**CASE STUDY**: Fond Construction of Union Buildings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the fond / collection</th>
<th>Fond Construction of Union Buildings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>1910 - 1913</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>PWD – Public Works of the Department of Transvaal, South African Government, 1900-1914. The Public Works Department of Transvaal was established in 1901, and on 9 May 1901 Major G.H. Fowke was appointed the first Secretary to the PWD Transvaal by the High Commissioner.</td>
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<td>Number of photographs</td>
<td>1080 prints</td>
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<td>550 (glass negatives, b/w 6x8inc)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>540 (direct prints (contact prints 6x8inc) (duplicate photographs)</td>
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<td>Main information of the fond</td>
<td>The Union Buildings (Afrikaans: Die Uniegebou) form the official seat of the South African government and also house the offices of the President of South Africa. The Buildings are one of the centres of political life in South Africa; &quot;The Buildings&quot; and &quot;Arcadia&quot; have become metonyms for the South African Government. It has become an iconic landmark of Pretoria and South Africa in general, and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in the city and an emblem of democracy. The Buildings are the location of Presidential Inaugurations. These buildings, built from light sandstone, were designed by the architect Sir Herbert Baker in the English monumental style and are 285 m long. They have a semi-circular shape, with the two wings at the sides, this serves to represent the union of a formerly divided people. The clock chimes are identical to those of Big Ben in London. The east and west wings, as well as the twin-domed towers, represent two languages, English and Afrikaans, and the inner court symbolizes Union of South Africa. These buildings are considered by many to be the architect's greatest achievement and a South African architectural masterpiece. A photographer (unknown) was commissioned to document the different stages of the construction of this monumental building. 550 6x8 in black and white glass negatives were produced.</td>
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Main series

a. Construction of Union Buildings
b. Completion of Union Buildings

Original situation
- The glass negatives were only wrapped in paper and stored in wooden boxes
- All of the glass negatives are unidentified and not dated.
- The glass negatives are related to the prints (numbers on the prints relate to the numbers given to the glass negatives).
- Only descriptions that are available are the ones allocated to the duplicate photographs in the manual register.
- Several of the glass negatives are very badly damaged and the copies (duplicate photographs) of the original glass negatives will have to be used to describe the image.
- No other related information and documentation to accompany the prints and negatives

Goals of the work
- To do a multilevel archival description. Description at a single item.
- To restore and preserve the original glass negatives using conservation materials.
- To establish the relationship between the original glass negatives and the duplicate prints.
- To produce high quality prints and to digitise the collection

Phases of the work

Phase 1
1. Conservation:
   - Original containers are removed. The photographs are housed in proper archival storage by using conservation materials.
   - Glass negatives are cleaned
   - Prints and negatives are housed separately for conservation reasons.

Phase 2
1. Description works:
   - Classification.
   - Identification of reports.
   - Identification of image contents and dating of all images.
Archival description at single item level.
Indexing.

2. Digitisation
Digitisation of 100% of the fond.
Reproduction characteristics: TIFF_UNC, 8 bits, 600dpi, RGB (prints) and RGB (glass negatives).
Digital images are host at the repository of the National Archives of South Africa.

Specificity of the fond

1. Direct prints
What we have?
- Original Glass negatives that depicts the different stages of the construction of the Union Buildings.
- Negatives that have prints of blueprints and proposed plans of the construction of the Union Buildings.

What we want?
To establish the existing relationship between the original glass negatives and multiple prints and related to reports.

How we do?
Digitisation of negatives to establish the relationship with prints.
Negative and prints have the same reference code.
Description at a report level. Two levels of description: visual image and physical image. In the physical description, the characteristics of the photographs are recorded: format, carrier, photographic process, etc.

2. Duplicate prints
What we have?
There are around 540 duplicate prints made directly from the 6x8 inch glass negatives

What we want?
To establish the existing relationship between negatives and multiple prints and related to reports.

How we do?
Digitisation of duplicate prints to establish the relationship with glass negatives.
Negative and prints have the same reference code.
Description at a report level. Two levels of description: visual image and physical image. In the physical description, the characteristics of the photographs are recorded: format, carrier, photographic process, etc.
In the case were there are no glass negatives, but only duplicate prints, the duplicate print will have to replace original glass negative.

Examples
Methodological contribution

Decisions attending the treatment of this fond, considering its specificities, provide methodological criteria in the following issues:

1. Establishing the correct conservation method and procedures for the glass negatives
2. Establishing relevant relationships between the original glass negatives and the duplicate prints.
3. Where original negative does not exist, will the duplicate print be sufficient to replace it.
4. When direct duplicate prints are the only photographic object existing they will be preserved and treated in a different way than the glass negatives but allowing its accessing as a grouping together with the original glass negatives.

Case Study by:

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