

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Abrahams Barn

2. Location

street & number 26531 Howard Chapel Drive not for publicationcity, town Damascus vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Montgomery

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Martin Seldeen Trustee

street & number 1738 Elton Road, Suite 310 telephone no.:

city, town Silver Spring state and zip code MD 20903

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse liber 3498

street & number folio 595

city, town Rockville state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository 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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Abrahams barn is a large stanchion barn (a barn used specifically for milking cows). It is 15 bays long, three bays wide, and has a dairy (milk house) located immediately south of it and attached to it by a narrow-roofed passageway. Both barn and dairy have red brick walls and bent rafter, or gothic, roofs of wood construction. German siding covers the gables and also the side walls from the top of the brick wall to below the eaves on both buildings. The roofs are covered with an assortment of composition shingles in a deteriorated state, and portions of the barn roof have been patched with tar paper. Sagging and bulging of the barn roof give evidence of structural problems. The ridge of the barn has three large, sheet metal ventilators on which are mounted weather vanes containing the figure of a cow. Three lightning arresters alternate with the ventilators on the barn roof ridge. The dairy roof has two smaller ventilators on its ridge.

The barn windows are six-light, metal sash with the bottom three lights fixed and the upper three hinged to open inwards, hopper-fashion. The west (front) gable contains at the ground level, a double door flanked by a window on each side. Above the double door a horizontally sliding, wood, crossbraced batten door covers a single door opening. The upper portion of the gable has a large opening into the hayloft which is covered by a pair of large, wood, crossbraced batten doors which slide diagonally upwards to close. Two windows with six-over-six light, double-hung, wood sash are on either side of this large opening.

Standing directly east of the barn are two concrete stave silos with steel bands and domed roofs covered with galvanized sheet metal. The barn is still used for milking cows, and has a concrete floor and two rows of stanchions. The hayloft above the milking floor is used for storing baled hay.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input 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 checked="" 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 1941-42 **Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or
Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G

Level of Significance: national state local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Abrahams barn is significant for being one of the few gothic roof barns in Montgomery County. Constructed in 1941 and completed in early 1942, it was the showplace of the area, according to local farmers.¹ Its use of brick for the ground floor walls is unusual, too, for most barns of this period were built of wood or concrete block.

Plans and descriptions of the gothic or bent rafter type of roof construction were published in farming manuals as early as 1922. The gothic roof was described as "increasing in popularity for use on farm barns, as having no obstructions in the loft, and the entire strength is secured by the arch construction. The cost is higher than for the other types, as the labor and material necessary to secure the smooth curve make it more expensive."² Apparently the added expense and trouble was enough to dissuade most Montgomery farmers, for gable roofs predominated on bank barns built through the first quarter of the twentieth century, and gambrel roofs became standard on concrete block barns built from the 1930's.

The use of the gothic roof and of brick exterior walls makes the Abrahams barn very unusual in the County, and its location close to a well-traveled road makes it a highly visible landmark in the Damascus area.

FOOTNOTES

1. Interview with Joseph P. Abrahams, July, 1987.
- 2 William A. Foster & Deane G. Carter, Farm Buildings (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1922), p. 62.

DAMASCUS MAP
N 3915 - W 4707.5 / 7.5

1518
Claggettville

PATUXENT



Friendship

11/8
Damascus

11-28
ABRAHAM'S BARN

Magnolia
Park

Seneca
Creek

M. 11-28

M: 11-28



M:11-28





M: 11-28

Abrahams Barn

26531 Howard Chapel Drive

Damascus, MD

Andrea Rebeck 1987

Looking southeast



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