

ST. JOHN'S
ELLCOTT CITY
Private

A Chapel of Ease of Queen Caroline Parish, established in 1728, St. John's was incorporated in 1822 by the Maryland General Assembly. Referred to as "Dorsey's" Heaven, it stands on a tract of land donated by Caleb Dorsey called Three Brothers. St. John's is notable architecturally as one of three works by Nathan G. Starkweather noted architect of the mid-1800's, which are located in Howard County, Maryland. The others are El Monte and Temora, both on the National Register of Historic Places and victorian architectural gems utilizing the central bay second floor tri-partite fenestration found on St. John's front facade.

St. John's is an excellent example of Romanesque architecture (all fenestration is Romanesque) with Gothic elements in the timber vaulting of the nave and the three bay division and central Roman door of the front facade. It exudes the massive strength and solidarily of the Romanesque with its solid stone spire rising eighty-three feet above the ground, decorated with south and east Romanesque windows at its base and Roman fenestration on each of the four sides of the spire. Victorian traces can be found in the scalloped barge boards of the south facade and the scrolled double brackets running along the east and west cornice between each of its nine Roman windows.

Maintained in excellent condition, the original six bay nave was extended to nine in its 1974 restoration, while its dirt floor basement was cleaned out, cemented in and now accommodates a choir room, rest rooms, small kitchen facilities and columbarium.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET

NOMINATION FORM
 for the
 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES, NATIONAL PARKS SERVICE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME						
COMMON: St. John's Episcopal Church						
AND/OR HISTORIC:						
2. LOCATION						
STREET AND NUMBER: Frederick Road						
CITY OR TOWN: Ellicott City						
STATE: Maryland			COUNTY: Howard			
3. CLASSIFICATION						
CATEGORY (Check One)		OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both		Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)						
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	_____		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious	_____	_____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	_____	_____		
4. OWNER OF PROPERTY						
OWNER'S NAME: Vestry of St. John's Church						
STREET AND NUMBER: Frederick Road						
CITY OR TOWN: Ellicott City			STATE: Maryland		21044	
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION						
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Hall of Records						
STREET AND NUMBER: Ann Arundel County						
CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis			STATE: Maryland			
Title Reference of Current Deed (Book & Pg. #): p.1067 H.C. also						
6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS A.A.Co. 11/62, 54/79, 166/71, 179/92, 30/534,						
TITLE OF SURVEY: Howard County Historic Sites Inventory Tax Map #24						
DATE OF SURVEY: 1976 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local						
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Maryland Historic Trust						
STREET AND NUMBER: 21 State Circle						
CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis			STATE: Maryland		21401	

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncolored	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

St. John's Episcopal Church, located on Old Frederick Road west of Ellicott City was established in 1728 as a chapel of ease of Queen Caroline Parish. The present structure, a Romanesque revival building dates from the 1860's and is constructed of blocks of local granite. It has a steeply pitched gable roof, running north south. The south elevation contains a central Romanesque door, surmounted by a vertical tripartite Roman arched window with stone lintels and sills crowned by a rose window within the A formed by the gable roof. Originally three bays wide and six bays long, in 1974 its nave was extended to comprise nine bays, delineated by tall Roman arched windows with fine stone lintels and projecting stone sills. A stone water table rises from the stone foundation. On the south facade a bell tower with open belfry springs out of the west bay with a cross sculptured into its upper south and west walls. A tower topped by a spire whose south wall is decorated with an unmarked shield in half relief projects from the east bay. This tower contained a north entrance and stairs leading to the slave gallery, now enlarged and used as a choir loft. At the apex of the roof on the south is a granite cross.

The roof members are exposed on the interior and resemble the medieval type of construction where molded ribs are brought down into decorative pendants at certain points. There is an entrance hall, a long nave with central and side aisles and a section behind the nave used for clergy and altar guild. A large rose window is located in the middle of the north wall. It represents through symbolism the various aspects of Christ. The stained glass windows on the east wall depict events in the life of Christ with an exceptionally fine tiffany window on the south of the east wall. The stained glass windows on the west depict the lives of the saints with representative figures of hope and faith.

Elements of the gothic style are evidenced in the east and west towers, the central portal surmounted by a rose window and the feeling of height you experience in the nave. The fenestration however, is Wholy Romanesque with the heavy east tower giving much the same feeling as that of St. Germain de Pres in Paris. An example of Romanesque revival with elements of the Gothic, it is the work of Nathan G. Starkwether noted architect of the mid-1800's who designed Victorian buildings such as Temora and El Monte. The exterior trim work along the eaves of the south facade and the open belfry give a trace of Victorian to the south facade. The tripartite window treatment above the south entrance door is utilized both in El Monte and Temora though not totally Romanesque in nature as at St. John's.

A columbarium is located in the basement of the church, which furnishes an out reach to the community. There are six levels of niches with nine niches in each level. The bottom level is six inches above ground and the top row is eye level.

St. John's Church is bounded on the north east by St. John's cemetary which was donated by Miss Sally Dorsey in 1871 and is now operated on a separate basis. In 1949 a new rectory was completed south east of the church. Further south of the rectory is a parish house built in the 1950's which hosted the 1st St. John's Antique Show in 1956. This has become an annual event. An educational building was later built, attaching itself

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. John's ranks with Christ Church in its importance as a religious institution for Howard County, Queen Caroline Parish. An act of incorporation was obtained from the General Assembly, December 1822 to provide for the election of a vestry for St. John's Church. The petitioners for this act had built a church at their own expense, including George Howard and Jacob Hollingsworth.

On Easter Monday, April 4, 1823 a vestry which included Thomas B. Dorsey, Caleb Dorsey of Caleb, Lloyd T. Hammond and Jacob Hollingsworth was elected. There were so many Dorseys who attended St. John's Church it was jestingly referred to as "Dorsey's Heaven". The building was known as the White Church on St. John's Lane. It served as did Christ Church the leaders of Howard County and played an important role in the social life of the 1800's.

The land on which St. John's stands was donated by Caleb Dorsey out of a tract of land called Three Brothers.

The present structure was erected in 1860 and is a good example of the eclecticism in our American architecture of that period. The building integrating Romanesque and gothic elements with a trace of Victorian. The fenestration is purely Romanesque, as well as the heavy east tower with its granite spire. The central door flanked by an east and west tower and the sense of height in the nave are reminiscent of the gothic style while the wood work on the open belfry, the brackets at the eaves and the corbels holding the copper cross in place at the apex of the roof give a flavor of the Victorian. The Rose window of 1974 above the altar was designed and assembled by the Willet Studio of Chestnut Hill, Pa.

In Romanesque architecture there were circular windows; however, it was in the Gothic that the circles were divided by mullions like the spokes of a wheel. This Rose window is a flat rose with symbols of the I am statements of Christ, one in each petal.

The church over its 150 years of ministry has served many of the leaders of Howard County as a gathering place for social affairs as well as religious. In recent years St. John's has opened its doors to residents of the new town of Columbia as well as the old families of Howard County, providing a place for mutual appreciation and understanding.

In the field of Christian Education it has been instrumental in form-

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

HO-26

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Stein, C.F. Origin and History of Howard County, Maryland. Baltimore, 1972.
 Warfield, J.P. The Founders of AA and Howard Counties, Md. Baltimore, 1967.
 Christ Church Guilford. "Notes from Vestry minutes". (Unpublished material)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SE	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	
SW	° ' "	° ' "		° ' "	° ' "	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY:

Acreege Justification: Please see tax map #24
 8.76 Acres
 P.1067 Howard County
 AA Co.
 Ref 11/62
 54/79
 166/71
 179/92
 30/534

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Cleora B. Thompson, Archivist		DATE: June, 1976
ORGANIZATION: Howard County Comprehensive Planning		
STREET AND NUMBER: 3450 Court House Drive		
CITY OR TOWN: Ellicott City	STATE: Maryland	21043

12 State Liaison Officer Review: (Office Use Only)

Significance of this property is:
 National State Local

 Signature

Description continued

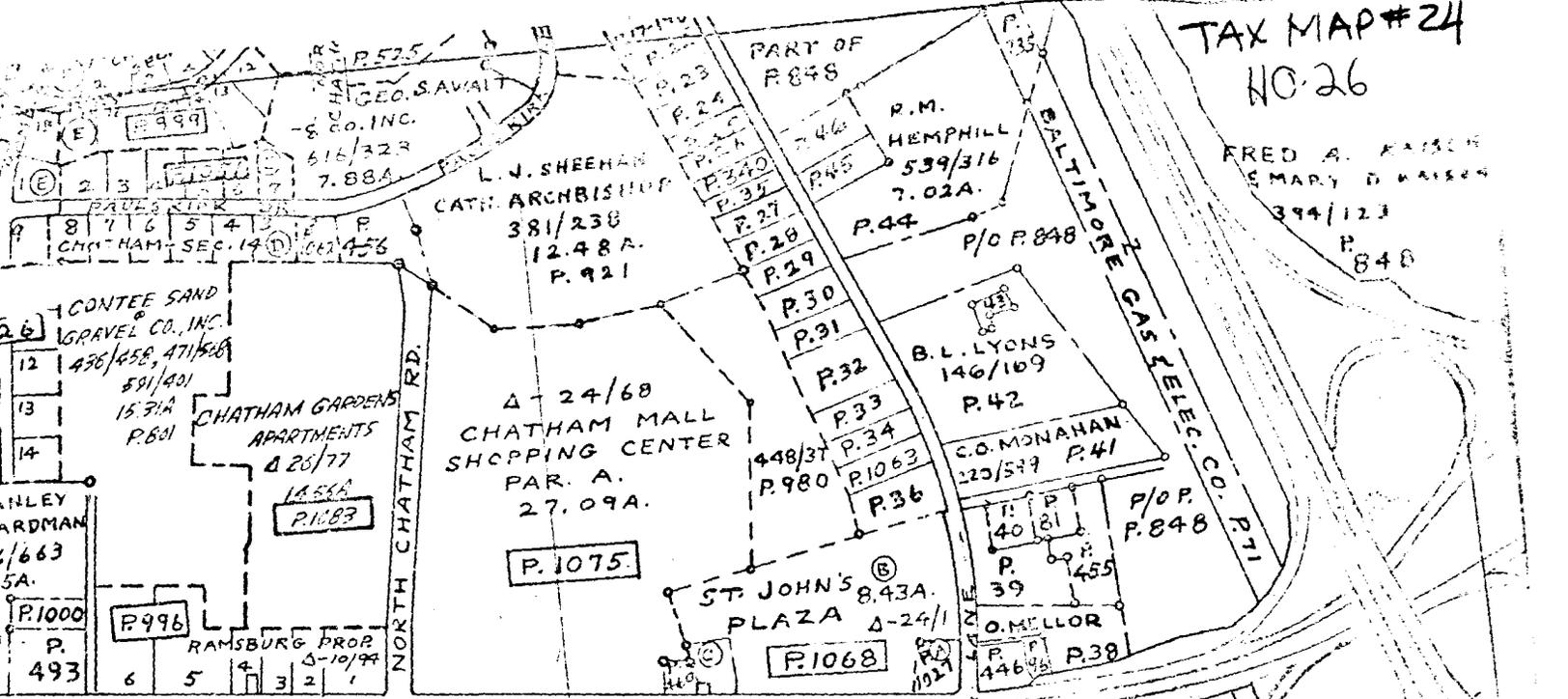
NO-26

to the north wall of the parish house, extending north and joining with an eastern wing to create an L plan.

In 1960 property west of the church known as Rose Hill was acquired and in 1974 the residence west of Rose Hill on Old Frederick Road became a part of the St. John's complex.

ulating a Howard County School of Theology as well as providing an excellent nursery school for 3-4 and 5 year olds.

TAX MAP #24
NO. 26



U.S. 40





H.O. 26

572A

St John's Church SSE 6/7



HO-26 DIST 2
ST. JOHN'S CH
MHT