

Capsule Summary  
SM-645  
Old Ridge Firehouse  
Ridge  
Private

1949

Amid concerns that the southern part of St. Mary's County lacked adequate fire fighting capabilities, the residents of Ridge, Maryland met in 1948 to create the Ridge Volunteer Fire Department.<sup>1</sup> By July 1949, the group had chosen a central and convenient location for a new firehouse.<sup>2</sup> On a crossroad between Maryland Routes 5 and 235, the fire department erected a modest, two bay, two story, cinder block firehouse with a brick topped, false parapet similar in form to the Mechanicsville and Leonardtown Firehouses (See SM-395 and SM-550 respectively). The first floor of the building housed the first pumper which was a 1928 Brockway purchased from the Upper Marlboro Fire Department. An interior stairway led to a second floor that was largely used for meeting space as well as for occasional parties and wedding receptions.

By the early 1970s the old firehouse was deemed inadequate and a new firehouse located on Maryland Route 5 was built by December 1972. The fire department eventually sold the old firehouse to its present owners Steven M. and Nancy L. Pratt in 1992 who have converted the building into a residence and workshop. Overall, the masonry building has retained its original appearance with only the addition of another single garage bay on its west side.

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<sup>1</sup> Much of the information for this summary came from an informal interview with Steven Mark Pratt as well as an Enterprise newspaper article. See Joe Cooper, "South County Spirit: Ridge Volunteer Fire Department Celebrates 50 years of Service," The Enterprise, June 10, 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, the property was not actually transferred until 1950 by Harvey W. Hilton. The Enterprise newspaper article mentions that the tract was donated to the fire department by James Roach.

SM-645, Old Ridge Fire House  
St. Mary's County  
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:	Western Shore
Chronological/Developmental Period:	Modern Period, 1930-present
Historic Period Theme:	Architecture Government/Law

Resource Type

Category:	Building
Historic Environment:	Rural Crossroads
Historic Function and Use:	Fire House
Known Design Source:	None

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIESMaryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Old Ridge Fire House

**2. Location**N side of Wynne Rd. between Routes 235 and 5  
street & number not for publication

city, town Ridge

 vicinity of

congressional district

1

state Maryland

county St. Mary's

TM-71, G-7, P-68

**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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 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 Steven Mark Pratt, Jr.

street &amp; number PO Box 447

telephone no.:

city, town Ridge

state and zip code Md 20680-0447

**5. Location of Legal Description**

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

liber EWA 701

street &amp; number

folio 96

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-645

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

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The Old Ridge Fire House, constructed in 1949, is located on Wynne Road and between Maryland Routes 235 and 5 in the small crossroads community of Ridge, Maryland. The building is oriented on a north/south axis and is situated on a relatively flat .197 acre parcel. Conveniently lying in close proximity to the road, the old fire house is largely surrounded by small one story residences on small lots with a commercial auto parts and repair shop lies south, across Wynne Road, from the building. The building is currently used as a machine and metal shop and residence.

The Old Ridge Fire House is a two story, double bay, masonry building. The walls are constructed of regularly coursed cinder blocks with the primary elevation receiving a facing of vertically scribed, machine made brick. The roof is flat and could not be seen from ground level. A one story, one bay cinder block addition lies to the west of the main block

The primary elevation is pierced on the bottom floor by two large, panelled garage bays. The paneling is punctuated by a row of glass panes that permit light into the interior. The one story addition features a similar garage door. Midway up the main block's elevation, the building materials change from cinder block to vertically scribed, machine made brick. This decorative treatment terminates with a false fronted top that hides the flat roof. The second floor exhibits two, four-light, swinging casement windows with a two light transom (All windows on the building are of this type unless otherwise noted).

The west elevation consists of the addition and second floor of the main block. The addition features a door and three windows. The main block is pierced by three windows, all of which exhibit brick surrounds, lintels, and sills. This treatment is found on the north and east elevation as well.

The rear or north elevation consists of the ends of the main block and addition. The addition is pierced by a single door, while the first and second floors of the main block have a window and door. The door on the second floor is entered via a metal spiral staircase.

Only the two story side of the main block is visible on the east elevation. The first floor is pierced by a small one-over-one window and a casement window. The second floor also contains a one-over-one window, but it is accompanied by two casement windows.

The interior of the main block consists of two open, communicating spaces designed for the storage of the large firetrucks. A stair located in the northwest corner of these spaces permits entry to the building's second floor. The west addition features a single space meant for a fire tanker. The second floor was originally an open hall for dances, meetings, and other community events. The hall was partitioned in the 1990s in order to create a residence.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. SM-645

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 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

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

Amid concerns that the southern part of St. Mary's County lacked adequate fire fighting capabilities, the residents of Ridge, Maryland met in 1948 to create the Ridge Volunteer Fire Department.<sup>1</sup> By July 1949, the group had chosen a central and convenient location for a new firehouse.<sup>2</sup> On a crossroad between Maryland Routes 5 and 235, the fire department erected a modest, two bay, two story, cinder block firehouse with a brick topped, false parapet similar in form to the Mechanicsville and Leonardtown Firehouses (See SM-395 and SM-550 respectively). The first floor of the building housed the first pumper which was a 1928 Brockway purchased from the Upper Marlboro Fire Department.<sup>3</sup> An interior stairway led to a second floor that was largely used for meeting space as well as for occasional parties and wedding receptions.

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<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, the property was not actually transferred until 1950 by Harvey W. Hilton. The Enterprise newspaper article mentions that the tract was donated to the fire department by James Roach.

<sup>3</sup> Cooper, "South County...."

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-645

See Significance 8.0

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .197 acres

Quadrangle name Pt. lookout Quad

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
---	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Same as per deed description.

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyor

organization St. Mary's County Dept. of Planning & Zoning

date 8-17-98

street & number 22740 Washington Street

telephone 301-475-4662

city or town Leonardtown

state Maryland

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

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
 DHCP/DHCD  
 100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
 514-7600

SM-645, Old Ridge Fire House  
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 EWA 701, Folio 96

Grantee: Steven Mark and Nancy L. Pratt

Grantor: Ridge Volunteer Fire Department

Date: June 1, 1992

Notes: Here the property is listed as containing .197 acres.

Reference: Liber CBG 24, Folio 502

Grantee: Ridge, Maryland Fire Department

Grantor: Harvey W. Hilton

Date: May 20, 1950

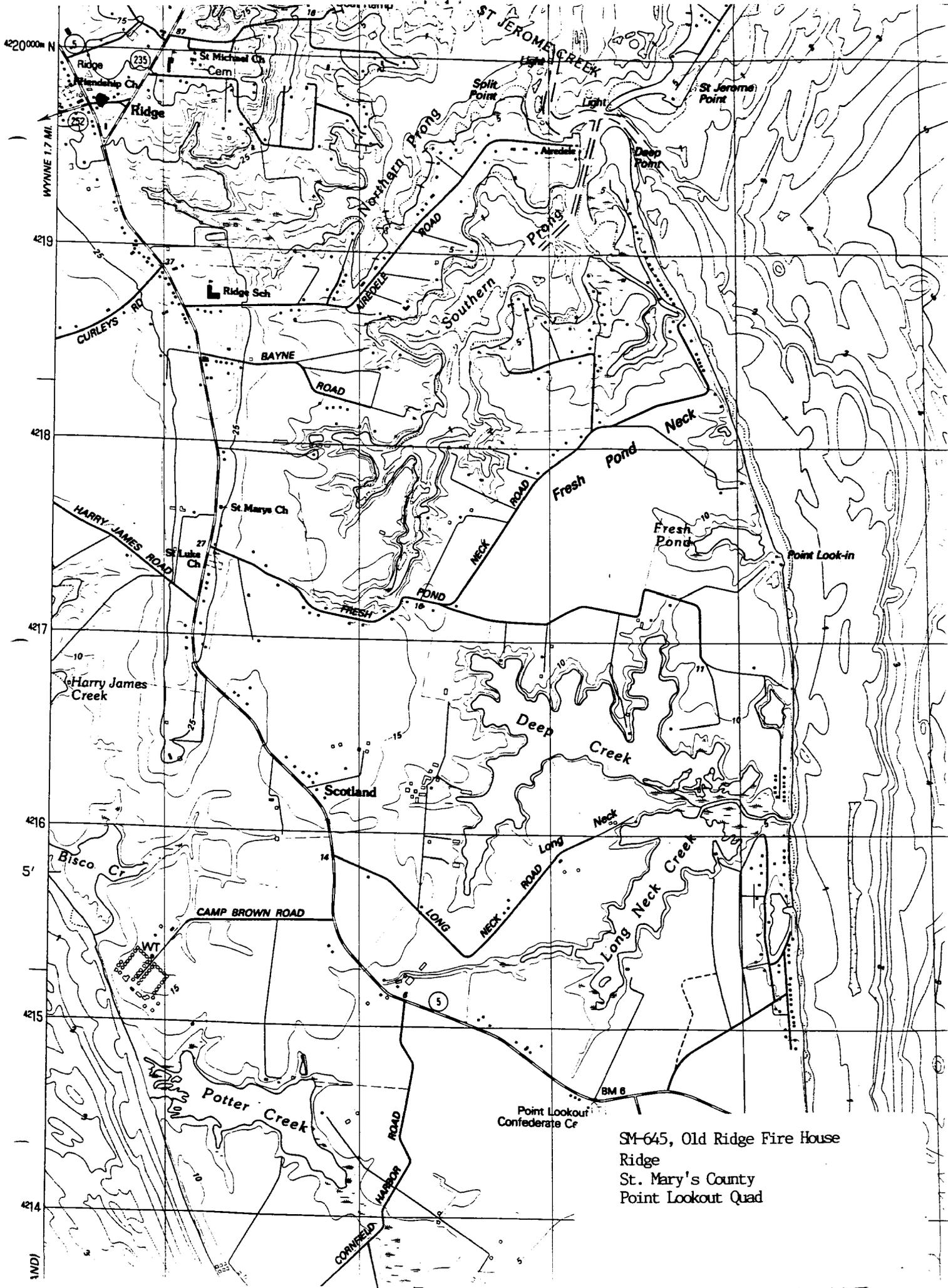
Reference: Liber CBG 19, Folio 369

Grantee: Harvey W. Hilton

Grantor: Michael J. Curley, Archbishop of Baltimore

Date: September 5, 1946

Notes: The parcel for the future fire house is listed here as being a part of "St. Michael's Church Property." A survey by George W. Joy dated November 5, 1945 is mentioned. A bean clause is not given and a search through the grantee/grantor index did not reveal where the church received the property from.



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St. Mary's County  
Point Lookout Quad





