

Januarie 2013

Dagsê al die belangstellendes in die geskiedenis van ou Pretoria,

Hier volg nog 'n aflewering in die reeks wat in 1987/88 in die Pretoria News verskyn het. U moet maar verskoon as ek inligting wat ek reeds gebruik het weer herhaal. Na 10 jaar is ek nie meer altyd seker wat in die vorige briewe geskryf is nie.

6. Pretoria Gister en vandag [Pretoria News, 1987-08-28]

As ons na die foto kyk sien ons dat die ZAR wapen van die gewel verwyder is. Dit lyk ook asof die horlosie nie meer werk nie. Ook die Nederlandse woorde "Generaal Post Kantoor" en "Private Briewen Bussen" is nie meer daar nie.

A look at the GPO in 1900

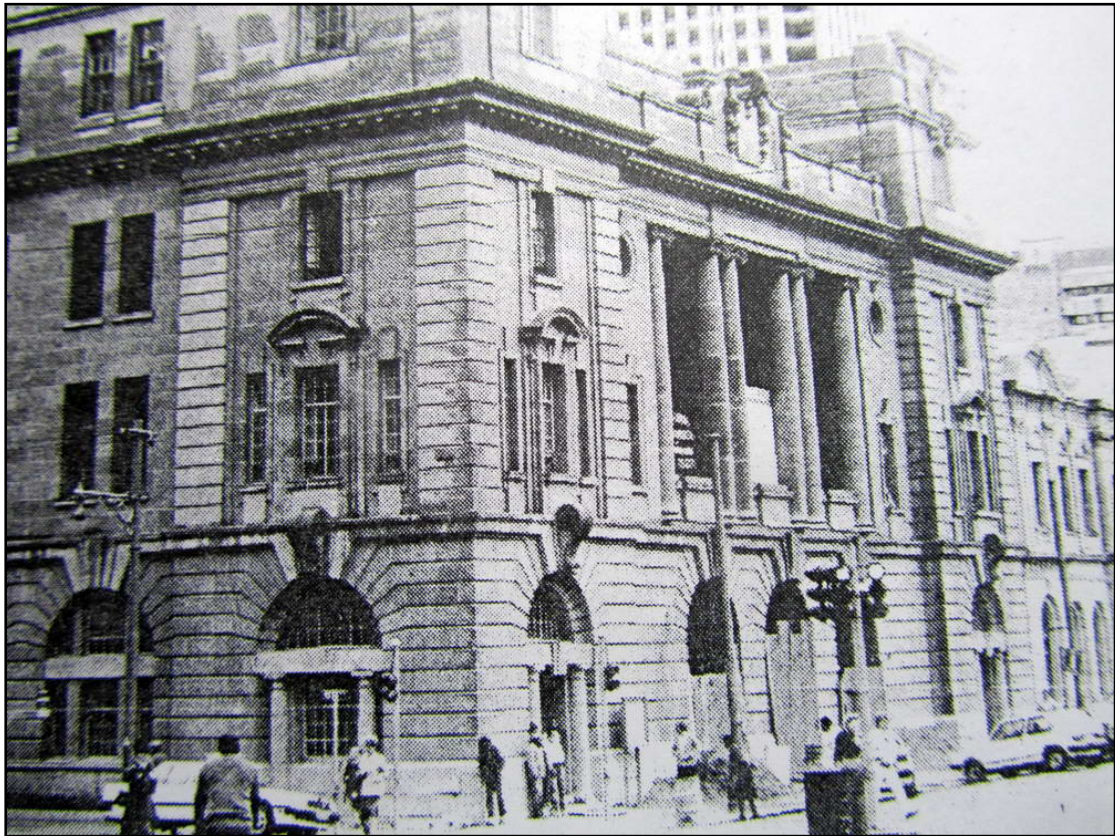


It was at the turn of the century when this photograph was taken of the Post Office, or the General Post Office, as it was known until recent years. The Post Office was built in 1887 on the north corner of Church Street West where it leaves the Square. The Civil Commissioner's office and the landdrost's office were housed in the building, and the telegraph office in the western wing (note the telegraph pole and cables on the extreme left of the picture).

The building was demolished in 1910, and in its place was erected a four-storey building which is still there today, although the Post Office headquarters have now moved into a modern complex at the corner of Vermeulen and Bosman streets.

This picture (above) was probably taken in the early morning, as the sun has drawn long shadows around the men (all wearing hats) and their bicycles, as they called to make use of the city's only postal services at the time.

(Pretoriana picture submitted by Mrs. S. Minnie of 26th Avenue, Villieria. Text by staff writer Daan de Beer)



Die Poskantoor soos ons dit vandag ken



'n Mooi foto van die 1887 poskantoor met die poskoets wat gereed is om te vertrek. Heel links is die deur van die poskantoor, op die hoek die deur van die lokaal waar die briewebusse was, dan volg die kantoor van die Landdros en heel regs die kantoor van die Siviele Kommissaris. Op die dak wapper die vierkleur van die ou ZAR.

Die Poskantoor van 1887

Waar die gebou van die Hoofposkantoor vandag staan, is Pretoria se eerste Pos- en Telegraafkantoor in 1887 gebou. Dit was ontwerp deur Leslie Simonds [Rex-2, p22]. Die nuwe poskantoor van 1887 is gebou op die hoek waar die Austengebou eers gestaan het.

Die volgende beskrywing kom uit 'n koerant van 1891:

“The above-mentioned building comprises not only the Post Office, but also the Telegraph-office, the Postmaster General’s Department, the Civil and Criminal Landdrost’s Courts, and the Civil Commissioner’s Office.

The yard at the back gives room to the police barracks, the Charge Office, and the Fire Station, improvised into a barrack for the Kaffir police.

The building has a decidedly modern appearance, and occupies the most central position in the town. The edifice can not be called solid. During a recent gale part of the galvanized iron roof was flapping up and down like the roof of a canvas tent.

In days of old, the Post Office operations were conducted in a thatched-roof shanty on the site of the present building. Afterwards the Post clerks were shifted to the old gaol where they remained until the new “Postkantoor” was completed. The “Postkantoor” boasts a clock with a white dial, black numbers and gilt hands. Above the Post Office is a flagstaff, and when the English mail comes in, usually of a Monday afternoon, a black flag with the characters B.M. in white floats from the flagstaff, threatening to tear down the cornice whenever the wind is a bit fresh.

On entering the corner door you come full tilt against the tiers of “postbussen”. The arrangements are peculiar. In the right wall are the letter and paper slide, below which stand baskets, which receive a steady stream on mail days. The approach to these baskets is in no way debarred to the public, so that if you slipped in a letter by mistake you may go and help yourself for all the authorities will say.

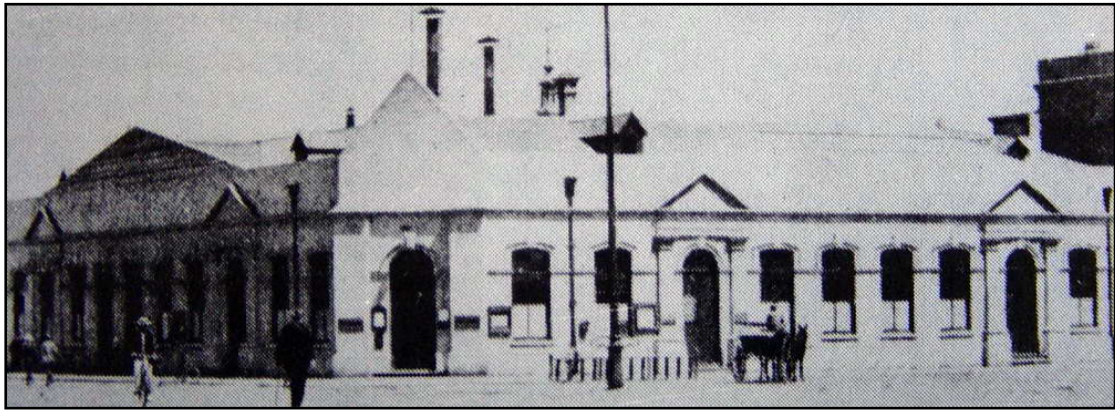
A ladder leads to the loft where the “great unclaimed” repose in dust, and that they are great is shown by the fact that several boards in the ceiling are starting, and threatening, to split.

To the left of the boxes are the Poste Restante, where exemplary courtesy is shown; still further is the money order and parcels depot, where a collection of unclaimed photo’s of beauties are nailed to the panel.

The end of the building is devoted to the telegraph and telephone. The Landdrost’s Courts are roomy, neat buildings. And are considered to be worthy of the capital.”

[Pr-74, p43]

“By around 1905 the Post Office had reached such a stage that the entire cornice had to be removed. Thus it is that later photographs show the clock and rounded gable replaced by a simple triangular gable. The old building had served its purpose and was proving to be too small and dilapidated so a new Grand Post Office was planned.”



Die 1887 Poskantoor kort voordat dit afgebreek is

“The original façade which included the clock and the Republican coat of arms has been removed as the stone work was crumbling and becoming a danger” [Pr-74, p41].

Terwyl die nuwe Poskantoor in aanbou was het die posdiens tydelik verskuif na die ou Muntgebou met die ingang in Kirkness Yard [Pr-74, p45].

In 1889 was die volgende persone verbonde aan die Poskantoor
[Dun-01, p8].

Isaac van Alphen [posmeester-generaal]

S.G. Kriegler [posmeester]

A.G. Cooch [1ste klerk van die posmeester-generaal]

H.J.S. Schuurman [2de klerk van die posmeester-generaal]

C.H. Vos [2de klerk van die posmeester-generaal]

Joseph Walsh [1ste klerk van die poskantoor]

A. van Tulleken [klerk van die posmeester]

U.S.Z.C. Tijn [klerk van die poskantoor]

J.W. Zulch [klerk van die poskantoor]

Landdroskantoor

Jacobus Smit [landdros]

S.P. Coetsee [bode en staljonge]

Siviele Kommissaris se kantoor

William van Manen [kommissaris]

Z.H. Evers [1ste klerk]

F.S. van Manen [2de klerk]

Die nuwe Poskantoor van 1910

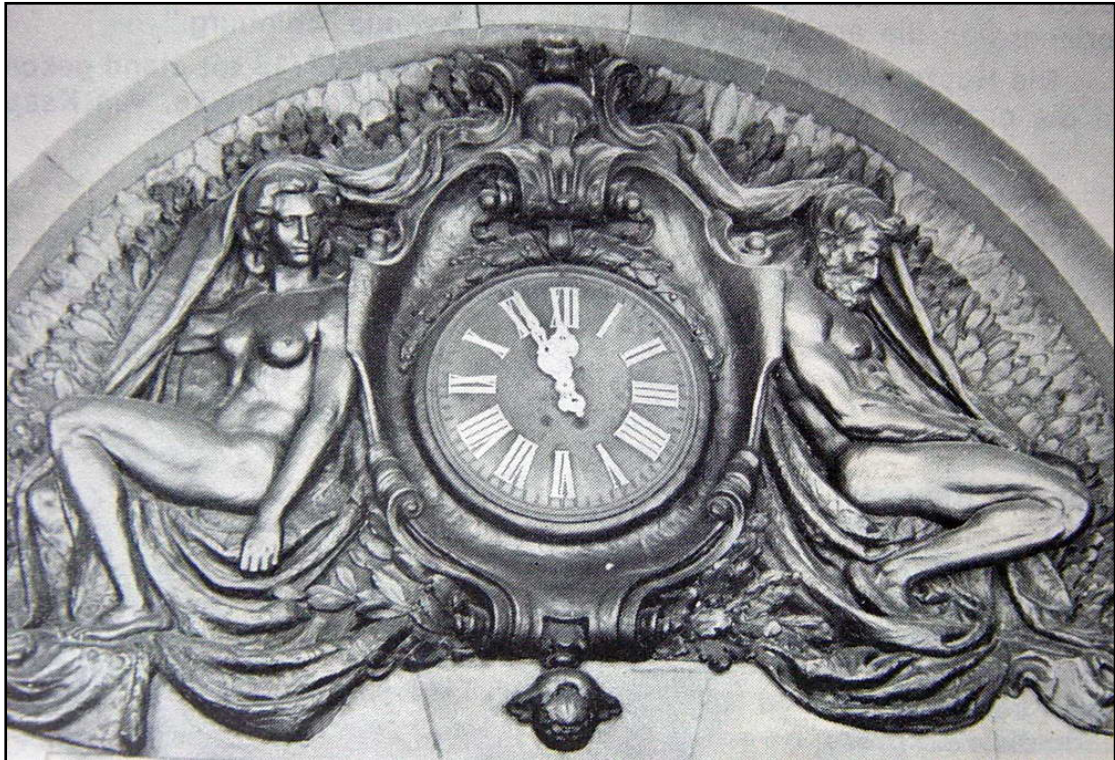
Die Hoofposkantoor is in 1909 deur William Hawke ontwerp, ‘n vennoot in die Kaapstadse argiteksfirma Hawke & McKinlay. Met hierdie ontwerp het argitek Hawke destyds ‘n prysvraag verower. Die boukontrakteur van die Hoofposkantoorgebou was William Nottingham, wat in 1880 na S.A. geëmigreer het. Hy kom in 1892 na Pretoria, en is in vennootskap met W. Rodda vanaf 1892 tot 1898 en van toe af op sy eie [Rex-01, p18].

Die hoeksteen van die Nuwe Poskantoor is op 2 Maart 1910 deur Lord Selborne gelê [Pr-75, p45].

Naakfigure in die Hoofposkantoor

The Post Office on Church Square, which has halls lined with red stone brought by ox wagon from Warm Baths in the Northern Transvaal, has two nudes which are partially hidden from public view. Historians are uncertain who the artist was, but the nudes, with a clock as a central point, are above the main entrance to the building which was completed in 1910 at 'n cost of £130 000.

They are not easily seen as people entering the building have to climb two steps before coming to the main floor. Watching people entering the building, it is clear that only a few notice the nudes, a reclining man and woman [Pr-72, p13].



Kunswerk deur 'n onbekende beeldhouer aan die binnedeur by die sy-ingang aan die Kerkpleinkant van die Hoofposkantoor [Pr-72, p222]

'n Paar interessante stukkies inligting uit koerante

1874 – Pos word deesdae baie vinnig gestuur. Dit neem net 30 dae vir 'n brief om van Engeland na Suid Afrika te kom. [De Volksstem, 1874-07-11]

1880 – Pos tussen Pretoria en Leydenburg gaan nie meer te perd gestuur word nie maar wel met kar en perde. [De Volksstem, 1880-01-09]

1882 – Dit neem tans 11 uur vir pos tussen Pretoria en Heidelberg en tussen Pretoria en Potchefstroom neem dit 22 uur. [De Volksstem, 1882-08-17]

1889 - Geen kruid of lucifers [vuurhoutjies] mag per pos gestuur word nie. [De Volksstem, 1889-06-27]

Bronne geraadpleeg

- Dun-01 – Dunston, Lola. 1975. **Young Pretoria 1889-1913**. Pretoria: Lola Dunston.
- Pr-72 – De Beer, Daan. 1975. **PO has its own nudes**. Pretoriana, Nommer 72, Desember.
- Pr-74 – Emms, Mervyn. 1974. **The Post Office in Pretoria**. Pretoriana, Nommer 74 & 75, Maart – Junie.
- Rex-01 – Rex, H.M. 1960. **Pretoria van Kerkplaats to Regeringstelsel**. Kaapstad: HAUM.
- Rex-02 – Rex, H.M. **Besienswaardighede in Pretoria, 1975**. Ongepubliseerde werk, Hervormde Kerk Argiewe.

Groete tot volgende maand,
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