PH0509582

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 29 1977

DATE ENTERED MAY 2 3 1978

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC   St. Helena Catholic Church

AND/OR COMMON   St. Helena Catholic Church

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER   N.W. Corner of Oak and Tainter Streets   __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN   St. Helena   __ VICINITY OF   CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT   2

STATE   California   CODE 6   COUNTY Napa   CODE 55

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	X RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__ YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME   Church Society Catholic

STREET & NUMBER   1340 Tainter St.

CITY, TOWN   St. Helena   __ VICINITY OF   STATE California   94574

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.   Napa County Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER   Coombs St.

CITY, TOWN   Napa   STATE California   94558

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE   Napa County Historical Inventory

DATE   1974 - 1977   __FEDERAL X STATE X COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS   Napa County Conservation and Planning Department

CITY, TOWN   1121 First St.   Napa   California STATE   94558

7 DESCRIPTION

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located on the northwest corner of Oak and Tainter Streets, the St. Helena Catholic Church is designed in the style of an English Medieval parish church with the tower at the front, with nave attached in line with no transept. The tower is tall, perpendicular Gothic style with crenellations. Windows are tall and narrow lancets. The roof is open timber Jacobian style.

Property for the church site was donated to Archbishop Alemany, first Archbishop of San Francisco, in 1865 by Mr. and Mrs. Tainter. Prior to 1889, a wood-frame church stood on the site; it was destroyed by fire. Construction of the present stone church was done under the direction of Father Renatus Becker. He is credited with having acted both as architect and contractor for the building. Interior work was completed by Father Patrick Blake who became Pastor after the death of Father Becker in 1892.

In 1945, a fire destroyed the interior of the church, although all of the original stained glass windows escaped damage. Restoration was done under the direction of architect Martin Rist and Pastor, Father Timothy O'Conner. At that time, the tower was remodeled. Prior to the fire, it had been topped by a squat wooden vault with slightly concave sides with louvers, peaked with a cross. After the fire, the tower was elongated and embellished more in keeping with the style of the church (see photos).

At that time, also, the narthex was enlarged, two sacristries were added by extending the area behind the sanctuary and the interior was renovated. The walls were reinforced by adding seven buttresses on the North and South sides. Matching stone used for the additional work came from a winery building being destroyed in the Conn Valley-east of St. Helena. All stone is local.

All additions and remodelings have been entirely in keeping with the original architecture of the church.

In 1970, Msg. William N. Serado Became pastor. Under his direction, an extensive reconditioning project has been carried out. This included the re-mortoring, sandblasting and sealing of the exterior stonework. Support and funds for this project were received from non-Catholics as well as church members, showing the appreciation of the entire community for this building. During this project, extensive landscaping and the paved agora in front of the church were done by Richard McDonald.

Measurements of the church today are: length, 108'10"; width 40'8"; height, 43'4" from nave level. The tower rises 48'4" above the level of the nave. Original building cost was $9,000 (1890).

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
_PREHISTORIC	_ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	_COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	_RELIGION
_1400-1499	_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	_CONSERVATION	_LAW	_SCIENCE
_1500-1599	_AGRICULTURE	_ECONOMICS	_LITERATURE	_SCULPTURE
_1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	_EDUCATION	_MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
_1700-1799	_ART	_ENGINEERING	_MUSIC	_THEATER
X_1800-1899	_COMMERCE	_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	_PHILOSOPHY	_TRANSPORTATION
_1900-	_COMMUNICATIONS	_INDUSTRY	_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	_OTHER (SPECIFY)
		_INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES Built 1889 - 1890
Restored 1945 - 1946

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

More than any other form of architecture, stone building is indigenous to the early Napa Valley. Stone as a building material was prized by the early settlers not only for its beauty, but also for its strength and durability. Many of the original settlers, especially in the Upper Napa Valley, looked back to roots in the wine growing regions of Europe. They strove to emulate the solid stone buildings that they remembered while, at the same time, adding the distinctive touches which made these buildings unique to the Napa Valley area. Stone was so prized for building purposes that official publications designed to attract new settlers to the area, listed the availability of stone for building as one of the advantages of the Napa Valley.

Today, unfortuneately, many of these magnificent buildings have been destroyed, several of them by a government project.

The St. Helena Catholic Church has been a landmark locally since the day of its completion; at the time several local papers congratulated the Church congragation on the "magnificance of their fine new building." Today clearly the best example of a stone church remaining, it is also the only remaining entirely stone church left in the County. The Church stands on the site of the original Catholic Church in St. Helena; services have been held on this site since 1866. This building is such a landmark that during recent restoration and rehabilitation work, support and funds were received from throughout the community at large.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Napa Register misc. issues 1888 - 1890

St. Helena Star misc. issues 1888 - 1890, 1945 - 1947

Serado, Msg. William N.   Brief written description and history, unpublished.
                          Also, unrecorded conversations, Spring 1977

Kernberger, David and Kathleen, Early Napa County Photo collection.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____ less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A |1,0| |5|4,6|2,9,0| |4,2|6,1|6,3,0| B |__| |__,__|__,__| |__,__|__,__|
  ZONE EASTING   NORTHING   ZONE EASTING   NORTHING
C |__| |__,__|__,__| |__,__|__,__| D |__| |__,__|__,__| |__,__|__,__|

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

    St. Helena Catholic Church is bounded on the north by the St. Helena Elementary
School, on the south by Tainter St., on the west by the Parish House, and on the east
by Oak St.

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
    David and Kathleen Kernberger, Vice-chairman and Secretary

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Napa Historic Preservation Society	June 24, 1977

STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
P.O. Box 862	707-963-2855

CITY OR TOWN	STATE	
Napa	California	94558

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 State Historic Preservation Officer   DATE November 17, 1977

GPO 892-453