

Capsule Summary
SM-428
John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery
Coffee Hill vicinity
Private

1868

The John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery is significant as the site of one of St. Mary's County's earliest African American Methodist churches. To the south of the chapel extends what is probably the largest and oldest African American church graveyards in the County. While the chapel is no longer standing, the many graves are visible either because of engraved stones, field stones, or depressions in the ground which mark their location.

Luke P. Barber, owner of the extensive tract known as "Barber's Enclosure," deeded this acre lot of Barber's Enclosure to the Trustees of the "Colored Methodist Episcopal Church" in 1868. The people who worshipped at the chapel were probably either former members of nearby Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church or former slaves on the Barber property. Today, a pile of rubble stands on the chapel site, behind which extends the unkempt and endangered cemetery.

SM-428, John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery
St. Mary's County
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Agricultural/Industrial Transition, 1815 -1870.
Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870 -1930.

Historic Period Theme: Architecture
Religion

Resource Type

Category: Site

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function and Use: Church
Cemetery

Known Design Source: None

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-428

Magi No.

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery

and/or common

2. Location

street & number South Side of Aviation Yacht Club Road not for publication

city, town Coffee Hill vicinity of congressional district 5

state Maryland county St. Mary's

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| <input 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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Cemetery |

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

name John Wesley Chapel Trustees

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Mechanicsville state and zip code Md. 20659

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clerk of Court liber JAC 3

street & number St. Mary's County Courthouse folio 209

city, town Leonardtown state Md

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> good | <input checked="" 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 John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery is located on the south side of Aviation Yacht Club Road near Budd's Creek in St. Mary's County, Maryland. The site is located on a one acre lot surrounded by trees. The Chapel, no longer standing, originally faced north with the gable roof oriented on a north/south axis. The cemetery extends south of the Chapel ruins.

Constructed in the late 1800s, the John Wesley Chapel was a one-story, frame building which stood on a brick pier foundation. The exterior was sheathed with german siding and the steeply pitched gable roof was covered with metal. The ruins of the Chapel show that the vertical studs were mortise and tenoned and pegged into place. The Chapel burned in the late 1980s.

The cemetery which extends to the south of the Chapel consists of 110 distinct graves, some of which are marked with either engraved stones or field stones. The majority of the graves are unmarked. The cemetery is in very poor repair.

8. Significance

Survey No. SM-428

| 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1868 **Builder/Architect** unknown

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 John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery is significant as the site of one of St. Mary's County's earliest African American Methodist churches. To the south of the Chapel extends what is probably the largest and oldest African American church graveyards in the County. While the Chapel is no longer standing, the many graves are visible either because of engraved stones, field stones, or depressions in the ground which mark their location.

Luke P. Barber, owner of the extensive tract known as "Barber's Enclosure," deeded this acre lot of Barber's Enclosure to the Trustees of the "Colored Methodist Episcopal Church" in 1868. The people who worshipped at the chapel were probably either former members of nearby Bethel Methodist Episcopal Church or former slaves on the Barber property. The deed suggests that the acre lot was already improved with a building at the time of its transfer.

The John Wesley Chapel was in use until the 1950s. Sometime in the late 1980s or early 1990s, the chapel burned. A pile of rubble stands on the site, behind which extends the unkempt and endangered cemetery.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-428

Patricia Bendi, Research Findings on the Methodist Churches in St. Mary's County, Md.
St. Mary's County Bicentennial Committee on Methodism, 1984. Located at the St. Mary's
County Historical Society.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 1 acre

Quadrangle name Charlotte Hall

Quadrangle scale 1:24 000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| A | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| C | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| E | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| G | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| B | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| D | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| F | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| H | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Acre lot on which the chapel ruins and Cemetery stand.

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 | Elizabeth Hughes, Historic Sites Surveyor | | |
| organization | St. Mary's County DPZ | date | April 1994 |
| street & number | telephone 301-475-4662 | | |
| city or town | Leonardtwn | 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 21032-2023
-514-7600

SM-428, John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery
St. Mary's County
8.1 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: John Jackson, Charles Thomas, Moses Queen, Walter Yates, John Young, Gustavus Brown, Henry Brown, Trustees of the "Colored Methodist Episcopal Church" called "John Wesley's Chapel."

FROM: Luke P. Barber

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Record, Liber JAC 3, folio 209.

DATE: October 8, 1868.

NOTES: Transfer of a lot of land called and known as "Barber's Enclosure," containing one acre more or less together with all the present improvement thereon.

SM-428, John Wesley Chapel Site and Cemetery
St. Mary's County
8.2 Significance

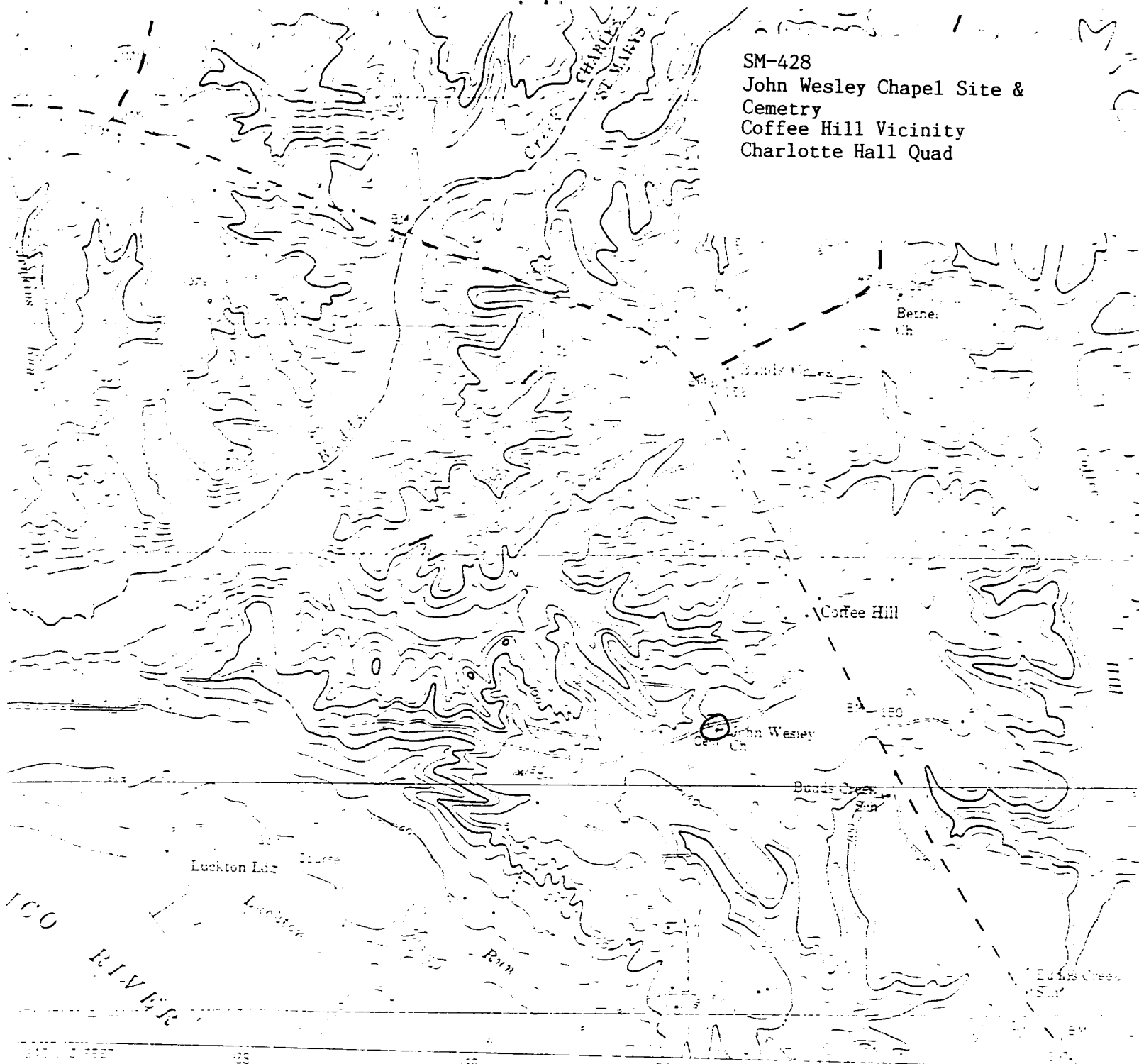
Photo of the John Wesley Chapel in 1984.

Source: Patricia Biondi, "Research Findings on the Methodist Churches in St. Mary's County, MD." St. Mary's County Bicentennial Committee on Methodism, 1984.



← Ruins of John Wesley
North of Chaptice —

SM-428
 John Wesley Chapel Site &
 Cemetery
 Coffee Hill Vicinity
 Charlotte Hall Quad



of Engineers, U. S. Army
 by the Geologist Survey
 Survey

NATIONAL OCEAN SURVEY
 HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY INDEX

SCALE

Compiled from aerial photographs
 1943. Culture revised by

National Ocean Survey from
 surveys. This information is
 purposes

and mean high water (height
 from tide-coordinated aerial
 the four (type of vegetation)

that grid ticks based on
 use Mercator grid, zone 18

in American Datum 1983
 meters south and 27 meters
 of ticks

H-700

HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY

CHARLOTTE HALL, MD

380.6 D7 18 024

1953

PHOTOREVISION 1974
 BATHYMETRY ADDED 1982
 NOAA 5660 IV NE Series 7853

THIS MAP COMPILED WITH AERIAL
 PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY DATA COMPILED WITH



SN-428 John Wesley Chapel Site

St. Mary's County, MD

Elizabeth Higdon

MD SHPD

May 1999

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