

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 90001550

Date Listed: 11/01/90

St. John's Methodist Epis. Church
Property Name

Somerset
County

MD
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Patrick Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

11/1/90
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

The Period of Significance for this nomination is defined as starting in 1828, but the oldest extant building dates to 1850. Ron Andrews with the MD SHPO agrees to change the start of the Period of Significance to 1850. The nomination is now officially amended to reflect this change.

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DISTRIBUTION:

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

SEP 17 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church and Joshua Thomas Chapel
other names/site number St. John's United Methodist Church S-365 &
S-44

2. Location

street & number Deal Island Road N/A not for publication
city, town Deal Island N/A vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Somerset code 039 zip code 21821

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official [Signature] STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER Date 9/12/90
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. [Signature] 11/1/90
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:) _____

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

S-44 & S-465

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/religious structure

RELIGION/religious structure

FUNERARY/cemetery

FUNERARY/cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

(enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

foundation BRICK

Gothic

walls WEATHERBOARD

ALUMINUM

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

This complex consists of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, an 1879 frame Gothic building, Joshua Thomas Chapel, an 1850 Greek Revival frame structure, and the surrounding cemetery with nineteenth and twentieth century burials and markers. St. John's Church has a brick foundation, a steeply pitched roof, a three story bell tower rising on the northwest corner, shed roofed additions along the sides, and Gothic arched windows. On the interior, the church is characterized by large chamfered support posts with decorated corner brackets, pressed metal decoration, an altar rail with turned balusters, and an elaborately decorated balcony rail with heavy sawn balusters. Joshua Thomas Chapel is a rectangularly shaped pedimented gable-front one story structure sheathed in weatherboards with three double hung windows (12/12 lights) along the sides, and a pilastered entranceway with double doors. On the interior, the window and door surrounds are plain with undecorated corner blocks. The wooden pews have scrolled armrests. Surrounding the buildings is the tightly packed cemetery characterized by various types of grave markers and fencing.

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and Joshua Thomas Chapel
Somerset County, Maryland S-44 & S-465Section number 7 Page 1GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

The St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church and Joshua Thomas Chapel complex stands on the east side of Deal Island Road, State Route 363, near the center of the community of Deal Island, Somerset County, Maryland. The complex consists of the 1879 Gothic St. John's Church, the 1850 Greek Revival Joshua Thomas Chapel, and the surrounding cemetery. The St. John's building has an east/west axis. The chapel sets at an angle several feet to the southeast of the church.

Built in 1879 with minor renovation in 1924, the St. John's Church (S-365) rests on a continuous brick foundation and is uniformly sheathed with aluminum siding. A steeply pitched roof is covered with asphalt tiles. Rising on the northwest corner is a three-story bell tower.

The west road side elevation of the church is lighted by Gothic arched tripartite windows on two levels. The eave is bracketed and trimmed with decorative sawnwork in the peak. To the north is the three-story bell tower which contains a double-door entrance in the first floor. Victorian molded doors are topped by a three-pane Gothic arched transom. Lighting the second level are clover-leaf shaped windows. The belfry consists of four principal posts that flank Gothic arched bays which mark each side. Turned baluster railings stretch between each pair of posts. A tapered octagonal spire rises from the belfry and is topped by a ball finial.

The south side of the church is covered on the first floor by a shed addition that contains the principal double-door entrance in the west bay. The entrance bay is distinguished by a gable roof that interrupts the shed, and the double-door entrance is topped by a Gothic arched colored glass transom. East of the entrance are two sets of lancet windows that pierce the outside shed wall. The center set of three windows is covered by a shed roof slightly raised above the main shed, since the center set of windows is longer than the shed wall. Piercing the wall space between the shed and the main church roof is a series of six lancet windows of clear or etched glass.

The north side of the church is detailed in a similar manner as the south side with a shed roofed section and a row of clerestory windows. The east end of the church has a projecting single-story apse as well as rear Gothic arched entrances. Narrow brick stove stacks rise from the rear wall, and a round colored glass window is located in the upper gable.

See Continuation Sheet 7.2

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The church interior is divided with a center aisle that connects the church vestibule with the altar. Large chamfered support posts with decorated corner braces support the side walls of the church and separate the side aisles from the main sanctuary. Located above the corner posts are clerestory windows and a row of pressed metal medallions. Covering the walls and ceiling are various pressed metal designs. The sanctuary walls are covered with an anchor motif, while a lobed block design covers the sanctuary ceiling. The interior of the Gothic arched apse is covered with pressed metal, and the corner is trimmed with rope molding. The altar is separated from the sanctuary by a semi-circular railing with turned balusters. The raised altar is furnished with turn of the century fittings. Some mid twentieth century wainscoting exists in limited areas.

Located in the rear of the sanctuary is a steep balcony stair with a chamfered newel post, heavy sawn balusters and a molded handrail. The balcony stair soffit is also covered with decorative patterned metal. The balcony railing on the second level follows along the same design with a decorative pattern to the sawn balusters.

The Joshua Thomas Chapel (S-44), erected in 1850, is a gable-front church supported by a raised common bond brick foundation. It is sheathed with a uniform layer of weatherboards. The medium pitched roof is covered with asphalt shingles. Located immediately south of the front steps is the grave marker of Reverend Joshua Thomas.

The westerly or front elevation is a pedimented facade with a center double door entrance. The pair of paneled doors is framed by a simply executed entablature with plain pilasters. The pediment is highlighted by a stepped bed molding, and the flush board tympanum is pierced by an eight-pane rectangular window.

Each side of the church has three evenly spaced twelve-over-twelve sash windows. The base of the roof is finished with a boxed cornice with a stepped bed molding. The rear (east) elevation of the buildings is a plain weatherboard wall.

The interior of the chapel has been modified over the years with the addition of beaded board wainscoting. The windows and doors are simply framed with plain surrounds with undecorated corner blocks. A plain rectangular-shaped surround frames the space behind the altar, and two large support posts are centered within the room. The church furniture consists of a mid nineteenth-century altar and Victorian pews.

Surrounding the church and chapel is a cemetery of nineteenth and twentieth century burial sites and markers. Three family plots are distinguished by iron fences made by the Stewart Iron Works (3rd and Calvert streets, Cincinnati, Ohio). One is the Gibson family and two mark Webster family burials.

8. Statement of Significance

S-44 & S-465

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Religion

Period of Significance

1828-1900

Significant Dates

1850
1879

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The significance of the Deal Island complex formed by the St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church and the Joshua Thomas Chapel derives from the architectural character of the buildings and historic association with Methodism in Somerset County. Architecturally, the Joshua Thomas Chapel, built in 1850, is the finest example of the Greek Revival churches built in the county in the mid nineteenth century. Only two examples survive. The other church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church near Kingston, is smaller in scale and almost devoid of decoration. St. Mark's appears to be closer to typical of what was built than Joshua Thomas is. St. John's Church, erected in 1879, is one of the earliest examples of the more complexly designed and decorated churches being built in Somerset in the last quarter of the century. The earliest extant one of this type, the Upper Fairmount Methodist Episcopal Church built in 1873, is less complex in design than the St. John's Church which is only one story in height but gives the illusion of being two stories. Historically, the site of St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church and Joshua Thomas Chapel is the oldest site in Somerset County in continuous use for Methodist meetings. Meetings began in tents in 1828. As the Deal Island group grew in size and strength, the chapel and then the church were built. Through most of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, Methodism has been the most predominant religious sect in Somerset County. The earliest gathering is thought to have been held on Deal Island possibly as early as 1781.

See Continuation Sheet 8.1

See continuation sheet 8.1 for HISTORIC CONTEXT and MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN data.

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties: Somerset County. Maryland Historical Trust, Annapolis.

Touart, Paul Baker. Somerset: An Architectural History. Maryland Historical Trust and Somerset County Historical Trust, Inc., 1990.

Williams, William Henry. The Garden of American Methodism: The Delmarva Peninsula 1769-1820. Wilmington, Del: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1984.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 2.5 acres
USGS Quad: Deal Island, MD

UTM References

A

1	8
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4	1	7	0	1	0
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4	2	2	3	2	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet 10.1

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet 10.1

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul Baker Touart, Architectural Historian
organization Somerset County Historical Trust date 10/15/87
street & number P.O. Box 5 telephone (301)651-1094
city or town Westover state Maryland zip code 21871

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HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Eastern Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

Agricultural-Industrial Transition A.D. 1815-1870

Industrial/Urban Dominance A.D. 1870-1930

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):

Architecture/Landscape Architecture/Community Planning

Religion

Resource Type:

Category: Buildings

Historic Environment: Village

Historic Function(s) and Use(s):

RELIGION/religious structure

FUNERARY/cemetery

Known Design Source: None

See Continuation Sheet 8.2

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Section number 8 Page 2HISTORIC CONTEXT:

Methodism is an important aspect of Somerset County history. By the close of the nineteenth century, Methodism had become the predominant religious sect in this rural county. In the years following the American Revolution, particularly after 1800, Methodism rapidly expanded over the Delmarva Peninsula where Somerset County is located. At one point, despite significant national growth, nearly 19 percent of the Methodist membership lived on the peninsula. With this growth, Methodist churches were built in practically every town and rural community. By the close of the century the largest church structures in most towns were the Methodist churches.

Methodist gatherings in Somerset County are believed to have started on Deal Island possibly as early as 1781. On the present site of the St. John's Church and Joshua Thomas Chapel complex, meetings have been held since 1828. At first these meetings were held in tents. In 1850, the congregation was strong and wealthy enough to build the present chapel. In less than thirty years, growth presented the need for larger facilities and the St. John's church was built. In both instances, the buildings were constructed in fashionable modes. St. John's Church is one of the more complexly designed of the last quarter nineteenth century churches built in Somerset County.

The chapel is named in honor of Joshua Thomas, known as the "Parson of the Islands," who was a convert to Methodism who organized and held Methodist services on Tangier and Smith islands in Maryland and Virginia. During the British occupation of Tangier Island, Virginia in 1814, Thomas held services for the encamped soldiers. Later in his ministry, Thomas served several congregations on the lower Eastern Shore by traveling in his log canoe, "The Methodist." Around 1825, he relocated his family to Deal Island where he continued to minister the faith locally and afar. He delivered his last sermon in the present Joshua Thomas Chapel. Thomas is buried at the southwest corner of the building.

This site is historically known as Park's Grove. Accompanying the church on the knoll during the second half of the nineteenth century were an academy, post office, camp round, and meeting hall for the Sons of Temperance.

Architecturally, the Joshua Thomas Chapel is the best preserved of the Greek Revival churches. The austere Greek Revival design of the Joshua Thomas Chapel is not unusual to rural communities where modest finances and conservative philosophies often affected community-built structures. The exterior stylistic references were limited to the gable-front pediment and the simple classical surround that frames the double-door opening. The interior was finished in a similarly plain fashion with simple Greek Revival door and window surrounds.

See Continuation Sheet 8.3

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- St. John's United Methodist Church provides an interesting contrast to its nearby Greek Revival predecessor, the Joshua Thomas Chapel. Following recommended designs published in circulated literature on proper church architecture, the Deal Island Methodists financed the construction of an impressive Gothic Revival church. Attached to the northwest corner of the bi-level building was a three-story bell tower. Inside, the church walls were covered with pressed metal sheeting. One pattern that incorporated an anchor motif obviously related to the sea-faring occupations of many of its congregations. The church cemetery is also significant for its collection of iron fence that highlights several family burial plots.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

All that lot or parcel of land situate in Deal Island Election District, Somerset County, Maryland, beginning for the same at the northwest corner of the church property along Deal Island Road (State Route 363) and heading in a easterly direction for approximately 450 feet to a point that serves as the northeast corner of the church lot, thence due south for approximately 187 feet to a point, thence due east for 75 feet to another point, thence due south for 37.5 feet, thence due east once more for another 37.5 feet to a point, thence due south partially following the western edge of a dirt road for 450 feet to a point that establishes the southeast corner of the church lot, thence in a westerly direction for 150 feet to a point along the east side of Deal Island Road, thence by and with the east side of the aforesaid road for approximately 750 feet to the place of beginning, containing 2.5 acres more or less. See map on Continuation Sheet No. 10.2

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION:

The 2.5 acres accompanying this nomination includes two churches, St. John's United Methodist Church and the Joshua Thomas Chapel as well as a significant collection of nineteenth-century tombstones and cemetery fence. The boundary line on the west side follows the Deal Island Road, which has been in use throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The other, irregular boundary lines to the north, east and south are more arbitrary and separate the church lot from adjacent ground that is not significant to the nomination.

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