

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned by Montsi Properties and the Cape Town Heritage Trust to conduct archaeological investigations at Block 11, recently named Heritage Square, Bree Street, Cape Town (Figure 1, Plate 1). Nine properties in the block are being redeveloped for mixed commercial purposes. This has involved a process of refurbishment and adaptive re-use of previously neglected historic buildings, many of which contain fabric dating to the 18th century. For this reason it was necessary to excavate and record features and material of historical significance before impacts by the redevelopment process would occur. This volume contains the findings of investigations conducted in 1996-1998 at properties in Bree and Shortmarket Streets while Appendix A contains a short report on properties on the corner of Buitengracht and Hout streets.

Block 11 has been the subject of a number of prior historical and archaeological studies. These include a detailed archival project undertaken by Hall<sup>1</sup>, an extensive excavation in the rear of No 90 Bree Street (unpublished) and a phase 1 assessment of properties owned by the Cape Town City Council (Hart 1992).

For most of the 18th century marginal land on the outskirts of Cape Town was used for grazing of stock while natural erosion features and gullies were used for dumping the city trash. The main outspan and watering well for Cape Town was situated on what is now Riebeeck Square (adjacent to Block 11). Expansion of the city soon extended into these areas with the granting of land for residential purposes.

The balance of physical evidence to date indicates that originally most of the buildings in Block 11 took the form of vernacular style two story Cape Town Houses built in the latter half of the 18th century. Recent archival research (Malan, pers comm) has shown that at the beginning of the 19th century there was access to a large courtyard in the interior of the block via a short road from Buitengracht Street. Street directories show that from quite early on in the history of the block many of the properties housed commercial activities. By 1862 a significant number of buildings had been subdivided and altered as indicated by the Snow Survey.

At the end of the 19th century the insurance plans indicated that this was a mixed commercial area with manufacturing enterprises (tobacco makers, bakery, blacksmith and coach manufacturing works) and boarding houses/hire houses being in the same block. This trend continued into the 20th century but accompanied with increasing degeneration and ultimate dereliction of some structures. During the period from 1972 - 1984 the Cape Town City Council began appropriated portions of the block for demolition and redevelopment. Recognition of the high historical and architectural significance of the structures<sup>2</sup> by concerned architects and historians resulted in suspension of the decision to demolish. In 1996, restoration and refurbishment of nine buildings commenced.

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Five properties in the block (A, C, D, F, I) have been subject to investigation by the Archaeology Contracts Office (Figure 3). The report details the most recent excavations in the building as well as summaries of other work already completed.

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<sup>1</sup> Hall, M.J. 1989. Block 11 Cape Town - an archaeological assessment. Archaeology Contracts Office report prepared for the Cape Town City Council.

<sup>2</sup> Cape Provincial Institute of Architects. 1978. The Buildings of Central Cape Town. Fransen, H and Cook, M. 1963. The Old Buildings of The Cape. Cape Town: AA Balkema.

## **2.1 PROPERTY A (108 Shortmarket Street)**

### **2.1.1 Historical Background**

The archival research was conducted by Hall, in 1987 and by A Malan for this study. The findings with regard to the history of Structure A are summarised below.

108 Shortmarket street was created along with the next door property on Shortmarket Street when the erf was granted to Caspar Lybrecht in 1771. The first person to purchase the property was Hermanus Santzer (1799 - 1802), followed by Mathias Jacobse (1802 -1819). The first street directory that refers to this property indicates that a blacksmith was present in 1815. It would appear that Jacobse did not reside on the premises but leased it to the blacksmith, H. Schuenedorf.

The property was purchased by H. Lategan in 1819. He is listed in the street directory as running a retail shop from this address (3 Boereplein). The title to the property remained in Lategan's name until his widow sold the buildings and the land. Lategan, who died in 1835 had been born in Wagenmakers Valley in Stellenbosch and was married to Sara Wilhelmina Heckroodt. On his death he owned a house, premises, slaves and other moveables.

In 1845 the property was purchased by J. Richter who, in turn, hired the property to a snuff manufacturer, James Barry Munnik. Richter had his own business next door where he was a wheelwright and a dealer in gun powder. Richter eventually sold the property to his tenant in 1854. In 1880, Munnik sold the property to his partner, J. Woof although the business was known some years after this as Munnik and Woof. By 1900, the property was known as the Economical Tobacco Works run By J.Woof and Company. In 1951 the firm was sold by E.M.T Woof to the Marbuff Investment Company, eventually being expropriated by the Municipality of The City of Cape Town in 1982.

### **2.1.2 Archaeological excavations**

Archaeological investigations in the interior of 108 Shortmarket Street took place in two phases in 1996. During the first phase, exploratory excavations were placed in various parts of the building. The second phase involved a more specific investigation into structures located during the first phase of investigation in excavation A. These initial findings are summarised below.

#### **2.1.2.1 Excavation A**

The first phase excavation was located against the rear wall of the left-hand room (Plate 2). Midden material characteristic of 18th century was found in secondary context below floor level. A stone walled feature (which later was found to be part of a hearth) and a powdered brick surface dating to the building phase of the structure were exposed. A collection of shellfish (*Patella* sp.) was found lying below floor level against the rear wall. This find remains unexplained but is probably the remains of a worker's meal. The threshold of nearby door indicated that original floor level was very similar of that today.

A second phase of work involved widening excavation A further to try to explain the below surface features. In all, an extensive expanse of the floor of the left- hand room was opened and a large number of sub-surface features exposed. These are depicted on Figure\*. It is evident that a complex sequence of modifications has taken place in the western side of the building. At least 6 stages of wall construction and demolition have taken place (Plate 3)

*Stage 1.* The left-hand side of the building originally consisted of three rooms of almost equal size. These were a front room to the left, rear room to the left, and kitchen with hearth. Evidence of these consists of two wall footings (500 mm) that cross the left side of the building.

Entrance to the front room exists off the *voorhuis*. A similar entrance may have existed for the rear room but we suspect that this has been filled with a more recent Georgian fireplace. Plaster removal will verify this.

The hearth in the kitchen has been subject to a number of changes in its own right. It started as a broad structure, probably stretching across most of the rear wall. In later years it was decreased in size and subsequently another feature was added to the rear left hand corner - possibly a lock up or oven. There is thick layer of soot on the rear wall above the hearth. There is a very large opening between the kitchen and the yard at the back. This was subsequently bricked up so that a smaller door could be fitted. According to the archival research, one of the early occupants of the building was a Blacksmith who may have been involved in shoeing horses. If the kitchen doubled as a forge for a period in the early 19th century, a wide opening may have been necessary to bring horses into the workshop.

*Stage 2* A wall was built from the edge of the left hand side of the hearth extending to the front wall of the kitchen creating a partition. This may have been a pantry or even a stairwell.

*Stage 3* A wall was built across the front of the back room. Its presence is difficult to explain but it does imply a phase of possible demolition in the interior of the left-hand side of the building. The wall was built and demolished prior to the insertion of the iron fireplace. The location of the fireplace does not make sense if this wall existed when it was positioned. It can only be hypothesised that at some time in the pre-Georgian era, the wall was built to A) divide the left hand side into two rooms, B) create a lock-up at the rear of the front room, or C) create a stairwell.

*Stage 4* This involved the construction of a further wall together with the placement of a doorway onto Buitengracht Street. The additional wall took the form of a light brick partition built across the kitchen to create a corridor from the Buitengracht doorway to the second doorway, which gives access to what used to be the *gaandery*. The hearth in the kitchen was demolished at this time or earlier judging by the paintwork and plaster that has been applied to the original sooty surface or the rear wall. The ceiling was also rebuilt as there is no evidence of a chimney penetrating through. There is evidence that the boards on the first floor ceiling had been rearranged after the chimney was demolished.

*Stage 5.* This involved the demolition of internal walls on the left hand side of the house and the laying of a cement floor to create a large open room.

#### **2.1.2.2 Excavation B**

This involved lifting the wooden floor under the staircase in the *galdery*. Removal of the wooden floor revealed a dusty deposit which contained artefacts dating to the 19th century (Plate 4). The excavation showed that the original floor rests around the wall had been reused to support the beams of the later pine floor. Evidence of the original floor exists in the form of some slate slabs that had been left in place as beam rests along the interior wall of the *galdery*.

#### **2.1.2.3 Excavation C**

This was located close to the threshold of what was originally the front door of the *voorhuis*. The purpose of the investigation was to check for original floor levels and materials.

The excavation showed that original floor levels were slightly lower than those of today ( $\pm 30\text{mm}$ ). The presence of a lime mortar surface is an indication that either slate slabs or tiles were laid in the *voorhuis*. The even surface of the lime plaster indicates that the paving that was used, had a uniform quality and are therefore likely to have been tiles.

#### **2.1.2.4 Excavation D**

This was located in the in the rear of the right hand room adjacent to the 19th century brick chimney. Its purpose was to check for original floor levels.

The removal of a modern cement skin revealed a carefully laid slate floor. This extended across large portions of the left-hand side of the room. An area was located where the slate floor had been disrupted and backfilled with brick rubble, then cemented over. This extended over a large portion of the right-hand side of the room. Underneath this, but centrally located directly in front of the 19th century chimney, was a stone feature (Plates 5 and 6) that consisted of a stone lined pit that had been filled with some very large rocks. The left-hand side of this stone-lined pit lay under the slate floor.

The stone lined pit predated the existing floor of 108 Shortmarket Street having caused a subsidence of the floor sometime in the past. The slate floor was then lifted, rubble thrown in and a cement skin put down in later years.

The demolition of the chimney was monitored by archaeologists. It was built with well fired frog bricks of standard size (19th century). The base of the chimney penetrated to about 70cm below the current floor level. On the right hand side of the chimney was an opening with an adjustable iron "gate" which probably served a double function of regulating the air-flow, stoking and ash removal. A further smaller opening (bricked up) was visible on the left-hand side. Excavations on the right hand site of the chimney revealed a sunken floor adjacent to the opening of the fireplace. At this time we are not sure of the extent of the sunken floor as it was not possible to excavate a large area.

Excavations through the floor of the right hand room by workers has resulted in the destruction of the wall footing (600mm in diameter) of the cross-wall which originally divided this side of the house into a front and a back room. Unfortunately a concrete slab had been thrown before inspection of the substrates could take place. What was evident was that the back room's original floor is still present throughout. It was made of slabs of shale laid flat. This implies that this could have been a work area as opposed to a residential room. The front room had been re-floored with a cement surface cast over compacted brick rubble.

#### **2.1.2.5 Excavation E:**

This focused on the well or cistern in the rear out-rooms of property A. Probing of the feature indicated that more than 1000 mm of deposit had accumulated (Plates 7 and 8).

During the course of excavation, 3 layers of archaeological deposit were distinguished. Excavation of the final layer required the assistance of a pump as much of the deposit was below the water table.

- Layer 1, sawdust, copper and iron fragments, some bottles bone (20th century).
- Layer 2, wine glasses, German transfer ware, sponge ware, bottles, large amounts of bone (mid 19th century).
- Layer 3, small quantities of ceramics, bone, clay pipes (mid to early 19th century).

The well is rectangular in form, made from shale slabs and 2015 mm deep. Water table is at about 1800 mm below surface. It is probably an original structure, which operated during the late 18th - early 19th centuries, after which it appears to have fallen into disuse and accumulated garbage.

### 2.1.3 Discussion

Although building A was built with reference to fairly typical 18th century Cape Town house styles, the archival research has shown that this was not necessarily a residential building. As far as is known all the owners have engaged in some form of enterprise that has ranged from smithing to retail and tobacco manufacture. This range of activities would have placed specific demands on the property, which was in turn, modified by its owners to changing needs. The archaeological evidence is beginning to provide some clear indications of the original layout of the property. It has however been heavily modified, especially towards the mid 19th century which saw a phase of work that involved modification of many of the openings, replacement of joinery, construction of an outside door onto Buitengracht Street, and some re-arrangement of the interior.

The establishment of the Tobacco works placed a particular set of demands on the building. It is known that the roof was utilised for sun-drying tobacco. This would have not been possible in the wet season so curing of tobacco would have taken place in doors as well. The process of tobacco curing is highly skilled and very dependent on achieving the correct temperature and humidity balances<sup>3</sup>. The large chimney and fireplace was central to the control of these factors. Its purpose was to keep the environment in the right hand side of the house stable. Chunks of coal in the bottom of the hearth indicate that this was the fuel used. Air flow to the system was regulated by the drop-sliding cast iron gate. Besides, construction of the chimney, many alterations were probably made to the structure to accommodate the tobacco curing process. Windows had to be opened or closed according to the ambient weather conditions to control the moisture content of the tobacco<sup>4</sup>.

There is evidence that at least one of the owners of the property was a slave owner. Previous studies have suggested that out-rooms in the rear courtyard, would have been used by slaves. Archival records have indicated that it was a very common practice in Cape Town to hire out rooms to emancipated slaves and immigrants. The spatial arrangement of the building shows that it was designed with the usual conspicuous front entrance - the buildings' public face. The rear of the structure is accessed through a narrow alleyway which lead to the rear courtyard, out-rooms and kitchen. This is the hidden dimension of the building, which would have been used by servants, slaves or persons residing in the backrooms. It is fortunate that this aspect of the building has survived and has the potential to be incorporated as one of the layers of history manifested in this structure.

## 2.2 PROPERTY C (102 Shortmarket Street)

### 2.2.1 Historical Background

This portion of land covers what are now 2 erven most recently owned by R Heddle and Company. One of the erven makes up a warehouse while the other erven makes up what was the office space of that organisation.

The history of 102 Shortmarket Street is not clearly understood due to gaps in the deeds records of this property. We know that the initial land grant was made in 1771 to Casper Lybrecht but it is not until well into the 19th century that more details are available. Street directories have revealed that a certain M. Levy ran a retail shop from the property in 1810. Between 1815 and 1819, J. Weydeman, a gunsmith operated from the premises. Between 1834 and 1862 the property was owned by J. Richter, a wheel right. In 1862 upon selling the property Richter divided the land into 2 erven. The Snow survey of 1862, shows that the original erf was covered with buildings.

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<sup>3</sup> Breen, T.H. 1985. Tobacco Culture. Princeton University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Tanner, A.E. 1945. Tobacco. Sir Isaac Pitman and sons.

In 1862 Richter sold one of his erven (the warehouse section) to G. Wiehahn whose occupation is unknown. In 1873 he in turn sold the property to the occupant of 90 Bree Street, Johannes Brink who must have hired out the warehouse. Brink sold the warehouse to Johannes Adriaan Smuts, who sometime between 1873 and 1891 extended the warehouse backwards into the block with the addition of a further parcel of land subtracted from 90 Bree Street. The warehouse has retained this form until the present day.

When Smuts sold 90 Bree to David Hanzman in 1881, he did so without the back parcel of land. The conditions of the transfer for 90 Bree at this time make it quite clear that Hanzman did not have the use of the back parcel, and so we can conclude that the size of the warehouse was more than doubled. Pocock's panorama, taken some three years later, show a facade with two windows on the first floor and a large entrance, presumably designed to take a wagon, on the ground floor<sup>5</sup>.

The adjacent property, also excised from the earlier single erf, was effectively recombined in 1891, when it came into Smut's ownership<sup>6</sup>. But before this, it was owned by several people: C Benangee (1862-1879), C Heydenrych (1879), S Boonzaaier (1879-1890), and South African Mutual Life (1890-1891).

Although both the warehouse and office/residential erven had almost 30 years of separate ownership, it seems possible that they always remained combined as far as occupancy was concerned. This deduction is based on the fact that, in the street directory for 1883, in which year the warehouse was owned by Johannes Adriaan Smuts and the residential/office was owned by S Boonzaaier, both properties were the address of W Gray, a carriage builder<sup>7</sup>. Gray is listed again as being in occupancy of both properties (now owned by Johannes Adriaan Smuts) in 1894<sup>8</sup>. In 1900 both properties were the address of Abrahams Brothers, produce merchants<sup>9</sup>. The 3 erven that together comprise property continued to be sold together until the present day, and until recently formed the premises occupied by the builders' merchants, R Heddle & Company.

## 2.2.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

Six excavations located in various areas in the 3 erven have revealed a complex and as yet unexplained architectural sequence together with patches of 18th and 19th century midden material. Plates 9, 10 and 11 show interior views of the warehouse prior to redevelopment. Figure 8 shows section diagram's of excavations on property B.

### 2.2.2.1 Excavation A

Located in the warehouse interior, this has shown that there have been several episodes that have involved raising the floor level of the interior of this part of the building.

The first surface, which consisted of a slate (with lime plaster) floor, was located 800 mm below the present surface. There is also evidence of a cross wall of early construction indicating that the original layout of the building was more complex than today. This is not indicated on any known plans. This wall was probably demolished by Smuts in the 1880s, to open up the rear of the warehouse.

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<sup>5</sup> Pocock, 1884.

<sup>6</sup> The municipal survey for 1898, however, continues to show the properties as separate: see Figure 7.

<sup>7</sup> General Directory, 1883.

<sup>8</sup> Argus Directory, 1894.

<sup>9</sup> Longland's Directory, 1902.

### **2.2.2.2 Excavation B**

This was placed opposite a large wall opening that may have been an access point for carts. Its location is in the center of the block consistent with the road into the block depicted in diagrams of 1800.

There is evidence that several episodes of fill were transported into this area to raise floor levels. A cobbled floor was located at 620 mm below surface (Plate 12). This was part of the road into center of the block that existed circa 1800. Below the cobbled floor were several layers of fill, the lowest contained artefactual material characteristic of the mid-8th century (thus predating the present structures).

### **2.2.2.3 Excavation C**

This test was located in the central portion of the building against the east wall.

There is evidence that several episodes of fill were transported into this area to raise floor levels. A carefully laid shale floor was located at a depth of 850 mm. The floor abutted a foundation just inside of the existing east wall. There is evidence of demolition and rebuilding of aspects of the inner area (Plate 13).

### **2.2.2.4 Excavation D**

This excavation was located in what was once an open yard in the interior of the block.

There is evidence of several episodes of transportation fill into this area to raise floor levels. The period when this area was used as a blacksmiths shop is represented by a layer of charcoal at a depth of 300mm. A plaster and slate floor as well as an early foundation was located at a depth of 800 mm (Plate 14). This represents an early phase of the block when other structures existed in its interior. The nature of these is not well understood, nor are they indicated on any known plans.

The sequence had been interrupted by a hole that had been dug into the deposits during the 19th century in which late 19th century garbage had been buried.

### **2.2.2.5 Excavation E:**

This test was located in the exterior portion of just below the stairs to the mezzanine level.

There is clear archival and physical evidence that the Shortmarket Street side of the warehouse was separate from the interior portion. The original floor level on this side was 4100 mm higher than that of today. When the two portions of the warehouse were joined the outer portion was excavated deeper and the inner portion filled to equalise the height. This was to counter the natural slope of the landscape.

A deposit containing mid-19th century midden was located at a depth 760 mm below surface. This material is similar to that encountered previously in the rear of 90 Bree Street. It is expected that the midden material is in a secondary context as it abuts the foundation of the east wall of the warehouse. There is no evidence of a foundation trench until the natural clay and ferruginous gravel are reached at a depth of 1220mm (Plate 15).

### **2.2.2.6 Excavation F**

Ferruginous gravel and the foundation trench were located at a depth of 400 mm below surface. Minimal archaeological material was located.

## 2.3 Property D

### 2.3.1 Historical Background

In its later years, Property D shared the history of the adjacent property E. In 1939 it was acquired by the Hoogendoorn undertaking firm and sold with the rest of the concern to Human & Pitt in 1949. At some stage during this period, it was converted into a chapel and the premises today stood vacant until recently.

In earlier years, however, this building had a distinct history of its own. It was originally created in 1783 in the same transaction that saw the division of Bottiger's original land grant. In 1783 H Bekker bought the property sold it in the same year to Abraham Fleck who, in turn, sold it in 1784 to H Dempers. From this year onwards, ownership became more stable. Dempers owned the property until 1789, to be followed by C Schilbach (1789-1796), J Muller (1796-97) and Michel Levi (1797-1801). As we do not have street directories for the 18th century, we have no indication of the use to which the building was put during this period.

In 1801 Levy sold to D Byl, who was to own the property for a quarter of a century, and who is listed in the street directories as operating a retail shop on the premises<sup>10</sup>. At this time, selling and purchase prices, were by and large consistent and fall above the average for the block as a whole, suggesting again a stable commercial practice taking advantage of its frontage on a busy and bustling Boereplein. After a brief period of ownership by G Martin (1826-1829), The property was purchased by van Breda & Son, who operated a currier business from the premises until 1841<sup>11</sup>. From 1841 through the rest of the 19th century property D was owned by 4 people: Johannes Coenraad Wicht (1841-1857), Johannes Hemmel (1857-1866), James Barry Munnik (1862-1870) and Johan William Hurlingh (1870-1902). Unfortunately, occupancy over this long period has not been traced. It is quite possible that some of the owners occupied the premises and continued business practice from the site. In other cases, however, this clearly did not happen. James Barry Munnik, owner of Property E for 8 years, was running a tobacco and snuff factory further up the street and must have been renting out the building as an investment. Similarly, the street directory for the year 1900 shows that Hurlingh was renting to Mrs J C Wahl who was running a boarding house in the business<sup>12</sup>. To add to the uncertainty, there is a gap in the deeds records between 1903 and 1939, when the premises was acquired by Hoogendoorn's undertaking firm.

Both the 1862 and the 1898 municipal surveys show a square house at the front of the *erf*, with a side passage leading to a back yard with outbuildings, although between the dates of these two surveys there were clearly changes in the structure of these outbuildings<sup>13</sup>. Unfortunately, the façade of the building was in shadow when Pocock took his panoramic photograph of Cape Town<sup>14</sup>. Again, architectural survey suggests that much of the earlier building fabric still survives<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Laburn, Street Directory, 1810; Laburn, Street Directory, 1815; *African Court Calendar for 1817*, Cape Town: South African Library, 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Cape Calendar, 1840.

<sup>12</sup> Longland's Directory, 1902.

<sup>13</sup> Snow, 1862; Thom, 1898.

<sup>14</sup> Pocock, 1884.

<sup>15</sup> Unpublished report, John Rennie and Pat Riley Architects, August 1986.



## 2.3.2 Archaeological excavations

### 2.3.2.1 Excavation A

This was located in the rear courtyard (Figure 6). An extremely deep sequence of architectural events was encountered here.

Below the cement surface was the top of a wall foundation, which relates to the previous backyard structures clearly visible on the Snow Survey plan of 1862.

A carefully laid cobble floor was located at a depth of 350 mm. Evidently the rear yard area was cobbled. A carefully laid slate and plaster floor was located under reworked fill at a depth of 1200mm. This would seem to predate the 18th century structure (Plate 16).

### 2.3.2.2 Excavation B

Two test holes sunk by workers to check for foundations in the mid-section of the chapel. These were checked by the *Archaeology Contracts Office*.

Heavy cross walls of shale were found in both excavations. The locations of these conform to a typical 18th century house layout with a *voorhuis*, *agterkamer* and rooms on either side. Indications are that that this structure started its life as a residential property.

## 2.4 PROPERTY F (90 Bree Street)

### 2.4.1 Historical background

90 Bree Street has been investigated previously by archaeologists. Excavations in the back yard during 1988 and 1989 revealed one of the richest historical middens ever found in suburban Cape Town.

90 Bree street is one of only two properties in Block 11 for which the present boundaries are coincident with the boundaries of the original land grant in 1771. Transfer documents have revealed that an additional parcel of land was sold with the *erf* for a 15 year period during the last century. The original grant was to Jurgen Spengler who owned 90 Bree Street until 1788 when he sold it to Daniel Petrus Haupt. The fact that in 1788 the property was valued at more than 30% below the current rate for properties in Block 11 suggests that Spengler had not built on his land; a deduction that is supported by the absence of any reference to buildings in the early transfer documents. Haupt lived at what is now 90 Bree Street until 1817 and the street directories make it clear that he was practicing as a notary<sup>16</sup>. He was also at some stage a ward master for this part of Cape Town, suggesting that he was a man of reasonably high standing in the Cape Town community<sup>17</sup>.

For some years after 1817 the history of Property F is closely tied to the history of the adjoining property. Successive owners were Johan George Steytler (1817-1818), Michiel Wolff (1818-1822), Isaac Manuel (1822-1828) and Thomas Sinclair (1828-1861). In all of these cases it is clear that the owner/occupants of Property F practiced their businesses in the store on an adjacent property.

Although it took Sinclair some time to attain ownership of the next-door store, he was obviously a man of reasonable substance. In January 1831 he considerably enlarged 90 Bree Street by buying the *erf* behind his original holding from Francois Louis Mabile, the owner of a property

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<sup>16</sup> Laburn, Street Directory, 1810; Laburn, Street Directory, 1815; *African Court Calendar*, 1816, Cape Town: South African Library, 1983.

<sup>17</sup> *African Kalendar for MDCCCII*, Cape Town: South African Library, 1972.

that faced onto Buitengracht Street. This additional *erf* was to remain part of 90 Bree Street until 1881.

In 1861 Sinclair sold his house. He might by this stage have fallen on hard times for, when he died in a house in Waterkant Street four years later (at the age of 71), it was noted: "no will. A few articles of Household furniture"<sup>18</sup>. No 90 Bree Street was bought by Johannes Brink. The layout of the buildings on Brink's new acquisition is suggested by the 1862 municipal survey<sup>19</sup>. The plan shows a large house, fronting Bree Street, with a side passage giving access to a back yard area: essentially the same plan as survives today. At the back, a large outbuilding straddled the boundary between the original *erf* and Sinclair's 1831 additional land purchase. It seems reasonable to assume that this building had been constructed by Thomas Sinclair.

When Brink died, in 1876, he was given as living in Picketberg, which suggests that, for at least part of his ownership, he rented out his Bree Street house<sup>20</sup>. Brink's widow sold 90 Bree to Johannes Adriaan Smuts in 1878. Smuts owned other land in Block 11 and in 1881 rearranged the boundaries of his properties, reducing the size of 90 Bree back to its original dimensions by selling land to David Hanzman while keeping the back portion and adjoining it to no102 Shortmarket Street warehouse.

Hanzman remained the owner of the Bree Street house until 1889. The reference to "D Flanzman" in the street directory for 1885 suggests that, at least in this year, Hanzman was occupying the house that he owned<sup>21</sup>. Two years previously, however, in 1883, the occupier of 90 Bree was listed as Nathan Hart and the use given as a private boarding house<sup>22</sup>. This suggests that Hanzman only lived on his land intermittently. Pocock's 1884 panorama just shows the flat roof of Hanzman's house<sup>23</sup>.

Hanzman sold 90 Bree in 1889 and through the remaining years of the 19th century the house had six successive owners. The only reference found in the street directories of this later period is to the year 1900, when 90 Bree Street was rented by Mrs J McNeale, and was known as the Albany Boarding House<sup>24</sup>. Given the reference to a boarding house on the property in 1883, and the fact that, from the beginning of Smuts' ownership, the house was rented, it would seem likely that 90 Bree Street served as a boarding house through much of the last quarter of the 19th century. The 1898 municipal survey<sup>25</sup> shows the building plan unchanged, except for the restored property boundary running through the middle of the back outbuilding. After several additional changes of ownership, 90 Bree Street was expropriated by the Municipality of Cape Town in 1973 and has stood vacant for 23 years until 1996.

No 90 Bree Street was the subject of extensive studies some years ago so extensive testing has not been conducted here apart from in few selected areas.

## 2.4.2 Archaeological investigations

### 2.4.2.1 Excavation A (rear yard):

This was located in an outbuilding (no roof) to the rear of 90 Bree Street (Figure 8).

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<sup>18</sup> Cape Archives, MOOC 6/9/116 -2859.

<sup>19</sup> Snow, 1862.

<sup>20</sup> Cape Archives, MOOC 6/9/154 - 2524.

<sup>21</sup> *General Directory and Guide Book 1885*, Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co.

<sup>22</sup> *General Directory*, 1883.

<sup>23</sup> Pocock, 1884.

<sup>24</sup> Longland's *Directory*, 1902.

<sup>25</sup> Thom, 1898.

The outbuilding contained modern rubble fill, which had been transported in during previous investigations. The threshold to the door was located at a depth 30 mm below surface. There were no indications of previous floors (probably wood). The foundation bottom was reached at a depth of 900 mm below surface. This was followed by natural sterile ferruginous gravels.

#### **2.4.2.2 Interior excavations**

Two small excavations were positioned in the front right room and *voorhuis* of 90 Bree Street to test for original floor levels.

Removal of the existing cement surface revealed that the original floor rests are some 80mm below the present cement surface. The remains of a fragment of red tile in the right hand front room that is clearly in-situ is a good indication that the original floor was tiled. Sterile river sand fill has been introduced into the under-floor area of 90 Bree Street to raise the floor levels to be equivalent to the rear yard (Plate 17).

#### **2.4.3 Discussion**

When members of the Historical Archaeology Research Group undertook excavations in the rear of 90 Bree Street (1989-1990) they assumed that the large quantity of archaeological material that was located in shallow depression, related to activities that had taken place on the property. Today, as a result of greater knowledge about refuse disposal patterns in Cape Town together with information obtained from other parts of the block, the earlier interpretation can be revised.

When Malan and Klose (pers com) undertook the analysis of the large ceramic collection from the yard of 90 Bree Street, they began to realise that although many of the items found, were contemporary with the structure, a large number of pipe stems and ceramics dated to the mid-18th century. These therefore, predated the structure by a number of years. Excavations in the warehouse (Property C) revealed that parts of this midden extended into this *erf* and were later cut by the warehouse foundations. This has led us to conclude that the midden that existed in the yard predates the building on the property. In the mid-18th century this area would have been on the outskirts of town. Natural gulleys and hollows in these areas were used for the disposal of domestic refuse. Indications are to date is that the midden accumulated in a natural depression that stretched from what is now the yard of property F to under property C and across to property D. The artefacts and other material from the midden do not necessarily represent material from the block but rather this general area of Cape Town in the mid-eighteenth century.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

Heritage Square is not only a unique collection of buildings in the context of Southern Africa but it is also a complex historical archaeological site. What has been achieved in terms of the understanding the archaeology of the area is just a glimpse of what appears to be multiple phases of construction, demolition and deposition of archaeological material. The pattern of test excavations placed in various parts of the block to date indicate that the building history is far more complex than indicated by the archival evidence or represented in the current redevelopment of the block. It is clear that this complex of buildings in a dynamic urban environment has never been static in terms of both use and physical attributes. Structures have been continuously adapted to the demands made upon them by the changing urban environment, ownership patterns and use, as well as prevailing architectural preferences.

It is not possible to understand the physical history of the block without extensive excavation of large areas of the ground floors of the structures. The developers of the heritage square have taken care not to encroach into areas with known archaeological deposits thus conserving

archaeological material under the new development. Unfortunately this means that we are unable to explore the archaeology of the area further in the short term. This task will have to be left to future generations of archaeologists who will need to continue to be involved in any further modification of the structures. For this reason it is most important that Heritage Square is acknowledged in the records of conservation and planning authorities as an archaeological site.

#### 4 Recommendation

It is most important that when properties in the block change hands in future years and owners wish to alter structures, suitable measures are taken not to impact the below surface archaeological material. This phase of excavations has shown that several properties in the block are still highly sensitive in terms of buried middens and foundations. These are outlined below and rated in terms of sensitivity.

**Property A.** *High.* Buried foundations and archaeological material throughout the ground-floor, cistern in ground-floor courtyard structures as well as buried water conduits under the rear courtyard.

**Property B.** *?High.* Below surface archaeology is untested.

**Property C.** *High.* Buried middens, foundations and lower floor levels throughout.

**Property D.** *High.* Buried floor levels, foundations and possible midden material.

**Property E.** *?High.* Below surface archaeology is untested within the structure. The courtyard has been tested and this is not sensitive.

**Property F.** *Medium.* The yard has been extensively excavated and most archaeological material has been removed. Small test excavations have been undertaken in the interior of the house which remains largely untested.

**Property G.** *Low.* Test excavations have shown that property G has been excavated deep into the substrate. Little archaeology is expected to have survived.

**Property H.** *Unknown.* Below surface archaeology is untested. Foundations of cross-walls are expected to exist.

**Property I.** *Unknown.* Below surface archaeology is largely untested apart from the yard, which is insensitive. Foundations of cross-walls are expected to exist.

#### 5 Professional Team

Fieldwork

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## APPENDIX A

### PROPERTIES H AND I (Cnr Hout and Buitengracht Streets)

#### 1. Introduction

The Archaeology Contracts Office of the University of Cape Town was commissioned at short notice to investigate and record fabric exposed during building activities in buildings on the corner of Hout and Buitengracht Streets, Cape Town (Plate 1). No 61 and 63 Hout Street (Property I) was originally thought to have been built in 1902 on the site of a demolished 18th century town house. Removal of plaster has revealed that 18th century fabric still exists in the structure leading to the conclusion that the original structure was not demolished but extensively renovated and a third story added. As extensive renovation of the building is to take place shortly, it was necessary to make a photographic record (video and still photography) of the exposed features before they are impacted. Figures 1, 2, 3 show locations of photographs (Plates 2-11) presented in this report. Figure 4-6 are annotated diagrammes showing locations of previous openings and original fabric.

#### 2. Archival research

Hall (1989) reports that the property was granted in 1771 to C. Persoon. The next transfer that took place in 1776, makes mention that there was a house on the property. The first modification of the premises is known to have taken place by 1878 (one half was used by a Mason while the other half was vacant). Furthermore, the municipal survey of 1862 shows that the house was divided into two erven at this time. The property was sold to Joseph Cosay in 1901 who divided it into three separate erven. Cosay who was a speculative builder also owned 99 Hout Street at about the same time.

The balance of evidence available indicates that the original 18th century building had undergone extensive changes by the mid-19th century and was further divided and extensively modified in 1901-2. It is quite probable that the standard vernacular town house layout had already been interrupted by 1862 with the construction of an almost central dividing wall.

#### 3. Physical evidence

The most confusing aspect of the study has been the fact that there has been extensive rebuilding compounded with the fact that the latest phase of renovations was done as economically as possible by Cosay who made use of recycled 18th century bricks bonded with a cement based mortar. It is quite probable that he was responsible for gutting no 99 Hout Street and re-used the fabric in rebuilding 61 and 63 Buitengracht Street. A difficulty encountered in understanding the building sequence is that no. 63 which was part of the original property is under separate ownership and not accessible.

##### *No. 61 ground floor*

Plaster has not been stripped on this side but enough fabric is visible to determine that much of the left-hand room is 18th century (Plate 2). The rear wall shows evidence of a kitchen fire or hearth, furthermore the room is stepped down (with the fall of the land) and the resulting saving in head space used to create an *opkamer* above the kitchen. Beam slots are visible. The right hand room (left wall rear) shows evidence of 3 openings (Plate 3) with relieving arches - probably one of the original walls of the *gaandery*. In general the central core of the house has been demolished (pre 1862) to create two properties. The right hand wall of the right hand room is not original but nevertheless mid-19th century. Openings in this wall are rudimentary with no use of relieving arches. Cosay who was evidently a jerry builder recycled a number of 18th century beams which are visible in the left hand room (Plate 4).

### *No. 61 first floor*

One of the major alterations Cosay undertook was raising the floor level of the first floor by 920 mm. This is evident by beam slots (bricked up) on the ground floor walls. There are also openings with lintels that extend across both levels which are evidence of previous floor arrangements (Plate 5). The right hand room shows clear evidence of a scar marking the position of the original internal dividing wall (Plate 6). This however, extends to only half the height of the first floor showing that the second floor has also been raised by at least 1000mm with recycled bricks. Several bricked up beam slots are also evident.

The rear portion of both rooms has been rebuilt with recycled materials, as has the facade.

### *No. 61 second floor*

The second floors in both rooms have been added with non-standard bricks (recycled) but with cement based mortar (Plate 7). Some 18th century beams have been recycled to support parts of the roof as well as lifting hitches. The most interesting aspect of the second floor is the hand-operated 19th century lift. This is a unique artefact worthy of conservation (Plates 8 and 9).

### *Facade*

The facade of the structure has been rebuilt (Victorian) as has most of the rear apart from the ground floor. The proportions of the original house are still evident apart from the additional floor.

### *Foundations*

Visible foundations are of Malmsbury shale. The rear wall of the courtyard is also stone as is the Hout Street ground floor wall of the building.

### *Below surface*

There is a very strong possibility that below surface excavations will reveal the footprint of the original structure - dividing wall, the remains of the *voorkamer*, *gaandery* and possibly the hearth.

### *The Inner Courtyard*

Between properties I and H, there is a small inner courtyard. This was previously tested for sub-surface archaeological material. removal of the cement surface showed that in-situ ferricrete gravels lay immediately underneath and there is no buried evidence of any archaeological material. The walls of the inner courtyard reflect the complex building sequence characteristic of properties I and H. The west wall of property H still contains substantial amounts of 18th century stone work on the ground floor (Plate 10). Above this is a small amount of surviving 18-19th century brickwork while the second and third floors are largely typical of Cosay's alterations at the turn of the century. The extraordinary amounts of modifications that have taken place in the courtyard are indicated by bricked up openings of various ages and the fact that none of the four wall of the courtyard lock (Plate 11). Each represents phases of modifications to both buildings.

## **4. Conclusion**

No. 61 contains multiple layers of modification, the first of which involved division of the town house into two properties before 1862. The second major revision took place when the builder, Cosay (1902) demolished much of no 99, then changed the internal proportions of no 61 and 63

by dividing it into 3 erven and adding a further story using recycled materials (possibly from no. 99). He raised the height of the interior rooms by raising the floors and rebuilt parts of the rear as well as the facade. The left hand side of the structure contains the bulk of original fabric. The right side of 61 is bounded by the pre 1862 dividing wall.

No. 99 has been rebuilt on 18th century foundations and stone walls by Cosay at the turn of the century. The brickwork also consists of a curious mixture of standard frog bricks and non-standard 19th century material bonded with a cement based mortar. As with no. 61, the footprint of the original structure is probably preserved under the existing cement floors.