

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 93000144 Date Listed: 3/22/93

George O. Bergstrom House Winnebago WI
Property Name: County: State:

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patricia Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

3/31/93
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

The end of the Period of Significance stated in the text of the nomination (Section 8, p.2) was clarified through a phone call to the Wisconsin SHPO. The text should indicate that the house was sold prior to the end of World War I, not prior to World War I. The nomination is officially amended to include this information.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FEB 05 1990

NATIONAL REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name BERGSTROM, GEORGE O. HOUSE

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 579 EAST WISCONSIN AVENUE

N/A not for publication

city, town NEENAH

N/A vicinity

state WISCONSIN

code WI

county WINNEBAGO

code 139

zip code 54956

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site		<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure		<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		<u> </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

No. of contributing resources
previously listed in the
National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Jeff Dean
Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

8/29/92
Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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.

 removed from the National Register.

 other, (explain:)

Patrick W. Andrews 3/22/93

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne
Shingle Style

foundation Limestone
walls Weatherboard
Shingle
roof Asphalt
other Wood
Limestone

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The George O. Bergstrom House is situated across from Riverside Park on East Wisconsin Avenue surrounded by large, notable homes from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The immediate neighborhood is located between Lake Winnebago to the east and the south channel of the Fox River to the north, approximately one half mile from the central business and milling districts of Neenah.

The building is a two-story Queen Anne residence of frame construction built in 1894. The plan configuration is L-shaped with two semi-circular towers incorporated into the north or main facade. The foundations are rock-faced ashlar limestone. The first floor is surfaced in clapboard and the second floor is shingled. The roof is moderately pitched with prominent gables on the north, east, and west facades. The roof form is hipped and the east and west gables are shingled pent pediments. The north gable is a large, shingled gambrel that extends to the second floor line and is located on the east side of the north facade. One of the two towers is incorporated into the gambrel end near the middle of the facade and is surfaced in ashlar limestone to the second floor line. The west tower is located at the northwest corner of the house. Both towers have conical roof forms. A polygonal dormer is located between the two towers on the north facade, and two large hipped dormers are located on the south facade. The roofing materials are composition shingles. The fenestration is functional and includes a first floor bay window on the east and west facades. Both bays are recessed beneath an overhanging second floor line. The wooden window sash is double-hung and single-paned, except on the rear corner of the south facade where purposely differentiated multi-paned lights and transoms identify interior kitchen modifications. The attic window in the gambrel end is recessed with curving shingled sidewalls and hooded overhang. External red brick chimneys are located near the northeast and southwest corners of the building. The northeast chimney is ashlar limestone to the second floor line. Internal red brick chimneys are located near the center and southeast corner of the building.

An ashlar limestone veranda with wooden decking and steps extends north from the house just west of the gambrel end, wrapping around the northwest corner tower. The veranda roof form is shed and supported by paired slender Tuscan columns. The main entrance is accessed from the veranda and consists of a single multi-paned paneled door through a wall of ashlar limestone. Single-paned french doors open out onto the veranda from the tower and on either side of the south chimney out onto a discrete contemporary wood porch with a spindled balustrade. A lighted paneled door is located at grade level at the southeast corner adjacent to the driveway. Nominal ornamentation includes fishscale shingles on the polygonal dormer, flat modillions at the second floor line of the gambrel gable, and a denticulated cornice on the veranda.

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On the first floor the interior consists of a large, central reception hall dominated by a cascading staircase with englenooks and goose-neck balustrades. The walls are wainscotted, a corner fireplace mantel and mirror incorporate Colonial Revival motifs, and the ceiling is beamed. A parlor, sitting room, dining room, and rear stair hall open onto this central reception hall. On the second floor the central hall is surrounded by five bedrooms. A three-car frame garage is located in the southeast corner of the property.

Over the years the house has been subtly modified. During its ownership by the Bergstroms the east gable and external chimney were added in order to enlarge and enhance the parlor and master bedroom. When the house changed hands various other alterations were made. A carriage house in the southwest corner of the property was demolished and replaced by the present non-contributing garage. A porte-cochere located at the southwest corner of the west facade was removed in order to combine and enlarge the sitting room and library on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second. An internal chimney was removed from the west facade and the external chimney on the south facade was constructed. The french doors were installed and a terrace off the south facade was planned but never completed. A spindled balustrade was also removed from the veranda roof. The present owners added the rear porch in the area planned for the terrace and modified the kitchen and rear utility rooms, introducing new windows purposely differentiated from historic features. While most of these changes antedate the period of significance, they are consistent with the types of subtle alterations that often took place in Neenah in the early 20th century. The alterations lack historical significance, but do not materially impair the integrity of site or form.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions) Period of Significance Significant Dates
 Industry 1894-1918 (1) 1894 (2)

Architecture _____

Significant Person Architect/Builder

Bergstrom, George O. Waters, William (3)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The George O. Bergstrom House is nominated to the National Register for its local significance under criteria B and C. The property is nominated under criterion B for its association with pioneer Neenah industrialist George O. Bergstrom. The property is also nominated under criterion C for its distinctive architectural characteristics which embody the Queen Anne and Shingle Style periods of construction addressed in Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan. The George O. Bergstrom House is reflective of a period of significant growth and achievement in the community.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Neenah began in 1835 as an industrial and agricultural mission for the Menominee Indians. Its early white settlement, attracted by the water power of the Fox River, started a few years later. Neenah incorporated as a village in 1854 and became a city in 1872. Developing in the 1850s as the second largest flour milling center in Wisconsin, Neenah's industrial economy evolved into a nationally prominent center for paper milling with the formation of Kimberly-Clark Corporation in 1872. After the turn of the century the local paper industry turned from bulk papers to consumer products, a move which resulted in continued industrial expansion and economic stability during the early 20th century.

The economic development of the late 19th century produced a number of substantial fortunes for local industrialists who built notable residences on East Wisconsin Avenue and East Forest Avenue. The homes on East Wisconsin Avenue were largely constructed by prominent Neenah paper industrialists, including J. A. Kimberly, C. B. Clark, F. C. Shattuck, Havilah Babcock, J. R. Davis, F. J. Sensenbrenner, and C. W. Howard. Lumberman Henry Sherry, inventor John Stevens, and stove manufacturer G.

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O. Bergstrom also built homes on East Wisconsin Avenue, which was locally referred to as "Piety Row" and "Piety Hill."

Bergstrom (1847-1928) was a Norwegian immigrant who came to Neenah as a boy in 1851 and as an adult co-founded Bergstrom Brothers & Company Stove Works. He served as alderman from 1879 to 1883, and was a popular three-term Mayor.(4) Active in the promotion of public water works and the construction of both the Neenah Opera House and the Neenah Public Library, Bergstrom was also a director at the First National Banks of Neenah and Kaukauna. Bergstrom's stature in the community provided his family with a social position that allowed his sons to marry into the Kimberly and Sensenbrenner families. His son Edwin came into national prominence as the architect of the Pentagon.(5)

The George O. Bergstrom House was begun in 1893 and completed in 1894.(6) It is believed to be the work of Oshkosh architect William Waters, who was working on various Neenah projects at the time. Waters was a master architect from Oshkosh who influenced Wisconsin architecture throughout the Fox River Valley area. His residential designs were rendered predominantly in the Queen Anne, Shingle, and Richardsonian Romanesque styles. Among the most characteristic features of his designs are the abundant use of decorative wood shingles and varied roof lines which seem to dominate the buildings. The patterning of shinglework in prominent gable end walls is also indicative of his late 19th century work in the Fox River Valley. Waters is perhaps best known as the architect of the Wisconsin State Building at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago. He is also known to have designed a significant number of residential and commercial buildings in Neenah during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, several of which have been nominated to the National Register. Among these were the Perry Lindsley House (1102 E. Forest Ave.), the Ellis Jennings House (711 E. Forest Ave.; NRHP), the Second Ward Schoolhouse (demolished), and the American Express Office (West Wisconsin Avenue Historic District, NRHP), all built in 1893. Waters had also designed the D. W. Bergstrom House (demolished) in 1892 and the Allison B. Ideson House (Paine Historic District, NRHP) built in Oshkosh in 1898, to which the Bergstrom house bears many similarities.

INDUSTRY

Among the first industries in Neenah were small foundries, machine shops, and blacksmiths where crude implements and machine parts were fashioned and repaired by hand or with the help of water power. Most of these early operations served only the immediate area and had only a minor impact on the local economy. Two firms actively marketed a specialized product and made significant contributions to the

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economic stability of the community. The largest of the two was the Neenah Stove Works, which was organized by the firm of Moore & Wells in 1857. The second largest was Peckham & Krueger's Island City Foundry which began operation in 1866. Both manufactured stoves, kettles, and other hollow ware. By 1870 there were eleven metal products plants in Neenah and six in nearby Menasha, which together employed seventy men and had an annual output valued at \$80,000.(7) At that time the Neenah Stove Works was manufacturing 3,000 stoves in fourteen styles, and the Island City Stove Works was producing 1,600 stoves.(8)

Another early entrant in the field was George Bergstrom. Forming a partnership with his father in 1872, Bergstrom directed their energies away from generalized blacksmithing to the specialized manufacture of steel plows. Operating under the name Neenah Plow Works, Bergstrom bought out his father's interest in 1873 and aggressively marketed his product throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest.(9) In 1878 Bergstrom was able to acquire the Neenah Stove Works in partnership with his brother D. W. and Havilah Babcock, who provided management and capital. Bringing the reputation of his plow works to the partnership, Bergstrom manufactured both stoves and plows, but eventually concentrated on domestic stoves. He continually updated their product, actively acquiring patents for new designs and ultimately developing a line of stoves and ranges trademarked under the name "Royal:"(10)

By the turn of the century Bergstrom Brothers & Company had an 80,000 square foot plant, employed seventy-five men with an annual payroll of \$60,000, and was distributing its product throughout Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and the Pacific coast states.(11) Where it began as one in a field of many, Bergstrom Brothers & Company was now the largest heavy metals manufacturing operations in either Neenah or Menasha. Its only other competitor was the Neenah Foundry Company, organized in 1872 by William Aylward, Sr. Beginning as a plow manufactory, the Neenah Foundry shifted to stoves in 1881 and continued as a small operation until 1910, at which time it specialized in "municipal castings" such as sewer pipes, manhole covers, and water taps. Until then the Neenah Foundry and the Aylwards figured less prominently in the community than the Bergstroms and the Bergstrom Brothers Foundry.

In 1904 George Bergstrom became sole owner of the business, buying out the interests of his brother and the Babcock estate. This move, along with the emergence of highly competitive national brands, appears to have strained his personal finances. Just prior to World War I the Bergstroms sold their home in favor of more modest living arrangements at the Valley Inn. After his death in 1928, his son Jim Bergstrom continued to run the business, phasing out the manufacture of stoves in favor of furnaces. Under Bergstrom's son, furnace casting were purchased and the

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foundry end of the business abandoned. In 1948 the business closed its doors and the plant was converted to warehousing.(12) The Bergstrom plant is still extant on the 700 block of Main Street and is the only surviving 19th century industrial structure associated with Neenah's heavy metals industry.

In Factories in the Valley, Glaab and Larsen cite D. W. Bergstrom as an outstanding local example of 19th century immigrant assimilation and financial success.(13) This citation, however, should also make reference to his brother George. As a leading 19th century industrialist who served three terms as mayor, George Bergstrom was a prominent community leader whose business provided essential economic diversity and employment in a city dominated by the manufacture of paper. He was a pioneer in establishing the local manufacture of heavy metals products, which to this day remains a significant part of Neenah's economy.

ARCHITECTURE

Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan states that the Queen Anne period of construction in Wisconsin began in the 1880s and continued into the first decade of the 20th century. It goes on to state that Queen Anne houses are characterized by an irregularity of plan and massing, and by a variety of surface textures, roofs, and wall projections. Roofs are steeply pitched with a dominate front gable, and bay windows and corner towers are often included in the design. Both classical and Colonial Revival ornamentation are prevalent.

The George O. Bergstrom House possesses many of these distinctive architectural characteristics. Its surface textures include wood shingles, clapboard, and rock-faced ashlar limestone. The roof includes a dominant front gable, the east and west facades have bay windows, and a tower is located at the northwest corner of the building. While very solidly massed, the typical irregularity of plan is evident in the inclusion of a second tower and the asymmetrical location of the veranda. Colonial Revival features are limited on the exterior to the flat modillions, the slender porch columns and the single, multipaned lighted front door that gives the appearance of a divided Dutch door. On the interior the most significant Colonial Revival feature is the gooseneck balustrade of the dramatic cascading staircase.

These typical Queen Anne features are juxtaposed with significant features more commonly associated with the Shingle Style period of construction.

Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan states that the Shingle Style period of construction began in Wisconsin in the 1880s and continued into the first decade of the 20th century. It goes on to state that the Shingle Style evolved from the Queen Anne style with a more simple emphasis on volume and horizontality. Walls are typically entirely shingled, although the first story is often stone or brick.

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Roofs may be hipped, gable or gambrel, and the pitch is also more moderate than in Queen Anne. And there is also less overall variety of color and material.

The Bergstrom house possesses many of these Shingle Style characteristics. Its roof pitch is noticeably moderate and the overall height is significantly lower than typical Queen Anne structures, emphasizing volume and horizontality. The wall surface is not entirely shingled, but there is a strong presence of stone on the central tower, around the front door, and in the veranda wall. The large gambrel end is another distinguishing characteristic, as is the blending of the conical tower with gambrel roofline. The polygonal dormer and the recessed attic window with its curving shingled sidewalls and hooded overhang are two more distinguishing features. The overall design is further distinguished from Queen Anne by the comparatively ascetic absence of ornamental features. Fishscale shingles are entirely absent except on the polygonal dormer. Window and door frames are also distinctively devoid of any applied ornamentation. The Shingle Style is also present in the plan of the interior, which is dominated by a central living hall with a dramatic cascading staircase. The newel posts are carved with interlacing floral motifs, as is the door hardware.

This sophisticated simplicity of design in an era of architectural excess required the hand of a master architect, which in Northeastern Wisconsin was William Waters. While conclusive documentation of Waters' association with the Bergstrom house is not known to exist, there is evidence of his influence. Four years after the completion of the Bergstrom house, Waters designed the Allison Ideson House at 1304 Algoma Boulevard in Oshkosh. Both have small, central towers in which the conical roof form blends into the roofline of the larger gable. The first floor of both towers are also faced in rock-faced ashlar limestone, as are the walls surrounding the front door. Another distinguishing Waters feature of the Bergstrom house is the veranda portal vents. This element is not included in the design of the Ideson house but is included in Waters' 1904 veranda addition to the Havilah Babcock House (537 E. Wisconsin Ave.; NRHP), and in Waters' design of the 1906 J. H. Wall House (206 Algoma Boulevard, Oshkosh; NRHP). It is also of some significance that in 1892 Waters designed the D. W. Bergstrom house, which stood on Church Street until its demolition in the 1960s.

The architectural context of the George O. Bergstrom House gives further evidence of its distinctiveness and integrity. The 1891 Charles R. Smith House (824 E. Forest Ave., NRHP) is more typically Queen Anne with its round corner tower and plethora of incised ornamentation at the cornice and around the windows and doors. The house William Waters designed in 1893 for Henry S. Smith (709 E. Forest Ave., NRHP) is more similar to the Bergstrom house in its use of shingling and the blending of a central tower into its front facade. The Henry Smith house, however, is far more

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extensively ornamented with Colonial Revival details such as bas relief friezes and dentiled cornices. It has also been so greatly enlarged that, with the addition of a third story to the tower, the horizontality and low massing have been distorted.

The 1904 Albert Gilbert House (1010 E. Forest Avenue) was also designed by Waters and is also similarly shingled with a polygonal corner tower blended into the wall and gable roofline. Like the Bergstrom house its stone veranda has portal vents, but its veranda roof has been removed. This alteration emphasizes the verticality and overall height of the design, which with three floors and an attic is significantly greater than the Bergstrom House. The Gilbert and Smith houses, as well as the Ideson house, include many more styles of cut shingles. The D. W. Bergstrom House similarly displayed a variety of shingle styles and was, with a three-story corner tower, far more vertical in its massing. Outside this context of form that incorporates a tower, the George O. Bergstrom House is further distinguished from other significant Neenah residences of the era. The 1894 Ellis Jennings House (711 E. Forest Ave., NRHP) is far more ornamented and vertical in the Queen Anne style. The 1892 C. W. Howard House (409 E. Wisconsin Ave.) and the 1893 Perry Lindsley House (1102 E. Forest Ave.) are more comparable in simplicity of design, but both are more modest in scale. These three residences are also the work of Waters.

Within this turn-of-the-century context of domestic architecture in Neenah, the George O. Bergstrom can be seen as an important example of both Queen Anne and Shingle Style design. While moderately altered, it retains sufficient integrity of site and form, and is distinguished by the absence of ornamentation in an era that is characterized by its generous application.

- (1) The period of significance begins with the date of construction and continues to the year in which the property was sold by the Bergstroms.
- (2) Neenah Daily Times, 6/5/1894.
- (3) Association with Waters is inferred from the following sources: Neenah Daily Times: 3/27/1893, 7/20/1893, 9/6/1893, 10/4/1893.
- (4) Daily News-Times 7/30/1928.
- (5) Hammond, Christie. "The Italian-Style Gardens of Kimberly Crest; Redlands, California." Unpublished thesis, UC - Riverside.
- (6) Neenah Daily Times; 7/20/1893.
- (7) Smith, Alice. Millstone and Saw. P. 75.
- (8) Neenah Gazette, 8/31/1872.
- (9) Neenah Gazette, 4/4/1874.
- (10) Neenah Gazette, 5/26/1883; Neenah Daily Times, 1/22/1903.
- (11) Neenah Daily Times; 1/22/1903.
- (12) Shattuck, S. F. History of Neenah. P. 299.
- (13) Factories in the Valley, p. 210.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
 preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository:

CITY OF NEENAH, DEPT. OF COMM. DEVELOPMENT

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property LESS THAN ONE ACRE

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>3/8/4/1/3/0</u>	<u>4/8/9/2/7/3/0</u>	B	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / / /</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / / /</u>	D	<u>/</u>	<u>/ / / / /</u>	<u>/ / / / / / /</u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Subdivision of Block F, Lakeview Addition; Lots 3, 4, 20, and 21, Block F.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lot area that has been historically associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Peter J. Adams

organization N/A

date May 18, 1992

street & number 636 East Doty Avenue

telephone 414/725-1945

city or town Neenah

state Wisconsin zip code 54956

NPS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

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Photographic Materials - Identification

Bergstrom, George O. House
Neenah, Winnebago County, WI
Photos by Peter Adams, May 1992
Negatives at State Historical Society of Wisconsin

- Photo #1 of 6: View from northeast.
- Photo #2 of 6: View from north.
- Photo #3 of 6: View from northwest.
- Photo #4 of 6: View from south.
- Photo #5 of 6: View of garage from north.
- Photo #6 of 6: View of staircase in living hall.

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Section number OWNER Page 1 Bergstrom, George O. House
Neenah, Winnebago Co., WI

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