

# JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

## HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

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

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Cellphone: 082 325 5823

NAME OF PLACE: TALEKINSKY'S BUILDINGS



Top: view of *Talekinsky's Buildings* in the foreground next to the *Clyde Buildings* in Jeppe Street.

Previous/alternative name/s :

**LOCATION:** Street : cnr Jeppe, Harrison  
 Street number :  
 Stand Number : [137 Jeppe; 68, 70 Harrison]  
 Previous Stand Number: 1221, 1222  
 Block number : 1116, 1115  
 GIS reference : AP

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

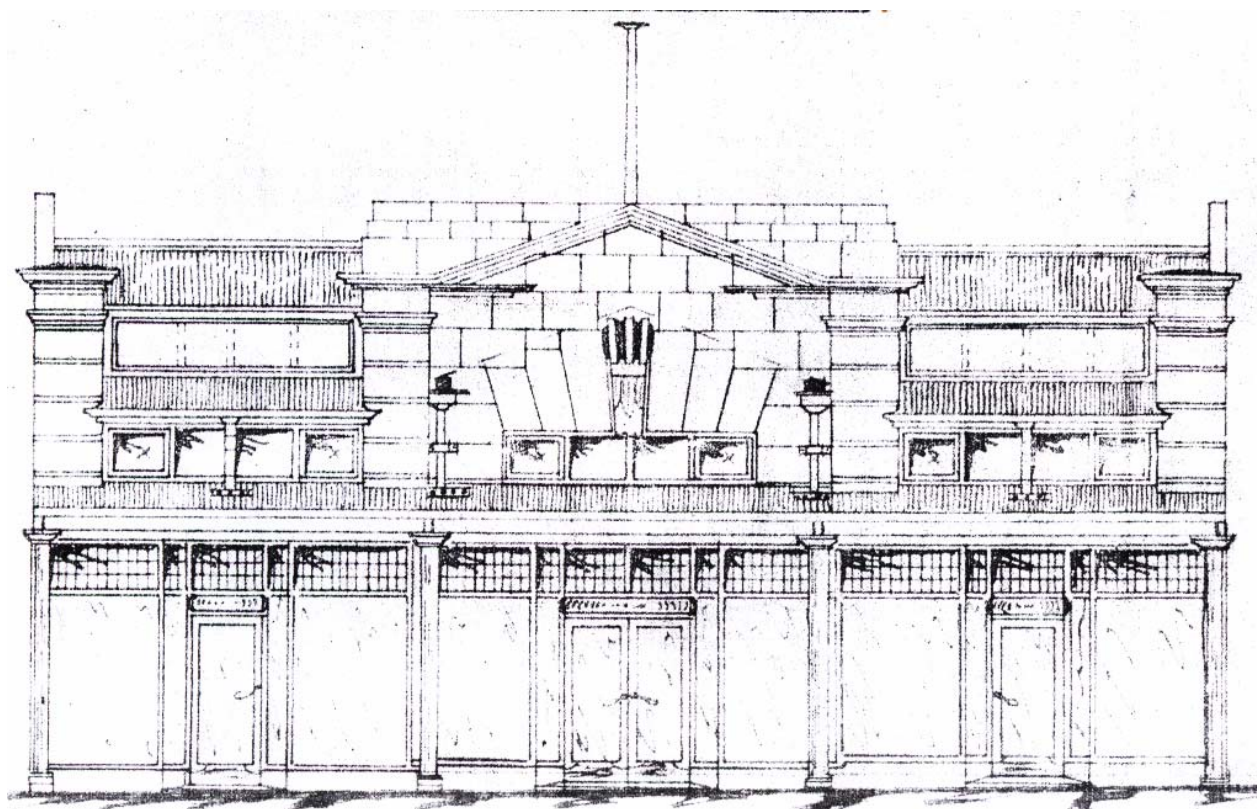
### DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :  
 Levels above street level : one  
 Levels below street level : none

On-site parking : none

This interesting single storey corner building was constructed in phases. The section of the building at 70 Harrison Street was completed at the end of 1921, whereas the corner section (i.e. at 68 Harrison Street and the section facing Jeppe Street), was completed more than six months later during July 1922. Of interest is the fact that separate municipal drawings were submitted for the original building and the corner addition. The responsible architect in both instances, being Bertram R. Avery.

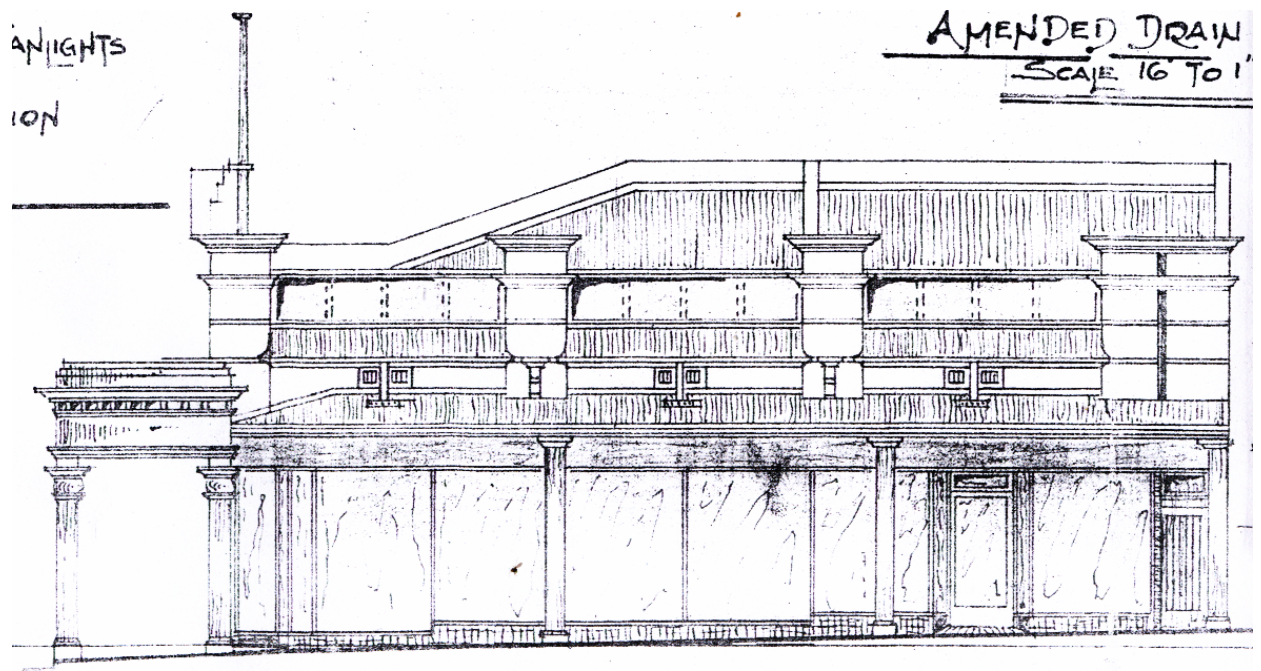
The original building at 70 Harrison Street comprised three shops, each with a separate recessed entrance, and with three W.C.s located in an enclosed yard at the rear of the centre shop. The strongly symmetrical design included large glazed shop fronts, a corrugated iron verandah canopy with supporting down-pipe columns, surmounting the entrance (with double door) to the centre shop, central and flanking fanlights (some of which could be opened), and a gable (in stucco) with pediment and pilasters, entablature, cornices, flag post, and keystone; three fanlights, and. See copy of extract from original drawings dated June 1921: Front Elevation below.



When completed, the corner building with marble plinth, an identical gable to the one at 70 Harrison Street, and most unusual rounded corner canopy with sizeable columns and surmounting dentil insets, separate cornice and coping, accommodated four separate shops. Of interest is that the gable and much of the associated aspects of external ornamentation of the original building were not mirrored on the Jeppe Street elevation plan of the new addition. See copy of extract from original drawings dated January 1922: Elevation to Jeppe Street.

Of interest is the street lamppost being projected as a column extension in Jeppe Street. The introduction of this element was clearly done in sympathy with the column composition of the existing pavement canopy.





#### CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: plastered brick.  
 Roof: corrugated iron.  
 Windows: timber frame shop fronts.

#### SITE FEATURES:

#### ALTERATIONS:

Internal alterations to central shop (of 1921 building) facing Harrison Street. "Proposed Bullet Magazine on Std 1115 Johannesburg" – construction of mezzanine floors and magazine with steel doors. Shop tenant: S. Franks. Architect: S. Nay (address 271 Jules Street, Malvern, Johannesburg). Approval of plans: 26 October 1948. Estimated cost £50.

Major alterations to shop in Harrison Street during 1962. Conversion of shop to Snack Bar. This work included drastic changes to the existing entrance and shop front with the installation of plate glass panels, a new sliding-folding door and surmounting controllable louvers. Architect: Andrew Zenon. No completed Application for Approval of Plans form found.

The unsympathetic external alterations to one of the shops in Harrison Street (see photo on the right), seems not to have been approved by the authorities as no evidence of this could be found on the extant plans record of the building.

#### INTEGRITY:

The integrity of the building has remained largely intact. Any proposed changes to the building, should therefore be considered with strict regard to the conservation value of the building, and the fact that its intrinsic character could quite easily be irreversibly damaged through unauthorised changes, especially to the exterior of the building. Currently, the aesthetic qualities of the buildings are adversely affected by unsympathetic posters and advertising (including sky) signs.

#### INSCRIPTION:



**ARCHITECT:**

Avery, Bertram R. (Address: 8 Natal Bank Chambers, Market Square, Johannesburg).

**BUILDER:****CONSTRUCTION DATE:**Building at 70 Harrison Street

Date on plans : June 1921  
Approval of plans : 5 September 1921  
Completion date : 31 December 1921

Addition at 68 Harrison Street and 137 Jeppe Street

Date on plans : January 1922  
Approval of plans : 13 April 1922  
Completion date : 11 July 1922

**BUILDING STYLE:**

Edwardian (1900 to 1914).

"Contributes to Area's Character: These shops to the street are a fine example of early Johannesburg architecture". (Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City).

**BUILDING TYPE:**

Shop to street building.

**ENVIRONMENT:**

The building stands proud, projecting its interesting architectural qualities with great *élan*. Its multi storey neighbour in Jeppe Street, i.e. the *Clyde Buildings*, tends to enhance these qualities by providing the necessary contrasting 'backdrop' that it does. The *Talekinsky's Buildings* and the neighbouring *Selwels Building* in Harrison Street, stand in complete harmony. About this, nothing more needs to be said. Noteworthy is the fact that both these buildings date from the 1920s and were designed by the same architect, viz. Bertram Avery.

**CONDITION:**

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

**URGENT ACTION:**

See CONDITION.

**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:

By 1901: J.G. Muller  
By 1914: S. Gordon  
By 1921: A. Talekinsky  
By 1947: A. Talekinsky

**PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:**

One of the greatest standing attractions in early Johannesburg, no doubt, was the famous *Fillis' Circus* (1889). Also known as the *Fillis' Amphitheatre*, this amenity (also used as a community hall) with seats for 2 000 persons, was according to Van Der Waal, "a conical tent-shaped structure of wood and corrugated iron, 15 metres high and 47,23 metres in diameter." It was located on the block bounded by Jeppe, Harrison, Bree and Loveday Street. See attachment.

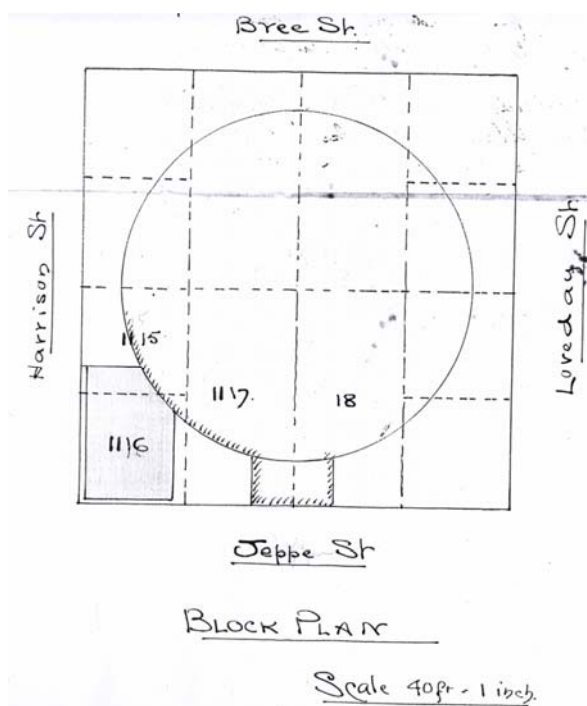


Left: Seen is this postcard in the right background is *Fillis' Amphitheatre* (Norwich, O.I.: A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards, postcard 139).

In 1901, the owner of the site of the current building, J. G. Muller, applied to the Town Council for permission to construct an open air skating rink on his property (i.e. Stand 1116), next to *Fillis' Amphitheatre*. His architect was none other than Charles Aburrow. See copy of handwritten letter dated 19 July 1901 signed by Muller below, as well as copy of an extract from the relevant submission drawings by Aburrow.

In 1914, an elongated corrugated iron open shed with hanging eaves, Oregon Pine posts, and barge boards, was erected at an estimated cost of £80, facing Jeppe Street. The owner at the time was S. Gordon. On 27 September 1915, plans were passed for the erection (for S. Gordon) of a larger and taller corrugated iron shed, adjacent to the existing shed, on the remainder of the stand at 68 Harrison Street. This structure was to be used as a Market Stall. The two sheds are shown on a block plan dated 1920 as an "Open Bazaar".

According to amended plans by the architect



Arthur Leitch (address: 46 Steytlers Buildings, Loveday Street, Johannesburg) dated 26 September 1916, and submitted on behalf of S. Gordon, a small building comprising wood facings and asbestos sheets, with corrugated iron saddle roof, was subsequently erected on the rear portion of the stand at 70 Harrison Street.

## **HISTORY:**

## **GENERAL NOTES:**

### Building at 70 Harrison Street

Estimated cost of building	: £2 000
Estimated cost of drainage	: £60
Accommodation approved	: none
Valuation at completion	: £2 500
Occupied	: yes

### Addition at 68 Harrison Street and 137 Jeppe Street

Estimated cost of building	:
Estimated cost of drainage	:
Accommodation approved	: none
Valuation at completion	: £3 300
Occupied	: yes

## **PREVIOUS TENANTS:**

By 1948: S. Franks.

By 1954: Harrison Street - 68 Gold's Hardware Store.  
68a Johannesburg Art & Picture Framers (Pty) Ltd.  
70 Universal Book Agency.  
70a - Ranks Cycle Supply & Furniture Mart.  
70b London Hairdressers & Tobacconists.  
137 Jeppe Longwear's Outfitters.

By 1962: Snack Bar.

## **CURRENT TENANT/S:**

Harrison Street: 68 M.Y.Z. Appliances.  
68a M.Y.Z. Appliances  
70 Jumbo Take Aways.  
70a Nando's Radio & TV Repair.  
Shoe Box; Economic Shop.  
137 Jeppe Kwa Nkanyamba Herb Specialist.

## **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.

CHARLES ABURROW.

P.O. BOX 534.

TELEGRAMS: "CAB"

Free 10/100 5.7.01

Johannesburg, TRANSVAAL.

July 19 1901

The Town Council Johannesburg.

Dear Sir,

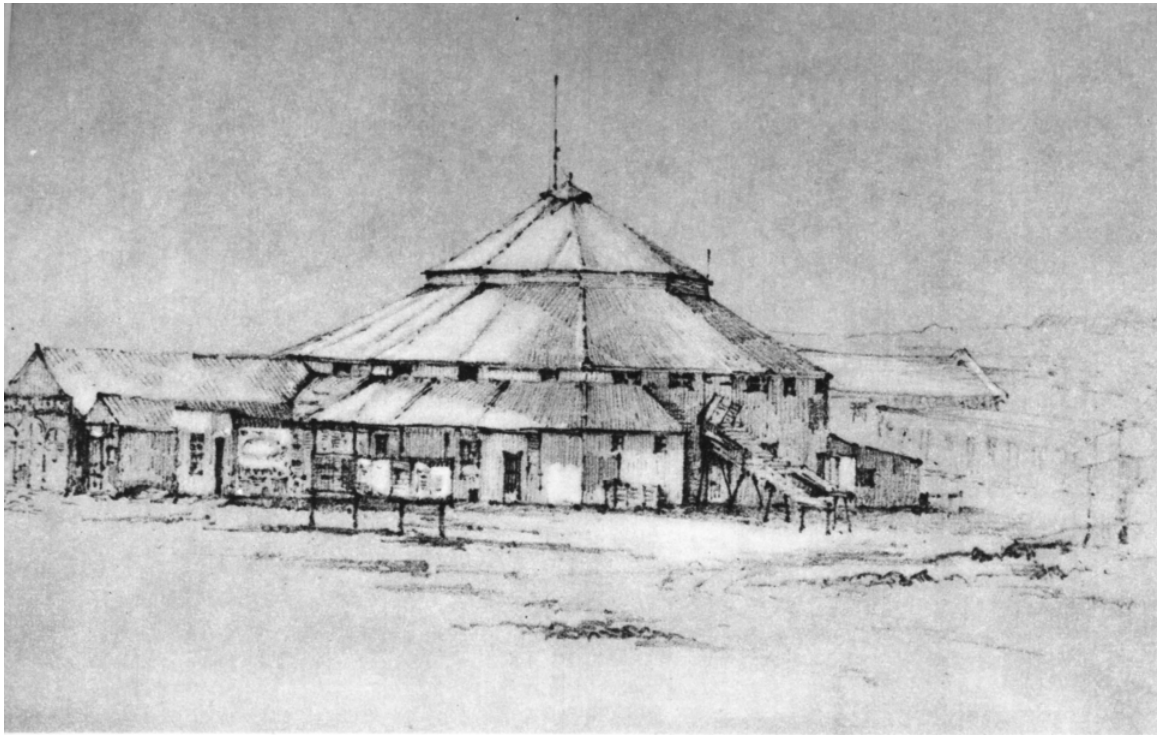
Herewith I enclose plan of a temporary floor - which I propose to lay on stands 1115 1116 Jesse St. Harrison St. to use as an open air skating rink - The floor will be laid under the supervision of my architect Mr. Abner. It will be of hard wood laid on 3x2 joists 18' apart - with 4x3 beams 4' apart. with a rail around same - It will be enclosed by an open iron fence - with gates - the area of the floor is 60' x 40'. and only a small portion of it abuts the existing Amphitheatre building -

I respectfully request your permission to lay the above floor - and also to be permitted to use same as an open air skating rink I am yours respectfully

J. J. Muller.  
G.P.O. 3092.

## FILLIS' AMPHITHEATRE:

Below: (Smith, A.H.: Pictorial History of Johannesburg...).



### 84

It is noted in *Payable Gold* that Fillis' Circus gave the first professional performance in Ferreira's Camp about the middle of September 1886. The *Transvaal Mining Argus* on 21 September 1887 records that on 24 August 1887 Fillis' Circus opened on Marshalls' Square for a fortnight, and that "the support tendered surpassed the utmost expectations; and led to a scheme for the erection of a permanent Circus building, which will shortly be started upon". The *General Directory of Johannesburg* (of which the preface is dated 31 January 1890) contains a picture of this building not very different from that depicted in this pencil drawing by H. Clayton, dated 17.11.90. It is stated that this

building was erected by W. J. Symons at a cost of £8,000 and was situated in Bree Street on the site partly occupied by Paddy's Market.

For more information on *Fillis Circus*, see Pre-History: AI-1.







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*Electronic Accessories*

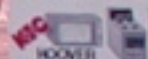


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