



# Forced Removals

## Forced Removals of the Group Areas Act.

People of colour were forcefully relocated, because the areas they were living in were zoned as 'white areas'. One of the Johannesburg townships was Sophiatown was renamed Triomf when the black people were relocated to SOWETO (**S**outh **W**estern **T**ownships).

As neighbouring white working-class areas developed adjacent to Sophiatown, the perception arose that the suburb was too close to white suburbia. The Immorality Amendment Act, No 21 of 1950, which prohibited people of mixed races living together, made it possible for the government to segregate the different races and move the residents out of Sophiatown. Sophiatown residents united to protest against the forced removals, On 9 February 1955, 2 000 policemen, armed with handguns, rifles and knobkerries (clubs), forcefully moved the black families of Sophiatown to Meadowlands, Soweto. Coloured people were moved to Eldorado Park, the Indian community was moved to Lenasia; and the Chinese people were moved to central Johannesburg. Sophiatown was eventually flattened and removed from the maps of Johannesburg.

The Johannesburg City Council took the decision in 1997 to re-instate the old name Sophiatown for the suburb. On Saturday, 11 February 2006, Mayor Amos Mosondo reverted the name of Triomf back to Sophiatown.

Adapted from: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/place/sophiatown>

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