

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. AA-402

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Reynolds Tavern

other

### 2. Location

street and number 6 Church Circle not for publication

city, town Annapolis vicinity

county Anne Arundel

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

name National Trust for Historic Preservation c/o Historic Annapolis, Inc.

street and number 6 Church Circle telephone

city, town Annapolis state MD zip code 21401

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse tax map and parcel Map 4Z Parcel 426

city, town Annapolis liber 3148 folio

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☒ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☒ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☒ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function		Resource Count	
district	public	agriculture	landscape	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	commerce/trade	recreation/culture	2	buildings
structure	both	defense	religion		sites
site		domestic	social		structures
object		education	transportation		objects
		funerary	work in progress	2	Total
		government	unknown		
		health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory	
		industry	other:		
				2	

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## 7. Description

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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Prepare both a one-paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Prominently sited at 6 Church Circle, Reynolds' Tavern is a two-and-a-half-story, five-bay brick structure built in 1747. The building is covered with a steep gambrel roof, clad with slate shingles, and is characterized by its quintessential Annapolis detailing, including massive slab brick end chimneys, and header bond brickwork. It is set upon a rubble sandstone foundation that rises to the original grade level, and features a projecting English bond water table, and a unique, four-course brick belt course which follows the segmental-arches of the first floor windows. A pedimented front entry porch dates to a ca. 1812 period of construction that included substantial interior modifications, while a two-story rear wing was added to the building around 1906. The interior of the center-passage, double-pile plan structure has been affected by several periods of construction, including a 1984 renovation, but retains much of its original 1747 detailing, as well as much of its ca. 1812 work--attributed to Annapolis cabinet maker John Shaw.

### Exterior Description:

The primary northeast elevation facing Church Circle is brick, laid in all header bond, above an English bond watertable, and is divided into five equal bays. The first story consists of a central entry door with flanking 9/9 windows, while the second story features five, symmetrically arranged 6/9 windows. The central entry is clearly defined by the ca. 1812 pedimented entry porch, which replaced an earlier wooden platform. The porch one of the alterations made by John Shaw to create a temporary banking facility, has a pedimented canopy with a flattened segmental arched soffit, resting on turned Tuscan columns and engaged pilasters. Two Aquia stone steps with scrolled ends are flanked by iron boot scrapers (one of which is broken) and the porch deck is enclosed by a Chinese Chippendale balustrade. The door itself, under a three-light transom, is a six-paneled replacement, occupying the place of an historic door that hung on three large wrought iron HL hinges, affixed to the inner north jamb of the entrance.

The 9/9 windows to either side are contemporary (1984) replacements with contemporary wood sills, set into square openings topped by segmental arches of gauged bricks. A four-course-wide belt course of header bricks separating the first and second story, follows the segmental arched window openings, thus forming a unique undulating belt course. The second story features five single windows with 6/9 replacement sash and wood replacement sills. A wood box cornice with a cyma reversa profile above an ovolo bed molding separates the second story from the gambrel roof and half-story above. Three shed-roof dormers with 6/6-replacement sash define the half-story.

The basement level features four 1984 replacement windows (two to either side of central entry) set within segmental-arched openings of rowlock bricks and protected by metal bars.

The southeast end wall is constructed of brick laid primarily in English bond, but with the middle segment of the wall in the eastern, front bay laid in all-header bond. The slab end chimney projects slightly from on-center of the wall. Openings are limited to a single 6/9 window on the rear bay of the second story, and two attic-level windows to either side of the chimney stack. An English basement is located towards the south corner of the

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building, exposing the rubble stone foundation wall at this elevation. Although the basement level door is a replacement, reached by a contemporary stair well, the opening itself appears original, based upon the brick work with its Queen closers.

The northwest elevation is only partially exposed, as the Farmer's National Bank building next to it was altered in 1936 to abut the tavern's chimney. The front bay of this end wall is brick laid primarily in English bond, but with header bond located on the center portion of the wall towards the front. The slab chimney is similarly brick, laid in a combination of header and English bond. Window openings here are confined to the attic level, while two blind arches relieve the mass of the slab chimney stack above the roofline.

The southwest elevation is dominated by the two-bay-wide rear ell, built ca. 1906. This rear ell is constructed of brick, laid in Flemish bond, and is covered with a gable roof with a parapet and interior end chimney built flush with the wall surface. Since the construction of this rear ell, only the southeast end bay of the main block remains exposed. The exposed bay of the main block is laid in all-header bond, and consists of a 6/6 window on the first story and a single 6/9 window on the second story. The first story window survives from the ca. 1812 period of alterations, while the 6/9 is a contemporary, period replacement. A pedimented porch with a flattened segmental-arch vault, moved from the center bay of this rear facade when the rear ell was added, is identical to the front entry porch and dates from the same ca. 1812 period of alterations.

The southwest end elevation of the 1906 wing is two bays wide, with single, 6/6 windows on both the first and second stories. The southeast side elevation of this rear wing is two bays deep with a single window and door located on the first story and a single window on the second story. The windows of the wing were built to match the earlier ca. 1812 windows on the main block, in terms of number of lights and sash configuration, just as the boxed wood cornice was designed to match the existing (and original) cornice. A contemporary brick deck with stairs and garden walls is located at the rear of the property.

### Outbuildings:

A brick, header-bond smokehouse covered with a pyramidal roof and dated to the original 1747 period of construction is located at the rear of the property, with a contemporary brick garage built abutting it.

### Interior Description:

Although it is not entirely clear how Reynolds' Tavern was originally configured, it historically offered a central-passage, three-room plan with corner fireplaces. During the circa 1812 period of alterations, certain fireplace configurations were altered, and new, Adamesque mantels were made to adorn them. The present corner fireplace in the NW rear room was altered in the late 19th century and fitted with a cast-iron fireplace.

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Over time, the various mantels were moved around. During the 1984 renovation, the mantels (mostly from ca. 1812) were returned to their ca. 1812 locations.

In 1906 when the two-story, rear wing was added to the building, the rectangular-plan structure was converted into a T-shaped building, and several windows were converted to doors.

The main, central entry to Reynolds' Tavern opens directly into the central stair hall with a stair located against the southeastern side wall. The front door features a six-paneled replacement door (ca. 1960) with a three-light transom from the ca. 1812 period of alterations.<sup>1</sup> The door frame is beaded around the opening and has an ovolo back band around the outside edge. The floors are covered with non-original, narrow oak floorboards and the walls feature raised panel wood wainscoting. A wood crown molding with a cyma reversa and cyma recta profile encircles the stair hall.

The main stair, from the original 1747 period of construction, is an open stringer stair which leads in two straight flights from the first floor to the attic, with a bi-level landing between, leading to the second floor of the main building and the 1906 wing. The stair features two turned balusters per tread and a molded handrail which ends in a scroll formed by a cluster of paired balusters. The stringer, above wide-board paneling features scrolled brackets. The second floor landing features two square newels with a baluster "in antis" and pilaster balusters on the inside face of the newels.

The passage opens on the left to the southern room which extends the full depth of the building and on the right to what was originally a two-room front and rear parlor (the wall between the rooms has been opened up, but is apparent). The southern room features a fireplace on center of the southeastern side wall and two windows in the front wall. Two doors, which were originally windows, are located on the back wall. One opens to the exterior and onto the ca. 1812 porch (moved from on-center at the time of the 1906 addition), while the other opens into the 1906 wing. The mantel in this south room, from ca. 1812, is applied to the large, projecting chimney breast and features side pilasters supporting an entablature with a narrow architrave and wide frieze board. The pilasters are reeded in a herringbone-type pattern, while the frieze features a central tablet and end blocks. The central tablet has a flowering bud on center with scallop shells filling in the four corners; the end blocks have an elliptical reeded rosette. The cornice has a dentil course and a projecting mantel shelf above.

The northeast front parlor, originally offering a corner fireplace, now features a fireplace on center of the northwest wall. The ca. 1812 Adamesque mantel with pilasters supporting a narrow architrave and wide frieze had been in the rear room, and was returned to this location during the 1984 renovation. The pilasters are reeded and the frieze features two corner blocks with rosettes and a central tablet with a rosette on center. The

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<sup>1</sup> The replacement door was apparently based upon the original door that survives and is located in storage. The door originally swung in, but now opens out for safety code reasons.

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bed molding consists of an enriched cavetto and ornate dentils with a mantel shelf above. The mantel breaks out over the central tablet and end blocks.

The northwest rear parlor retains its corner fireplace and a mantel that appears to be the product of two phases of construction. The crossetted fireplace surround with interior bead and ovolo back band may be the original 18th-century mantel, while the frieze board and complex mantel shelf were probably a ca. 1812 addition. The frieze features a central, unornamented tablet and fluted end blocks. This mantel had been moved, but was returned to this location as part of the 1984 renovation. This rear parlor also features an 18th-century corner cupboard with an arched opening with shelving.<sup>2</sup> Fluted pilasters frame the arched opening. Shelves below the arched opening are enclosed by two solid raised panel doors. The rear wall of the room has a door leading into the 1906 wing and a 1984 (18th-century period replacement) window.

The second floor of Reynolds Tavern has a stair landing with two rooms to either side and a small office occupying the center, front bay. The two front rooms have fireplaces located on center of their side walls and massive summer beams running across the room on center of the ceiling; the rear rooms have no fireplaces. The floors on this level are the original random-width wide floorboards, while the walls feature a wide wood chair rail with beading on the top and bottom. The doors opening into the front and rear rooms are located side-by-side, and retain their original 18th-century trim with an interior bead and a deep back band. All of the doors on the second floor have two raised panels.

The southeastern front room has a wide summer beam running the width of the room, a fireplace on center with a closet to one side, wide, random-width floorboards, a bold ogee cornice, and a plain chair rail with no bead. The mantel is relatively simple with a plain surround and a molded mantel shelf. A sort of overmantel is created by wood trim defining the edges and cornice of the plastered chimney breast and thereby forming a central panel. The closet features a two-paneled door with replacement hardware.

The southwestern rear room is separated from the front room by a wide, board partition wall with beading. A door on the back wall of this room leads to the 1906 addition, while a bathroom dates from an even later period of construction.

On the northeastern side, the front room is similarly defined by a wide summer beam running across the room, and by the fireplace on center, and closets to either side. The mantel in this room consists simply of a molded mantel shelf over the fireplace opening, and a similar overmantel treatment. The closet doors are four-panel replacements.

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<sup>2</sup> According to the Historic Structures Report, this cupboard is 18th-century, but may have been moved from elsewhere.

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The attic level consists of a large room on the southern side of the building, a stair landing and a small room in the center, and transverse corridor with two rooms (front and back) to either side on the northern side. The large room on the southern end has been extensively renovated, but retains a late 19th-century painted stone mantel on center of the southern side wall. The chimney breast has its original plaster finish exposed with remnants of a painted scene, and protected behind a plexiglass case.

The transverse corridor is a narrow hall of board partition walls and two-paneled doors leading into the front and rear rooms. The front and rear rooms are relatively unadorned with board partition walls on the inside wall and plaster walls on the exterior walls. The dormer windows in the gambrel roof light the front and rear walls of the front and rear rooms, respectively.

The basement level of the building is reached by a stair under the main stair, and is divided into two rooms--the tavern room and the hatmaker's shop (now equipped with a bar). The stair leading down is an enclosed, straight-flight stair with an original railing pegged into square banisters at the top and bottom. The stair passes under a large, beaded summer beam. Although renovated to accommodate a bar, the southern room features exposed ceiling beams, plaster walls, a brick-lined floor, and an original 18th-century cupboard that made use of a structural relieving arch.

The tavern room features exposed stone walls, brick-lined floors, and a large fireplace with a segmental arched opening, and a corner relieving arch. The back wall of the room has replacement wood paneling.

## 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

**Significance dates** ca. 1747-1936 **Architect** Unknown

**Specific dates** ca. 1747-1812; 1812-1936 **Builder** Unknown

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

William Reynolds had the Georgian style building at 6 Church Circle constructed circa 1747 as a dwelling and hat shop. This prominently sited brick building, located on the Glebe Lands of St. Anne's Parish, subsequently served as a tavern, bank, city library, and hotel. During its tenure as the *Beaver and Lac'd Hat* tavern in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the building hosted meetings of the Corporation of the City of Annapolis and the Mayor's Court. In 1812, the building was conveyed to the newly established Farmers Bank of Maryland, the first bank in institutions chartered in Annapolis and the first bank in the nation to pay interest on deposits. The former tavern was used first as a banking hall, and then as the home of the Cashier of the Bank for nearly 125 years. Threatened with demolition, the building was purchased in 1936 by prominent members of Annapolis preservation society for use as the city library. In 1974, Reynolds Tavern was transferred to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and by the 1980s, had returned to one of its original uses as a tavern. The property also includes a rare 18<sup>th</sup> century brick smokehouse.

### Site and Building History

James Stoddert surveyed the property on which Reynolds Tavern stands in 1718. Stoddert's map indicates the three lots (59, 60, and 61) were owned by St. Anne's Parish, and remained unimproved under their custody. According to a 1742 act of Assembly, the Parish was given permission to lease the lots for twenty-one years to "such persons as might be willing and desirous to receive such Lease of the Lots aforesaid, or some of them and to Build on and otherwise improve the same."<sup>3</sup> A second act of Assembly was granted in 1747 that extended the period of the lease to sixty-three years with an annual fee of four pounds sterling. This second act was needed, as the Parish had been unable to lease the property, because the twenty-one year lease was not considered profitable by prospective investors. With the provisions of the new act, the Parish successfully leased all three lots within months.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Christian Steiner, ed. *Archives of Maryland, Volume XLII: Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland Volume 20, 1740 to 1744*. (Baltimore, MD: Maryland Historical Society, 1923), p. 432.

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Daniel Dulany leased lot 59, while lots 60 and 61 in Parcel 5 were leased to William Reynolds. The westernmost portion of lot 61, "whereon is standing a stone house, formerly the prison," was leased to Thomas King.<sup>4</sup> Prior to leasing the property from the Parish, Reynolds maintained a shop in Annapolis where he sold "sundry European and India goods, spices, confections, spirits, and other miscellaneous merchandise."<sup>5</sup> In 1747, Reynolds' was noted in the *Gazette* as a hatter, and later as a public house keeper. Reynolds did not advertise that he maintained a tavern in his home on Church Circle; however, Mary Fonnereau appears to have placed a public notice announcing that she operated an ordinary on the property leased previously to Reynolds. The notice was placed November 13, 1755:

Having Rented Mr. William Reynolds' House, over against the Church (except a small part of which he has reserved for his own use) hereby gives Notice, That she has taken out License to keep a Tavern; And all Gentlemen may there have good Entertainment, for themselves, Servants, or Horses; the House being large and very well contrived, with a Good Number of Rooms for different Companies; She has good Wines, and other Liquors, and Gentlemen may depend on good Attendance, and civil Treatment for their humble servant, Mary Fonnereau.<sup>6</sup>

Fonnereau was granted a license "to keep an Inn or Ordinary in the Dwelling House of William Reynolds" on November 11, 1755.<sup>7</sup> This license and advertisement, coupled with the lease granted to Reynolds by the Parish indicates that the building presently standing at 6 Church Circle was constructed between 1747 and 1755. The sublease between Reynolds and Fonnereau was renewed in 1756. When Fonnereau's lease expired in 1757 William Reynolds applied for a license to keep a tavern in "his dwelling house."<sup>8</sup> Between 1760 and 1768, the Corporation of the City of Annapolis held meetings in the tavern. In addition, the Mayor's Court sat nine times for a total of thirty-two days in the building.<sup>9</sup> Reynolds appears to have renewed the tavern lease each year until 1767. An advertisement in the *Maryland Gazette* documents that Reynolds named his tavern the *Beaver and Lac'd Hat*.<sup>10</sup> By law, the tavern had to provide lodging with six beds available at the rate of six pence per night.

Deeply in debt, Reynolds advertised in the *Maryland Gazette* that "As I am now more at Leisure, than when kept Public-House, I purpose to give more Attention to the Hatmaking Business; My former Customers, and others, may be supplied with Hats of any Sort..."<sup>11</sup> From 1770 until 1777, Reynolds employed two apprentices for his hat making shop. His will was probated in 1777, and after monetary bequests, "all the rest and residue of

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<sup>4</sup> Vestry Minutes of St. Anne's Parish, vol. 1, folio 295.

<sup>5</sup> Advertisements in *Maryland Gazette*, 1745-1751.

<sup>6</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, "Addendum to Reynolds Tavern," MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>7</sup> Anne Arundel County Court Judgments, ISB #3, folios 335-336.

<sup>8</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, "Addendum to Reynolds Tavern," MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>9</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, "Addendum to Reynolds Tavern," MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>10</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, August 29, 1765.

<sup>11</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, "Addendum to Reynolds Tavern," MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.



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[his] present estate both real and Personal” were devised to his second wife, Mary, and daughter Margaret Reynolds’ estate was valued at 2,440 pounds, with the house and leased lot valued at 1,200 pounds. The inventory lists nineteen rooms, including several passages, parlors, halls, kitchen, dining room, and hatter’s shop. During this period, the first addition appears to have been constructed on the north elevation of the building. This circa 1777 ballroom wing was noted in the inventory as the “new room in the yard.” On August 30, 1781, Mary Reynolds offered for lease “the large and commodious house, formerly the dwelling house of William Reynolds, well calculated for a tavern or private gentleman’s family, as there is every convenience for either rent or lease.”<sup>12</sup> Following the death of Mary Reynolds sometime before 1783, the property was conveyed to her daughter, Margaret Reynolds, and her husband, Alexander Trueman.

Alexander Trueman advertised a boarding house “in a convenient situation opposite the Church Circle, for the reception of boarders and lodgers...of the genteelst accommodation, and the strictest endeavors to please.”<sup>13</sup> Less than a year later, Trueman offered for rent the “very large, elegant, and convenient house, fit for public or private business.”<sup>14</sup> Cornelius Mills subleased the property from Trueman two months later, advertising that he had opened a boarding house “in a most elegant manner,” in “that commodious house opposite the Church Circle... formerly occupied by Major Alexander Trueman.”<sup>15</sup>

In 1789, Trueman leased the property to Deborah Reynolds, granddaughter of William Reynolds. Simultaneously, he deeded the residue of his real property to Gabriel Duvall in trust. A prominent lawyer and statesman, Duvall was charged with selling the land and paying Trueman’s many debts. In 1794, two years after Trueman had been killed by Indians while in the Ohio Valley, a Chancery Court case was brought against Duvall and William Dent Beall (a creditor of Trueman) by the Corporation of the City of Annapolis. The case was related to Trueman’s many debts, which included the satisfaction of William Reynolds’ legacies, payment of debt to the State of Maryland, payment of debts due to William Dent Beall, and payment of debts to the City Corporation. The Corporation was distressed because the property was not sold, yet the “interest on the debt [was] daily increasing and the property and improvements [were] decaying and becoming less valuable...”<sup>16</sup> Duvall testified that he had endeavored a number of times to execute the trust by selling the property, but had “never been offered for any of the said property...any price which was in his opinion nearly equal to the value of the property and therefore he deemed it most advantageous to the creditors to delay the sale...”<sup>17</sup> Duvall stated that “the said house and lot [had] been occupied by Mrs. Reynolds and her two daughters by direction of said Trueman until late in the year 1791 and when they left it, it was rented out by [Duvall] until the present

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<sup>12</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>13</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>14</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>15</sup> *Maryland Gazette*, March 23, 1786 and June 29, 1786.

<sup>16</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>17</sup> Chancery Court Record, Liber 29, Folio 14.

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time and the improvements were much out of repair when the same was rented.”<sup>18</sup> After 1791, the property was leased to William Goldsmith, city councilman and sheriff of Annapolis in the 1780s. Goldsmith, like Reynolds allowed the City Corporation to meet in the tavern. John Davidson bought the lease for 1,020 pounds several months after the Chancery Court case commenced. Davidson was a prominent member of Annapolis society serving as collector of the port in the early 1790s, register of the free School, purveyor of arms for the Revolutionary Army, and city councilman. Upon his death in 1794, Eleanor Davidson received title to the lease, and appears to have lived in the dwelling sometime after 1794 until 1812. Title of the property was confirmed in 1798. The Federal Direct Tax of 1798 charged Davidson with a brick house (30 by 24), one frame stable (16 by 12), and a smokehouse (10 by 8), valued at \$1,200. On February 3, 1812, Eleanor Davidson sold the lease and brick dwelling to the President, Directors, and Company of the Farmers Bank of Maryland for \$3,600. Six years later, St. Anne’s Parish sold lots 60 and 61 to the bank for \$350.

The Farmers Bank of Maryland, incorporated in 1804, was one of the first four banking institutions chartered in the state, and the first in Annapolis. As documented in “Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide,” the bank was formed specifically for the purpose of supporting agricultural production, complementing the Baltimore banks that primarily were involved with commercial and industrial activities. “Recognizing that farmers often had few assets besides land, Farmers Bank was the first in the state to accept real property as security for loans. The bank also was the first in the nation to pay interest on deposits.”<sup>19</sup>

Soon after obtaining the lease, the financial institution decided the former tavern was not suitable as the home of a bank. Accordingly, they “took up the subject relative to the expediency of building a Banking House.”<sup>20</sup> A building committee was appointed to contract John Shaw (1745-1829) to construct a structure adjacent to the tavern and renovate the tavern for use as a dwelling. John Shaw was born in Glasgow on April 25, 1745, immigrating to Annapolis by 1763. The son of a cabinetmaker, Shaw is believed to have been apprenticed in the craft he would one day be widely known for. The first accounts of Shaw working in Annapolis appear in the 1768 ledgers of James Brice, who was erecting an imposing house on East Street. Shaw’s expertise as cabinetmaker allowed him to expand his trade to include the traditional sideline of undertaking and retailing of sundry goods and foodstuffs. He served the community by holding numerous public offices, including state armorer (1777-1819), assessor, official fire engine keeper, City Councilman (1801-1812), city commissioner in 1803, and was elected to the legislature in 1806. In 1783, with the relocation of the Continental Congress to Annapolis, Shaw was charged with producing two flags to fly over the State House. As early as 1791, Shaw worked as chief mechanic, maintenance supervisor, and carpenter for the State House. A position he maintained until the 1810s, Shaw was responsible for completing construction of the State House, which included interior repairs, construction of

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<sup>18</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>19</sup> Marcia M. Miller and Orlando Ridout V, editors, *Architecture in Annapolis: A Field Guide*. (Crownsville, MD: Maryland Historical Trust, 1998), p. 72.

<sup>20</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

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circular balustrade behind the seats of the Senate Chamber, as well as repairing desks and constructing benches and chairs. Additionally, the cabinetmaker was responsible for repairing the Chancery Office, making new feet for the chairs, providing hinges, banisters, glass, scantling and planks, as well as new blinds and carpet in the Senate Chamber. Shaw is most notably recognized for overseeing the completion of the dome in 1793 and his design of the 1798 House of Delegates Chamber.<sup>21</sup>

The contract between John Shaw and the Bank outlined that the building was “to be made on the plan laid before the Directors, but subject to such alterations as maybe directed by a committee to be appointed by the Board, under whose direction in general the said John Shaw is to act.”<sup>22</sup> Shaw was to purchase the material and employ, superintend, and direct all of the workmen, “so as not to make the Bank responsible for the same.”<sup>23</sup> After the new building was completed at 5 Church Circle, Reynolds Tavern became the home of the Cashier of the Bank, a prominent position in the bank. Reynolds Tavern functioned as the home of the cashier until 1925, serving as the home of at least six bank cashiers. These include such prominent Annapolitans as Jonathan Pinkney, Samuel Maynard, Thomas Franklin, Richard Conman, and Nicholas Hammond. The former tavern was the home of L. Dorsey Gassaway during his tenure as cashier and bank president. During this period, about 1906, the rear ell was added to the main block and several interior alterations were done.

After the death of Gassaway in 1935, the former tavern stood vacant for nearly two years. Standard Oil Company envisioned the abandoned property as the ideal site of a gasoline filling station, and proposed to buy it from the Farmer's National Bank for \$20,000. The construction of the filling station would have required the demolition of the circa 1747 tavern, which had been a landmark of colonial Annapolis for nearly two hundred years. This proposal prompted many prominent Annapolitans led by Elmer M. Jackson, Jr. to devise a plan to purchase the tavern from the bank and use the building in a public capacity. Using a trust fund dedicated for this purpose, the building became the home of the Public Library Association of Annapolis in 1936. The \$17,500 money available in the trust fund was the residue of the unused assets of the Female Orphan Society of the City of Annapolis. The Library Association of Annapolis used the former tavern just as office space beginning in 1965, when the Anne Arundel County Library was constructed on West Street. The association outgrew Reynolds Tavern by the mid-1970s. Aware of the building's architectural and historical significance the library association transferred title of the property in September 1974 to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the organization chartered by the U.S. Congress to further preservation in America. The Trust subsequently leased the tavern for 99 years to Historic Annapolis, Inc., with the concurrence of the Library board. The Maryland Historical Trust was granted an easement on Reynolds Tavern in 1974.

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<sup>21</sup> Morris L. Radoff, *The State House At Annapolis*, Publication No. 17, (Annapolis, MD: The Hall of Records Commission, Department of General Services, State of Maryland, 1972).

<sup>22</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

<sup>23</sup> Historic American Buildings Survey, “Addendum to Reynolds Tavern,” MD-248. Edited by Eleni Silverman, July 1975.

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In the 1980s, Paul M. Pearson subleased the former tavern for use as a hotel with a 55-seat restaurant on the ground floor. The building, carefully renovated, was the fifth hotel open by Pearson and his associates (Historic Inns of Annapolis). By 1990, the company was bankrupt, forcing the tavern to close. A restaurant appropriately named Reynolds Tavern opened in the building in the mid-1990s, closing in 1999. The building is presently vacant.

### Chain of Title

- 1694: Lot 61 surveyed for Vestry of St. Anne's Parish  
Archives of Maryland XIX, Folio 110
- September 1, 1747: Vestry of St. Anne's Parish leased part of Lot 61 and all of Lot 60 to William Reynolds for 63 years  
Archives of Maryland XLII, Folio 432  
Provincial Court Records  
Liber A Folio 297
- April 3, 1777: William Reynolds devised lease to Mary and Margaret Reynolds  
Will Records  
Liber EV 1, 33 Folio 2
- June 15, 1789: Alexander Trueman, husband of Margaret Reynolds, sold lease to Deborah Reynolds, portion of Lot 60  
Land Records of Anne Arundel County  
Liber NH 4 Folio 270  
Liber NH 7 Folio 325
- June 15, 1789: Alexander Trueman, husband of Margaret Reynolds, sold lease to Gabriel Duvall portion of Lot 60  
General Court of the Western Shore  
Liber JG 1 Folio 466
- April 2, 1794: Gabriel Duvall sold lease to John Davidson, portion of property  
Chancery Court Records  
Liber 29 Folio 19

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August 2, 1798:	John Davidson devised lease to Eleanor Davidson Land Records of Anne Arundel County Liber NH 9 Folio 275
April 22, 1811:	St. Anne's Parish renewal of lease to Eleanor Davidson General Court of the Western Shore Liber JG 7 Folio 422
February 3, 1812:	Eleanor Davidson sold lease and building to Farmers Bank of Maryland, portion of property General Court of the Western Shore Liber JG 7 Folio 531
July 16, 1818:	St. Anne's Parish sold property to Farmers Bank of Maryland, portion of property leased from Davidson Land Records of Anne Arundel County Liber WSG 6 Folio 31
January 31, 1936:	Farmers Bank of Maryland sold to Public Library Association of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Land Records of Anne Arundel County Liber FAM 148 Folio 10
September 19, 1974:	Public Library Association of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County to National Trust for Historic Preservation Land Records of Anne Arundel County Liber 2721 Folio 202
December 18, 1974:	National Trust for Historic Preservation leased to Historic Annapolis Inc. Land Records of Anne Arundel County Liber 3148 Folio 6

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Reynolds Tavern, 6 Church Circle, Annapolis  
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### HISTORIC CONTEXT:

#### MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period(s): Rural Agrarian Intensification (1680-1815)  
Agricultural-Industrial Transition (1815-1870)  
Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930)  
Modern Period (1930-present)

Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning  
Commerce

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Town

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): COMMERCE/TRADE/Tavern

Known Design Source: Unknown

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Anne Arundel County Court Judgments, ISB #3, folios 335-336.

Baker, Mrs. Robert L. "Reynolds Tavern, National Register of Historic Places – Nomination Form," April 1975. (Not submitted to the National Register).

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of project area less than one acre

Acreage surveyed less than one acre

Quadrangle name Annapolis, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

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## Verbal boundary description and justification

The building at 6 Church Circle has been associated with Parcel 426, Grid 15 on Map 4Z since its construction in circa 1747.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title L. Trieschmann and K. Williams, Architectural Historians

organization EHT Traceries, Inc.

street & number 5420 Western Avenue

city or town Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815

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The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties 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  
DHCD/DHCP  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032  
410-514-7600

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Historic American Building Survey, "Reynolds Tavern," MD-248. Blue Worksheet, Prepared by Howear Norman Ingle, August 1964 and updated by Anthony Oliver James, July 1975.

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*Maryland Gazette*, August 29, 1765.

*Maryland Gazette*, March 23, 1786 and June 29, 1786.

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Vestry Minutes of St. Anne's Parish, vol. 1, folio 295.