Engineering Department, Stand No. 688, Township Johannesburg (Planning Dept., City of Johannesburg)

Benjamin, A.: Lost Johannesburg, Macmillan SA, 1979

South African Architectural Record, February / March 1948

Registrar of Deeds, Johannesburg

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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