

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/003/0053
	<b>Site Name</b>	Trompetter's Drift Fort, Albany District
	<b>Date</b>	
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-33.194133, 26.959663

Page No: 1

**SiteAutoID:** 63

Site Category: Building

#### **SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: Trompetter's Drift Tower stands on the bank of the Fish River some 11 km east of the Fraser's Camp. It was not one of the series of signal towers and has its own interesting history. Trompetter's Drift, about 27 kilometres up from the mouth of the Fish River, was called after a Hottentot freebooter Hans Trompetter. It is one of the oldest and best-known drifts across the Fish River and was one of the places where Lord Charles Somerset built a military post in 1817 in pursuance of his so-called Spoor or Tracking System. The main body of the Xhosa forces passed this way on their march on Grahamstown in 1820, but it was in the Sixth Xhosa War of 1834 that Trompetter's Drift Tower played a particularly important role. In 1834 a great Xhosa force once again massed in this vicinity and the White traders hastily fled to Grahams town. Sir Harry Smith chose Trompetter's Drift as his temporary headquarters from which he invaded the Xhosa territory. To ensure that regular supplies would reach the troops from Grahamstown, a start was made with building a large pont at Trompetter's Drift, under the protection of a civilian guard of forty men. On 6th March, 1835, the Xhosa launched a massive attack on the drift. The burghers tried desperately to save the trek oxen and supplies, but were surrounded. They fought their way out but five Whites and four Hottentots were killed. The entire camp, including the wagons, oxen, equipment and the unfinished pont fell into the hands of the Xhosa. Barely three days later Commandant Rademeyer and 175 men were led into a trap in the immediate vicinity. His losses were five killed and seven wounded. After the war Trompetter's Drift was one of the places where the old defences were replaced by a proper fort in accordance with Sir Benjamin D'Urban's defence plan. During the War of the Axe the thick bush in the neighbourhood of Trompetter's Drift once again enabled the Xhosa to make successful attacks on the British Forces. In May, 1846, a detachment from Fort Peddie was attacked in the thick bush on the eastern slope of the river and was only able to reach the fort with considerable difficulty. Two weeks later a convoy of 43 wagons with supplies for Fort Peddie was captured by the Xhosa and the soldiers who were escorting the convoy also had great difficulty in reaching the fort. The watch tower is all that remains of the old fort. Bronze Plaque 1938" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: 1835 Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

Damage Types: