

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #79-44 Building Date: 1899

Building Name: St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church

Location: 14908 Main Street, Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Private/Religious/Occupied/Excellent/Accessible

Description:

St. Mary's Church is a gable-roofed brick church which fronts directly on Main Street in Upper Marlboro. It is a large building (ca. 120' long and 58' wide), with two-story nave, and one-story side aisles. Entrance is through double doors centered in the east gable end the surround of the doors is composed on each side of three engaged columns of brownstone, with acanthus leaf capitals. Above the door is a wooden rosette-filled pediment, and above that, a large pointed-arch stained glass window with dentilled sill. South of the double doors and set into the southeast corner of the building is a three-story (75' high) bell tower, crenelated and decorated with four turrets. There is a second set of double doors in the east face of the tower, also surmounted by a rosette-filled pediment. There is a parapetted balcony on each of the south and east faces of the tower at second level; and the top of the tower is adorned with brownstone turrets, painted white. The sides of the church are 14 bays long; the pointed-arch windows are filled with stained-glass memorials, and their sills are of brownstone. Brick buttresses between each set of two bays have molded brownstone caps at the weatherings.

Significance:

St. Mary's Church exemplifies Gothic Revival Church architecture in the grand style; when it was dedicated in 1899, newspaper accounts claimed that it compared favorably with the great churches of great cities. St. Mary's had its beginnings in Boone's Chapel, a small private Catholic chapel which was built before 1787 in the area now known as Cheltenham; this small log chapel had deteriorated by the 1840's, when a Catholic church was constructed on the main street in Upper Marlboro. The mid-nineteenth century building served the Catholic population of Upper Marlboro for more than 50 years. In 1898, the old church was demolished, and the new church erected on its site. The new brick building was designed by Hugh A. Campbell, Washington architect, and the Wyvill Brothers of Upper Marlboro were contracted as builders. The new church was dedicated 28 May 1899 by Cardinal Gibbons. St. Mary's Church is an important landmark in the town of Upper Marlboro, not only as part of the evolution of a center of Catholic worship in Prince George's County, but as an example of grand scale church architecture by local builders.

Acreage: 1.08 acre

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic St. Mary of the Assumption Roman Catholic Church

and/or common St. Mary's Catholic Church

2. Location

street & number 14908 Main Street not for publication

city, town Upper Marlboro vicinity of congressional district 5

state Md. county P.G.

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Rev. Patrick O'Boyle, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Washington

street & number c/o St. Marys Church telephone no.: 627-3255

city, town Upper Marlboro state and zip code Md. 20772

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. not found liber

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title P.G. County Inventory of Historic Sites

date 1974 federal state county local

depository for survey records History Division, MNCPPC

city, town Riverdale, state Md. 20737

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

St. Mary's Church is a gable-roofed brick church which fronts directly on Main Street in Upper Marlboro. It is a large building, with two-story nave, and one-story side aisles; it is ca. 120' long, 58' wide, and 60' high at the ridge. Its principal facade is its east gable end, and entry is through double doors centered in this east gable end, and flanked by pointed-arch stained glass windows. South of the double doors and set into the southeast corner of the building is a three-story (75' high) bell tower, crenelated and decorated with four turrets. There is a second set of double doors centered in the east face of the tower.

The main entrance is through five-panel double doors; the surround of the doors is composed on each side of three engaged columns of brownstone, with acanthus leaf capitals. The door is surmounted by a wooden rosette-filled pediment, and above that a large pointed-arch stained glass window with dentilled sill.

The double doors in the east face of the tower are, like the main doors, surmounted by a rosette-filled pediment. There are two louvered pointed-arch windows on each face of the tower at second level. Each set of double louvered windows has a shallow dentilled platform beneath; on the east and south, this platform is expanded into a parapetted balcony. The top of the tower is adorned with brownstone turrets, now painted white.

The sides of the church are 14 bays long (including three doors on the north side, and two on the south); the pointed-arch windows are filled with stained-glass memorials, and their sills are of brownstone. There are six brick buttresses on the side walls of the church, placed between each set of two bays; these buttresses have molded brownstone caps at the weatherings.

At the west gable end of the church is a curved altar lighted by four narrow pointed-arch windows. They are filled by stained glass memorials to Eliza Graham, the principal benefactor of the church.

The interior is painted white, and features wainscoting below the chair rails, and door surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks. The ornate wooden ceiling beams and braces are fully visible. There are four banks of heavy ornate oak pews which can accommodate 800 persons. An original fresco in the arched ceiling of the altar has been painted over in plain white.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1899 **Builder/Architect** Wyvill Brothers/Hugh Campbell

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
 and/or
 Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G
 Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

St. Mary's Church exemplifies Gothic Revival Church architecture in the grand style. When it was dedicated in 1899, newspaper accounts claimed that it compared favorably with the great churches of great cities.¹ St. Mary's had its beginnings in Boone's Chapel, a small private Catholic chapel which was built before 1787 in the area between Nottingham and the Woodyard, now known as Cheltenham. This small log chapel must have deteriorated by the 1840's, when a Catholic church was constructed on the main street in Upper Marlboro.

This building served the Catholic population of Upper Marlboro for more than 50 years. Then in 1898, under the rectorship of Charles Trinkhaus, the present brick church was built on the same site. Demolition of the old church began in May 1898, and two months later, the new cornerstone was laid. The new church building was designed by Hugh A. Campbell, Washington architect, and the Wyvill Brothers of Upper Marlboro were contracted as builders. The new church was dedicated 28 May 1899 by Cardinal Gibbons.²

St. Mary's Church is an important landmark in the town of Upper Marlboro, not only as part of the evolution of a center of Catholic worship in Prince George's County, but as an example of grand scale church architecture by local builders.

Notes:

¹ Laurel Leader - 2 June 1899; Catholic Mirror - 3 June 1899; Prince George's Enquirer, 9 June 1899.

² Ibid; church records, St. Mary's Church; Stones and Bones, Prince George's County Genealogical Society, 1984.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G. #79-44

cf. Notes, Item #8

Interview with Father McGuigan; Wyvill family members.

St. Mary's Church records.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1.08 acre; TM#101, parcel 75Quadrangle name Bristol quadrangle, section D

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research Historianorganization Historic Preservation Commissiondate May 1985street & number c/o County Planning, MNCPPCtelephone 952-3521city or town Upper Marlboro,state Md.

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

R-U
P.18

R-T
MARLBOROUGH TOWNE APTS.
PARCEL 'A'

6201

SCHOOL HOUSE POND

O-S

P.G.CO.
4411/183
11.00A.
P.258

M.N.C.P./B.P.C.
4413/141
805A
P.258

STATE OF MARYLAND
5156/136
6.39A
P.250

R-R
4.00A
P.285

R18

R-80

725

79-44

R-55

C-0

8621

R-55

ODEN BOWIE DRIVE

PARKING

G.A.B.I.

FINGLASS
1.03A
P.171

VOL. FIRE DEPT.

JAIL

C-S-C

BOARD OF EDUCATION
419/44
4.34A
P.60

CLARA SMITH
4731/291

2.06A
P.153

R-80

CLARET BETH
ADM. 15:2
5.30A.
P.55

T VAN CLAGETT
2509-174
5.21A.
P.56

C-0

C-0

O-S

I-1

TRINITY CHURCH
3296/451
5.48A
P.266

P.G. CO
COMM
3190/520
5.48A
P.266

FLOOD CONTROL
2125/41
P.225

R-R

I-3

1/2 MILE RACE TRACK

R-A

PG: 79-44

44A
P.97

ELL 1

#7 Continued

There is a parking lot behind the church (to the west); located on its northern perimeter are two small classroom buildings. The easternmost is a one-and-one-half-story hip-roofed frame building, four bays long, covered with German siding; it has dormers in the end planes of the roof. The other is a one-story gable-roofed building, nine bays long, with a door in the central bay of the long south facade. On the small corner lot, directly south of the church, is a two-story rectory building.



P.G.#79-44

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

March 1985

Interior

Neg.: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



P.G. #79-44

St. Mary's Catholic Church
Prince George's County, MD.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1985
Southwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD.



P.G.#79-44

St. Mary's Catholic Church
Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

March 1985

Southeast 3/4 elevation

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD