

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/055/0003-001
	Site Name	Mission Church, Kuruman Moffat Mission, Seodin
	Date	Street, Kuruman
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-27.421533, 23.429118

Page No: 1 **SiteAutoID:** 28208

Site Category: Building

Directions:

High

SiteComments:

Archive Import History: The foundations to the church were laid in 1830 by Robert Moffat. The town of Kuruman is situated 221 km north-west of Kimberley. Moffat's Church stands in the grounds of the Seodin School 5 km north of the town. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the missionaries began to turn their attention to the Bechuana. In 1812 the London Missionary Society sent the Rev. John Campbell on an extended tour of inspection of mission stations in South Africa. He travelled northwards past Griquatown as far as Lithako, now called Dithakon, some distance north of Kuruman. There he conducted negotiations with the Bechuana chief for sending missionaries to his country and in 1816 two missionaries, J. Read and R. Hamilton, established themselves there. Read persuaded Chief Mothibi to move his chief kraal to the banks of the Kuruman River. The new capital, six miles from Kuruman, was known as New Lithako and is now called Maruping. Here Read and Hamilton continued their work until Read returned to his first charge at Bethelsdorp, near Port Elizabeth in 1820 and was replaced by the well-known missionary, Robert Moffat. The name of Robert Moffat is permanently associated with Kuruman and missionary work amongst the Bechuana. He arrived in South Africa in 1817 and worked among the Hottentots in Namaqualand for some time before going to Kuruman. On his way there he spent nearly a year in Griquatown, so that he only reached New Lithako on 27th May, 1821. He worked there for three years, but he in turn also persuaded the Chief to move his kraal, this time nearer to the Kuruman spring. As a result, the kraal and the mission station were moved to their present situation in 1824. Moffat was now determined to give permanence to the mission. Fortunately Isaac Hughes, a blacksmith, joined the mission in that year and with his assistance Hamilton, who was a fine artisan as well as a missionary, began to erect the first stone building. The foundations of the church were laid in 1830 and it was opened in November, 1833. Meanwhile Moffat continued his missionary work and undertook the task of learning Tswana and reducing it to writing. He visited England in 1838 and by his sermons and representations engendered great enthusiasm for missionary work in Africa. It was as a result of this that David Livingstone came to South Africa in 1841. He visited Kuruman, where he met Moffat's daughter Mary and married her in 1845. Moffat preached the gospel in this little church for thirty-seven years. His influence extended far and wide and continued to be felt, even after he had preached his last sermon in 1870, through his translation of the Bible into the Tswana language, done in the mission house at Kuruman. This little church stands as a monument to the great and enduring work of Robert and Mary Moffat. Proclaimed 1939" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Good Construction Date: 1830 Materials: Stone : Thatch Catalogue: Brann, 1992 (e), No: 4.2, Significance Category:

Damage Types: