

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

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

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

For HCRS use only
received **MAY 27 1982**
date entered

1. Name

historic Ferryboat BINGHAMTON

and/or common The BINGHAMTON

2. Location

street & number 725 River Road N/A not for publication

city, town Edgewater N/A vicinity of congressional district

state New Jersey code 34 county Bergen code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Ferryboat, Inc.

street & number 725 River Road

city, town Edgewater N/A vicinity of state New Jersey

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. N/A

street & number

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N.J. Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Office of Cultural and Environmental Services

city, town Trenton state New Jersey

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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		N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Binghamton Ferryboat, now a floating restaurant permanently docked at the base of the Palisades in Edgewater, Bergen County, was one of six identical screw-propelled double-end ferryboats built by Newport News Shipbuilding & Dry Dock Company at Newport News, Virginia in 1904-5 to designs of Gardner & Cox, naval architects; for the Hoboken Ferry Company, then a subsidiary of the former Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company.

Launched on February 20, 1905, the Binghamton weighs 1462 gross tons and has a steel hull with spoon-shaped ends. The principal dimensions are 187.5 feet long between perpendiculars (231 feet overall), 43.3 feet wide (62 feet over-guards), depth of hull 16.5 feet, and a draft of 10.5 feet.

Propulsion was by a double-compound reciprocating engine having four cylinders (2 high pressure; dimensions 18" dia., 38" dia. x 28" - stroke/2 low pressure 18", x 28") rated 1400 horsepower, taking steam from two coal-fired single-end Scotch boilers at 150 pounds working pressure, and driving a screw-propeller at each end on continuous shafting.

The superstructure (deck housing) is chiefly wooden construction with steel engine room and boiler room "trunks." Surmounting the double-deck house are two pilot houses, a single smokestack and davits holding two life boats. Exterior color scheme was originally all white, changed in the late 1920's to tan for the main deck house with white above. The smokestack was black and bore the parent "Lackawanna Railroad" emblem facing each side of the boat. Binghamton's exterior is again all white; even the smokestack from which the railroad emblems have been removed is now painted white.

On the main deck the Binghamton had separate cabins, or aisles, for men and women on either side of her vehicle lanes. These provided seating for 408 people. The spacious Upper Deck offered further seating for 578 persons. Total passenger capacity was 986 commuters. Initially her non-human cargo consisted of horses and wagons, plus some automobiles, but as the passenger car gained in popularity, the boat was said to be able to carry 24 autos.

Located at either end of the Binghamton, both of the elliptical-shaped pilot houses are still in place on the hurricane deck (roof of the upper level), but most of their navigational fittings have been removed.

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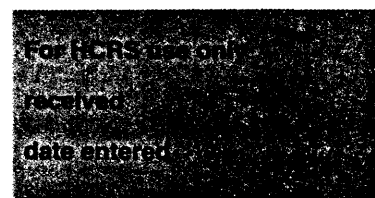
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Description (continued)

Once Binghamton was moved to her permanent berth in Edgewater in 1975, a considerable amount of money was provided to refurbish the vessel. Binghamton's moorings, for example, had to be specially designed to accommodate a tide of from four to six feet. At low tide the boat rests partially on the mud bottom, but at high tide the wake of passing vessels sets Binghamton in motion.

In the hold the boat's two 500-ton steam boilers were removed to provide space for modern kitchens. 640 tons of concrete were poured into the hull to provide ballast to compensate for the removed metal. A dumbwaiter and kitchen exhaust were installed in the stack. An intimate dining room circles the boat's engine, which has been polished and replated. A nautical motif is provided by two 800-gallon aquariums.

Entry to the ferry is gained through a gangway constructed amid ship. Catering and banquet facilities for up to 250 people are on the Main Deck. The Nassau and Half Moon Rooms occupy the space which formerly held vehicles.

The Upper Deck contains a Restaurant/Nightclub with its two dance floors, fore and aft, plus two bars. Outdoors there are additional tables set up under umbrellas for use in good weather. The original exterior wooden seats have been retained. Binghamton, with her open decks and many windows, provides a panoramic view of the Hudson River and the Manhattan skyline.

Much of the interior bench seating was removed, but benches along the perimeter, the mahogany finish woodwork below the windows and the cabin bulkheads were preserved. Both on the main and upper decks furnishings are mahogany seats, chairs and mouldings. Flooring in the cabins and pilot houses was all covered with rubber tiling cemented down. The decorations installed include plush red velvet upholstery, brass railings and fixtures, hanging ferns, stained glass and saloon artwork in gilded frames, giving Binghamton a Victorian atmosphere.

Binghamton was connected to shore support facilities providing water, sewage, gas and electricity with flexible hoses. Total air conditioning and a fire extinguishing sprinkler system were added to the boat.

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Description (continued)

There have been some changes to the exterior of the Binghamton. The open passenger and automobile gangways on either end of the main level have been enclosed. The original wooden railings along the perimeter of both decks have been replaced with steel rails. A new shore entrance has been added midway along the shore side of the main deck and the line of three section windows, port and starboard, now uniform height, originally had the middle window rising above the others.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1904-5 **Builder/Architect** Gardner & Cox, Naval Architects

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Binghamton ran continuous ferry service between Hoboken and Barclay Street in Lower Manhattan from 1905 to 1967. Built 1904-5 by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company of Newport News, Virginia to the designs of naval architects Gardner and Cox for the Hoboken Ferry Company, the Binghamton is typical of ferries once used at the turn of the century and is the last double-screw, double-ended steam powered ferryboat on the Hudson. It is, further, one of the few early 20th century ferryboats on the east coast.

Until the Pennsylvania Railroad built Pennsylvania Station in Manhattan and tunneled under the Hudson River, all rail lines terminated at the New York Harbor. Accordingly, a number of independent and railroad affiliated ferry companies provided passenger and light freight service across the harbor. One particular type ferryboat, the "double-ender," was especially common in the New York Harbor. The first American double ended ferries were the 1812 paddle wheels Jersey and York of the Robert Fulton York and Jersey Steamboat Ferry Company (Hilton, pg. 73). Excellent for transporting vehicles, the double-ender ferries, were well adapted to the New York Harbor where there was considerable demand for speed and efficiency (vehicles could drive on and off from either end and time consuming turns were not necessary). It has been estimated that over 400 double-ended ferries operated in the New York Harbor from the 19th century to present-day. The peak years were 1906-1908 when approximately 150 double-ended ferries were in service (Hilton, pg. 76).

The Hoboken Ferry Company was a subsidiary of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company. The company had a fleet of six ferryboats when it ceased operations in 1967. Three of these - Elmira, Scranton, and Pocono (nee Scandinavia) - Binghamton's sister ships, were also built in 1905. (Another, Ithaca, was destroyed by fire in 1946). The Elmira may still exist, but the Scranton has been scrapped and the Pocono sank at Rossville, Staten Island in 1975.

9. Major Bibliographical References

ADDRESS NOT VERIFIED

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property N/A

Quadrangle name Central Park Ny/NJ

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

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5	8	6	3	8	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

N/A - object only

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

Revised by Terry Karschner, Office of Cultural and Environmental Services 2/1982

name/title Harry Cotterell, Jr., Historian

Staten Island Ferry Maritime Museum

organization Steamship Historical Society of America date 12/16/1981

street & number 457 West 57th Street telephone (212) 265-0162

city or town New York state New York 10019

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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Laura Schmelt

title _____ date May 11, 1982

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Ann M. Dwyer</u>	date <u>7-9-82</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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Significance (continued)

By 1905 the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad had acquired the Hoboken terminal and ferries of the Morris and Essex Railway. These ferries had been operating at capacity and the ferry terminal was woefully inadequate. Shortly after purchasing its new fleet of ferryboats, the obsolete ferryhouse caught fire. Several boats, including the Binghamton, berthed at the terminal, were damaged by the fire. The ferryhouse and terminal were both destroyed. The rail-ferry traffic, however, was delayed only briefly. For a few days the trains were routed to other terminals, but wreckage was quickly cleared away, giving access to most of the ships.

Work began at once on a new terminal. In order to more easily accommodate the new double level ferryboats, the ferry slips, finished by 1907, had two access and egress levels separating passenger and vehicular traffic making for more efficient transport.

The Binghamton was launched on February 20, 1905 with Miss Charlotte Emery, the daughter of John M. Emery, the newly promoted superintendent of the Hoboken Ferry Company and Ferry Department of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company, serving as her sponsor. Binghamton was completed a month later and left the Newport News yard on March 25 for the trip to Hoboken, New Jersey. She was placed in commission on April 3. Her Captain for the first trip was Capt. Oren D. Relyea.

Her normal run was from the Hoboken Terminal to Barclay Street, a twelve minute journey of approximately 1 3/4 miles, a trip made continuously every day for over 60 years (on occasion she substituted on the Hoboken - 23rd Street route).

As alternate methods of travel across the Harbor were implemented, ferry transport diminished. The opening of the Pennsylvania Railroad line to Penn Station in Manhattan (1907); the Hudson and Manhattan Rapid Transit Line (1907); the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels (1927, 1937); and the George Washington Bridge (1931) all contributed to the decline of ferries. The last ferry crossing of the Hoboken Company, in operation since 1821, was on November 22, 1967 when the railroad closed its trans-Hudson operations, offering its ferries for sale.

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Significance (continued)

Binghamton was acquired in 1969 by Edward Russo, an Edgewater, New Jersey contractor, for conversion into a restaurant. Russo planned large dining rooms on the Upper and Main decks, plus two pubs in the former engine room. Russo leased four acres of land from the Borough of Edgewater for ten years at a monthly rental price of \$500. Restaurant and liquor licenses were approved in advance, thus there seemed little to block the boat's projected Labor Day, 1970 opening.

Unfortunately, all did not go as planned. Binghamton moved temporarily to Hoboken's Fifth Street Pier for exterior repainting and was to be towed to Weehawkin for conversion into the planned restaurant facility. A tug strike delayed this move until June. Once tied to the vacant Penn Central Railroad Pier 18 at Weehawkin, work progressed slowly. Dredging also took longer than had been anticipated.

Once the channel at Edgewater was completed in 1971, Binghamton found herself again at the end of a towline. She was moored in her new berth where pilings were driven around the guards to keep her in place. Russo provided the fill as promised, but failed to install the black-top and outdoor lighting needed to give the floating restaurant a parking lot.

Russo, however, was unable to find a concessionaire to operate the restaurant aboard the ex-steamer. There was a report that the boat would open in the fall of 1972 as the "Edgewater Ferryboat Restaurant," but nothing materialized and Binghamton continued to lie unused in the shadow of a 21-story high-rise apartment complex.

The American National Bank and Trust of Montclair held a 1973 note for \$50,000 issued to Russo (Ruscon Industries) which had used Binghamton as collateral. When Ruscon defaulted on repaying the loan, American National, anxious to recover its money, actively sought buyers for Binghamton. Two parties materialized, one being a firm interested in turning the boat into a low cost family restaurant. The other prospective buyer, ultimately the successful bidder, had plans for a restaurant and nightclub.

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Significance (continued)

Ferry Binghamton Inc., Hackensack, New Jersey bought the boat late in 1974 for \$65,000. After conducting negotiations with Edgewater, plans to keep the boat at her present site were abandoned in favor of a new location a half mile downstream. Although the distance seemed short, moving Binghamton was no easy task as silt had built up around her hull. ~~On February 28, 1975,~~ amid snapping towlines, Binghamton was pulled off the mud flat and successfully moved to the Alcoa Dock, also in Edgewater. The restaurant opened later in the year.

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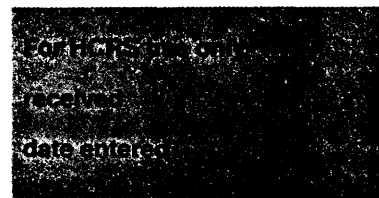
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Bibliography

Marine Engineering (a monthly periodical) for April 1904 and March 1905.

Nautical Gazette (a former trade weekly) for March 9, 1905.

"Binghamton Proves It Can Be Done" by Peter T. Eisele in Steamboat Bill #136, Winter, 1975 Issue.

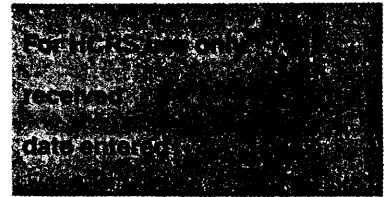
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Ferryboat Binghamton
Edgewater, Bergen County
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10. Geographical Data (continued)

Boundary

The Binghamton Ferry is permanently moored off the western shore of the Hudson River in Edgewater, at the base of the Alcoa Edgewater Plant (National Register). The moorings are specially designed to accommodate a four to six foot tide. At low tide the boat rests partially on the mud bottom, but at high tide the wake of passing vessels sets the Binghamton in motion. The specific municipal properties adjacent to the ferry are Block 75, Lot 43 and Block 70, Lot 5.

Terry Karschner
June, 1982