

# THE CITY OF GRAHAMSTOWN.



CITY HALL,  
GRAHAMSTOWN.

P.O. Box 176.  
TELEPHONE No. 271.

26th September, 1952.

WJL/RK

ALL COMMUNICATIONS  
TO BE ADDRESSED TO  
THE TOWN CLERK.

IN YOUR REPLY PLEASE QUOTE  
REFERENCE NO. L. 3/12/1596

The Secretary,  
National Council of African Women,  
7a, Orsmond Street,  
GRAHAMSTOWN.

Dear Madam,

With reference to your letter of the 22nd ultimo, addressed to the Mayor and Councillors, I have to inform you that when the Beer Hall was established during 1939, there was a certain amount of opposition but after taking all factors into consideration, my Council decided in favour of the establishment of a Municipal Beer Hall. The old Beer Hall building which was constructed of wood and iron, deteriorated through the years to such an extent that it was condemned by the Medical Officer of Health. The building of a new Beer Hall became an absolute necessity and before proceeding with the erection of the building together with modern brewing facilities, the whole matter was considered de novo, in view of certain protests which appeared in the press.

Incidentally, the Council can only be guided by the Location Advisory Board who was in favour of a new building and this was subsequently approved by the Provincial Administration and the Native Affairs Department after very close investigation. The protests which appeared in the Press, were in favour of domestic brewing which the Council and the Native Affairs Department considered out of the question for the following reasons:

- (a) the impracticability of controlling domestic brewing owing to the fact that a large number of Natives are residing outside the Municipal Location, in the Fingo and Hottentot Villages and in the European area as the 1951 census will substantiate:

1951 Census	Natives		Coloureds		Asiatics		Malays		Total
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
Municipal Location	2501	3182	123	131	-	-	-	-	5937
Fingo Nat. Village	1826	2242	220	235	8	3	3	6	4543
Hottentot Village	242	256	915	973	22	21	-	-	2429
European Area	841	702	240	233	59	68	12	11	2166
TOTAL:	5410	6382	1498	1572	89	92	15	17	15075

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- (b) the residence of a large number of Natives in the location not living under conditions of family life, e.g. there are 540 householders in the location with approximately 2,000 lodgers living with these families and their demand for kaffir beer and the efficient control thereof cannot be met from domestic brewing.
- (c) in view of the fact that the Council has no control under the Location Regulations over the inmates of Fingo and Hottentot Villages, it would be undesirable in terms of Section 33(2)(a) of the Act to issue written permits to Native householders residing in these Villages or even in the European area for domestic brewing.

The establishment of milk bars, eating houses etc., can only be undertaken by the Council when it is possible to subsidise these amenities from profits derived from the Beer Hall. You will appreciate that the provision of these amenities cannot be made an economic proposition and must therefore be subsidised to bring prices within the means of the average Native.

I might mention that Grahamstown is the only centre in the Union where the boycott of the Beer Hall is part of the resistance movement. In no other centre have Natives boycotted the Beer Hall as they realise that it is there for their own benefit. There is no doubt that they have been misled in Grahamstown as the boycott of the Beer Hall is to their own detriment, as any grants-in-aid towards social amenities can only come from the profits on the sale of Kaffir beer. In accordance with the Act, a special Kaffir Beer account has to be kept and is audited by the Provincial Auditor and the estimates are submitted annually to the Minister of Native Affairs for approval.

The sweeping allegations made against the Beer Hall are ill-founded and not supported by facts. There will always be Municipal Beer Halls and the unjustifiable criticism comes from people who are obviously not conversant with the purpose of the undertaking. These unjust criticisms seem to champion the cause of illicit brewing and shebeens which the Council is endeavouring to stamp out by brewing wholesome Kaffir beer, manufactured and supplied under hygienic conditions.

Your allegation that the meagre earnings of the Natives are squandered at the Beer Hall, is not supported by facts.

Yours faithfully,

TOWN CLERK.