

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: (Third) ANSTEY'S BUILDING



Main photo: "The evolution of the firm (of J.C. Cook & Cowen) took a dramatic leap forward into 1930s modernity when they designed the Anstey's skyscraper, purported to be the second-highest modern building in Africa at the time." (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...); corner of Jeppe and Joubert Streets – view of the four storey podium with rounded corner and cantilevered canopy at pavement level, the two stepped right angle apartments wings, and the stepped back facades at the upper levels.

Top right: taken from a position in Jeppe Street west of the building, the systematically stepped back top storeys of the building remain one of the most notable features of the building; on the right foreground can be seen the north facade of the Woolworths Building in Jeppe Street.

Bottom right: the building as seen from a position in Joubert Street, south of the building.

Bottom centre: the 3-Dimensional massing of the building is clearly visible in this picture.

Previous/alternative name/s : none

LOCATION: Street :
Street number :
 : [59, 61 Joubert; 160, 162 Jeppe]
Stand Number : 1118, 1119, 1120
Previous Stand Number:
Block number : AF
GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height : 55m
Levels above street level : 19
Levels below street level : two
On-site parking : none

The descriptions below by Chipkin and Van Der Waal of the *third Anstey's Building*, including its central place in the competitive environment of the development of tall commercial buildings in the City during the 1930s, point to the exceptional qualities of this building as one of Johannesburg's most notable landmark buildings.

"The Anstey's ziggurat, designed by Emley & Williamson, at the corner of Jeppe and Joubert streets comprised two stepped, right angle apartment blocks (with cylindrical glazed windows at the re-entrant angle) rising off a four storey podium, whose rounded corner derived from its counterpart on the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building (1929-32) by Howe & Lescaze. The podium was built to house Norman Anstey & Company, the prestigious department store of the pre-war and post-war periods, run at the time by Hugh Manley Anstey, the son of the founder. The store was famous for its gorgeous and elegant window-dressing seen from the pavement through large plateglass shop-fronts and in dressing seen from the pavement through large plateglass shop-fronts and the freestanding cylindrical glass showcase at the main entrance. Banham has written that Howe's early revisions for the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building showed Howe 'groping for a modernism that would be more than just Art Deco with the Deco scraped off'...That seems to be an appropriate commentary on Williamson's work for the Anstey's building, where the design is a remarkably reticent statement of a high-rise building, modern in its own way...The tallest buildings in the Johannesburg of the 1920s were ten storeys high; the addition of pinnacles, roof accretions and flagmasts made them appear even higher. By 1938 there were four real skyscrapers in the city centre: Anstey's (1935-7), at 17 storeys, Lewis & Marks (1935-7) at 14 storeys [see P-6], Escom House (1935-7) at 21 storeys, and Chrysler House (1936-8) at 16 storeys...Escom and Anstey's vied with each other as the highest modern buildings on the African continent, thought they were well short of the building height achieved in Ancient Egypt of the fourth dynasty in 3700BC. But as reinforced-concrete building structures, they were amongst the highest in the world at the time...But Anstey's, surmounted by its Art Deco flagmast, seemed in the 1930s (when viewed from Hospital Hill) the highest point in the Johannesburg skyline. (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society..).

It is stated by Van Der Waal that from about 1933-34, "the proportions" in façade planes "were made more dynamic by narrowing one of the façade planes and linking the windows in a continuous band...In *Surrey House* (1935-6), 106 Commissioner Street, the dynamic effect was strengthened by the rounded corner of the building around which the window bands were stretched, and by the cantilever concrete slabs extending over the upper balconies. A similar effect was created in the *Grand National Building* (1935-8), 50/2 Rissik Street [see Pre-History; U-1], but this building, as well as *Manners Mansions* (1937-9), 164/6/8 Jeppe Street [see AE-3] and the aforementioned *Anstey Building*, constituted an exception in the usual street aspect, in that the building mass was treated in a sculptural fashion. The recessed section above the main entrance imparted a dramatic effect to the whole...While the severe lines of the *Woolworths Building* [65, 67 Kerk Street] projected a very modern image, *Boustred* [130 Fox Street], *Cleghorn & Harris* and *John Orr Building* (1934-6), 73/5 Pritchard Street, were streamlined in the Modernistic Style. The rounded street corner of the latter building was a good manifestation of how the dynamics of spatial articulation at street corners was perceived. A similar effect was created in *Anstey's Building*, where the contrast between the massive proportions of the charcoal-coloured lower five storeys with rounded corner and the recessed corner of the off-white higher storeys made a forceful statement in the street aspect. This was also the only

commercial building without a severe upper termination. The top storeys were systematically stepped back to end in a tower with a flagpost." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

"Whereas the office buildings (during the latter 1930s) created an hierarchical impression with their vertical accents, the larger commercial buildings accentuated the more democratic horizontal proportions. The facades of most shopping complexes consisted of alternating bands of wall and window planes. With one notable exception, the 17-storey *Ansteys*, these buildings were not very tall. While these retail buildings accentuated the more human horizontal dimension, in character they differed from the non-communicative office blocks in only one respect. Like the latter, they projected their single-function aspect in a consistent and uniform façade treatment..." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

"To compensate for the businesslike façade of commercial buildings, the architects and owners put a great deal of effort in to livening up the display windows. As early as 1927 no less a person than Rex Martienssen (then still a student) published an article on 'Modern architecture, with particular reference to shop design'...in which he suggested that 'the shop should invite...but, most important, the external decorative treatment should in all cases be a foil to the displayed articles. It should emphasise the importance of the goods, and not detract therefrom [sic.]'...Few suggestions by Martienssen were as faithfully heeded as this one, as was revealed above all in the illusion of depth created in the display windows of the time, which seemed to apply a kind of suction force on the pedestrians on the pavements. Even during the previous century the entrances to shops were placed far back while the display windows were gradually funnel-shaped towards the entrance. But during this period [i.e. 1920 to 1940] this was given a powerful new architectonic treatment. Another innovation was to push back the display window front, as was done in the *Cleghorn & Harris Building*, in which detached display cabinets formed a separate front all along the sidewalk. Similar detached display cabinets were also used in other buildings, such as *Ansteys* where they were located in the entrance funnel. This experimental treatment of the sidewalk space indicated an integrated perception of life on the streets and advertising needs. The growing independent existence of the display windows was made possible by the narrow reinforced concrete columns on which the buildings were supported. These columns were often integrated in the design as partitions between windows, which at that time were smaller and lower than before and conceived as separate décor (also closed off from behind) with the emphasis falling on only a few articles rather than the bountiful displays of yore. In line with the guidelines of Martienssen, these display windows seemed to suggest that the articles themselves were important, not the abundance thereof. Concealed electric lighting caused these display cabinets to stand out conspicuously in their frames in the shadow of the sidewalk hood." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

In May 1989, the NMC was approached by RFB Consulting Architects regarding the proposed redevelopment by SANLAM of the city block bounded by Kerk, Joubert, Jeppe and Rissik Streets. See HISTORY. The report, subsequently submitted by the NMC (see extract below) to SANLAM, adequately substantiated the NMC's insistence on the retention of the *third Anstey's Building* (sourced from SAHRA Archive File 3/1/3/Joh/154, Ansteys- & Manners Mansions, h/v Jeppe- & Joubertstr, Johannesburg).

2. ANSTEYS (circa 1936).

The important features for retention are:

2.1. PODIUM.

- 2.1.1. the horizontal ribbon windows in the four-storeyed podium demonstrating what (at the time) was a new independence of external infill walls between a concrete framed structure.

- 2.1.2. the balustrade at the top of the podium, made up of two pipes on raking brackets, possibly echoing similar ship-architecture details.
- 2.1.3. the shopfronts in black marble or granite which possibly have been modified over time. Some areas still retain fragments of the original Anstey's shop signage.
- 2.1.4. the green terrazzo finish to the podium level - unless it can be ascertained that this was not the original finish.

2.2. SUPER-STRUCTURE.

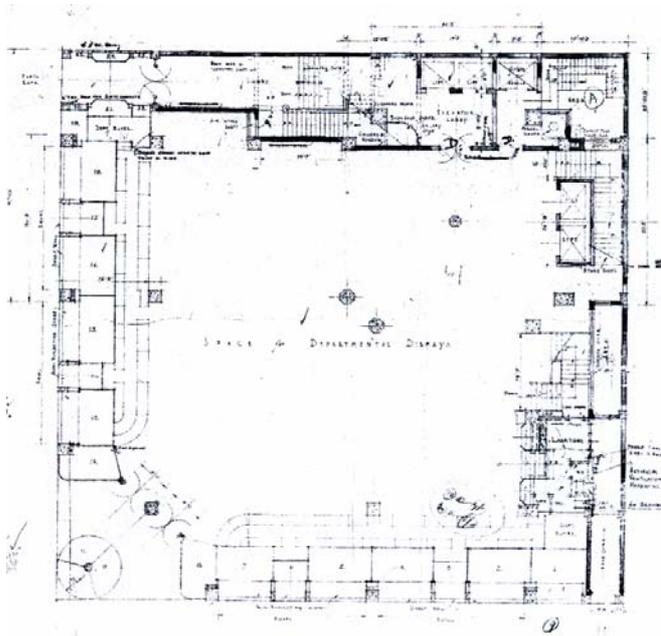
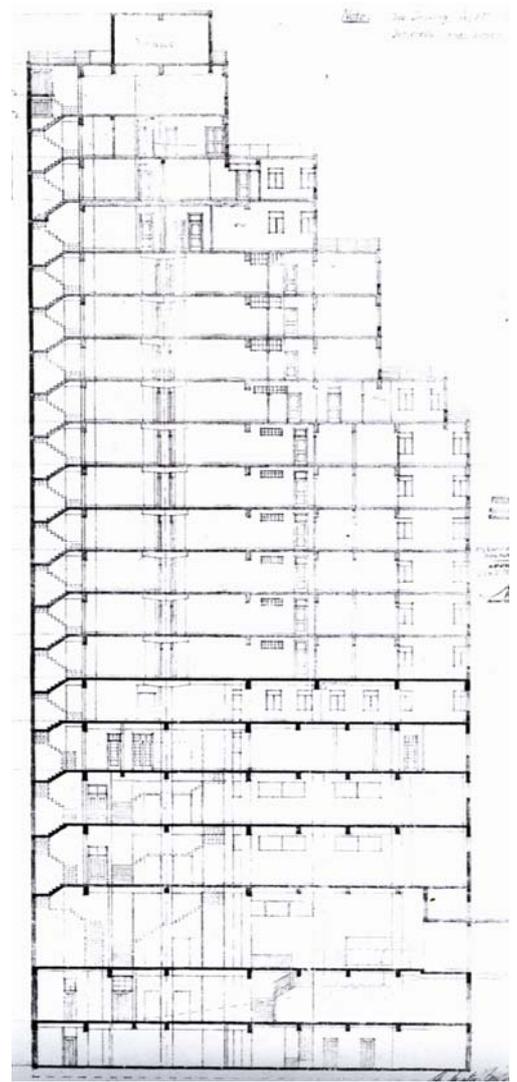
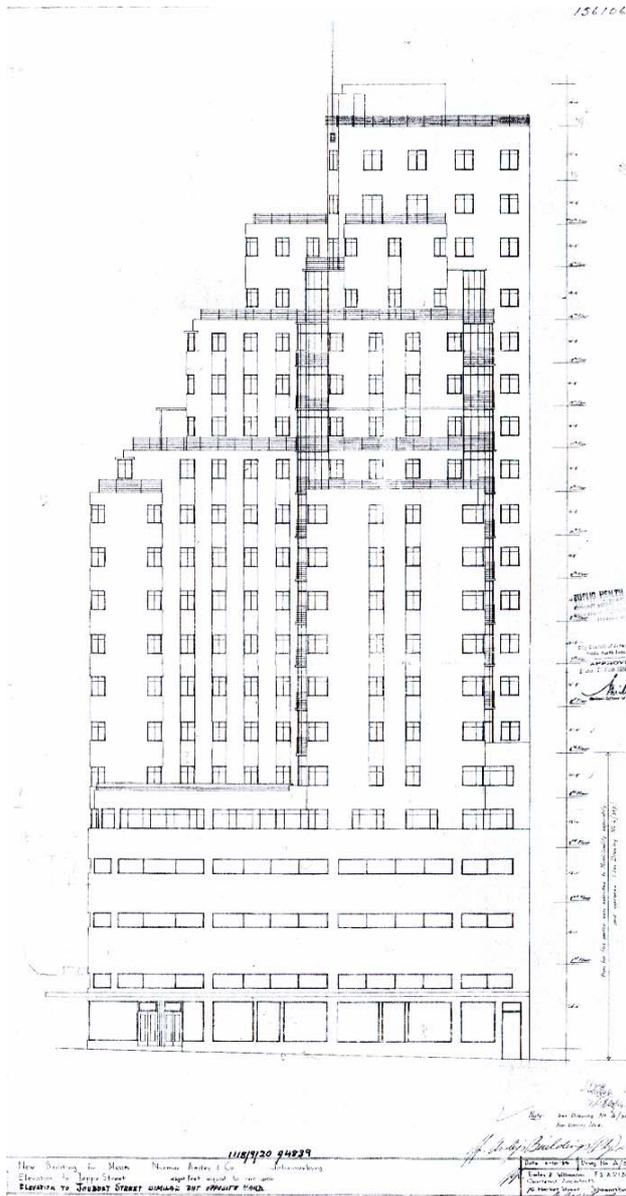
- 2.2.1. the three rounded glazed bays which rise the full height of the two residential wings and which tend to emphasise the symmetry of the external form.
- 2.2.2. the termination, at the apex of the central rounded bay, with a finely detailed pinnacle which is emphasised by two smaller flagpoles on either side of it.
- 2.2.3. the corner windows occurring at each external corner, for the full height of the two wings, which are characteristic of the period and also have significant impact on the interior spaces.
- 2.2.4. the slightly recessed vertical panels into which the mid-wall windows are set, emphasising the soaring, vertical quality of the building.
- 2.2.5. the profile of the irregular setbacks of the residential wings forming balconies (from the 11th floor and above) which terminate in a square form at the apex. The single pipe - balustrade detail to these balconies is also a significant feature.
- 2.2.6. the scale, proportions and finishes of the existing window and french-door openings.
- 2.2.7. the original colour, texture and finish of the external wall surface.

2.3. INTERIOR FEATURES

- 2.3.1. the large decorative brass screens in the entrance foyer.
- 2.3.2. the standard resolution of the separate flat entrance opening into a common foyer (with large freestanding circular column) which leads in turn into the lift foyer.
- 2.3.3. those lightfittings and light switches, doors and door furniture, wooden parquet floor etc. that are original and sufficiently intact.

2.4. CONCLUSION

From the foregoing points it is apparent that Anstey's is an exceedingly fine Johannesburg building and the external appearance of the building defined on the diagram attached, may not be altered.

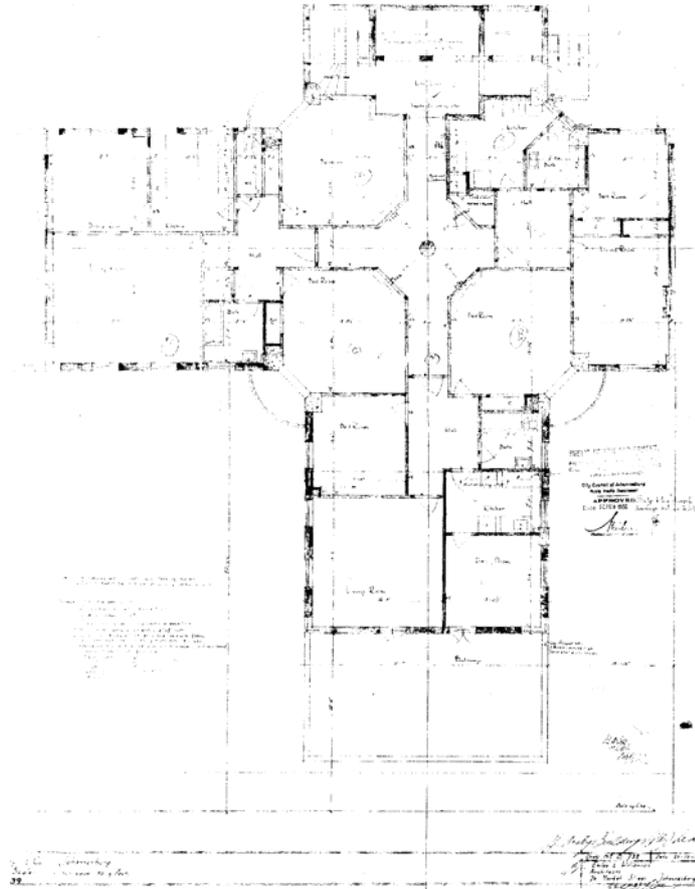


Appearing on this and the next two pages of the form is a selection of extracts from the original submission drawings by the architects Emley & Williamson. The poor quality of the copied drawings is regretted.

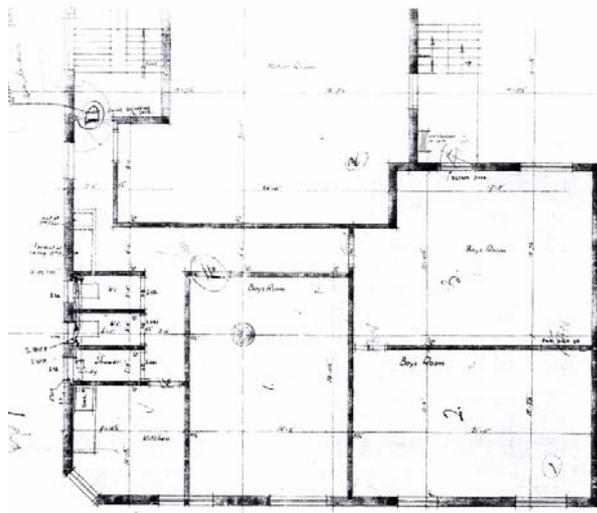
Above: on the left is a copy of the north (Jeppe Street) elevation of the building, and on the right, a copy of one of the Sections.

Below: copy of Ground Floor Plan, showing that Anstey's Department Store with double volume Ground Floor, was accessed via the corner Main Entrance; note the cylindrical glass showcase at this entrance; the residential floors were accessed via a separate entrance in Joubert Street, at the southeast corner of the building.

Below: copy of 12th Floor Plan.



Below: copy of 18th Floor Plan; as can be seen, this floor (i.e. the workers' floor) comprised of three sizeable staff rooms, a kitchen and communal toilet and ablution facilities, a Lift Motor Room. See GENERAL NOTES. This floor and the 19th Floor, were accessed via the extended stair from the 17th Floor, i.e. the furthest point serviced by the two lifts.



CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: reinforced concrete frame construction; plastered brick.

Roof: concrete, flat.

Windows: steel casements.

SITE FEATURES:**ALTERATIONS:**

In 1953, internal alterations estimated at a total cost of £85 000 (building) and £650 (drainage) were carried out to the building. Architect W.C. Von Berg (address: 903 Maritime House, Loveday Street, Johannesburg). Plans for this were passed on 23 September 1953. See GENERAL NOTES.

Refurbishment of the building. Approval of plans 4 November 1994. (Plans approved by NMC in January 1994). Architects: Denzil Hersch Associates. Estimated cost R1 200 000.

INTEGRITY:

The integrity of the exterior of the building has remained largely intact, which *inter alia*, justifies the building's status as a declared provincial heritage site.

INSCRIPTION:

"In March 2003 South Africa hosts the Seventh Annual World Congress on Art Deco. This will be held in Cape Town and to link into this, Jo'burg is erecting plaques on buildings evidencing the Art Deco theme. We start with the TOP TWENTY – great buildings in the Inner City will be identified by means of distinctive blue and white heritage plaques. A further forty buildings of similar merit will follow in the hall of fame. These include more in the centre of town but also those spread across Johannesburg, noticeably blocks of flats. Art Deco was not just the preserve of the wealthy corporates [sic.] - it belonged to everyone, and the purpose of this project is to highlight a period in the history of Jo'burg which created a valuable architectural and social treasure. Some of these buildings are, sadly, deteriorating but dilapidation and decay cannot conceal their glorious and exuberant architecture." (Information sourced from Art Deco Plaques\main.htm).

The information appearing on the Art Deco heritage plaque at the *third Anstey's Building*, reads as follows: "Designed in 1935 by Emley & Williamson for Norman Anstey, founder of the elegant department store of that name, which occupied the first four floors. Two apartment wings soar another twelve storeys with magnificent views of the city. Cecil Williams, actor, playwright and member of Umkhonto we Sizwe lived here. Nelson Mandela was disguised as his driver when captured on 5 August 1962." (Information sourced from Art Deco Plaques\list1.htm). See also HISTORY.

ARCHITECT:

Emley & Williamson (address: 76 Market Street, Johannesburg).

BUILDER:

Reinforcement by The Reinforcing Steel Co., Ltd.

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans: December 1934; January 1935; 15 June 1935; 11 October 1935; 23 October 1935.

Approval of plans: 1936 (the completed Application for Approval of Plans form for this building could not be found).

Completion date: 1937

BUILDING STYLE:

Art Deco – Monolithic.

"In a certain group of buildings, those designed in the so-called Modernistic Style...the horizontal and vertical accents were combined in order to reinforce the impression of dynamic movement in all directions. Long window strips, rounded corners in buildings and bay window sections and, incised windows at the corners of buildings, were used to create a streamlined effect and demonstrate the recent independence from load-bearing outer walls. Examples were *Anstey Building*...and the *Cleghorn & Harris Building* (1939), 68 Kerk Street." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

"Architectural Merit: "For many years the tallest building in Johannesburg, Anstleys (sic.) has been the strongest symbol of art deco Johannesburg over the years." (Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City).

BUILDING TYPE:

Shops to street and apartment building.

ENVIRONMENT:

A year after the declaration of the *third Anstey's Building* as a national monument, the NMC indicated (i.e. in a letter dated 30th May 1995), that there were numerous conservation valuable buildings in the area of the *third Anstey's Building* –the area was therefore considered to have special heritage qualities. Mention was made of the *School Clinic* (see AR-3), the *Union Club Building* (see AR-5), the *second Universal House* (see AR-2), and *Manners Mansions* (AE-2).

From an architectural viewpoint, the relationship between the *third Anstey's Building* and the multi-storey *Manners Mansions* opposite the former, on the northeast corner of Joubert and Jeppe Streets, is of particular interest. These buildings date from the same period. *Manners Mansions*, according to Chipkin, is "a massive fourteen-storey building, designed by Anstey's architects, Emley & Williamson, but in a substantially different style. It ignores, in a quintessentially Johannesburg manner, any attempt at architectural compatibility with its Anstey's neighbour at an important intersection. One can imagine how this opportunity would have been handled in a great age of town building but this has little relevance to the Johannesburg situation. Anstey's is a skyscraper with basically cubic setbacks; Manners Mansions is a building with rounded Mendelsohnian forms and a very pronounced axial symmetry concentrated on a main tower splayed to the corner. Both buildings are set back from lower-level podiums (which respond to each other with rounded corners). It is these setbacks that open up the view of the sky in an extraordinary manner. (Chipkin, C.M.: *Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...*).

The noteworthy aspect of architectural interconnectivity between the *third Anstey's Building* and *Manners Mansions* are described as follows in the Introduction to an unpublished report by the NMC, dated 11 September 1989, and titled *Report On The Important Architectural Features Of 'Anstey's' And 'Manners Mansions' Cor Joubert And Jeppe Streets, Johannesburg*: (see HISTORY BELOW) "These two multi-storey blocks of flats create one of the most dramatic architectural features in the city...The architectural importance of the two buildings is both in their relationship to one another, and in the similar way in which both designs address the planning and spatial problems inherent on a corner stand. The most impressive features of both buildings are the 3-Dimensional massing, the sheer vertical facades and the stepping back of the façade at the upper levels. Both buildings 'celebrate' their position on the corner by the enclosure of an open vertical space between two adjacent wings. This design response is in direct contrast to what had been typical in Johannesburg prior to their construction. The buildings terminate a fine collection of buildings along Joubert Street. Both buildings are characterised by a strong horizontal heavier podium which 'wraps' in a gentle curve around the street corner. This feature is combined with flat cantilevered concrete canopies at pavement level (with recesses on the underside for canvas roller blinds) which serves to accentuate the horizontality at ground floor level." SAHRA Archive File, 3/1/3/Joh/154, Anstey's- & Manners Mansions, h/v Jeppe- & Joubertstr, Johannesburg).

CONDITION:

Fair.

URGENT ACTION:

SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:

The refurbishment of the building by NEWHCO (the New Housing Company) were carried out in consultation with and in terms of a permit issued by the former NMC in January 1994. All subsequent work to the building has been effected under the authority of permits issued by the NMC, and its successor-in-title, SAHRA. Refer to SAHRA Current File 9/2/228/004 for further information.

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 checked="" 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: Government Notice No. 1085 dated 17 June 1994 as published in Government Gazette No. 15796 of 17 June 1994.

Gazette description: "The building known as Anstey's, situated on Erven 1118, 1119 and 1120, in the Township of Johannesburg, District of Johannesburg. Deed of Transfer T2737/1960, dated 1 April 1960."

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

Previously declared as a national monument.

NOTES:

This building was nominated as one of Johannesburg's top 100 heritage places in 1986.

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership: Norman Anstey & Co.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

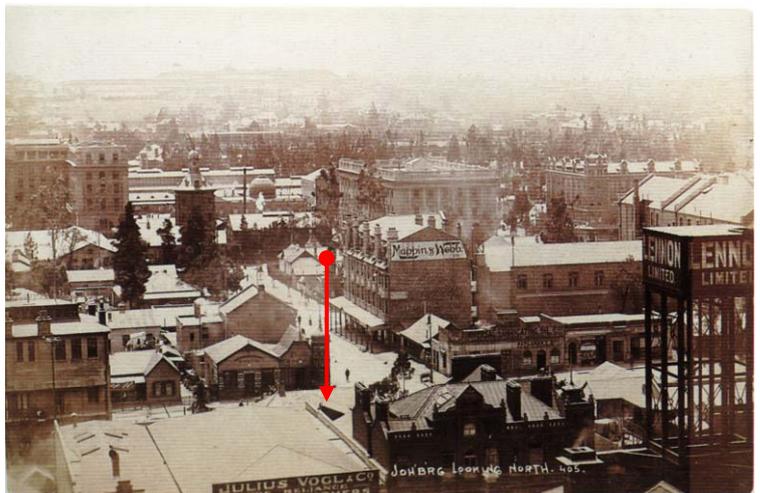
TENNIS CLUB:

It is stated by Leyds that the site of the current *third Anstey's Building* originally accommodated several tennis courts of the Johannesburg Tennis Club. "Tennis", according to Leyds, "was also started in the town's first years. Again the men from Natal and from Kimberley took the lead. The first meeting was held on 5th August 1891, the organisers being Messrs. Fox, Curtis and Williams, all well-known tennis players...When they (i.e. the Tennis Club) moved to the [sic.] Berea the site became the 'Orpheum Bio' [bioscope or cinema], long one of the most popular theatres in the town...on the spot where the Tennis Club had played on Sundays and where it was left alone by the police in as much as the Rev. Darragh (see Pre-History: AD-5), the nearest Padre, did not complain." (Leyds, G.A.: A History of Johannesburg).

ORPHEUM THEATRE (also known as MAMMOTH THEATRE / PICTURE PALACE):

Right: "On the corner of Jeppe Street is the Pavilion Bar, subsequently the site of the Waldorf Café, with the Orpheum Theatre directly opposite. On the right corner is the Universal Lubricating Oil Co. owned by Patlansky Bros." (Norwich, O.I.: A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards, postcard 140).

"The most significant theatre building of this period was the five-storey *Orpheum Theatre* (1912), 160/2 Jeppe Street...The *Orpheum* was the second theatre (after the *Bijou* of 1910) to be built in this area where the *Plaza* [at 150, 152 Jeppe Street] would also be erected in 1930 [The *Royalty*, erected during 1930 at 68 Pritchard Street, also falls in this category although no



no longer used as a theatre.]. Thus there emerged a second concentration of theatres after those in Commissioner Street – on the boundary between the commercial district and residential area and close to a number of club buildings. After 1910 this area must have been particularly lively during the evenings. The *Orpheum Theatre* was designed in the form of a block, with a snub tower on the street corner. The façades were horizontally divided in two. The lower portion included both a high and low verandah while the upper level was articulated by classicist pilasters in narrow panels. The horizontal lines of the verandahs were repeated in the rather heavy cornice with parapet, while the pilasters linked up with the pillars of the verandahs. In this way architect J A Moffat succeeded giving this unusual composition a satisfactory unity. More than other buildings from this period, the *Orpheum Theatre* betrayed the French origins of the Beaux Arts building style, especially in the rounded corners, (so typical of street scenes in Paris), and the application of architectural ornamentation. The torch-like wall lights, which suggested the interior of the theatre, were rather unusual. The formal effect of the top storey compensated to some extent for the personal impression created by the verandahs...Like the *The Orpheum*, the *Empire* [*Empire Place of Varieties*] provided a focal point in its environment, in which several well-known theatres, such as the *Colosseum* and *His Majesty's* were destined to arise later...The theatre building was erected in 1912 with a two storey auditorium and a single storey façade (architect: Alan Monsborough). In 1919 the auditorium was increased in height and the façade under discussion here was built. The alterations were made without a single performance being cancelled!...As in the pioneering days, theatre buildings had a more important role than church buildings in the architectural development of Johannesburg from 1920 to 1940, during which period four enormous theatres and cinemas were built in the city centre. This would seem to indicate that after 1920 the interest and taste in entertainment shifted to new and experimental social activities, including spectacular shows. It is probably also explained by the acknowledged need for entertainment in times of stress, such as those of the world-wide depression and the searing drought in the South African countryside around 1930...The development of talking pictures, which were shown in Johannesburg for the first time in 1929...gave conventional theatre an important partner. Both created a rich new fantasy world and these buildings reflected the attraction of the unusual. Moreover, these developments were also a reflection of a more democratic tendency, in that an effort was made to entertain the masses, just as the infant broadcasting system was doing at the time. Previously, when British imperialism with its autocratic approach held sway, entertainment of the masses was considered unimportant. The excitement created by the theatres and cinemas made the city centre a very lively place every night – not only by drawing large numbers of people and vehicles into the streets but by enlivening the area with large illuminated bill-boards.” (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

Right: “The Orpheum Theatre. This theatre, also known as the Mammoth Theatre and Picture Palace, was opened on the corner of Joubert and Jeppe streets in December 1911, with much fanfare and publicity. It staged excellent variety turns and ‘star’ films, a change from the everyday run of bioscopes. On the ground floor are a number of commercial shops (i.e. H. Platte, Tailor; Silcock & Versepoot Ltd. Forwarding Agents and A.E. Street, Grocer etc.). The prices advertised at the front pay office are 2 shillings and 1 shilling. The theatre was originally a single-storey but in 1919, under the supervision of architect (J.A.?) Moffat, it was apparently jacked up an additional 4,5 m and converted into a double-storey.” (Norwich, O.I.: A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards, postcard 83).



HISTORY:

The *first Anstey's Building* was situated at 83 Eloff Street. This was a five-storey building, completed in 1899. On the lateral wall of the building facing Kerk Street, Norman Anstey & Co. advertised themselves as The New Drapery Stores, Costumiers, Milliners. (See Pre-History: AD-5.).

In those days, the ladies of Johannesburg were as fashion conscious as they are today. “Not only did their homes require the flamboyant clutter of the day which prevailed, with ornate brass taps, red plush curtains, mahogany furniture and the grand piano, but they also followed diligently the dress fashions of the period. Anstey's in 1902 offered silk voiles, crepelines, taffetas and hop sac. Elbow

sleeves with lace mitts were in vogue as were tea coats in cream lace and turquoise chiffon. And ballroom gowns included creations of 'hydrangea chiffon' and 'black lace over white silk with a glimmer of jet beads and frills of white chiffon at the bodice.'" (Palestrant, E.: Johannesburg One Hundred).

The founder of Ansteys was Norman Anstey, a prominent public figure during the early days of Johannesburg. He, *inter alia*, served a term as Mayor of Johannesburg during the period 1913 – 1915. This was during "one of the more turbulent times in Johannesburg...(i.e. at the time of the 1914 Strike)...the Government acted promptly. Martial law was declared;...and under the chairmanship of the Mayor, Councillor Norman Anstey, a Committee of Public Safety was formed in Johannesburg to ensure the equitable distribution of supplies in the town and prevent any undue rise in prices." (Shorten, J.R.: The Johannesburg Saga).

During 1915, as part of his duties as Mayor, he addressed the following letter dated 1st July 1915 to "Reverend Mother Adèle, We, representing the meeting of citizens held in Town Hall on the 18th May, 1915, voice a sentiment which is as sincere as it is universal: we desire to place on record our deep regret at the withdrawal of the Community of Catholic Sisters from the Johannesburg Hospital. To you and your noble assistants was due the possibility of starting the hospital, 27 years ago, under conditions that would have dismayed and discouraged a less zealous band of women. On behalf of the people of Johannesburg, Norman Anstey Mayor." (Shorten, J.R.: The Johannesburg Saga).

Due to its popularity, Ansteys, as one of the first department stores in Johannesburg (see also GENERAL NOTES below), continued to grow. As this necessitated larger premises, a new building was completed in 1911 for Norman Anstey & Co. This, then known as the *second Anstey's Building*, later the *Paramount Building (OK Bazaars Building)*, is situated on the northeast corner of Joubert and Kerk Streets.

In 1934, the well-known architectural practice of Emley & Williamson was commissioned by Ansteys to design a new building for the Company. This building, to be situated on the southwestern corner of Jeppe and Joubert Streets, was clearly meant to be no ordinary building. Sadly, the old *Orpheum Theatre* had to make way for this proposed new building. When completed in 1937, the building immediately took the position of one of the city's landmark buildings, due to its height and the unusual way in which its massing was sculptured. See DESCRIPTION OF PLACE.

Right: looking west down Jeppe Street in 1956 – just visible on the left is *Manners Mansions* with the *third Anstey's Building* on the opposite corner of Jeppe and Joubert Streets; almost hidden from the camera, is the *Heritier Building*, the western neighbour of the *third Anstey's Building* in Jeppe Street; the *Criterion Hotel* stands on the southeastern corner of Jeppe and Rissik Street, and on the opposite corner, the *Plaza Theatre*. (Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years...).



From the following description by Van Der Waal, the *third Anstey's Building* in its own way, represented a first for the City in terms of the development of tall buildings. "With the growing number of skyscrapers constructed in a large section of the city centre... Johannesburg began to resemble a mini New York in the 1920s and 1930 – an extraordinary achievement for a city so young. Thus the city was given many flattering sobriquets, such as 'Wonder of the Modern World' and Miracle of the Empire'...The outstanding feature of the cityscape was its youthfulness, the 'oldest' tradition of the city. C H Sayce remarked in 1948: 'a youthful vigour...is the spirit of the place'. This boundless energy was used to prise open the shape and three-dimensional form of the centre, thereby replacing the pristine shelter effect by a bold configuration of building blocks of up to 20 storeys in various parts of the city centre. At the same time the verticality and rectangularity of the building masses shifted the attention in large measure from the material to the cerebral. It seemed as if the buildings, by their very height and emphasis on simple stereometry, broke away from the earth-bound sentiments which marked the previous periods. ...A full silhouette of the city could only be seen from the east and west. From Hospital Hill in the north one looked down upon the city, while from the south, the view was obstructed by the yellow and white mine dumps. Until 1935 there were no individual accents in the city's skyline, and the centre was perceived as an undifferentiated conglomeration of buildings of more or less equal height. The first such focal point was *Ansteys Building* (55 m) completed in 1936. This was followed by *Escom House* (73 m) in 1937 and *Chrysler House* (58 m) in 1938. While these buildings fell far short of the tower blocks of

Chicago, e.g. *Woolworth's Tower* (239 m, built in 1910-3) or the *Empire State Building* (390 m, built in 1929-31), they were nevertheless seen as extraordinary achievements in the South African context." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

By 1954, Norman Anstey Limited, was still specialising in the following items: Milliners, Costumiers, Footwear Specialists, Ladies and Children's Complete Outfitters, Men's Outfitters; Drapers, furnishings, crockery and glassware; hardware, groceries and provisions. Contact numbers: PO Box 1003, telephone 011 22-5551, telegraphic address "Draperies".

Below: 1956 Aerial view of Anstey's. (Stark, F. [Ed.]: *Seventy Golden Years...*).



1898 — 1956

The House of Anstey . . .

The name of Anstey is a household word throughout the country—it is a name built up on confidence, integrity and service.

Anstey's

NORMAN ANSTEY LIMITED, Corner JEPPE & JOUBERT STREETS, JOHANNESBURG
NORMAN ANSTEY LIMITED, WEST STREET, DURBAN

NELSON R. MANDELA:

The interesting association of the building with South Africa's first democratically-elected President, Nelson R. Mandela, was eventually to become the subject of a documentary film, titled *The Man Who Drove With Mandela*. Directed by Greta Schiller, this film received The Best Documentary Film award at the 1999 Panama Film Festival and in Germany. The following is an extract from an internet article, regarding the story of the Mandela association: "South Africa in 1962. Disguised as the chauffeur of a distinguished gentleman, Nelson Mandela drove a gleaming limousine across the length and breadth of the country - and organised the armed struggle against the apartheid regime. What happened to Mandela following his arrest is, of course, history. But who was the mysterious, elegant gentleman who was chauffeured around by Mandela? This film describes the struggle for freedom in South Africa from an unusual perspective. The son of a blacksmith, Cecil Williams was born in Cornwall and he came to South Africa in 1928 where he was to become one of the best known stage directors of his time in Johannesburg. He was a committed (sic.) communist and a homosexual. Although in public he was greatly respected and admired on account of his artistic prowess, the repressive political climate of the forties and fifties meant that his life was always something of a tightrope walk between two forbidden worlds: on the one hand the world of organized [sic.] freedom fighters working underground and on the other, the world of a gay subculture. Among those to visit his apartment on the sixteenth floor of Ansteys Building were Nelson Mandela and Sir Lawrence Olivier. In spite of his fame, Williams was often arrested, interrogated and banned from working. Finally, he was obliged to leave South Africa; he left the country during a dramatic escape over the border. Cecil Williams died in London in 1978." (Information sourced from <http://www.ilga-portugal.org/festival/99/prog99p2.html>).

In 1989, the NMC was approached by RFB Consulting Architects, regarding a proposal by the latter's client, viz. Sanlam Properties (the owner of the *third Anstey's Building* since the 1970s), to redevelop the city block bounded by Rissik, Jeppe, Joubert and Kerk Streets. There were numerous conservation worth buildings on this block, including *Africa House* and *Anchor Mansions*. The NMC was quick to point to the conservation value in particular, of the *third Anstey's Building*. A report, titled "Report On The Important Architectural Features Of 'Ansteys' And 'Manners Mansions' Cor Joubert And Jeppe Streets, Johannesburg" compiled by the architect William Martinson, and dated 11 September 1989, was subsequently submitted to Sanlam Properties, to show that the *third Anstey's Building* had exceptional architectural qualities. The NMC was, *inter alia*, prepared to agree to the proposed demolition of the remaining buildings on the city block and to support a free-of-bulk application by Sanlam Properties (i.e. in terms of their proposed redevelopment scheme), whilst also making it clear that it wished to see the building being declared as a national monument.

It was subsequently decided by Sanlam Properties to donate the *third Anstey's Building*, through the NMC, to NEWHCO, who proceeded to renovate and sectionalise the building – thereby providing much needed refurbished Inner City housing. This happened in 1994. The Preservation of the Anstey's Building Trust (the Trust) was formed to see to the maintenance of the building, once the apartments had been sold. In September 1997, the then Mayor of Johannesburg Councillor Isaac Mogase officiated at a ceremony to mark the successful completion of the refurbishment project. Mr Werner Kirchhoff, the first chairman of the Anstey's body corporate, on this occasion, recalled the popularity many years before, of the Anstey's Tearoom. It was as famous as the one in the John Orr's Department Store. The *third Anstey's Building*, on account of its successful refurbishment and subsequent sustainable conservation, became a flagship project of the NMC in the City. It also became a valuable housing resource for people who were previously disadvantaged.

The building currently comprises of 81 sectional title units. The Ground Floor, Basement, and Sub-Basement are leased as retail space to Stillers Discount Stores. The First, Second and Third Floor are used by emergent commercial enterprises, whilst the Fourth Floor is currently used as a recreation space.

GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building	:	
Estimated cost of drainage	:	
Accommodation approved	:	
Valuation at completion	:	
Occupied	:	yes

PREVIOUS TENANT:

By 1954: Norman Anstey Ltd.

CURRENT TENANT/S:

Stillers Discount Stores.

The explanations below by Van Der Waal appropriately show how it came that a tall building such as the *third Anstey's Building*, was erected, and more importantly so, how it was possible to erect a tall building such as this. This had to do with the system of land taxation applicable in Johannesburg since 1919, and with the amendment of building regulations in 1934.

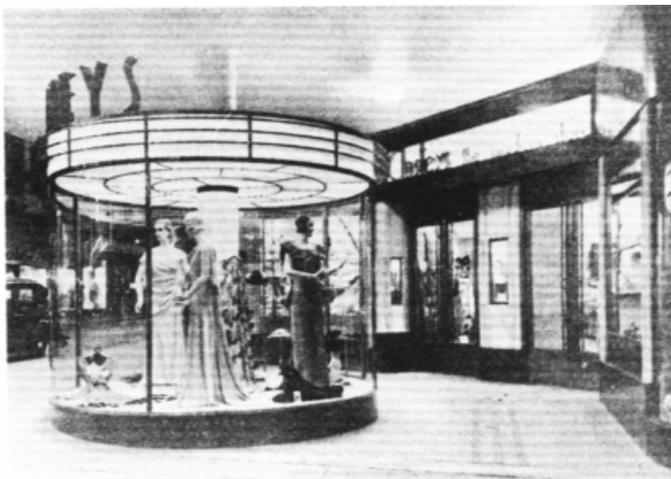
"The economic reasons for the high-rise construction were related to the municipal valuation system, which will be discussed first, and amendments to the building regulations and the emergence of new building techniques, which will be dealt with later. It is a generally accepted fact that valuations systems have a bearing on the course of urban development. A system which taxes only buildings impedes growth and fires land speculation, while one that taxes only land promotes land development to the maximum while curbing land speculation. Until 1918 Johannesburg applied a system of joint taxation on land and improvements, much along the lines of the British model. This prevented extremes in both land speculation and development...In terms of a provincial ordinance of 1916, Johannesburg decided in favour of a tax on land only with effect from 1919...The result was a steep increase in land values after 1933 when economic conditions improved. In fact, land values more than doubled during the period 1930 to 1938...It should be borne in mind that the stands in central Johannesburg (Ferreirasdorp, Marshalltown and the former government land on Randjeslaagte and the farm Braamfontein) passed to new owners around 1909, when these stands, originally put out on leasehold, were sold to the lessees...This paved the way for the ordinance of 1916. Thereafter the City Council could tax the private sector directly. Owing to the relatively quiet and unexceptional economic circumstances prevailing from 1919 to 1932 the change in the tax system had no noticeable effect on land development, but the effect became rather marked after 1933 when the high taxes on land obliged owners to put up even higher and therefore more lucrative buildings. From the very outset Johannesburg took the lead in the promulgation of building regulations in the Transvaal, as was evidenced by the prototype regulations introduced in 1903. In 1934 Johannesburg proceeded to make some imaginative changes in these regulations – once again the first Municipality in the country to do so. After 1903 the height of buildings was restricted to five-thirds of the width of the street or a maximum of 44 m. In 1934 paragraph 23 of the regulations was amended to allow taller buildings, depending on the width of the street. Buildings were not allowed to extend above a line drawn from the building line on the opposite side of the street through a point five-thirds of the width of the street above the building line of the building concerned. It was not permissible for the cubic capacity of such a building to exceed that of a building of 44 m... The *South African Builder* (July 1934: 43) reveals the rather startling fact that this regulation was amended to allow the City Council to approve the plans of *Escom House*! The optimistic city fathers were so infatuated with the Manhattan-like image the city centre was acquiring that they even had viewpoints constructed where the residents could admire the panorama. These were in Berea (Primrose Terrace) at the *Medical Institute*." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

Van Der Waal continues: "The repeal of the restrictions on building heights allowed owners to give full vent to their search for vertical effects. Several buildings, such as *Escom House*, *Anstey's* and *Chrysler House*, were prime examples of the extent to which this new licence was exploited. Obviously, no account was taken of the possible effect of these high new facades on the perception of street spaces. After all, these tall buildings virtually obliterated all street spaces, and there was no relation at all between the steep street walls and life on the streets. The city fathers came to realise the adverse affects too late and an amended regulation introduced in 1937 (paragraph 2.3) served only to prevent further damage by new buildings. The new regulation restricted the number of storeys...not the cubic capacity of the building. The upper sections of many buildings erected before 1937 were already stepped back, so that the amended regulations effected no noteworthy change in the cityscape before 1940, as was evident from *Manners Mansions* (1937-9) [see AE-3] and the *S A Mutual Building* (1937-9) [now *Mutual Building*; E-3]. The probable explanation for this development is that the buildings were cast in the mould of the New York skyscrapers which were obliged to be stepped back at the top by a regulation promulgated in 1916." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

Helen Grange in a most informative newspaper article titled "Graceful old stores have all gone" on department stores and the early history of Johannesburg, writes as follows: "Of all the character changes which have left their mark on Johannesburg none has been more noticeable than the disappearance, in the 1970s, of the graceful old department stores. Its contemporaries – Anstey's, Belfast, Ackermans, Paramount and Stuttafords went too. So complete was the rout that Stuttaford's building in the city remained derelict for years. Some would even remember the firm of Blinman, Holwell and Islip – a department store with style and panache in the British manner in Eloff Street on

the site now occupied by the OK. The OK was one of the stores which stayed – and flourished. Historically, these stores all stood relatively close to each other, in the city's prime spots. Their siting was considered to be of huge significance in terms of fashion appeal – and only very few streets were regarded as fashionable. These streets were all north of Commissioner Street – that part of the city which the Transvaal Republic auctioned to the public in 1886 when Johannesburg was born. South of that street on what historically mine-owned land, are the grandiose old mining and financial houses. John Orr's had been a pioneer department store. Stuttafords had also been a household name since early in the century. But when Sam Cohen launched the cash-and-carry store called OK Bazaars in 1927 he was told it would fail – it was, people said, on the 'wrong side of Eloff Street'. Not only did the Eloff Street store do a roaring trade, it triggered a new age of cash stores and remained a powerful force even when similar cash stores were foundering. Instalment credit Because large department stores occupying four to five floors presented management difficulties, speciality department stores emerged – and quickly grew. One of the earliest speciality stores to open its doors was Hepworths, a menswear [sic.] retailer launched in 1894 in Harrison Street [on the corner of Eloff Street]. Edworks, the country-wide shoe chain opened its first Johannesburg shop on the corner of Joubert and Pritchard streets in 1924 – Foschini's clothing outfitters started in 1925 (in Pritchard Street) and Truworhs opened soon afterwards in 1926 (on the corner of President and Eloff). But the most noteworthy speciality store was Edgars, which started in 1939 as a tiny business specialising in giving instalment credit to typists and shop assistants when John Orr's was serving the upper end of the market. Since then, Edgars has established the largest and most successful speciality department store in Market Street (where the Belfast used to be) while also spreading its chain into shopping centres and other central areas nationwide. Its subsidiaries [sic.], Sales House and Jet Stores are major chains in their own right, each aiming at identifiable segments of the market. It was management difficulties which saw the closure of the old-timer, Greatermans, in 1982. The space vacated was promptly taken by Dions, a very successful speciality store dealing in furniture, sporting and photographic equipment and appliances....While some department stores went to the suburbs some, like Ansteys whose tall stepped building was the city's highest for years, and the bargain-basement shop, Paramount, simply disappeared. Ackermans, a giant in the 1920s, was bought out by Pep stores and today exists only as a supplement to Pep."

Whilst typing the above list a flood gate of memories was opened. So many buildings were well known to my meagre salary and I. It was highly fashionable in the Seventies to collect trousseau and I still posses some of the articles collected during those years; a wooden cutlery-holder bought at the main OK as it was known then; pieces of a dinner-set from *Greatermans* with the words 'Microwave oven safe' printed on the bottom – keeping in mind that microwave ovens were not a household name in the 70s in South-Africa; a rose-pattern stainless steel kitchen utensil set from *John Orr's* at a sale price of R25.00 – remember the rose-pattern, it was on everything such as glasses, dinner sets, carving sets and cutlery. Every Easter season a special stand was allocated for Easter eggs in *Greatermans* at the entrance on Rissik Street, the eggs I remember were the size of an ostrich egg, hand decorated with icing sugar and by special request, a name was iced on the egg. The best place to have breakfast on a Saturday morning was at the restaurant located on one of the upper floors in *Greatermans* – their scrambled eggs and toast was well known. My first account was opened at Edgars, the manageress was a Mrs. Van Den Heever, and with her help the account was opened without the permission of my parents, keep in mind that during the 70s women had fewer rights than now! The amount I could buy for was a staggering thirty rand! *John Orr's* had a Jucy Lucy bar and it was very vogue to say 'O, I went to John Orr's today.' The clothes sold at *Foschini's* and *Truworhs* were more expensive but their window dressing was always very tasteful and nice shops to do window-shopping at. (Catharina JM Bruwer).



Left: view of the Main Entrance at the corner of Jeppe and Joubert Streets to the Anstey Department Store. "The store was famous for its gorgeous and elegant window-dressing seen from the pavement through large plateglass shop-fronts and in dressing seen from the pavement through large plateglass shop-fronts and the freestanding cylindrical glass showcase at the main entrance." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

Below: copy of letter dated 28 February 1935 from the Manager: Native Affairs Department, Johannesburg City Council, showing how the practice of racial segregation was blatantly followed in the Council's approval of the plans of the proposed new building.

P 2398/1115 22/7/35

All Communications to be addressed to the MANAGER
Alle Mededelingen te adresseer aan die BESTUURDER

City of Johannesburg.



Stad Johannesburg.

TELEPHONES 33-3322 and 33-3323
TELEFOONS
P.O. BOX 5382.
POSBUS

G. BALLENDEN,
Manager.
Bestuurder.

Ref. No. N.A. 7/18

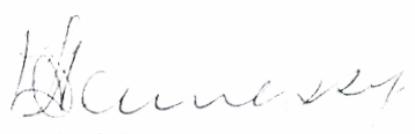
The City Engineer,
MUNICIPAL OFFICES.

Native Affairs Department
Departement Van Naturellesake
CORNER ELOFF STREET AND VILLAGE ROAD
H/V ELOFFSTRAAT EN VILLAGESWEG

28th November, 1935.

PLANS - MESSRS. NORMAN ANSTEY & CO.

I return herewith the plans of the native quarters
for a new block of flats situate on Stand ^{1114/18/19/20/21/22} ~~1246/8~~ Johannesburg -
Messrs. Norman Anstey & Co. The native quarters are in
order for the housing of 24 male natives provided single iron
beds are installed.


MANAGER.

WC/LE

Below: copy of letter dated 23 March 1953 from the Ansteys Management to the City Engineer, Johannesburg.

DRAPERY FURNISHING
CHINA - GLASS
GR... PROVISIONS
ANL HARDWARE

DIRECTOR
H. MANLEY ANSTEY
W. FEARNHED
E. V. HAINE
C. T. HILL
VICTOR KENT
T. LYNCH
H. Porter.
ALTERNATE:
T. R. HERBERT
E. J. NEWELL
D. F. KENT G. I. BAINES
J. P. HAINE B. C. W. FEARNHED
MANAGING DIRECTOR'S
OFFICE

CTH:LDM

NORMAN ANSTEY LTD



THE MODERN STORE

JEFFREY AND DUBERT STREETS

Johannesburg

23rd March, 1953.

The City Engineer,
P. O. Box 1049,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the plans, etc. for the new building, alterations and additions and drainage to be executed by us on Stands Nos. 1246/7/8 and 1118/2/21 (35) 1442 Township Johannesburg, we the undersigned Hugh Manley Anstey and Clarges Trevor Hill in our capacity as directors of Norman Anstey Limited, duly authorised by a Special Resolution of the Board of Directors of this Company passed on 23rd March, 1953, hereby authorise Mr. W.C. Von Berg of 903 Maritime House, Loveday Street, Johannesburg to act on our behalf in all matters connected with the aforementioned plans, etc., and the execution thereof as fully and effectually as we might or could do if personally present and acting therein, and we hereby accept full responsibility for any failure by our said agent to comply with any provisions of the Building, Plumbing and Drainage By-Laws, the Town Planning Scheme or any other of the Council By-Laws, or to carry out the requirements of any notice lawfully issued by the Council in terms of the provisions of such By-Laws or the Town Planning Scheme in connection with the said plans.

Yours faithfully,
NORMAN ANSTEY LIMITED,

Hugh Manley Anstey
DIRECTOR.

[Signature]
DIRECTOR.

All communications should be addressed to the FIRM, and NOT to INDIVIDUALS.

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:

Heritage Resources Management team Johann J and Catharina JM Bruwer.
Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.



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WOOLWORTHS



25 1 2004



WOOLWORTHS

WOOLWORTHS

A photograph of a curved building with a green facade and a white banner at the bottom. The building has a curved facade with a green, textured material. There are several windows visible, some of which are dark. A white banner is stretched across the bottom of the image, featuring black text. The background shows other buildings and a blue sky with some clouds.

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