

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes X  
no     

Property Name: United States Post Office, Upper Marlboro Inventory Number: PG:79-61  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: Upper Marlboro Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
County: Prince Georges USGS Topographic Map: \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Is the property being evaluated a district?      yes  
Tax Parcel Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Map Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Account ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
Site visit by MHT staff: X no      yes Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Is the property is located within a historic district?      yes      no

*If the property is within a district* District Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
NR-listed district      yes Eligible district      yes Name of District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Preparer's Recommendation: Contributing resource      yes      no Non-contributing but eligible in another context      yes

*If the property is not within a district (or the property is a district)* Preparer's Recommendation: Eligible X yes      no

Criteria:      A      B      C      D Considerations:      A      B      C      D      E      F      G      None

Documentation on the property/district is presented in:

Description of Property and Eligibility Determination: *(Use continuation sheet if necessary and attach map and photo)*

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended       
Criteria:      A      B      C      D Considerations:      A      B      C      D      E      F      G      None

**MHT Comments**

The Post Office was federally determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Patrick Andrus

Reviewer, NR Program

Date

October 19, 1988

Date



Esch

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #79-61 Building Date: 1936

Building Name: Upper Marlboro Post Office

Location: 20772 Main Street, Upper Marlboro

Public Post Office/Occupied/Good/Accessible

Description

The Post Office in Upper Marlboro is a five-by-five bay, one story brick building with a loading dock across the north (rear) facade. Built in 1936, the building fronts directly on Main Street, the main thoroughfare in Upper Marlboro. The five bay south (main) facade has central entrance through a modern double door of glass framed with metal. Surmounting the entrance is a wide wooden entablature with a dentil band, wide plain frieze and crown-molded cornice. Above the entablature is an arched transom with leaded tracery, surmounted by a brick arch with a central cement keystone. The main facade is a symmetrical, three-part facade. The center section is recessed slightly, flanked by two wings of one bay each, approximately five feet lower in height. Both the wings and center block are surmounted by a wide entablature with a parapet above the crown molded cornice. The center block is surmounted by hipped roof covered by a metal covering with pronounced standing seams, and by a rectangular wooden cupola. At the southeast corner of the main facade is a corner stone. The interior of the Post Office is ell-shaped. The wall covering is dark campania rose marble wainscot, ending at a raised, flat rectangular marble chair rail. Centered on the west wall, above the post master's office door is a large mural, depicting tobacco cutters in a field.

Significance

The Post Office in Upper Marlboro is significant for its Colonial Revival architecture produced under Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect for the Treasury Department; and for the large mural prepared for it by local artist Mitchell Jamieson, hanging on its interior west wall. The building is also significant as one of the 1,100 post offices built by the United States Treasury Department between 1934 and 1943, as a part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.

Acreage: 19,480 square feet

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Upper Marlboro Post Office

### 2. Location

street & number 20772 Main Street  not for publicationcity, town Upper Marlboro  vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county Prince George's

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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	<b>Public Acquisition:</b>	<b>Accessible:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 United States Postal Service

street &amp; number Field Real Estate and Building Office telephone no.:

city, town P.O. Box 701 state and zip code MD 21045  
Columbia

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse  not  
liber found

street &amp; number Main Street folio

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title N.A.

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Commission, #4010 CAB

city, town Upper Marlboro state MD

# 7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#79-61

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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.

The Post Office in Upper Marlboro is a five-by-five bay, one story brick building with a loading dock across the north (rear) facade. Built in 1936, the building fronts directly on Main Street, the main thoroughfare in Upper Marlboro.

The five bay south (main) facade has central entrance through a modern double door of glass framed with metal. There are door-sized glass windows flanking the entrance, lighting an interior glass vestibule. Surmounting the entrance is a wide wooden entablature with a dentil band, wide plain frieze and crown-molded cornice. Above the entablature is an arched transom with leaded tracery, surmounted by a brick arch with a central molded concrete keystone. The entry was altered ca. 1964. The original entry door had leaded glass sidelights and wooden pilasters flanking double wooden doors.

The entrance is flanked by two 12/12 double-hung-sash windows surmounted by flat brick arches and having a molded concrete keystone and concrete sills. Centered above each window is an inset rectangular panel as a decorative feature on the brick wall surface. Centered on the facade is the title "United States Post Office Upper Marlboro Maryland."

The main facade is a symmetrical, three-part facade. The center three-bay section, including the central entrance, is recessed slightly. It is flanked by two wings of one bay each, approximately five feet lower in height, containing a 12/12 window surmounted by a flat brick arch and having a concrete sill. Both the wings and center block are surmounted by a wide entablature with a parapet above the crown molded cornice. The center block is surmounted by a hipped roof with a standing seam metal covering and a rectangular wooden cupola. There is an arched, louvered opening in each face of the cupola and it is surmounted by a dome with a weathervane in the form of a figure of a running horse. The rest of the building has a flat roof, covered with asphalt.

At the southeast corner of the main facade is a cornerstone which reads, "Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Secretary of the Treasury, James A. Farley, Postmaster General, Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect, Neal A. Melick, Supervising Engineer, 1936."

The east and west facades of the building originally were 3 bays. The building was extended to the north (rear) by 2 bays in 1964. The extension maintained the same Flemish bond brick work, cornice and roof height as the main block. It is evident by a seam in the wall between the third and fourth bays, and by a slight variation in the brick color.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

Survey No. P.G.#79-61

Description (continued)

Section 7 Page 2

The west facade has a concrete stair down to a door to the basement, beneath the fourth bay. Windows on the east and west sides are also 12/12 sash. Some have been bricked over.

The rear of the building is taken up by a loading dock with a flat metal roof and a concrete loading dock area. There is an asphalt driveway along the east wall of the building and a parking lot immediately north (behind) the building.

The interior of the Post Office is divided between the public lobby and the non-public area used for processing the mail. The lobby is ell-shaped, with the counter service area directly opposite the entrance door, and the post office boxes along the east and north walls.

The wall covering is dark campania rose marble wainscot, ending at a raised, flat rectangular marble chair rail. The rose marble forms a wide, flat door surround around the entry to the postmaster's office, centered in the west wall. The upper portion of the walls are plaster. Pink and grey marble was used as division margins in the floor. The rest of the flooring is of square sections of a composite material composed of light and dark Tennessee marble chips with 25% red champlain chips.

Centered on the west wall, above the postmaster's office door is a large mural, depicting tobacco cutters in a field. This painting, completed in 1938, was commissioned for the Upper Marlboro Post Office and painted by local artist, Mitchell Jamieson.

On the west and south walls of the lobby are a total of five wooden cases with glazed doors, original to the building, for the purpose of posting bulletins or notices. Some of the cases have the word "Bulletin" above the door in metal lettering. Two have the heading "Civil Service Commission." A freestanding wooden display case, probably dating to the construction of the post office, is set in the southeast section of the lobby. It is a rectangular case on four wooden legs and has locking glass doors on both east and west sides.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. P.G.#79-61

Period	Area 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Total history

**Specific dates** 1936 **Builder/Architect** Louis A. Simon, architect

**check:** Applicable Criteria:  A  B  C  D Neal A. Melick, engineer  
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.

The Post Office in Upper Marlboro is significant for its Colonial Revival architecture produced under Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect for the Treasury Department; and for the large mural prepared for it by artist Mitchell Jamieson, hanging on its interior west wall. The building is also significant as one of the 1,100 post offices built by the United States Treasury Department between 1934 and 1943, as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal.

The Treasury Department built and administered all Federal buildings from the late 19th century through the decade of the 1930's.<sup>1</sup> A total of 1,100 post offices were built by the Treasury Department between 1934 and 1943. The community post office became an emblem of New Deal government policies such as the link between local communities and the Federal government. The new edifices were also to symbolize efficiency, permanence, service and even culture.<sup>2</sup>

Louis A. Simon (1867-1958), served in the Office of the Supervising Architect in the Treasury Department from 1896 through his retirement in 1941. He served as Supervising Architect beginning in 1934, although as Chief of Engineering and Drafting beginning in 1915, he actually supervised all phases of the design and construction of Federal buildings. Simon's design philosophy was characterized by simplicity and restraint. His interest was in mass and proportion rather than surface elaboration.<sup>3</sup> This design philosophy is evident in the tripartite massing and unadorned surface treatment of the Upper Marlboro Post Office building. Simon was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1937.

The Post Office in Upper Marlboro is Colonial Revival in style, a style popular for public buildings and dwellings during the 1920's and 30's. It is notable for exterior details such as its tripartite, symmetrical plan, use of brick arches and formal central entrance with entablature and leaded-glass transom. The entrance was altered in 1964 and the removal of leaded-glass sidelights and pilasters flanking the doorway has somewhat compromised the appearance of the entry. The

building's domed cupola is highly visible throughout Upper Marlboro's small main street commercial area and is a landmark. The interior of the building is formal and institutional in style. The walls have rose marble wainscoting and the floor is of a composite material of marble chips. The wooden wall cases and a wooden freestanding floor case for public announcements are original to the building, and display metal lettering in a style common in the 1930's.

The rectangular mural on the upper west lobby wall was commissioned specifically for the Upper Marlboro Post Office. The Treasury Department directed two art programs during the 1930's, the Treasury Relief Art Project and the Section of Painting and Sculpture. The latter program was instituted in 1934 and was based on a policy that one percent of the cost of new Federal buildings was to be set aside for embellishment. A total of 1,400 commissions were distributed to artists during the program's nine years of existence. The effort was to distribute commissions to local artists, providing financial support for them and fostering the regional cultures of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

The mural in the Upper Marlboro Post Office, called "Tobacco Cutters" was completed in 1938 by local artist Mitchell Jamieson. The scene depicted is inaccurate in that tobacco in Prince George's County is harvested by cutting the entire stalk, not by picking the leaves as the mural portrays.<sup>5</sup> Jamieson, born in Kensington, Maryland in 1915, also painted murals for the Post Office in Laurel, Maryland and in Willard, Ohio. During his career he was actively involved in depicting American life culture and received many public commissions. He was one of seven painters to record defense activities during World War II for the Office of Emergency Management. Life Magazine commissioned him in 1957 to depict American activities abroad. In 1963-64 he was appointed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as the official artist of Project Mercury. In 1967 he went to Vietnam as a guest of the Army under the Civilian Volunteer Artist Program. Jamieson was a professor of art at the University of Maryland from 1959 through his death in 1976.<sup>6</sup> He was listed in Who's Who in American Art in 1980.

#### Notes

1 Antoinette J. Lee, "Architects to the Nation, History of the Office of the Supervising Architect of the United States Treasury," unpublished manuscript.

2 Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, Democratic Vistas: Post Office and Public Art in the New Deal, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1984.

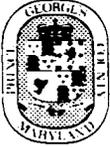
3 Lee, op.cit.

4 Park and Markowitz, op. cit.

5 Ibid.

6 Obituary, The Washington Star, Thursday, February 5, 1976, p. B-5; and The Washington Post, Friday, February 6, 1976.





**Prince  
George's  
County**

# Historic Preservation Commission

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING • UPPER MARLBORO, MD. 20772 • (301)952-3520

September 27, 1988

Mr. Patrick Andrus  
National Register Staff  
National Park Service  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Mr. Andrus:

I am writing on behalf of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission, a certified local government and an interested party in the disposition of the Old Post Office building in Upper Marlboro, Prince George's County, Maryland. The Maryland State Historic Preservation Office has been keeping our office informed on the Section 106 process as it pertains to the Post Office.

I recently received from the Maryland SHPO a copy of the E.O. 11593 form addressed to USPS Sandra L. Bauder, requesting further information on and a photograph of the WPA mural in the building. As part of the Historic Preservation Commission's program to maintain and update information on significant historic county properties, we have compiled a file on the Post Office, including the WPA mural. I am submitting this for your files.

Please don't hesitate to call with any questions.

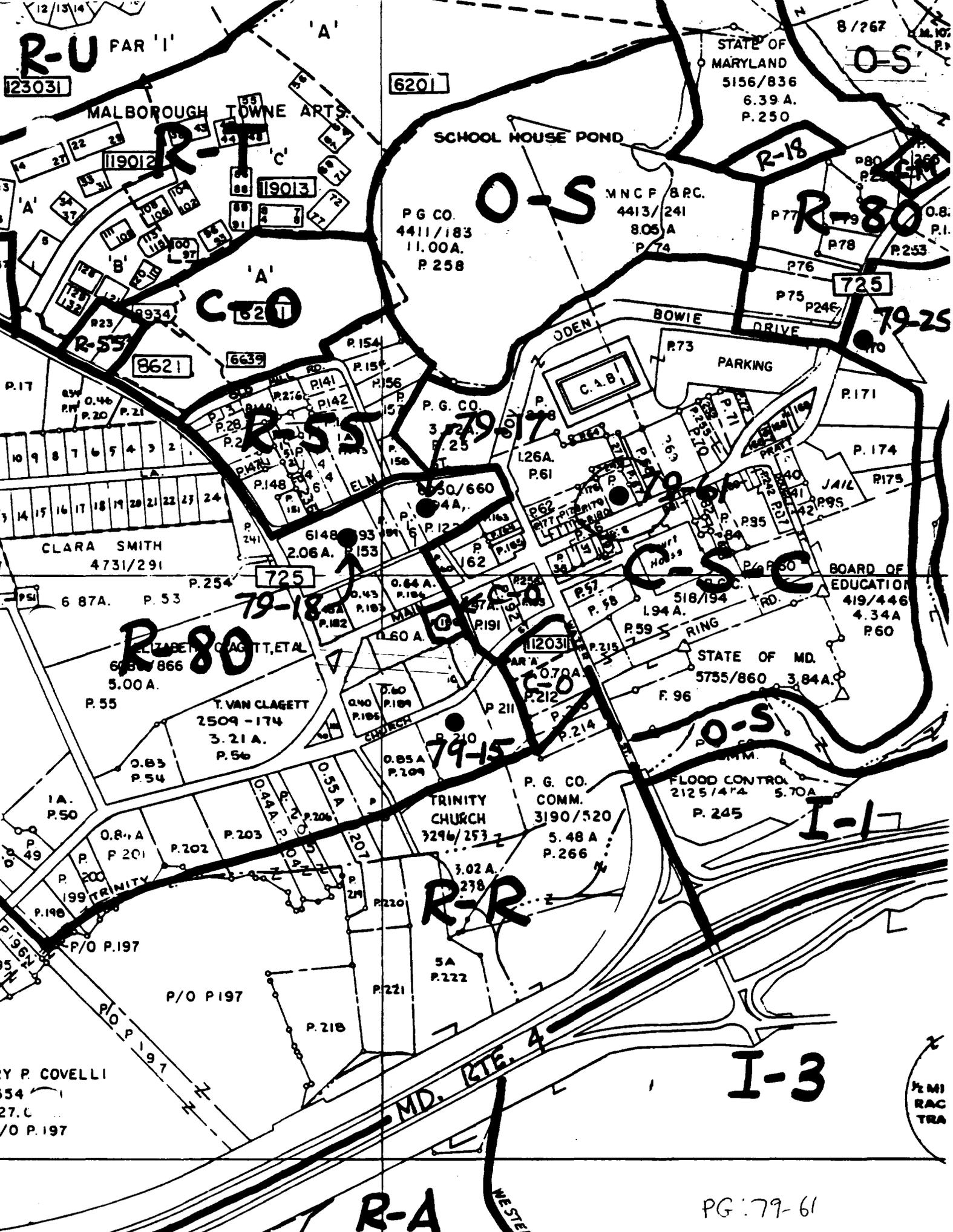
Sincerely,

Marina King  
Preservation Planner

MK:bs

Enclosure

cc: Ron Andrews  
Maryland Historical Trust



R-U FAR 'I'

123031

6201

STATE OF MARYLAND  
5156/836  
6.39 A.  
P. 250

O-S

8/267

M. 107  
P. 1

MALBOROUGH TOWNE ARTS

SCHOOL HOUSE POND

R-T

119012

119013

O-S

PG CO.  
4411/183  
11.00A.  
P 258

MNC P B.R.C.  
4413/241  
8.05A  
P 74

R-18

R-80

725

79-25

C-320

8621

6639

BOWIE DRIVE

PARKING

JOEN

C.A.B.

R-55

P.G. CO.  
3.72A  
F 25

650/660

C-S-C

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
419/446  
4.34A  
P 60

CLARA SMITH  
4731/291

725

79-18

R-80

ELIZABETH GAGETT, ETAL  
608/866  
5.00A.  
P. 55

T. VAN CLAGETT  
2509-174  
3.21A.  
P. 56

79-15

TRINITY CHURCH  
3296/253

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

STATE OF MD.  
5755/860  
3.84A.  
F. 96

FLOOD CONTROL  
2125/414  
5.70A  
P. 245

I-17

R-R

5A  
P. 222

P/O P197

P. 221

P. 218

MD. RTE. 4

I-3

1/2 MI  
RAC  
TRA

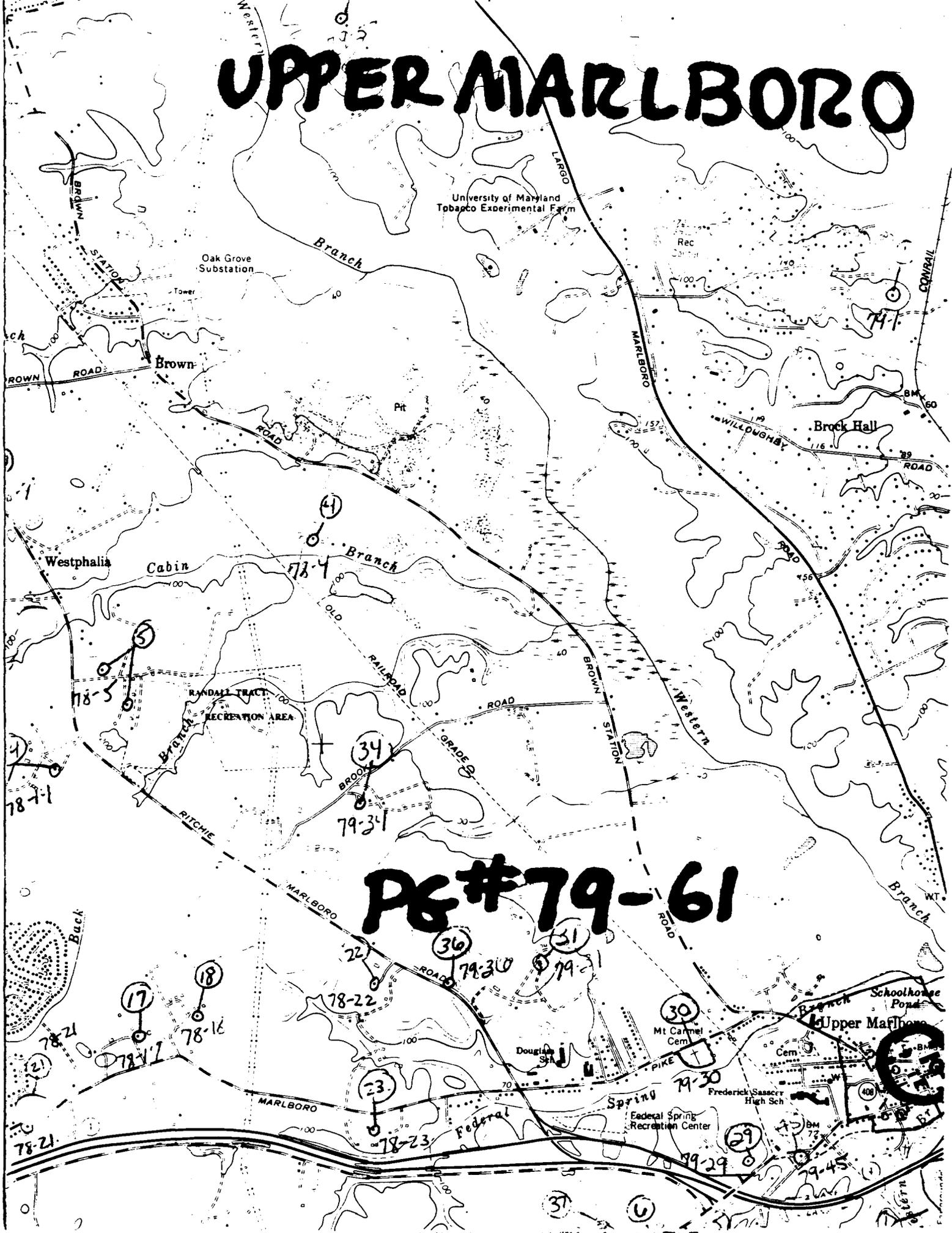
RY P. COVELLI  
354  
27.C  
P/O P. 197

R-A

WESTER

PG: 79-61

# UPPER MARLBORO



**PG#79-61**



P.G. #79-61

Upper Marlboro Post Office  
Prince George's County, Maryland  
Marina King  
March 1987  
South elevation  
Neg: Maryland Historical Trust  
Annapolis, MD



P.G. #79-61

Upper Marlboro Post Office  
Prince George's County, Maryland  
Marina King  
March 1987  
Northeast elevation  
Neg: Maryland Historical Trust  
Annapolis, MD



OS  
CA  
RR  
VE

LABOR

LABOR

CHILD  
AND  
EXPLOITED  
CHILDREN



EXIT

P.G. #79-61

Upper Marlboro Post Office  
Prince George's County, Maryland  
Marina King  
March 1987  
Lobby, looking west  
Neg: Maryland Historical Trust  
Annapolis, MD



PG # 79-61

United States Post Office  
Upper Marlboro, Prince  
Georges County, MD

Maxine King

September 1988

Lobby, looking SE



P.G. #79-61

Upper Marlboro Post Office  
Prince George's County, Maryland  
Marina King  
March 1987  
North elevation  
Neg: Maryland Historical Trust  
Annapolis, MD

HENRY MORGENTHAU JR  
SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

JAMES A FARLEY  
POSTMASTER GENERAL

LOUIS A SIMON  
SUPERVISING ARCHITECT

NEAL A MELICK  
SUPERVISING ENGINEER

1936

P.G. #79-61

Upper Marlboro Post Office  
Prince George's County, Maryland  
Marina King  
March 1987  
Cornerstone, Southeast corner  
Neg: Maryland Historical Trust  
Annapolis, MD



PG# 79-61

United States Post Office  
Upper Marlboro, Prince  
George's County, MD  
Marina Keig

September 1988  
West wall, mural  
"Tobacco Cutters"



PG# 79-61

United States Post Office  
Upper Marlboro, Prince  
George's County, MD  
Marina King  
September 1988  
Display case, East lobby



PG # 79-61

United States Post Office  
Upper Marlboro, Prince  
George's County, MD

Marina King

September 1988

West wall, detail



PG # 79-61

United States Post Office  
Upper Marlboro, Prince  
George's County, MD

Marina King

September 1988

Iron balustrade and light  
post, South elevation