NAME
HISTORIC Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
AND/OR COMMON First Church of Christ, Scientist, University City

LOCATION
STREET & NUMBER 6900 Delmar Boulevard
CITY, TOWN University City
STATE Missouri

CLASSIFICATION
CATEGORY _DISTRICT • _BUILDING(S)
-_STRUCTURE • _SITE • _OBJECT
OWNERSHIP _PUBLIC • _PRIVATE • _BOTH
STATUS _OCCUPIED • _UNOCCUPIED
PRESENT USE _AGRICULTURE • _MUSEUM
__COMMERCIAL • _PARK
_EDUCATIONAL • _PRIVATE RESIDENCE
_ENTERTAINMENT • _RELIGIOUS
_GOVERNMENT • _SCIENTIFIC
_INDUSTRIAL • _TRANSPORTATION
_MILITARY • _OTHER

OWNER OF PROPERTY
NAME Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
STREET & NUMBER 6900 Delmar Boulevard
CITY, TOWN University City
STATE Missouri

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis County Government Center
STREET & NUMBER 7900 Forsyth Blvd.
CITY, TOWN Clayton
STATE Missouri

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS
TITLE 1. Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture, by John Albury Bryan
DATE 1928
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS published: St. Louis Architectural Club
CITY, TOWN St. Louis
STATE Missouri
Federal Register Library

ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Continuation sheet 1

Item number 6

Page 1

2. Missouri State Historical Survey
1977
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101
DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

- Excellent
- Deteriorated
- Good
- Ruins
- Fair
- Unexposed

CHECK ONE

- Unaltered
- Altered

CHECK ONE

- Original site
- Moved
- Date

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church, at 6900 Delmar Boulevard, is located at the southwest corner of Delmar and Trinity Avenue. The limestone ashlar building has a saucer dome and, while not exactly square in elevation, suggests that the curve of the dome could be the visible portion of a sphere contained within the building. The carefully coordinated five-bay main elevations of the building are identical on east, west and south sides, while the north elevation is enriched by a colonnade in antis. The corners of these elevations are angled to create four minor wall surfaces in addition to the four main ones, thus giving the building the shape of a non-equilateral octagon.

The ground floor is rusticated. On the north, it centers on three double doors under large half-round fanlights, flanked by marble urns on carved pedestals. To the east, the ground falls away to meet a narrow semicircular drive, putting the central door on this side of the building about a half story lower than the matching front doors. The keystone above this door supports a large console in the shape of a volute. On the west side, three pairs of french doors at the level of the east door open onto a sunken area.

At the piano nobile level, the side and rear elevations all have six very plain (Tuscan?) pilasters framing five windows. Over each window is a dish-like roundel of acanthus leaves surrounding a rosette. Above the pilasters is a frieze of square coffers. The north front has four composite columns set in a porch or umbrage above the main doors. Through a daring but logical shift, the frieze which has run above the pilasters on the other elevations finds itself below the level of the architrave here and running across the wall behind the columns. The beautifully carved capitals incorporate an eagle on the abacus in place of the more usual rosette. Bronze crosses decorate the blank end bays of this elevation. The date AD 1924 is inscribed on the cornerstone at the northeast corner. An egg-and-dart molding lies just under the modillioned cornice, above which rises a low parapet.

Inside, the half-story adjustment apparent on the exterior is followed through in the narthex, which is a half story above the ground floor social and utility rooms. Curved flights of stairs ascend from the ends of the narthex to the sanctuary, which fills the whole volume of the building. It has a sloped floor and long curving pews. The underside of the dome is decorated with five concentric rings of coffers, each with a rosette. The iconostasis is also neoclassical, based on a framework of Corinthian columns. Murals dated 1962 in the narthex and sanctuary depict Eastern saints in traditional Byzantine garb. Many of these include Greek inscriptions, including the four evangelists in the pendentives of the dome. A fire in storage rooms on the ground floor in January, 1980, caused relatively minor damage but distributed much soot throughout the interior.
Assumption Greek Orthodox Church was built in 1924 by T. P. Barnett Co. for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, University City. It is a fine example of the work of its architect Tom Barnett, and it plays a crucial role in the overall civic composition of the City Hall Plaza of University City. With its companion building, the former Anchor Masonic Temple at 6901 Delmar, it should have been included in the University City Plaza historic district, which was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on March 7, 1975. Now that the Anchor Temple has been included in the University Heights Subdivision Number One district, which was recently nominated to the National Register, this building is the only part of the group not to be so protected. Together, these buildings form one of the most outstanding City Beautiful civic complexes in the country in a city of this size.

Thomas Barnett (1870-1929) was the younger son of George I. Barnett (1815-1898), the English immigrant who had led the architectural profession in St. Louis from the time of his arrival here in the 1850's and was responsible for many notable buildings, including the Governor's Mansion in Jefferson City. Tom Barnett worked in the family firm of Barnett, Haynes and Barnett from 1886 to 1911, and was credited with a large role in the design of the major commissions, which were crowned by the Catholic Cathedral of 1907-1914. After forming his own firm, he continued to produce designs which have become local landmarks, including the Arcade Building at Eighth and Olive, the gothic mausoleum of Adolphus Busch in Bellefontaine Cemetery, and the Italian Renaissance house of Edward Fust at 1 Portland Place, often thought of as the most palatial in the city.

In University City, Tom Barnett found himself in the position of revising the design concepts put forward two decades before by Edward Garincor Lewis, the founder of University City. Lewis, publisher and real estate promoter, a businessman, whose methods were often controversial and sometimes of dubious legality, had by stages from 1902 to 1906 developed a plan for a civic center that would include his publishing offices, municipal buildings, and a university for women. The surviving model for this district shows the Beaux-Arts buildings that are now included in the plaza historic district as well as others in more eclectic modes. The site of Assumption Church is occupied in the model by a copy of the Parthenon, while across the street rises a miniature Taj Mahal. Lewis went bankrupt in 1912, and he left St. Louis. A designer of Barnett's talent and sophistication would
have found the Lewis model naive, but Barnett was also able to see the
soundness of its underlying concept: a group of buildings of strongly
geometric shapes, each different but united by materials, scale and
formality. That is exactly what he provided, first in this building and
the following year in the step-pyramid shape of the Anchor Masonic Temple
across the street.

The First Church of Christ, Scientist, University City, which
commissioned the building, had been organized February 21, 1921, by members
of the First and Fourth Churches in St. Louis. It had met in a commercial
building at 6640 Delmar. The cornerstone of the permanent building was
dedicated July 16, 1924, and the first services were held in the completed
structure or "edifice" as it is called by Christian Scientists, on May 3,
1925. It cost $212,000.

The building was sold on August 1, 1958, when the Christian Scientists
moved to the Clayton Masonic Temple. The new owner, Assumption Greek
Orthodox Church, had been founded in 1946 and had first been located at
Academy and Vernon Streets in St. Louis. Now, after nearly a quarter of a
century in University City, the church is planning to move farther west,
which raises the question of the continued maintenance of the present
building.

Footnotes

1. A brief biographical sketch of Tom Barnett is found in Carolyn Hewes Toft
and Osmund Overby, The Saint Louis Old Post Office (St. Louis:

2. The best general source on Lewis' career in University City is Susan
Waugh McDonald, "Edward Gardner Lewis: Entrepreneur, Publisher, American
XXXV, No. 3.

3. This model is now on display on the main floor of City Hall.

4. Information from a historical sketch in the files of the First Church
of Christ, Scientist, Creve Coeur.

5. The group was rechartered as the First Church of Christ, Scientist,
Creve Coeur, on completion of the present building at 10939 Ladue Road
in 1963.

6. Information courtest of the church office.
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES


GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .75 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME "Clayton, Mo."

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

ZONE EASTING NORTHING
A (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)
C (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)
D (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)
E (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)
F (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)
G (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)
H (1,5) 1 3 3 9 6 0 B (4,2 8 1 8 4 0)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 7 and 8, Block 2, University Heights Subdivision No. 2.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>St. Louis</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

1. Esley Hamilton

ORGANIZATION

STREET & NUMBER

1169 Ursula Avenue

CITY OR TOWN

University City

STATE

Missouri

CODE

63130

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE X 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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

Director, Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE
2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey and State Contact Person
   Department of Natural Resources
   Office of Historic Preservation
   P.O. Box 176
   Jefferson City

   March 7, 1980
   314/751/4096
   Missouri 65101
ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
University City, Missouri
U.S.G.S. 7.5' Quadrangle

Scale: 1:24,000
UTM Reference:
A. 15/733960/4281840
Photo Log:

Name of Property: Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
City or Vicinity: University City
County: St. Louis County State: MO
Photographer: Esley Hamilton
Date Photographed: 1980

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 2. View of church from N.
2 of 2. View of church from NE, showing S pylon of University City Hall Plaza Historic District.