

<b>Archaeological Site Report</b>	<b>SiteNo</b>	9/2/015/0010-015
	<b>Site Name</b>	Bell tower, Mission Complex, Genadendal
	<b>Date</b>	
	<b>Project</b>	
	<b>CaseNID</b>	
	<b>Coords</b>	-34.033919, 19.558024

Page No: 1      **SiteAutoID:** 29401

Site Category: Building

#### **SiteComments:**

Archive Import History: Genadendal, one of the most picturesque and fascinating villages in the Overberg, lies in this mountain valley with its spectacular scenery. The centre of the village is the mission station with its complex of buildings of the greatest historical and cultural importance. These include the church, the parsonage, the school, the old watermill and, not the least, the great church bell hanging between elegant pillars. Georg Schmidt's missionary work was resumed in 1792 by the Moravian missionaries, Hendrik Marsveld, Daniel Schwinn and Johann Kulhnel. At that time the remarkable and widely respected Jan Marthinus Theunissen, or ""Baas Theunis"" as he was generally known to the Hottentots, was in charge of the Company's post called Oude Post, on the farm Rietvallei, east of Swellendam. He was a field cornet, and interested himself so much in the welfare of the Hottentots that his fellow- burghers teasingly referred to him as ""Hottentotsgod"". He did his best to befriend the three new missionaries and not only provided them with transport from Cape Town to Baviaanskloof, but helped them to establish themselves there. In 1793 he attended a sale in Hottentots Holland and, with money donated by friends in Cape Town, bought a large church bell for the mission station at a cost of 40 riksdaalders. At first it was hung in a tree, but the sound of its note in the echoing kloof was soon stifled. The Dutch Reformed Church had always opposed the admission of ""foreign"" church and missionary societies at the Cape on grounds of differences in their doctrines. This is why the Lutheran Church only obtained permission to build their own church after a long struggle and, when they eventually gained the necessary permission, they had to do without a belfry or church bell. On the arrival of the Moravian missionaries, the Rev. Meent Borchers of Stellenbosch, whose parish included Genadendal, likewise made representations to the Council of Policy that this "sect" should be repressed. He could not tolerate the ringing of the bell at Genadendal which he alleged could be heard in Stellenbosch, and for a long time it was forbidden to ring it without the consent of the authorities. In 1795 the Cape was occupied by Great Britain for the second time. According to the journal kept by the missionaries, "the Cape was now English" and Lord Macartney gave permission for the bell to be used "to call together the members of your community at the Baviaanskloof". Shells, lime and sand for building a bell-cage were brought by members of the congregation and in March, 1798, a special mason built the fine pillars that can be seen there today. Now the missionaries rang the bell for every possible purpose as much as nine times on a single day. The old bell has served the community faithfully for more than a century and a half, and despite a small crack, it still emits a clear note when rung. Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: Materials: Catalogue: le Grange, 1991, No: 1.04, Significance Category:

#### **AdminComments:**

Bibliography archive: f & c, 22.033, p 341

Damage Types: