



SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURAL RECORD
SEPTEMBER 1952

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SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTURAL RECORD

JOURNAL OF THE INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARCHITECTS; THE CAPE, NATAL, ORANGE FREE STATE AND TRANSVAAL
PROVINCIAL INSTITUTES AND THE CHAPTER OF SOUTH AFRICAN QUANTITY SURVEYORS

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EDITORIAL

We are privileged to review in these pages an outstanding building which was recently completed for the Meat Board in Pretoria. While the Meat Board is not a Government organisation it is only a few steps removed. The building may therefore be fairly named official architecture. As such it makes a most valuable contribution to the limited range of buildings in this class, and clearly points to what can be done to free official architecture from the heavy hand of convention and outmoded tradition.

It is a peculiar fact long nurtured by habit and precept that any building of an official nature designed to fill a formal or monumental rôle is automatically clothed in the trappings of traditional classicism. Sometimes it is a matter of sentiment, sometimes policy, often mere convention. But yet it happens. To produce an imposing home to impress the public large financial and commercial undertakings will more often than not resort to this means. On the other hand any government building of importance is seldom if ever conceived in any other guise. It seems to be a case of mistaken identity. To be imposing a building must be classical, to be monumental it must ape the monuments of history. This clearly is a refusal to accept things as they are and to design contemporary buildings to serve contemporary needs in a contemporary manner. This sort of argument is already hackneyed.

What is refreshing is to see evidence of a new trend, a trend in which the architects — and their clients — face up to the facts of present-day social and economic conditions and accept the fact that we are living in the twentieth century.

We have, of course, the examples of Switzerland and Sweden, two countries that have taken kindly and sympathetically to the new idiom. We have the more recent and vigorous, almost revolutionary but wholly stimulating example of South America. Even in the home of classicism we have the new Rome Station. Why not in the Union? The Meat Board Building, the Provincial Offices in Durban, the Provincial Administration Building in Pietermaritzburg, the new Johannesburg Station and possibly others demonstrate that contemporary means can produce formal buildings of great merit.

In the Meat Board Building we have an official building which is a happy expression of formal architecture in contemporary terms, a building which is bright and colourful to the observer and comfortable for the occupants, well integrated with its residential environment. It is a worthy addition to a city already well endowed with good architecture.



THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL
L'ARCHITECTURE D'AUJOURD'HUI No. 13-14, 1947

THE ROME STATION. L'ARCHITECTURE D'AUJOURD'HUI No. 21, 1948



THE MEAT BOARD BUILDING, PRETORIA

H. W. E. STAUCH AND PARTNERS, MM.A., ARCHITECTS

This is a most interesting and stimulating building, not only by reason of its progressive character and the fact that it is a semi-government building, but also for the intensive thought implicit in the architects' approach to the problem. There is no doubt that it represents the highest standard of contemporary architecture in the Union and elsewhere.

Designed to house the administrative organisation of the Meat Board, the controlling body of the livestock and meat industries, it clearly reflects the architects' deliberate policy of creating an atmosphere both gay and friendly and an environment of comfort and concentration.

Apart from meeting the normal problems of an office building the planning demanded no specialised solution. On the other hand, the initial absence of precise office requirements, together with the fact that space requirements in an office building can vary considerably as time goes on, rendered the introduction of flexibility in space subdivision imperative. The architects have faced up to this problem and have produced a building in which floor space can be readily changed to meet varying needs.

This demand for flexibility has given rise to the establishment of a modular unit which is used as a basis of the planning grid throughout. The unit employed here measures 3 ft. 5 ins. and was selected as most suitable for office subdivision. Three such units, less the thickness of partitions, produce a single or minimum office 10 ft. wide. It also permits the installation of doors up to 3 ft. 0 ins. in width which is the maximum required in a building of this nature. The addition of such a module must inevitably exert a definitive influence on partition units and elevations as a whole, while the aspect of flexibility in subdivision of office space demands careful arrangement of lighting and air-conditioning installations.

THE PROGRAMME

Principally the building was required to provide office accommodation capable of variation in size and subdivision, with a public entrance and enquiry office off Vermeulen Street.

The second major item was the boardroom suite. The requirements here included a large boardroom for 50 members, together with separate fayer and cloaks, a reading room and two small committee rooms capable of being combined to form one large room. These meeting rooms were to be accessible from the offices but served by a separate entrance to permit their being let to outside bodies.

Storage space, linked to the offices with access for heavy vehicles for the delivery and dispatch of paper in bulk, was to be provided, the entrance to which would be used as the service entrance to the building.

The remaining items included a caretaker's flat near the Native servants' quarters but as private as possible and related to the garden; and as much parking space as possible for the staff and board members.

An important item was a well planned garden of reasonable size as the building is situated in a residential area.

THE SITE

The site measures 214 ft. by 107 ft. with the longer southern boundary in Vermeulen Street and the shorter western boundary in Hamilton Street. It is in a residential area to the east of the city centre. The Vermeulen Street frontage is important as this street is one of the main routes to the Union Buildings from the city. The ground slope from east to west was approximately 8 ft. and 2 ft. from north to south.

The architects faced a difficult problem in fitting the building and garden space required on a site of this size. In fact, owing to the limited amount of free ground space ultimately available the roof of the boardroom is designed to carry a soil filling to permit the development of a planted roof garden accessible from the staff recreation room and linked with the garden proper by a sweeping curved stair.

The pavements bounding the site have also received attention. These have been treated with brick paving and lawn like other parts of the site. The effect has been a visual extension of the garden space beyond the confines of the site.

Height zoning restriction imposed a limit of three floors. By a clever exploitation of the fall of the ground the architects have been able to incorporate a lower ground floor area as an additional level.

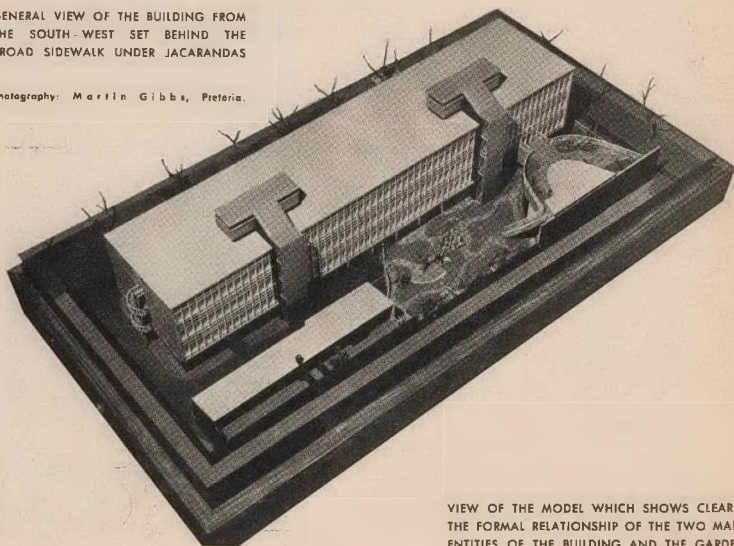
THE BUILDING

The requirement of complete flexibility in office arrangement led to the design of partition units that are easily handled and completely interchangeable. They are constructed of standardised wooden posts and rails faced with painted asbestos sheets and with insulation board between the framing. The positioning of lights and air-conditioning outlets are arranged for even distribution for any form of subdivision.

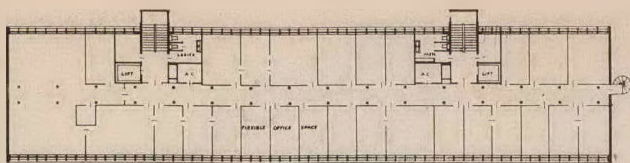


GENERAL VIEW OF THE BUILDING FROM
THE SOUTH-WEST SET BEHIND THE
BROAD SIDEWALK UNDER JACARANDAS

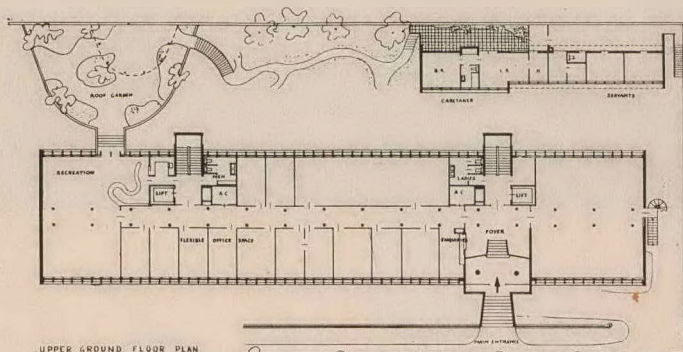
Photography: Martin Gibbs, Pretoria.



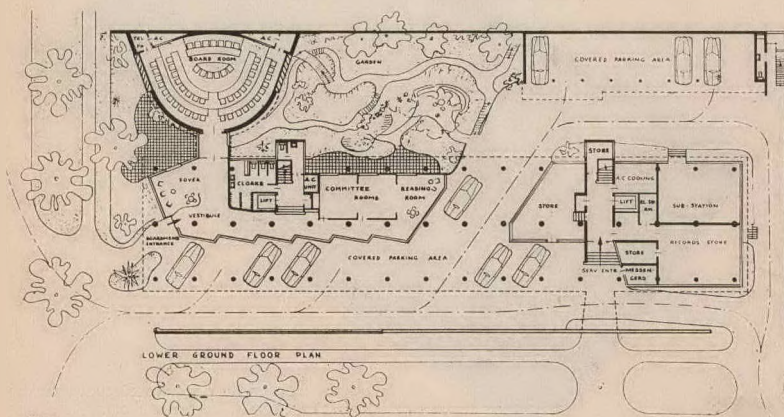
VIEW OF THE MODEL WHICH SHOWS CLEARLY
THE FORMAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE TWO MAIN
ENTITIES OF THE BUILDING AND THE GARDEN



FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR



UPPER GROUND FLOOR PLAN



LOWER GROUND FLOOR PLAN

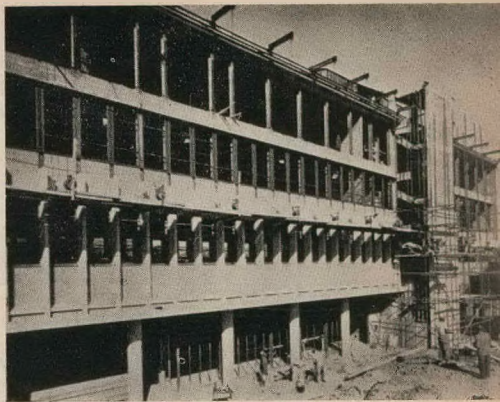
SCALE
0 10 20 30 FEET



DETAIL OF THE GARDEN FRONT ON THE NORTH. NOTE THE ATTRACTIVE DESIGN OF THE LAMP STANDARD.



VIEW OF THE ESCAPE STAIR ON THE EAST ELEVATION. THE WHITE OF THE FINS IS SEEN AGAINST THE GREY FRAME.



THE BUILDING IN CONSTRUCTION SHOWING ON TOP FLOOR THE STEEL STANCHION SYSTEM, ON CENTRE THE MODULAR SUBDIVISION OF THE FACADE, AND ON LOWER FLOOR THE PRECAST CONCRETE CLADDING AND PROJECTING VERTICAL FINS

The structural system used in the main office block is an interesting combination of structural steel and reinforced concrete. The office floors comprise a reinforced concrete ribbed construction supported down the centre by pairs of reinforced columns which also carry the dropped slab over the corridors. Small rolled steel stanchions at more frequent intervals support the floors along the outer edges. The aim was, of course, the elimination of heavy supporting columns on the external face whether incorporated in the wall thickness or set back behind the line of windows. The use of steel stanchions has permitted a uniform size and spacing of small mullions to any of which office partitions may be joined without forming the awkward and irregular junction usually associated with the normal structural column.

In this regard the design is obviously highly successful. The mullions are narrow and do not obstruct light and permit subdivision on the modular beat without structural or aesthetic difficulties. Externally the mullions have been extended to form vertical fins which screen the offices from the slanting rays of the sun—an important factor even on the south elevation in Pretoria.

The construction in the lower ground floor varies from that above. A single row of columns carries the paired columns flanking the corridors, and the external reinforced concrete columns are set back from the building face. This spacing of columns facilitates the circulation and parking of cars by permitting diagonal movement and parking alignment, and it also permits this area to be freely planned to accommodate rooms of different dimensions from the normal offices.



FOYER TO BOARDROOM AND COMMITTEE ROOMS, LOOKING EAST



COMMITTEE ROOM SEEN FROM READING ROOM, LOOKING WEST



LOWER GROUND FLOOR, SHOWING PARKING AREA AND BOARDROOM SUITE



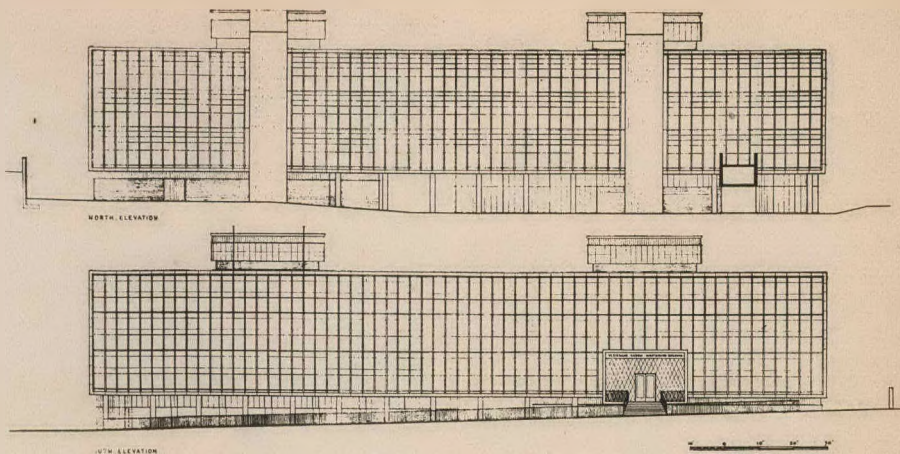
A TYPICAL OFFICE SHOWING MODULAR PARTITION AND WINDOW UNIT



STAFF RECREATION ROOM ON UPPER GROUND FLOOR



CORRIDOR FRIEZE LIGHTS IN PARTITIONS, PORTHOLES TO REDUCE GLARE



The boardroom and committee rooms with their adjuncts have been planned on the lower ground level at the west end of the building. Advantage was taken of the slope of the ground to make effective use of the space created under this portion of the building. Sufficient height was obtained to permit the placing of the suite in this position rather than relegating the area to storage or parking. This was particularly valuable in view of the three floor restriction previously mentioned. As may be seen from the plan, the boardroom itself is articulated and given a sweeping curve which contrasts with the rigid rectangular form of the office block itself. The separate entrance with foyer and cloakroom makes this suite entirely self-contained.

The service rooms and stores are placed in the eastern, excavated, portion of the site, with the service entrance immediately below the main entrance, and are directly linked with the offices above by the lift and stair.

The two separate stairs are symmetrically placed in the plan, each with a lift, lavatory unit and air-conditioning room grouped about them. The two vertical service ducts house all plumbing and other services and are accessible throughout their height. They are in turn connected with the horizontal distribution ducts over the corridors.

MATERIALS AND FINISHES

Since it was the express desire of the clients that the finishes used should not require constant and costly maintenance, these have been chosen for both their lasting qualities and their aesthetic effect. Moreover, because the building is a free-standing structure the same qualities are required on all elevations.

Reference has already been made to the architects' desire

to produce a building that is bright and cheerful as well as being conducive to the comfort and efficiency of those who work in it. The architectural means of achieving this aim is in the handling and co-ordination of form and colour. To this end permanent colours have been applied both to accentuate specific forms and to impart a bright, gay appearance without destroying the formal and dignified character of the building.

The external surfacing generally is of grey precast concrete slabs. The vertical fins are white precast concrete with white mosaic on the forward weather faces. The precast spandrels between the windows have a blue mosaic facing. The projecting frame of the main entrance has white mosaic on the external faces with green mosaic on the inner surfaces. The retaining walls, walls in lower ground floor and the paved surfaces are of dark purple facebricks. The circular columns supporting the block are sheathed in bright yellow mosaic which is not only hard wearing but serves to brighten this shaded area.

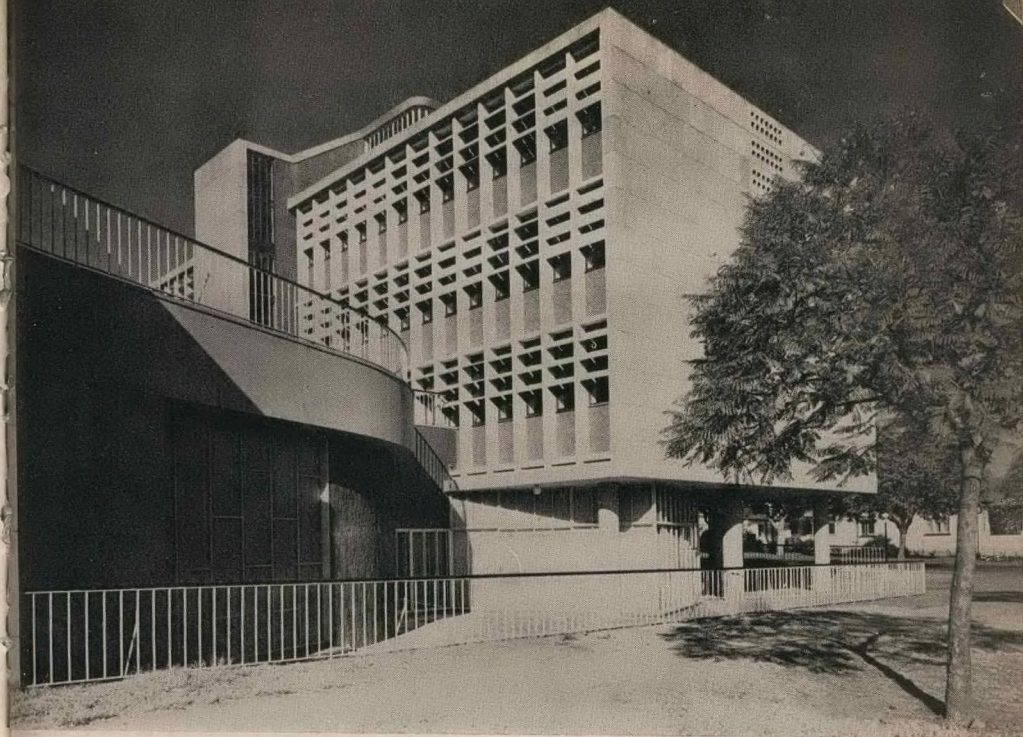
The bright almost brittle sophistication of coloured mosaic has thus been restricted to three important surfaces, the columns, the spandrels and the entrance, and has as a foil the neutral colour of the precast facing slabs.

The office floors are surfaced with asphalt tiles, the committee rooms with woodblock flooring and the boardroom with carpet.

The ceilings are of fibre-board fixed to nailing strips under the ribbed concrete slab to reduce sound transmission. Cover strips are fixed at modular intervals and serve as locating guides for the rebated top rails of partitions units.

* * *

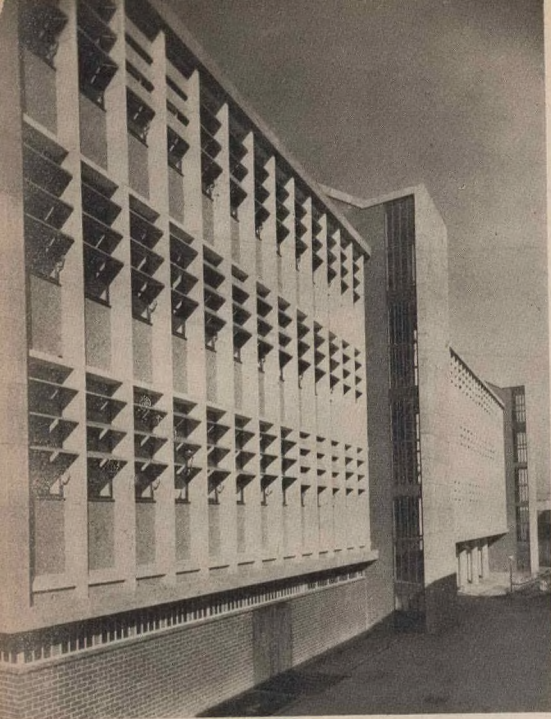
One's first impressions on seeing this building are of formal elegance and colour. Attention is immediately drawn to the



VIEW FROM THE NORTH WEST WITH BOARDROOM IN FOREGROUND. THE VERTICAL FINS PROJECT TO SCREEN OFFICES FROM THE SLANTING RAYS OF THE SUN. ADJUSTABLE LOUVRES ARE USED TO PROTECT THE WINDOWS FROM DIRECT SUN PENETRATION.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE BOARDROOM. PANELLING IS BOTH DECORATIVE AND GOVERNS THE ACOUSTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ROOM. WALLS ARE FACED WITH INDIGENOUS HARDWOOD STRIPS SPACED $\frac{1}{2}$ IN. APART. AT REAR WHERE ABSORPTION IS REQUIRED BACKING IS BLACK BAIZE. WHERE REFLECTION IS REQUIRED BACKING IS OF TIMBER STRIPS PAINTED BLACK. CENTRALLY PLACED TABLE LEGS FIT FLOOR SOCKETS AND ARE REMOVABLE, THUS PERMITTING THE FURNITURE TO BE REMOVED WHEN DESIRED.





THE NORTH ELEVATION WITH ITS RIPPLING TEXTURE OF FINS AND LOUVRES PUNCTUATED BY THE STAIR TOWERS.

as one moves to the front of the building one is faced with a broad statement of the facade which has all the attributes of an "anti-centric" design. It has much in common with the WISPECO building and Medical Centre. Architectural interest here again lies in proportioning and the handling of the repeated elements, which create a texture over the breadth of the elevation. The only interruption in the present case is the framed entrance and the slender flag poles.

This textural unit derives directly from the module selected. It is in reality a frank visual statement of the design unit. This very statement, coupled with the fact that the resulting unit of proportion or pattern, here defined by the vertical and horizontal banding which surrounds each window and spandril, becomes the generator of the facade, makes it clear that a great aesthetic importance must attach to it — importance in respect of its proportion and its significance in the building as a whole.

Obviously a module of some three feet is bound to give relatively great freedom in spatial subdivision. Small offices

may be 10 ft. wide and can be enlarged by some three feet at a time, giving a wide choice of sizes which is certainly adequate for the purpose.

On the other hand the minimum compartment is the small office. It is a measure of occupancy and therefore of the human scale relating to the building, yet the lesser modular pattern cannot reflect this. If a larger module is adopted, say 10 ft. this clearly will reduce flexibility to untenable limits. The architect is then faced with a difficulty which a modular facade pattern will inevitably impose, he is in a dilemma.

In the building under review this repetitive modular unit is spread across the breadth of the facade within the confining limits of the major frame. One has a sense of termination top and bottom and can appreciate the subtlety of the detailing at these points. The termination is not as forceful nor convincing at the ends where a vertical fin abuts the frame. The closing or limiting function of the frame is not nearly so strong or important. A refinement in the facade is of course the vertical continuity of the fins which contrast with very necessary projections marking the floor levels and the horizontal continuity of the blue spandrels.

But one is left in the end with a desire for some transition between the scales of the textural modular unit and the broad surface of the facade, some element which will relate the two with a greater feeling of sympathy.

It is perhaps interesting to note that the more intricate pattern produced on the north facade by the introduction of sun-controlling louvers, firmly punctuated by the staircase projections appears more satisfactory. It does modify the accent on the single unit, and by its textural modulation serves to give the main surrounding frame a desirable strength and importance.

As one's eye roves over the south facade attention is immediately and forcibly focussed, by sheer contrast, on the projecting rectangular frame embracing the entrance and by the slender verticals of the flag poles. Their relative position on the facade suggests a deliberate intent and the dynamic balance of their placing supports this impression. But in a textural facade like this, why not a little closer together or a little further apart? In fact, the very form of the entrance, surround notched on to the frame suggests it could slide. It is only by reference to the elevational drawing that the real determinant becomes apparent. Both are directly related to the staircases and towers which punctuate the north facade. But the man in the street will never appreciate the fact.

In the foregoing comments some criticism of aspects of this building has been ventured. It is done with every respect for the positive contribution which this building makes in the sphere of good contemporary architecture and for its very real merits in design.



THE MEAT BOARD BUILDING, PRETORIA. DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS. Architects — H. W. E. Stauch and Wepener (at commencement of work firm was H. W. E. Stauch and Partners). Quantity Surveyors — C. L. F. Borckenhagen and Louw, Consulting Engineer — Dr. Jan K. Marais. Structural Engineers — Van Wyk and Louw. Acoustic Advisers — C.S.I.R. Contractors — McLachlan Bros. (Pty.), Ltd. Electrical Installation — Yates and Co. Light Fittings — B.G.E. Ltd. and Fluorescent Sales Ltd. Plumbing — Korpes Bros. (Pty.), Ltd. Painting — H. C. Wolfswinkel. Lifts — Schindler Lifts (S.A.) Ltd. Air Conditioning — Airco Engineering Co. Boardroom Furniture and other Fittings — Fred K. Sage and Co. (S.A.) (Pty.), Ltd. Boardroom Chairs — Duncan Bayne Ltd. Ceiling to Lower Ground Floor — Fibrous Plaster Ceilings (Pty.), Ltd. Venetian Blinds and Modern Fold Doors — Forsyth Udwin (Pty.) (Pty.), Ltd. Strangroom Doors — Chubb, V. Yorke-Hart. Precast Concrete — Concrete Craft Ltd. Mosaic — Central Agencies and Import Co. (Pty.), Ltd. Sand and Co. Ltd. Asphalt Tiles and Waterproofing — Frank Wright (Pty.), Ltd. Reinforcing — H. F. Passage & Sons. Windows — Granite Producers (Pty.), Ltd. Wrought-iron Work — R. Bischoff Steel Construction and Engineering Co. Intercommunication — Dicta-Com (Pty.), Ltd.



Photography: Derrick A. Bridge

View of the house from the main road showing the countryside beyond. The outbuildings were extended sometime after Mr. Price took occupation.

"PLOVERS," MILLHILL, JOHANNESBURG

RESIDENCE FOR MR. & MRS. B. W. PRICE

JOHN FASSLER, B.Arch., A.R.I.B.A., M.I.A., Architect

A house in the country, twelve miles north of Johannesburg, set in a rolling Highveld landscape and with magnificent views of the distant Magaliesberg range on the northern horizon.

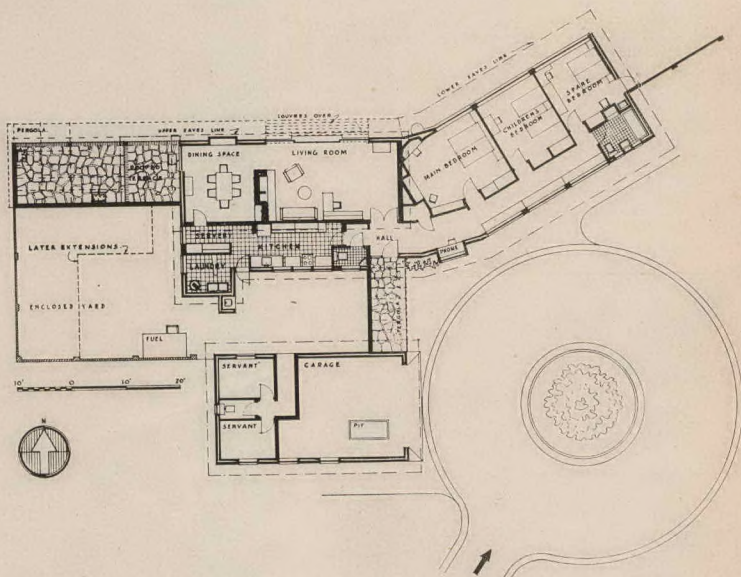
"Plovers", a house in the country, was designed and built in 1947. The site 5 acres in extent, is situated on high ground in a small township called Millhill adjoining Bryanston, which lies twelve miles north of Johannesburg. Here, the Magaliesburg mountains some twenty miles away rim the northern horizon, enclosing a panorama of undulating countryside and infinitely varied skies. In these circumstances in which a feeling of an immensity of space was so strongly in evidence, Mr and Mrs. Price felt the need for a house of low spreading character, taking advantage of the view as much as possible.

The accompanying plan shows the general lines of the solution. A single storeyed building was decided upon, to spread the house as much as possible. The slope of the ground and area of the plot eliminated the likelihood of the view to the north being interfered with by future buildings. An approach driveway links the main road along the southern boundary of the property to a turning circle giving access to the pergola between the main entrance door and adjacent garage. The bedroom wing has been swung forward from the general line of the north facade to place it on the contours, and give the feeling of house embracing view. This arrangement also has the advantage of introducing a series of interesting transverse

views; for example, there is the glimpse of the terrace at the opposite end of the house from the bedroom windows, or the oblique view of the bedroom wing from the living room. The corridor approaching the bedroom turning away from the entrance is also rendered more interesting.

To emphasise the horizontal character of the composition, a low pitched roof of asphaltic sheeting on boarding was employed. The pitch is eight degrees, and the exposed surface of the sheeting has been coloured green with a bitumastic paint. Because of its larger volume, the living room and dining space has been given a higher ceiling level to that prevailing generally. This difference is expressed externally by raising the roof over the living room above the general line of the eaves. To unite the composition, the fascia to the eaves of the bedroom wing has been swept through in one unbroken line to the pergola at the far end. Provision was made for a piece of sculpture, to occupy a pedestal between bedroom and living room windows, to accent the facade at this point. The sculpture has not been added up to date.

Finishes generally are straight forward and few in number. At the time the house was designed, there was a tendency for contemporary architecture in Johannesburg to display the use

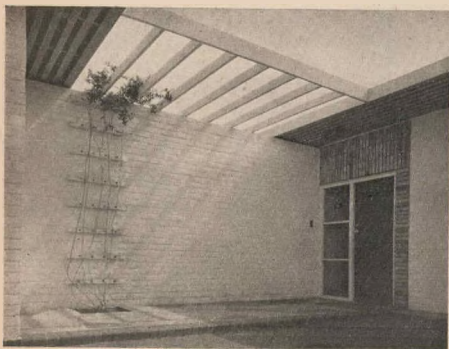




Above: The south side of the house with turning circle, garage wing and main entrance pergola.

Right: The corridor to the bedroom wing. A ducoed fitting occupies the lower part of the wall space. A desk built into a projecting bay in the foreground forms a telephone recess.

Below: Detail of the entrance pergola.



Right: The living room with dining space beyond. The desk in the foreground is moveable when the use of the uninterrupted floor area is required.



Below: The sliding doors to the living room and dining space appear in this view. As the louvred eaves above the living room doors did not afford sufficient sun protection, the canvas canopy was subsequently added by Mr. Price.





Main front from the north east. The greater volume of the living room elevates it above the general eaves level. From the north, the house exploits its length, and relates itself to the broad plot from which it rises. The cill to bedroom windows ends on a half round pedestal for a sculptural accent.

of an excessive number of materials, with consequent loss of unity and strength of expression, since in most cases, these materials were never successfully integrated as parts of a greater whole. In this case with few exceptions, such as the facebrick plinth, facebrick splashbacks behind taps over gulleys, and facebrickwork between corridor windows and at the main entrance, whitewashed stock brickwork predominates. Rather an attempt has been made to achieve a composition of some diversity and breadth of treatment, growing naturally

from the plan and sectional organisation, and depending on the use of one principal material.

This house has great merit in the essential simplicity of the architectural statement and in the disciplined handling of the several elements and forms of the whole composition. In this respect the illustrations speak for themselves. It nestles comfortably in its site and exhibits a strong sense of repose. Quite apart from these facts, what is immediately apparent, even in the illustrations, is the fine quality of design and the sensitive and precise detailing which is everywhere apparent.

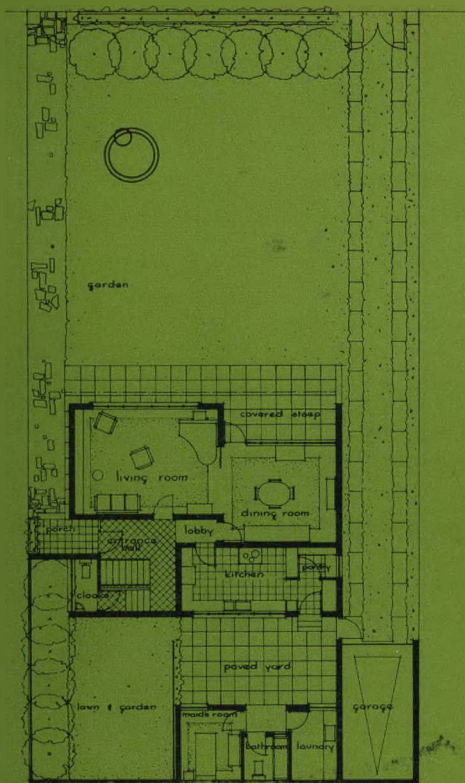


Photography: Robin Summers.

"THE FAIRWAY," CAMPS BAY, CAPE TOWN

S. CHAPMAN AND L. G. COHEN, MM.I.A., ARCHITECTS

This is another interesting family residence in the suburb of Cape Town which has been skillfully related to a very confined site.



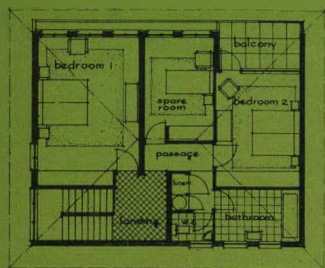
Programme : A double storeyed house built within the central area of 2,150 square feet was required, with accommodation for a family consisting of husband, wife and two daughters and for a guest. A semi-enclosed sleeping porch was required for the two daughters adjoining their bedroom. The owners desired to re-use some very valuable lounge and dining room furniture

The Site : The site available was extremely restricted, being only 50 feet by 100 feet in extent, facing onto the road and running at right angles to the beach. It was further hemmed in on both sides and rear by existing houses which were built close to their boundaries.

Solution : The architects ignored the two side and rear boundaries where possible and orientated all the principal rooms towards the road. In addition, owing to the smallness of the site, the house was kept as far back as possible to consolidate all garden space into one, whilst allowing at the rear a small vegetable garden. In this way it was possible for all the main rooms to overlook the garden with no direct vista of the adjoining properties. The scheme is extremely simply and efficiently laid out and while the sizes of most of the rooms are modest yet the spatial effect is satisfying.

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



S. CHAPMAN & L. G. COHEN, M.M.I.A., ARCHITECTS

"THE FAIRWAY", CAMPS BAY, CAPE TOWN



ABOVE: A view of the livingroom from the entrance hall, showing the garden and the glimpse of the mountain rising beyond.



The entrance hall showing detail of the stair and access to cloakroom.

CONTEMPORARY JOURNALS

COMPILATION BY UGO TOMASELLI

APARTMENTS

House and Home, March, 1952, pp. 90-93.
Garden Apartments with amenities of private houses in Berkeley, California designed by Architect H. Harris. Each Apartment has its own terrace, garage and enclosed service yard.

ARCHITECTURE

Progressive Architecture, January, 1952.
This issue is devoted to previews of buildings to be constructed in America in 1952 and covers the following types of Buildings: Housing, Education, Public, Defence, Commercial, Industrial and Religious.

Architectural Review, March, 1952, pp. 183-189.
Common Ground by Gordon Cullen. The author draws the reader's attention to the square, which is quickly ceasing to be the common ground that it should be. The two principal enemies of this conception of the square as common ground are the railing mentality and the communications mentality; and the latter is also the enemy of that sense of Enclosure which is a characteristic of every good square.

Architectural Review, April, 1952, pp. 217-226.
Sixtus V. and the Planning of Baroque Rome, by Sigfried Giedion.
Edilizia Moderna, pp. 11-22, 23-26.

(1) Reconstructional Plans in the United States. An article by Richard Neutra.
(2) Mies van der Rohe. Franco Carpanelli discusses architect Mies van der Rohe and illustrates work carried out by him.

The Architectural Journal, January 24, 1952, pp. 118-124.
Expression in Modern Architecture. Frederick Glibber examines contemporary clichés to see whether they have, in fact, their roots in the expression of function and construction; whether they are being applied in their right context, and whether they are as sensitive in form as possible.

Progressive Architecture, July, 1952, pp. 84-98.
The Architect and his community. The work of the firm Sherlock, Smith and Adams is illustrated in this article which includes a Stadium, a hospital, a church, a factory and several shops.

COMMERCIAL

Progressive Architecture, April, 1952, pp. 84-93.
Office Building in New Orleans, Louisiana. Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill and Claude Hooten, architects. This extremely interesting office building is the home of Pan-American Life Insurance Company and is completely enveloped by a sunshade grillage of aluminium vertical fins and cantilevered canopies that protect all four facades of the six-storey building.

Progressive Architecture, June, 1952, pp. 67-106.
Shopping Centres. A study of shopping centres, the Sites, Land usage, Merchandising, Traffic and parking, Structure, Materials and Current Projects, written and arranged by Victor Gruen and P. Smith.

CONSTRUCTION

Architectural Review, March, 1952, pp. 171-175.
The PROUVE system. The urgent Post-war need in France for easily manufactured and rapidly erected houses has produced a new constructional method of using mass-produced metal components. This system developed by Jean Prouve consists of one or more centrally placed portal frames carrying a spine beam which is supported at either end by a gable beam on columns. The beams join the ends of the gable beams and longitudinal stability is provided by the rigid metal wall panels. Wall and roofing panels consist of double aluminium sheets separated by insulating material supported by a light alloy frame.

The system and components allow for houses varying considerably in size, function and planning. Four buildings showing the Prouve system are illustrated:-

- (1) A Tropical House.
- (2) Factory office at Nancy.
- (3) Maison Metropole.
- (4) Villa at St. Clair.

Progressive Architecture, July, 1952, pp. 125, 127, 129.
Selected details.

- (1) University Ramp in Graduate Commons Project, Harvard University designed by Architects Collaborative.
- (2) Interesting stair detail for Residence. E. and M. Hunter, architects.

DOMESTIC

Progressive Architecture, April, 1952, pp. 116-121.
A home for a couple with four children in San Rafael, California. Architect Henry Hill designs a 175 foot-long house with all major rooms facing south on a long narrow site.

House and Home, March, 1952, pp. 94-103.
Gordon Drake 1917-1952. Gordon Drake died in a blizzard at the age of 34. The Review illustrates various houses designed by Gordon Drake and discusses his place in contemporary architecture.

House and Home, April, 1952, pp. 82-107.
Nine Hillside houses are illustrated, each designed imaginatively to its sloping site:-

- (1) In Sands Point, Long Island, N.Y., by Henry Hebbin.
- (2) A three-level house in West Los Angeles on a hillside site, by A. Gallion and C. Staub.
- (3) On an almost useless site W. Corlett designs an interesting house on an extremely steep narrow slope.
- (4) A mezzanine house on a Minnesota hillside site.
- (5) A house in the air on an edge of Seattle designed by Chiorelli and Kirk.
- (6) In Fayetteville, Arkansas by Ed. Stone and K. Holzing.
- (7) Leafing apartments on a Pacific hillside by K. Lind.
- (8) A split-level house in Palo Alto, California, Architects—A. Quincy Jones.
- (9) A seven-level house on a steep rack in Rye, N.Y. Henry Wright, Architect.

Progressive Architecture, July, 1952, pp. 103-105.
Guest houses with plastic roofs in Sarasota, Florida designed by Twitchell and Rudolph.

GARDENING

Plants Indoors. A special number of the Review covering plants available for cultivation indoors. Articles cover:-

- (1) A history of the origin of the taste for indoor plants by H. F. Clark.
- (2) Cultivation with soil by Margaret Jones.
- (3) Cultivation without soil by H. F. Clark.
- (4) Species by Margaret Jones and H. F. Clark.
- (5) Uses. Article addressed to designers and architects who are now increasingly inclined to use indoor plants for displays and for interiors.

The issue is fully illustrated by numerous drawings by Gordon Cullen.

HOSPITALS

Progressive Architecture, July, 1952, pp. 63-83.
(1) 1,000-bed general hospital in Brooklyn, New York, for the Veterans Administration. Skidmore, Owing and Merrill, architects. The complex comprises nurses and staff residences, the hospital, the laundry and powerhouse unit.
(2) Patient-nurse two-way communication by L. Chandler.
(3) Hospital lighting by Howard Haynes.

HOTELS AND MOTELS

Progressive Architecture, April, 1952, pp. 101-113.
A series of Hotels and Motels are illustrated in this issue.
(1) Hotel Interior: Moorhead, Minnesota. Thorshov and Cerny, Inc., architects.
(2) Resort Hotel: St. George's, Grenada, B.W.I. A. Lewis, Architect.
(3) Motor Court: Green Lake, Wisconsin. Auler, Brian and Wertsch, Inc., architects.
(4) Vacation Motel: Wellfleet, Massachusetts. Saltanall and Morton, architects.

Architectural Review, April, 1952, pp. 251-256.
A club house combining restaurant, night club and small hotel, at Punta Ballena, Uruguay. Antonio Bonet, architect.

INDUSTRIAL

Architectural Review, March, 1952, pp. 143-164.
Brynmarw factory in South Wales. Architects: Co-operative Partnership.
W. P. Jordan gives a critical analysis of the building, which to cover comprehensively, he followed carefully during its constructional progress and kept in constant touch with the architects, the clients and the engineers. Plans and photographs illustrate the factory comprehensively.

INTERIOR DESIGN DATA

Progressive Architecture, July, 1952, pp. 113-124.

- (1) *Patients' Rooms*. Typical double bedroom in Mount Zion hospital, San Francisco, California, designed by M. Pfeuger and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.
- (2) *Patients' Rooms*. Typical single Bedroom, *Crosett* hospital, designed by William Lescaze.

LIBRARIES

Edilizia Moderna, June, 1952, pp. 53-62.

A new library for architects designed by Gilo Darlies. An extremely interesting small library illustrated by means of large photographs many in colour.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Architectural Review, March, 1952, pp. 175-182, 190-195.

- (1) **TIMBER** by M. Rich. The author discusses in this article the five most important techniques of dealing with timber, and their influences on design. The techniques being structural grading, timber connectors, bonding with synthetic adhesives, high frequency heating and stressed skin construction in plywood.
- (2) **PRINTED TEXTILES**: The work of the younger English designers by Douglas Newton.

BOOK REVIEW

Architects' Year Book 4, 1951.

Edited by Jane B. Drew and Tzerov Dannatt, published by Paul Elek, London, 1952, 230 pages, 350 illustrations, 42/-.

Those who are familiar with and found stimulation in the three former issues of the Year Book will certainly not be disappointed with this volume. It carries on the unique policy of architectural journalism together with the fresh and attractive presentation which one has come to expect from this publication. Like the former, too, its range of interest is wide and up to date, and it brings together serious articles on current subjects directly or indirectly affecting architecture. Written as by Critics, Historians, Town Planners and Engineers as well as architects, and supported by illustrations of significant contemporary building, it stands in the van of architectural journalism devoted to the theory and practice of Modern Architecture.

Recent work illustrated includes schools, flats, housing and factories, as well as a comprehensive description of the Royal Festival Hall, together with articles on work in Italy, North and South America. Nann Gain contributes an article on "Constructive Realism" and Denys Sutton on "Painting and Architecture". Town Planning heads a provocative article by Rattray Taylor entitled "The Social Basis of Town Planning", and Freda White discusses the New Towns.

Although this is a stimulating and worthy addition to the series.

SOUTH AFRICAN BUREAU OF STANDARDS STRUCTURAL TIMBER

The Council of the South African Bureau of Standards has recently published the first of the seventeen chapters comprising the Bureau's set of model building regulations. Dealing with structural timber, the chapter is simply and concisely worded and is primarily intended to serve as a guide to local authorities in drawing up their own building

by-laws. But the quantitative and dimensional information given should also prove of great value to architects, engineers, builders and draughtsmen concerned with the use of timber.

Permissible stresses are given for all types of timber as classified in the S.A.B.S. specification for graded South African soft wood timbers or as listed for imported timbers. Conversion factors are given for stresses at an angle to the grain and for stresses in struts of various slenderness ratios. Cutting and notching, relief from concentrated loads near supports, built-up beams and columns, tapering columns and all questions necessary for the scientific design of structural timber members are also considered.

Copies, at 7/6 per copy, are obtainable from the South African Bureau of Standards.

SPECIFICATION FOR EUCALYPTUS (GUM) WOOD BLOCKS FOR FLOORS

Each year, householders in South Africa spend at least £250,000 in replacing timber destroyed in their homes by fungi, termites and other wood destroying insects. This may be ascribed to the fact that in most areas 90 per cent of the timber used in building is still unsatisfactorily treated or untreated despite repeated warnings to the public that the proper impregnation of building timbers constitutes the most effective means of combating this menace to the timber in our homes.

The specification for eucalyptus (gum) wood blocks for floors, recently published by the Council of the South African Bureau of Standards, therefore requires that manufacturers who produce floor blocks in compliance with the specification and wish to obtain permission to apply the S.A.B.S. standardization mark of quality in their products, must furnish evidence that the timber has been pressure-impregnated in accordance with the S.A.B.S. code of practice for the application of timber preservatives.

Dimensions and dimensional tolerances, finish and moisture content are also dealt with in the specification and natural defects limited. Requirements are laid down regarding the processing of timbers, including types of bore, in addition, an appendix contains descriptions of nine types of gum wood, giving details in connection with weight, colour, hardness, durability and texture.

Copies, at 5/- per copy, are obtainable from the South African Bureau of Standards, Private Bag 191, Pretoria.

NOTES AND NEWS

LONDON'S NEW RIVERSIDE PROMENADE

London has acquired a new tourist amenity with the opening of a half-mile long riverside promenade linking Westminster and Waterloo Bridges.

London County Council decided that when the Festival site on the south bank of the Thames was cleared, it should be laid out as a public riverside promenade and open space with gardens and a children's playground.

The whole scheme was due to be completed in July, but the promenade was opened specially for the Easter holiday.

Except during the Festival of Britain last year, this stretch of the bank of the Thames has not been accessible to the public. By the end of the war it had become an area of blitzed and dilapidated buildings with a ragged fringe of

wharves and unsightly sheds. The council's scheme has been made possible by the construction of a new river wall which reclaimed four and a half acres from the river bed.

From points of vantage along the new promenade there is now a fine view of London's skyline with the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's Cathedral, and other buildings on the north bank in bold relief.

The cantilevered viewing platforms in front of the Royal Festival Hall, which were very popular during the Festival, have been retained, and for the time being the Skylon, the famous vertical feature of the South Bank exhibition, still dominates the scene.

On May 24 the Festival Gardens re-opened in Battersea Park and the Festival Hall Pier, formerly called the Rodney Pier is now in use again. The garden layout in the vicinity of the pier and the Thameside Restaurant has also been completed.

PROVINCIAL WORK

LIST OF ACCEPTED TENDERS FOR MAJOR PROVINCIAL SERVICES FOR QUARTER ENDING 31st MARCH, 1952.

SERVICE	ARCHITECTS	QUANTITY SURVEYORS	CONTRACTORS	AMOUNT
Middelburg Primary School. Erection of Hostel.	Messrs. Verhoef, Smit & Viljoen.	Messrs. Barckenhagen & Lauw.	Messrs. Duncan, Elliot & Co. (Pty.) Ltd.	£52,018.17.6
Parkview Senior School. Additions and Alterations.	Messrs. Logan & Firth.	Mr. L. Novis.	Mr. W. H. Gresty.	£14,925.0.0
Boragwenath Hospital. Additions and Alterations.	Messrs. Gordon Leith & Partners.	Departmental.	Messrs. S. J. Elloff & Altman (Pty.) Ltd.	£16,257.0.0
Barberian Intermediate School. Additions.	Departmental.	Departmental.	Messrs. P. J. Joubert Bros.	£6,760.0.0
Vereeniging Hospital. New Native Ward Block.	Messrs. Slegman & Porter.	Messrs. J. B. McIntosh & Partners.	Messrs. River Construction Co. (Pty.) Ltd.	£33,200.0.0
Hape Homes School. Additions.	Messrs. Gordon Leith & Partners.	Messrs. Quail & Quail.	Mr. W. H. Gresty.	£13,559.0.0
Erection of New School at Bethal.	Departmental.	Departmental.	Mr. N. J. Hangelbraek.	£23,750.0.0
Edenvale Hospital. Non-European X-Ray Block.	Departmental.	Departmental.	Mr. F. C. Holtan.	£5,838.0.0
Klerksdorp Hospital. Additions and Alterations to Nurses Home.	Messrs. Cowin & Ellis.	Mr. N. C. Grant.	Mr. H. G. Nolan.	£33,698.0.0
Klerksdorp Hospital. Additions and Alterations to Non-European Operating Theatre.	Messrs. Cowin & Ellis.	Mr. N. W. Lund.	Mr. H. G. Nolan.	£11,387.0.0
Klerksdorp Hospital. Additions to Native Wards.	Messrs. Cowin & Ellis.	Departmental.	Mr. H. G. Nolan.	£16,997.0.0
Pretoria Normal College. Mens' Hostel.	Mr. C. E. Todd.	Messrs. Barckenhagen & Lauw.	Messrs. G. Newlands (Pty.) Ltd.	£77,624.0.0
Krugersdorp Hospital. Erection of Mortuary.	Departmental.	Departmental.	Messrs. Maoiman & Sons.	£2,557.10.0

Journal of the SA Architectural Institute

PUBLISHER:

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

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