

HA-1435

1936

Bel Air Post Office  
Main & Gordon  
Bel Air  
public

From its disciplined stone work to its handsome cupola, the Bel Air Post Office stands as a fine example of the Colonial Revival of the mid-1930's. A warmer building than the federal buildings built in Washington during the same period, the Post Office has outstanding tracery in the fan light and sidelights around the double front doors and an excellent wide cornice inside the lobby. The foyer decorations are also worthy of note, as is the historical mural on the north wall above the postmaster's office door. Painted by D. C. artist William Chalfee, the mural depicts the famous Shakespearian actor Edwin Booth, a Harford native, in an early performance in the courtroom of the old courthouse.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Bel Air Post Office

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

N. Main & Gordon Street

1st

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Harford

**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 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	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" 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

Post Office Department

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Washington

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

D. C.

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Harford County Courthouse

Liber #: 239

Folio #: 26

STREET & NUMBER

Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

\_\_\_ FEDERAL \_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<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

This one and a half story coursed ashlar building is at the southeast corner of North Main and E. Gordon Streets in the Town of Bel Air, Harford County, Maryland. The building was originally five bays wide with a slightly projecting central pavilion of three bays topped by a pediment. The southern bays were added in 1964. The building has a gable roof over the central pavilion and a flat roof elsewhere. The water table, cornice and coping are of a contrasting stone. The central pavilion is obviously the important part of the building. The tall white cupola over it is with the Courthouse cupola, an integral part of Bel Air's skyline. A classical figure in plaster decorates the tympanum of the pediment. Recessed stone plaques are above the two windows. The entrance has a semi-circular fanlight with delicate tracery and five pane over panel sidelights around a pair of glass and aluminum doors. The windows are 12/12 double-hung sash in wooden surrounds set clean in the stone walls.

The first floor interior has a lobby which corresponds to the center pavilion. To the north is the Postmaster's office, to the south a one bay section with the Post Office boxes. Behind the lobby is the work section which fits around to the south of the Post Office boxes.

While the rest of the building is severely utilitarian, the lobby is elegantly decorated. The handsome cornice has a shell motive and a Greek key band with a molding string at top and bottom. The vestibule is decorated with various classical elements including fluted pilasters, a dentil band and a modillion. The door to the Postmaster's office has a full entablature. Behind the lobby and the office and around the south end of the niche for boxes is the open work space. The half story has a workers' lounge and a chamber which overlooks the work area for secret inspections.

The loading dock occupies the north half of the rear (east) elevation.



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

This property occupies parcel #585 in the Town of Bel Air.

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

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_\_\_

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Marilynn Larew, Architectural Historian

5 December 1979

ORGANIZATION

Town of Bel Air

DATE

838-8700

STREET &amp; NUMBER

39 Hickory Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bel Air

STATE

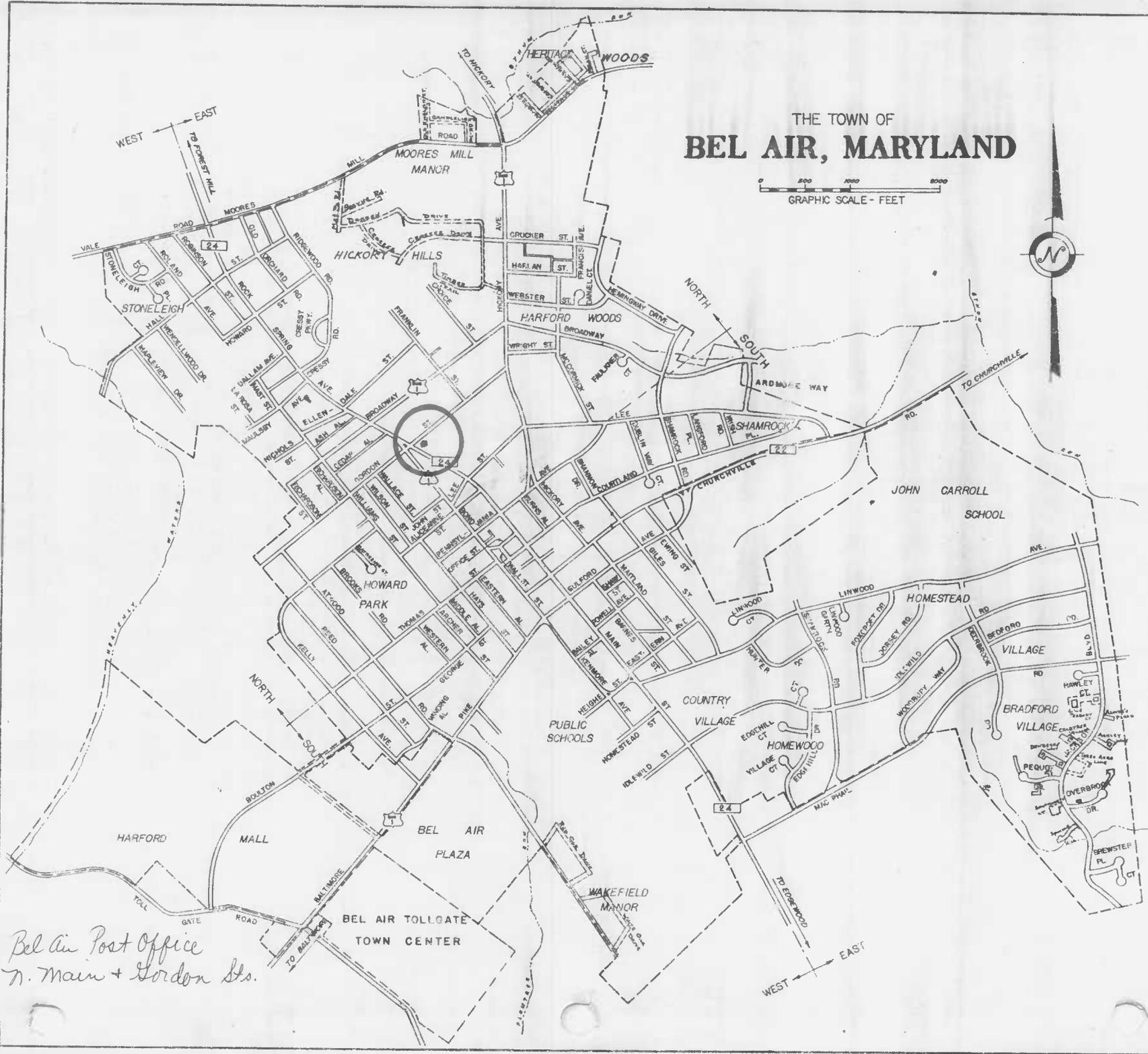
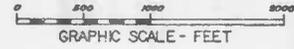
Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

# THE TOWN OF BEL AIR, MARYLAND



HA-1435

*Bel Air Post Office  
N. Main + Gordon Sts.*







U.S. POST OFFICE - MAIN GORDON, BEL AIR

DETAIL OF W. ELEVATION

M. LACE (N. 979)

HA-1435