

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

FEB 24 1976

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED APR 8 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Church of the Madonna *HABS*

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Hoefley's Lane

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Fort Lee

VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Jersey

34

Bergen

003

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

__DISTRICT

__PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

__AGRICULTURE

__MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

__UNOCCUPIED

__COMMERCIAL

__PARK

__STRUCTURE

__BOTH

__WORK IN PROGRESS

__EDUCATIONAL

__PRIVATE RESIDENCE

__SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

__ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

__OBJECT

__IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

__GOVERNMENT

__SCIENTIFIC

__BEING CONSIDERED

__YES: UNRESTRICTED

__INDUSTRIAL

__TRANSPORTATION

__NO

__MILITARY

__OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Madonna Church and Cemetery

STREET & NUMBER

2070 Hoefley's Lane

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Fort Lee

VICINITY OF

New Jersey

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Court House

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Hackensack

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey (NJ-421)

(New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory #1148.3)

DATE

1939

FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington, D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Church of the Madonna at Fort Lee, New Jersey is constructed of native basalt quarried from the nearby Palisades and trimmed in local red sandstone. The church, rectangular in form, has a projecting stone tower on the front facade.

Entrance into the interior of the church is made by a large Gothic-arched double door at the base of the tower.

The tower is topped by an octagonal spire which is also built of basalt stone. This steeple projects the height of the church to nearly 86 feet. The tower is enhanced by corner buttresses, a tracery window and a Gothic window.

Flanking the tower on each side is a Gothic window. As with the tower, the first facade of the church building is abruptly curtailed with buttresses, which are trimmed in red sandstone. One story with a balcony, Madonna Church, without the tower, is 45 feet by 63 feet with a height of 40 feet to the peak of the roof.

The north, or long, elevation appears to have had originally four bays - Gothic arched windows and four-all trimmed with red sandstone. The fenestration of the church is divided by buttresses. The doors are of modern glass and metal construction replacing the original wood doors.

The rear of Madonna Church was later extended in order to form the present altar. Attached to this addition is a chimney from the oil furnace in the cellar.

The small vestibule in the tower opens onto an aisle - with pews on either side.

The walls of the church are brick covered with plaster and painted in 1973 to give off a marble stone effect. The massive interior space is divided by a rear balcony and wooden trusses, recently trimmed in gold leaf.

Much of the interior decor is of the early 20th Century - including a J.J. & C.S. Odell pipe organ, which was donated to the church in 1904 by Andrew Carnegie. In addition, three marble altars date from 1903, and the 18 stained glass windows completed by A.L. Brink of Mayer and Company were completed between 1909-1911.

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

1854

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Henry James Anderson

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Madonna Chapel is the oldest Catholic Church in Bergen County and one of the oldest extant Catholic edifices in New Jersey.

Religion

Although the Proprietary Governments of East and West New Jersey granted complete religious freedom to its citizens, few Catholics settled in the state until after the Revolution. In effect, while the political regime tolerated Catholics the social environment did not. Catholics who live in New Jersey conducted mass in their own homes; quite often in secrecy. As a result until 1814 there were only Catholic missions in the state. In that year Trenton organized New Jersey's first Roman Catholic church. In the next 40 years only a handful of additional Catholic churches were constructed; among which was the Church of Madonna at Fort Lee.

Unlike the other Catholic churches which were built in urban regions, the Madonna Church was constructed in a rural region in anticipation, or perhaps fear, of the development which would follow.

Built in 1854 by Henry James Anderson on a hill commanding a view of the entire area, the Madonna Church was the earliest Catholic edifice in Bergen County and one of the oldest extant in New Jersey. In 1890 the church officially was owned by the Riley family when it became the property of the Church of Madonna.

Fort Lee today is a vertiable mass of superhighways and high rise apartments virtually surrounding Madonna Chapel, which stands in mock contract to modern society, reflecting the simpler and quieter semi-rural past of the region.

Architecture

The Church of the Madonna is typical of the early Gothic Revival style of architecture of the mid-19th century in the United States. Crudely imitating the greater churches of the New York-Metropolitan area, the Church of the Madonna, which overlooks the Hackensack Meadowlands from the highest geographical point in Bergen County, was completed by Henry James Anderson around 1854. The church reflects a traditional design as evidenced by its rectangular symmetry, but the pointed arches with ridged voussoirs, the Gothic tower with spire, and the buttresses represents an attempt at the Gothic style -- the result being a classical design in Gothic disguise.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Historic American Buildings Survey Church of the Madonna
(N.J. - 421). 1939.

Religion in New Jersey. Wallace N. Jamison, 1964 (pp. 81-2, 90, 111-121).
data supplied by:

Frank Birch, Madonna Cemetary Director
Fort Lee, New Jersey

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	5,8,6	0,5,0	4,5	2,3	5,3,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING		
C						

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Terry Karschner, Historian - Curator

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Historic Sites Section, Dept. of Environmental Protection 7/19/75

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

P.O. Box 1420

(609) 292-2023

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Trenton

New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE

September 18, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

DATE

4/8/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

4-8-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Church of the Madonna
Fort Lee, Bergen County
New Jersey

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8. PAGE 1.

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This unfamiliarity with or contempt for the preferred asymmetry of the Gothic style is not untypical in America and it is indicative of the local craftsman and mason interpreting a new style while still adhering to part of the old. In light of this, the Church of the Madonna is a significant architectural landmark in Bergen County -- symbolic of the progressive intertwining with the old (sometimes naively); a former generation reluctantly relinquishing control to a new one.