

S-364

Oriole

private and public

Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries

The settlement history for the area surrounding St. Peter's Creek dates to the earliest period of Somerset County history, however, the village of St. Peter's, later renamed Oriole, did not develop until the nineteenth century. The organization of the Methodist church in 1810 appears to be the earliest date associated with a building that stood along the county road which serves as the main street of the small watermens' community. By the Civil War period, a group of approximately thirty houses defined the village. Designated on the 1877 county atlas, St. Peter's boasted a steam saw mill, a school, St. Peter's Church, and two dozen dwellings. When it came time to establish an United States post office, Thomas Smith, a local store proprietor and farmer, was informed by government officials that the community had to distinguish itself from another Maryland town already designated St. Peter's. Due to the large number of nesting Baltimore Orioles in the area, it is related that Thomas Smith submitted Oriole as the community name for the post office designation, and the name has remained the same since. The area continued to expand during the years surrounding the turn of the century when the village as well as the county reached a peak in population around 1910. Since the Depression, Oriole and surrounding villages have dwindled in size and importance and remain quiet rural communities.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. S-364

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Oriole Survey District

2. Location

street & number Md. Route 627, 2 miles west of Md. 363 not for publicationcity, town Oriole vicinity of congressional district Firststate Maryland county Somerset

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" 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 Multiple Owners

street & number telephone no.:

city, town state and zip code

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Somerset Clerk of Court liber

street & number Somerset County Courthouse folio

city, town Princess Anne state Md. 21853

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

pository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Survey No. S-364

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<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.

Oriole Survey District

Oriole, Somerset County, Maryland is a rural community located on the north and south sides of MD Route 627 two miles west of MD 363. Princess Anne, the county seat, is located seven miles east of Oriole.

Comprised of thirty dwellings and one church, Oriole is situated at the head of St. Peter's Creek on the north side of the Manokin River. The dispersed group of buildings stand on large sized lots primarily facing MD 627. St. Peter's Church and cemetery are located at the east end of the community at the intersection of MD 627 and Jerusalem Road.

Largely dating from the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth century, the frame houses follow standard forms for the period. The two-story, two- or three-bay frame dwellings follow side hall and center hall plans and extend to the back with a single- or two-story service wing. Slightly more complicated houses include ell or tee-shaped dwellings trimmed with Victorian sawnwork and turned post porches. The most elaborate house is the Joe Crosswell house (also known as the Phoebus house, S-43) which stands at the west end of the village. The cruciform building is distinguished by a pair of three-story towers capped by pyramidal roofs. Several houses following a simplified bungalow style, dating to the early twentieth century, are scattered throughout the community.

Supported by infilled brick or concrete block foundations, these frame houses are currently covered with artificial layers of aluminum, vinyl, or asbestos sidings. Asphalt shingles are the common roof covering. Two-over-two or single-pane sash windows light a large number of the turn of the Victorian and early twentieth-century houses.

St. Peter's Church, built in 1928, is an ell-shaped Gothic Revival Church supported by a stretcher bond brick foundation and covered with aluminum siding. Rising in the southeast corner of the ell-plan is a three-story entrance and bell tower with a pointed arch belfry. Large tripartite windows and narrow lancet windows define each wall. Surrounding the church and cemetery is a brick wall. The datestone, fixed in the southwest corner, documents the construction of this building as well as other dates pertinent to the history of the church. The date 1810 refers to the initial organization and building, whereas 1862 was the year a second church was erected. On June 9, 1928, the church was completely destroyed by a tornado. On September 9 of the same year construction was begun on a replacement building.

8. Significance

Survey No. S-364

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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

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.

Oriole is a moderate sized watermens' community consisting of thirty dwellings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Largely following vernacular or popular national styles, the houses range from modest two-story, two-bay side hall/parlor frame structures to the exceptional Crosswell house (S-43) with its cruciform plan and twin chimneys. Representing the twentieth century are a few bungalow-style houses and the St. Peter's Church, a Gothic Revival building erected in 1928. The buildings have been altered with the application of artificial sidings, but much of the period exterior trim remains in place.

History and Support

Settlement history for the area surrounding St. Peter's Creek dates to the earliest period of Somerset County history; however, the village of St. Peter's, later renamed Oriole, did not develop until the nineteenth century. Organization of the Methodist Church in 1810 appears to be the earliest date associated with a building erected along the current road. By the Civil War era, a group of approximately thirty houses defined the village of St. Peter's. Designated on the 1877 county atlas, St. Peter's boasted a steam saw mill, a school, St. Peter's Church, and two dozen residences. The area evidently grew during the following half century when the community as well as the county reached its population peak during the early years of the twentieth century. Since the Depression, Oriole and surrounding communities have dwindled in size and importance and remain quiet rural communities.



ORIOLE SURVEY DISTRICT S-364
Oriole, Somerset County, Md
6/86, Paul Touart, photographer
Victorian porch, east elevation
Negative/Md Historical Trust



ORIOLE SURVEY DISTRICT S-364

Oriole, Somerset County, MD

North elevation

6/86, Paul Touart, photographer

Negative/Md Historical Trust



ORIOLE SURVEY DISTRICT S-364

Oriole, Somerest County, MD

6/86, Paul Touart, photographer

Negative/Md Historical Trust

North elevation



ORIOLE SURVEY DISTRICT S-364
Oriole, Somerset County, Md
6/86, Paul Touart, photographer
Negative/Md Historical Trust
South elevation of church