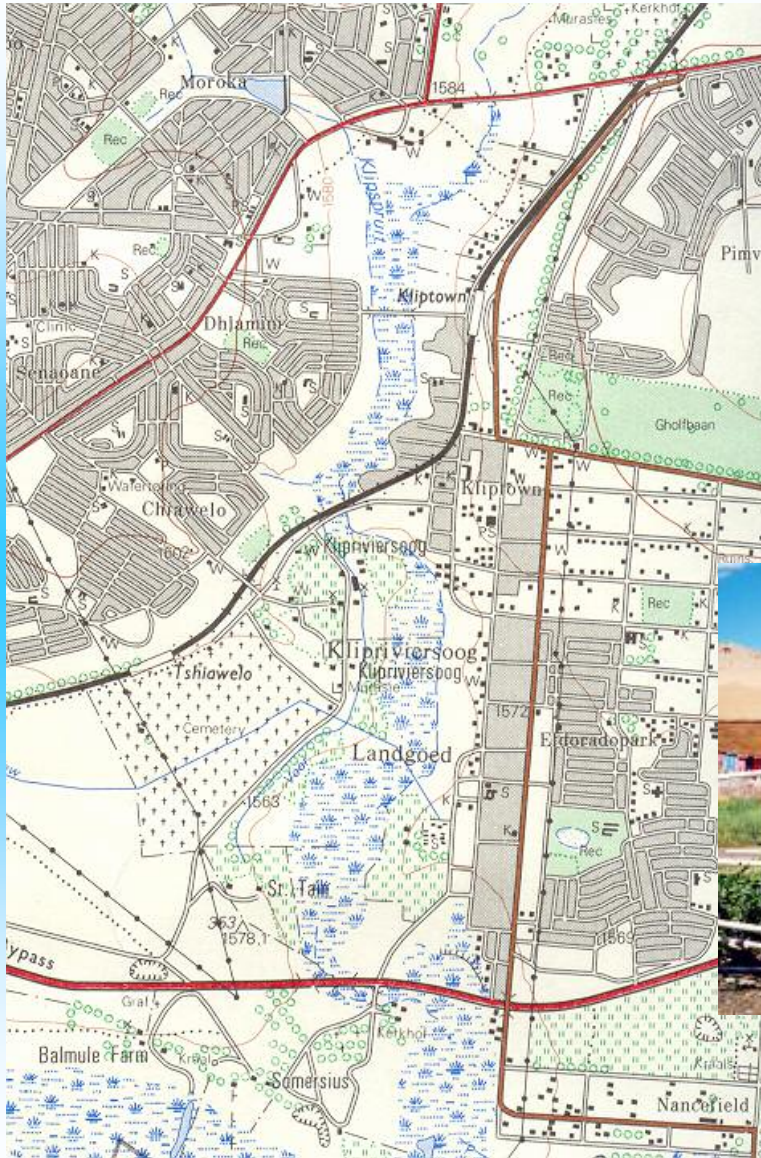


Kliptown: A People -driven Urban Regeneration



**Benoit Allanic and Gene Duiker
(Kliptown Our Town Trust)**

Kliptown over the years

- Klipriviersoog Estate and Race Course proclaimed as freehold townships in April 1903:
 - House building by Black landowners
 - Wells and latrines
 - A green valley with a river lined with willow trees

“My parents came to Kliptown because when they were young, they used to hire a horse cart between Feetas and Kliptown. They had picnic at the river. And those trees along the river were beautiful willow trees. ”

(Oral History Project, 2000 – 2001)

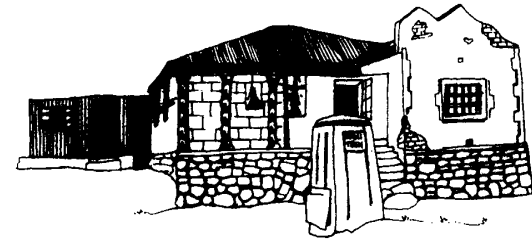
“Two bioscopes served our community for many years. People came from Pimville. So, we never bothered to go to town. Kliptown was such a good place. On New Year’s Day people used to come from all over Johannesburg to picnic out here along the river. I learnt to swim in that stream.”



"There was an influx of people when Sophiatown was removed. There were lots of coloured people coming from Alexandra and Protea who moved here. When children got married, they always knew that Kliptown was the easiest place to find somewhere to live because there were no strict rules like in Coronation or Noordgesig where you had to make applications and get a house through the Council."

"Kliptown gave refuge to a lot of criminals on the run, freedom fighters and homeless people because Kliptown was not in the Jo'burg Municipality. That is also why it became a slum. "

Kliptown a periurban village surrounded by white-owned farms developed organically



- **Influx of migrants to the Rand**
- **Speculative rental housing development – no building permit and planning regulations**
- **Mix of land uses**
- **A truly multiracial society – Whites, Indians, Blacks, Coloureds, Chinese, ...**
- **Emergence of 'shanties' and shack farming (Chicken Farm and Albertyn's Farm)**



*Apartheidtown
planning and
matchboxhouses*



Redevelopment of Pimville / Klipspruit Village and creation of the South- Western Townships (Soweto)



*“Eldorado Park found Kliptown here.
Soweto found Kliptown here.”*

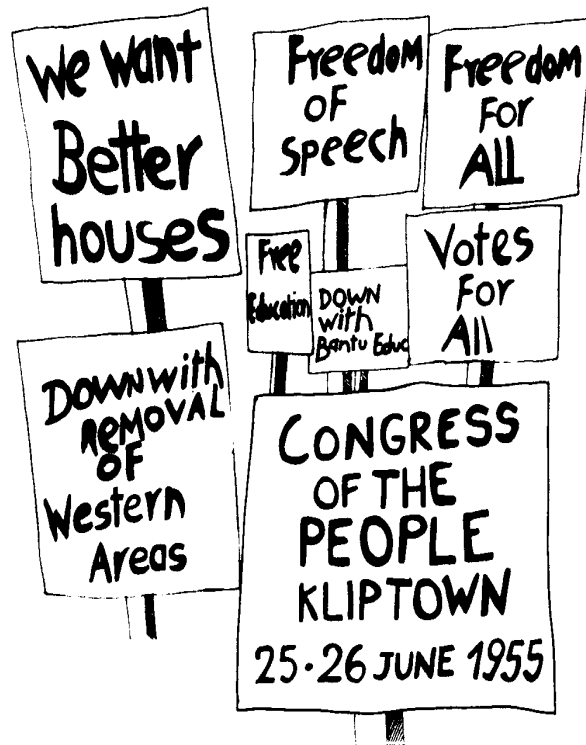
Town versus Location



- ***“Kliptown is a town not a location. Here, we have many shops, an open market, workshops, a police station, a post office, our own court of law, a movie theatre, a train station and even a river! We are surrounded by townships – Chiawelo, Dlamini, Eldorado Park, Klipspruit West – which were established long after Kliptown came into existence. ”***

Oral History Project (2000 – 2001)

The Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter



50 years later ... "What would you do to make [Kliptown] a better and happier place for all the people who live in it?"



**A historical landmark –
the place where it all
started**

Years of neglect and survival

- a **community with a spirit** very much like Sophiatown, District Six or Fietas (Vrededorp).
- but not demolished during apartheid, probably because Kliptown was a periurban settlement **outside Johannesburg municipal boundaries**.
- and as silent wish that Kliptown, a place that **did not fit within the urban apartheid scheme** and where all races lived together, would just die.
- **1957**: Rezoned as a '**white area**'. Nancefield a white area made of smallholdings and farms was declared 'coloured' and later developed and named **Eldorado Park**.
- **Expropriations and relocations**.

Slum clearance and territorial shrinkage

- In the late 70s - early 80s demolition of Paddavlei, Vaarkejaard, First Gate, ...
- Land invasions and shack settlements
- Construction of Eldorado Park Extensions 9 and 10
- A Layout Plan for Kliptown South of Union Rd

Kliptown today

- Total population: +/- 36,306 inhabitants (census'96)
- Approx. 6,900 households
- Old houses: Race Course, Ngubane, Vaal Kamers, First Gate, Tamatievlei, ... (5%)
- Shacks: Chris Hani, Charter Square, Winnie Camp, Angola, Johnson's Stop, Mandela Square, Valentine's Valley (95%)
- Buckets system and some emergency services











Drags & Delays in Delivery

- Feasibility studies for an ambitious redevelopment plan
- Political will but no financial resources and no qualified implementing agent
- Kliptown aspires to become more than a new monofunctional RDP scheme with rows of standardised and uniform housing
- Regeneration/renewal rather than redevelopment so as to retain Kliptown's character and heritage

UrbanRenewal

Aprocessinwhichtheobsoletefabricofan urbanareaisrestored,renovatedand improvedinordertomeetcontemporary needsorstandards.Inmostcasesanattempt ismadetoretainitsoriginalexternal character,butifthisisimpossible,acertain amountofredevelopmentmaybeincluded. Redevelopmentinvolvesthetotaldestruction ofallpartoftheobsoletefabricbeforethe workofnewbuilding,creationofopen spaces,possiblynewroads,etc.begins.

Years of Revival?

- A piecemeal and uncoordinated approach
- A focus on Kliptown north of Union Rd
- A complex project - a new generation of urban intervention to deal with existing neighbourhoods and real inhabitants
- A new approach that incorporates the various dimensions, technical, social, economical and environmental
- An implementing agent with long-term involvement

The Housing Programme

- A conventional approach to community participation
- 1st phase: 3,000 Mayibuye subsidies (essential services)... increased to 5,700 and upgraded to Project -linked
- 2nd phase: 1,400 institutional subsidies
- Old quarter – cultural precinct

JohannesburgDevelopmentAgency

- Anintegrateddevelopmentproject:
 - housingdevelopment
 - cleaningand depollutingtheriver
 - upgradingtheseweragesystem
 - economicdevelopment(informaltraders)
 - FreedomSquareandmonument
 - transportation(K43,newtaxirank)



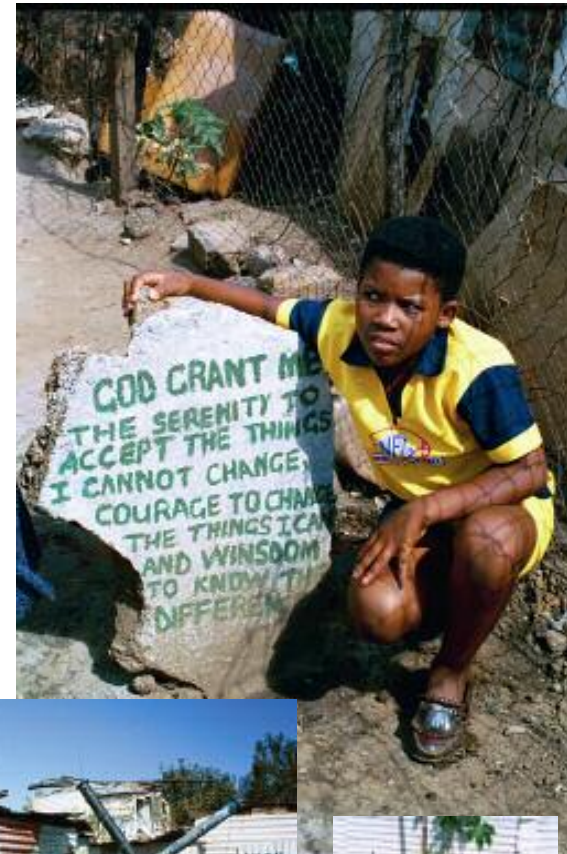
Grassroots impetus for regeneration

Many residents want a reborn Kiptown: a vibrant African town resurrected via self-started improvements. They have started taking action accordingly. This people-driven impetus for regeneration is combining with the Johannesburg Unicity redevelopment project. Kiptown may now have a better future.





*God grant me the serenity to accept the things
I cannot change, courage to change the things
I can and wisdom to know the difference.*



From Neglect to Respect



Kliptown, the village famous for its link with the Freedom Charter, is taking its destiny into its own hands. Self -started initiative to breathe new life into this neglected and run -down community commenced in 1998 when concerned residents started collecting betterment ideas, oral histories, personal experiences of the 1955 Congress of the People as well as artefacts – household and family items – from community members. Combined with old and recent photographs of Kliptown’s people and places, this material formed the basis of a colourful, fascinating and growing exhibition: “Kliptown Our Town”.

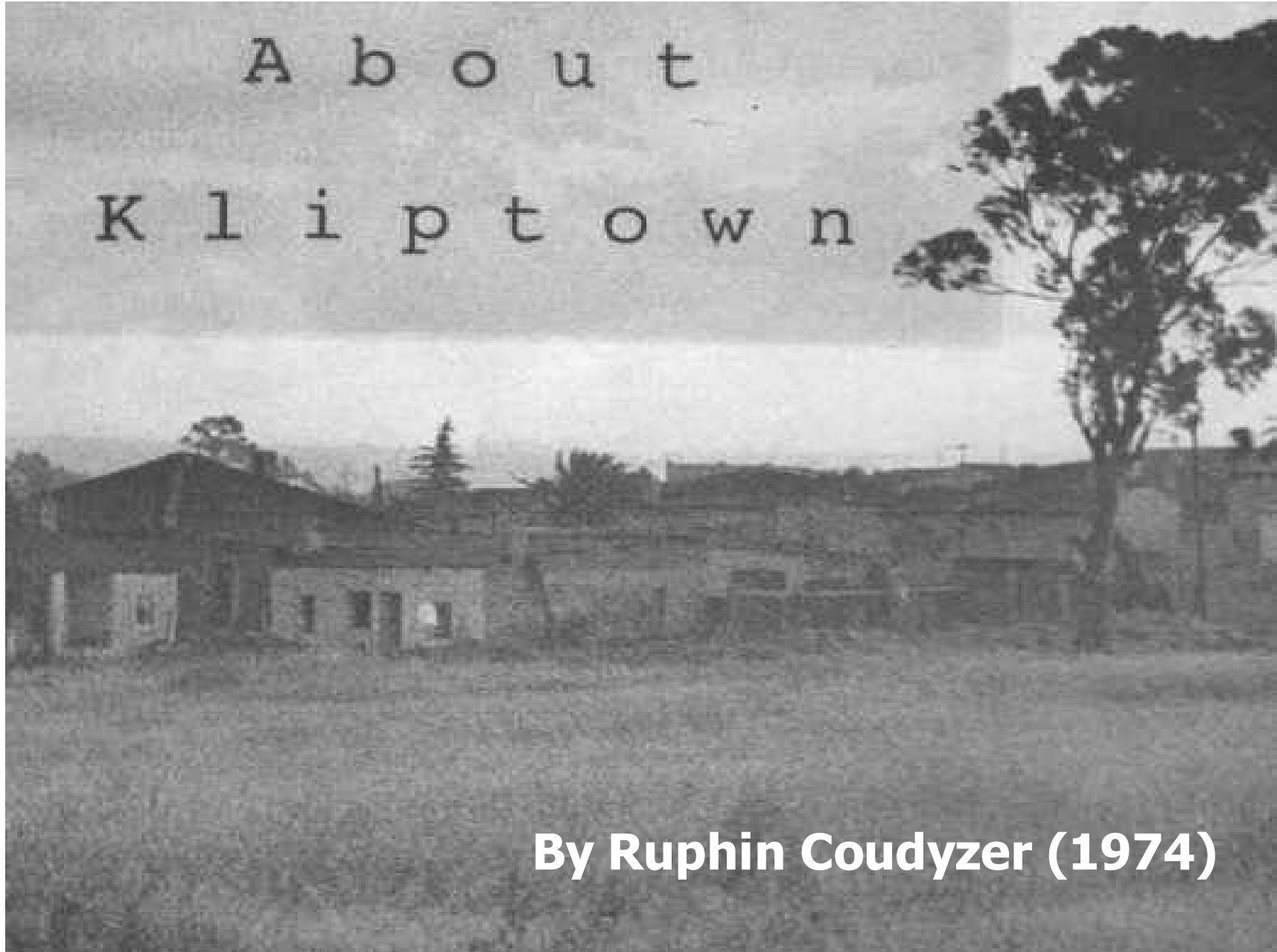


The exhibition was the first building block in community-driven initiatives to make Kliptown a better and happier place to live in through self-started improvements and development. CRIAA kickstarted funding for the initial research and exhibition materials.



A b o u t
K l i p t o w n

By Ruphin Coudyzer (1974)





First Gate

**Johnson's
Stop**







San Souci Cinema (1974)



An icon for Kliptown's regeneration





In June 2001 the Kliptown Our Town Trust (KOTT) was established to drive development initiatives. These include adapting the exhibition for publication as a coffee-table book, a documentary film, further oral history research, a household survey, rehabilitating the Klipspruit to become the picnic spot loved by old residents, reviving the San Souci Cinema, a famous landmark which attracted many patrons from Soweto and even further afield.

Building Diagnosis, Alternative Layout, Oral History and Household Survey

The community wants to restore old Kliptown rather than entirely rebuild it. They do not want to lose Kliptown's unique character which has survived despite official neglect. KOTT is therefore designing alternative layout planning proposals for the south of Kliptown to be combined with a technical evaluation of potentially upgradable old houses.



A new approach for urban renewal that would combine technical, social, economical and environmental aspects

“I will never move out of Kiptown. Kiptown is the welcome that you get. It is the love that we show each other that counts. In Kiptown, there are certain people who will help you. I am part of Kiptown because I grew up here. In Kiptown, you can't fake your life. We live what we are. I've got a lot of friends who live in the suburbs but during the weekends, you will find them here. They still miss this place. Kiptown is where our roots are.”

“Life in Kiptown is cheap. Everything is nearer – shops and all that.”

“If they could say we must upgrade our houses, I think that would be better. It will give us that confidence to know that we are staying here. Some of the people are scared to renovate their houses because they keep on telling us we are moving. ”



“People come and buy heretogo and sell in Soweto, in Freedom Park, ... Kliptown is like a mother town. If they could give us at least real toilets and electricity, we would be happy. But now since all these years, we must still live like our forefathers and mothers. If they can put me a toilet there in the yard, I will say: “No thank you for an electrified house elsewhere! ”