

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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NAME OF PLACE: SECOND MARLBOROUGH HOUSE

Photograph: Catharina JM Bruwer.

Above: View of Marlborough House, corner Fox and Eloff Streets, with Fox Street 127 Building, to the left. (CJMB)

Previous/alternative name/s :
:
:

LOCATION: Street : corners Commissioner, Eloff and Fox
Street number : 60 Eloff
: (126, 128 Commissioner, 58, 60 Eloff; 125 Fox)
Stand Number : 1188
Previous Stand Number: 316
Block number : BH
Suburb : Marshallstown
GIS reference :

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

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :
Levels above street level :
Levels below street level :
On-site parking :

Chipkin: "Festival of Britain details were commonplace in the 1950s architecture of Johannesburg, and they occurred on several occasions in the work of Wayburne & Wayburne. This is evident in the entrance foyers at Parkleigh (1956), which has implanted Brazilian roof-shapes, and at Marlborough House (1956) in Eloff Street (corner of Commissioner). Here vertical wall panelling in sapele mahogany, linoleum inlay patterns and marble recess details all derive from the foyer details at the Royal Festival Hall on London's South Bank.

But at Marlborough House the design attitude is influenced, too, from a more elusive source: from the prevailing attitudes of the New Empiricism combining with the impact of the Moscow journal *Architektura CCCP*, which arrived monthly on Rusty Bernstein's desk in a plain paper wrapping from Collet's book shop in Great Russell Street, London" (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...).

Chipkin: "Walter Mansions and Bosman Building as well as African City and Marlborough House were all Eloff Street sites owned by African City Properties, the historic property trust that erected the ACPT Building on Market Square in 1896. In the 1950s this property group was controlled by the Glazer Brothers working tandem with Volkskas and other rising financial interest. Their architects were Obel & Obel but in effect they were Wayburne & Wayburne, which is the reason why in 1956 there were large name-boards on four major Eloff Street sites bearing the legend: 'Architects Obel & Obel (in large letters) 'with Wayburne & Wayburne' (in small lettering). Marlborough House and African City were completed as Wayburne buildings". (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...).

Chipkin: "Wayburne's office in Johannesburg, like many others, absorbed the form without the curtain wall, although they didn't quite get it right at Marlborough House and African City on Eloff Street" (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...).

Chipkin: "At some stage after 1957, ACPT switched architects from Wayburne & Wayburne to H. W. E. Stauch & Partners in Pretoria. Thus Stauch inherited the predetermined column grid from a symmetrical tower building on the Bosman site, a layout originally influenced no doubt - like Marlborough House before it - by the Moscow journal *Architektura*. (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...).

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls:

Roof:

Windows:

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

BUILDER:

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans :
Approval of plans :
Completion date :

BUILDING STYLE:

Johannesburg Modular Regionalism. 1950s.

BUILDING TYPE:

This is a shop to street and office block. (CJMB)

ENVIRONMENT:

CONDITION:

The exterior of the building appears to be in a fair condition. (CJMB)

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:

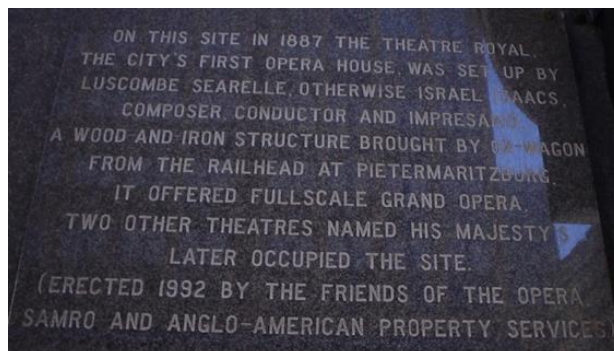
DEEDS INFORMATION:

- Ownership: Old Mutual Life Assurance Co. South Africa Ltd.
- Registration Date: 1990-11-02
- Document: T42837/1990
- Amount:

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

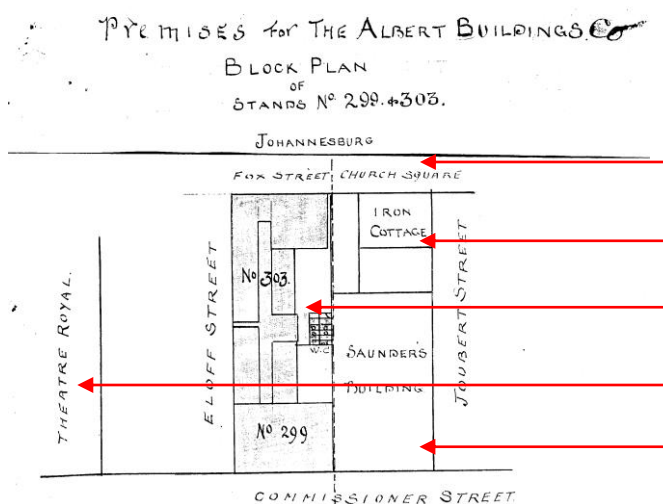
THEATRE ROYAL:

The photo below shows the information appearing on a polished granite plaque located at the main entrance to the *second His Majesty's Building* (BG-1) in Eloff Street.



"ON THIS SITE IN 1887 THE THEATRE ROYAL, THE CITY'S FIRST OPERA HOUSE, WAS SET UP BY LUSCOMBE SEARELLE, OTHERWISE ISRAEL ISAACS. COMPOSER, CONDUCTOR AND IMPRESANO. A WOOD AN IRON STRUCTURE BROUGHT BY OX-WAGON FROM THE RAILHEAD AT PIETERMARITZBURG. IT OFFERED FULLSCALE GRAND OPERA. TWO OTHER THEATRES NAMED HIS MAJESTY'S LATER OCCUPIED THE SITE. (ERECTED 1992 BY THE FRIENDS OF THE OPERA. SAMRO AND ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPERTY SERVICES.)"

- The above information pertaining to the *Theatre Royal* is incorrect; the *first Theatre Royal* was situated on Market Street east, and is referred to in a newspaper article dated 21 September 1887, as being a music hall;
- The *second Theatre Royal* was located on the corner of 60 Eloff Street and 126, 128 Commissioner Street, and not on the site of the *second His Majesty's Building* (BG-1) (this is borne out, *inter alia*, by Van Der Waal, Hedley A. Chilvers, and a newspaper article dated 1897); a sketch (see copy below) of a site plan dated 18 April 1893 by the architect Charles R. Snell, clearly also shows the position of the *second Theatre Royal* as being opposite the site of the *second His Majesty's Building* in Eloff Street).
- Luscombe Searelle, according to both Chilvers and Leyds, only arrived in Johannesburg in 1889; he therefore could not have started the *Theatre Royal* in 1887;
- Was the *Theatre Royal* really the City's "First Opera House"?; consider that the *Globe Theatre Building* was opened on 29 September 1888 (Leyds, G.A.: A History of Johannesburg).



Left: Copy of site plan by Charles R. Snell dated 18 April 1893, clearly indicating the position of the *Theatre Royal*.

- Church Square.
- Wood and iron cottage.
- Premises for the *Albert Buildings Co.*
- Theatre Royal*.
- Saunders Building*.

(Compiled by Catharina JM Bruwer)

HISTORY:

GENERAL NOTES:

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

PREVIOUS TENANT/S:

By 1954:
 126 Fox – Cape Furniture Mart, The
 126 Fox – Prudential House
 126 Fox – Prudential Building Society.

CURRENT TENANT/S:

Capitec Bank

SOURCES:

Published Sources

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

The Rand-Pretoria Directory 1954 (Comprising Complete Alphabetical And Trades Directories of Johannesburg, Pretoria And Reef Towns), Cape Times Limited, Cape Town, 1954.

Leyds, G.A.: A History of Johannesburg, Nasionale Boekhandel Limited, Johannesburg, 1964.

Chilvers, H.A.: Out of the Crucible, Juta & Company Ltd., Johannesburg, 1948.

Unpublished Sources

Architects In South Africa 1780 – 1940; Draft manuscript, J Walker & G M van der Waal, 1992, HSRC, Pretoria.

Plans records of surveyed buildings, Marshallstown and City of Johannesburg: Archives, Building Control, Development Management, City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality.

Rand Township Registry Johannesburg.

Internet sources

Internet GOOGLE Search on current ownerships, 2006.

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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Photographs (unless otherwise indicated) by Johann J Bruwer and Alezea Bruwer.