

Where Shoprite, Main Street, now is once the double-storied building owned by GH Geeringh. His general dealer's business was on the ground floor while he lived on the first floor. This later became Central stores and still later Knowles, before becoming Shoprite and now the Village Walk Centre.

On either side of Drama Street, two hotels existed. On the right was the "Queens Hotel" (the building still stands) and on the left was the "Central Hotel" which later became the Savoy Hotel. This was demolished for the Shoprite Building, which now houses several satellite stores. In Drama Street is The Bookworm, the oldest bookstore in Somerset West. It was established in (circa) 1947 by one, Mrs Shackleton. It has moved around Somerset West to sites such as the Cuthbert's ??? Building, Queens Hotel, Library Lane and Fairview Centre.

Across Main Street is the First National Bank which was established in Somerset West on 13th August 1919 as Barclays Bank (D C & O) with which was incorporated the National Bank of South Africa with one, Mr JWJ Versfeld as the first manager. The present premises were purchased by the bank from the estate of the late Mrs EDJ Burinck on 13th November 1945 for the sum of GBP2 828 - 18s - 6d. The building has undergone a series of alterations since being built.

## Oldest Business

Martin's Pharmacy (TS Martin) shares with W Miller, the prestige of being the oldest continuing business in Somerset West.

On the left hand side between Oak Street and Dirkie Uys Street was the old outspan area of Somerset West. Turn left down Dirkie Uys Street, formerly known as Station Road. The building on the right housing Beehive Stationers has the gable dated 1903. Originally used as the first synagogue, it became Bloch's general dealers, forerunner of M Bloch and Co Wholesalers in the major centres.

Continue down Dirkie Uys Street crossing Andries Pretorius Street. On the right is the NG Moederkerk of Somerset West completed in 1941.

On the left is Somerset West Primary School. Dating back to 1865 with the establishment of the first government school in Somerset West, this school building came into being in 1904, the old Church Street School Building being converted into a temporary town hall. Of interest here too is the building at 13 St James Street which was part of the primary school and housed the sub-standards. In 1930 Hottentots Holland High School was established as a separate entity at its present site.

Continue down Dirkie Uys Street turn left into Short Street and continue around until you reach Oak Street. Continue up Oak Street turning right into Andries Pretorius Street. On the right are the Somerset West municipal offices. Somerset West was declared a municipality in January 1904 (some authorities suggest it was 1903) Electricity was introduced in 1916 and piped water was originally brought from the dam at the bottom of Helderberg's Disa gorge. Waterborne sewerage only came about in the late 1940's.

At the traffic lights, turn left into Victoria Street. On the far corner is the Coachman's Cottage. It was built some 140 years ago and was owned by the Gordon Family for several generations. It is the only cottage still in its original form in Somerset West. This building was restored by the Historic Somerset West Society in 1977 and was declared a national monument in 1979.

This info is pertaining to the sketch by Dr Chipps - district mail - Buried in this old Dutch Reformed Graveyard (built 1819) are the remains of many prominent Somerset West citizens including JH ("Onze Jan") Hofmeyer, the champion fighter for harmonious relations between the Dutch and the English. He died in London while part of a delegation taking the draft constitution of the Union of South Africa to the British Government. His remains were brought back to South Africa and he was buried in soberest west on the 17th of November 1909. Members of the Cape Town cricket club acted as pallbearers.