

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/331/0012
	<b>Site Name</b>	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Church, Voortrekker
	<b>Date</b>	Street, Philippolis
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-30.261607, 25.272908

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Site Category: Building

**SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: The picturesque town of Philippolis lies amongst typical stony hills some 28 kilometres north of the Orange River. It has a long history, for it was here that the Griquas under Adam Kok settled in 1825 at the insistence of Dr. John Philip. In time a village arose and a church was built. In 1861 the Republic of the Orange Free State purchased Philippolis and the entire country south of the Riet River from the Griquas who then moved to No Man's Land. The Dutch Reformed congregation of Philippolis was established in 1862. The old Griqua church was bought from the Griquas for R1 800 and in 1863 the Rev. Cohn Fraser arrived to assume duty as the first Minister. He preached in the simple little church for seven years before it was demolished. On 8th May, 1869, the foundation stone of a new church was laid on the same site. R. Wocke, a Bloemfontein architect, worked for nearly two years before the building could be inaugurated on 24th February, 1871. It was a great occasion for the congregation of Philippolis; people streamed to the town from all directions and no fewer than eight ministers from other centres attended the ceremony. The church cost R12 000 and was regarded as a beautiful piece of work. The tasteful and well-made pulpit, which is still in use, was made by E. T. Smith. The congregation gradually increased and after twenty- five years the church had become too small. It was decided to add two wings and the enlarged church was inaugurated in 1895. The Falckel of 10th October, 1885, recorded: 'The architect, Mr Hawkins, has acquitted himself honourably and admirably of his difficult task. The old building has been enlarged by building on two wings with galleries so that the present building, if we are not mistaken, seats about a thousand instead of only 600 as before. The old part was made to conform to the new by replastering, white-washing and painting it. The height of the old, short, stumpy spire has been increased by an estimated 6 metres so that the whole structure may with justification be called an elegant building. Consequently we congratulate the Minister and congregation of Philippolis, more particularly as the fine church building which has now cost £1 225 (R2 450), has been inaugurated with practically no debt'. Philippolis was occupied by British troops in March, 1900. The parsonage and other dwellings were burned down; the church was converted into a fort and the windows of the spire were blocked with sandbags. The church was damaged during the war : the fence was broken down, the organ was irreparably damaged and the wooden. ornamentations of the pulpit were broken off. After the war the building was renovated throughout. This building in the centre of the main street has served the congregation as a place of worship for nearly a century. It is representative of the ecclesiastical architecture of the nineteenth century. The interior is most attractive and the pulpit is a masterpiece of woodwork. Proclaimed 1969 Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Good Construction Date: 1869-05-08 Materials: Brick : corrugated iron Catalogue: Philippolis, No: 18.1, Significance Category:

Damage Types: