

Architectural Inventory Form

**Official Eligibility Determination
(OAHF use only)**

OAHF1403

Rev. 9/98

Date _____ Initials _____

- Determined Eligible – National Register
- Determined Not Eligible – National Register
- Determined Eligible – State Register
- Determine Not Eligible – State Register
- Need Data
- Contributes to eligible National Register District
- Noncontributing to eligible National Register District



I. IDENTIFICATION

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Resource number: | 5ST.130.7 | Parcel number(s): |
| 2. Temporary resource number: | N/A | |
| 3. County: | Summit | |
| 4. City: | Breckenridge | |
| 5. Historic Building Name: | St. Mary's Church | |
| 6. Current Building Name: | St. Mary's Church | |
| 7. Building Address: | 109 S. French Street | |
| 8. Owner Name: | Archdiocese of Denver | |
| Owner Organization: | | |
| Owner Address: | 1300 S. Steele Street | |
| | Denver, CO 80210 | |

44. National Register eligibility field assessment:	Eligible
Local landmark eligibility field assessment:	Eligible

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II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **6th** Township: **6S** Range: **77W**
NW ¼ of NW ¼ of SE ¼ of SW ¼ of Section 31
10. UTM reference
 Zone: **13** **410198 mE** **4370869 mN**
11. USGS quad name: **Breckenridge, Colorado**
 Year: **1970; photorevised 1987** Map scale: **7.5**
12. Lot(s): **10-15; Block 11**
 Addition: **Abbett Addition** Year of addition: **1880**
13. Boundary description and justification:
This legally defined parcel encompasses but does not exceed the land historically associated with this property.
 Metes and bounds?: Describe:

III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Irregular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **122' N-S by 74' E-W overall dimensions (the original church measures 30' N-S by 48' E-W)**
16. Number of stories: **1 1/2**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Wood/ Horizontal Siding**
18. Roof configuration: **Gabled Roof/ Front Gabled Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Metal Roof**
 Other roof materials:
20. Special features: **Porch**
Window/ Stained Glass
Roof Treatment/ Finial (Belfry with a cross motif finial)
21. General architectural description:
Built in 1881 at the corner of High Street and Washington Avenue, and moved to this location in 1890, the historic St. Mary's Church is a tall 1½-story wood frame building which measures 30' N-S (across) by 48' E-W (deep). It has painted white horizontal exterior wood siding, and a steeply-pitched front-gable roof covered with red corrugated metal roofing material. The eaves are boxed with painted white and grey wood trim. A large cross-gabled belfry is located at the east (front) end of the roof ridge. This prominent architectural feature has painted white variegated wood shingle exterior wall cladding, and its small cross gabled roof is covered with wood shingles. A painted white wooden cross extends above the roof of the belfry. The church features a symmetrical façade on the east elevation. Here, a set of paired, painted grey, wood-paneled doors are located beneath a gothic-arched transom window. A large stained glass oculus window is then centered above the entry doors in the upper gable end. The entry doors are also flanked on either side by a 4/4 double-hung sash window with stained glass lights. The doors lead into the church from a 6' by 5', 6-step, concrete front porch with a black pipe railing. A 1980 Breckenridge Centennial plaque affixed to the façade wall is inscribed with the following text:

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THIS PROPERTY HAS BEEN PLACED
ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF
HISTORIC PLACES

ST. MARY'S WAS BUILT IN 1881 &
MOVED FROM WASHINGTON AND HIGH
BY 1890; BELL & BELFRY ADDED 1899

Four 4/4 double-hung sash, gothic-arched windows penetrate the church's north (side) elevation, and four identical windows are located directly opposite on the south elevation. The church's west (rear) elevation is covered by an older, 26' by 30', single-story shed-roofed addition. This addition is supported by a low concrete foundation, and its walls are clad with painted grey horizontal wood siding, with painted white 1" by 4" corner boards. Its shed roof is covered with corrugated metal roofing material. A painted white solid wood door, and a 1x1 horizontal sliding window are both located on the addition's west elevation.

22. Architectural style: **Late Victorian/ Carpenter Gothic**
Building type: **N/A**
23. Landscape or special setting features: **St. Mary's Church is located on the west side of South French Street, in the block between Lincoln and Washington Avenues, in the heart of the Breckenridge Historic District. The new 1995 church and rectory abuts the historic church building on its south elevation. The historic church rectory residence is located south of the new church, at the corner of French Street and Washington Avenue.**

1995 St. Mary's Church

A new (1995) St. Mary's Church is located to the south of the historic St. Mary's Church, and the two church buildings are joined by a connector element. The 1995 church is supported by a concrete foundation, and its exterior walls are clad with painted grey horizontal wood siding, with painted white 1" by 4" corner boards. The 1995 church is covered by a prominent gabled roof, with red metal roofing material. A set of paired, painted grey, wood-paneled doors are located beneath a stained glass window on the symmetrical east elevation (façade). A plaque affixed to the façade wall states:

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
ERECTED 1995

A very large, vertically-oriented, stained glass window is centered on the west (rear) elevation. Two other large, vertically-oriented, stained-glass windows penetrate the south elevation. Three painted white solid wood service entry doors are located on the west elevation. Another painted white solid wood door provides access into the rectory on the east elevation. The rectory's east elevation is also penetrated by two sets of paired single-light casement windows.

24. Associated buildings, features or objects: **N/A**

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ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

25. Dates of construction: Estimate: Actual: 1881, 1995
 Source of information: Breckenridge *Daily Journal*, October 12, 1881; builder's plaque.
26. Architect: Unknown
 Source of information: N/A
27. Builder: Unknown
 Source of information N/A
28. Original owner: Catholic Missions of Colorado
 Source of information: Gilland, Mary Ellen. *Century of Faith*. Breckenridge: St. Mary's Church, 1981.

29. Construction history:

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church was built at the corner of High Street and Washington Avenue in 1881. An article regarding the church's construction appeared in the Breckenridge Daily Journal on October 12, 1881. The church was then moved to this location in 1890. According to a 1980 Breckenridge Centennial plaque, the belfry was added in 1899. The 1890 Sanborn Insurance map indicates that some form of a rear addition was in existence at that time. The addition was apparently enlarged, or replaced by a larger addition. In 1995, a new St. Mary's Church was built to the south of the historic church, and the two church buildings were joined by a connector element.

30. Original location: No Moved: Yes Date of move(s): 1890

IV. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): Religion/ Church
32. Intermediate use(s): Religion Church
33. Current use(s): Religion/ Church
34. Site type(s): Catholic Church

35. Historical background:

The history of St. Mary's Church began with the baptism of Helen Durrir by Joseph Projectus Machebeuf, on September 3, 1861, in Galena Gulch, near Breckenridge. Machebeuf was the first priest of Colorado and, later, became the first Bishop of Denver. The first record of Catholic activity in Breckenridge is 1867 when the Bishop Machebeuf said Mass. The collection was \$25.00.

This event occurred on Machebeuf's ninth visit to the Blue River missions. He made these visits over a period of ten years. By 1871 Father John B. Raverdy, a newly ordained priest from France, who accompanied Bishop Machebeuf to Colorado in 1860, had learned sufficient English to minister to the American and Irish miners in the Blue River Diggings.

Father Henry Robinson, who in 1872 became the first priest ordained in Colorado, was assigned to the missions of the Upper Arkansas and the Blue River in 1874 and served until 1878. The first priest assigned to Breckenridge was Father Thomas M. Cahill in 1880. Father Cahill built the Catholic church, which is now St. Mary's, in 1881. Bishop Machebeuf probably designed it, as he did many other churches. The building was originally constructed on the southeast corner of Washington Avenue and High Street. It was built in twelve days and was "a mere shell or skeleton"

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with no interior finishes. At first, planks on nail kegs provided the seating, and there was little provision for warmth against winter's cold.

Cahill serviced a large territory, visiting mining towns and camps in Summit and Park counties. Services were held monthly in the Breckenridge church. The demanding work wore him down, and he returned to Ireland in May of 1882. His successor was Father James E. Chapuis. In Breckenridge, the Altar Society raised funds to furnish the church. St. Edward's in Montezuma and Our Lady of the Snows at Robinson were built at this same time. In 1886, German Benedictines fathers came and stayed six years. At the same time, Benedictine sisters from Chicago established St. Gertrude's School and Convent and St. Joseph's Hospital in Breckenridge. But the mining boom ended, and the Benedictines departed for Canon City.

Father Cornelius Alger, who, eventually, became overwhelmed by the hardships of mountain life and financial worries, succeeded them. His collections did not cover his travel expenses. His missions included Climax, Decatur, Dillon, Drake, Estabrook, Frisco, Garo, Grant, Hall Valley, Horse Shoe, Jefferson, King, London Mine, Webster, and Wheeler in Summit and Park counties. He occasionally serviced a few Eagle County towns, such as Red Cliff, and when the Denver, South Park, Pacific Railroad arrived in 1882, he served its stations as well.

The St. Mary's Church received its first coat of paint in 1888, and the lots for the present location of the church were purchased July 26, 1890. The building was moved that same year. Father Alger departed in 1893, and Father D. A. O'Begley became his successor. He stayed less than a year. After that a number of priests' names can be found in the old record books. They are Father J. Riordan, July 1894-1896; Father M. C. Brennan, May, 1896-September, 1896; Father Joseph Scheurrer, 1896-February 1898; and Father Patrick Mee, May 22, 1898-August 11, 1898.

Father Dionysius C. Robertson arrived to lead the Catholics in September of 1898. Robertson immediately began improving the hastily constructed church, building a new floor and adding interior wall decorations. The bell tower and the bell were added in 1899. The Summit County Journal described the bell as "sweet toned to draw sinners to worship." A number of fundraisers were held with entertainment in which all faiths joined. The congregation carried on a continuous round of fairs, balls, fetes, parties, and theological lectures for the community. A spirit of ecumenism prevailed.

In 1902, Father J. C. McCourt, brother of the renowned Baby Doe, wife of Leadville's Silver King, H.A.W. Tabor, was here briefly. Father Robertson and Father McCourt were beloved not only by their parishioners, but all of Breckenridge. Both died early in life, in 1905.

The priests shared in the lives of their people and sadly buried miners, young wives, infants, and children, who were victims of poor sanitation, undernourishment, exposure to the bitter mountain weather, mine accidents, and silicosis, which caused heart and lung disorders.

More than fifty priests have served the parish in over a hundred and twenty-five years. After mining declined and the population shrank, Breckenridge became a mission of Annunciation Parish in Leadville. For fifty years the church building was only occasionally used.

Father John Slattery reopened St. Mary's in 1966, revived spiritual life, and earned the esteem of the entire community in his two-year tenure. In 1975, Our Lady of Peace, a multipurpose building, was erected in Dillon Valley, and in 1977 a new rectory was built in Frisco, which still serves as a parish center.

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36. Sources of information:

Breckenridge Bulletin. October 20, 1899

Breckenridge Daily Journal. October 12, 1881; July 13, 1882; August 18, 1994;
July 3, 1886

Fiestler, Mark. *Blasted Beloved Breckenridge*. Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1973

Gilliland, Mary Ellen. *Century of Faith*. Breckenridge: St. Mary's Church, 1981

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, dated August 1886, October 1890, January 1896, November 1902, and August 1914

Summit County Journal. July 22, 1899

V. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation: Yes No Date of designation: **N/A**

Designating authority: **N/A**

38. Applicable National Register criteria:

- A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;
 - B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
 - C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
 - D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.
- Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).
Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

39. Area(s) of significance: **Architecture**

40. Period of significance: **1881; 1890; 1995**

41. Level of significance: National: State: Local:

42. Statement of significance:

This property is historically significant for its early associations with Breckenridge's social and cultural development, due to its long sustained use as the community's Catholic Church. The church building is also architecturally significant for its Gothic style of architecture. The original church building's level of significance may well be to the extent that it would qualify for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and in the State Register of Historic Properties. It should also be considered eligible for individual local landmark designation by the Town of Breckenridge, and it qualifies as a contributing resource located within the boundaries of the Breckenridge Historic District.

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43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

This property exhibits a reasonably high level of integrity, relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society - setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. The physical integrity of the historic church building has been compromised by the construction of the new (1995) church, and church connector element, which abuts the historic building's south elevation. Although large, the new church is visually separated from the historic church by the connector rectory. Overall a sense of time and place of a late nineteenth century Gothic Revival style church building is still very much in evidence.

VI. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

44. National Register eligibility field assessment : **Individually eligible**
 Local landmark eligibility field assessment : **Individually eligible**

45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes No **N/A**

Discuss: **This property is located within the boundaries of the Breckenridge Historic District which was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 9, 1980.**

If there is National Register district potential, is this building contributing? **N/A**

46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it contributing **Yes**

VII. RECORDING INFORMATION

47. Photograph number(s): **Breckenridge Phase IV Survey – CD-1; Images 102-110** Images filed at: **Town of Breckenridge
150 Ski Hill Road
Breckenridge, CO 80424**
48. Report title: **Town of Breckenridge Phase IV Cultural Resource Survey**
49. Date(s): **May 15, 2006**
50. Recorder(s): **Carl McWilliams** **Rebecca Waugh**
51. Organizations: **Cultural Resource Historians** **Town of Breckenridge**
52. Address: **1607 Dogwood Court** **150 Ski Hill Road**
Fort Collins, CO 80525 **Breckenridge, CO 80424**
53. Phone number(s): **(970) 493-5270** **(303) 629-6966 ext. 142**

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Sketch Map

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Location Map