

Archaeological Site Report	SiteNo	9/2/018/0204
	Site Name	Waterhof, 56 Hof Street, Gardens, Cape Town
	Date	
	Project	
	CaseNID	
	Coords	-33.936890, 18.407313

Page No: 1 **SiteAutoID:** 29183

Site Category: Building

SiteComments:

Archive Import History: "Waterhof" was originally a part of Leeuwenhof, but became a separate property in 1782. The house was probably built in 1785 or 1786 and is one of the historic 18th-century houses on the slopes of Table Mountain. Just below Leeuwenhof, on the opposite side of Hof Street, another old mansion, Waterhof, is situated. The garden is not only one of the most extensive, but is also one of the prettiest of the gardens which still adorn an old property . in Table Valley. To appreciate the almost dramatic beauty of this garden and house, the premises should be viewed from below. A large lawn, surrounded and broken by giant trees and luxuriant shrubs, extends to the steep slope. The lawn runs up in terraces, overgrown by an amazing variety of plants and flowers, to the impressive stepped entrance of the house. Through the luxuriance of the vegetation the huge white gable looks shyly down on Table Valley. Behind the house the blue- grey rocks of Table Mountain tower perpendicularly into the sky. The land on which this house and garden are situated, originally formed part of the Leeuwenhof estate, but in 1782 J. C. Brasler sold it to J. F. W. Bottiger to enable him to build his stately house at Leeuwenhof. Bottiger was a linen-merchant add he probably bought the premises for speculation. Consequently he sold it in the very same year to Marthinus Johannes Möller, who in turn sold it to Hendrik Justinus de Wet in 1785. As chairman of the Burgher Council he was, as it were, the mouthpiece of the colonists with the central government at that time and he thus played a leading role in the small community at the Cape. It must be accepted that he began building the house in the same year in which he had purchased the premises or shortly after. Originally the groundplan was U-shaped. De Wet died in 1804 and Waterhof was sold to J. H. Hofmeyr, the eldest son of the ancestor of this famous South African family. He lived here till his death in 1820. When the cemetery in Somerset Road was cleared away some years ago, his tombstone was removed and incorpo rated into the wall of the private garage. After Hofmeyr's death Waterhof changed hands several times and in the course of time alterations were made to the house. First, rooms were added on a big scale at the back of the house. Then the main entrance was removed at the beginning of the sixties. Next a block of flats was built on top of the entrance hall and the interior was largely altered. Nevertheless, this mansion with its garden in the heart of Cape Town, remains a feast for the eyes.

Proclaimed 1969" Visual Description: Colours: Site Features: Condition: Construction Date: 1785c Materials: Catalogue: , No: , Significance Category:

AdminComments:

Altered by Parker and Forsyth in 1919 Bibliography archive: PSB:294 alteration

Damage Types: