

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED AUG 22 1979  
DATE ENTERED OCT 22 1979

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 St. Michael's Church

AND/OR COMMON Hannah More Chapel

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Academy Lane and Reisterstown Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Reisterstown

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT Second

STATE Maryland

VICINITY OF CODE 24

COUNTY Baltimore

CODE 005

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 checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Donald P. Hutchinson, County Executive

STREET & NUMBER Courthouse, 400 Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN Towson

VICINITY OF

STATE Maryland

21204

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. County Courts Building

STREET & NUMBER 401 Bosley Avenue

CITY, TOWN Towson

STATE Maryland

21204

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7- DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 Chapel consists of Nave of three bays, Chancel, northern Sacristy, and southern Porch, the porch being on the westernmost bay of the Nave. Orientation is observed. The west end presents two lancets and a vesica window, and is surmounted by a simple bell-gable, which, however, is rather of a stone than a timber outline. The side walls of the Nave are pierced by lancets and couplets, alternated: the chancel has two South lancets, and an East window of three lights with plain intersecting tracery. The side walls of Nave and Chancel are 13 feet high; Porch and Sacristy 7 feet; the Sacristy roof is a lean-to, [coming] just under the Chancel eaves; the nave, chancel [and porch] gables are at an angle of 60°, and are each surmounted [by a] cross of wood of varying patterns. The bell gable is [unintelligible] carrying up two posts, 12 inches square, in the framing [of the] West end, which are shown inside with cross ties and chamfered and appear above the roof outside having a cross-tie at the apex of Nave, and others above, so arranged that the opening for the bell is an arch, and the top of the bell gable is of the same pitch as the Nave, and roofed in a similar manner, with cypress shingles having octagon ends. The outside of the building is covered with upright plank, with battened joints, having wide battens at the corners, and near cornices; the roofs project at the gables and have simple vergeboards.

The Porch is entered by an arched doorway of good width, and is lighted by a small window on each side: the Nave opens into the Porch by an arched doorway with folding doors. The present length of the Nave is 34 feet by 21 feet in width, allowing a wide central alley, with comfortable sittings for 100 persons: about 20 more can be accommodated by movable stools in the alley without obstructing the passage, except in case of a funeral. The Font will be placed in the centre of the alley opposite the South door. The Nave roof, inside, shows a principal at each post, which posts project beyond the plastering of the side walls, and with the plates neatly planed and chamfered: a simple moulded base is broken around the posts and carried all around the building. Between the principals are smaller intermediate rafters with straight collars; the principals have collars also and are secured at their feet by curved knees bolted to them and to the posts. The ceiling between the rafters is of pine, oiled. The pulpit is low and is placed in the northeast corner of the Nave. The Lectern stands just outside the Chancel.

The Chancel arch is 12 feet wide. The chancel is 17 feet deep by 15 feet wide, properly divided by step and rail into Choir and Sanctuary: The Choir has two stalls on each side and a door into the Sacristy just West of the rail. The Sanctuary has the altar, northern credence and two sedilia on the South side. The roof is in two bays, having principals with cross collars, and arched braces, and intermediate rafters with cross collars only.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1

**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"/> 1600-1899	<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 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 **1853-54** BUILDER/ARCHITECT **John Weller Priest**

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

HISTORY

St. Michael's Church (Episcopal) was built adjacent to the Hannah More Academy on Reisterstown Road in Baltimore County, Maryland. A 1788 plat for the construction of the Reisterstown Turnpike Road shows that the present Hannah More Road is a surviving link of the Old Conowago Road of 1737. This female academy, originally known as Locust Grove Seminary, was founded in 1829 by Mrs. Anne Neilson, daughter of Isaac Vanbibber, a Baltimore merchant, shipowner and county landowner and farmer.

Locust Grove was located on the west side of Reisterstown Road. In her will of March 15, 1832, Mrs. Neilson renamed the school in honor of Hannah More, an English school mistress in Stapleton, Norfolk. When she died in 1834 at the age of 45, Anne Neilson left the school \$10,000. and three acres of land on the east side of Reisterstown Turnpike Road. Her six trustees, three clergymen and three laymen, formed a board to carry out the provisions of the will and, in 1834, appointed Mrs. Gertrude Hoyt superintendent.

The school, located approximately one mile southeast of Reisterstown, was incorporated in 1838. Mrs. Neilson's will specified that a plain, substantial building was to be erected on the new site. That two-story house burned on November 25, 1857, but was soon replaced. In addition, her will stated that the first three administrators were to be women. The academy was forced to close at the beginning of the Civil War and, when it reopened in 1863, Reverend Arthur John Rich was appointed the first headmaster.

Mrs. Neilson stipulated that religious instruction was to be the school's primary and leading object and that each day's session should begin and end with prayer and the reading of the Scriptures. In addition, parts of Monday and Friday were to be devoted to religious instruction and a Sunday School conducted by the superintendent. After the trustees acquired additional property in 1848, St. Michael's Church was built (1853-54) in the angle between the turnpike and Hannah More Road as a result of Reverend Rich's efforts. Prior to its erection, services were held in the school rooms and were attended by many neighborhood people, most of them non-members. The chapel was to serve the general public as well as the school's thirty students.

In order to build a new church in St. Thomas Parish, Rev. Rich, then chaplain of the school, received permission from the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church held in Baltimore in May of 1853. The cornerstone was laid on the Feast of St. Michael and all Angels, September 29, 1853, and Consecration was held on Thursday, July 13, 1854. St Michael's was a "free church," one without pew rents, and the original contributions were collected with that understanding. At the Convention of 1855, the Bishop described St. Michael's as "one of the most beautiful and church-like structure to be seen in Maryland or elsewhere. . . with sittings free forever, under the management

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #4.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Reisterstown Quadrangle

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 343490 4368220

B               

C               

D               

E               

F               

G               

H               

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

**Shown on Tax Map 48, Parcel 965 (24 Lines)**

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE George J. Andreve, Architectural Historian/  
Ms. Hester Rich

ORGANIZATION Maryland Historical Trust/ Nomination supported  
by B.C. Committee of MHT (June 27, 1978)

DATE July, 1978

STREET & NUMBER 21 State Circle/5813 Willowton Avenue

TELEPHONE (301)269-2438/(301)685-3750

CITY OR TOWN Annapolis, Baltimore

STATE Maryland 21401/21239

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE X LOCAL     

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

*J. Mitchell* 8-10-79

TITLE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*John Charles Spurr*

DATE 10-22-79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
ATTEST: *Constance Saxe*  
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 10-18-79

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Baltimore County  
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET      ITEM NUMBER 7      PAGE 1

(DESCRIPTION, continued)

The Chancel rafters, etc., are chamfered; the ceiling is panelled in diamonds and triangles. The Sacristy is about 8 feet by 12 feet inside, and has a good wardrobe. All the furniture of the Church is of oak, simple in design but substantial. The Altar is a heavy oak slab supported by upright ends, pierced and moulded, connected by stretchers bevelled and pierced with quatrefoils. The Credence is a shelf on two brackets. The Nave seats are open with plain gabled ends.

The windows are filled with stained and enamelled glass. The lancets have plain enamelled quarries of a pleasant tint, with a colored border and head of foliage. The side lancets of the chancel have the quarries enriched with a diaper. The vesica window at the west end of the nave contains a rich and beautiful I.H.S. in gold, on a dark purple foliated ground; this window being high in the gable is made to swing as a ventilator. The East window being of three lights, with intersecting tracery, has three spaces in the head filled with the Alpha and Omega. The three lights have a border of wheatears and grapes, expanded richly in the heads, and are filled with a foliated ground of neutral tint, broken by three medallions in each light. The upper and lower medallions are cusped ovals; the central ones are quatrefoils. The center light has in the medallions the dove, cross and double triangle: the side lights have the passion flower and the pomegranate; the lamb and the pelican; the wheat and the grape worked up as symbols, and gracefully managed. The general effect of the window is very good. All the glass was executed by H. P. Bloor & Co., of Brooklyn, under the direction of the Architect, J. W. Priest, 634 Broadway, New York.<sup>1</sup>

In 1858, an English "Corona Lucis" was presented to St. Michael's by one of the vestry and a large stone font with oak cover from Priest's design was given by the children. The congregation purchased a 395 pound bell in 1869 from Messrs. Joshua Regester & Son in Baltimore.

St. Michael's has been changed very little since it was built. The chapel was falling into disrepair by 1928, and repairs were made. The chancel was lengthened from two to three bays, a brick aisle was laid, kneelers added, sanctuary and chancel carpet laid and leaded stained glass side windows installed. The church was then reconsecrated on May 31, 1929. The lancets now in the west end fit the description of the originals except that neither have a head of foliage. Both the vesica and east windows are original. Missing are the bell

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET NO. 2)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

(DESCRIPTION, continued)

and the 1928 organ which was removed by the Episcopal Church prior to sale of the property. St. Michael's was de-consecrated on May 12, 1978.

On February 28, Baltimore County Council approved a \$1.1 million contract to buy the Hannah More Academy. Included in this were the chapel, school buildings and 53 of the 65-acre site. The remaining acreage will be leased to the county who has the option to purchase. Though the school is to be renovated for use as a community center and a school and rehabilitation center for emotionally and socially handicapped children, the future use of St. Michael's has not been determined. The Baltimore County government is interested in seeing the church preserved.

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<sup>1</sup>The Church Journal, II (Aug. 3, 1854), pp. 211-212. (This article concerning St. Michael's is the result of research by Francis R. Kowsky, Chairman, Fine Arts Department, State University College at Buffalo, New York.)

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St. Michael's Church  
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CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland . ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

of a legally and canonically constituted vestry,"<sup>2</sup> and on May 31st the congregation was received into union with the Convention.

By 1875, St. Michael's was overcrowded particularly on fair Sundays. Dr. Rich, recognizing the need for a new church in Reisterstown, began holding services in a room in town. Eventually, All Saints was built in Reisterstown in 1891, and Dr. Rich became the first rector. St. Michael's closed; but, in 1908, Bishop William Paret wrote to one of the trustees that the girls were having difficulty getting to All Saints in bad weather and suggested resuming regular services at St. Michael's. By 1928, the chapel, falling into disrepair, was refurbished and had the chancel lengthened. None of the work detracts from the church's original appearance.

Most of the Hannah More Academy buildings were built late in the nineteenth century. During the 1960's, the school expanded and soon after suffered the financial strain of a large debt. It was losing about \$50,000 per year when the trustees decided to close, transferring Hannah More's charter and students to St. Timothy's School on Green Spring Avenue. The Diocese of Maryland decided to sell the property in the Spring of 1974. Baltimore County purchased the campus, including St. Michael's, in 1978 and plans to use the buildings for a senior citizens center and for housing emotionally disturbed youths.

SIGNIFICANCE

St. Michael's, though deconsecrated on May 12, 1978, remains intact and an excellent and important example of mid-nineteenth century Gothic Revival church architecture. Its design is characteristic of those found in Richard Upjohn's Rural Architecture (1852).

The church, designed by John Weller Priest (1825-1859), is architecturally outstanding. Mr. Priest's offices were in New York City, and he was one of the thirteen who met with Richard Upjohn in 1857 to organize the American Institute of Architects. He died at an early age in Newburgh where he moved apparently hoping to arrest a case of tuberculosis.

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<sup>2</sup>Journal of the Seventy-Second Annual Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Maryland (Baltimore, 1855), p. 16.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. The Church Journal, II. August 3, 1854.
2. Coleman, Catherine Offley. A Short History of Hannah More Academy.  
Published in Reisterstown, 1960.
3. Stanton, Phoebe B. The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture.  
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968.
4. Williams, William. "Hannah More Academy, One of the Oldest Girl's Schools  
in U.S., Established in 1832." Clipping from the Jeffersonian.