

Montgomery County Cemetery Inventory

ID: 67

Name: Bethesda Meeting House

Alternate name: Capt. John Presbyterian Church, Cabin John Pres.

Address: 9420 Wisconsin Ave.

Town: Bethesda

ADC Map Page 35 Grid K-7

Type Religious PRESBYTERIAN
 Family _____
 Private _____
 Other _____

Association
 Free black
 Enslaved
 Ethnic _____
 Prehistoric _____

Setting Rural Urban Suburban Forested Other _____

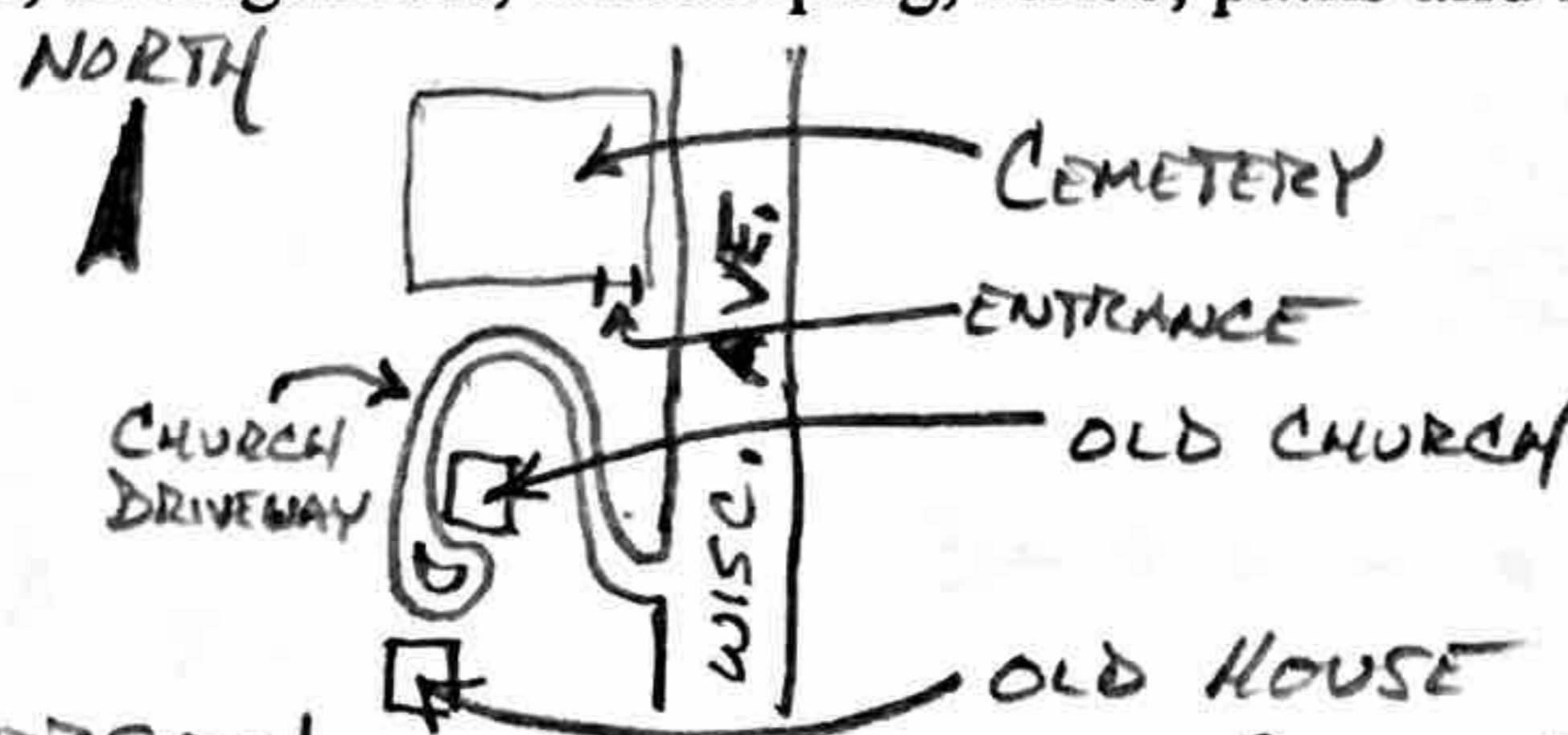
Condition Excellent Good Fair Poor

Negative Impacts (vandalism, dumping, neglect, encroachment, etc) _____
Some stones leaning; a few toppled

Approximate no. of burials 110+ Date range of burials 1820-1942

Description (markers, materials, arrangement, landscaping, fence, paths and roads, etc.)

(See attached write-up for complete description.)



Surveyor(s) CARL PETERSON Survey date NOV 2004
Photographer CARL PETERSON Date NOV 2004 Photo no. 67-01 thru 67-12

Current owner _____
Address/Phone No. _____

Historic Status Locational Atlas ID _____ National Register
 Master Plan ID _____ Other _____

UTM 18S 0318336 UTM 4320086

Additional sources of information:

67
BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE
9420 WISCONSIN AVE.
BETHESDA

BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE CEMETERY AT BETHESDA (CAP- JOHN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CABIN JOHN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)

Directions: Route 355 West through Bethesda, past NIH, church and cemetery on left. [A.D.C. Map: Montgomery, page 38, grid coordinates H-1.] Condition of cemetery: Well kept, 109 marked graves. Active cemetery. Earliest known death: 1820. Most recent death: Present. Date transcribed: 1981. Location of transcribed records: Montgomery County Historical Society Library, 42 West Middle Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20850. Author: J. Thomas Scharf, A.M. Title: *History of Western Maryland*, page 768, Vol. I. Publisher: Regional Publishing Company [reprinted 1968], Baltimore, MD [originally printed in Philadelphia, 1882]. Comments: Original Presbyterian church built 1820, sold church to Baptists in 1950, but cemetery retained.



NO LONGER TRUE.
1942 appears to be most recent.

5 NW 770,000 FT

MAP 35

214 NW 440,000 FT
213 NW
212 NW 430,000 FT
211 NW Joins Map 36
39°02'30"
39°00'00"
210 NW
MD GRID 420,000 FT

67
BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE
9420 WISCONSIN AVE.
BETHESDA

20892

94

BETHESDA

191

188

67
BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE
9420 WISCONSIN AVE.
BETHESDA

Cemetery Description:

**BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE
ID # 67**

Inactive cemetery on partially wooded hillside overlooking busy Wisconsin Ave. *to north of church.* Cemetery is located near northern edge of Bethesda, on west side of Wisconsin Ave between West Cedar Lane and Elsmere Ave. Approximately 110 burials ranging from 1820 to about 1942. Some stones are leaning or toppled. A few burials from the 1800s are marked by modern-looking polished granite stones, presumably replacements for the original markers. Lot is surrounded on three sides by a rusty, dilapidated, 3-foot-tall chain-link fence. East side of cemetery is separated from Wisconsin Ave by a metal railing atop a stone embankment. No paths or driveways inside fence. Cemetery can be accessed on foot via a gap between the fence and railing at the southeast corner, where a metal plaque describes the location's history.

PHOTO LOG
Bethesda Meeting House (ID# 67)
Nov 2004 - 12 photos

67
BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE
9420 WISCONSIN AVE.
BETHESDA



Church and sign
67-01.JPG



Plaque at cemetery entrance
67-02.JPG



View from cemetery entrance,
looking northwest
67-03.JPG



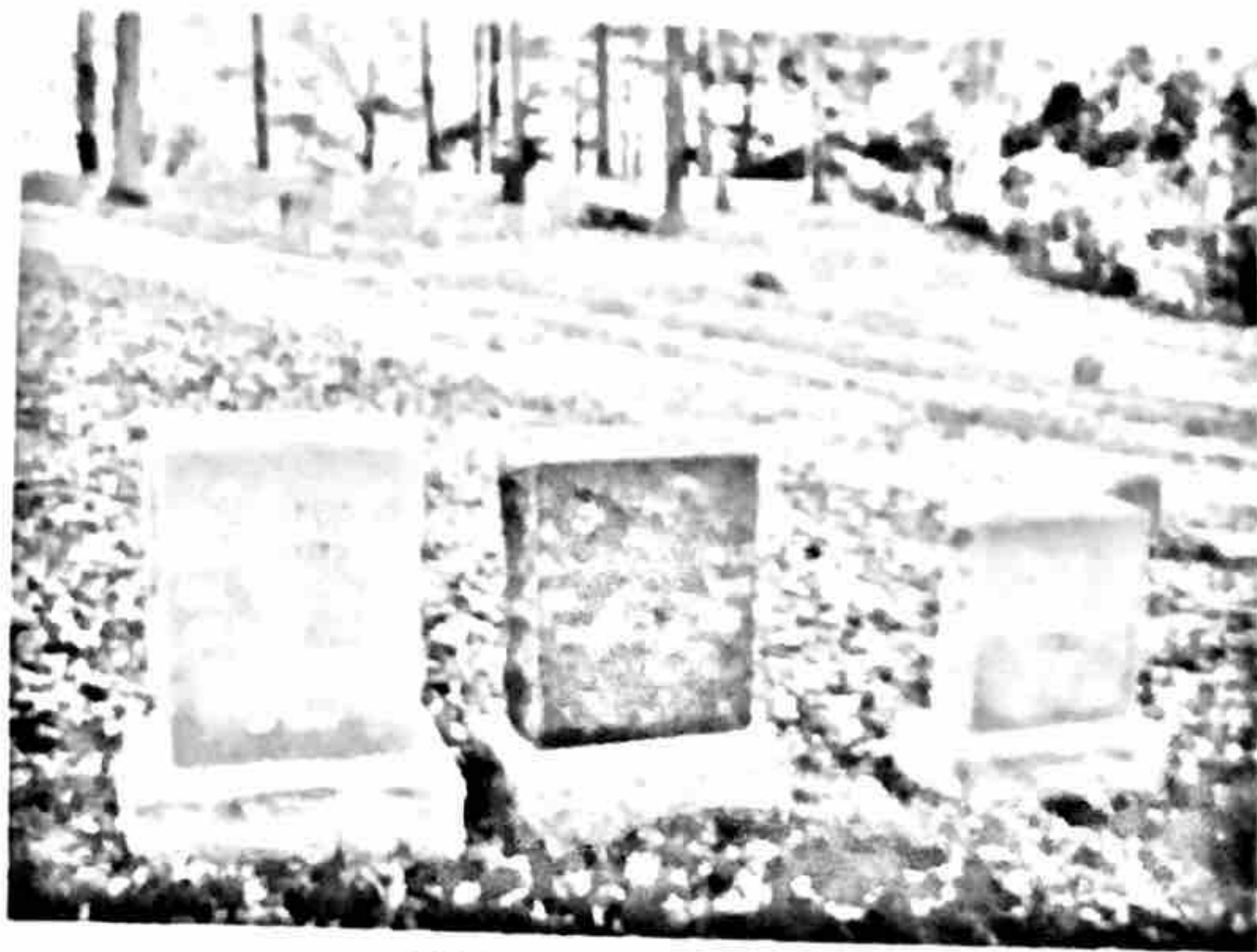
Markers, looking northeast toward
Wisconsin Ave
67-04.JPG



Markers, looking southwest toward church
67-05.JPG



Leaning headstones
67-06.JPG



"Clark" markers
67-07.JPG



"Magruder" child marker
67-08.JPG



"Davis" obelisk
67-09.JPG



"Wilson" obelisk
67-10.JPG



Modern marker (perhaps
replacement?) on old grave
67-11.JPG



Modern and old "Powell" markers
67-12.JPG

67
BETHESDA MEETING HOUSE
4420 WISCONSIN AVE.
BETHESDA



The Church that Named Bethesda

Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda (meaning House of Mercy), having five porches.

In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

ST. JOHN V

Shawmeken

OLD BETHESDA

BY

DOREE GERMAINE HOLMAN

BETHESDA NOT SO OLD

BY

GERTRUDE D. BRADLEY

FRANKLIN PRESS

GAITHERSBURG, MD.

For mail distribution purposes, Bethesda is a part of the Washington Metropolitan area and is served by three substations of the Washington Post Office—Bethesda 14, Chevy Chase 15, and Friendship 16.

Bethesda had its own post office for many years, but this was abolished in the 1920's in an effort to give the rapidly growing area better mail service. The name Bethesda was given to the newly established substation of the Washington office, although it did not serve the entire Bethesda District.

For many years the substation was located in the building now occupied by Leon's Mens Shop. In 1938 the present native stone structure at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Lane was constructed.

The substation of Chevy Chase is located on Connecticut Avenue in a building owned by the Village of Chevy Chase. Friendship substation, which serves a vast area west of River Road to the Potomac River, is located on Wisconsin Avenue in the District of Columbia.

Election Districts in Montgomery County have an interesting history. An Act of the Maryland Assembly in 1798 authorized the division of the county into five Election Districts. These were called Berry, Cracklin, Rockville, Medley and Clarksburg. Bethesda was in Rockville or No. 4 District. In 1878 there was a re-division and eight districts were laid out. Our section became the Seventh District. Still later 13 election districts were created, but Bethesda still remained the Seventh.

As the little settlement near Five Points grew it came to be known as Bethesda, after the old church up the Pike. Gradually the entire Election District came to be known as Bethesda.

Shoemakers Early Settlers

Mr. Martenet's map, spoken of earlier, shows 7 different Shoemaker families living in the Bethesda District in 1865. All of these were descendants of Samuel Shoemaker who, in 1819, with his wife and several children, came to Montgomery County, Md., from Montgomery County, Penna., where his ancestors had lived as Quakers since 1683.

Mr. Shoemaker purchased from Clement Smith, who was then president of the Farmers and Merchants Bank in Georgetown, a tract of 102 acres. This property included what is now Yorketown Village and a part of Westmoreland Hills. The family dwelling was in Yorketown Village and just north of the house was the Shoemaker burying ground. This is still intact because of the following clause in Samuel Shoemaker's will:

"And I do hereby dedicate for a graveyard for my family the following piece of ground containing 6¼ square perches, and shall never be appropriated to any other purpose, and there shall be at all times a convenient right of way to and from the same."

Two large boxwood, near the gate of the fence enclosing the plot, mark the graves of Samuel Shoemaker and his wife.

Samuel Shoemaker's two sons bought additional acreage through the years. At one time they owned most of the land bordering Western Avenue in the Bethesda District.

Two of the Shoemaker heirs, Mr. Rudolph Bopp and Miss Ruth Shoemaker, still live on original Shoemaker