

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic St. Stephen's Church

and/or common

**2. Location**

west side of Pa. hwy. route 68 at junction  
street & number of Church Street and Hwy. \_\_\_ not for publication  
city, town Bradys Bend \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 12  
state Pa. code 42 county Armstrong code 005

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
___ district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture <span style="margin-left: 100px">___ museum</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial <span style="margin-left: 100px">___ park</span>
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational <span style="margin-left: 100px">___ private residence</span>
___ site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	___ entertainment <span style="margin-left: 100px">___ religious</span>
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government <span style="margin-left: 100px">___ scientific</span>
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	___ industrial <span style="margin-left: 100px">___ transportation</span>
		___ no	___ military <span style="margin-left: 100px"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other <small>American Legion Home</small></span>

**4. Owner of Property**

name Bishop-Madden American Legion Post No. 488  
Mr. Ralph Zimmel, Secretary  
street & number Rural Route 2  
city, town Karns City \_\_\_ vicinity of state Pennsylvania

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Armstrong County Courthouse  
street & number North Market Street  
city, town Kittanning state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Penn. Inventory, Historic Pl. has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no  
date October 3, 1979 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local  
depository for survey records Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places  
city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

St. Stephen's Protestant Episcopal Church is located near the remains of the Bradys Bend Iron Company furnaces. In 1867 the trustees of the company granted a parcel of land to each of six religious groups upon the receipt of \$1.00. The parishioners of the church took advantage of this offer and erected a small Gothic sanctuary. of the original six congregations who were granted land, St. Stephen's was the only one to build a stone structure. The other five were of frame construction, and only one of them exists today.

The church is a one-story structure with a steeply pitched slate gable roof. Built of readily available native sandstone, the congregation wanted a permanent house of worship, believing that their thriving iron industry would remain prosperous. Red brick exterior window casements and courses of brick around the building highlight the construction. Exterior dimensions measure 36 feet in width, 68 feet in length, and 40 feet to the uppermost peak of the roof. Interior dimensions measure 28 feet 4 inches in width, 60 feet in length, and 35 feet to the inside roof peak.

St Stephens has numerous Gothic characteristics. The masonry walls are supported by buttresses. An artistically crafted tracery windows is located above the cusped doorway. Four twin-lancet windows in each of the two side walls are topped by pointed arches are placed high in the front and rear walls. A circular stained glass window in the peak of the gable above the doorway contains the design of a descending dove with outspread wings.

The wooden spine no longer exists.

The original interior plan was arranged for use as a conventional church sanctuary, with a chancel area in front and a chimney was built inside the rear wall. Sconces were attached along both sides of the windows to provide light for night-time use of the sanctuary.

The church was purchased in 1925 by Mr. Edward R. Dewey and designated as a facility to be made available for community meetings and social gatherings. At this time alterations were made to adapt the building to these uses. Two dormers were built into each side of the roof, one of the side lancet windows was converted into an exit (although the upper portion of the windows still remains), and the steeple was removed. It is probable that the porch was also added to the front of the church when these other changes were made.

# 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 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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1867-68

Builder/Architect

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

St. Stephen's is a fine, although somewhat altered, example of a rural Gothic-style church. The congregation was one of six to receive land from The Bradys Bend Iron Company in 1867. Of the six original grantees, The structure is the only stone church remaining from the period when the iron industry was thriving. The only other extant structure is of frame construction. In fact, of the eleven churches in Bradys Bend, St. Stephen's is the only stone church.

The Gothic style is well-represented in this little church. The sandstone construction is replete with buttresses and steeply pitched gable roof. Double lancet windows with pointed arches are found in the sides of the structure; triple windows with the same arches are located in the front and rear. An interesting vaviation is the use of brick to outline the windows and to trace courses around the building.

Land grants were given by the trustees of the Bradys Bend Iron Company for schools and churches to accomodate the needs of employees and their families. The company acquired possession of the Great Western Iron Works in 1844. Already on the property was a merchant mill for the manufacture of iron nails and merchant iron. A second blast furnace was erected by the Bradys Bend Company in 1845. Most important was the manufacture of strap iron rails, and later, T-rails. The Brady Bend Iron Company became one of the leading rail-road iron manufacturers in the state.

In 1867 one of these land grants went to the Episcopalian residents of the town. Many of these were immigrants from the British Isles, including Welsh, Cornish, and English workmen. These people wanted to raise their families in the religious traditions of their ancestors. They were quite willing to attempt to establish a congregation and build a house of worship.

Organization began under the direction of a missionary from the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh—the Reverend B.F. Brown. The Chapter of Incorporation of St. Stephen's Church of Bradys Bend was submitted to a standing committee of the Diocese in 1867 and accepted in the same year. The church building was completed in 1868. St. Stephen's was the only stone church within a twenty mile radius of the town.

In 1873 the furnace shut down due to the financial panic in the nation. As workers left to look for jobs at other places, the congregation begun to lose members. As a result of this loss, it

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

St. Stephen's Church

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later disbanded. The property returned to the ownership of the Bradys Bend Iron Company. Because of its enduring construction and position along a main road, St. Stephen's Church survived as a valued building, if not as a house worship.

Mr. Edward W. Dewey purchased the Bradys Bend Iron Company in 1901 and placed everything in the Dewey Trust Estate. The latest owner, the American Legion, purchased the property from Mr. Dewey's son.

Currently St. Stephen's Church is not in use, and it is feared that the owner will sell the building in order to dismantle it for the stone and other valuable parts. Thus there has begun a movement in the town to make it into a community center or to restore it as a historic spot connected with the iron-manufacturing center. St. Stephen's Church may once again be a focal point of civic pride and historical significance.

# 9. Major Bibliographical Reference

See Continuation Sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .13

Quadrangle name Chicora Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

	6	15	1	60	4	53	8	8	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

C 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

D 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

E 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

F 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

G 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

H 

Zone	Easting				Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at point at the intersection of Church Street and Pa. Route 68, thence South 152 feet, thence West 133 feet, thence North 160 feet, thence East 100 feet to point of beginning.

### 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 Mr. Robert H. Peters/ Brenda Reigle

organization Pennsylvania Historical Museum Comm. date August 29, 1979/February 24, 1980

street & number Rural Route 1/Box 1026 telephone 412-526-5410

city or town East Brady/Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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Bibliographical Data

Book

Western Pennsylvania Historical Survey. Guidebook to Historical Places in Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh, Pa. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1938.

Interviews

Junker, Bruce C. Written accounts of two personal interviews. (Patrick Bernard, June 23, 1963; Edward R. Dewey, June 29, 1963).

Sundry items of information gathered from people whose ancestors were affiliated with St. Stephen's Church.

Journals

Journal of the Second Annual Convention of the Pittsburgh Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church. May 21-23, 1867, pp. 45-46.

Journal of the Third Annual Convention of the Pittsburgh Diocese of the Protestant Episcopal Church. June 9-11, 1868, pp. 70-71.

Legal Document

Armstrong County Registry of Property Deeds. (An 1867 deed enabling the Bradys Bend Iron Company to sell and convey lots to various churches).

Local History

History of Armstrong County. "Bradys Bend Township." (Includes history of Bradys Bend Iron Company.)

Newspaper Articles

Carlin, Margie. "The Bygone Glory of Bradys Bend." Pittsburg

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

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Press, September 7, (Based of information given by Edward R. Dewey) p.4.

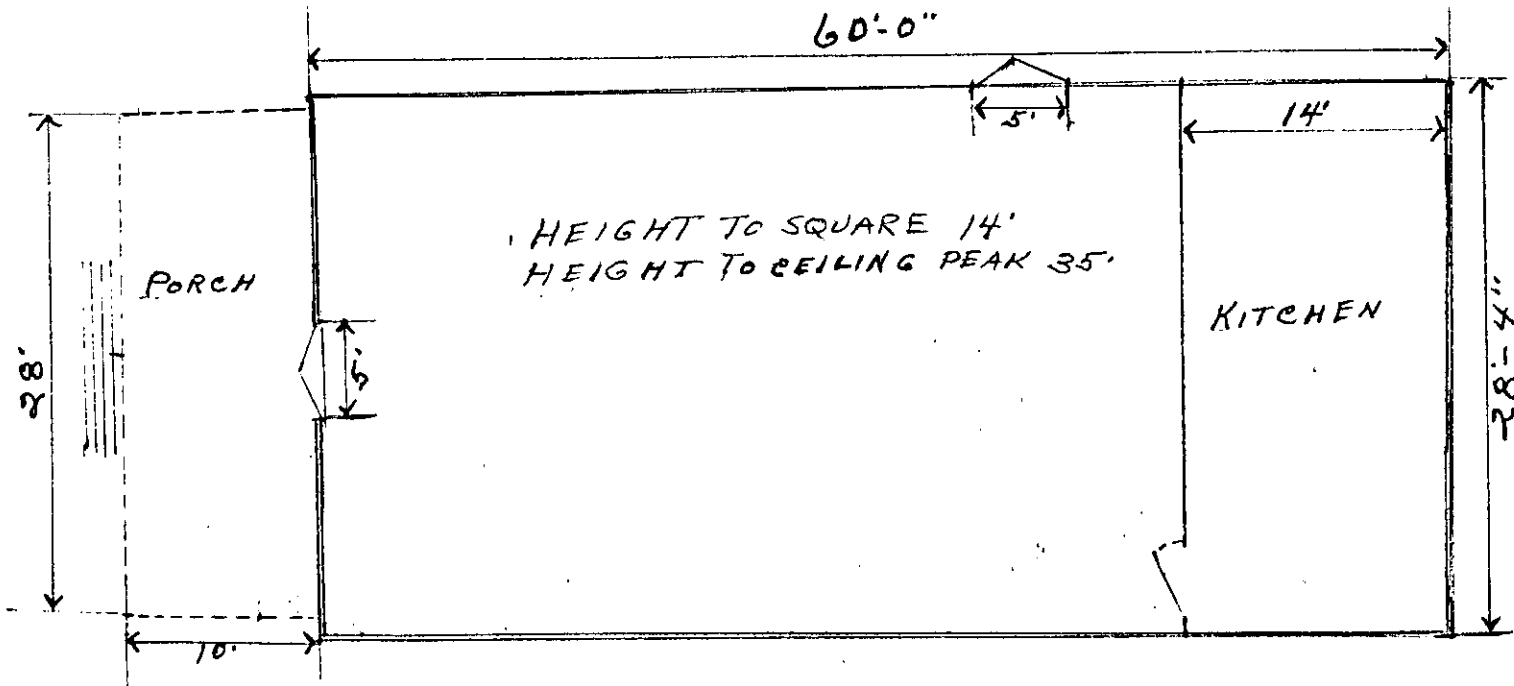
Cowan, John L." An Industrial Tragedy: History of the Rise and Fall of the Bradys Bend Iron Company, and the Desertion and Ruin of a once Thriving Little City, "The Pittsburg Post, December 29, 1901,p. 2.

St. Stephens Church ( Old Stone Church )  
Bradys Bend Twp. Armstrong Co. Pa.

Floor Plan  
Inside Dimensions.  
Scale 1" = 10'

August 30, 1979

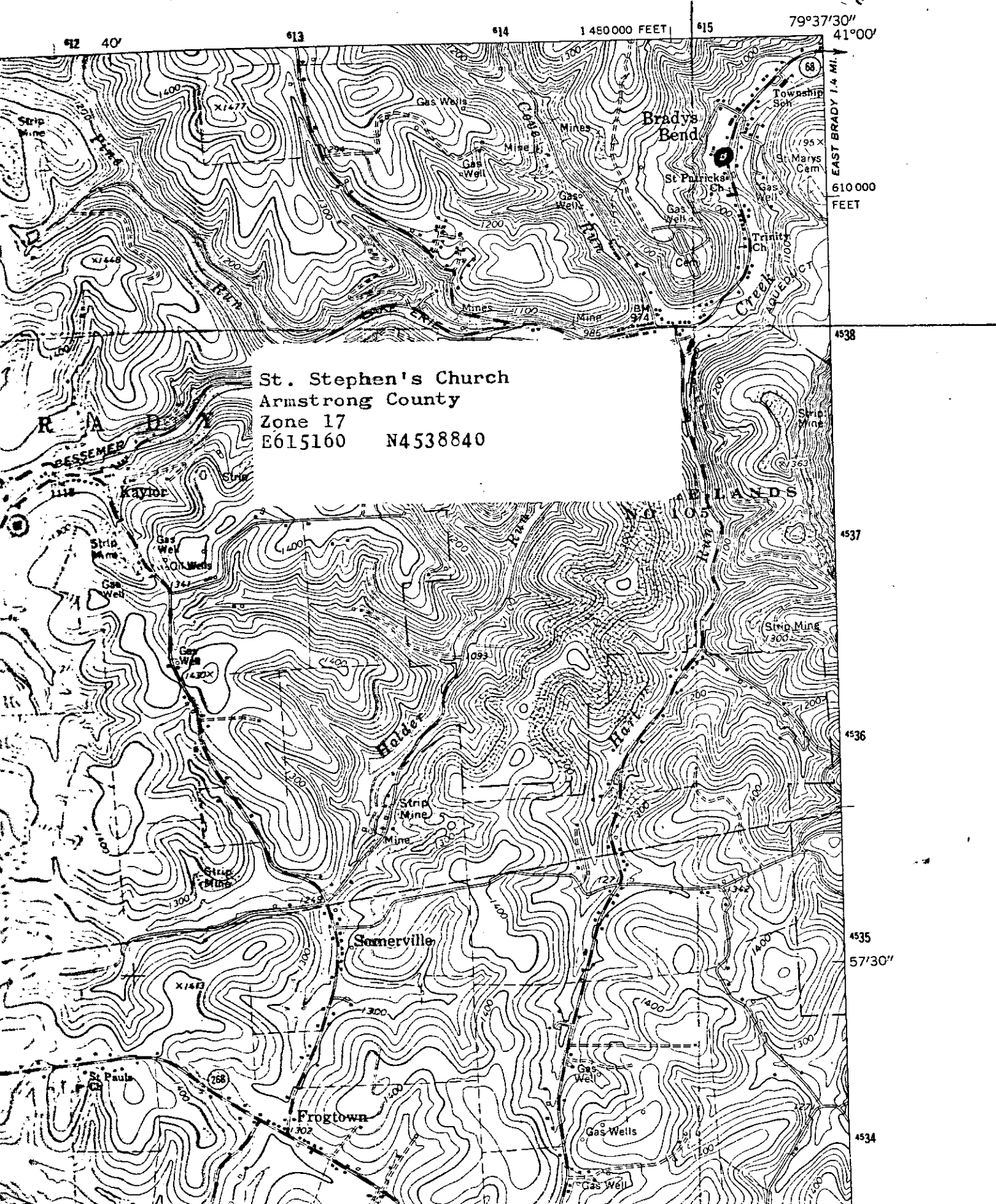
St. Stephen's Church  
Armstrong County  
Floor Plan





CHICORA QUADRANGLE  
PENNSYLVANIA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5086 11 SE  
(RIMERSBURG)



St. Stephen's Church  
Armstrong County  
Zone 17  
E615160 N4538840

REAR

ISLANDS

Somerville

Frogtown

610000 FEET  
EAST BRADY 1.4 MI.  
4538  
4537  
4536  
4535  
4534