

The Old St. Paul's Rectory 1791 – 1989
24 West Saratoga St
Fact Sheet

Introduction

St. Paul's Rectory was built in 1791 on land conveyed to the Vestry of St. Paul's by John Eager Howard in 1786. The deed stipulates that the property must stay in the hands of the vestry in perpetuity, or it will revert back to the Howard family. It is a Baltimore City Landmark, and a contributing structure of the Cathedral Hill Historic District

The Current Old St. Paul's Church was built in 1856 by Richard Upjohn, most noted for his design of Trinity Church in New York City. The Church was built on the foundation of an earlier, neoclassical style, church designed by Baltimore Architect Robert Cary Long in 1817. The Long church was destroyed by fire in 1854, with only the exterior walls surviving. Upjohn's design of the church was inspired by his recent visits to Italy. Although the triple arched portico of the church's façade used the earlier neoclassical inspired building, the overarching design of the building featured an Italianate sense of proportion, asymmetry and balance. Most prominent in the design was the six-story campanile that contrasted against the low roof basilica. Only the first two stories of the tower were ever completed. This was actually the third church completed on this site. The first was built in 1729, to replace another building elsewhere in the city. St. Paul's Parish dates from 1692.

Also affiliated with Old St. Paul's Church is a cemetery currently located on Redwood Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. This is the third site associated with St. Paul's Parish. The other two are St. Paul's Parish Churchyard off North Point Road and St. Paul's Burial Ground on Charles Street and New Church Street. The current cemetery contains graves from notables such as John Eager Howard (war hero from the Revolutionary and 1812 Wars), Bishop James Kemp (who lived at the Rectory), Tench Tilghman (aide de camp of George Washington), Revolutionary Sighner Samuel Chase and his father Thomas Chase (early rector of St. Paul's), George Armistead (Commander of Fort McHenry during the Bombardment of Baltimore in 1814) and Robert Cary Long, Jr. (renowned Baltimore architect who designed the 1817 St. Paul's church).

At the time of its construction, the Rectory sat at the extreme northern border of Baltimore City. Its location gave a commanding view down to the Harbor and was intended to help the church shed its Tory post war image and compete with other American Protestant churches. The prominence of the location was reaffirmed in the 1830s by the presence of significant local leaders, Johns Hopkins and A.S. Abell as immediate neighbors to the East and West of the Rectory.

The rectory was built for Rev. William West who never actually occupied the house. He died one month before the completion of the house.

The last rector to live in the Rectory, William McKeachie, stayed in the house until the Preservation Maryland led restoration in 1986. The furnishing and physical restoration of the house was designed to reflect the building's 1829 appearance, although the 1835 expansion of the west side of the house, the raised roof and the rear porches are still intact. This period was chosen both in light of the architectural changes made at that time and for its uniqueness with regards to other historic houses in the area. Mt. Clare Mansion and Hampton mansion both depict late 18th-century residences. The Rectory was opened to the public in 1989.

Research was conducted by the Junior League of Baltimore and the restoration was supported by Preservation Maryland, the State of Maryland and from private donations, as well as the Friends of the Rectory and the Colonial Dames.

Exterior features

The Rectory has no known architect, but its style is typical Georgian country home style and the design may have come from a pattern book. Architectural details typical of this style that are visible at the Rectory include:

- rigid symmetry of doors and windows,
- classical elements to the cornice,
- jack arch lintels of the same material as the rest of the building
- Flemish bond brick face
- a projecting gabled pavilion at the front door
- simple six paneled door with transom above
- Palladian window in center of second floor

The exterior masonry of the main house remains intact and original, however significant additions have been made over the years.

1791- the main house had a single story hyphen and a two story annex.

1829 - the eastern portion of the property (the annex) was sold to Johns Hopkins. To accommodate the large family of Reverend William Edward Wyatt (who would establish St. Paul's School for Boys in 1849) a second story was added to the hyphen with a service stair to the second floor, as well as a second story bathroom, a dining room and an enlarged kitchen.

1835 - an addition to the west side of the building added a study for the rector and a dressing room to the second story bedroom. The tripartite window in this expansion is typical of the time. The wood shingled roof was replaced with tin and raised to make additional bedrooms on the third floor and to allow for the building of a covered second story deck in the back. The large deck and patio area reflects the mid-nineteenth century romantic ideal of becoming closer to and serve as outside rooms.

1906 - the north end of the hyphen was demolished and rebuilt with a new kitchen, laundry room and second floor rooms (no longer extant) above. During this renovation electricity, steam radiators and central coal heating were added to the building.

Interior features

Colors and patterns of the carpets, wallpaper and window treatments are reproductions from historic samples of this period. Carpets in the house are Brussels-Wilton woven carpets. Designs were taken from the original point papers found in the archives of a factory in Northern England. The colors were matched to the original specifications of the papers from 1829. Colors schemes for the rest of the house were chosen from the carpet colors. Much of the furniture in the house is Baltimore-made and date back to the early 1800s.

Window sashes, shutters and casings, as well as doors and door casings are original to 1829

Neoclassical wood trim was added in 1829 construction and was restored in the 1986 restoration. East room would have been used initially as dining room, then as a parlor.

Entrance Hall

The floors, baseboards, front door casing and arch are all original to the house.

The octagonal stair tower resembles those in prominent 18th century houses such as

Montpelier in Laurel, MD and Hampton in Towson, and would have been extremely fashionable in the late 18th century.

Chairs come from the Governor's mansion and are owned by PM. They date from 1815.

Prints and maps in the hallway and up the stair tower reflect nineteenth-century fashion trends.

The Central hallway may have been used for dancing during functions and receptions

Parlor (Front room)

Card tables to either side of the fireplace were originally owned by Mayor Calhoun, the first mayor of Baltimore City. They date to the 1820s and are owned by the Maryland Historical Society

The piano forte is by Lawrence Rickett of Baltimore and dates from the 1830s. It is owned by PM.

The mirror dates from 1810 and is either English or American made. It is made of pier glass and is notable for the typical neoclassical scene above.

Dining Room (Back room)

The New York Empire pedestal sideboard came from the Waverly Mansion in Howard County and is owned by Preservation Maryland. The drop leaf table dates from 1815 and has “spiky reeding” legs characteristic of Baltimore-made furniture.

Library

Originally this room would have been the parlor, after later expansions this room was used as the library

Guillotine window on north wall is typical of the time period and would allow visitors to pass from the (then) parlor onto the terrace.

The bookcase is one of two in the house – they are owned by the Trimble family and come from the Ravenhurst house. The second bookshelf is located in the Preservation Maryland office directly above this room.

Boardroom table and chair are on permanent loan from the Maryland Historical Society and came from the offices of (Mercantile Bank)

Prints around the room are by William Hogarth, an English portrait painter who became well known for comical paintings. These date back to 1747 and depict idleness and industry.

Rectors of Old St. Paul’s Parish

1702 – 1732 **William Tibbs**

1732 – 1739 **Joseph Hooper**

1739 – 1745 **Benedict Bourdillon** – First cousin, by marriage, to Lady Baltimore

1745 – 1779 **Thomas Chase** – Father of Samuel Chase, the prominent revolutionary, signer of the Declaration of Independence and Supreme Court Justice.

1779 – 1791 **William West** – served, along with Patrick Allison of Presbyterian Church, for the Continental Congress that met in Baltimore from December 1776 – February, 1777

1791 – 1812 **Joseph Grove John Bend** – Conducted funeral services for George Washington in 1799

1812 – 1827 **James Kemp (Bishop)** – served as Suffragen Bishop from 1814 – 1816 and Second Bishop of Maryland from 1816 – 1827.

1827 – 1864 **William Edward Wyatt** – Established St. Paul’s School for Boys in 1849. Served as Associate Rector under Bishop Kemp from 1814 – 1827.

1864 – 1870 **Milo Mahan**

1870 – 1905 **John Sebastian Bach Hodges** – No relation to the famous Bach family, he was widely known as a composer of hymns and anthems. Started the tradition of great music at Old St. Pauls.

1906 – 1942 **Arthur Barksdale Kinsolving** – lived in rectory for 36 years – the only person to live in the house longer was William Wyatt and family.

1942 – 1955 **Harry Lee Doll** – Abolished the rented pew system at Old St. Paul’s.

1956 – 1960 **Frederick Ward Kates** – Never lived at the Rectory. Used it, instead, for social occasions and meeting space.

1961 – 1981 **Halsey Moon Cook** – Raised six children in the Rectory

1982 - ? **William Noble McKeachie** – Lived in the Rectory until it was leased to Preservation Maryland.