

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/083/0028
	<b>Site Name</b>	Groot Paardevlei, Somerset West
	<b>Date</b>	
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-34.088778, 18.832240

Page No: 1      **SiteAutoID:** 27652

Site Category: Building

#### **SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: On the outskirts of Somerset West the old Firgrove Road branches off the road to Stellenbosch. A couple of kilo- metres further on and to the right the large group of buildings belonging to the farm Groot Paardevlei is situated. This farm, originally 34 hectares in extent, also belonged to Frans van der Stel. The farm originally called De Paarden Stal was granted to him in 1702 and it must have bordered on the above-mentioned Parel Vallei. It is doubtful whether he had a house erected here, but because he was fond of fishing, it is supposed that he deepened the vlei which lies lower down and began experimenting with fish-breeding. In 1717 it was sold with Parel Vallei to Nicolaas van den Heuvel and the two farms remained in the possession of the same owner until 1748. After that it changed hands every now and then until the well-known Martin Me the owner of Elsenburg, purchased it in 1760. After his death the farm remained in the possession of his widow, Maria Rosina Loubser, till 1794. In his day Martin Melck was the wealthiest burgher at the Cape and he did not leave Groot Paardevlei undeveloped. To develop pisciculture on his farm, he not only had the above-mentioned vlei cleared and deepened, but by means of a furrow he also connected the vlei with the Lourens River to ensure a constant supply of water. But he had to complain bitterly to the Council of Policy that certain dirty and unpleasant people were catching the fish before they had a chance to breed. To prevent them from ruining the hatchery, he requested the Council to forbid, by means of a proclamation, the catching of fish in the vlei. There is also little doubt that it was Martin Melck who built the house and the outbuildings, because the previous owners either lived at Parel Vallei or were in possession of the farm for such a short time that they could have built only a modest dwelling at best. Probably the original house was T-shaped. However, the date 1782 on the back gable suggests that Melck's widow, a year after her husband's death, converted it into an H-shaped building by the addition of the western part. After the death of Maria Rosina Loubser the farm changed hands every now and then until it came into the hands of the Scholtz family toward the end of the nineteenth century. At the beginning of this century Ahce Tr mockingly remarked that elaborate "improvements were being made to the house. The thatched roof was replaced by one of galvanised iron and to be able to do this the back gable was topped and the walls were slightly raised. Later the gable was to be restored and the present front gable is a replica of it. However, the wood work of the front façade is still the original, viz, the two single and the four double windows with shutters and the upper and lower doors with graceful panels. Also the built-in cupboard of stinkwood in the back-room and the large Batavian tiles are the original. From the stoep with its stoep seats on both sides one has a matchless view of the white sand dunes and of False Bay. The house was purchased by Historical Homes of South Africa Ltd. in 1968. Proclaimed 1970" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: Somerset West Structure Plan, No: 02, Significance Category:

#### **AdminComments:**

Bibliography archive: Heap, p. 72

Damage Types: