

Capsule Summary
SM-598
St. Michael's R.C. Church
Ridge
Public

1929

St. Michael's R.C. Church was initially started in Scotland, Maryland as a mission of St. Ignatius Church (SM-15) near St. Inigoes. By 1823 this mission church had grown to a congregation of 320 parishioners. The first substantial church facility was dedicated in 1881 by Archbishop James Cardinal Gibbons. In only seven years, this sanctuary was pulled down and replaced by another church at the crossroads of Tall Pine (later Ridge, Maryland) under the direction of Father John BeGaffney. In 1919, the Archiepiscopal See of Baltimore under the direction of Archbishop Gibbons purchased 30 acres called "Tall Pine" from Charles and Mary J. Wood and soon after constructed an elementary school, convent, high school, and church. The current, modestly Romanesque-style church sanctuary was constructed at this location in 1929 under the direction of Father Gregory G. Kuehne, S.J.

The building is significant not only as a symbol of the longstanding Catholic presence in the community of Ridge, but also for its architecture. The exterior appearance of the church is modestly distinguished by its semi-circular arch, stained glass windows, its cornice brackets, and a prominent, projecting front steeple pierced by a double door entry with an elliptical transom on the first floor and a Palladian window that lights a second floor gallery. The interior, however, features the most extensive and competent use of pressed metal yet documented in all of Southern Maryland. While other examples of pressed metal interiors exist in churches such as St. Paul's U.M. Church (SM-274), as well as dwellings such as the Bushwood Post Office (SM-608), the interior of St. Michael's reflects the full fledged acceptance of pressed metal as a fire resistant, sanitary, permanent, and economical alternative to plaster. Used on the walls, ceiling, and staircase to the gallery, the pressed metal patterns vary from fleur-de-lis and laurels to coffers and rosettes. The extensive use of coffers on the coved ceiling provides a especially dramatic visual effect. Today, the church retains a high degree of structural and decorative integrity and was recently renovated--the interior receiving a new coat of white paint.

SM-598, St. Michael's Catholic Church
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period: Industrial Urban Dominance, 1870-1930
Historic Period Theme: Architecture
Religion

Resource Type

Category: Building
Historic Environment: Village
Historic Function and Use: Church
Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-598

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic St. Michael's Catholic Church

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 15650 Three Notch Road not for publication

city, town Ridge vicinity of congressional district 1

state Maryland county St. Mary's County TM-71, B-1, P-198

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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input 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 St. Michael's Catholic Church

street & number telephone no.: 301-872-4321

city, town Ridge state and zip code Md 20680

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber 18

street & number folio 110

city, town Leonardtown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. SM-598

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.

Contributing Resource Count: 1

St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church is situated just east of Route 235 and behind St. Michael's Catholic School in Ridge, Maryland. Oriented on an east/west axis, the church is situated on a relatively flat lot. The building is bounded to the west by a large parking lot, to the south by a convent, to the east by a cemetery, and to the north by the church rectory.

Constructed in 1929, the modestly Romanesque style St. Michael's Church is a large one story, frame, three bay, gable front building with a rectangular plan and a one story rear addition. The masonry foundation (most likely concrete block) supports exterior walls that are sheathed with cedar shingles attached to the frame with wire nails. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles.

The west gable end or primary elevation is dominated by a steeple that is situated on a square shaped projecting entrance that forms the vestibule and the base for a four-part steeple. The entry, approached via five concrete steps, consists of a paired set of modern vinyl doors with an elliptical fanlight that is decorated with stained glass. A white band of trim marks the boundary between the first and second sections of the steeple (as well as the other sections). The second section of the steeple is pierced by a Palladian window that consists of a central, one-over-one, double hung sash window flanked by fixed sidelights with an elliptical fanlight overhead. All of the glazing for this window is stained glass. The third section of the tower features a louvered opening for ventilation. A steep, pyramidal shaped roof forms the fourth section. The projecting vestibule entrance is flanked on either side by a semicircular arch, stained glass window that features one movable sash. The gable end of the church's main block is further emphasized by a pair of cornice returns--the returns decorated with cyma recta moldings.

The south elevation of the vestibule is pierced by one stained glass window with a semicircular arch. The main block of the church is pierced by six stained glass windows--each featuring a semicircular arch. Between the fourth and fifth window is a square shaped projection (confessional) with a low hipped roof and no doors or windows. The cornice of the main block consists of an enclosed frieze, a soffit of beaded matchstick, and a series of brackets that feature reeding and flower motifs. A one story wing (sacristy) with a low roof pitch extends from the east side of the main block. It is pierced by a modern door and a one-over-one, double-hung sash window. A small portico with an open bed pediment with a segmental arch bed is supported by two turned porch posts and two, turned, engaged posts.

The east elevation consists of the gable ends of the rear wing and the main block. The rear wing is pierced by three, modern, one-over-one, double hung sash windows with double glazing. A four-light-over-three-panel door is located to the northern end of the wing. The main block is pierced by two quarter arch, stained glass windows. At the juncture of the main block and wing is a brick chimney flue.

The north elevation consists of the side of the main block and wing. The wing is pierced by a single one-over-one window. The main block is pierced by six, semicircular arch, stained glass windows. Like the south elevation, a square shaped projection (for the confessional) with a low hipped roof and no doors or windows extends from the building. The cornice is also identically constructed on this elevation. The base of the steeple (projecting vestibule) is pierced by one stained glass window with a semicircular arch.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-598

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 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 type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D and/or	
Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

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

St. Michael's Church was initially started in Scotland, Maryland as a mission of St. Ignatius Church (SM-15) near St. Inigoes. By 1823 this mission church had grown to a congregation of 320 parishoners. The first substantial church was dedicated in 1881 by Archbishop Gibbons. In only seven years, this sanctuary was pulled down and replaced by another church at the crossroads of Tall Pine (later Ridge, Maryland) under the direction of Father John BeGaffney. In 1919, the Archiepiscopal See of Baltimore purchased 30 acres called "Tall Pine" from Charles and Mary J. Wood and soon after constructed an elementary school, convent, high school, and church. The current, modestly Romanesque-style church sanctuary was constructed at this location in 1929 under the direction of Father Gregory G. Kuehne, S.J.

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SM-598, St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church
St. Mary's County
Description 7.1

The entire interior of St. Michael's features an extremely elaborate and dramatic use of pressed tin. The interior walls, from the baseboard up, are ornamented with pressed tin that features a variety of decorative motifs. Most of the walls feature fleur-de-lis, rosettes, and garlands. The barrel-vaulted ceiling, supported by a series of projecting tin covered braces, exhibits a series of coffers or ornamental recessed panels. The plan of the church consists of an entrance vestibule, central nave with a pair of flanking aisles, a confessional on each side aisle, an altar, and a segregated sacristy. Two pairs of doors with semicircular stained glass fanlights flank the centrally located crucifixion on the wall behind the altar. The two doors closest to the crucifixion permit direct access between the altar and sacristy, while the two furthest doors permit access between the sacristy and the side aisles. The altar is situated on a platform one step higher than the rest of the sanctuary. While open to the congregation, the altar is separated by a railing with turned balusters. Climbing up the west wall of the church's interior is an open string stair to a small gallery that lies directly above the vestibule. The gallery features a segmental arch pediment supported by a series of square columns. Each of the confessionals, located on the north and south side aisles, consists of a central door for the priest that is flanked on either side by curtains that cover rooms for the penitents.

SM-598, St. Michael's R.C. Church
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber EBA 18, Folio 110

Grantee: James Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, Archiepiscopal See of Baltimore

Grantor: Charles and Mary J. Wood

Date: April 17, 1919

Notes: The deed notes the transfer of 30 acres called "Tall Pine."

Reference: Liber EBA 18, Folio 110

Grantee: Charles and Mary J. Wood

Grantor: Samuel and Louisa C. Mumford

Date: March 27, 1919

Reference: Liber EBA 12, Folio 251

Grantee: Samuel and Louisa C. Mumford

Grantor: Lawrence P. and Mary C. Williams

Date: January 9, 1914

Reference: Liber EBA 12, Folio 215

Grantee: Lawrence P. Williams

Grantor: Alexander Beal, guardian for Lucy Dunbar Tippet and J. Virginia Tippet minor children of Lewis M. and Myrtle B. Tippet

Date: December 31, 1913

Reference: Liber JJG 4, Folio 311

Grantee: Louis M. Tippet

Grantor: Robert C. Combs, trustee to Louis M. Tippet

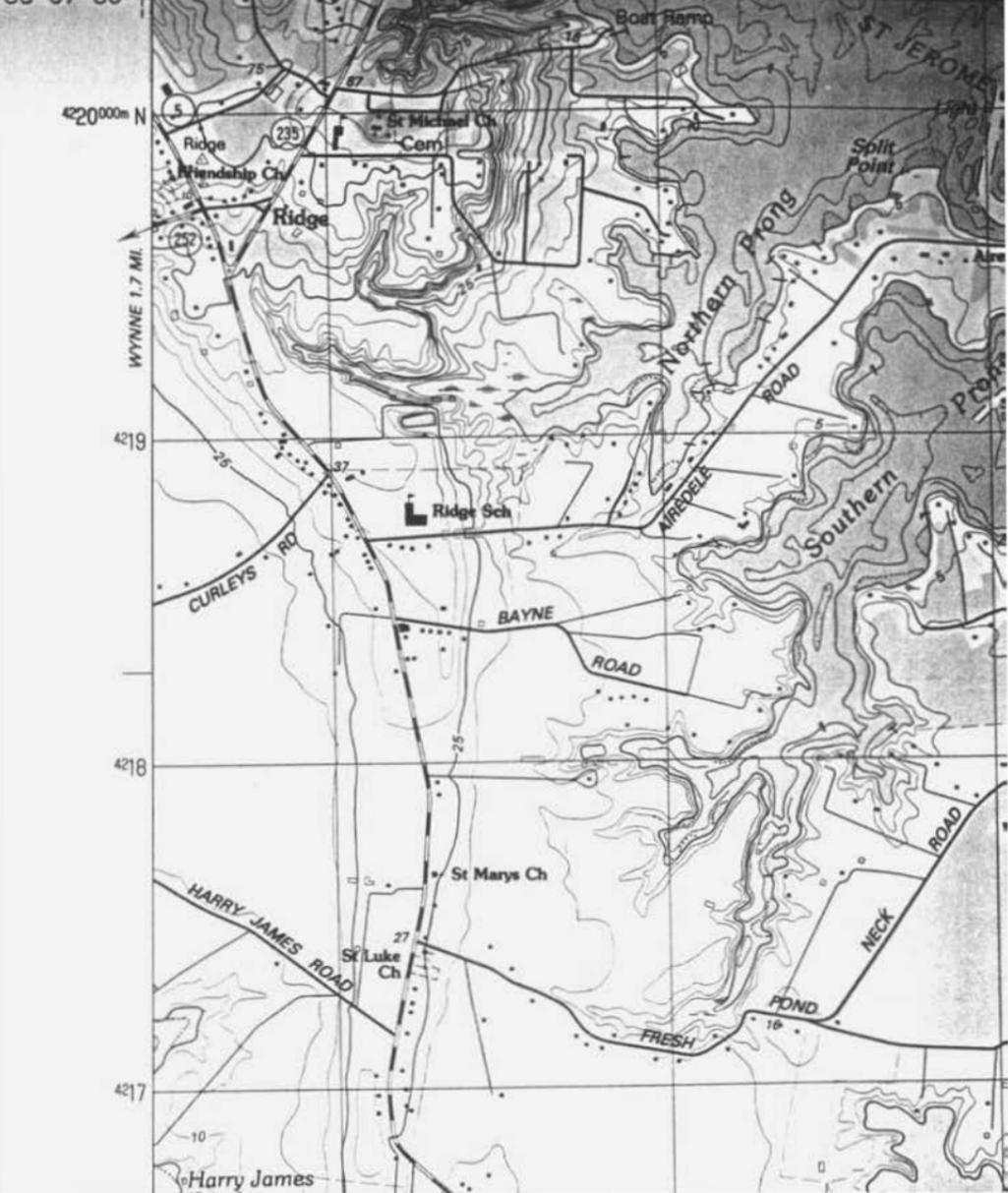
Date: April 29, 1897

Notes: The deed notes that the sale was ordered by the circuit court of equity as a result of the case between Joseph E. McKay v. Corine Milburn. The property is called "Tall Pine" and contains 30 acres. The chain-of-title is interrupted.

5700 B NW
MARYS CITY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

76° 22' 30" 3800000 E LEXINGTON PARK 12 MI. DAMERON 20 MI. 381 382





SM-598

St. Michael's R.C. Church

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov, 1997

MA SHPO

Wt S elevation

1 of 6



SM-318

St. Michael's R.C. Church

→ Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov., 1997

nd SHPO

N+E elevation

2 of 6



SM-598

St. Michael's R.C. Church

St. Mary's County

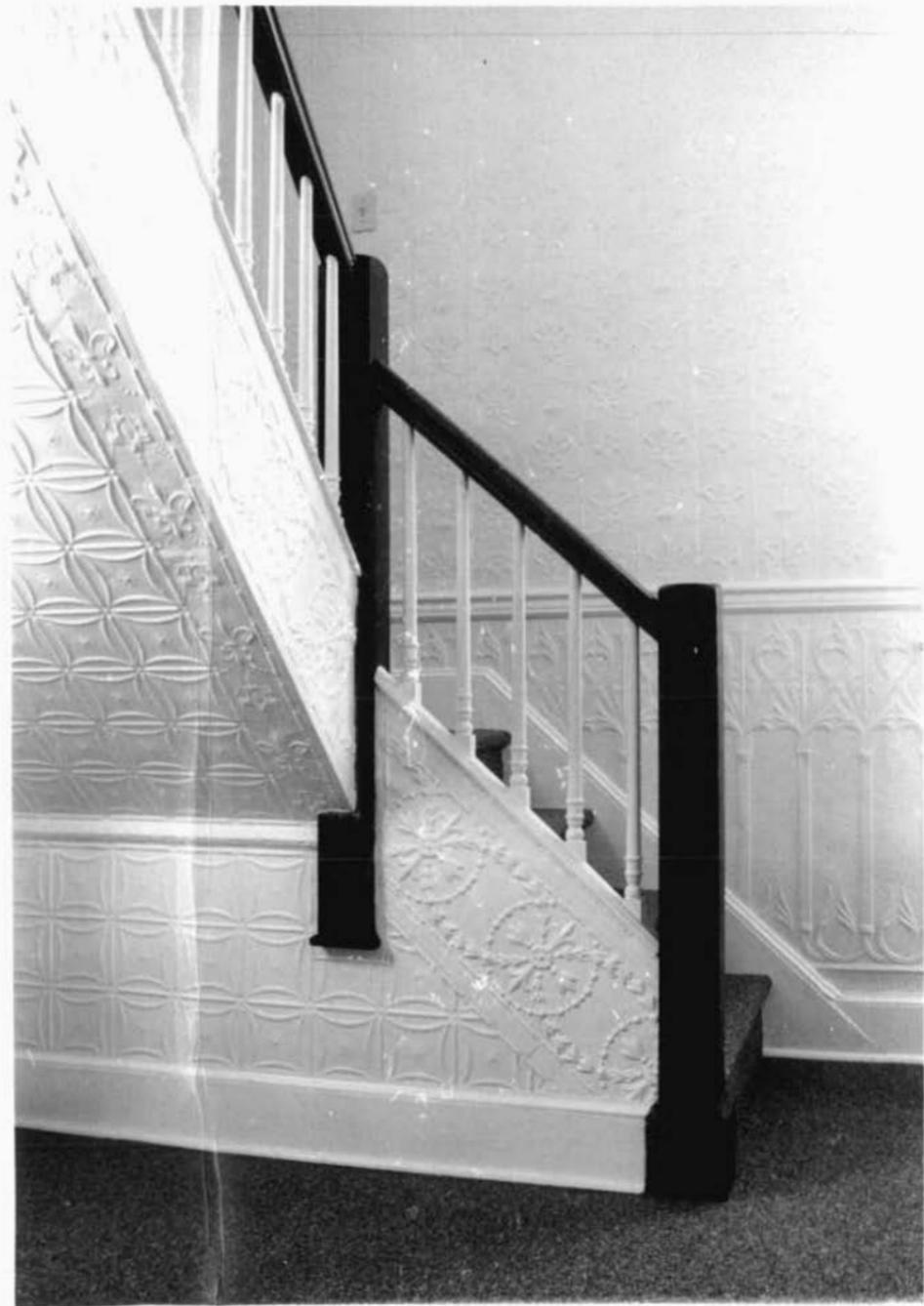
Kirk Ranetta

Nov., 1997

Md SAPO

Interior - looking NW

2 of 6



SM-598

St. Michael's R.C. Church

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov, 1997

nd SHPO

Interior, stair detail, looking N

4 of 6



CM-598

St. Michael's R.C. Church

St. Mary's County

Kirk Rancetta

Nov, 1997

Md SHPO

Interior, looking SW

5 of 6



SM-598

St. Michael's R. C. Church

St. Mary's County

Kirk Ranzetta

Nov, 1997

MD SHPO

Interior, Isling E

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