

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey: PG#71B-2-30 Building Date: 1939

Building Name: Bowie Fire House

Location: 13006 9th Street, Bowie, Maryland

Private/Antique Shop/Occupied/Good/Accessible

Description:

The Bowie Fire House is a front-gabled building, two bays by four, and one story in height. Two large white garage bay doors dominate the south gable front, and above them the pediment is defined by wood molding painted white. Within the tympanum is a round window, its glazing divided into nine geometric sections. The building is constructed of brick painted bright red; all trim is white. The eaves of the gable roof are marked with a wide frieze board painted white. Near the front of the ridge is a wooden belfry (painted white) which gives the building its distinctive character. The bell is enclosed within arched openings surmounted by a steep pyramidal roof. A narrow flat-roof addition has been built onto the east side, adding two bays to the width of the original fire house and extending the full depth of the building. In the northwest corner of the original building, a tall square tower has been added, and a two-story frame wing has been constructed at right angles to the rear of the main block.

Significance:

The Bowie Fire House is a contributing element in the streetscape of the old town of Huntington/Bowie. The town of Huntington was established in 1870 at the junction of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad and the branch line south into Washington. The town was devastated by fire in 1895 and again in 1910, but, until the 1920s, had no organized fire-fighting system. In 1928 the Bowie Volunteer Fire Department was organized; the first firehouse was a small frame building constructed in 1928 on land provided by merchant George Luers behind his general store. Luers allowed the Fire Department free use of the land for as long as they used the building. In 1933, the Bowie Volunteer Fire Department was incorporated and purchased three lots immediately west of the Luers store; in 1939 the main block of the subject Fire House was built. Financed partially by Works Progress Administration funds, it served both as Fire Department building and Town Hall. It closed in 1974 when a modern Fire Station was constructed adjacent to it. The old Fire House currently operates as the "Olde Friends" antique shop. Its picturesque belfry and bright red color make it a noticeable landmark in this railroad junction town.

Acreage: 2400 square feet

Bowie Fire House

PG#71B-2-30

HISTORIC CONTEXT:

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Periods:

Modern Period - 1930 to present

Historic Period Themes:

Architecture, Community Planning

Social/Cultural

Government

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Functions and Uses: Fire House, Antique shop

Design Source: unknown



# 7. Description

Survey No. PG#71B-2-30

<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 of move _____
<input 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 Bowie Fire House is a front-gabled brick garage building with several rear additions as well as a small addition to the east side. The building is distinguished by its small belfry and its bright red color.

The original building is front gabled, two bays by four, and one story in height. Two large white garage bay doors dominate the south gable front, and above them the pediment is defined by wood molding painted white. Within the tympanum is a round window, its glazing divided into nine geometric sections. Windows in the long side walls were long 6/6 double hung sash with broad white lintels. There is a door in the fourth (southernmost) bay of the west side elevation.

The building is constructed of brick which is painted bright red; all trim is white. The gable roof is covered with black asbestos shingle, and the eaves are marked with a wide frieze board painted white. Near the front of the ridge is a wooden belfry (painted white) which gives the building its distinctive character. The belfry rests on a square wood base, and the bell is enclosed within arched openings surmounted by a steep pyramidal roof.

A narrow flat-roof addition has been built onto the east side, adding two bays to the width of the original fire house and extending the full depth of the building. Entrance to the building is now through the south front of this easterly addition through a modern door. The east side of the addition is lighted by three eight-pane casement windows, with white panelled shutters.

The northwest (rear) corner of the original building, a tall square tower has been added, and a two-story frame rear wing has been constructed at right angles to the main block. This multi-part building has been adapted to serve as an antique shop. A modern fire station now stands on the adjoining lot to the east.

# 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 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 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** 1939 **Builder/Architect**

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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 Bowie Fire House is a contributing element in the streetscape of the old town of Huntington/Bowie. It represents an organization which was important in the history of this community, and its picturesque belfry and bright red color make it a noticeable landmark in this railroad junction town.

The town of Huntington (Bowie) grew up around the junction of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad and the branch line south into Washington. Construction of the line began in 1868, and in the following year Ben H. Plumb, a land speculator and developer, purchased 250 acres of farmland through which the railroad was being constructed. At the point where a spur line to Washington, D.C., joined with the B & PRR, Plumb surveyed and platted a town of approximately one square mile, with numbered streets running east and west, and tree-named avenues running north and south, forming a grid over the diagonal railroad line.<sup>1</sup> In 1870, he published a Prospectus of Huntington, which described the new town, and offered for sale building lots, each of 2,500 square feet. Two carpenters, brought for the purpose, began building dwellings on lots already purchased. Several stores were constructed, lots were reserved for school and churches, two parks were laid out, and the railroad company began construction of depot, round house and machine shops.<sup>2</sup> The Depot itself was from the beginning known as Bowie Station, after members of the family who had backed the construction of the railroad line; the town, originally named Huntington, soon came to be known as Bowie as well.

<sup>1</sup> Plat of Huntington City, J.C. Lang, 1870, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Prospectus of Huntington, 1870, Library of Congress.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Notes, Item 8

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2400 sq ft

Quadrangle name Laurel

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research/Architectural Historian

organization Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission date March 1993

street & number 14741 Gov. Oden Bowie Drive telephone 301-952-3521

city or town Upper Marlboro state MD

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  
 Shaw House  
 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
 DHCP/DHCD  
 100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
 CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2003  
 (301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM  
Statement of Significance (continued)

Survey No. PG#71B-2-30

Section 8 Page 2

As might be expected, the railroad was the biggest employer in the new community. By 1880, the population included conductors, engineers, baggage master and brakeman, as well as all the other professionals essential to a small town: postmaster, merchants, carpenters, school teacher, telegraph operator,<sup>3</sup> hotel keeper, shoemakers, butcher, hostler and barber.<sup>3</sup>

The town of Bowie was devastated by fire in 1895 and again in 1910, but, until the 1920s, had no organized fire-fighting system. In 1928 the Bowie Volunteer Fire Department was organized, funded by voluntary contributions and fund-raising events. The first firehouse was a small frame building constructed in 1928 on land (on Chapel Avenue) provided by merchant George Luers behind his grocery and general store. Luers allowed the Fire Department free use of the land for as long as they used the building.<sup>4</sup>

As early as 1933, the Bowie Volunteer Fire Department had incorporated and purchased three lots immediately west of the Luers store,<sup>5</sup> and in 1939 the main block of the subject Fire House was built. It was financed partially by Works Progress Administration funds, and partially by funds raised by Bowie residents for the purpose of constructing a town hall. For several years the building was used as and known as the "Town Hall and Fire Department Building".<sup>6</sup>

The subject building closed as a firehouse in 1974 when a modern Fire Station was constructed immediately adjacent to it on the east. The old Fire House has been adapted for commercial use, and is currently open as the "Olde Friends" antique shop.

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<sup>3</sup> Federal Census for Prince George's County, 14th Enumeration District, 1880.

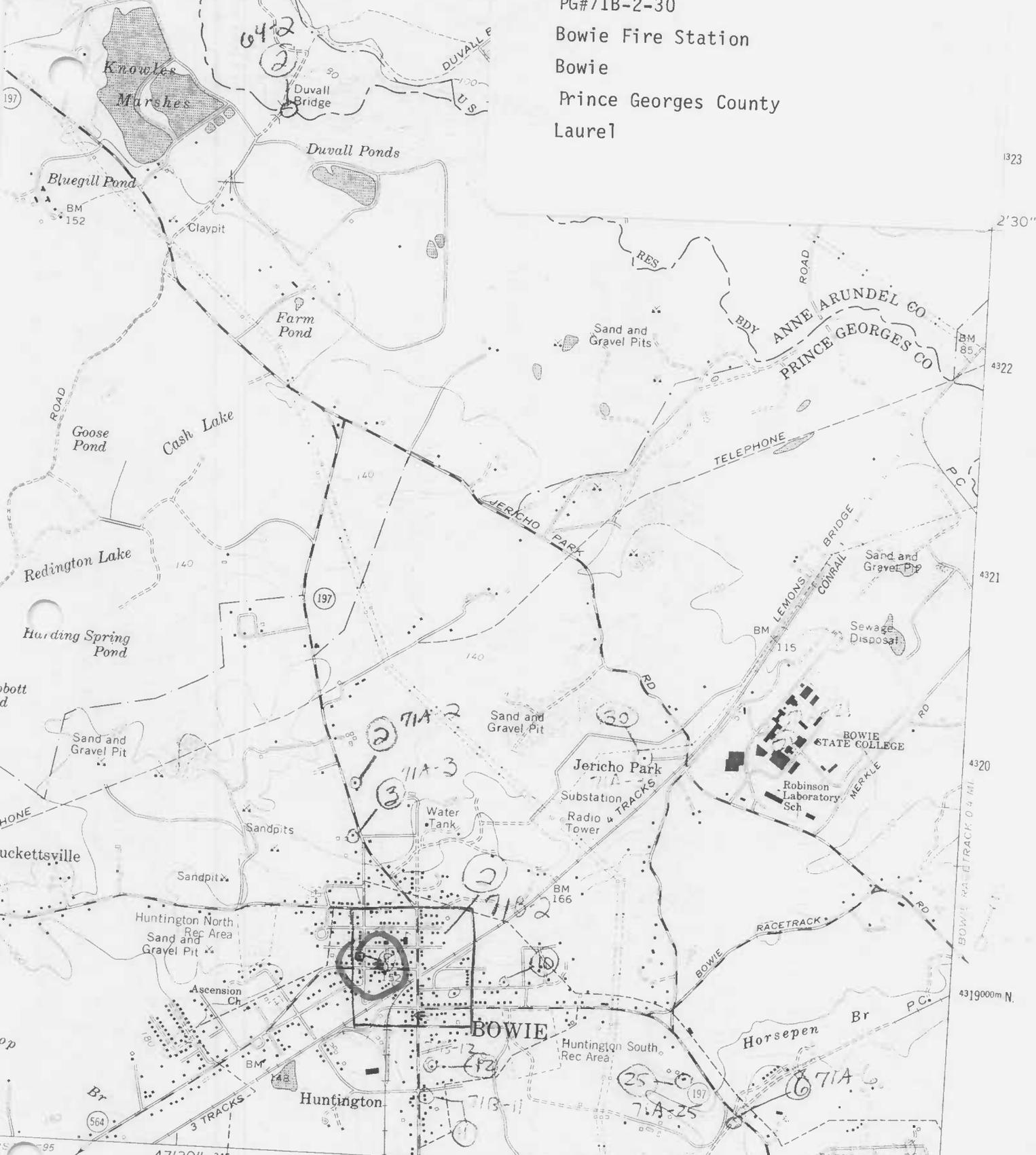
<sup>4</sup> Town of Bowie Maryland, 1870-1960, Huntington Heritage Society, Inc., 1992; Prince George's Enquirer, 19 April 1895, 14 October 1910.

<sup>5</sup> Prince George's county Deed #384:165.

<sup>6</sup> Prince George's County Deeds #498:301, #656:230.

CENTER  
Hance  
Pond

PG#71B-2-30  
Bowie Fire Station  
Bowie  
Prince Georges County  
Laurel



**PG#71B-2-30**



● INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY RESTON, VIRGINIA—1979  
1 MI TO MD 450  
348000m E 39°00' 76°45'

- ROAD CLASSIFICATION
- Heavy-duty —————
  - Medium-duty —————
  - Light-duty - - - - -
  - Unimproved dirt - - - - -
  - U. S. Route [Symbol]
  - State Route [Symbol]

(BOWIE)  
5661 NW



PG # 71B-2-30

Bowie Tire House

Prince Georges Co. MD

Susan G. Paul

December 1992

MD SHPO

South facade from SE

181