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Master of Philosophy in Conservation of the Built Environment

In the School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics

**June 2015**

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**NOSTALGIA AND HERITAGE IN  
KORSTEN, PORT ELIZABETH, 1956 TO 1990**



Figure 1:

'This is Elkana Street, a respectable area in Korsten where children play happily in the street, only metres away from an empty plot that attracts layabouts', *The Herald*, 6 November 1972.

Source: The Herald Newspaper Archive.

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Thank you.

## ABSTRACT

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Nostalgia and Heritage in Korsten, Port Elizabeth, 1956 to 1990

Bryan Wintermeyer

Submitted in January 2015

This study centres on interdisciplinary notions of 'place' (and its structures), the attachment to place, their ordinary and everyday potential heritage resources and the value of nostalgia as a method for engaging with these marginal heritages. The case is a set of values of a group of past users of a series of entertainment structures in Korsten, Port Elizabeth, from 1956 to 1990. Their everyday experience of living in Korsten, together with the trauma of displacement (as a consequence of forced removals) and the nostalgia associated with the joy of an 'era of entertainment' they experienced as young adults in new structures such as grand cinemas and dance halls, is central to addressing the argument of this study.

Three themes were explored through interviews with eight people. These were: the user experience, responses to nostalgia and the nature of the potential heritage resource. The interviews were initiated by open-ended questions that allowed for diversion and storytelling.

The study suggests that past users experience their heritage with what Boym has called 'reflective nostalgia'. This directs the study towards the development of a series of *lieux de memoire* with the intention of aiding the process of remembrance.

Further, I suggest that the use of contemporary heritage resource values be complemented with emerging local and experiential values defined on a case-by-case basis. This allows for the present-day valorisation of place and structures to become a more useful and subtle tool for user experts who, with the supportive role of the professional expert, are better able to define their own heritage.

Keywords: Nostalgia, ordinary and everyday heritage, shared symbolic structures, place attachment.

## CHAPTER ONE

### ARGUMENT, POSITION AND METHOD

Issues of displacement and a rapidly changing physical environment were a defining condition of the 20th century and continue to be one into the 21st century. Coupled with this is an increasing interest in the past and the way it is used in the present, especially by individuals and groups whose heritage has been under-recorded, difficult, or counter to what Smith calls the 'Approved Heritage Discourse'.<sup>1</sup> This sets a backdrop for the increasing prominence of 'small heritages' of the individual and group that often develop alongside those of the dominant heritage environment. This context is currently under critical review and this study is positioned to engage with this.

### SETTING THE SCENE

The theoretical context of this study is the construction of two sets of ideas of heritage: first, those related to the personal and experiential and, second, the use of the past, particularly through nostalgia. It has been noted that users' understanding of a place is largely defined by their personal histories.<sup>2</sup> This is elaborated on and linked to changes in the physical environment: 'loss of cultural identity can be alleviated through the creation of shared symbolic structures that validate, if not actually define social claims to space and time'.<sup>3</sup>

What is the nature of these structures: are they traditionally heritage? Are they significant structures such as town halls, religious structures and commemorative memorials, or can they also be the ordinary, the corner shop, the cinema, the dance hall, or hotel? Are all 'shared symbolic structures' also heritage resources? Can the personal histories of the individual and groups of the case at hand be a starting point in trying to better understand these notions?

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, L (2009): 2.

<sup>2</sup> Hubbard, in Jiven and Larkham (2003): 67–81.

<sup>3</sup> Hubbard, P (1993): 361. Hubbard's term 'shared symbolic structure' is a key term and is elaborated on further in this study.

The physical situation is a geographically small area of urban space between Durban and Highfield Roads in Korsten, a town once outside, but now engulfed by Port Elizabeth. The study examines two former film theatres and a former hotel with an attached dance hall as potential heritage resources. The study uses these structures as an introduction (especially to the interviewees) and allows for elaboration of themes of displacement and nostalgia and for a critical discussion of the role of the ordinary and even mundane as potential shared symbolic structures and further as potential heritage resources.

### **MY POSITION AS THE INSIDER-OUTSIDER OBSERVER**

The origins of this study are in the increasingly questioned nature of heritage, how it is used and valued today and its relationship to individuals and groups – users and ‘claimants’ of heritage. There are various regulatory tools that rely on the notion of the individual or group, such as, a ‘strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group’<sup>4</sup> and the established heritage charters.<sup>5</sup> My interest in nostalgia and how it relates to heritage has been ignited by my personal relationships – my mother-in-law, a past resident of Korsten. She sparked the topic of this study when she described some of her experiences of the places, the people and the period. This makes me, a White architect now married into the group I am describing, an ‘insider-outsider observer’.<sup>6</sup>

There is a potential advantage in both positions. ‘The qualitative researcher’s perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others – to indwell – and at the same time to be aware of how one’s own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand.’<sup>7</sup> Commentary on insider observation identifies the inside observer as ‘part of the community’ and there is the implied idea that the insider is able to retrieve information more completely because of his or her acceptance by the community.

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<sup>4</sup> Republic of South Africa, National Heritage Resources Act, 1999, Section 3.

<sup>5</sup> These are charters developed largely by international heritage regulatory bodies ICOMOS and UNESCO. An interesting recent paper on the charters, their ‘truth’ and the interface of the cultural and material contexts is, Wells, J (2007).

<sup>6</sup> Dwyer, S and Buckle, J (2009). This is position is also elaborated on by Miller, J, Glassner, B (1998): 125 – 139.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid: 55.

Shortcomings of this approach include role conflict, confusion and assumptions. The outsider - observer also has advantages: the advantage of retrieving information apparently without bias because of the perceived 'neutral' position of the outsider is balanced by the potential limits of the information received. Also on the positive side, the insider–outsider can be 'open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of [the] research participants, and committed to representing their experience accurately and adequately'.<sup>8</sup>

### LOCATING THE ARGUMENT

This study is located (and so aligned with its theoretical context) in the contemporary debate about the nature of heritage and an emerging debate about the value of the ordinary and everyday, which is particularly interesting in the context of displacement and rapidly changing physical environments. This debate is highlighted in this study with a discussion on the relationship between the notion of heritage and that of the 'heritage resource' and elaborated on by understanding the memory tool of nostalgia. In this regard the study relies primarily on the positions of Smith, Harvey, Lowenthal and Boym.<sup>9</sup>

A primary underpinning assumption or argument is that *nostalgia can have an important role in the construction of heritage*.

Then, does *nostalgia about the ordinary and everyday have a role in the valorisation of the potential heritage resource*? Is there an argument for an engagement with nostalgia that allows for some structures to be considered 'symbolic' and 'shared' by a group of people?

Finally, are these nostalgically shared and symbolic structures *sufficiently significant in heritage terms* that they can be regarded as heritage resources? Then, if so, do they need deliberate state intervention in order to sustain and protect the memory associated with them?

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid: 59.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, L (2006), Harvey, D (2008), Lowenthal, D (1985) and Boym, S (2001).

## METHOD AND ENQUIRY

The basis of the study is the evidence derived from the case explored, that is, the ordinary and everyday experiences of individuals and groups in Korsten, Port Elizabeth, from 1956 to 1990. It is argued that there is a positive relationship between these feelings and experiences and the structures of everyday use – cinemas, hotels, corner cafés and dance halls, where memorable events unfolded. Three of these structures have been identified – the Reno Theatre, the Alabama Hotel and the Star Theatre.

My access to this case study is through family and professional relationships. I study eight people, all of whom previously lived in Korsten or other forced removal sites like South End or North End. All of them are engaged with the potential heritage structures described and all were forcibly removed to the Northern Areas, where they reside today. Further, all are aged between 60 and 80 and so would have been actively engaging with their built environment as young adults in the 1960s and early 1970s. Significantly, they all share a common nostalgia for the physical location and time period of the study.

A traditional positivist methodology to the valorisation of heritage resources has limitations in not being fully receptive to the subtleties of place-specific memory and tending, rather, towards the monumental and grand narrative of history. Commentators suggest<sup>10</sup> that a critical investigation of heritage should focus instead on ‘personal histories’:

It is towards such small heritages that much attention, policy and practice is focused at present; as confidence in meta-narratives of heritage purpose is being questioned, it is through such small heritages that an answer may be at hand.<sup>11</sup>

Flyvbjerg supports the notion that participants are user experts (as opposed to professional experts) and are able to provide valuable context-dependant evidence and that, ‘context

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<sup>10</sup> Such as Hubbard, P (1993).

<sup>11</sup> Harvey, D (2008): 20.

dependant knowledge and experience are at the very heart of expert activity'.<sup>12</sup> He notes that case studies are rooted in the everyday and are important for their 'nuanced view' of reality.

After all, man is, in his ordinary way, a very competent knower, and a qualitative common-sense knowing is not replaced by quantitative knowing ... This is not to say that such common sense naturalistic observation is objective, dependable, or unbiased. But it is all that we have. It is the only route to knowledge – noisy, fallible, and biased though it may be.<sup>13</sup>

Further, he rejects the notion that case studies do not lend themselves to generalisation (as opposed to, say, theoretical knowledge) and argues that carefully chosen case studies are valuable.

One can often generalize on the basis of a single case, and the case study may be central to scientific development via generalization as supplement or alternative to other methods. But formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas 'the force of example' is underestimated.<sup>14</sup>

Although in this study this 'force of example' relates specifically to a particular group of users, a particular period and a particular place, the position of generalisation is supported where the argument of the study as well as the findings could have wider implications for others experiencing displacement and rapid change. This is a position that could add credibility and methodological depth to the study in looking at the key ideas from the scale of the singular case study, with its local experts giving a 'noisy, fallible and nuanced' view; as well as a view from a

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<sup>12</sup> Flyvbjerg, B (2006): 5.

<sup>13</sup> Campbell, in Flyvbjerg, B (2006): 7. This quote raises some interesting notions about the nature of the participant (the competent knower) and qualitative information. Also, Standford, in support of this, differentiates between the historical event, the evidence of the event (usually the primary information) and the historical knowledge of the event, which is constructed from the evidence. Standford also, in support of the notion of the 'competent knower', raises a notion in discussing the role of the historian he terms the 'imaginative or extended type', where, 'Knowledge of a historical event ... may take on a very different significance according to the context in which is placed', 'knowledge of the past has come through one or more minds, has been thereby 'processed.' Standford, M (1986): 80 - 81.

<sup>14</sup> Flyvbjerg, B (2006): 12.

distance that is able to assemble a contemporary theoretical position that allows for broader application.

Stake would describe this study as an 'instrumental case study', that, in addition to being a description of experience may also provide insight into an issue. 'The case is often looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, but this helps us pursue the external interest. The case may be seen as typical of others.'<sup>15</sup> He elaborates on this notion by describing the value of a case study not only being about the particular and specific case at hand but also being about what is common – 'case study can usefully be seen as a small step towards grand generalization'.<sup>16</sup>

Eight individuals – three males and five females, between 60 and 80 – were interviewed for the study. The individuals and groups who participated identify themselves as Coloured and Indian. Their current occupations vary including a newspaper journalist, teachers, receptionists and retirees. Their common ground is their experiences of growing up in Korsten or other mixed suburbs such as South End and North End and their experiences of frequenting the entertainment places of the time, particularly the three potential heritage resources described.

I met with four of them individually and four of them as a group. This proved to be useful in getting a wide range of information (provided largely in a storytelling format). The four individual interviews took place at the interviewees' place of employment and each lasted about one hour formally, followed by some additional informal conversation. The format involved me asking largely open-ended questions and then allowing for storytelling and diversions. In some cases, such as the group interview, it became evident that the specific questions were less important than the time allowed for nostalgic recollection.

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<sup>15</sup> Stake, R (1994): 237. Stake describes three types of study: intrinsic, instrumental and collective. The intrinsic case study is used to better understand a specific case as a discussion of human experience and the collective is a study of several cases to better understand a phenomenon.

<sup>16</sup> Campbell in Ibid: 238.

The group interview took place at the home of one of the interviewees and was attended by two additional people who chose not to be formally interviewed or recorded. All interviewees, with the exception of Interviewee Eight, were filmed by a colleague,<sup>17</sup> a technique that proved to be valuable in reviewing the interviews and helped with understanding comments in context and in relation to body and facial expression. It also allowed for accuracy in quoting and depth of interpretation. All interviewees agreed with the terms of the Ethics Clearance form (see attached). I emailed my proposed questions to two individuals and to the group beforehand (see attached). I also spoke to and corresponded with some of the participants, such as Interviewee One, before and after to the interview to get further information. Interviewees Three and Eight brought photograph albums to the interviews for me to look at and I have included some of the photographs in the study. The interviewees are not identified by name (see attached).

### **LIMITATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

There are several limitations to this exploration. The focus of the argument is theoretical and exploratory in nature. It is suggested that the single case study is neither a methodological nor a contextual limitation, but rather that there is an argument for the ability of the 'instrumental case study' to allow for some generalisation. The relatively short period and limited interview process of the study is a function of the limited nature of this as a 60-credit mini dissertation.

### **OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS**

Chapter Two, 'The Monumental and the Everyday', elaborates briefly on the contemporary debate about the nature of heritage. Chapter Three, 'Is it useful to Remember the Good Times', makes a case for the role of nostalgia in heritage. Chapter Four, 'The 'Native' Free State and its Small Heritages', gives context to the case study. Chapter Five, 'Stories of Days Gone By', describes the case study. Chapter Six, 'Interpreting the Evidence – Valorisation of the Everyday', interprets these discussions within the context of the preceding chapters and suggests some

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<sup>17</sup> The interviews were filmed by filmmaker Mikale Barry.

points of confluence. Finally, in Chapter Seven, 'Conclusions', some tentative findings are noted.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### THE MONUMENTAL AND THE EVERYDAY

#### A STARTING POINT

The starting point for this argument is located in two places: the philosophical positions of space, as described by Lefebvre, and the notion of 'place attachment' found in Environmental Psychology.

Space and time do not exist universally. As they are socially produced, they can only be understood in the context of a specific society. In this sense, space and time are not only relational but fundamentally historical. This calls for an analysis that would include the social constellations, power relations and conflicts relevant in each situation.<sup>18</sup>

Here the notions of 'specific society', of a 'fundamental historicity' and of space and time being socially produced are a starting point for this study. Notions of the specific society reaffirm the methodological decision to emphasise the potential of the 'small heritages' through the interview process. The focus on this social construct is further reinforced by the fact that 'central to Lefebvre's materialist theory are human beings in their corporeality and sensuousness, their thinking and their ideologies; human beings who enter into relationships with each other through their activity and practice'.<sup>19</sup> This brief introductory position raises opportunities to identify notions of the intrinsic interconnectedness of the production of social and material space of the physical (built) and the everyday (social). This, in turn, directs the study towards the relationship among social practice, its space and (for the purposes of this study) the structures of this space.

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<sup>18</sup> Lefebvre in Highmore (2002): 29.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid: 29.

The discourse of place attachment and its relationship to the individual and group is located largely in Environmental Psychology and makes a valuable contribution to furthering the argument of this study Milligan is critical of sociologists that do not study space as a variable because of the concerns of 'geographical determinism' and that 'space does not determine interaction, but shapes, constrains and influences it'.<sup>20</sup> Rather, it is suggested that place attachment does this by extending the philosophical notions of Lefebvre of a socially produced space that is temporally located and connected to a specific community, to an argument for the increasing importance of place in psychological terms in describing a sense of identity.

According to this notion, place is an 'active construction of identity' rather than simply a backdrop.<sup>21</sup> It seems that this situation is made most evident in environments of rapid change and displacement and there is a general understanding that place attachment 'is a positive experience, encouraging both stability and growth at an individual level, providing a person-environment relationship which is conducive to physical and psychological well-being'.<sup>22</sup> Place attachment can be seen as an intermediary between the psychological experiential and the spatial experiential and in this a key notion of this study.

## HERITAGE AS A DISCIPLINE

The work of Smith, Harvey and Charters from the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is pertinent in relation to challenges in defining the various components of heritage over the past forty years.<sup>23</sup> Smith's position is that contemporary heritage practice is hegemonic and elitist<sup>24</sup>. She elaborates on this observation by describing an 'Authorized Heritage Discourse', which, 'developed in Western Europe in the 19th century, directly flows out

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<sup>20</sup> Milligan, M (2003): 382.

<sup>21</sup> Twigger-Ross, Uzzel (2006): 218.

<sup>22</sup> Speller (2000): 2.

<sup>23</sup> In this regard, the summary document by ICCROM, Jokilehto, J, 'Definition of Cultural Heritage: References to Documents in History', *ICCROM Working Group 'Heritage and Society'* (2005): 1 – 47, accessed 20 July 2014, [http://cif.icomos.org/pdf\\_docs/Documents%20on%20line/Heritage%20definitions.pdf](http://cif.icomos.org/pdf_docs/Documents%20on%20line/Heritage%20definitions.pdf), is valuable.

<sup>24</sup> Smith, L (2009): 2.

of the agitation of archaeologists and architects for the protection of material culture they deemed to be of innate and inheritable value', and

focuses attention on aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places and/or landscapes that current generations must care for, protect and revere so that they may be passed to nebulous future generations for their 'education' and to forge a sense of common identity based on the past.<sup>25</sup>

She is critical of this tendency in heritage practice as it reinforces hegemonic societal positions, tends to assimilate and create singular versions of the past and is largely constructed by the professional expert. This tends to exclude difference and 'other voices'. This leads Smith to suggest provocatively that heritage is a 'subjective political negotiation of identity, place and memory' and that, 'all heritage is intangible'.<sup>26</sup> Elaborating on this statement, Smith writes, 'in stressing the intangibility of heritage, however, I am not dismissing the tangible ... but simply de-privileging and de-naturalizing it as the self evident form and essence of heritage.'<sup>27</sup> Reinforcing this further, she writes, 'the sites themselves are cultural tools that can facilitate, but are not necessarily vital for this process'.<sup>28</sup>

There is a notable and growing schism between the definition of heritage by established international bodies such as ICOMOS and UNESCO and that by more recent commentators from a critical heritage position. The notion of critical heritage has recently formalised with the creation of the international body, the Association of Critical Heritage Studies. Its manifesto raises several of its primary ideas:

Above all, we want you to critically engage with the proposition that heritage studies needs to be rebuilt from the ground up, which requires the 'ruthless criticism of everything existing. Heritage is, as much as anything, a political act and

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid: 2.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, L (2006): 3.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid: 3.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid: 44.

we need to ask serious questions about the power relations that 'heritage' has all too often been invoked to sustain. Nationalism, imperialism, colonialism, cultural elitism, Western triumphalism, social exclusion based on class and ethnicity, and the fetishising of expert knowledge have all exerted strong influences on how heritage is used, defined and managed. We argue that a truly critical heritage studies will ask many uncomfortable questions of traditional ways of thinking about and doing heritage, and that the interests of the marginalized and excluded will be brought to the forefront when posing these questions.<sup>29</sup>

This statement is a reaction to and deliberate criticism of the existing criteria, largely set by ICOMOS and UNESCO and presented in the charters. For example, a 2009 document, sponsored by ICOMOS reinforces the validity of 20<sup>th</sup> century heritage management built on the charters, criticising a range of moves that appear to direct heritage management away from the spirit of the Venice Charter (of 1964). For example, there is criticism of the more recent Burra Charter's use of the word 'place' rather than 'monument' and a statement that it 'would be advisable to forget as quickly as possible' the 'Malta Discussion Paper', which describes 'tolerance to change'.<sup>30</sup> In this schism there is an opportunity to undertake a heritage exercise (such as this study) as this allows for a study situated in the widening debate about the nature of heritage, the heritage resource and notions of value, particularly with regard to marginal potential heritage resources of the ordinary and everyday.

When responding to the challenge of positioning heritage, as Smith has, there is an important distinction to be made between the heritage discourse and the heritage resource. The discourse is a much contested and expanding arena encompassing a range of concepts about the past (it is not a 'thing'<sup>31</sup>), and the resource is a 'thing' – physical and spatially located, with a temporal character, and useful in making cultural and social processes tangible. This study

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<sup>29</sup> Smith, L, Campbell, G, 'Association of Critical Heritage Studies Manifesto', Association of Critical Heritage Studies, accessed 02 November 2014, [criticalheritagestudies.org/site-admin/site-content/about-achs](http://criticalheritagestudies.org/site-admin/site-content/about-achs). In describing structures and places in terms of contemporary heritage values, '... preservation practitioners routinely overlook the values of the local population instead exert their profession's expert judgements in determining which places have historical significance.' Wells, J (2011): 13.

<sup>30</sup> Pezet, M (2009):10-11.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, L (2006): 2.

challenges both the provocative position of Smith and the counter position of ICOMOS. The de-privileging of the physical heritage resource and the wariness about paternalistic empowerment in heritage discourse is supported conceptually. But the inclusion of the real and valid value of the heritage resource (arguably always physical and sometimes a structure such as a building) to the debate, I believe, creates a richer and appropriate context in which the actions of heritage can be played out in.

Harvey elaborates on this interest in redefining the nature of heritage: 'Heritage itself is not a thing and does not exist by itself – nor does it imply a movement or a project. Rather, heritage is the process by which people use the past – a 'discursive construction' with 'material consequences' ... It is a value-laden concept, related to the processes of economic and cultural co-modification, but intrinsically reflective of a relationship with the past, however that past is perceived and defined.'<sup>32</sup>

Harvey's definition is similar to that of Smith in its 'de-privileging' of the physical artefact and its notion of 'a process' to be used in the present, but he inserts notions of materiality and the role of the physical by mentioning 'material consequences'. This is significant for the development of the argument of this study, which is focused on the material consequences. This is not to discount the potential for heritage to be discussed without the associated physical heritage resource. But, the relationship between heritage and the heritage resource is an appropriate starting debate for this study, whose focus is on the material consequences of the heritage of the ordinary and everyday.

The notion of a 'discursive construction' is a reference to the discourse-centred nature of critical heritage studies. Smith is critical of the constructive, discursive nature of contemporary heritage studies, describing it as 'a hegemonic discourse about heritage, which acts to constitute the way we think, talk and write about heritage'.<sup>33</sup> How is this done? Elaborating, Smith refers to the relationships between power and knowledge. Primary to this is the notion that first the key role players use the discourse, then the discourse uses them. These key role

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<sup>32</sup> Harvey, D (2008), 19 – 20.

<sup>33</sup> Smith, L (2006): 11.

players are typically professional ‘experts’, institutions and authority bodies. She is critical of this and identifies the discourse as a collection of skills and expertise that are organised and controlled in a certain way and ‘deal with the construction and representation of knowledge’.<sup>34</sup> In doing so, it ‘not only reflects social meanings, relations and entities, it also constitutes and governs them’<sup>35</sup>

This notion of the relationship between experts (user and professional) and discourse can be applied to this particular case study and its context. The current dominant authorized heritage discourse in Port Elizabeth largely follows Smith’s earlier description of the ‘protection of material culture’ of ‘innate and inheritable value’. Only very recently have the more comfortable and acceptable histories of Afrikaner and English Settlers been supplemented by new historical knowledge. A telling example of this is the recently published, *Pillars of Korsten and New Brighton*, by the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality. The intention behind the publication in September 2014 of this limited edition publication, which is the product of a much longer process acknowledging well-known people in Korsten and New Brighton, is ‘to fill the void in local history of Port Elizabeth’. The publication describes places and their people who ‘contributed handsomely to the development and growth of Port Elizabeth’.<sup>36</sup>

Until recently, the story of Port Elizabeth’s past has been rich in tales of the adventurous and pioneering spirit of the Settlers and the material consequences such as civic structures and farmhouses, to the degree that this has become the dominant heritage story of the city. The notion of the pioneering Settler and his Architecture has become the constructed and representative knowledge of all of Port Elizabeth, to the extent that it starts to inform the user (often the expert heritage practitioner or Architect) so that potentially overly significant value is ascribed to the approximately 4 000 English settlers who arrived from 1820 onwards, to the detriment of a host of other significant events. In this way, the discourse becomes self-referential and

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid: 14.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid: 14.

<sup>36</sup> Skinner, Y (2014): 3. This is a good example of heritage studies being ‘rebuilt from the bottom up’ as suggested in the manifesto of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies as a project undertaken by two local libraries with local community structures.

simultaneously draws on and naturalizes certain narratives and cultural and social experiences often linked to ideas of nation and nationhood. Embedded in this discourse are a range of assumptions about the innate and immutable cultural values of heritage that are linked to and defined by the concepts, of monumentality and aesthetics.<sup>37</sup>

In the context of present day Port Elizabeth, a potentially broader and looser understanding of heritage is useful and allows for inclusiveness and less non-discursive practice. In contrast, it is argued that the definition of the heritage resource could be narrower and firmer, with clearer operational methods (such as law) to manage these resources. The notion of broadening the understanding would allow for a more inclusive understanding of the use of the past and would identify and promote the production of historical knowledge where there are gaps.

If heritage is a 'discursive construction with material consequences'<sup>38</sup>, how does it manifest itself physically? A premise of this study is that the physical heritage resource of the ordinary and everyday has a positive role to play in heritage and that a more careful interrogation of this, its components and emerging values may extend the current value-based understanding of the heritage resource. This will allow for a more localised and case-specific approach to assessing value, which would encourage more subtle discussions about value. It is argued that these material consequences could highlight largely undervalued significances such as the social, the experiential and use, all under the theoretical position of increased value of the ordinary and everyday.

The terms 'historic monument', 'cultural heritage' and 'heritage resource' and their changing use and meaning in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries reflect the changing approach to heritage as it is described by the charters. Commentators locate an early position on this in the work of Reigl, notably, *The Cult of the Historic Monument*. It is valuable to highlight Reigl's notion of the intended (or 'deliberate') and unintended monument. The deliberate monument is erected

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<sup>37</sup> Smith, L (2006):4.

<sup>38</sup> Harvey, D (2008): 19 – 20.

with the intention to commemorate and its value is defined at its erection, where the unintended monument is given value in today's terms. Unintended monuments 'were not erected with the purpose of commemorating any specific event or person but [are] still monuments in their irreplaceable value for modern man'.<sup>39</sup> Where the intentional monument is concerned with memory and truth, the unintentional monument takes on a richer and more relative position that allows for differences in interpretation. 'Not purposely built as monuments, they are found in the inflated realm of heritage as 'historical objects' that reject a transparent presence in preference for an obscured and distant past.'<sup>40</sup> This powerful distinction is also drawn by Choay

The purpose of the monument is to bring to life a past engulfed by time. The historic monument has a different relationship to living memory and the passage of time. On the one hand, it is simply constituted as an object of knowledge and integrated into a linear conception of time ... on the other hand, as a work of art it can address itself to our artistic sensibility ... in this case it becomes a constitute part of our lived present.<sup>41</sup>

Choay describes two sets of values, as defined by Reigl – the commemorative, linked to the memory and past and, secondly, the present day. In describing the commemorative, she highlights the notion of age value, which possesses a 'universal validity' separate from an historical value, which is based on historical knowledge. In contrast, the present day has an 'art value' (further divided into 'relative' and 'newness') and a 'use value'. These values often conflict such as age and newness, but Reigl suggests that they are not incompatible. Rather they are 'amenable to compromise, negotiable on a case by case basis, depending upon the condition of a given monument and the social and cultural context in which it is placed'.<sup>42</sup>

Choay believes that this suggestion, made by Reigl at the turn of the 20th century, was not fully taken up in 1931 by the Athens Charter.

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<sup>39</sup> Arrhenius, T (2012):52.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid: 52.

<sup>41</sup> Choay (2001): 13.

<sup>42</sup> Choay (2001): 114.

In contrast, some commentators have argued that the Athens Charter was largely based on ‘scientism’ – the promise of science – and the notion of truth which was directed largely at the materiality of the heritage resource and was thus exclusionary and focused mainly on a singular approach.<sup>43</sup> Reigl’s position of relative values and case-by-case analysis allows for a more variable context for valorisation in the present day and, in turn, a more meaningful engagement with the past.

UNESCO and ICOMOS use a range of terms, such as ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘intangible heritage’,<sup>44</sup> but offer no clear definition of the term ‘heritage’. It is cultural heritage that is at the core of the work of the charters and its arguments about approaches to conservation.<sup>45</sup> Cultural heritage is a comparable notion to what is termed in the Venice Charter an ‘historic monument’ and, arguably, in this study, as a ‘heritage resource’. The Venice Charter of 1964, describes cultural heritage in this way:

Imbued with a message from the past, the historic monuments of generations of people remain to the present day as living witnesses to their age-old traditions. People are becoming more and more conscious of the unity of human values and regard ancient monuments as a common heritage. The common responsibility to safeguard them for future generations is recognized. It is our duty to hand them on in the full richness of their authenticity.<sup>46</sup>

The term ‘cultural heritage’ is used quite extensively, its definition changing over time. For example, in 1989 UNESCO defined it as

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<sup>43</sup> Wells, J (2007): 7-8.

<sup>44</sup> Defined as ‘... the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage’. UNESCO (2003): 1 – 2.

<sup>45</sup> Ahmad, Y (2006): 292 – 300.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid: 17.

the entire corpus of material signs – either artistic or symbolic – handed on by the past to each culture and, therefore, to the whole of humankind. As a constituent part of the affirmation and enrichment of cultural identities, as a legacy belonging to all humankind, the cultural heritage gives each particular place its recognizable features and is the storehouse of human experience. The preservation and the presentation of the cultural heritage are therefore a corner-stone of any cultural policy.<sup>47</sup>

Other charters describe the notion of ‘cultural heritage’ in similar ways – as the protection of material culture with intrinsic value and as sites and structures that current generations must look after and pass onto future generations.<sup>48</sup> These definitions highlight some common themes of the charters such as the innate materiality of cultural heritage, the notion of the responsibility of patrimony, legacy and notions of universal identity. These are issues that are contested by commentators like Choay<sup>49</sup>, who criticises the notion of patrimony, and Smith, who broadly criticises cultural heritage’s need for ‘universalness’.

Five years after the definition above, the Nara Document of Authenticity noted that ‘values attributed to heritage ... differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture’, and that ‘the respect due to all cultures requires that cultural heritage must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which it belongs’.<sup>50</sup> This notion of cultural heritage (or the heritage resource) being valued by a specific, recognised group is a central assumption of this study.

Can values be universal and intrinsic to an object or structure? Can values be inheritable? The National Trust in the United Kingdom describes the ‘[v]alue inherent in heritage, the benefit derived from heritage products for their existence value and for their own sake’.<sup>51</sup> Milligan, in a review of patterns of valorisation and reasons for preservation in America, comments on a tendency in the preservation movement to ‘save everything’, noting that ‘the answer is often

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid: 4 – 5.

<sup>48</sup> Smith, L (2009): 2.

<sup>49</sup> Choay, F (1992).

<sup>50</sup> ICOMOS, ‘The Nara Document of Authenticity’ (1994).

<sup>51</sup> The National Trust (2006): 11.

that the historic built environment is felt to be inherently significant and worthy of preservation. For these individuals, that environment gains importance through its very existence.<sup>52</sup> In her review she describes how ideas of 'history' or 'patterns of history' are used to legitimate the goal of saving as much as possible. The intrinsic or inherent value of built heritage resources, as described in these United Kingdom and American examples, are the product of influential movements within international heritage management and the development of an international standards that are being questioned.

A central part of the contemporary debate about the nature of heritage relates to the position of intrinsic, stable, extraordinary, monumental, timeless and universal values; balanced against the position of relative values, which are changeable, locally specific, ordinary and non-monumental. 'Universality – the assumption that some heritage is meaningful to all of mankind – is one of the basic assumptions and matters of faith underlying conservation practice,<sup>53</sup> but 'universality warrants closer critical attention. There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that local place and community bound values... are a more important impulse behind conservation.<sup>54</sup> This counter position is supported by this study as an appropriate way of discussing the heritage of the ordinary and everyday of this case study.

### **ISSUES OF 'THE COMMUNITY'**

Who is the specific, recognised group? An argument of this study is that rather than identifying the individuals and groups of people of the case study as 'a community' or 'the community' or 'the Coloured community' or the 'so-called Coloured community', there is validity in identifying them as individuals or even as 'heritage claimants'. Perhaps for ease of description the individuals can, together, be considered the specific and recognised group that is engaging with the heritage of this study. Smith and Waterton are critical of the misuse and popular over-use of the term 'community' in heritage discourse.<sup>55</sup> They see it as a term used largely by the

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<sup>52</sup> Milligan, M (2007): 106.

<sup>53</sup> Avrami, E, Mason, R, de la Torre, M (2000): 69-70.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid: 69.

<sup>55</sup> Waterton, E, Smith, L (2010): 4.

approved heritage discourse to describe the 'other', usually minority interest groups, in an effort to reduce the nuances and differences between groups of individuals to more manageable homogenous components. The word 'community' is often used to describe the 'undeveloped' and 'underdeveloped', and has a nostalgic quality in its association with the past, cohesiveness and certainty. This is in contrast to the uncertainty of the fast-changing and 'modern' present.<sup>56</sup> In this definition there is a widening gap between the 'community' and individuals who are seen as independent thinkers, able to engage with the present and have no need for nostalgia. The community and its nostalgia for tradition (its 'habits of the past') is increasingly seen as comfortably old-fashioned in contrast to the contemporary individual, without the sometimes perceived negative associations of tradition.

Within the South African context this extends logically to race and class, where there could be an argument for a generalisation that identifies the wealthy, White elite as contemporary and independent and poor Black and Coloured people as communities 'held back' by habits of the past.

With reference to issues of identity and community, Trotter describes 'commemorative narrative identity' in forced removal environments in Cape Town as a method of collective nostalgia that has an important emotional, archival, aesthetic, social and political function in helping communities deal with trauma. In using this narrative, common positive themes of collective nostalgia are highlighted and differences downplayed.<sup>57</sup> Harvey elaborates on this, calling this an 'identity model' in which 'group members feel bound by a collective – and simplified – identity to which they conform' and 'it also blends each individual member of a group into a blander, homogenous collective' that is linked to 'dominant understandings' of the community.<sup>58</sup> There are many benefits for the community in employing this tactic (consciously or not). It creates increased feelings of a single collective voice and it highlights notions of unity against a common opponent and allows this unified collective authority in attending to and commenting on matters of importance. In this way, although there is acknowledged reluctance

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid: 7.

<sup>57</sup> Trotter, H (2009): 49-78.

<sup>58</sup> Waterton, E, Smith, L (2010): 10.

to construct 'Coloured identity' as a reductive package, there is acknowledgement of its usefulness.

There are also advantages for the elite (often an authority) in promoting this strategy. The collection of divergent individuals and groups into reductive packages allows for simplistic 'grand narratives' in the construction of national identity and nationhood. This packaging and construction of 'community' downplays the expressive ability of the individual and simplifies the complexities of the 'underdeveloped'. It allows for a construction of the past that favours the elite and generalises the marginalised. Just such thinking resulted in the enactment of the Population Registration and Group Areas Act in South Africa in 1950.

### **ISSUES OF THE EXPERIENCE OF PLACE**

I argue that 'place' has a wider meaning than a word like 'site'. Site refers to constructed, geographically located positions that suggest architecture or archaeology. Place allows for wider discussion and becomes a 'category of thought and a constructed reality ... a central aspect of 'heritage''.<sup>59</sup> What is described is the nature of heritage and the role (and value) of the physical heritage resource. Place also allows for the potential revaluation of the heritage resource in terms largely under-described in common heritage practice, where the understood set of values created by Reigl and modified since, may be significantly widened to include a range of emergent, localised values. This is not to discount the established values defined by the charters nor values related specifically to aesthetics, but it does suggest an awareness of value being described far more broadly. One of these emergent, localised values is the notion of place and attachment to place.

So, what does it mean to be attached to place? It has been said that this 'involves critical historic dimensions that give this environment a temporal depth of meaning. Autobiographical insideness embraces not only the place of the present but also a series of remembered places.'<sup>60</sup> Place attachment is, first, historical and this gives meaning; second, there is the

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<sup>59</sup> Smith, L (2006): 74.

<sup>60</sup> Speller, Lyons, Twigger-Ross (2002): 42.

identification of the personal ('autobiographical insideness'), which references small heritages, and third, it can be used to mediate between the present and the past.

If meaning is found in 'temporal depth' there is an argument that there is a range of tools, triggers and resources that facilitates this meaning. For the purpose of this study, nostalgia is seen as a tool, the heritage resource as an important role player and the trauma of displacement as a powerful trigger in exposing meaning.

How are these emotional attachments to place achieved and what is the value of understanding them? Some commentators identify Graumann's modes of identification as a starting point. Graumann identifies the symbolic value of place and 'things' as important, stating that '[u]ltimately, there is no social identity which is not also place related and thing related.'<sup>61</sup> His elaboration on this is a significant position that elevates the role of place in the contemporary debate about the nature of heritage. Identity Process Theory is a tool for describing the various components of this process, which includes notions of identity, self-esteem, self-efficacy, continuity and distinctiveness. It is suggested that where these values are strong and well distributed there is a strong identification with place and where they are weak and scattered, there is a weaker identification with place.<sup>62</sup>

Hubbard links the experiential values of Environmental Psychology and the debate on the nature of heritage in *The Value of Conservation: A Critical Review of Behavioural Research*. Describing a review of individual and group behaviour related to heritage with an emphasis on the experiential, Hubbard provides insight into the nature of heritage, from the critical heritage perspective. 'The value of an awareness of the past is beyond doubt, but the reasons why we conserve are not so clear – there is little research about this aspect of our daily lives and yet to preserve effectively, we must know what is being preserved, for whom, and why.'<sup>63</sup> Hubbard links the experiential with a 'sense of place', noting that the built environment is important for 'stabilizing group identities' and that the '[d]emolition of prominent social or public buildings

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid: 36.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid: 43 – 44.

<sup>63</sup> Parkes and Thrift in, Hubbard, P (1993): 361.

can have a deep seated effect on a community ... and erases memories of its heritage for the majority of its present and future inhabitants.’<sup>64</sup> Can the structures described in this study be considered these prominent symbolic buildings (shared symbolic structures) and is their existence linked to nostalgic memory?

### **SUMMARY – THE ORDINARY AND EVERYDAY IN HERITAGE**

A composite position is identified here, starting with a statement of space and place. These are seen as being a valid, appropriate starting point for the development of an argument for the relationship between individuals and groups and their structures. These structures can become shared and symbolic and may become heritage resources through a process of valorisation. From this point, it is argued that a wider range of values, particularly those related to the experiential and to the notion of place need to be considered. The relationship between heritage and the experiential is seen as an under-explored position of increasing contemporary relevance.

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid: 366.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IS IT USEFUL TO REMEMBER THE GOOD TIMES?

How does the relationship between the individual or group and the structure develop and what are the socio-psychological factors that allow for this? There is a rich debate about the nature and use of memory and some of the notions are useful to the argument of this study. Among these are Nora's 'true memory' and the need for *lieux de memoire*; Halbwach's 'collective memory'; trauma and a fear of loss of memory, as described by Huyssen; and nostalgia described by Boym.

### MEMORY STUDIES

Halbwachs argues that all remembering relies on the dynamics of groups such as families, social classes, and religious communities. An individual's social interactions with the members of his or her groups determine how one remembers experiences from the past and what it is that he or she remembers.<sup>65</sup>

Further, Halbwachs focuses on particular types of memories – those of lived experiences and important moments of the past. Like Nora, Halbwachs believes the lived collective memory is rich in detail, authentic and valid.<sup>66</sup> Huyssen describes a modern obsession with memory that has developed because of a fear of forgetting, described as 'musealisation', which is separated from the museum and is part of every aspect of life so that 'memory and musealisation together are called upon to provide a bulwark against obsolescence and disappearance, to counter our deep anxiety about the speed of change and the ever shrinking horizons of time and space.'<sup>67</sup> This viewpoint emphasises the lived experience (like Nora's 'true memory') and its relationship to the individual and the specific group. Further, the 'modern obsession of memory' and the need for formal structure (like the need for *lieux de memoire*) as security

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<sup>65</sup> Russell, N (2006): 796.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid: 797.

<sup>67</sup> Huyssen, A (2003): 23.

against rapid change are a strong underlying theme of this study. The collective nostalgic memory of a specific group of a particular time and place becomes an important experiential package.

Nora expands on Halbwachs's notions and raises two further concepts of memory – the nature of contemporary memory, which is *constructed and replaces* 'true' memory<sup>68</sup>, and the need for the *lieux de mémoire* (sites of memory).<sup>69</sup> Nora separates contemporary memory (also called 'modern'), memory that is institutionalised, elite, belongs to the planner and is preserved in archives, and 'true' memory (also called 'traditional'), which is ingrained, unspoken and part of everyday life.<sup>70</sup>

*Lieux de mémoire* originates with the sense that there is no spontaneous memory, that we must deliberately create archives ... the defence, by certain minorities, of a privileged memory that has retreated to jealously protected enclaves in this sense intensely illuminates the truth of *lieux de mémoire* – that without commemorative vigilance, history would soon sweep them away. We buttress our identities upon such bastions, but if what they defended were not threatened, there would be no need to build them.<sup>71</sup>

Here Nora asserts that contemporary memory is an overwhelming force and true memory has retreated to a point where it becomes necessary to construct archives actively in the present. Using oral history testimony these true memories can deliberately be brought to the surface. This can be strengthened by the creation of symbolic *lieux de memoire* in the present. In describing this method, Trotter uses the ideas of 'official' and 'counter' transcripts, with particular reference to the position of the institutionalised (and planned) memory of authority and the way the establishment of this memory, with its rationalisations and official nature, encourages the development of a hidden (or counter) transcript, especially with regard to

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<sup>68</sup> Harvey, D (2001): 326.

<sup>69</sup> Nora, P (2001): 12.

<sup>70</sup> Harvey, D (2001): 326.

<sup>71</sup> Nora, P (2001): 12.

marginal memories and heritages.<sup>72</sup> 'Instead of passively accepting the word of the elites, subordinates construct narratives that embody their real hopes and longings as well as a different understanding of their subjugated status.'<sup>73</sup> Through the oral history process in environments of displacement and trauma like those of the forced removals of Cape Town explored by Trotter and Field, it is these constructed narratives that highlight the need for *lieux de memoire*. During the limited interviews undertaken for this study all interviewees were very willing to engage with me and there was a sense that what they had to say was important and valid. There was a notable need to describe in detail a particular space and time.

### WHAT ABOUT NOSTALGIA?

According to Boym, 'nostalgia appears to be a longing for a place but it is actually a yearning for a different time', adding that 'nostalgia is about the relationship between individual biography and the biography of groups or nations, between personal and collective memory.'<sup>74</sup> Nostalgia, she avers, 'is frequently used dismissively'.<sup>75</sup> Lowenthal elaborates on this critical view, writing: 'Critics mock nostalgia's kitschy absurdities and deplore its enervation of present endeavour, its lack of faith in the future; it is put down as the 'most fashionable of palliatives for the spiritually deprived.'<sup>76</sup>

Is nostalgia's engagement with the past a negative practice? Lowenthal believes that it potentially alienates people from the present and does not allow for problem solving in the present and the future. Boym describes nostalgia in more detail from the perspective of the experience of rapid change and displacement in contemporary Russia and Eastern Europe.<sup>77</sup> That 'nostalgia is to memory as kitsch is to art'<sup>78</sup> is relevant to this study, which is largely about

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<sup>72</sup> Trotter, H (2009): 52 - 54.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid: 53.

<sup>74</sup> Boym, S (2007): 7-18

<sup>75</sup> Boym, S (2001): xiv.

<sup>76</sup> Lowenthal, D (1985): 12.

<sup>77</sup> Boym describes how, at the demise of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, there was a 'memory boom – a confrontation with history' created by citizens having access to a vast amount of historical knowledge of the past in the form of secret documentation. This quickly turned to nostalgia for the 'great Russia' as 'nostalgia can involve forgetting trauma'. Lambert, C (2001):1.

<sup>78</sup> Maier in, Boym, S (2001), xiv.

'kitsch', the opposite of the monumental. The study is about the value judgements made by individuals and groups, their everyday practice and its engagement with marginal potential heritage structures. These value judgements should not be seen as less valuable than those of the elite and the monumental because of the perceived position in society of those who make them or of their modest, ordinary and even kitsch material manifestations. The response to the context of fast-paced change and displacement is with nostalgia, which 'allows for the establishment of new identity ties based on the shared experience of loss'.<sup>79</sup> 'Rather than an abnormal, undesirable, or overly sentimental response to change, nostalgia is 'one of the means ... we employ in the never ending work of constructing, maintaining, and reconstructing our identities.'<sup>80</sup>

Displacement<sup>81</sup> can take the form of rapid change, population mobility, relocation, dislocation, immigration, refugees, migrant labour practices, periods of war and forced removals. South Africa has a long history of many of these, from practices of segregation that have resulted in different population groups being moved, to migrant labour practices, to the practice of forced removal to 'Bantustans'. This study argues that this involuntary and traumatic disruption of place attachment has a negative psychological, social and cultural effect on those affected. Milligan suggests that:

'[n]ostalgia often emerges after displacement as individuals attempt to regain a sense of identity continuity through recognizing and redefining a shared past. Loss results in identity discontinuity, which nostalgia can repair by creating a shared generational identity to mend the lost one.'<sup>82</sup>

Boym, asserting that nostalgia is a valuable contributor to the debate about pastness and heritage, describes two broad types of nostalgia – restorative and reflective. Strong notions of restorative nostalgia can be used as a force for nationalism, collectivism and power. Conversely,

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<sup>79</sup> Milligan, M (2003):383.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid: 384.

<sup>81</sup> Displacement can be described as 'the involuntary disruption of place attachment'. Milligan, M (2003) 382. Where place attachment is seen as a positive attribute, displacement is seen as negative.

<sup>82</sup> Milligan, M (2003):381.

reflective nostalgia allows for the 'mediation of the passage of time' and the narrative of the individual.<sup>83</sup> These are noted as 'tendencies' rather than absolute types. The conceptual difference between these types is further described with reference to the word, 'nostalgia'. Boym writes that 'restorative nostalgia puts emphasis on 'nostos' and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps' while reflective nostalgia focuses on the 'algia', 'in longing and loss, the imperfect process of remembrance'.<sup>84</sup>

These distinctions are described further, with parallels to the discussion of the nature of 'community', by suggesting that restorative nostalgia is linked to the collective and oral cultures while reflective nostalgia is largely linked to the individual.<sup>85</sup> In drawing this distinction Boym highlights a warning against the overly collectivist and restorative and supports the positive and healthy reflective individual. Other commentators have similarly elaborated on these manifestations of nostalgia, drawing 'a distinction between the desire to return to an earlier state or idealized past, and the desire not to return but to recognize aspects of the past as the basis for renewal and satisfaction in the future.'<sup>86</sup>

Under what conditions does nostalgia for the shared symbolic structure become prominent? Milligan suggests that places (and their related physical attributes, such as structures) will become increasingly less important in the experience of nostalgia because of increased mobility and the increase in media and communication. She argues that this may be true for large homogeneous communities but is not the case for smaller 'ideo-cultural' communities facing displacement. These smaller communities are different from their larger homogenetic counterparts in that small groups allow for face-to-face interaction and a stronger sense of group identity in which 'nostalgia remains anchored to experience in a place and to the persons and events associated with that place'.<sup>87</sup> This factor was also highlighted by Hubbard, who

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid: 14 – 15.

<sup>84</sup> Boym, S (2001): 41.

<sup>85</sup> Boym, S (2004): 15.

<sup>86</sup> Pickering, M, Keightley, E (2006): 921. Other commentators have described modes of nostalgia in similar terms. Milligan notes Davis, for example who identifies a lived and un-lived past, where the un-lived past is dismissed as "antiquarian sentiment" and not 'authentic nostalgia'. Milligan, M (2003) 384.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid: 399.

notes that ‘loss of cultural identity can be alleviated through the creation of shared symbolic structures that validate, if not actually define social claims to space and time’.<sup>88</sup>

Is this true for this case study? Port Elizabeth is characterised by a wide array of ideo-cultural communities, the result of a long history of segregation, distrust, xenophobia and isolation. This is even more pronounced in the dominant group in Korsten from 1956 to 1990 – the ‘Coloured community’.<sup>89</sup> The displacement, segregation and changing definitions of race through the colonial and Apartheid period have left Korsten and the ‘Northern Areas’<sup>90</sup> with an unfortunate history of fragmentation and a wide array of ideo-cultural groups, each with largely distinctive areas, identity and even histories.<sup>91</sup> The other conditions noted by Milligan can also be tested and seen to be relevant – the small size of the group, groups in which media are not prominent (or, conversely, are complementary, as in the case of music, for example) and lack of mobility (including choice and the ability to go somewhere else).

It is therefore suggested that this case study is appropriate to a discussion of the prevalence of nostalgia for the shared symbolic space. Further, an understanding of this prevalence of nostalgia is a valuable value system for interrogating the potential heritage structures.

## **NOSTALGIA AND CONTINUITY**

Continuity, as opposed to displacement, is seen by many commentators as positive. They note that ‘unwanted and personally uncontrollable change in the physical environment, resulting in the loss of the principle of continuity, may cause a grief or loss reaction’ and that ‘the principle of continuity can be useful in explaining psychological issues surrounding forced relocation’.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Hubbard, P (1993): 361.

<sup>89</sup> This ‘population group’ title is used as it was used by the Group Areas Act, which was in force at the time. It is interesting and valuable to note that several of the interviewees do not use the term, with one repeatedly referring to the ‘so-called Coloured community’.

<sup>90</sup> This is a general term for the large suburban residential area to the north of the centre of Port Elizabeth designated for Coloured people by the Group Areas Act.

<sup>91</sup> For example, forced removals divided the population according to race – Indian, Coloured, Cape Malay and Asiatic being the most common. But it also separated mixed-race areas such as Korsten according to economic divisions, typically with more ‘upmarket’ Coloured people relocated to Gelvandale and Parkside and those less affluent Coloured to new suburbs such as Salsoneville and Westend.

<sup>92</sup> Twigger-Ross, Uzzel, (2006): 208.

This can be described in two ways – as place-referent and as place-congruent. Place-referent continuity relates to the maintenance of continuity through the use of specific places that have emotional significance for the individual or group. Place-congruent continuity relates less to the specific physical place but rather to the characteristics of place.<sup>93</sup> Twigger-Ross writes of one study that '[i]t was particularly noteworthy that the symbolic role of the local environment was highly salient for many inhabitants'.<sup>94</sup> This attachment, argues Milligan, is most common and strongest in environments where there is spatial continuity. She argues that spatially continuous environments are linked to the group's positive and common identity and that in cases of discontinuity, nostalgia is a useful memory tool, 'for the establishment of new identity ties based on the shared experience of loss'.<sup>95</sup>

Other commentators draw a more direct connection between the built environment and continuity. Fullilove, for instance, writes that 'the townscape ought to reflect our need for continuity, and the more rapidly society changes, the less readily should we abandon anything familiar which can still be made to serve a purpose'.<sup>96</sup>

The commentators above are referring to place-referent continuity – the literal temporal continuity of place and the built environment. What is perhaps more interesting and useful in the context of rapid change and displacement (and this case study) is the notion of place-congruent continuity. This study supports the notion of this form of continuity of the 'characteristics of place'. Throughout the interview process, there were references to the ways in which 'things have changed' and the way nostalgic recollections of the past highlight the disjunction in place character between vivid, place-specific memories (such as playing sport on the street) and present-day placelessness. But surprisingly, none of the interviewees indicated a desire to return to the physical places of their past, although there is a clear longing for the characteristics of those places. This seems different from the sense of 'homecoming' described

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid: 208.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid: 215.

<sup>95</sup> Milligan, M (2003): 382.

<sup>96</sup> Fullilove, M (1996): 1521.

by those repatriated to District Six forced removal sites, who seem to have a strong desire for place referent continuity.

Perhaps the experience of many who were forcibly removed in Port Elizabeth is different from that of those of District Six. In places such as South End and Village Board Korsten, homes and streets (and so spatial continuity) were demolished and new structures built over them so that no evidence is left. By contrast, in places such as District Six, structures and roads were demolished but the site today stands largely open so there is a reasonable chance that people may physically return to the place of the past. It has been suggested from the limited engagement through the interview process that those in a similar position in Port Elizabeth realise that such a return would be impossible. Repatriation land in other parts of Port Elizabeth such as Fairview for example, has been received mixed responses from claimants. This creates a certain atmosphere of practical 'getting on with things', as highlighted by several of the interviews.

But is all change a negative influence on place attachment and the role of the heritage resource? Lowenthal argues that 'flux' is not only inevitable but can be a positive influence on heritage and the heritage resource.

Time-honoured goals of eternity, stability, and permanence are nowadays increasingly discarded as unreachable. Cultural guardians who once hoped to husband heritage for all time, like ecologists who envisaged a timeless, changeless nature, are learning to accept that things are in perpetual flux.<sup>97</sup>

Practitioners of Environmental Psychology describe how 'absence of continuity is usually experienced negatively', but also note that 'continuity involves not the complete absence of change but some connection between the past, the present and the future within identity'.<sup>98</sup> The discussion of the notion of place raises similar criticisms of the humanistic tradition in Geography which view change, flux and even 'placelessness' as overly negative and linked to a

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<sup>97</sup> Lowenthal, D (2000):20.

<sup>98</sup> Speller, Lyons, Twigger-Ross (2002): 47.

declining sense of community and neighbourhoods. Some note that 'the development of place bonds is viewed more 'as an enduring and changeable process related to the construction and maintenance of identity in a changing social and physical environment'.<sup>99</sup>

If, as suggested, change (or rather, flux) does not negatively impact on the attachment to place, this attachment and adaption to the physical environment (which includes the potential heritage resource) is an attachment to an environment of flux. From this it follows that the flux in the heritage resources themselves is not only acceptable but an integral and positive part of heritage. This leads to a primary argument of this study – does the prominence of nostalgia have a role to play in the valorisation of the heritage resource? Do these potential heritage resources need to be physically retained or is it sufficient for their memory to be retained?

It is valuable to elaborate on the differences between notions of perpetual flux and traumatic discontinuity, as described in place attachment. Traumatic discontinuity, such as forced removal, is an extreme act that has a negative effect on individuals and groups, on shared symbolic structures and on heritage resources and the relationships between them.

Alternatively, perpetual flux is seen not only as inevitable but as a positive force. What are the characteristics of traumatic discontinuities? The traumatic discontinuity is a break in all continuities, the deliberate removal of a large body of true memory (through strategies of demolition and the control of the Authorised Heritage Discourse, for example) and the obliteration of the place-congruent and place-referent in favour of something new.

The work of oral historians such as Field and Trotter has shown that this has a long-term negative impact on the individual and the group and Boym suggests that the traumatic discontinuities can evoke strong notions of nostalgia. She argues that, in many cases, with the additional influences of nationalism and identity politics, this reveals itself in notions of collectivism and restorative nostalgia such as that in former Soviet countries. It could be argued that this is a manifestation of the desire to return to an earlier, more stable time and is a reasonable response within the South African context. What has been surprising in the

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<sup>99</sup> Kaltenborn, B, Williams, D (2002): 189 – 190.

interview process is that this theory was not supported by any of the responses. Instead, the emerging theme of the interviews has been positivity and resilience in response to traumatic displacement. Several interviewees commented on how they dealt with their forced removals by noting that 'it is no good living in the past'.

Boym describes a difference between, 'habits of the past' and 'habits of the restoration of the past'. Habits of the past are those customs and practices undertaken by individuals and groups seen as real and unselfconscious, where the habits of restoration are, in essence, invented or restored traditions referring to a

set of practices, normally governed by overly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual of symbolic nature which seeks to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition which automatically implies continuity with the past. The new traditions are characterized by a higher degree of symbolic formalization and ritualisation than the present peasant customs and conventions after which they were patterned.<sup>100</sup>

Continuity as a positive force (in heritage terms) can be criticised. It is noted that selectively represented memories of the past (restorative nostalgia) can be aligned to a strong rhetoric of continuity and an emphasis on traditional values. This could be used in a way that discourages flux and difference and promotes specific agendas (perhaps with emphasis on the wholesomeness of tradition) that can become a force of authoritative control.<sup>101</sup>

It could be argued that this notion of the restorative and of a deliberate and selective continuity of the past into the present can be found in approaches to conservation. For example, Viollet-Le-Duc, in the mid-nineteenth century, wrote:

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<sup>100</sup> Boym, S (2001): 42.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid: 42.

Restoration ... both the word and the thing are modern. To restore an edifice means neither to maintain it, nor to repair it, nor to rebuild it; it means to re-establish in a finished state, which may in fact never have actually existed at any given time.<sup>102</sup>

This notion of re-establishing and completing something of the past in the present can be seen essentially as a nostalgic act in the same way as the fantasy styled interior designs of some of the potential heritage resources under discussion in this thesis may evoke another era. This 're-establishing in a finished state' allows for the nostalgic in the present, to 'patch up the memory gaps' and, in so doing, conclude the narrative of 'origins'.<sup>103</sup>

Boym sees reflective nostalgia as more useful and flexible. 'The focus here is not on the recovery of what is perceived to be an absolute truth but on the mediation of history and the passage of time' and 'cherishes shattered fragments of memory'.<sup>104</sup> In this way the past is not reconstructed, but acknowledged and used in the present as a reference and marker that adds meaning. Here there is less of an imperative for place-referent continuity, less attachment to the physicality of place and instead there is attachment to place-congruent continuity's 'characteristics of place'.

Translated into the physical built environment of potential heritage resources and heritage places, it can be argued that this reflective use of nostalgia regards the resource and place as part of a collective memory that is intertwined with the everyday activity of individuals and groups, has use, spectacle and flux. This allows for an understanding of conservation that is based on an argument of present-day (rather than intrinsic) value, of a changing set of interrelated values, sometimes complementary or perhaps contrasting with a 'reflection of the past' and its 'habits', but with a strong present and future focus.

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<sup>102</sup> Viollet-Le-Duc, E (1996): 314.

<sup>103</sup> Boym identifies the restoration of origins and conspiracy theories as the two main narratives of restorative nostalgia. Boym, S (2001): 43.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid: 50.

In this regard the counterpoint to Viollet-Le-Duc is perhaps less about the materiality (and appearance) of the potential heritage resource and more about the broadening context of heritage being more subtle with richer opportunities for place.

## **NOSTALGIA AND TRAUMA**

It has been argued that a primary theme of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is traumatic change – the breaks in continuity and its consequences. This has been realised physically in forced removals, migration, immigration and displacement in rapidly changing built environments.<sup>105</sup> These events are, to a large degree, managed in the present with notions of trauma and nostalgia. These two responses can be seen as opposites, sometimes responding to the same or different events in different ways.

Trotter and Field elaborate on the notion of the traumatic event that is central to the oral history narrative. In the context of this study, that was anticipated at the start of the interview process to be the act of forced removal. It has been surprising to note that interviewee's redirected their emotional focus to the nostalgic acts of entertainment (prompted by the questions) and to the trauma of the Northern Areas Uprising, which 'changed everything'.

The aversion to talking about forced removals could be attributed to the clear focus of the questions and the opportunity for pleasurable, descriptive story-telling and the clear defining by the interviewees of the Northern Areas Uprising as the traumatic break.<sup>106</sup> Lynch writes of the impersonal nature of the more remote past and the value of 'near continuity', that it 'is emotionally more important than remote time, although the distant past may seem nobler,

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<sup>105</sup> Huyssen describes trauma as a psychic phenomenon, '... located on the threshold between memory and forgetting'. Huyssen, A (2003):8.

<sup>106</sup> O'Connell, in exploring this notion of narrative recall in individuals and groups that were forcibly removed in Cape Town, describes this situation. 'Childhood pranks were recounted in minute detail and considering that many of these occurred over forty years ago, I was astounded as to how precise their recollections were. There were, however particular moments that were not that clear, evidently lying dormant and opaque, I now think. These were articulated by heavy silences, particularly when I asked about their own evictions.' O'Connell, S (2012): 180.

more mysterious or intriguing to us ... feeling locally connected where we customarily range is more important than our position at a national scale.<sup>107</sup>

The traumatic event and displacement finds a counterpoint in *la fête*,<sup>108</sup> the joyful moments of the everyday that are realised in the dance hall, the cinema and in everyday places of meeting and activity. The differences in the official and the counter transcripts are highlighted here. The official transcript is associated with trauma – the rationalisation of the elite, of forced removals and of conspiracy about the origins of the Northern Areas Uprising. The counter transcripts, in contrast, are aligned to nostalgic memory, fond recollection, recall of detail, human engagement and storytelling.

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<sup>107</sup> Lynch, K (1972):61.

<sup>108</sup> Highmore, B (2002): 122 - 123 and 144.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE 'NATIVE' FREE STATE AND ITS SMALL HERITAGES

Heritage is not only a social and cultural resource or process but also a political one through which a range of struggles are negotiated. The implications and consequences of the theorization of heritage as a cultural practice concerned with negotiating tensions between received and contested identity has consequences for both academic analysis and heritage practice and policy.<sup>109</sup>

### THE 'FREE TOWN' OF KORSTEN

The case study has a origin in independence, enterprise and political action, within the larger context of the rapidly developing segregated colonial city of Port Elizabeth in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These 'received and contested identities' are at the core of what Interviewee Two describes as the 'so-called Coloured community'<sup>110</sup> and, indeed, an argument of this study is that political acts as heritage have created a traumatic demographical and spatial redefinition that should be at the centre of any discussions of urban space in South Africa today.

Historical commentators have described how Apartheid city planning affected the form and development of Port Elizabeth as the town experienced rapid 19<sup>th</sup>-century growth as a gateway to the interior and as a trading port.<sup>111</sup> From the establishment of Fort Frederick in 1799 and the more formal establishment of settlement pattern in 1815, segregation tendencies have been evident in the establishment of places in the growing town of Port Elizabeth such as the 'Malay Quarter' in the Strand Street area and of several inner-city Black 'locations' such as Stranger's Location in 1855.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Smith, L (2006):7.

<sup>110</sup> Interviewee Two, 03 September 2014.

<sup>111</sup> Christopher, A (1987): 195 – 204.

<sup>112</sup> The origins of people who identify themselves as 'Malay' are described in a recent publication by the South End Museum, *Celebrating the History of the Cape Malay Heritage in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality*. Of interest is the description of Frederick Korsten bringing Malay craftsmen from Cape Town (they may have been slaves) to construct his farm, Cradock Place, in 1810. After the construction some remained to

A defining date in the construction of historical knowledge of Port Elizabeth is 1820, the year in which about 4 000 mostly poor immigrant British Settlers arrived. They continued to arrive for several years, mostly moving northwards to the interior to settle as farmers.<sup>113</sup> With this influx came a divergent support structure of trades people, shop owners and labour, most identified as Malay, Indian and Coloured. By the 1880s these support structures included Chinese immigrants. Until recently the dominant historical themes of Port Elizabeth were the narrative of the brave settler of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the rapid industrial prosperity of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

A significant event in the segregated city of Port Elizabeth was the outbreak of Bubonic Plague at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This resulted in the demolition of the inner city 'locations' and the forced removal of inhabitants to the perimeter of the city, the reason being concerns about sanitation. Kirk's description of the establishment and operation of Stranger's Location creates an early context for a study of the segregation of the city, highlighting, as it does, under-recorded early attempts to legislate segregated areas for the Black and Coloured population.

By the 1880s almost half the town's Black population was permanent, Christian, formed a notable part of the town's emerging middle class and had the resources with which to purchase land. Some commentators argue that the 'Cape liberal tradition' and 'progressive policies' created a context for this Black population to thrive within the town limits. The establishment of Stranger's Location in 1855 was arguably the earliest example of enforced segregation in South Africa. Not content with this, in 1883 the Town Council passed the Native Stranger's Location Act, intended to remove those living in this area to the more remote 'Reservoir Location'. This move faced resistance and was never enforced, but it did set the scene for deliberate, planned, race-based developments that would culminate in the growth of Korsten and the establishment of New Brighton, Port Elizabeth's first formal Black township.<sup>114</sup>

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live in the present-day Strand Street area. One of the remaining people has been identified as Fortuin Weys, 'one of the first settlers of the town and founder of the Muslim community there'. South End Museum (2008): 22. This is a remarkably under-recorded detail of the origins of the city and its early settlers.

<sup>113</sup> They included my ancestors, the Hewson family.

<sup>114</sup> Kirk (1991): 293-321.

The earliest recorded occupation of the land now known as Korsten and the surrounding suburbs was by Frederick Korsten (born 17 August 1796), a Dutch Settler who acquired the land known as Papenkuilsfontein between Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage and renamed it Cradock Place in 1812.<sup>115</sup> Here he set up a trading station that became prosperous because of the arrival of the 1820 British Settlers.<sup>116</sup> After the arrival of the Settlers he retired to Cape Town, but returned in 1836 to live there until his death in 1839. The property was divided into 236 plots and sold off with the condition that the name of Korsten be retained.<sup>117</sup> The current spatial layout of Korsten is still largely based on these plots. The current structures of Cradock Place are ruins in the open veld alongside the Uitenhage Road. The Cradock Place farm would have covered areas now known as Korsten and Young Park and Algoa Park – two suburbs created in the era of forced removals for poorer White people, many from South End, North End and Korsten. ‘Unfortunately, a native free state has grown up outside the Municipal boundaries at Korsten ... [which] is practically under no supervision. The lazy, dissolute natives live at these locations in happy content,’ reported the Medical Officer of Health of the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>118</sup>

The case of Korsten and the period leading to the establishment of Port Elizabeth’s first formalised Black township, New Brighton, at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is an intertwined study. At its root was the Native Reserve Locations Act of 1902 (largely a re-enactment of the 1883 Native Stranger’s Location Act), ‘an experiment in social control which, it was hoped, would help solve the problem of regulating African labour in urban centres’.<sup>119</sup> Essentially, Korsten and New Brighton were both intended as dormitory areas on the outskirts of the town from which labour could be drawn. In their nature, however, they were quite different. Korsten initially consisted of privately-owned land to the north of Port Elizabeth, which had been laid out as a potential village from 1853, once the farm of Cradock Place had been divided into plots. There was very little growth there until 1901, when the removal of inner city ‘locations’

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<sup>115</sup> He named his farm, Cradock Place, after his friend, Governor Sir John Cradock.

<sup>116</sup> Woodward (1995): 84 – 85.

<sup>117</sup> Badenhorst, E, (2009): 5.

<sup>118</sup> Report of the Medical Officer of Health of the Cape of Good Hope in, Kirk, J (1991): 309.

<sup>119</sup> Kirk, J (1991): 310.

(including Stranger's Location) was intensified. At this stage, those who were being removed essentially had two options: to be settled in the newly created New Brighton township or to go to Korsten. They 'headed straight to Korsten, avoiding New Brighton at any cost'.<sup>120</sup>

Korsten was favoured because it was outside the town limits and the authority of Port Elizabeth and, although colony law was applicable, it was practically unenforceable. There were also increased business opportunities and opportunities for land ownership. This resistance by Black families to being resettled in the model township of New Brighton endured until the 1930s.<sup>121</sup>

It is useful to consider the contrasting physical aspects of Korsten and New Brighton at this juncture in the city's history. Korsten was a haphazard settlement. Homes were created primarily from temporary materials and most had no running water or sewerage (at one stage, 1 680 of the dwellings were declared unfit by the plague board). Because they were outside the boundaries of Port Elizabeth, the authorities had little control over land use and movement. New Brighton, on the other hand, was a highly controlled residential suburb even further to the north, separated from Korsten and the town itself by a wide wetland area. Business was highly regulated and property ownership impossible. Rentals in New Brighton were also notably higher than those in Korsten.

The unregulated state of Korsten has led to a perception that the Korsten of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was a 'slum' and was solely intended for those who were not White. For example, Terblanche, a local historian, has written that 'many poor Whites put up their homes in Korsten, because it was cheaper to do so. But Korsten was in fact one big slum ... the health conditions were shocking. It was seen as a menace to the health of Port Elizabeth.' He elaborates on this by describing how the poor Whites and other races 'intermingled'.<sup>122</sup> I argue that this notion of the poor White having to endure the poverty and degradation of mixed race

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid: 317.

<sup>121</sup> Kirk, J (1991): 335 - 336.

<sup>122</sup> Terblanche, O (1993): 8-9. This notion is reinforced in other established histories of Port Elizabeth such as Lorimer's *Panoramas of Port Elizabeth*, in which he writes: 'Today the name of Korsten survives in Port Elizabeth only as that of a slum suburb – poor recognition for a man who was the founder of its commercial development.' Lorimer (1971):23.

'slums' is over-stated. The legitimisation of such ideas supported the agenda of the Apartheid state and, through repetition and reinforcement, have become an official transcript. A surprising detail mentioned by several interviewees was their fond memories of the mixed race nature of their living environment prior to forced removals and their highlighting (perhaps emphasised because I am White) of how satisfied their White neighbours were with this situation.

Figure 2, from circa 1900, indicates the formal grid of streets of the new model township of New Brighton and the more varied structure of 'Korsten Village'. The village is divided into three distinct parts. The first, the northern section, centred on the development of the road north west to Uitenhage, now called Commercial Road and the suburb renamed Sidwell. The second part, spatially central to the village, was set out in a radial oval pattern centred on a lake. This area was a dense residential area known as 'Village Board', which was declared an industrial area in the 1960s. Its residents were forcibly removed, houses demolished and the lake drained. It is today partially redeveloped as an industrial area known formally as 'Ferguson'.

The third part, the context of this study, is south west of Village Board and comprises a grid of three long streets running approximately south-east to north-west – Stanford Road, Durban and Highfield Roads, with a number of cross streets. It is this area that is now officially identified as Korsten by authorities and citizens. It is a relatively small geographical area, two kilometres long and 300 metres wide. Its north-west end would historically have been at the edge of the town. The development of the vast northern areas for Coloured and Indian people (to be known as the Northern Areas, including the suburbs of Gelvandale and Parkside for Coloured people and Malabar for Indian people) was an extension of Stanford Road. Galvandale was established in 1963 by families forcibly removed from South End, Central, North End and Dassieskraal and Malabar (formally Woolhope) was established in 1968, when 500 Indian families were settled there.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality (2014): 4.

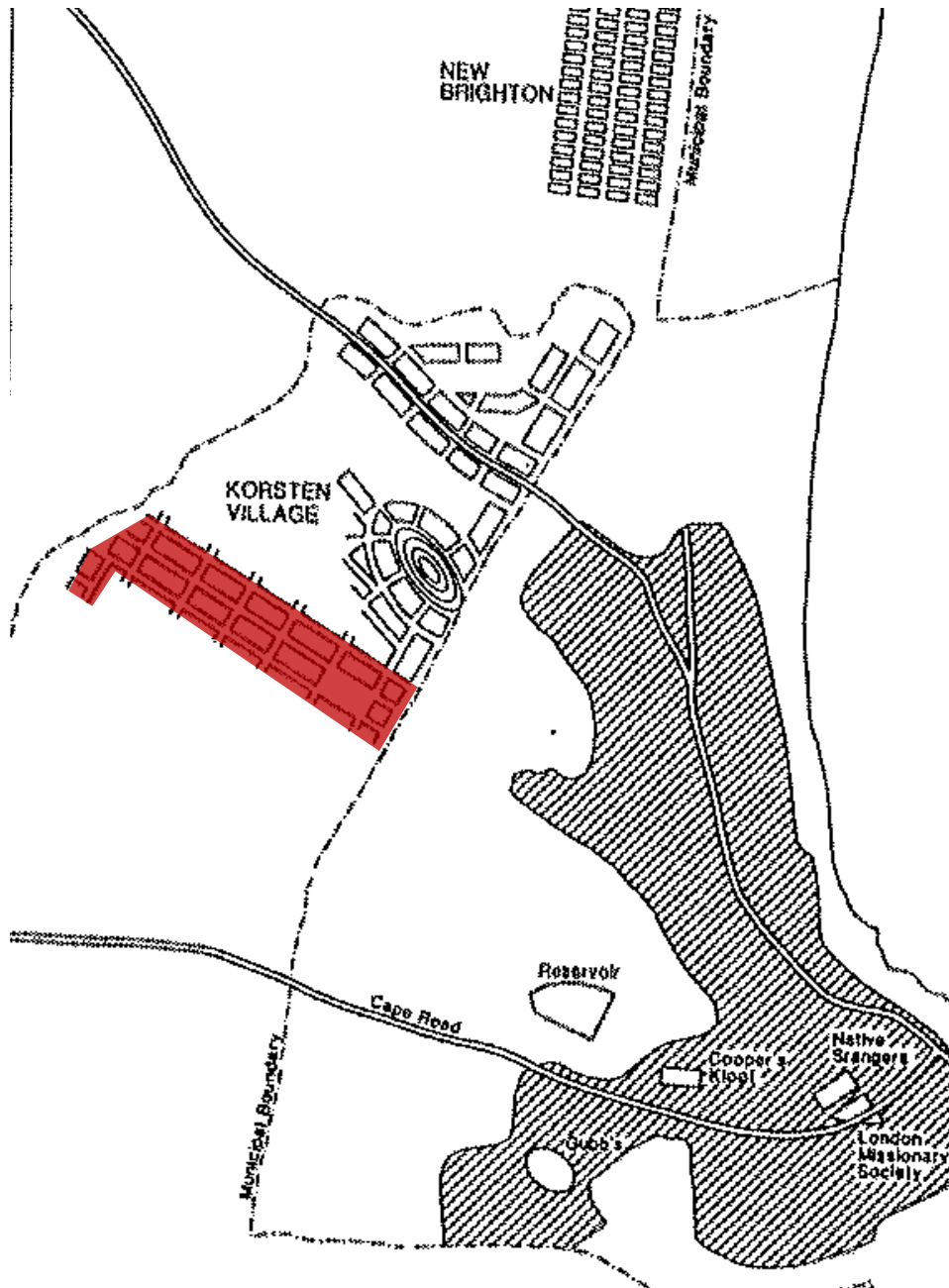


Figure 2

Diagram showing 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Black and Coloured residential areas in Port Elizabeth.

Source: Robinson (1990): 294.

Figure 3, showing the development of the city from 1927-1951, indicates the positions of New Brighton and Korsten to the north in relation to the city centre to the south and the municipal boundary. The 1927 city boundary avoids Korsten and the proposed boundary enacted in 1951 includes it, as well as the previous municipality of Walmer to the south. It is because of this

anomaly in boundaries and property ownership that Korsten has historically been referred to 'Korsten Village' or a 'Free Town'.

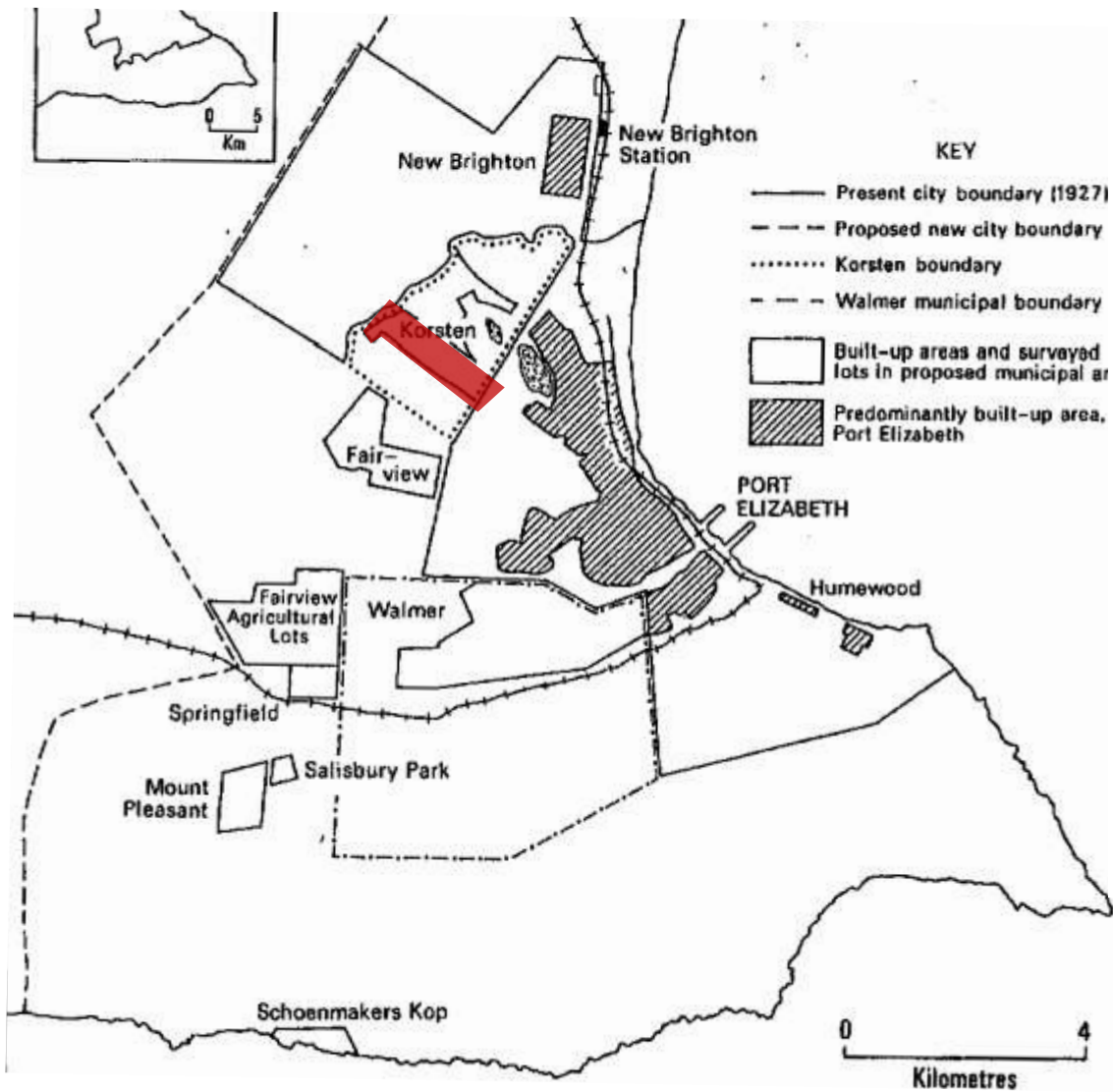


Figure 3

Port Elizabeth Municipal boundary extensions 1922 to 1951.

Source: Baines, G (1995): 103.

In 1948 the National Party came into political power in South Africa and over the following years set in place the legal equipment to continue the ambitions of the segregated city that they had inherited, most notably the Population Registration and Group Areas Acts of 1950. What several contemporary commentators highlight is that the segregated city did not begin in 1950 but rather, at least in the example of Port Elizabeth, from the earliest arrival of Dutch and

English Settlers.<sup>124</sup> At the point of 1950, the notion of forced removals of the Black population to New Brighton and the Coloured population out of the city centre and from Korsten to other areas (such as 'slum clearance' forced removals from Korsten to Schauderville of the 1930's) was well underway.

Converting the segregated city of Port Elizabeth into the Apartheid city from 1950 to 1985 took considerably more time than expected, and was much more costly and complicated than anticipated but was merely an extension of an earlier paradigm. A priority of the 1950's was to relocate the Black population to New Brighton and this meant that Black population in Korsten decreased from 17 200 to 2 200 and the Coloured population rose from 19 300 to 31 800 in nine years.<sup>125</sup> Additional housing for the growing Coloured population was built further northwest of Korsten at Gelvandale, the start of the present day Northern Areas. It is of interest to note that by 1985, the vision of the Apartheid city was virtually realised with only 3.4% of the population of Port Elizabeth living outside their designated areas.<sup>126</sup>



Figure 4

This photograph, from an issue of *The Herald*, dated 19 September 1957, shows 'some of the big areas of land already cleared of slums, and decent homes in the background, gives an idea of the future Korsten, part of which will be used for a Coloured housing scheme'.

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<sup>124</sup> This is not to discount the real trauma of the implementation of the Group Areas Act. 'The Group Areas Act did not just move poor people from South End – it destroyed a community; scattered family and friends,' and, 'If one law could be singled out as the one which caused the most suffering, the most humiliation, and the most depravation, and about which non-White people still talk today with hatred and bitterness, then it is the Group Areas Act...' Agherdien, Y, George, A, Hendricks, S (1997): Introduction and 77.

<sup>125</sup> Christopher, A (1987): 200.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid: 202. Christopher notes that these were largely Black and Coloured servants in White areas or people of 'dubious' classification.

This sense of the turbulent independence of Korsten, then replaced by ongoing displacement, continued into the mid- and late 20<sup>th</sup> century, with a range of migrations and forced removals, including significant movement in the 1930s ('slum clearance' from Korsten to Schauderville for Coloured people and McNamee Village for Black people), in the 1960s and 1970s and even as late as 1983.<sup>127</sup> Forced removals were costly and time consuming, with some families moving more than once.

The structures identified as part of this study date back to the later period of these moves, so, as places of entertainment, form an experiential counterpoint to the trauma of the time. This later period was characterised by the strengthening of the apparatus of Apartheid and the ongoing physical development (including daily activity and practice) of Korsten.

It is useful here to discuss, through the work of De Certeau, these two positions: the strengthening apparatus of Apartheid and the ordinary and everyday practice of the people of Korsten. De Certeau uses 'strategies' and 'tactics' to describe the relationship between 'subjects of will and power' (like the state and the mechanisms of town planning, forced removals and the organisation of races).<sup>128</sup> While strategies are a 'political, economic and scientific rationality' that privileges the spatial; tactics are the 'clever tricks' used to subvert the imposed mechanisms.

strategies pin their hopes on the resistance that the *establishment of a place* offers to the erosion of time; tactics on a clever *utilisation of time*, of the opportunities it presents and also of the play that it introduces into the foundations of power. (Emphasis in original)<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> Adler, G (1995): 1 – 30.

<sup>128</sup> De Certeau, M (1984): xix.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid: 38.

Perhaps these everyday tactics are best highlighted within this context by the 'play' of entertainment that is introduced through places such as cinemas and dance halls. These can perhaps be seen as places of low level subversion, of 'clever tricks of time', where the ordinary person is removed from the mundane everydayness of work, the state and authority and allowed short periods of fantasy. This fantasy was of worlds created by cinema, by the lifestyle of gangsters, the night time, courting, nightclubs, drinking and dancing.

Within the context of the Apartheid state and its control of the mundane everydayness and all its detail, including when and where people should be entertained, control of the sale and consumption of liquor and who could or could not have relations with whom, perhaps this could be seen as De Certeau's *la perruque* on a grand scale. *La perruque* is the notion of 'poaching' time, often by the subjugated from the authority. De Certeau describes the smaller scale examples of a secretary using office time to write a love letter or of a joiner using the factory tools to make his own furniture. *La perruque* 'diverts time' and is 'free, creative and precisely not directed toward profit'.<sup>130</sup>

Attending the cinema or a dance is not the type of revolutionary act in which many were involved at the time, taking the form of the armed struggle, boycotts, disinvestment campaigns, sports boycotts, defiance and illegal marches, but rather an everyday event that is also a diversion. Aware of this, the Apartheid state imposed increasingly complex restrictions on these activities such as banning certain films and music, prohibiting White bands from playing in Coloured areas, prescribing the way traditional beer should be brewed, sold and consumed and controlling sexual relationships the Immorality Acts of 1927 and 1957.

Korsten today is a dense, mixed use, lower-income suburb with obvious signs of physical degradation. It has a mix of structure types that convey its history, including limited origin structures (some of them wood and iron), a range of densely arranged residential structures, rarer double storey colonnaded structures on Highview and Durban streets, some evidence of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century relocation of Chinese people in signage, limited civic structures with

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<sup>130</sup> De Certeau, M (1984): 25.

modest modernist detailing and a significant amount of municipality-sponsored housing from the 1970s, which replaced 'slums' that were demolished.

Figure 5, dating back to 1988, shows an underdeveloped Korsten. The view is westward, with Durban Road to the right and Highview Road to the left. The morphological form is created largely by the rigid street grid and regular small-scale plot sizes. There is notable commercial development in Durban Road. Apart from the primary roads, roads appear to have been surfaced with gravel. Structures are largely single storey, with a great variety in form, positioning and materials used.



Figure 5

Aerial view of Korsten, 4 August 1988. The position of the three potential heritage resources is indicated by the white oval.

Source: The Herald Newspaper Archives.

Korsten is a palimpsest (perhaps typical of many inner city forced removal sites) of place and signs. The signs themselves – the name, the identifier of function (shop signs) or place (street signs) or a building name hold the story of Korsten. They highlight ownership (Raza Ali Laher on the corner parapet of the commercial building on Durban Road), function (La La's Spice King,

formally of South End) or place (Peddie Street, highlighted in some of the interviews) and identify ownership of space, of being, 'socially produced' and 'fundamentally historical'.



Figure 6

View westwards of Durban Road.

Source: Google Maps 2014.

### **POTENTIAL HERITAGE RESOURCES OF KORSTEN**

Within this context and within the debate about the changing nature of the heritage resource as described in Chapter Two, there is a range of potential heritage resources that can be considered in Korsten, of which three have been identified. This is not intended to be an exhaustive survey but rather an opportunity to focus on a specific temporally located typology that furthers the argument of the study.

Several of the interviewees highlighted the importance of the collection of entertainment places described in the study as central to their youth and sense of understanding of the past. The interviewees highlighted how these structures were important in their collective memory largely because of their typology (places of entertainment), because of their popularity and because of their rarity. As a typology, these structures, usually located on Stanford, Durban or Highview roads, were large, with large interior volumes. They are usually built up to the street edge to create a civic engagement with the street. They were usually purpose built and included modern technology (such as film projectors). Interviewee Five recalls the construction of the Star Theatre in the 1950s and the anticipation related to it. At that stage the owner-to-be was showing films in the garage alongside his business, Progress Stores, which was directly opposite the Alabama Hotel. He was building the Star Theatre in Highfield Road close by.<sup>131</sup> This

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<sup>131</sup> Interviewee Five, 10 October 2014.

proliferation of the entertainment typology was not limited to Korsten but existed throughout Port Elizabeth from the 1960s to about 1975.

In 1975 television was introduced to South Africa and with it came a radical change in the experiential interaction of the citizen with the city and its structures. Television allowed for increased choice. People were no longer limited to a small number of places of entertainment – they could stay at home and be entertained. So, by the late 1970s many of the cinemas,<sup>132</sup> road houses and drive-in cinemas in Port Elizabeth had closed or changed function.

It is argued that the era of 1960s to 1975 was a grand era of entertainment. Interviewee Seven identified those who visited the facilities under consideration as the ‘cream of the crop’;<sup>133</sup> several interviewees said they had gone to the Alabama Hotel more than twice a week and Interviewee Four noted that ‘people got dressed up!’<sup>134</sup> What is described here is the event and extraordinary. ‘Festival holds an equivocal position in the everyday: it is part of popular everyday life but is also a radical reconfiguring of daily life that is anything but everyday.’ Further, it is also a very public act.<sup>135</sup> This factor emerged from the interviews, with particular reference to the descriptions given by some about preparing and moving from home to the place of entertainment and the notable references to the diversity of the audiences. Interviewees Four to Seven (interviewed in group session) agreed that they (and presumably others) had arrived as unaccompanied women and would dance with anyone who invited them courteously.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> Or ‘bioscopes’, as they were also called.

<sup>133</sup> Interviewee Seven, 10 October 2014

<sup>134</sup> Interviewee Four, 10 October 2014. This phenomenon of the public act of attending an event was not limited to Korsten. Port Elizabeth has an extraordinary history of grand cinemas and some drive-in cinemas. The large and grand cinemas were mostly in the town centre and were reserved for Whites only. They included the Astra, the Metro the Grand, the Twentieth Century and the Roxy. All of these have subsequently closed and been demolished. In addition there were others in Coloured areas such as the Alpha and Casino in Korsten, the Palace in South End and the Royal in Fairview. An article in the *Looking Back* magazine of the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth of 1962 asks: ‘Was Port Elizabeth the first city in South Africa to have a bioscope show? An advertisement in the P.E. Advertiser of April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1899 would seem to prove this for it proclaims ‘First exhibition in South Africa of the most marvelous machine ever invented – THE BIOSCOPE – with the Delroy Season at the Opera House.’ The Historical Society of Port Elizabeth (1962):12. The Palace Bioscope on South Union Street, South End was a popular Cinema in South End. Agherdien, Y, George, A, Hendricks, S (1997): 65.

<sup>135</sup> Highmore (2002): 122 - 123 and 144

<sup>136</sup> Interviewee Four, Five, Six, Seven, 10 October 2014.

This pattern of experiential, place-specific behaviour changed from 1975 onwards and ended in August 1990. At this time purpose-made entertainment places had effectively become obsolete – entertainment had changed. It had become less public, less place specific and there was more competition. This raises the third reason for the importance ascribed by interviewees to these places of entertainment – their relative rarity. There were generally not many places of entertainment in Port Elizabeth and those available for use by people of colour were particularly limited. By the entertainment era the Population Registration and Group Areas Acts were in operation and Coloured and Indian people were limited to the few facilities in Korsten and other areas. This rarity was a driving force behind their popularity – there was nowhere else to go. The *Herald* newspaper, in 1956, published a photograph and caption stating, ‘the new Star Cinema, which will be open in Highfield Road, Korsten, tonight. The Cinema cost more than 19 000 pounds to build and can seat 420-160 in the circle and 260 in the stalls. The cinema is for Africans and Coloureds.’<sup>137</sup>

### **THE IMAGE OF THE ENTERTAINMENT ERA**

The appearance of the places of the Era of Entertainment was notably modern. This modernity was also present in new civic structures such as the Korsten Library, opened in 1971. The difference between the entertainment places and the civic structures build by the state was in intention. Where state structures such as the library were part of the institutional infrastructure, built with serious intent, the places of entertainment were more loosely modernist, with Art Deco influences. One example was the treatment of the Reno Theatre façade, its signage and the treatment of the interior. The interiors of the Reno and Star Theatres were (and still are) relatively luxurious, modestly detailed Art Deco interiors intended to engage with the visitor on an experiential (and even fantasy) level.

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<sup>137</sup> The Herald Reporter (1956).

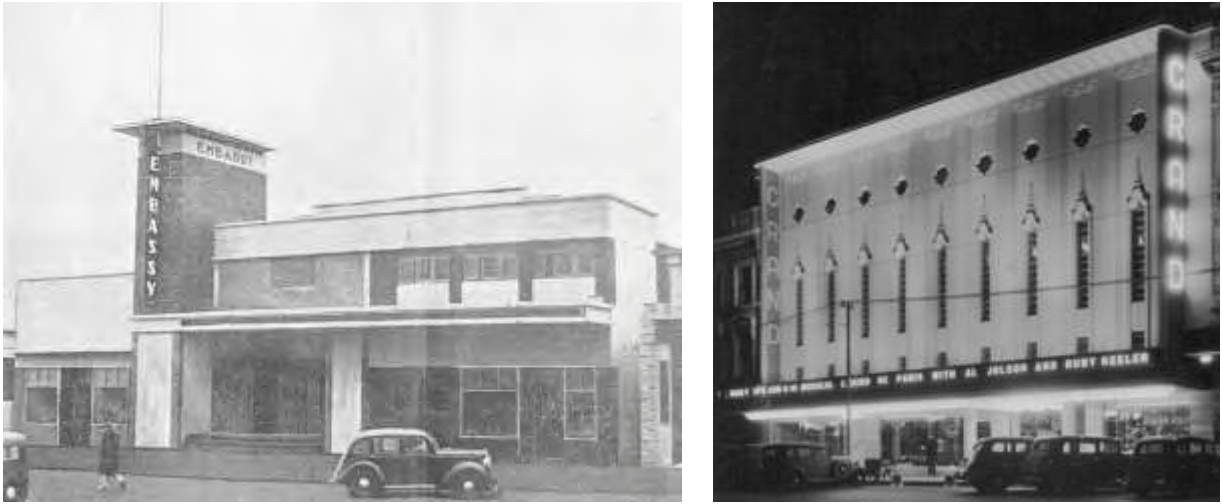


Figure 7

The Embassy Theatre on Govan Mbeki Avenue and the New Grand Theatre, opened on 9 September 1935 and now demolished.

Source: Harradine 2004.

The adoption of ‘the modern’ is a multi-dimensional notion. Several commentators have noted that the emerging Afrikaner Nationalist authority adopted a version of Modernist Architecture as an official method and representation of state ideas. Van Graan notes, ‘The political victory of the Nationalist Party in 1948 saw the adoption of modernism, as a mechanism of state’.<sup>138</sup> From the perspective of memory, Huyssen is critical of these ‘modernist fantasies’, writing: ‘After the waning of modernist fantasies about *creafie ex nihilo* and of the desire for the purity of new beginnings, we have come to read cities and buildings as palimpsests of space, monuments as transformable and transitory.’<sup>139</sup> He comments that an ‘urban imaginary in its temporal reach may well put different things in one place: memories of what there was before, imagined alternatives to what there is’.<sup>140</sup> This contrasts with the nature of the modernist programme and that of the Apartheid state – well-suited collaborators in trying to create pure beginnings out of nothing.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Van Graan, A (2011):4. Murray notes, ‘one of the key features of the Apartheid period, architecturally speaking, was the appropriation of the forms of international modernism to signify the modernity of Apartheid’. Murray, N (2010): 54 and 63.

<sup>139</sup> Huyssen, A (2003):7

<sup>140</sup> Ibid: 7.

<sup>141</sup> Pickering and Keightley note that ‘[t]he temporal emphasis in modernity has always been on relentless supersession and movement beyond existing conditions and circumstances. This modernist emphasis leaves no space, remedial or otherwise, for dealing with the experience of loss.’ Pickering, M, Keightley, E (2006):920.

This late modern with local modification was the style of choice in the ongoing ‘redevelopment’ by the state and exemplified by the Korsten Library, which is stylistically modern and serious, with its low horizontal profile and emphasis, use of cantilever concrete elements and modernist planning. Where the Korsten Library could be considered a ‘visual language of Apartheid’ and a signifier of its modernity, the Reno and Star theatres and the Alabama Hotel are, in intention, expressions of entrepreneurship, prosperity, opportunity and the modern lifestyle of the people of Korsten.



Figure 8

Front elevation of the Korsten Library, opened in 1971.

Source: NMBM digitising project 2009.

This selection of three structures is opportune in several ways, including the fact that they were constructed and active during the period of the case study, were all used by the interviewees, were geographically close to each other and were stylistically and typologically similar. Geographically the three structures are within a 500m radius of each other, with the Reno

Theatre to the east on a prominent corner site of Durban and Throughgood roads, the Alabama 50m to the west along Throughgood Road towards Highfield Road and the Star Theatre a further 300m away to the west on Highfield Road.



Figure 9

View from Highfield Road north with the Star Theatre to the left, the Alabama Hotel in the centre and the Reno Theatre to the right.

Source: Peter Wintermeyer 2014.

This essentially made a precinct of entertainment places, all within walking distance of each other and included supporting places such as the previously noted 'Progress Store' opposite the Alabama alongside the original La Fiesta take away and the Delhi Snacks next to the Reno Theatre. Delhi Snacks is still a functioning and well-known business, La Fiesta has moved elsewhere and Progress Stores has closed down.



Figure 10

Aerial photograph indicating the three possible heritage resources.

Source: Google Earth 2014.

### THE STAR THEATRE

The oldest of the three structures is the Star Theatre whose Surveyor General diagram is dated 1944.<sup>142</sup> The building Inspector's Records and the street directories from the time indicate that in 1956 the building was a 'Civil Store', erected by Mr Frank Quanson Ting Chong.<sup>143</sup> On 26 July 1956 The Herald announced the opening of the Star Theatre and it is recorded in the street directories from 1959 as 'Civil Stores and Star Cinema'.<sup>144</sup> The structure itself is a two-storey rectangle with a simple pitched roof and parapet to the street frontage. On this front elevation is a large star pattern, still visible today.

Currently it is being used by a charismatic Christian church and the interiors remain largely as they were in 1956, except that at some stage the theatre seats are removed and replaced with period appropriate seats from another cinema that had been demolished. The screen has been

<sup>142</sup> Survey General Diagram Note: the original diagram is dated 28 December 1858 in favour of Sarah Graves.

<sup>143</sup> Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 'Building Inspector's Records, Frank Quanson Ting Chong, Plan Number 22614, 14 September 1955, Cinema', in Africana Library. It is interesting to record the names of the neighbours of the Star Theatre in 1960 as per the Street Directories: Fy Pow Chong, Rose Cash Store, Low Kum R, United Dairies Depot and Jackson, F.

<sup>144</sup> It is this date that sets the early limit to the time period of this study.

removed and replaced with a pulpit and music equipment. The exit and toilet signs are notable late Art Deco and there are star patterns on some of the ceilings. The most significant visible changes since 1956 is the enclosure of the series of front entrance doors and foyer with security gates and the removal of the original entrance, which would have been suitable for grand occasions, to a more modest and practical off-axis entrance with security.



Figure 11

Views of the Star Cinema in 1956 and 2014.

Sources: The Herald Newspaper Archive and photograph by Peter Wintermeyer 2014.

## THE ALABAMA HOTEL

The Alabama Hotel, which evokes the greatest nostalgia of the three potential heritage resources, dates back to a similar period. Strategically placed on Thoroughgood Street between Durban and Highfield roads, it was the 'centre of activities'.<sup>145</sup> A low two-storey structure, it comprises a simple geometric arrangement of broad horizontal lines and vertical elements. The

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<sup>145</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

entrance is central to the Thoroughgood Road elevation, with notable thin vertical elements and signage. The earliest reference to it in the Building Inspectors Records is in 1953, when it was a 'Hotel for Cape Coloureds'. The records note subsequent work in 1957 and two name changes, firstly, to the 'Vleipos Hotel' and then to the 'Alabama Hotel'.<sup>146</sup> The architects were Betram and Burger.<sup>147</sup>

The building is described in the Street Directory in 1965 as a 'luxury licensed Hotel for Coloureds, Indians and Non-Europeans, 244 Durban Road, Korsten'.<sup>148</sup> During the interviews conducted for this study it was notable that interviewees were able to create detailed 'cognitive maps' of the interior of the building and the prominence of dancing. Almost all of them mentioned the 'sunken dance floor' and the steps to the apron surrounding it, from which customers could sit at tables with a view of the dance floor. This is a valuable shared image. Interviewees also described the 'excellent floor' for dancing and more than one said that it was apparently the largest dance floor in South Africa at the time.

Also mentioned were the Anchor Bar, which could only be entered by an invitation, accompanied by a key, and the Dolphin Room Restaurant.<sup>149</sup> An advertisement in *The Herald* in 1981 describes a new ladies bar called Atlantis, its theme 'civilisation of a bygone era', with 'fish in recessed tanks in the walls' and 'elegant décor featuring bronzed 'relics' supposedly recovered from this vanished civilisation'.<sup>150</sup> Another two details that speak to the social value

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<sup>146</sup> *Looking Back*, the magazine of the Historical Society of Port Elizabeth, describes the 'famous American Confederate raider which has become a legend in South African folk law'. The ship captured Federal ship, Sea Bride, within sight of Cape Town on August 1863. Reference is made to a smaller vessel, called the Alabama that once sailed off the West Coast of South Africa collecting reeds. The Cape Malay song, *Hier kom die Alabama* commemorates the ship. The reeds are referenced in the song as a 'rietkooi' and the song was originally intended to be sung by young Cape Malay men 'looking forward to [their] marriage and the delights of the 'Riet Kooi' or 'bridal bed'. The Historical Society of Port Elizabeth (1965): 104.

<sup>147</sup> Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 'Building Inspector's Records, Lenro Pty Ltd, Plan Number 21856, 30 October 1954, Hotel for Cape Coloureds', in Africana Library.

<sup>148</sup> Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 'Port Elizabeth Directories, 1965, Alabama Hotel', in Africana Library.

<sup>149</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

<sup>150</sup> Herald Reporter (1981). Defining nostalgia, Pickering and Keightley write: 'Central to our argument has been that nostalgia can only be properly conceptualised as a contradictory phenomenon, being driven by utopian impulses – the desire for re-enactment – as well as melancholic responses to disenchantment.' Pickering, M, Keightley, E (2006): 936.

of the venue were the bands<sup>151</sup> that performed at the hotel and the the fact that it was used, usually by sports groups, as a venue for fundraising dances. Interviewees One and Two also noted that in the 1980s the hotel was the chosen venue for sports unification meetings and political meetings.<sup>152</sup>

The hotel's reputation as the 'only place to go to' and 'the centre of entertainment' lasted from its inception in 1953 until the Northern Areas Uprising in August 1990, when it was badly damaged by fire. Some interviewees mentioned that it might not have been insured and so could not recover from the fire.<sup>153</sup> Reasons for this lasting prominence could be the strong notion of a shared symbolic structure, perhaps in its later stages as a *lieux de mémoire* (perhaps even before its closure it had become a site of memory of itself in earlier times?), or perhaps, more simply, that, as several interviewees said, 'there was nowhere else to go' .

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<sup>151</sup> This in itself was the source of rich discussion. Some of the bands mentioned were The Ritz Band, the Regals, The Modernaires, The Cubans, The Black Slaves, The Invaders, The Tom Boys, The Triangles, The Jagers Band, The Majestics, The Premier Brothers and The Moses Brothers.

<sup>152</sup> Interviewee One and Two, 21 August 2014.

<sup>153</sup> This issue of lack of insurance was raised by Interviewee Eight, who suggested that one of the reasons the Northern Areas Uprising was so damaging to the Northern Areas generally and to Korsten specifically was that so many of the businesses targeted by the vandals were Chinese and Moslem family-owned businesses that were not insured and so could not recover from the damage. This is evident mostly on Highfield Road, where, just south of the Star Theatre, a series of traditional double-storey colonnaded structures that were former shops stand vacant today, 25 years after the event.



Figure 12

The Alabama Hotel building today, with central entrance, SAPS offices to the left and small shops to the right.

Source: Peter Wintermeyer 2014.

The demise of the Alabama Hotel as a dance hall was well documented in the local media. *The Herald* ran a series of articles describing its sale and the response of the public to this. A popular option was that Northern Areas businessman, Boya Chetty, should purchase it turn it into a 'community-orientated place, fully run as a sports, social and entertainment venue'.<sup>154</sup> This restorative nostalgic act of maintaining and even reviving something of the past was supported by the public. But it was not to be. An article in the *Weekend Post* on 10 July 1993 (Figure 13) stated that it had been turned into a supermarket, called, appropriately, the Alabama. It has subsequently closed and been replaced with other small businesses. The

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<sup>154</sup> Herald Reporter (1991).

upstairs hotel rooms were converted into offices for the South African Police Services and the signage over the main door to these offices was retained and is still there today.

In 1991 the *Weekend Post* interviewed a selection of people who had frequented the hotel, most of whom wanted it to be reestablished as a place of entertainment. Among the comments published were: 'she and her friends would miss the afternoon disco sessions', 'nice hall for dancing' and 'the best sessions were held in the hotel's main hall and the entrance fee was cheaper than elsewhere'. A notable comment was, 'Harold Wilson said the move would be a 'tragedy' and would cause a decline in social life. This is a tragedy not only to sports people because church people also have their functions there. The dance floor is the best in the country.'<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Post Reporter (1991). Harold Wilson, a notable historian, was instrumental in the *Pillars of Korsten and New Brighton* publication of 2014. The memory of the quality of the dance floor has been marked. I visited the Alabama Hotel building on 24 December 2014 and, inside the 'china shop' referred to in the Interviews, was overheard by a woman, who recalled how great the dance floor was and how she would 'glide' over it.



Figure 13

Article in *The Weekend Post*, 10 July 1993.

Source: Number 7 Castle Hill Museum Scrap Book Collection / Simon de Vries.

## THE RENO THEATRE

Most contemporary of the three potential heritage resources is the Reno Theatre. This property, at the corner of Thoroughgood Street and Durban Road, is noted in the Surveyor General Diagram of 1943 'in favour of the Board of Provinces Trust of the Church of the Province of South Africa'.<sup>156</sup> It only starts to appear in the Port Elizabeth Street Directories in

<sup>156</sup> Republic of South Africa, 'Surveyor General Diagram, May 1943, Lot 29, Corner of Thoroughgood Street and Durban Road'.

1973 as the Reno Theatre.<sup>157</sup> Its opening is documented in the biography of Mr Johannes Coetzee, a successful contractor and businessman, who, in partnership with three other businessmen, built and then opened the Reno Theatre with a gala Black tie function in 1967.<sup>158</sup> This event is elaborated on in an interview with his daughter (Interviewee Eight<sup>159</sup>). Like many other events mentioned by the interviewees, those who attended dressed up for an event that was marked by a sense of occasion. The Reno was not the oldest cinema in Korsten (the Star Theatre, for example, had opened 11 years earlier) but it was the largest. It also featured live performances given by popular White bands of the time such as Four Jacks and a Jill and The Bats as well as Coloured performers such as Abdullah Ibrahim, Lionel Peterson and Jonathan Butler.<sup>160</sup>

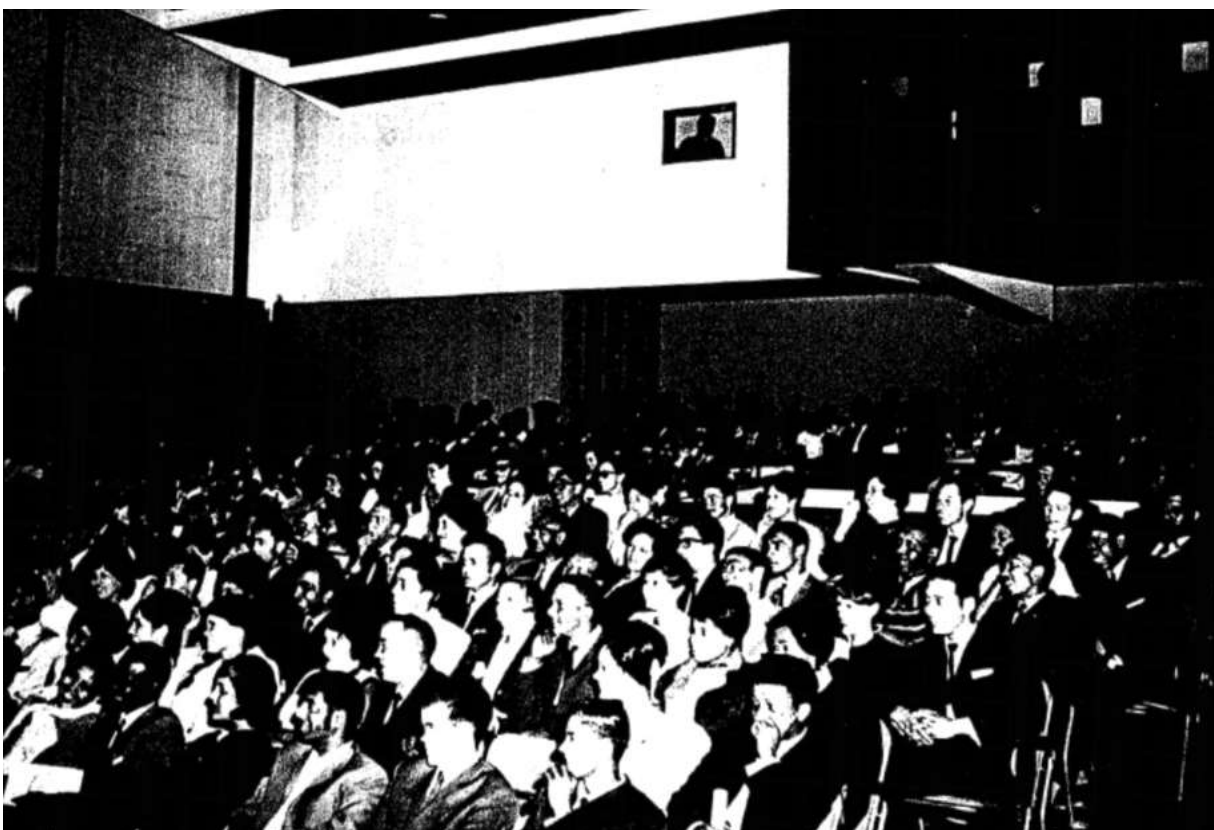


Figure 14

Opening night at the Reno Theatre, 1967, the film was *The Bread Seller* .

Source: Coetzee Family.

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<sup>157</sup> Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, *Port Elizabeth Directories*, 1973, Reno Cinema, Thorogood Street (Korsten)', in Africana Library. There is no evidence of there being a religious building on the site prior to its construction.

<sup>158</sup> Skinner, Y (2014): 40-42.

<sup>159</sup> Interviewee Eight, 13 November 2014.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid*: 41.

Physically, the Reno Theatre is the most notable of the three potential heritage resources. It is an elegantly designed modernist composition that holds to its street corner site well by means of its mass, height (approximately the height of a three-storey building) and decorated ground floor corner column. A decorative facebrick screen presents itself to Durban Road, with large elegant art moderne 'Reno' signage. The Thoroughgood Street elevation is more severe, with a decorative art deco flag pole element.

Cinema goers would have arrived from Durban Road into a symmetrical composition of double doors opening onto a foyer with a wide staircase that led into the cinema volume. This is a large volume with minimal modernist finishes, including timber panelling, sound insulation panelling and some art deco styled signage. The walls contain an interesting integrated ventilation system. All of this remains argely intact apart from the entrance procession, which has been blocked by security gates. The entrance is now off axis into a side space (perhaps that of the former cinema shop). The ground floor is occupied by a nursery school and the cinema itself is used by a charismatic church. The outside corner shop, which used to be a bank, is now a furniture shop.



Figure 15

View of the Reno Theatre building facing onto Durban Road.

Source: Peter Wintermeyer 2014.

## COMMON THEMES

It is useful to highlight some common themes – a relatively short ‘high life’, the prominence of the use of nostalgia, the traumatic break and finally, reuse and legacy, as realised in the retention of the names. The high life of these facilities seems to have lasted from their opening in the 1950s and 1960s to their degeneration in the 1980s – a forty year period which still invokes a great deal of nostalgia in those who experienced the glory days. None of the facilities, however, opened again in their original form after the Northern Areas Uprising of 1990.

Even in their early days the structures were a source of nostalgia. Advertising for the Alabama Hotel referred to the new ladies bar evoking a sense of a ‘civilisation of a bygone era’ and interviewees have noted that the type of films shown at the Star and Reno Theatres were often sentimental older European and Hollywood films. The Atlantis Bar at the Alabama Hotel was created with strong notions of fantasy and restorative nostalgia and perhaps consciously created interior heterotopic ‘other places’ of fantasy and *La Fête*, as a contrast to mundane everydayness.<sup>161</sup>

The reuse of the buildings and the retention of their names is an interesting detail in their development. It is argued that these three structures became largely obsolete in thirty years years and that their appropriate reuse is an important consideration in the construction of their value as potential heritage resources. I elaborate below on the notion of ‘use’ as a heritage value and, at this stage, it is noted that the two theatres have been efficiently and well adapted into venues for churches. The ‘cutting up’ of the Alabama Hotel into various retail and office components has been less successful. The large foyers and the dance hall itself have been subdivided to such a degree that the original volumes of the structure (notably the dance hall), the source of much nostalgia, are no longer recognisable.

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<sup>161</sup> Foucault describes a heterotopia as ‘something like counter sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which real sites ... are simultaneously represented, contested and inverted’. He describes several characteristics of this type of space, including ‘profound spatio-temporal disruption, a place that encloses an ‘absolute break with traditional time’.’ Foucault, M, *Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias*: 3. This break with traditional time would have been very much the intention of the themed Atlantis bar or a cinema.

It is interesting to note that all three structures are still identifiable by their names or symbols on their front elevations. Were these names deliberately retained or simply not removed or changed? It could be argued that the memory of the original function and 'high life' is retained in the present. I raised this with some interviewees and asked what they thought of when they saw the structures now and what kind of recall they evoked. All have moved away from Korsten and said they did not often return there. Interviewee Eight was emphatic that she had needed to 'disassociate' herself from the Reno Theatre once her father had sold it and the family moved from Korsten and Interviewee Six felt sad when revisiting the area.<sup>162</sup>

### THE TRAUMATIC EVENT – THE NORTHERN AREAS UPRISING

Interviewees were unanimous in defining as the traumatic event that 'changed everything' and separated the past with its fond memories from the present, the so-called 'Northern Areas Uprising' of August 1990.<sup>163</sup> This was a five-day uprising that started as a rent boycott in Bloemendal, quickly spread to the whole Northern Areas and left 59 dead, largely at the hands of the police. On the 24<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising, *The Herald* ran a two-page report, focusing on the personal experiences and the looting of shops that followed the outbreak of violence.

Interviewees identified the looting as deeply embarrassing for Coloured people, arguing that the perpetrators had ulterior motives, suggesting a distinction between older Coloured people with their nostalgic memories and middle-class ambitions, 'gentleman gangsters'<sup>164</sup> and younger, more lower-class people whose violent actions stemmed from greed. Interviewee Three was most vocal about this embarrassment, asking 'why remember this?', suggesting that the riots should be forgotten and that what should be remembered was 'those positive proud memories of community unity overcoming adversity'.<sup>165</sup> According to *The Herald*, 'Residents

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<sup>162</sup> Interviewee Eight and Six.

<sup>163</sup> This date has been used as the end date of the timeframe for this study.

<sup>164</sup> The notion of the gentleman gangster was mentioned by Interviewee Six and is remarkably similar to that noted by Trotter. According to Interviewee Six, in the 1960s, gangsters who were known to them, would walk single women home at night from the Alabama Hotel and the cinemas and violence would seldom include bystanders.

<sup>165</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

who witnessed the unrest remember how hundreds of people ran through the streets with whole sheep carcasses thrown over their shoulders', and 'The Alabama Hotel in Korsten, Teak Street Liquor Store in Arcadia, Koelie Morgan's shops in Gelvandale, Oomie se Winkel in Helenvale all these businesses were community favourites [were looted]. I guess the owners simply did not have the money to start over again.'<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Du Plessis, A (2014).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### NOSTALGIC STORIES OF DAYS GONE BY

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERVIEWS

As noted above, the interview process privileged these individuals and groups as 'expert participants'. A range of individuals and groups (historical and current) engaged and still engage with these structures. Although it is interesting to understand the current individual and group users of these structures, this study identifies the historical users as valuable and focuses on their experiences.

Three 'preset' themes were chosen to explore the interviewees' stories: first, responses relating to the individual and the group, a second set of responses relating to ideas of nostalgic memory and a third set of responses relating to the potential heritage resource. Each of these has sub-categories that are elaborated on from the initiation of the major theme. There is also a set of 'emergent themes' emanating from the interviews. These are themes that were not fully considered at the outset of the interview process but that have become prominent. From this set of themes and sub-themes, emerge important patterns and connections. Are there relationships between categories?

In undertaking the organisation of the evidence, care has been taken not to allow for an overly deductive and reductive process, but rather to use this as a tool to allow for richer and more supportive responses to the study argument. 'The coding, categorization and typologising of stories result in telling only parts of the story, rather than them in their 'wholeness'.<sup>167</sup>

In describing oral history testimony, Field elaborates on the open-ended interview method. 'If you are trying to understand how and why people believe what they believe, think what they

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<sup>167</sup> Miller, J, Glassner, B (1998): 127.

think, and – most crucially – why people act in the ways they do, then memories and oral narratives or texts are of vital significance.<sup>168</sup> ‘Oral history testimony’ that allows eye witness participants to construct their version of past events is increasingly preferred as a method of engaging with marginalised communities whose narrative has not been fully voiced and may contradict the official narrative.<sup>169</sup>

‘Literal recall is very rare and unimportant, remembering not being a matter of reproduction but of construction,’ writes Field.<sup>170</sup> He elaborates on these constructions of the past by noting that they include popular and unpopular memories. This highlights a key position of this study – a construction of the past that is both popular and unpopular and how these two operate, often at the same time. This is manifested in the popular, pleasant nostalgic memories of the ordinary and everyday activities related to entertainment and growing up, in contrast to the trauma of the unpopular memories of forced removal and segregation.

Trotter notes that the official transcript is that of authority and is used to rationalise and justify relationships of power and domination.<sup>171</sup> The official transcript is generalised and often purports to take a moral position. There are several notable examples of such generalisations in this case study and its context of Korsten. Among these are the forced removal of Black and Coloured people at the turn of the century to newly-created townships such as New Brighton, purportedly for reasons of sanitation and the public good. This reasoning was used again in the forced removals of the 1930s and in the last removal period of the 1960s to 1980s and, along with the additional logic of maintaining peaceful relations between races, became the official transcript.<sup>172</sup>

It can be argued that this example of the argument for forced removal has become a grand generalisation of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century South African city. Other ‘grand generalisations’ may include the position of the ‘Coloured community’ as a single unified population demographic

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<sup>168</sup> Field, S, Swanson, F (2007): 9.

<sup>169</sup> Field, S, Swanson, F (2007): 3-17; Trotter, H (2009): 49-78 and Perks, R, Thomson, A (2003): ix – xiii.

<sup>170</sup> Connerton in Field, S, Swanson, F (2007): 9.

<sup>171</sup> Trotter, H (2009): 53.

<sup>172</sup> Adler, G (1995): 1-30.

that attended to a certain specific useful position in industry (and space in the city), or of Korsten as a place of poverty, crime, lack of hygiene, dullness and subservience – a place for loyal working-class people to reside between working shifts in the conveniently close industrial areas.

The counter transcript highlights memories of independence, business, modern fashion, vibrancy and events and has an undercurrent of subversion. Where the official transcript usually takes the form of written law, rules and bureaucracy, the counter script starts as unwritten, as oral. It is also a narrative, more about meaning than events.<sup>173</sup> The counter transcript is specific, detailed and localised. It takes into account specific activities, people such as neighbours, friends and family members and what they mean to the participant today. This transcript is of personal histories and local relationships – who was there and where did the event happen and then, how does that make the participant feel?

Within this context of generalisations, the notion of a ‘Coloured community’ and its own heritage emerged. ‘The past is not just a tool in the arsenal of power, but the very wellspring of identity.’<sup>174</sup> Several interviewees describe the construction of the heritage of the Coloured community beginning with the act of forced removal. For them the period prior to the removals was one of largely unselfconscious, peaceful, mixed race neighbourhoods and the time after of racial awareness, animosity and broken social structures. Issues of demographic terminology are described in *South End As We Knew It*, a book about the forced removals of South End, which describes how terms were constructed by the Populations Registrations Act of 1950 to define all people who were not ‘European’ or ‘Native’. This included a wide range of groups such as previously labelled, St Helenian, Griqua and ‘Bushman’<sup>175</sup>, as well as Indians and people of Chinese descent.<sup>176</sup> This act of definition and registration was powerful in its removal of difference and as an act of separation – the ‘Coloured community’ was a ‘catch all’ for a wide range of minorities.

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<sup>173</sup> Portelli, A (2003): 66-68.

<sup>174</sup> Olick, J (2007): 20.

<sup>175</sup> The term ‘Bushman’ is understood today as being derogatory and even the more commonly used ‘Khoi San’ designation is much contested.

<sup>176</sup> Agherdien, Y, George, A, Hendricks, S (1997): 2. Chinese people were later reclassified as European and Indians were removed from the Coloured group and defined as ‘Asiatic’.

## **'THE HABITABLE SPACES OF LOCAL LEGENDS'**

The first of the three sets of interviews was a group of three individual interviews with people who were engaged with everyday community life at the time and have subsequently become well-known community leaders. The interviews were undertaken in August and September 2014 as a 'pilot study' to test the interview questions and assist with furthering the conceptual development of this study. A subsequent analysis revealed that the responses were remarkably similar. All three interviewees are between 60 and 80 years old, all were involved in sports administration in the Metro and all faced forced removal in the 1960s, when they were young men. Their testimony supports Trotter's notion of the commemorative narrative.

The narrative similarities relate, first, to the detailed memory of everyday experience, especially of their homes prior to forced removals and, when prompted by the line of questioning, of places of entertainment. The recall of detail (particularly names) was surprising. Second, all three could describe some of the physical features of these entertainment structures with specific detail. The interior of the Alabama Dance Hall and its sunken dance floor, for example, was described by all three without prompting. Other specific physical features were less clear such as, interestingly, the interiors of the cinema structures. I was anticipating that memories of these interiors would be vivid.

Interviewee Two described the area generally and the Alabama as follows:

The Korsten Alabama Hotel, the Reno Cinema, the Star and the Casino ... if you look at that is almost a square ... so there was a buzz on Saturday evenings, on Friday evenings when people came from work and got ready for the weekend of entertainment ... so the Alabama played a huge role in keeping ... in a sense that community feel together.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

According to Interviewee One,

The Reno was particular ... they had live shows, bands used to come from all over the country to play in the Reno. I remember watching the Syndicate Sisters there ... and some other bands that came up there ... and of course there was a boxing match at the Reno as well. The whole area ... half a kilometre radius I think ... was the hub of the entertainment area of the Northern Areas ...<sup>178</sup>

You could meet at the Ala [abama Hotel] ... didn't have the taverns and all the other places of the previously White areas. We had to get permission to go to the Holiday Inn, for that matter ... you know you had to get a permit to have a meeting at the Holiday Inn.<sup>179</sup>

Further elaboration of the landmark nature of the Alabama Hotel by Interviewee One included,

Buildings are an important part of memory, definitely ... the Alabama was a landmark ... in those days you could give people directions ... when they got to PE ... you tell the people as they come off the N2 there is Livingstone Hospital and the Alabama ... meet me there to take you home. That was a meeting point ... so the Alabama became a landmark in that sense.<sup>180</sup>

On the value of the structures themselves and 'reclaiming our heritage', Interviewee One said:

'I think that [demolition] will take away the essence of what the place was. They could perhaps refurbish the Alabama and still call it the Alabama and have the shops on the side and so on ... but ... look, things are moving so rapidly today for the younger generation, somebody born [in the] last twenty years ... the Alabama doesn't mean anything ... There is a move towards reclaiming our history ... once the Reno

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<sup>178</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

<sup>179</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

<sup>180</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

sign is gone no one will ask why is it there. That part of history will be wiped out. Similarly is the Alabama when you drive past and people ask what is that big building, what is that 'Ala', why is that 'Ala' ... then the older people like us will talk about it.<sup>181</sup>

Interviewee Three responded to the discussion about the possible demolition of the Alabama Hotel as follows:

'It's cold now ... that vibe is not there anymore ... you know you can't in a sense ... you have to go work very hard to recreate that ... I would say that it is just a commercial building, just like any other building.'<sup>182</sup>

All three said, using quite similar words, that before the forced removals their former neighbourhoods (South End, North End and Korsten) were places focused on the family, religion and multiracial harmony. This is in line with Trotter's experience of the forced removal testimony of District Six. This story of the old home was reinforced in an article in the *Weekend Post* about a function at the South End Museum, where it was noted that 'his face becomes serious when thinking about what it could mean for that spirit [of the old home] to be restored to South Africa. 'We could only hope and pray that it [the spirit of South End] could be restored, because then heaven would be here.'"<sup>183</sup> The old home becomes a myth, an idealised homeland that never existed. The old home is always simple, homely, traditional, stable and an absolute that stands in contrast to modern day life.

The response of Interviewee One to the subject of forced removals was poignant.

My wife ... and that's not an exaggeration, she ... sobs everyday we pass South End even now if we take a drive ... and put her in the car and drive past she will mention that she wants to die there.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

<sup>182</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

<sup>183</sup> Daniels (2014): 8.

<sup>184</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

Commenting on the Northern Areas Uprising of August 1990, Interviewee Three said:

I can't understand why people want to recall those riots because they only did harm to the community ... it broke down a community that was just recovering from the effects of the Group Areas Act. And then that happened and it set back the community another ten or fifteen years or more in my opinion ... this was almost a community fighting itself and that was poor ... you know that the community almost turned on itself.<sup>185</sup>

In summary, I felt that the interviewees were aware of their nostalgia and used nostalgia deliberately as a memory tool.

Nostalgia often emerges after displacement as individuals attempt to regain a sense of identity continuity through recognizing and redefining a shared past. Loss results in identity discontinuity, which nostalgia can repair by creating a shared generational identity to mend the lost one.<sup>186</sup>

This seemed like an important part of the act of historical recall for all three interviewees. An early condition I wanted to test was the nature of the nostalgia, in terms discussed previously by Boym. Interviewee Three responded most clearly to the issue of nostalgia by describing how the past 'cannot be recreated and that we live in a different age now', but that it is important to remember, so that, 'history doesn't repeat itself'.<sup>187</sup> The other two interviewees responded in similar fashion.

On the South End Museum<sup>188</sup> and its role, Interviewee Three commented:

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<sup>185</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

<sup>186</sup> Milligan, M (2003): 381.

<sup>187</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

<sup>188</sup> This is a private museum in South End, similar to the District Six Museum in Cape Town and others that has been established to record the forced removal story of South End.

Memory is important ... there are people who don't come to this museum ... residents of old South End that have never been to the museum and don't want to because of the poor memories that they have or that they are still thinking of the Group Areas Act and how it affected them directly in terms of breaking up families ... the hardship they had to go through as part of the move ... so they would rather forget that part of history ... rightly or wrongly.<sup>189</sup>

Four women, Interviewee Four to Interviewee Seven, were interviewed in a group. They highlighted sub-categories of everyday experience, detail and delight, relationships between various people and the emerging theme of the ability to engage with trauma with positivity and resilience. They approached the interview with humorous nostalgia and provided some detail specifically about the use of the Alabama Hotel.<sup>190</sup> Their ages ranged from 60 to 80 and the focus of the interview was their delight in the activities at the Alabama Hotel dance hall. Their comments reinforced the commemorative narrative testimony of the counter transcript.

They highlighted the use of the Alabama Hotel for a variety of dances, including the 'Quadrille', which is less popular now than it was and is little known by the younger generation – a source of notable concern to the interviewees. Different dances at the hotel took place on different days of the week – during the week there were the more traditional Quadrille and 'Lang Arm' dances and Friday nights were disco nights. The hall was often used as a venue for fundraising events held by various sports clubs. The clubs would book a table and decorate it and the area around it with the club's colours.

Interviewee Seven shared a humorous story about her wedding. She was living in Korsten at the time and married the lifeguard at the local swimming pool. On the evening of the wedding she wanted to go to the Alabama Hotel to dance but her new husband did not share her love of dancing so they went to the Reno Theatre instead to see a late movie.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

<sup>190</sup> Interviewee Four, Five, Six and Seven, 10 October 2014.

<sup>191</sup> Interviewee Seven, 10 October 2014.

Interviewee Four described her youth and functions at the Alabama Hotel as follows:

In my teenage years I stayed in Highfield Road and in those years the Alabama was just down the road ... I used to love the Alabama. It was a place where you met a lot of friends and it was actually the cream of the crop that used to attend the Alabama in those years ... those days it was very safe to walk around. They had a gang named the forty thieves and ... the mongrels ... ya ... and strange enough you could walk and they actually used to walk you home ... 'lady walking around at this time of night' ... 'come, we'll walk you home'. And it was quite safe.<sup>192</sup>

De Certeau refers to 'local legends' and their importance in 'inventing spaces'. In Korsten the local legends are the Quadrille, the public swimming pool and the fundraising dances – sharp focus spaces of the past. 'Local legends ... permit exits, ways of going out and coming back in, and thus habitable spaces.'<sup>193</sup> This seemed important to these interviewees – that ability to go back, with one responding that they 'always think about those times'.<sup>194</sup> De Certeau describes these local legends as 'makeshift things' that have the ability to 'punch open' the accepted order of the official transcript. He also states that 'one can measure the importance of these signifying practices (to tell oneself legends) as practices that invent spaces'.<sup>195</sup> In this way, this creation of local legends becomes a heritage act – as Harvey has described it, a focused process of using the past.

Interviewee Eight is the daughter of the builder of the Reno Theatre. Her interview highlighted common sub-categories of everyday experience, detail, delight and reflective nostalgia. Some of her comments ran counter to the commemorative narrative identity in highlighting some negative environmental conditions in Korsten including crime and racial tension in the 1950s and 1960s. The suggestion of racial tension, made in reference to conflict between Coloured and Xhosa families on Peddie Street, runs counter to the dominant narrative of racial harmony

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<sup>192</sup> Interviewee Four, 10 October 2014.

<sup>193</sup> De Certeau, M (1984): 106-107.

<sup>194</sup> Interviewee Four, Five, Six and Seven, 10 October 2014.

<sup>195</sup> De Certeau, M (1984): 107.

in the mixed suburbs prior to the forced removals.<sup>196</sup> This suggestion is understandably unpopular because it was the argument of the authorities that forced removals and racially separate suburbs would help ease racial tensions.

## CONCURRENCE AND MIXED MESSAGES

The interviews are summarised below in terms of the previously discussed preset themes, the sub-themes and the emergent themes. There are three preset themes (user experience, nostalgia and the potential heritage resource), ten potential sub-categories and two emerging themes. These sub-categories and emerging themes are described briefly and I indicate whether they were common or uncommon and, further, whether the response to them was uniting, mixed or divisive. It is noted that the number of interviews undertaken was limited and this is a limitation to this study, but the eight people who were formally interviewed have provided a rich record of nostalgic responses to the questions, allowing for consensus on many issues.

### User Experience

There were four sub-categories of user experience. The first three were common, united the narrative and are strongly related to each other.

*Everyday experience, detail and delight* was highlighted by the level of detail and recall of many of the interviewees about their youth and their experiences of youth, including the ability to recall names and historical and current relationships.

*Cognitive maps and the ability to recall the details of shared symbolic structures was a common and uniting sub-category.* Following the work of 20<sup>th</sup> century urban space commentators such as Lynch, it is noted that most interviewees had a strong notion of 'cognitive mapping' in relation to the physical area concerned. This became particularly noticeable with regard to the

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<sup>196</sup> Interviewee Eight, 13 November 2014.

interior of the Alabama Hotel dance hall and the descriptions of various significant places in the area of the three potential heritage resources.

*The commemorative narrative testimony* was, predictably, strong and highlighted by common specific details such as the clear visual image of the interior of the Alabama Hotel or the notion of the Gentleman Gangster.

The fourth sub-category of the first theme, of user experience, was relatively common but the degree of importance attributed to it differed. Some interviewees were concerned about the *need for the youth to understand the importance of the past*, to understand the enormity of the trauma and to pass on the message to future generations. The interviewees believe that this is not happening and that young people appear to be deliberately anti-history and to cherish other values such as popular culture, consumer culture, violence and greed.

### **Second, Regarding Nostalgia**

The second theme of Nostalgia had three sub categories that related to nostalgia for place, continuity and the nature of their nostalgia. These insights are described as follows:

*Clear use of reflective nostalgia* was evident in most interviewees who responded with clear indications that rebuilding the past is not only impossible but not wanted.

*Nostalgia of place and the possibility of non – place* was a sub-category with mixed comments. Following from a strong, common and uniting notion of the use of reflective nostalgia, what was noticed was that this nostalgia focussed largely on the event, the people and the experiential but there was also a notion of nostalgia directed towards the physical place. This manifested itself in the recall of the old home and neighbourhood, the recall of the church and (prompted by the focus of the study), towards places of entertainment. Further, the notion of non – place was highlighted by several interviewees who described current day events (such as dances or events at an old age home, like the Malabar Old Age Home) and new relations between family, friends, church and school in the newly developed Northern Areas as valid and

acceptable. In doing this there is an indication that for some, physical place is not an imperative.

*Potential conflicts as to the need for continuity* was a common sub-category with a mixed response. There was a mixed response to the nature of and need for continuity, with some interviewees making place referent comments and a larger number responding in a place congruent manner, noting a desire for the continuity of the 'characteristics of place' rather than the physical place itself. Some interviewees placed high value in the physical place (and its structures) itself while others placed value in the characteristics of the place, notably the experiential, in discussing notions of continuity. Continuity is a primary theme in discussions with people who have been forcibly removed and the commentary in this regard centres on the loss of relations, lifestyle and character but also centred on the loss of the physical – the family home and the church, for example.<sup>197</sup>

### **Third, Regarding Potential Heritage Resources**

The third theme was about the potential heritage resources and thoughts related to this. There were three sub categories related to place attachment and the shared symbolic structure, the materiality of the structure and then the use of the structure. These sub categories are described further as follows:

*Strong sense to place attachment to the shared symbolic structure and social claims to space and time*, was a common and uniting sub theme. There was a strong sense of 'claiming heritage' in the Interviews, and in this there was a sense of symbolic and sometimes physical claiming of places and structures. Further, there was a sense of familiarity and affection when discussing the shared symbolic structures.

*The materiality of heritage resources and shared symbolic structures*, was a sub-category whose outcome is largely unresolved and would be a valuable area of further research. There were

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<sup>197</sup> For example, Interviewees Four, Five, Six and Seven agreed that it was with sadness that they saw that there was 'nothing left' in South End and asked, 'why did they have to knock down the churches?' The attempted and actual demolition of churches and mosques in South End is still an emotive subject.

mixed responses regarding the materiality of the structures and places themselves. For example, many interviewees who previously lived in Korsten were critical of its current state and those that lived there. Others were specifically critical of the condition of the three potential heritage resources. It was notable that no Interviewee made a positive comment on the potential strong aesthetic architectural value of the Reno Theatre. There was not a clear and common indication as to whether the materiality of the heritage was very important.

*Practical reuse*, was a common response when the future of the structures was described. Most interviewees who may have been indifferent to the 'material manifestations' of their heritage were reluctant to openly agree to the potential demolition the three potential heritage resources. In response to a hypothetical possibility of their demolition and the building of a new facility, many were practical and suggested reuse of the existing structure.

### **Regarding Emergent Themes**

The two emergent themes were first, the clear indication that the Northern Areas uprising was a 'near continuity' traumatic event with its own emotional space separate from that of forced removals and second, the ability of the interviewees to engage with displacement with positivity and resilience.

### **Relations**

There are some evident sub-category relations, some anticipated and others not. There are five clear, common and uniting sub categories that create a common position of the case study. These related to the narrative of the everyday, the use of a commemorative narrative identity and the use of cognitive mapping – all directing the narrative towards a clear notion of reflective nostalgia. This in turn directs the conceptual position of the case study to a strong sense of place attachment towards certain shared symbolic structures as an act of a heritage claim. This is not necessarily realised physically (like a land claim, for example) but I sensed this to be a more of a symbolic act. This was realised largely in the act of talking, recording and claiming that created a conceptual space of legitimacy of personal recall of the counter transcript.

The common and mixed sub categories (of which there are three) are more diverse and less thematically contained but do highlight notions of validity to pastness and desire for the paternalistic act of passing this on to future generations. It is not clear how this is to be done. Central to this notion is the mixed response to the need of physical continuity through the retaining of the possible heritage resources. The unprompted idea of giving old structures a new use is significant, and something that further research could explore.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### INTERPRETING THE EVIDENCE –VALORISATION OF THE EVERYDAY

This chapter is in four parts that are directed towards an interpretation and understanding of the case at hand and response to the argument. These four parts are first, a summary of points of departure; second, discussion on emerging values; third, discussion on the relationship between the heritage resource and place attachment and then finally, a study of these notions in describing relative value of the structures concerned. It is important to note that this is not intended to be a methodological revision of contemporary heritage management practice, but rather as an exercise in highlighting other values.

#### POINTS OF DEPARTURE FOR INTERPRETATION OF THIS CASE STUDY

In order to interpret the evidence of the Interviews, it is necessary to highlight three conceptual points of departure – the use of notions of continuity, place and nostalgia.

##### **First, Positioning Memory and Nostalgia in Relation to the Case Study**

Nora suggests that the ‘true’ and ‘traditional’ memories of individuals and groups has been replaced by a constructed ‘modern’ memory and so there is the need to deliberately create archives in the form of the *lieux de memoire*, particularly in relation to minorities.<sup>198</sup> For this study, I suggest that this is the case.

How could this be created and does it need to be physically realised? Nora elaborates on the nature of the ‘site’<sup>199</sup> by suggesting three values – material, symbolic and functional – that coexist. Here there is an opportunity for the widest scope of what the site could be. It could be an event, *la fete*, a symbolic act such as the piling of stone markers or setting free of balloons on the District Six site, ‘a classroom manual [such as the ‘Pillars of Korsten and New Brighton’

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<sup>198</sup> Nora, P (1989): 7

<sup>199</sup> This site is not necessarily physically and conceptually different from the notion of ‘site’ and ‘place’ as discussed above with regard to the charters.

publication, for example] a testament or a veteran's reunion'.<sup>200</sup> Within the context of this study, any of these could satisfy the three coexisting values. Indeed, the act of me meeting with the interviewees (particularly with Interviewee four, five, six and seven in group format with cake and tea) is in itself a *lieux de memoire*.

### **Second, Continuity, Change and Flux**

I have argued for a need for continuity and suggested that it enhances a range of positive emotional and psychological conditions. The notion of limiting dramatic change, encouraging constant incremental flux and reinforcing the past in the present is supported. This idea of the positive nature of flux has most clearly been highlighted by Lowenthal, but is also highlighted in the arena of Environmental Psychology and Geography. It is suggested in this study that place-congruent continuity ('continuity of the characteristics of place') is a progressive method that allows individuals and groups experiencing the trauma of displacement to adapt.

The example of this case study is telling in regard to a contradiction that has become apparent - all interviewees have moved away from Korsten and seem to have a weak attachment to the materiality of the structures of their past, but all identified themselves positively with the nostalgia for the structures. These structures satisfy the conditions of the shared symbolic structure and the prominence of nostalgia. So can the notion of the shared symbolic structure exist without its physical materiality, in the form of the non physical, symbolic *leux de memoire*, for example? The rationale of some interviewees for the retaining the structures seem to focus on a clear position – there is a certain practicality and efficiency to reusing them.

In terms of management of continuity and change, there was general agreement in the Interviews that the traumatic event such as forced removals or the Northern Areas Uprising are unwelcome but that there was an acceptance of the current spatial-temporal context ('you can't change the past').

### **Third, Positioning Nostalgia in Relation to Place**

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid: 18-19.

Nostalgia has been discussed, not as merely a ‘kitsch’ in contrast to a more valid and noble notion of memory, but rather as an important tool often used by individuals and groups in situations of displacement. The positive effect of reflective nostalgia (that allows for ‘longing and loss’ rather than the desire for the rebuilding of the lost home) has been highlighted. This effect is found in the nostalgic assigning of value to the shared symbolic structure. In this, the role of the *lieux de memoire* is complimentary.

This nostalgic site of memory perhaps has already taken the physical form – signage on structures, street names, shared symbolic structures still active in their use such as La La’s Spice King or Delhi Snacks that are occasionally visited by those that have since left the area, representations such as photo albums (as showed to me by two interviewees) and the collective act of engaging with the narrative of the place and its structures (such as those who allowed me to interview them for this study).<sup>201</sup>



Figure 16

La Las Spice King on Stanford Road.

Source: Google Maps, 2014.

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<sup>201</sup> This takes the form of the ‘constructivist approach to meaning’, where ‘things don’t mean: we construct meaning using representational systems – concepts and signs. According to this approach, the material world must not be confused with this symbolic world where ‘practices and processes through which representation, meaning and language operate.’ Hall, S (1997): 17.

## EMERGING VALUES RELATED TO THE HERITAGE RESOURCE

There are three emerging contemporary notions of value that I believe are important to allow this study to appropriately discuss the relationship between the case study and the potential heritage resources of Korsten. These are essentially of an 'experiential' nature relating to the increasing interest in the ordinary and everyday heritage resource, the ideas generated by notions of place and issues of use, reuse and economics. Generally

Values give some things significance over others and thereby transform some objects and places into 'heritage'. The ultimate aim of conservation is not to conserve material for its own sake but, rather, to maintain (and shape) the values embodied by the heritage – with physical intervention or treatment being one of the many means toward that end,

And,

The creation of cultural heritage is largely derived from the way people remember, organise, think about, and wish to use the past and how material culture provides a medium through which to do this. The stories invested in objects, buildings, and landscapes, by individuals or groups, constitute a currency in which the valorisation of cultural heritage is transacted.<sup>202</sup>

If valorisation is giving added value to an object or place in the present, how are these values determined? Choay notes that, 'the key to the heritage enterprise is valorisation, or enhancement. This is the very keyword that sums up the present status of the built historic heritage'.<sup>203</sup> Further, Choay is critical of the link of valorisation to a patrimonial approach to heritage where the heritage resource is controlled by the elite few and managed in a way that reinforces their claim and stewardship of it (as well as the ability to receive profit from it).<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> Avrami, E, Mason, R, de la Torre, M (2000): 7-8.

<sup>203</sup> Choay, F (1992): 143.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid: 143-144.

This can be done in a variety of ways, most notably by identification of value by professional experts (its valorisation) and state intervention that usually involves assigning constraining rights to the heritage resource.

### **The Unintended Monuments of the Everyday**

There is an opportunity to extend the notion of valorisation of the monument to the ordinary and everyday. An argument of this study is that the ordinary and everyday structures, the cinema or dance hall or corner café, are enmeshed in ‘small and personal heritages’ and it is this that makes them valuable. It relates to a specific group of people and is linked to a specific time in contrast to the often universal and more timeless values highlighted the charters.

Milligan notes recent tendencies in American historic preservation that highlight the expanding understanding of what history and heritage is: ‘for example, preserving ‘cultural history’ resources – sites associated with patterns of events, and with group interaction, mobilization and daily life – has become a central focus’ and ‘generally, the locations of everyday histories are also imbued with a tangible meaning and should be preserved and acknowledged’.<sup>205</sup>

According to Lebre: ‘Analyzing the everyday may bring out the extraordinary in the ordinary’<sup>206</sup> and in doing so to ‘embrace both the trivial and the extraordinary’ and a positive and vital life force that is different from a notion of ‘everydayness’ that is repetitive, dull and quotidian. In response to the uncertain position of the everyday, Lefebvre highlights the ‘moment’ as a method to ‘rehabilitate everyday life’.

Lefebvre sees the opportunity for a transformation of everyday life, the ‘obliteration of ‘everydayness’ through creativity and play, *la fête*.<sup>207</sup>

In our sense [la fête], is more than a party or festival; it is the oppositional culture of the oppressed, a counter model of cultural production and desire. It offers a view of

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<sup>205</sup> Milligan, M (2007): 120.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid: 111.

<sup>207</sup> Highmore, B (2002): 122-123 and 144.

the official world as seen from below – not the mere disruption of etiquette, but a symbolic, anticipatory overthrow of oppressive social structures. On the positive side, it is ecstatic collectivity, the joyful affirmation of change, a dress rehearsal for utopia.<sup>208</sup>

This value is realised in the study in the relationship between user and potential heritage resources. This relationship is the ordinary and everyday practice of engaging with structures such as the entertainment structures that are the subject of the study. Where is the defining separation between ordinary, everyday, dull, and the ordinary and everyday made special by the assignment of an attachment to place? What are the limits of describing the built environment in heritage terms?

This study argues that these are tested first by assigning significance according to the values of the shared symbolic structure with strong notions of place attachment and second by the prominence of nostalgia for this shared symbolic structure. This allows the place or structure to be categorised as more than the dull, functionally everyday. It becomes something with value defined by a system that values a shared symbolic structure and the prominence of nostalgia. In such cases the places and structures, now of a certain value, can be discussed according to a scale of value that allows for wider and more subtle critical consideration of the built environment.

The position of this emerging value is reinforced by the interviews, for example, in the common and uniting sub-categories of ‘everyday experience, detail and delight’, as well as in the sub-category of ‘cognitive maps and the ability to recall in detail shared symbolic structures’.

## **The Opportunities and Challenges of Place**

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid: 123.

A significant position of this study is that place and the physical potential heritage resource play a primary role in the user's ability to remember, be nostalgic and define heritage. In this way, this study presents an opposition to the possibility of the 'non-place urban realm' where 'urban conditions are on the verge of being defined only by immaterial links, by the constitution of communities entirely liberated from any sort of spatial roots'<sup>209</sup> and supports Choay's criticism, highlighting the problem of 'the organic time of remembrance' being replaced with 'instantaneity'.<sup>210</sup>

The interviews showed that there was ambivalence about the spatially located structure and stronger positive emotions about present-day relationships and activities and their relationship to the past. For example, several interviewees indicated that they were still in contact with others they had known during the period covered by the case study and interviewees Four, Five, Six and Seven expressed satisfaction and pleasure in their ability to meet and recall the past. This response ties in with Massey's notion of a 'place' as a 'particular, unique, point of intersection' – 'a meeting place'.<sup>211</sup> In such situations place is not specifically physical and able to be bound but is, rather, 'articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings'. This allows the place to become 'extroverted', with links to a wider context. It also allows it to have multiple identities and to change over time.<sup>212</sup> In this way, place can be considered as 'temporary', within a context where

whichever view comes to be dominant, and by whatever means its hegemony assured, the particular characterisation of that envelope of space-time, that place, which it proposes is only maintained by the exercise of power relations in some form. The identity of places, indeed the very identification of places as particular places, is always in that sense temporary, uncertain, and in processes.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> Webber in Choay, F (1992): 167.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid: 167.

<sup>211</sup> Massey, D (1994): 7.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid: 7-8.

<sup>213</sup> Massey, D (1995):189-190.

The position of this emerging value is reinforced by the interviews, for example, in the common and uniting sub-category of 'clear use of reflective nostalgia', as well as in the mixed and uncommon sub-category of 'nostalgia of place and the possibility of non-place.

### **Use, Reuse and Economics**

It is of growing and particular relevance to the developmental state for heritage to be cognisant of its economic value. The Getty Conservation Institute has raised a wide range of issues related to this, noting that '[e]conomic factors shape the possibilities of conservation practice in fundamental ways, by influencing decisions, shaping policy, encouraging or discouraging the use of heritage, enabling conservation work through financing.'<sup>214</sup> The institute defines two types of economic values – use values (market values) and non-use values (non-market values), where use values are more easily allocated a financial value and non-use values are defined by ideas of socio-cultural economic value and 'public good'.<sup>215</sup>

Reigl highlights this notion in 1903, writing: 'Physical life is a pre-condition of all psychic life and is therefore more important. The former can, at least, prosper just as well without the higher form of psychic life, but not vice versa.'<sup>216</sup> He suggests that substitutes (modifications) are not only possible but are probably required to make structures with a previous heritage value adaptable and relevant to the present. Further, he highlights the notion of use and the positive value of the activity created by the heritage asset. This positive role of modification has been observed by environmental psychologists, who state that it is valuable to maintain structures that are 'familiar and [can] still be made to serve a purpose'.

Interviewee One was firm that the buildings should not be demolished, suggesting renovation as an alternative.<sup>217</sup> It is significant that most interviewees supported the way the Reno and Star theatres had been recycled as churches and, in the case of the Reno Theatre, as a preschool. This can be seen as a practical and considered response in contrast to the more

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<sup>214</sup> Avrami, E, Mason, R, de la Torre, M, (2000): 4.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid: 13.

<sup>216</sup> Reigl, A, (1996): 79.

<sup>217</sup> Interviewee One, 21 August 2014.

emotional responses to the condition of the Alabama Hotel and its rather undignified subdivisions into a range of spaces that have resulted in the loss of the well-remembered interiors. I suggest that this notion of practical reuse can be seen as an expression of *laissez faire* economic independence ('let the owner do what he or she wants') with a strong sense of economy ('why waste a good building', or 'the building is still in good condition', or 'there is no need to demolish it').

The position of this emerging value is reinforced by the interviews, for example, in the common and uniting subcategories of 'strong sense of place attachment to the shared symbolic structure and social claims to space and time', as well as 'practical reuse'.

### **THE PROMINENCE OF NOSTALGIA, SHARED SYMBOLIC STRUCTURES AND PLACE ATTACHMENT VERSUS THE HERITAGE RESOURCE**

Is there an overlap between the notion of place attachment as described by Environmental Psychology and the role and nature of the heritage resource within the context of critical heritage studies, and would it be valuable if there was? Are all places that are the subject of high levels of place attachment also nostalgia prominent and shared symbolic structures? Then, are they heritage resources?

Through the brief literature review and the interviews a direct link between the idea of place attachment and the shared symbolic structure can be made – places that have a high level of psychological place attachment are also 'shared symbolic structures that validate, if not actually define social claims to space and time'.<sup>218</sup>

Primary to this link is the use of nostalgia. A sense of social claim to space and time and a sense of pride have been common and uniting themes in the interviews. This claim to the entertainment era, its activities and places was notably confident in contrast to the uncertain and less articulate claims about the trauma of displacement and Apartheid, for example. This

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<sup>218</sup> Hubbard, P (1993): 361.

study argues that all three of the structures described (and several others) are notably shared symbolic structures and of places of attachment because of three notions - that of historicity, the strong sense of the personal and then, (through nostalgia) they have the ability to mediate between the past and the present.<sup>219</sup>

Are all shared symbolic spaces also heritage resources? A suggested position on this is the notion of two realms of describing place that have similar but different systems of value – the place attachment of the shared symbolic structure and the heritage resource that may or may not be common to a particular structure and is potentially causally related. Lynch notes that many shared symbolic and historic places and structures are rarely visited by the citizenry (who may have moved away from the place, for example) but that ‘a threat to destroy these places will evoke a strong reaction, even from those who have never seen, and perhaps never will see, then. The survival of these unvisited, hearsay settings conveys a sense of security and continuity.’<sup>220</sup>

The second realm is that of the heritage resource. The heritage resource is described according to a tradition of ‘heritage significances’, values described by Reigl and then contested and modified through the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. In heritage value terms, the interview process has, as anticipated by Hubbard,<sup>221</sup> shown an ambivalence to the materiality of the three structures with few clear responses from interviewees in describing the heritage value of the structures themselves. In response to questions such as what the interviewees thought of the structures today, most responded generally that things had changed and that Korsten had ‘gone down’. Interviewee Six described visiting the area a few days prior to the interview and going to a ‘china shop’ in the Alabama Hotel, saying it was ‘sad to go back and see what it looked like now’.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Harvey, D (2008), 19-20.

<sup>220</sup> Lynch, K (1972): 59.

<sup>221</sup> Hubbard, P (1993): 359-373.

<sup>222</sup> Interviewee Six, 10 October 2014.

There were mixed responses to the question of whether the structures could be demolished and new buildings built in their place. Interviewee Three felt the materiality of the past was important but did not elaborate on whether the structures should be conserved.<sup>223</sup> Interviewee Two said 'so much had been lost', but steered the conversation to the responsibility of museums for conserving the past, highlighting an ambivalence about the potential role of physical place and heritage resources in memory and engaging with the past.<sup>224</sup> Perhaps this ambivalence highlights a lack of clear general understanding of notions of heritage and heritage resources and further reluctance to engage with heritage management, with its perceived accompanying context of authority and state control.

### **SCALES AND SYSTEMS OF VALUE**

What has emerged is a growing awareness that there are several systems of value that can describe places and structures, whether they are heritage resources or to places with notions of attachment and the shared symbolic structure. Further, within each of these is a scale. In terms of scales of value, the least-valued structures are the ordinary and mundane, which usually serve purpose of function only and to which users have no sense of attachment. A second set of structures on the value scale are those to which users may have a strong attachment as nostalgic prominent shared symbolic structures but which cannot be considered heritage resources.

A third set consists of heritage resources (which, in the context of this study, are shared symbolic structures as well). These systems of heritage value allow for a more varied and subtle response to places and structures, from the wider definition of heritage proposed above, and are not intended to be sequential or conclusive.

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<sup>223</sup> Interviewee Three, 3 September 2014.

<sup>224</sup> Interviewee Two, 3 September 2014.

In this particular context the following five systems of value are noted:

First, the assignment of significance according to the values of the shared symbolic structure with strong notions of place attachment, with three considerations: historicity, a sense of the personal and an ability to mediate the past and the present.

Second (and strongly related to the first), the prominence of nostalgia for this shared symbolic structure, with four considerations: usually of a higher value in smaller ideo-cultural communities, in situations of displacement and constraints over media, mobility and choice.

Third, a contemporary heritage resource value set with five considerations: historical, aesthetic, scientific and social value and rarity/representivity.<sup>225</sup>

Fourth (and related to the third), a set of three emerging heritage resource values as described in this study – the ordinary and the everyday, the opportunities and challenges of place and use, reuse and economics that are added to the values ascribed to the contemporary heritage resource value set. This would mean that this system of value would include eight considerations: historical, aesthetic, scientific and social value, rarity/representivity, the ordinary and the everyday, the opportunities of place and use, reuse and economics.

Fifth, is the strength of opportunity of the heritage of the structure in becoming a *lieux de memoire*. This is considered by understanding the value of the nature of the 'site' (not necessarily physical) in material, symbolic and functional terms and how they coexist.

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<sup>225</sup> This set of values is as defined by the National Heritage Resources Act of South Africa.

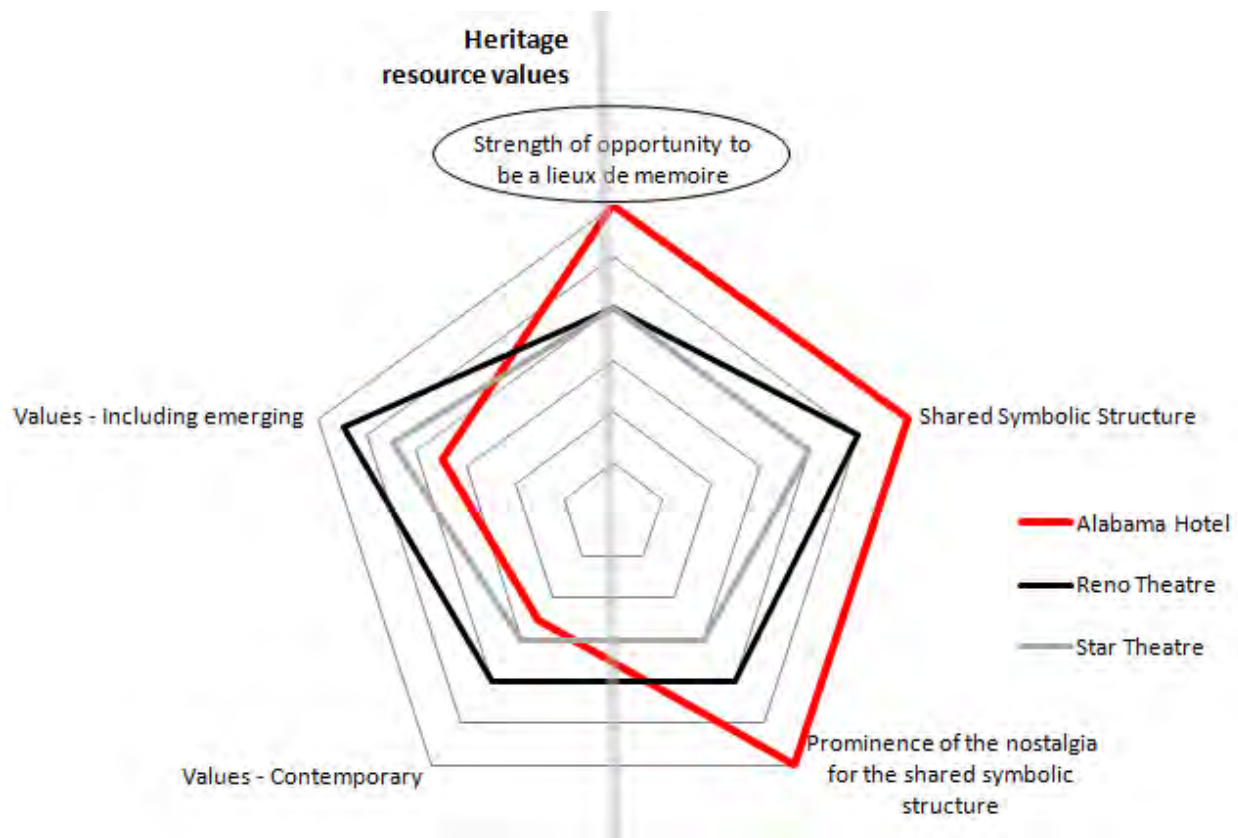


Figure 17

Radar graph describing relative values for the three structures using five different systems of value.

Source: Bryan Wintermeyer 2014.

The Alabama Hotel, indicated in Figure 17 by the red line, has notably the most variable scale of value of the three structures, with a strong likelihood of being a *lieux de memoire*, shared symbolic structure and nostalgia values but generally weaker heritage resource values. The Alabama Hotel is weakly valued using the contemporary values of historical, aesthetic, scientific and social value and rarity/representivity. It performs slightly better when the emerging values of the ordinary and the everyday, the opportunities of place and use, reuse and economics are included in the value set.

The Star Theatre, indicated in Figure 17 by the grey line, is more consistent in scale than the Alabama Hotel and generally follows the pattern of the Reno Theatre, but at a lower scale of value. Through the interview process, it seemed the Star Theatre was the least prominent shared symbolic structure and evoked the least prominent nostalgia. But it is valued moderately in terms of contemporary heritage resource values. These include a moderate value

ascribed to historical value and a greater value to scientific (as a cinema, a new technology at the time) and social because of its position as an early cinema in the area and for Coloured people. As with the other structures, its value is increased when the emerging values of the ordinary and the everyday, the opportunities of place and use, reuse and economics are included in the value set. Notions of use and reuse are strong values, as are the opportunities of 'place as meeting place' and the ongoing integration of the structure into the everyday activity of Korsten, as a Cinema and now as a Church.

The Reno Theatre, indicated in Figure 17 by the black line, follows the Star Theatre but on a stronger scale of value. It is argued that the Reno Theatre would be valued relatively well (by the professional expert) using contemporary heritage values. This would be by virtue of the same values ascribed to the Star Theatre but in addition because of the prominent corner position that gives it a landmark quality, its scale and grandeur and the level of detail and sophistication of the modernist aesthetic – all of which provide aesthetic value.<sup>226</sup> In addition to this, it is argued that it would perform well if the emerging values of the ordinary and the everyday, the opportunities of place and use, reuse and economics are included in the value set. Notions of use and reuse are strong values, as are the opportunities of 'place as meeting place' and the ongoing integration of the structure into the everyday activity of Korsten, as a Cinema and now as a Church.

In summary, the Reno Theatre performs the strongest using a contemporary value set usually used by the professional expert in assigning heritage value. It would also perform the strongest with the addition of the emerging value set, although the values of the other two structures would also be strengthened by this inclusion. The Alabama Hotel performs the strongest when values more commonly assigned the user expert, that of the shared symbolic structure and the prominence of nostalgia, are used. In this, the difference between how value is assigned to potential heritage resources by the user expert and the professional expert is highlighted.

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<sup>226</sup> For example, Interviewee One noted that 'the Reno for one ... that's kept its shape'.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS

This study recognises that heritage values are contested. In South Africa there seems to be a concerted drive to define heritage in a way that allows for wider definitions. What is suggested is that the heritage resource should be re-evaluated in contemporary and emerging terms – no longer wholly defined by the values of age, materiality and architectural accomplishment. These new terms need to include major themes such as migration, forced removals and displacement. In this, nostalgia is a valuable tool for defining heritage and the local and experiential are brought to the fore.

As an architect, it has been tempting to steer the argument towards issues of heritage resource management such as formal protection and restrictive property conditions rather than to keep it defined more generally as ‘heritage’. This has resulted in my own dilemma about how the built environment is thought of and valued by those who are not so-called ‘professional experts’ but are, rather, ‘user experts’. I had expectations of the three structures being valorised by the expert as heritage resources, but have found the responses of the interviewees ambivalent on this matter.

Rather, the findings of the study suggest that past users of structures, and the built environment more generally, experience their heritage with what Boym calls reflective nostalgia, that is strongly associated to shared symbolic structures. This has directed the study towards the opportunity for the development of a series of *lieux de memoire* sites in the widest sense, with the intention of deliberately using the past with ‘commemorative vigilance’ so that marginal heritage claimants and their heritage are not ‘swept away’.<sup>227</sup> Discussions with past users raised several methods already underway and possibilities of how this could happen.

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<sup>227</sup> Nora, P (2001): 12.

What is uncertain is who the custodian of these places of memory is and if it is necessary to deliberately formalise this process? <sup>228</sup>

I argue that contemporary heritage resource values are to be complemented by emerging values defined on a case-by-case basis that is more localised and experiential. This allows for the present-day valorisation of place and structure to become a more useful and subtle tool for user experts, who, in conjunction with a professional expert who plays a supportive role, are able to define their own heritage, particularly where it involves marginal potential heritage resources.

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<sup>228</sup> This issue was highlighted in the discussions about the South End Museum. See Chapter Five.

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## **ANNEXURE**

The annexure attached contains information about the Interviews, the Interview Structure and Questions and the Notice to the Interviewees.

## ANNEXURE 1: THE INTERVIEWEES

I have chosen to not identify the interviewees by name in this study as their identification would not change the nature of the study. The interviews are noted as follows:

- Interviewee 1: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 21 August 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 2: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 03 September 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 3: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 03 September 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 4: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 10 October 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 5: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 10 October 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 6: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 10 October 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 7: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 10 October 2014. Film recording by Mikale Barry.
- Interviewee 8: Interviewed by Bryan Wintermeyer on 13 November 2014.

## ANNEXURE 2: INTERVIEW STRUCTURE AND QUESTIONS

.....  
(Date)

Revision 03

Bryan Wintermeyer

107 Mackay Street

Richmond Hill

Central

Port Elizabeth

Dear.....

### **Questionnaire Schedule**

Title of Research Project: **Nostalgia and Heritage in Korsten, Port Elizabeth.**

My name is Bryan Wintermeyer and I am conducting research towards a Master's Degree in Conservation of the Built Environment through the University of Cape Town and am hoping to conclude my study by the end of 2014. My research is focused on nostalgia and how communities think about the past. I have focused my attention on a time period of about 1956 to 1990 in Korsten, Port Elizabeth and, as a start, related to three buildings: The Reno Theatre, the Star Theatre and the Alabama Hotel. There may be other buildings that were used at that time that could be identified.

I have heard that many people have strong memories of these, and possible others, and I want to understand this better. In order to determine this, I am going to interview about 10 people

who were active community members in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's. You have been identified as a valuable contributor to this and I would like to talk to you.

### **Introduction to the Interviews**

It is intended that this process allows for the users to be 'expert participants' and has a deliberate focus on their 'subjectivities in the form of their stories'. The intention of these interviews is to understand the current and historical user 'lived' experience of the community of Korsten and the activities related to the time period and places noted above. Although I have highlighted three buildings, the Reno and Star Theatres and the Alabama Hotel, this interview process is not specifically about them but rather the Korsten people of that time. I am suggesting these three buildings as a start to the conversation but am open to hearing about others.

### **Structure of Interviews**

It is suggested that the 'open ended interview' be the general approach to the engagement where open ended questions are used. These are arranged below thematically that follow the main themes of the study. I have started each thematic set with open ended subjective experience questions but also includes a little later these are followed up with more specific questions. The notion of the narrative and telling a story can be powerful methods in the context of this project and is to be encouraged. I think that I will undertake one or two group interviews and a selected number (say, 10) individual interviews of about 60 minutes each<sup>229</sup>. All interviews to participant group are to be recorded. An Ethics Clearance form is to be signed by all participants.

### **Possible Interview Questions**

This section is divided into four sections: Introductory questions, questions related to the people, questions related to memory and nostalgia, questions related to the heritage resource.

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<sup>229</sup> This timeframe is noted as favorable in, Seidman, I (2006): 20.

### *Questions Related to the Community*

Questions related to the theme of the individual and group could include:

- Tell me a little about the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's in Korsten. Where did you live? Where do you live now?
- What did you do for entertainment? What places were important for you?
- Tell me about the people that went to these places. Did you go with friends or by yourself?
- Are you still in contact with these people?
- What were the characteristics of this group of people? What kept the community together? How would you describe the way the people who used to go to these places are related to each other?
- Were these good times? Do you have fond memories about the people of these times?
- Were these places mostly used by Coloured people or was it a place that everyone in Port Elizabeth came to?
- How do you feel about me and others using terms like 'Coloured community'?
- When did things change? What happened to make these changes?
- Were the changes traumatic to you? How did these changes change you and your family?

### *Questions Related to Memory and Nostalgia*

The second set of questions relates to notions of memory and nostalgia, and can include the following:

- I would like to hear about your memories of these places and how they have been used in the past and today. Do you have fond memories of these times? Do you think a lot about the time you used these buildings?
- Do you still talk to other people and friends who were there?
- Have things changed now?
- Is it worthwhile thinking about the past, perhaps even longing for the past? Should it be remembered? Or should we forget about it and think more about our modern world and our modern problems? Do you think it's a good idea to record these memories and create something like a book or a film, or even a memorial?
- Some people say that to be nostalgic is to long for a person's homeland. Many South Africans have had to face tragic change in being forcibly removed and told where to live. Do

you think that we should be nostalgic about the past, like the good memories you may have of Korsten, or rather try and forget about it?

- What would happen if there were no buildings, no physical evidence of those times – like South End for example? If there is nothing left to remember, would it be harder to remember those times? Does it matter if the physical evidence has been totally erased?

*Questions Related to the Heritage Resource*

A third set of questions now directs the interview towards the heritage resource, as follows:

- What buildings in the area were important to you and why? When you used the buildings in the past, when they were theatres and a dance hall, for example, what do you remember most about them?
- They may be used very differently today. What do you think of that? How is the using of these buildings different today from the past? Korsten has changed as well. It looks different and there are different kinds of buildings in Korsten now. Does the way Korsten looks and feels affect you?
- Do you think that the buildings are important to the memories and nostalgia that you may have of the past?
- Are the buildings important to you and your feelings of heritage, or can those feelings happen without the buildings?
- How would you feel if these buildings were demolished? Would it change how you think about the past?
- Do you think it is important for the state to protect certain important places so that memories can be kept?

Thank you for time and participation and I look forward to talking to you. If you are concerned about anything with regards to this and want to discuss this further, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

.....  
Bryan Wintermeyer, Phone number: 0415824390, Email: [bryan@theworkplace.org.za](mailto:bryan@theworkplace.org.za)

## ANNEXURE 3

### NOTICE TO INTERVIEWEES

.....  
(Date)

Revision 03

Bryan Wintermeyer

107 Mackay Street

Richmond Hill

Central

Port Elizabeth

Dear.....

#### **Informed Consent Document<sup>230</sup>**

Title of Research Project: **Nostalgia and Heritage in Korsten, Port Elizabeth.**

My name is Bryan Wintermeyer and I am conducting research towards a Master's Degree in Conservation of the Built Environment through the University of Cape Town and am hoping to conclude my study by the end of 2014. My research is focused on nostalgia and how communities think about the past. I have focused my attention on a time period of about 1956 to the 1990 in Korsten, Port Elizabeth and, as a start related to three buildings: The Reno Theatre, the Star Theatre and the Alabama Hotel. There may be other buildings that were used at that time that could be identified.

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<sup>230</sup> Source: This consent form was drawn up using the example in Appendix D p14 of the University of Cape Town's EBE Ethics in Research Handbook, Revision 3.1 dated 2 February 2012.

I have heard that many people have strong memories of these, and possible others, and I want to understand this better. In order to determine this, I am going to interview about 10 people who were active community members in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's. You have been identified as a valuable contributor to this and I would like to talk to you.

#### *Voluntary participation*

Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part in it if you don't want to. Should you agree to participate it must be your decision alone and you must understand that there will be no negative consequences if you don't. Once you agree to participate and later feel that you no longer want to continue, it is your free choice to withdraw without any consequences at any time.

#### *Recording*

I hereby request your permission to take notes, record your voice and / or film you for the purposes of being able to transcribe it later and/or to make an oral history transcript to be used in the writing of my study. The interview will be a discussion based around a series of questions to which you can respond to. I can make these questions available to you beforehand.

#### *What is expected of you?*

To be interviewed by myself for approximately 60 minutes. I will arrange a facility that is convenient for you for us to meet at. There will be no costs involved for you and your participation will be at no charge.

#### *Benefit*

Being an academic research project, there will be no direct benefit for you other than hopefully feeling good that you participated in a project which is interested in the heritage of the people of Korsten. I can give you a copy of the completed study, if you like.

#### *Possible Risks for You*

Although I will do my best to minimise any possible discomfort, emotional upset, or potential stigmatization from others in the community as a result of your participation, I cannot

guarantee that it may not happen. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible in three ways: your contact details will not be disclosed, the interviews will take place one- on- one, some with only a respected third party present and, thirdly, your responses will not be disclosed to other participants. I have chosen to not disclose any names in my study but rather identify Interviews as, Interviewee 1, 2 ,3 etc.

*What will happen with the information obtained from you?*

The main reason for the interviews is to collect oral history testimonies from people from the Korsten community of the 1960's to 1980's regarding their everyday experiences and nostalgia of activities that took place at that time. The information gathered from these interviews will form part of the research for my Master's and may be included in my dissertation. On completion, a copy of this can be made available to you if you like.

Should you understand and agree with the information in this consent form, I will appreciate it if you could sign below to indicate your willingness to participate. Thank you for time and participation and I look forward to talking to you. If you are concerned about anything with regards to this and want to discuss this further, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

.....  
Bryan Wintermeyer, Phone number: 0415824390, Email: [bryan@theworkplace.org.za](mailto:bryan@theworkplace.org.za)

Name:

.....  
Signature:

.....  
Date: