

Do You Know Your Charleston?

Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church



(News and Courier Staff Photo)

A Landmark On Sullivan's Island

Congregation Reflects Growth Of Suburbs

Stella Maris Roman Catholic Church, on Sullivan's Island, was founded in 1865 by Vicar General Bermingham, who laid the cornerstone with the Rev. John Schachte acting as master of ceremonies.

The building was dedicated June 21, 1874, by the late Bishop Henry W. Northrop, assisted by the Rev. D. J. Quigley and the Rev. C. B. Northrop.

Cost of the structure when it was dedicated was given as \$15,000. It was built by the late John H. Devereaux, who also built the Customs House and the Masonic Temple at King and Wentworth Streets. The altar for Stella Maris

Church was taken from St. Paul's German Catholic Church in Society Street, according to contemporary accounts.

The church is one of the landmarks of Sullivan's Island. A few years ago it was an isolated place of worship, with a fair sized congregation in summer, when vacationers on the island attended service. In winter, there were few settlers.

When it was built a ferryboat connected Sullivan's Island with Charleston. Later, a horse car line

was constructed and for many years access to Sullivan's Island was by ferryboat to Mount Pleasant and horse car, later electric car, from there to Sullivan's Island. Today, with the Cooper River Bridge and modern highways, many summer visitors are able to attend church in Charleston but the resident all-year population at Mount Pleasant and on Sullivan's Island and the Isle of Palms has grown to such an extent that it has a large year-round congregation.