

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/084/0051
	Site Name	Grosvenor House, Drostdy Street, Stellenbosch
	Date	
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-33.935358, 18.862229

Page No: 1 **SiteAutoID:** 27592

Site Category: Building

SiteComments:

Archive Import History: There is a building next to the Dutch Reformed Church in Drostdy Street called Grosvenor House. Its history is closely associated with its environment, and indeed with South Africa. In the first place, Grosvenor House is associated with the oldest and best-known Stellenbosch and, therefore, South African families. The land on which it stands was granted to Christiaan Ludolph Neethling in 1781. He came to the Cape from Germany in 1741 and became the progenitor of this widespread Afrikaans family. He was soon promoted to the rank of Junior Merchant and Secretary of the Council of Justice. As soon as the land was granted to him he had a house built on it. In 1790 the property was transferred to a compatriot of his, Friedrich Gotthold Holtzappel, and in 1799 it passed into the possession of a third German, Johann Wilhelm Herold. Herold was for many years the sick-comforter, and his son Tobias became well-known as the minister of Stellenbosch who, especially from 1824 to 1837, played an important part in the movement that led to the independence of the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1820 the property came into the hands of Adrian Roux, a son of Paul Roux, and this man built the lovely old farmhouse on the farm Vredenburg near Vlottenberg station. Paul Roux died two years later, and when his widow married Frederik Rijk Ludolph Neethling, a son of the first owner, the house again came into the possession of the Neethling family. In 1845 this Neethling became bankrupt, but his daughter who was married to Eduard Bernhard Hoffman, a brother of the first president of the Orange Free State, bought the house from the insolvent estate. Sir Christoffel J. Brand, the first Speaker of the Cape Parliament and father of President J. H. Brand of the Orange Free State, became the owner of the house in 1872. After his death in 1875 the house became the property of William Collins who gave it the name of Grosvenor House. Grosvenor House remained in the possession of this family for 56 years until it was bought by the Dutch Reformed Church who sold it six years later to the Municipality of Stellenbosch. It was then restored, and until 1961 it was used to house the Phillimore-Ives Memorial collection of seventeenth and eighteenth century Dutch, Flemish, Italian and British paintings which had been lent to the Municipality. When South Africa became a republic and left the British Commonwealth, the collection was withdrawn and returned to England. The people of Stellenbosch immediately found another use for the building and began converting it into an historical museum. However, the importance of Grosvenor House does not rest solely on its connections with family histories. The building also provides a clear demonstration of how a simple structure could develop into a worthy example of Cape architecture. The house that Christiaan Neethling built consisted of a row of single-storeyed thatched rooms in Drostdy Street. At the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries a gable was added above the front door and a room was built on at the back which gave the building the shape of a T. Later additions made it into a full-scale H-shaped house. The sick-comforter, Herold, F added a second storey with a flat roof, an alteration that was at first probably confined to the front part of the house. These changes gave the house a completely new façade: four fluted pilasters with a richly ornamented cornice; a teak stable-door framed by shorter, ribbed pilasters; teak sash-windows with inner shutters of stinkwood and, right at the top, a little palm tree in bas relief, taken from the crest of the community. This is how the house still stands today. The outbuildings on either side of the main house were probably also built in Herold time. Frederick Neethling who occupied the house just when the late Georgian style was fashionable, was probably responsible for the wagon-wheel fanlight. The house, a cultural treasure in its own right, is a worthy repository for relics of the history of Stellenbosch and its neighbourhood. Proclaimed 1955" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Good Construction Date: 1781c Materials: Catalogue: , No: ,

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Significance Category:

Damage Types: