

ST. JOSEPHS CHAPEL
Ammendale Road
Beltsville
Prince George's County
Maryland

HABS NO. MD-1022

HABS
MD
17-BELTV,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL

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Location:

On the grounds of Ammendale Institute (HABS NO. MD-974), which is located at 6101 Ammendale Road, Beltsville, Prince George's County, Maryland

Significance:

This excellent example of a rural, Queen Anne style chapel was the first building erected by the Christian Brothers as part of the Ammendale Normal Institute, a catholic novitiate.

Description:

This is a one-story, three-bay-by-four-bay, common-bond brick (7:1) structure with a steeply pitched, gable-front roof. The decorative treatment to the building includes corbeled brickwork, belt courses and buttresses, and Gothic bargeboards supported by large brackets in the gable end of the roof and the entry vestibule. At the front elevation, above the entry, is a rosette window set in a recessed pointed arch of corbeled brick.

The typical window, as seen at the side elevations, are seven-over-six-light, pointed-arch windows with opaque glass and brick pointed-arch window heads. There is a buttress between each window. At the front, the windows are three-light fixed with a trefoil pattern at the top.

The entry vestibule is a single-story, one-bay-by-one-bay structure with flanking buttresses. It has a double-door entry with a high, semi-elliptical light above. There is a lower, gable-roofed chancel to the rear, with a rosette window in the gable end. It is flanked by gable-roofed, one-bay sacristy rooms.

The interior consists of an entry vestibule which leads to the open nave, with a chancel alcove flanked by pointed-arch doorways into sacristy rooms. The interior is ornamented by varying patterns of pressed tin which cover the walls and ceilings, and includes pressed tin cornices and chair rail. The tin walls are pressed in an interwoven fleur-de-lys pattern. The cornice is a layering of molding

patterns around a large cavetto with a floral leaf pattern. The ceiling is in a block, quatrefoil pattern.

History:

In 1880, Admiral Daniel Ammen offered twenty acres (at \$20 per acre) for a novitiate, and donated an additional five acres for a church site, to the Christian Brothers of Calvert Hall in Baltimore. The church, St. Joseph's Chapel, was the first structure built on the site in 1880, followed by the institute or school in 1883-84. The chapel was dedicated in October of 1880. The Queen Anne style in which it was erected is one that was seldom used for ecclesiastic architecture in Prince George's County and is therefore, fairly unusual.

Sources:

Owens, Christopher and Catherine Pierce (MNCPPC). National Register of Historic Places, Inventory-Nomination Form, Ammendale Normal Institute, prepared April 26, 1974.

Gabriel, Brother; interview with Catherine Lavoie during on-site investigation, 9 October 1990. Brother Gabriel has been at Ammendale since the 1920s.

Historian:

Catherine C. Lavoie
Historic American Buildings Survey
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