

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/003/0016
	Site Name	National English Literary Museum, 87 Beaufort Street, Grahamstown
	Date	03/09/2012 00:16
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-33.313901, 26.527163

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Site Category: Building

SiteComments:

The house which dates from the year 1860 was built by Bishop Patric Moran who succeeded Bishop Devereaux in 1856 and celebrated his first High Mass in St Patrick's Cathedral on 26 November 1856. Bishop Moran left Grahamstown in April 1870 for Rome from whence he was transferred to the Diocese of Dunedin in New Zealand. Bishop Moran was succeeded by the Rev James David Richards the local parish priest, whose consecration took place on 18 June 1871 in St. Patrick's. Bishop Richards was a man of many accomplishments. Apart from his devotion to his diocese and his congregation, he was a popular lecturer on scientific and other subjects. The Priest's House was bought from the Missionary Sisters of the Assumption on 18 July 1980 by De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, who have restored it to its original state. The building will be utilised for museum purposes. Also noteworthy is the fact that one of the windows in the Priest's House bears the initials of Bishop Richards, where he tested the hardness of the pebble which Dr., William Guybon Atherstone found in a letter addressed to him. Richards identified the pebble to be a diamond. This was the first diamond to be identified as such in South Africa, It is now known as the "Eureka" diamond and is housed in the Houses of Parliament. The building belongs to De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, and was declared a national monument in June 1982. Visual Description: The Priest's House is a double storeyed building in the Georgian style with a Roman colonnaded portico leading onto a wrought iron balustrade with steps leading to street level. The lower floor consists of a kitchen and service rooms while the main floor houses the reception and living quarters. The building as such has characteristics which are essentially English, although the ground plan shows surprising Cape influence. Double storey (basement to ground floor), double pile plan. 5 bay symmetrical front. Slate hipped roof. Walls brick plastered. Aedicular surround to front door. Small pane sash windows. Part fence and part wall to front. Internal features. Construction Date: 1860 Catalogue: Radford 1989 (b), No: Q.09

AdminComments:

Archive Import RESIDENCE OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS. ON 1863 MAP - FRONT PART. THIS BUILDING DATES FROM C1860 - 1870.

Damage Types: