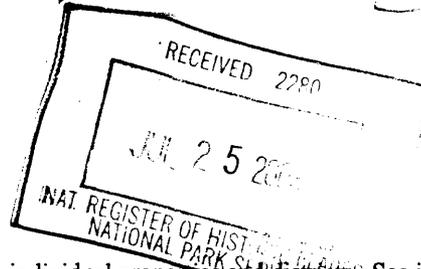


878

**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 331 East Wisconsin Avenue N/A not for publication
city or town Neenah N/A vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Winnebago code 139 zip code 54956

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alicia J. G...
Signature of certifying official/Title

June 18, 2003
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House

Winnebago

Wisconsin

Name of Property

County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Jens N. Jersild
Signature of the Keeper

SEP 2 2003

National Register

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- structure
- site
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<input type="checkbox"/> contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> noncontributing
1	1 buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	1 total

Name of related multiple property listing:
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Limestone

walls Shingle

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Description

The Reverend Jens N. Jersild House is situated on less than one acre of land on the south side of East Wisconsin Avenue, midway between Oak and Elm streets. Located less than one-half mile from the central business district, the immediate neighborhood is of local historical importance for its association with some of Neenah's most prosperous industrialists and retail merchants. It is also an enclave of architecturally significant late 19th and early 20th century residences, many of which are individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Jersild house is a two-story, frame construction Queen Anne residence built of in 1886.(3) The plan configuration is irregular with projecting pavilions on the north, east and south facades. A reconstructed Colonial Revival verandah is also located on the northeast corner. The foundations are quarry cut ashlar limestone, the walls are faced with mid-20th century shake shingles, and the roofing materials are contemporary asphalt shingles. The roof form in the main mass is hipped to a deck with four prominent cross-gables, one on each facade. Those visible from the street are front gabled, while the south or rear pavilion roof is hipped. The roofline includes one ridge chimney at the endwall of the east pavilion, and a slope chimney on the south or rear slope of the main mass. Both chimneys have corbeled chimney pots and are fabricated of red brick. There are no dormers. The north or front pavilion includes a two-story polygonal bay, while the east pavilion is polygonal on the first floor and rectangular on the second. The west cross gable extends over a hanging rectangular bay on the second floor. A wrap-around verandah, connecting the east and north pavilions, carefully recreates the design elements of the structural modification introduced by Rev. Jersild in the early 20th century. On the south facade a contemporary deck incorporates the remains of a small back corner porch and hipped roof. A full-height basement entry has a gabled roof and is located on the south facade of the south pavilion.

Building openings include the first floor main entrance, which is located on the east side of the north facade and is reached by a short flight of steps to the verandah. A second floor entryway opens onto the verandah roof directly above the main entrance. A first floor back door is at the juncture of the south pavilion and the rear facade of the main mass, opening onto the rear porch and deck. The basement entry is at grade level in the south facade of the entry structure. All doors are glazed and paneled except the basement entry door that is fully paneled. The fenestration is similarly functional and consists of double-hung, single-paned sash except as noted. On the north or front facade the polygonal bay forms a three-window group with a central plate glass window and transom on both floors. On the west side both floors have a double window group. On the east facade windows flank the end wall chimney on each floor of the east pavilion. On the first floor of the south facade of the main mass a double window group is located immediately east of the back door. Directly overhead is a single window. In addition to these the south pavilion has a single first-floor casement window on each facade, and a full height window on the second floor of the south facade. On the west facade there are two asymmetrically arranged windows on the first floor,

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 2

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

and a window on either side of the hanging rectangular bay on the second. A transom is centered in the bay itself.

Distinguishing Queen Anne features include the irregular massing punctuated by protruding pavilions and dominate cross gables, three of which provide the focus of other character defining features. The central north pavilion includes a two-story polygonal bay with incised frieze work, a stained glass transom, and an overhanging attic story with incised brackets, fish scale shingles, a cartouche attic vent (formerly a transom light), and incised verge boards. The east pavilion, polygonal on the first floor with an end wall chimney, is rectangular on the second floor with incised corner brackets and a gable end ornamented with fish scale shingles and incised verge boards. The west gable overhangs a second floor rectangular bay supported by scroll brackets and ornamented in the gable end with fish scale shingles, a cartouche attic vent, and incised verge boards. The original siding was clapboard with a first floor belt course of vertical tongue-in-groove paneling between the water table and windowsills.

In addition to these earlier features is the Colonial Revival verandah, reconstructed under the state Historic Preservation Tax Credit program using photographic documentation. The contemporary feature replicates what Jersild had constructed in the early 20th century. In the reconstruction wood elements were substituted for what originally were mostly concrete elements. Quarry-faced stone foundation veneering was used in place of cast concrete block. Turned wood balusters, paneled pedestals, fluted columns and Doric order capitals on the main porch level similarly replaced those originally made of concrete and removed by the Jersild family over time. The roof deck railings, consisting of corner pedestals and unturned post balusters, were originally in wood and repeated in that material. While some of the materials were substituted as a consequence of prohibitively high reconstruction costs, the new porch maintains the same proportions and feel as the original. For this reason, the porch reconstruction was accepted for the tax credit program. As a result, the porch contributes to the historic integrity of the house.

Inside the floor plan begins on the first floor with a corner entry hall and stairway, and leads back into the parlor. From there access is provided to the front sitting room, dining room, rear hall, and kitchen. Historic materials such as doors, woodwork, and other interior features remain in each room. The second floor is comprised of five bedrooms, one over each of the original first floor rooms, and a bath. The principal interior modification was the Jersilds removal of an interior first floor wall between the parlor and dining room, making for one large space.

A non-contributing garage is located in the southwest corner of the property. The garage is a later addition to the property and is of insufficient scale to be counted in the inventory.

While altered from its appearance when first acquired by the Jersilds, the house remains largely as it was left when the family ended its occupancy in 1948. As such it reflects the period in which the Jersild family distinguished itself in the community as an immigrant family of position and influence.

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Name of Property

Winnebago
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Period of Significance

1902-1917 (1)

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Jersild, Reverend Jens N.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Weber, Louis (2)

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 1

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

The Rev. Jens N. Jersild House is of local historical significance under criterion B in the area of Social History for its association with one of the Neenah's prominent civic leaders. Occupied by the Jersild family for nearly 50 years, the house is reflective of a significant period of Neenah's growth and achievement, during which time Jersild played a highly visible and important role in the community's economic development, as well as contributing to the social life of local immigrant Danes.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Neenah began in 1835 as an industrial and agricultural mission for the Menominee Indians. Its early white settlement, attracted by the waterpower of the Fox River, started a few years later. Developing in the 1850s as an important flour-milling center in Wisconsin, Neenah's industrial economy evolved into a nationally prominent center for paper milling in the late 19th century, dominated by what is today Kimberly-Clark Corporation.

The economic development of the late 19th century produced a large number of substantial local fortunes, which many of Neenah's industrialists used to build notable residences on East Wisconsin Avenue, the city's principal thoroughfare. The more imposing structures were constructed by prominent paper industrialists, including J. A. Kimberly, C. B. Clark, F. C. Shattuck, Haviilah Babcock, J. R. Davis, F. J. Sensenbrenner, and C. W. Howard. Inventor John Stevens and stove manufacturer G. O. Bergstrom also built homes in the neighborhood, which was locally referred to as Piety Row and Piety Hill. (3)

In addition to this small but highly visible segment of the community, the overall adult population of Neenah was between 42 and 51 percent foreign born during much of the 19th and early 20th centuries. A wave of Irish and Welsh immigrants had come in the 1850s, followed ten years later by even larger numbers of Germans and Scandinavians, the latter predominately Norwegians and Danes. These population segments lived scattered throughout the community but retained their ethnic identity through foreign language churches, libraries, newspapers, and clubs. By 1880 eleven out of sixteen churches in Neenah were conducting services in a language other than English.

The city's Danish population is recorded as having settled in the area after being employed to lay the Chicago & NorthWestern Railroad in the 1860s. Growing from 154 in 1870 to 403 by 1905 - nearly seven percent of the total population - Neenah's Danes were the second largest ethnic group in the city and comprised nearly half of all Danes living in Winnebago County. In 1890 federal census records showed this to be the second largest Danish community in Wisconsin, right behind Racine County.

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 2

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Although not the primary destination of most Danish immigrants, Neenah served as either a secondary settlement or a stopover point for those continuing westward. Here they found employment largely as factory workers and, to a lesser degree, as carpenters, railroad employees and domestics. Only a very small number achieved the status or propertied permanence of merchants. They also attended religious services in sufficient numbers to make the Danish Lutheran Church, organized in 1872, one of the largest ethnic congregations in the city.

Neenah's population and industrial development reached a plateau at the turn of the century and remained level until World War I, at which time military demand for war related materials created new production opportunities. The most significant of these were surgical dressings and gas mask filters developed by Kimberly-Clark Corp. Subsequently repositioned as Kotex and Kleenex, the shift towards consumer products would provide the city with a stable economic environment through to the end of the century.

JENS JERSILD

In 1884 Jens Nielson Jersild (1855-1917) immigrated to the United States from Denmark, adopting his home village as a last name. A graduate of the University of Copenhagen and an ordained Lutheran minister, he was assigned to a series of churches in Illinois and Minnesota before coming to Neenah in 1889. (4) In that year he became the fourth pastor at the Danish Lutheran Church, which was then located at the corner of Isabella and Adams streets.

Three years later, in 1892, Jersild became a key player in a doctrinal battle that led to the division of the Danish Lutheran Church of America. A believer in lay participation in church government, a theological movement that began in Denmark, Jersild took up publication of the Danskeren (The Dane), a Lutheran weekly publication that supported these views and quickly attracted a national circulation of 2,300 subscribers. Faced with excommunication for their activities, Jersild and other dissidents organized a new synod in 1894, which subsequently became the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church headquartered in Blair, Nebraska. (5)

In 1897 Jersild stepped down as pastor of the church in Neenah to focus on the Jersild Publishing Company. In only a few year's time the business had come to employ a staff of eleven people in a bookstore and in the printing and distribution of the newspaper and other Danish language publications. (6) In spite of its success, the company struggled to make ends meet, and in 1899 Jersild sold the publication to the new synod, which then moved operations to Nebraska.

With the proceeds of the sale, Jersild visited his native Denmark and returned home with two small knitting machines, the beginning of yet another enterprise. Thereafter, he and his half brothers, Hans and Peter Jersild, began turning out mittens and other small knit goods at the Jersild's new home at 620 Higgins Avenue. (7) In 1901 the knitting business incorporated as the Jersild Knitting Co.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 3

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

with a capital stock of \$20,000. With these funds land was acquired on North Commercial Street, the former St. Patrick's schoolhouse was purchased and moved to the site as a factory, and as many as twenty knitting machines were put into operation, expanding production to include socks, underwear and sweaters. (8)

The following year Jersild acquired the former residence of building contractor Louis Weber and established the property as the family home. (9) A precast concrete verandah was constructed shortly thereafter with the name REV. JERSILD impressed in the walk leading to the front steps. The ten surviving Jersild children were raised here. Two, when they married and left home, remained in the immediate neighborhood.

In 1904 the company reorganized with Jersild stepping down from president to general manager. At the same time Neenah businessmen E. E. Jandrey, George Madson, and Gustav Kalfahs stepped in serve as corporate officers and principal investors. With new management and funding, Jersild Knitting began regional distribution of its product. By 1908 the company had seventy-five operators in addition to shapers, packagers and office staff, most of them Danish women whose only other employment option was in domestic service. (10) Jersild's stature in the community rose to such an extent that in 1913 he was elected to the city council and actively pursued as a mayoral candidate.

By this time knitting production was focused on specialty sweaters, including a belted knit coat that was sold at Marshall-Field's in Chicago. (11) Bathing suits, jerseys, toques and scarves were also added to the line. In 1914 production increased even more dramatically when the outbreak of war in Europe made imported knitwear unavailable in America. (12) According to industry sources of the time, Jersild and other knitwear companies were unable to keep up with the sudden demand. Like Kimberly-Clark's paper-based surgical dressings and gas mask filters, Jersild knitwear would discover a national market as a result of the war.

At this point Jersild had sufficient economic security to pursue yet another enterprise. In 1914 he took steps to start the manufacture of a fire escape patented by relatives in Europe. Although formally organized, a catastrophic fire at the knitting mill thwarted further development of the fire escape company later that same year. Although not a complete loss, the company began construction of a new three-story plant under Jersild's leadership. Equipped with the latest fireproofing innovations, the building was still under way in 1917 when Jersild died unexpectedly at age 62. (13)

In the years that immediately followed his death, Jersild Knitting became one of the largest knitwear producers west of New York City with a national sales force, separate wholesaling operations and subsidiary plants in Menasha and Green Bay. (14) The new plant on North Commercial Street was also expanded in 1918, followed three years later by the addition of a fourth floor. Members of Jersild's family were similarly prominent figures in local government and industrial development. Holding on through the Depression of the 1930s, Jersild Knitting

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Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 4

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

gradually reduced the scope of its operations and presence in the market. In 1986 the mills passed out of family ownership and subsequently ceased operation.

While the related chapter in Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin does not address clothing manufacture, a parallel can be drawn from the closely related study unit on tanning and leather processing. In that section the manufacture of leather goods in Wisconsin is recorded as experiencing its peak years from 1870 to 1914, during which time it ranked among the top five state industries in terms of product value. Primarily concentrated in Wisconsin's major metropolitan areas, the manufacture of leather goods was given a boost by World War I and then hit hard by the depression, after which the industry never fully recovered.

SOCIAL HISTORY

Reverend Jersild attained significance in the area of social history for his important role in the Danish community and his continued attempts to improve the social conditions of Danish immigrants. His newspaper, church and industrial accomplishments all demonstrate a concern for the welfare of Danes in Neenah by supporting the educational, spiritual and economic efforts of this ethnic group. In his church, Jersild perpetuated the theological movement begun in Demark and, when this proved problematic, he was involved in the organization of a new Lutheran synod. His publishing company printed and distributed a Danish language newspaper and other publications. Furthermore, he employed many Danes at his knitting company.

Jersild's home on East Wisconsin Avenue is the primary resource associated with the life of this prominent industrialist and civic leader. The knitting mill property (329 N. Commercial St.) is still extant, but its conversion to offices included the removal of all original windows, the demolition of the significant 1918 addition, and the introduction of non-historic facade embellishments. As for other resources, the Danish Lutheran Church and parsonage (518 Isabella St.) were demolished and replaced by new facilities in 1905. The Jersild home at 620 Higgins St. has similarly experienced major losses of architectural integrity through the introduction of replacement siding.

After his death Jersild's widow remained in the home until she died in 1941. The house then passed to the youngest daughter, who finally sold it 1948. It was during these later years that both widow and daughter replaced deteriorating concrete porch elements and had the original clapboard siding removed when the house was insulated.

In spite of these alterations the house appears today much as it did during Jersild's lifetime, thanks largely to the meticulous verandah reconstruction approved by the State Historic Preservation Office and completed in 2002. With the original verandah features recreated in wood, the Jersild home on East Wisconsin

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 8 Page 5

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Avenue once again reflects the immigrant dream of advancement and assimilation, which few Danes experienced in the early 20th century.

NOTES:

- (1) The period of significance begins with the date of Jersild's acquisition of the house in 1902 to his death in 1917.
- (2) Randall, 25.
- (3) 1886 Neenah Tax Rolls, 35.
- (4) Hill, 3.
- (5) Mortensen, 48
- (6) Hill, 6.
- (7) Hill, 7.
- (8) Menasha Evening Breeze, May 9, 1901.
- (9) Winnebago County Register of Deeds, title index.
- (10) Lawson, 992
- (11) Lyle Pinkerton, 1976 interview.
- (12) Neenah Daily News, July 23, 1920.
- (13) Menasha Record, November 9, 1926.
- (14) Neenah Daily News, May 11, 1917.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 9 Page 1

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

9. Bibliographic Reverences

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Pinkerton, Lyle. 1976 interview with the son of Jersild Knitting Co. John Pinkerton.

Winnebago County Register of Deeds, title index.

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Name of Property

Winnebago
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Phyllis L. Goodenough	date	July 2002
organization		telephone	920/725-7215
street&number	331 East Wisconsin Avenue	zip code	54956
city or town	Neenah	state	WI

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section photos Page 1

Jersild, Reverend Jens N., House
Neenah, Winnebago County, Wisconsin

Photographic Materials - Identification

Jersild, Rev. Jens N., Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI.

Photos by Peter J. Adams; July 2002

Negatives at the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

- Photo #1 of 9: Exterior, view of house from north.
- Photo #2 of 9: Exterior, view of house from northeast.
- Photo #3 of 9: Exterior, detail of reconstructed verandah.
- Photo #4 of 9: Exterior, view of house from south.
- Photo #5 of 9: Exterior, view of house from northwest.
- Photo #6 of 9: Interior, entrance hall.
- Photo #7 of 9: Interior, parlor.
- Photo #8 of 9: Interior, bedroom
- Photo #9 of 9: Exterior, view of garage from northeast.

REVEREND JENS N. JERSILD HOUSE
NEENAH, WINNEBAGO COUNTY, WI
NO SCALE

