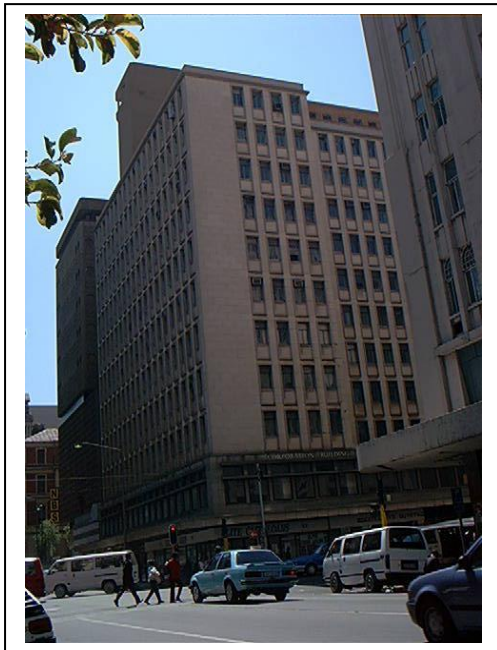


**JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY**

**HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM**

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

**NAME OF PLACE: Corporation Building**



**Previous/alternative name/s :**

**LOCATION:** Street : Commissioner  
Street number : 101, 103, 105  
Stand number : 4771 (previously 162)  
Block number : H

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

## DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Twelve storeys: basement, ground floor, and first to eleventh floors (the eleventh floor comprising a lift motor room, store room and staff quarters).

The building was constructed to accommodate shops (at ground level) and offices in the remainder of the building. Elements worth noting in regard to the building's external appearance are as follows: terrazzo-cladded coping and cornice at roof level; steel window with plaster bands between the different floors; terrazzo surrounds and facings below window lines; louvres above glazed shop front panels; terrazzo-cladded cantilevered canopy along entire shop frontage.

There originally was a through-connection between the building (at second floor level) and the former Belfast Warehouse (at first floor level), on the south-west corner of Market and Joubert Streets.

## CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls : reinforced concrete construction, face brick and textured panelling (ivory coloured) cladding.

Roof : flat, concrete.

Windows: steel and aluminium frame.

## SITE FEATURES:

## ALTERATIONS:

The list below refers to alterations / additions to the building subsequent to its construction:

<u>Plans passed</u>	<u>Architect</u>	<u>Nature of work</u>
18 September 1955	Barlin & Chaskelson	Internal alterations to <i>Rand Radio Shop</i>
21 November 1956	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: offices
5 June 1957	J.C. Cook and Cowen in association with Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: first floor
26 June 1957	J. C. Cook & Cowen	Internal: new staircase (shop No. 10)
11 November 1957	J. C. Cook & Cowen	Internal: steel stair (seventh floor)
10 August 1959	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: ground floor & basement
25 September 1959	Cook & Cowen	Internal: partitions (first floor)
1 November 1960	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: new spiral stair (shops on

		ground floor)
12 July 1961	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: first and second floors
27 February 1962	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: second floor
8 March 1962	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: ground floor
January 1963	Hanson & Tomkin	Internal: shops (ground floor)
28 May 1963	F. Harling	Internal: basement and section of ground floor facing Rissik Street for <i>Messrs Truworths Ltd.</i>
18 November 1966	Hanson, Tomkin & Prins	Internal: ninth floor
6 December 1968	Hanson, Tomkin & Prins	Internal
9 September 1968	Hanson, Tomkin & Prins	Internal: ground floor & basement
30 November 1970		Internal: shops facing Rissik Street at ground floor
16 October 1973	Cowin De Bruyn Cook Glennie & Jury	Alterations to premises of <i>Thomas Cook</i> (basement, ground and first floors); new glazing to shop front including new double door and illuminated panel above
22 December 1975	J.C. Cook & Cowen	New shop for <i>Truworths</i> on ground floor (entire space); new shop front glazing and black anodised aluminium sections between (i.e. entire shop frontage)
1981		Internal alterations to <i>Edworks &amp; Dodo's Shoe Stores</i> (cnr Rissik and Commissioner Streets)

#### **INTEGRITY:**

The changes made to the shop fronts during the 1970s were significant and did affect the original design of this part of the building.

#### **INSCRIPTION:**

#### **ARCHITECT/BUILDER:**

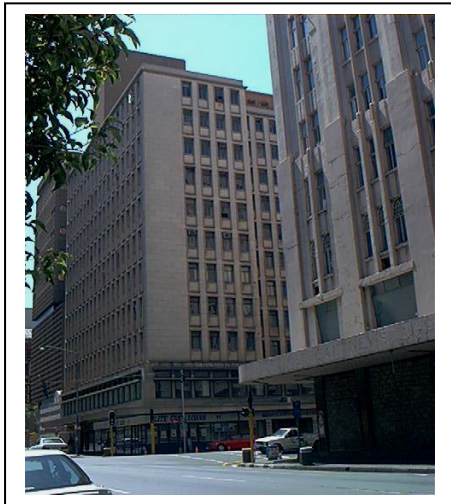
Associate Architects: J.C. Cook & Cowen / Hanson & Tomkin (See GENERAL NOTES)

**CONSTRUCTION DATE:**

On plan : 23 August 1954  
Completed : 1955

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Johannesburg Modular Regionalism (Urban Features).



**BUILDING TYPE:**

Shops and office building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

“Weinig invloed op Commissionerstraat solank hoogte nie oorskry word nie. Oorheers straattoneel in Rissikstraat.” (RAU Report, June 1976)

Van Der Waal’s comment does not do justice to the building, which contextually, does contribute in terms of forms and scale.

**CONDITION:**

Good. Shops at ground floor occupied but remainder of building vacant.

**URGENT ACTION:**

**SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:**

**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:**

Original ownership: New Corporation Buildings Pty Ltd

I-3250/1977LG Heathgate Pty Ltd  
T21535/1991 Belmark Prop Pty Ltd  
T35837/1992 South African Mutual Life Assurance Soc  
T35837/1992 Old Mutual Life Assurance Co South Africa Ltd

**PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:**

**HISTORY:**

In 1904, the City Council suddenly found that its lease of premises had expired in the old Corporation Buildings at the corner of Commissioner and Rissik Streets. With only six weeks to go before the entire municipal administration found itself in the street, the Town Engineer set to work to construct alternative accommodation. On what is called Plein Square near Park Station, corrugated iron buildings were hastily erected – this became known as the ‘Tin Temple’ – although originally intended for demolition as soon as permanent accommodation could be secured, the ramshackle complex of structures remained for 30 years!

**GENERAL NOTES:**

Chipkin refers as follows to the J.C. Cook & Cowen practice: Going into the 1930’s, there was the “prolific firm” of Cook & Cowen “who designed vast Art Deco piles and were working, at the beginning of 1934, on fourteen major buildings. Cook & Cowen, were the architects of Dunvagan Chambers...and Broadcast House, as well as buildings like Dorchester Mansions in Rissik Street and Stanhope Mansions in Plein Street, both embellished with startling Art Deco relief panels”. Later on, he states that there is no doubt in his mind “that, like the Obels, Maurice Cowen had also walked the sidewalks of New York: breathing in the atmosphere, studying the Manufacturers Trust Building, absorbing Art Deco details along lower Broadway, responding with youthful enthusiasm to the concocted world of New York modernity.”

**SOURCES:**

Opname Historiese Geboue In Johannesburg, Second Report June 1976, Inner City, RAU  
MC File 3/1/3/Joh/A : Johannesburg General

Chipkin, C. M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society 1880s – 1960s, David Philip, 1993

Shorten, J.R.: The Johannesburg Saga, John R. Shorten, Second impression, 1966

City Engineering Department, Stand No. 4771, Township Johannesburg (Planning Department), City of Johannesburg

Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City - Metropolitan Planning, Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (Cool Factory)

South African Architectural Record, September 1946

Registrar of Deeds, Johannesburg

**RECORDED BY:**

Johann J and Catharina JM Bruwer.  
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