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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Dettman, Art Fishing Shanty

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Church Street at Ahnapsee River N/A not for publication

city, town Algoma N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Kewaunee code 061 zip code 54201

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> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</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.

[Signature] _____ 11/5/93
Signature of certifying official Date
State Historic Preservation Officer-Wisconsin
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property X 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

Entered in the
National Register

[Signature] 12/10/93

___ determined eligible for the National Register. ___ See continuation sheet

___ determined not eligible for the National Register.

___ removed from the National Register.

___ other, (explain:) _____

[Signature] _____
Signature of the Keeper Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/fishing facility or site

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century
American Movements

foundation Concrete
walls Asphalt
roof Asphalt
other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Art Dettman Fishing Shanty is a highly intact one-story rectilinear plan wood frame Astylistic Utilitarian form building that is located at the mouth of the Ahnapee River in the city of Algoma. This vernacular building was constructed on the north bank of the river in 1935 for Art Dettman, a local commercial fisherman who utilized it as the onshore facility of his fishing operations. Dettman ended his commercial fishing career in 1950, but retained ownership of the shanty until 1987, when the present owner took possession. The shanty measures 48-foot-long by 33.5-foot-deep and rests on a concrete slab foundation. The original rolled asphalt siding still covers the exterior walls, which rise up to the overhanging open eaves of the tar-covered gable roof that shelters the building. The interior of the building is also still in largely original condition, two frame partition walls being used to divide it into three separate but interconnected spaces. In 1935, the Dettman Shanty was the newest of thirteen small commercial fishing shanties that lined both banks at the mouth of the Ahnapee. Unfortunately, nearly all of these buildings have since been demolished and the extremely well-maintained Dettman Shanty is now the largest and the most intact of the four that remain.

The city of Algoma is sited on both banks of the northwest to southeast flowing Ahnapee River at the point where the Ahnapee empties into Lake Michigan.¹ By far the largest part of the city is laid out on the relatively flat land located on the south side of the river. This area contains most of Algoma's residential neighborhoods and its central business district. The north edge of the business district runs along the upper edge of the south bank of the river, where the now vacated tracks of the Ahnapee & Western Railroad were once also located. Other residential neighborhoods are located on the somewhat steeper land found on the north side of the river, but this area is only about one-fifth the size of the area to the south.

Traditionally, the banks of both sides of the Ahnapee in Algoma have been given over to buildings associated with manufacturing and other commercial enterprises. Among these was the plant of the Algoma Foundry and Machine Co., historically one of Algoma's most important industries (the much modified remains of this plant are located on the north bank of the river just to the east of the present Fourth Street bridge). Another of Algoma's most notable commercial enterprises was the fishing industry that developed in the area towards the end of the nineteenth century to harvest the abundant fisheries of Lake Michigan. For nearly a century, from the 1880s to the mid-1980s, most of the 600-foot-long stretch of riverbank between today's Fourth Street bridge and the mouth of the river was lined with the wooden docks and the small frame buildings or "shanties" that were associated with this industry. Typically, each fisherman in Algoma maintained his own onshore facilities, a situation that led to the development of numerous small buildings rather than a few larger ones such as those that characterized the industry in other Great Lakes ports in Wisconsin such as Bayfield.

¹ The 1980 population of Algoma was 3656.

8. Statement of Significance

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

Applicable National Register Criteria X A _____ B _____ C _____ D

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Commerce

Period of Significance

1935 - 1943

Significant Dates

1935⁴

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

The Art Dettman Fishing Shanty is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its local significance under National Register (NR) Criterion A. More specifically, the Dettman Shanty is being nominated because of its associations with the NR significance area of Commerce, a theme that is also identified in the State of Wisconsin's Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP). Research to confirm this significance was centered on the Great Lakes Fishing Industry section of the Industry Study Unit of the CRMP.⁵ This research identified the Art Dettman Fishing Shanty as the most intact of the few remaining buildings in Algoma that are associated with that city's historically important local fishing industry.

The Art Dettman Fishing Shanty was built for Arthur Dettman in 1935 in conjunction with Dettman's concurrent construction of a 40-foot fishing boat, "The Caroline," which was named after his bride of five months.⁶ Boat and shanty were constructed at a cost of approximately \$10,000 and both were operated by Dettman as part of a commercial fishing operation that he carried on until 1950, when invading sea lampreys all but wiped out commercial fishing in the Great Lakes. Dettman then sold his boat to others and used his shanty as a storage place for a short-lived beer and soda-pop distribution business he operated. Dettman's interest in fishing revived in the early 1960s, however, after the State of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources began introducing salmon fingerlings into Lake Michigan for sport fishing.

Realizing the potential this program had for reviving interest in the area, Dettman then began what became virtually a second career on the water as a sport fishing

⁴ Algoma Record-Herald. (Algoma, WI), October 4, 1935, pg. 1; December 27, 1935, pg. 1.

⁵ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Cultural Resource Management Plan, Vol. 2. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1986. (Industry).

⁶ Algoma Record-Herald. October 4, 1935, pg. 1.

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The Dettman Shanty is the easternmost of the shanties on the north bank of the river. Today, three smaller and somewhat older shanties are located to the west of the Dettman Shanty, but the demolition of other shanties that were originally located in between them has given the survivors an isolated appearance that is quite different from the "cheek-by-jowl" appearance that historically characterized these riverbanks. The Dettman Shanty sits at the southern end of a large trapezoidal-shaped lot that is located at the south foot of Church Street, most of the lot being now given over to lawn and to a smaller gravel-surfaced parking area. The lot is bounded by the Ahnapee River on the southwest and by a small modern docking area to the southeast that has been created at the mouth of Algoma's harbor, the shorelines of both being held in place by stone and log cribbing. Portions of the river in front of the shanty were deepened in 1935 to facilitate the docking of Dettman's new fishing boat, "The Caroline," and the fill that was removed was used to improve the shoreline of the lot. Dettman's new shanty was then constructed on top of this fill.

Exterior

The Dettman shanty is situated at the extreme south end of its lot immediately adjacent to the river. The building is free-standing in design and its exterior walls are founded on wooden plates that rest on the concrete slab foundation that underlies the entire building. These walls are made of horizontally laid 1" by 9" shiplap boards that are attached to a standard wood frame that features studs placed on two-foot centers. The exterior surface of these walls is now covered in dark green rolled asphalt siding, the typical type of siding used on Algoma's fishing shanties.² The very shallow-pitched gable roof that shelters the building has a ridgeline that runs in a northeast-southwest direction. The roof is now covered with tar that has been poured over tar paper that is attached to the rough board decking of the roof. This decking extends beyond the walls to form open eaves and the ends of the boards are covered with a simple fascia board. Window and door openings throughout the building are located wherever need dictated.

The main facades of the shanty face southwest towards the river and northeast towards the land side. The southwest facade is 48-feet in length and it faces onto a wooden boardwalk that spans the width of the lot along the river edge. This boardwalk is elevated approximately 4 - 5 feet above water level and it is supported by rock and log cribbing and by vertical pilings, which also act as bumpers for boats that dock along the boardwalk. This facade is three-bays-wide and it was

² In at least one place on the northeast facade, a hole in the dark green asphalt siding has revealed gray asphalt siding underneath. It is not known if this gray siding underlies all of the visible green siding, but an interview with Mrs. Arthur Dettman conducted for this nomination confirmed that rolled asphalt siding has always covered the walls of the shanty. Mrs. Dettman also noted that the green siding has been in place as long as she can remember.

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originally symmetrical in design. The right-hand (east) bay now contains a single oblong one-light fixed sash window. Early photos show that this window replaced an earlier flat-arched door opening that contained a wood door of the same size as the one in the left-hand bay, but it is not known when the original opening was altered. The middle bay features a large sliding wood door that is inset into a flat-arched opening. This door has six-lights placed above three panels, each of which is filled with vertical matchboard. The left-hand (west) bay contains a single narrow sliding wooden door. The door features two panels, both of which are filled with vertical matchboard, and it is also inset into a flat-arched opening. Both this door and the one in the middle bay open out onto ten-foot lengths of wood decking that connect to the boardwalk that was described earlier.

The total length of this facade is extended six-feet to the west by a small ell that was originally used as a coal bin. This ell is original to the building and its southwest-facing side elevation is in the same plane as that of the main facade. The sole feature of this elevation is a flat-arched door opening that faces the river and contains a side-hinged four-panel wooden door.

The northwest-facing side elevation of the shanty is 33.5-feet in length. The right-hand (south) end of the elevation consists of the 6.5-foot-wide by 6-foot-deep ell described above. This ell sits on an extension of the same slab foundation that underlies the main building and its shed roof is formed by a downward extension of the west-facing slope of the main roof. The only opening on the northwest-facing elevation of the ell is a small oblong-shaped side-hinged door that is placed in the upper left-hand corner. There are no other openings or features of any sort on the remaining portion of this elevation of the shanty, but a small square window opening that was originally located just to the left of the ell and whose framework is visible on the inside of the shanty is now filled with wood boards and covered over with asphalt siding.

The northeast-facing main facade is also 48-feet in length and it is very similar in design to the southwest-facing facade described earlier. This facade too is three-bays-wide. The right-hand (west) bay contains a single sliding wood door. This door features two panels, both of which are filled with vertical matchboard, and it is inset into a flat-arched opening. Just to the right of this door is a small four-light fixed-sash window that is placed in a square, flat-arched opening. The middle bay features a pair of large sliding wood doors that are inset into a flat-arched opening. These doors both have six-lights placed above three panels, each panel of which is filled with vertical matchboard.³ The current owner has placed a large, handsomely painted commemorative sign in the main gable end above these doors that reads as follows:

³ The paneled portions of each of these doors are now covered over by sheets of 1/8" plywood, both inside and out. The original matchboarding is still intact, however, and can be easily restored to view.

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Art Dettman Shanty
Fishing Tug Caroline
Both Built in 1935

The left-hand bay contains a single oblong one-light fixed sash window like the one in the same location on the opposite facade, but it is not known if this window also replaces an earlier door opening.

The southeast-facing side elevation of the shanty is 33.5-feet in length and it is asymmetrical in design and two-bays-wide. The left-hand bay consists of a pair of one-over-one light double hung flat-arched wood sash windows that are placed just to the left of the center of the elevation. A single window of the same design is placed in the right-hand bay. These windows are not believed to be original to the building but it is not known when they were added or what, if anything, they replaced.

Interior

Much of the original interior of the shanty is still intact. The interior space is divided into three separate rooms by two floor-to-ceiling partition walls that run the full depth of the building. The method of construction of these walls is identical to that of the exterior walls. Studs are placed on two-foot centers. The studs are left visible in the two end rooms, but in the center room the studs are hidden by the same horizontally laid 1" by 9" shiplap boards that sheathe the exterior walls. The three rooms formed in this manner originally consisted of: (1) a 12-foot-wide by 33.5-foot-deep fish-cleaning and packing room that occupied the western end of the building, (2) a 24.5-foot-wide by 33.5-foot-deep net mending room that occupied the center of the building, (3) a 12-foot-wide by 33.5-foot-deep net storage room that occupied the eastern end of the building. Interior doors made of board and batten permitted passage between these rooms and each room was wired for electricity. Heat for the building was originally supplied by a coal-burning stove located in the south end of the central room. This stove was operated with a stoker, fuel being kept in the ell attached to the south end of the fish-cleaning room, and the stove was exhausted via a metal stovepipe that was attached to a still extant cream brick chimney that is located on the partition wall towards the south end of the fish-cleaning room.

The fish-cleaning and packing room was where the fish were prepared for shipment. The already gutted fish were off-loaded from the fishing boat and brought inside through the sliding door at the south end of the room. The fish were then cleaned and packed in ice that was hand-flaked from large blocks that were stored in a now-vanished building located just to the west of the shanty. Crates of fish were then passed through the sliding door at the north end of the room for delivery to the railroad depot or later, to waiting trucks, both of which delivered the fish to waiting wholesale markets, most of which were in Milwaukee and Chicago.

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The south 9.5-feet of this room is partitioned off from the remainder and it is believed that this space originally housed the stoker for the furnace (the coal storage space in the ell once opened directly into this space) and was also used to store items related to the operation of the boat. It is not known if the current appearance of this space dates to 1935, however. This space differs from the others in two ways. All four walls are covered in horizontal boards that are less wide than the 1" by 9" boards used on the exterior walls and the ceiling of this space does not extend up to the roof but is flat instead and is covered in the same boards as the walls. Since wall boards now completely cover the original opening into the ell it seems likely that the walls and ceilings were covered with boards at a later date, but just when is not known.

The larger central room was originally used for general storage and for mending the large commercial fishing nets associated with gill net fishing. Damaged nets were placed on large racks at one end of the room, the mending took place in the space at the center, and the repaired nets were then taken into the net storage room. Mending was often done during the daytime since it was an activity reserved for periods when boats could not leave the harbor. Consequently, daylight could be used for mending and this light was provided by four non-extant skylights, two of which were originally placed on each slope of the roof close to the ridgeline. Early photos show that these skylights were all identical in size and design, had a gable-shape, and remained in use until at least the 1960s. It is not known when they were removed but the wooden framework that supported them can still be seen.

The third and easternmost room was originally the net storage room. Here, wet nets were brought inside after a run and wound up on large horizontal wooden reels, which were then wheeled outside for drying. Dry nets were then taken off the reels and packed into boxes for use on the next day's fishing run.

Originally, all three of these rooms were strictly utilitarian in appearance. All walls save the side walls of the net mending room were devoid of (interior) cladding and the ceilings were open to the roof. In the 1960s, though, when sport fishing began to replace commercial fishing on the Great Lakes, Dettman began to make some cosmetic changes to the interior of his shanty. It is not known if the small room at the south end of the fish-packing room dates from this period but it is certain that the modern galvanized metal fish-cleaning station in the room does. Portions of the east wall in the remaining portion of the original fish-packing room have also now been covered over with 1/4" thick composition board. In addition, the skylights in the net mending room were removed and their openings were boarded over, the spaces between the room's ceiling rafters and the spaces between the wall studs of its two end walls were filled with fiberglass bat insulation, and all of the end walls save for the sliding doors were then covered over with thin sheets of composition board. A row of ten lockers covered in artificial wood veneer was also attached to the east wall of this room and these lockers were used by visiting sport fishermen.

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The greatest change to the interior of the shanty has occurred in the former net-storage room. In the 1960s Dettman transformed this room into a club room for visiting sports fishermen by installing a suspended ceiling, by lining the walls with rough-finished vertical tongue-and-groove boards, and by carpeting the floor. It is also thought that the double hung windows on the east wall of this room and the oblong windows on the north and south walls probably date from this period as well.

Fortunately, most of the alterations that have taken place inside the shanty are easily reversible. The most difficult tasks would be closing up the later window openings in the old net storage room and replacing the missing skylights. Otherwise, the basic fabric of the shanty is in an excellent state of preservation thanks to the continuous maintenance it has received over the years.

Other changes to the property over the years include the removal of machinery located outside of the shanty that was associated with Art Dettman's commercial fishing career. Early photos show that there was originally a large concrete boiling tank and an associated chimney stack located just to the east of the shanty. This tank was used to boil nets that had become begrimed with waste picked up from the lake bottom and similar machinery was once a feature of many of the commercial fishing operations along the river.

In addition, the land underneath the shanty has been raised at least three feet since the building was built. This happened in 1950-1, when a heavy northeast storm caused shoreline damage and flooding in the vicinity and also resulted in damage to the shanty itself when several large boulders were dislodged, sending them crashing into the north side of the shanty. Other shoreline repair has also been made necessary from time-to-time by the rising water levels of Lake Michigan and the Ahnapee River. These acts were essential for the survival of the shanty and have had no adverse affect on the building itself.

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Art Dettman Fishing Shanty, Algoma, Kewaunee County, Wisconsin
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charter boat owner and captain. He quickly became well known for this activity, thanks to his tireless promotion of the Algoma area and its fishing. In 1964, Dettman was elected the mayor of Algoma and during the 10 years he held office he was known throughout the state as Algoma's "Fishing Mayor." During this period and afterwards, Dettman continued to use his shanty in conjunction with his sport fishing activities, making it one of the few buildings in Algoma that has important historic associations with both the commercial fishing and the sport fishing phases of the city's history.

Historic Background

A fine overview of the history of the commercial fishing industry in Wisconsin is contained in the Great Lakes Fishing Industry section of the CRMP's Industry Theme.⁷ Consequently, the discussion that follows deals solely with the history of this industry as it pertains to Algoma and to the activities of Art Dettman.

Fishing appears to have been conducted in Algoma as early as 1851, when the first settlers arrived at the mouth of the Ahnapee River (then known as the Wolf River). These men were John Hughes and Orrin Warner, both of whom made their first journey to the site in March of 1851 from the city of Manitowoc.

They remained a week, their camp being made of boat sails, at the spot where the Water and Light Plant is now located. In May they again returned to the same place, erected a small shack, and remained for three weeks looking over the country and fishing. They decided to return to Manitowoc for their families.

Just when Edward Tweeddale and family decided to settle in Wolf River is not recorded, but old records have it that the John Hughes and Edward Tweeddale families arrived at Wolf River on June 27, 1851, and were occupying their cabins when the Orrin Warner family arrived one week later.⁸

The following year, Abraham Hall established a saw-mill on the south branch of the river, which was located close to the river's mouth, and he also ran a grist-mill as well. Also in 1852, the schooner "Citizen" from Manitowoc began to make regular trips to Wolf River, bringing with it supplies and more settlers and carrying away cut lumber, the principal product of what was then a densely forested region. In 1855, Simon Hall, brother of Abraham, arrived and built the first general store and stocked it.

⁷ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Op. Cit., Vol. 2. (Industry), pgs. 18-1 - 18-6.

⁸ Ackerman, Mrs. D. V. and Mrs. H. V. Foshion. "Women's Club Reviews Algoma History: Learns About Pioneers." Algoma Record-Herald. February 13, 1948, pg. 11. These settlers appear to have been the first in the area to engage in Lake fishing, although initially this activity was probably a subsistence rather than a commercial activity.

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In 1856, a large number settled in Ahnapee (Wolf River), the first steamboat, the "Cleveland," of Manitowoc, landing August 8, of that year. In the same year David Young built north pier, a school-house, on the north side of the river, was being filled up ... the bridge which was built next summer (across the Ahnapee) was being discussed, and all in all, the year 1856 was one of much activity and excitement. The fact that Kewaunee County had been formed this year, and the town organized, under the name of Wolf River, sufficiently explains this rush of energy. G. W. Elliott, the County Surveyor, platted the west side of Ahnapee in the spring and the east side during the fall. And this--the organization of the county and town, and the platting of the village--may be considered the close of Ahnapee's pioneer history.⁹

Among the large number of families settling in Wolf River in 1856 were many families from Racine, Wisconsin. "These included the Youngs, Evelands, Harkins, Palmers, Mullens, Parkers, Henrys, Hiltons, Richmonds, Goodwins and Hallams. Soon after this came the Schiessers, a Swiss family, ... and Germany sent the Simons, Melchiors, Beitlings, Knipfers, Bensows, Brandts, Heners, Raethers, Gerickes, Krauses, Buschs and Klenskys. Then came the Bohemian families ... the Swatys, Blahniks, Chapeks and Jakubovskys.¹⁰ These families gave the new village a vigorous mix of ethnic backgrounds, but one with a decidedly German orientation that still persists today.

On May 10, 1859, the name Wolf River was changed to Ahnapee, an Indian name meaning Gray Wolf. Beginning in the same year, a Goodrich Line steam ship stopped at Ahnapee twice a week on her Green Bay-Chicago route and brought with it newspapers, mail and provisions. The first census was taken in 1860 and showed that the town of Ahnapee (which had also been renamed the previous year) contained 1152 inhabitants. Getting out lumber and cultivating the land were the chief industries.

In 1866, the south pier was built, and Ahnapee had the makings of a real harbor at last. The community grew steadily throughout the remainder of the century. In 1873, Ahnapee was incorporated as a village and on February 28, 1879, it was incorporated as a city. Between 1890 and 1900 most of the streets were laid out, the city's name was changed to Algoma in 1897, and by 1900 the city population had reached 1738. Throughout this period lumbering and the manufacturing of lumber-related products played a major role in the economy of the town. In 1892, M. W. Perry founded the Algoma Plywood Company which eventually became the largest employer in Algoma and a major subsidiary of U.S. Plywood-Champion Papers, Inc. Other industries were also developed in the city as well, including the Kelsey Fly Net Company (later the Algoma Net Company), and the Algoma Foundry and Machine Company, a manufacturer of farm machinery. All of these companies had plants

⁹ History of Northern Wisconsin. Chicago: The Western Historical Society, 1881, pg. 433.

¹⁰ Ackerman, Mrs. D. V. and Mrs. H. V. Foshion. Op. Cit.

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located on or near the riverfront in Algoma and some of the buildings associated with these plants are still extant today.

A major contributor to the growth of Algoma was the development of the Ahnapee & Western Railroad in the early 1890s.

This city, until the building of this road, was to a large extent, retarded in its development from the lack of railroad facilities. It is due to the enterprise of Edward Decker and his son, David Decker, that the railroad was built. The first line was finished two years ago, making connection at Casco Junction, (about 12 miles southwest of Algoma) with the Kewaunee & Western, a part of the Green Bay, Winona & St. Paul system. This places the city in railroad communication with points in all directions. The line to Sturgeon Bay has (also) just been completed.¹¹

Completion of this railroad gave Algoma and its existing industries a critical link to outside markets, and it also made new industries possible. The railroad was especially important to the growth of Algoma's commercial fishing industry. Fishing as a commercial activity had been associated with Algoma and its inhabitants since the community was founded, but the lack of transportation facilities had prevented local fishermen from filling the needs of any but local markets. As a result, the capital formation needed to practice fishing on a more extensive scale was almost impossible to achieve. Fishing then was done in open one-masted 20-foot catboats "Built of cedar or pine "planking" with oak frames. Some boats were built entirely of oak. They were of shallow draft (usually flat bottom) to enable them to cross the bar at the river's mouth. They were propelled by oar or sail and could easily be beached in case of a storm."¹² The earliest Algoman to fish in this fashion was Edward Tweeddale, who fished the Lake Michigan waters from the time of his arrival in 1851 until he retired in 1866.¹³ Others who were following this trade around the time of the coming of the railroad were J. L. McDonald, George Wenniger, and Frank Chapek¹⁴ and by the turn-of-the-century they had been joined by Henry Muench, George Bohman, and William Adamson.¹⁵

¹¹ Ahnapee Record. September 27, 1894. Special (Ahnapee) Edition.

¹² Muench, Henry G. "Fish, fishboat and fishermen have changed through the years." Algoma Record-Herald, April 28, 1976. Muench was himself an Algoma commercial fisherman and he was also the son of a fisherman of the same name. In 1976, Muench wrote a series of articles in the Algoma Record-Herald (April 26, April 28, May 5, August 18, August 25, and September 22) that together provide a superb in-depth record of the life of Algoma's twentieth century commercial fisherman and the techniques they used. Because this information is extensive and is readily available on microfilm, it has not been incorporated into this nomination.

¹³ History of Northern Wisconsin. Op. Cit., pg. 436.

¹⁴ Ahnapee Record. September 27, 1894. Special (Ahnapee) Edition.

¹⁵ Algoma Record-Herald. "Fishing's heyday." February 11, 1981, pg. 6.

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Having access to Milwaukee and Chicago markets gave these men real commercial potential for the first time, and as new technologies changed the boat-building industry, this potential began to be realized.

Prior to 1892, commercial fishing in Algoma was negligible. This rapidly changed when the railroad opened the large market for fresh fish. The fishermen were quick to take advantage of this and the fleet began to grow.

Also about this time the marine engine made its appearance. While these early motors were crude by modern standards, they enabled the fisherman to build larger and safer boats. The hull had now grown from 20 feet to 40 feet in length; the width grew proportionately.

These boats were built of wood and the hull covered with a sheeting of steel to protect it from ice. They were now custom built at Manitowoc, Sturgeon Bay or Sumaico by professional boatbuilders.

As the fish boat continued to increase in size, steel began to replace wood construction. The present day (1976) fish tug is built entirely of steel, 50 to 60 feet in length, driven by a powerful diesel motor. The hull and house design is still patterned after the last wood boats.¹⁶

The result of these changes was the establishment of a genuine Algoma-based fishing industry. The number of men engaged in this trade in Algoma varied over the years but by 1934, eight boats were operating out of Algoma and they were pulling in better than 300,000 pounds of fish annually, the catch about evenly split between trout and chub.¹⁷ By this time, too, the shantys associated with the industry lined the banks of the Annapee River in the heart of Algoma and they and the boats they served gave the city an identity that was out of all proportion to the actual numbers of persons employed.

Every nationality was represented in the fishing fleet, but men of German heritage were especially prominent. Names such as Wenniger, Muench, Bohman, Wilhelm, Schneider, Busch, Kohlbeck and Lauscher have been associated with the fleet since the coming of the railroad made the industry possible. Another man of German heritage who was drawn to this trade was Art Dettman, the builder of the shanty that is the subject of this nomination.

¹⁶ Muench, Henry G. "Fish, fishboat and fishermen have changed through the years." Algoma Record-Herald, April 28, 1976. Another benefit of daily rail (and later, truck) transportation was that the Algoma commercial fishing industry was spared the expense of having to erect costly cold storage facilities.

¹⁷ Green Bay Press-Gazette. "Algoma, Thriving Little City by Lake, Founded 100 Years Ago." July 18, 1934. Tercentennial Edition, Retail Section.

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Arthur (Art) Dettman was born in Algoma on April 27, 1912. His parents were Mr. and Mrs. Edward Dettman, owners and operators of a dairy farm in the nearby Kewaunee County farming community of Rankin. Art Dettman was educated at Algoma High School and after finishing school in 1931, he went to work at Plumber's Woodwork manufacturing plant in Algoma. In 1935, Dettman married Caroline Braemer (1912-), another Algoma High School graduate, and began to rethink his career.¹⁹

"I think what got him interested in fishing was that he went out with an oldtime fisherman, Henry Gehrke," Caroline (Mrs. Arthur Dettman) said. "He decided he just liked that kind of life. He didn't want to become a farmer." Having accepted the fact that his son wouldn't become a farmer, albeit reluctantly, Ed Dettman helped set up Art in the commercial fishing business. While trout was selling for just 10 cents a pound in those early days, volume made it into a profitable venture. There must have been a dozen commercial boats at the time. There was an outlet, a truck service which picked up trout and took them to Chicago and even New York markets.²⁰

With \$10,000 loaned by his father, Dettman ordered a new fishing tug (named "The Caroline" after his new bride) from fledgling Sturgeon Bay boatbuilder Fred Peterson and commenced a search for a suitable site on which to build a new shanty to house his onshore operations. The only vacant spot left on the banks of the Annapee at that time was at the extreme east end of the north bank at the entrance to the harbor, but this site required some filling in order for the shoreline to be made buildable.²⁰ Work began early in the fall of 1935 and was well advanced by October, and since building activity of any kind in Algoma was noteworthy in that Depression year, Dettman's activities became front page news.

Algoma's fishing fleet will be augmented by a newcomer with the arrival of "The Caroline", now under construction and to be operated by Arthur Dettman. The dock for Dettman's new venture is practically completed and a Krueger Construction shovel was used this week to deepen the water. Dettman plans to erect his "shanty" immediately east of the George Kohlbeck layout. He expects to receive his new boat within the next ten days or two weeks.²¹

By December, Dettman's fishing venture was in operation and he continued to pursue it until 1950, when the invasion of sea lamprey into the Great Lakes began to kill off much of the lake trout and whitefish populations. The result was that most of

¹⁹ Algoma Record-Herald. June 14, 1935, pg. 4. Wedding announcement of Arthur and Caroline Dettman.

²⁰ Algoma Record-Herald. "Dettman helped promote Algoma's sport fishing." August 11, 1988, Shanty Days 88' special section.

²⁰ Interview in Algoma with Caroline (Mrs. Arthur) Dettman, December 9, 1992.

²¹ Algoma Record-Herald. "Art Dettman Fits Out New Fishing Boat." October 4, 1935, pg. 1.

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the commercial fisherman in the Algoma area including Dettman gave up fishing for a living. Dettman sold his boat and used his shanty as a storage depot for a new beer and soda distributorship operation.

Five years later, another outside force helped Dettman into another career change. High water caused a lot of damage to his beer and pop supplies in the shanty. Having decided he didn't want to service taverns for the rest of his life, the incident got Dettman out of the distributorship business and into a bookkeeper position the next 20 years for (Gerald (Jag)) Haegele at both Jag Signs and the marina.

When Haegele decided to promote Algoma (sport) fishing, Dettman quite naturally, became his right-hand man. "Jag was the promoter for Algoma. When there was an indication that sport fishing was going to become popular, those two did a lot of work setting the business up before there were even any charter boats or anything," Caroline said. Dettman and Haegele even took in a number of seminars in Michigan where sport fishing was already popular. Dettman, who had bought a boat again, helped promote fishing by taking visitors and celebrities out in his boat. Haegele helped by paying Dettman for the time he took them fishing.²²

In 1964, Dettman was elected mayor of Algoma, an office he held for the next ten years. During that time local restaurateur Lynn (Jumbo) Lawrenz helped promote Dettman as Algoma's "Fishing Mayor." "He (Lawrenz) encouraged fishermen to come to his restaurant, Jumbo's Drive-in, and have "breakfast with the fishing mayor." People would then ask the mayor where the fishing was good."²³ Among those Dettman met in this way were outdoor columnists from the Milwaukee Journal and WGN Radio in Chicago. Dettman was also introduced to Wisconsin governor Warren Knowles by the owner of a Madison (Wisconsin) funeral home (Sam San Filippo) and the resulting publicity photos of Knowles fishing in Algoma gave the community statewide publicity. As a result, Algoma earned a statewide and regional reputation for sport fishing even before charter fishing began in the area.

After leaving office in 1972, Dettman continued to be an active and highly visible promoter of Algoma. Finally, in 1987, he sold his shanty to his old friend and former employer, Jag Haegele.²⁴ The following year, in 1988, the citizens of Algoma

²² Algoma Record-Herald. "Dettman helped promote Algoma's sport fishing." August 11, 1988, Shanty Days 88' special section. Haegele, another Algoma native, was and is a well-known local businessman who developed the Algoma Marine Marina, located on the north shore of the harbor just to the east of the shanty, the Harbor Inn Motel, and an outdoor advertising company, Jag Signs, which he still operates today.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Algoma Record-Herald. August 13, 1987. Haegele is gradually restoring the building with the hope of possibly reusing it as a living museum dedicated to Algoma's fishing and boating days.

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chose Dettman as the honoree of the second Algoma Shanty Day's Festival, which is held in August of each year.

Art Dettman is still living today at the age of 80, but he is now in a local nursing home recovering from the effects of several strokes. Nearly all of the other men who fished with him on Lake Michigan during the heyday of the commercial fishing industry have now passed on, though, and most of the buildings that were once associated with them are now gone as well. Today, the Dettman shanty and the three other surviving tar paper-covered shanties located along the north bank of the Ahnapee are the only remaining buildings that were associated with the commercial fishing industry in Algoma prior to World War II. Of these four, the Dettman shanty, built in 1935, is the newest and the best preserved, and, thanks to the high visibility of its original owner, it has also been closely associated with the rise of the sport fishing industry that has grown up in the area since 1965. Consequently, it is believed that the Dettman shanty is the best surviving embodiment of what was once a thriving and highly visible industry in Algoma.

The Great Lakes Fishing Industry section of the CRMP identifies a number of resource types associated with this industry, including equipment storehouses, repair sheds, net cleaning, drying and winding areas, living quarters, boat docks and storage sheds, central packing houses, storage warehouses, docks, shipyards, and rail loading stations/platforms.²⁵ Many of these, however, are resource types that are associated with large scale factory operations such as the ones in Bayfield and Green Bay that once belonged to the Booth Fisheries. In Algoma, though, the resource types were associated with the needs of the small independent fisherman. Here, each fisherman built a building of his own that housed all his onshore needs. These buildings were traditionally called "shanties" and they were without the slightest pretense to architectural importance, being totally functional in design and construction.

The location of these shanties was dictated by functional requirements and by constraints imposed by the setting. Each fisherman needed a place to dock his boat and he also needed a building located immediately adjacent to this dock where supplies could be stored and newly caught fish prepared for shipment. The narrow harbor at the mouth of the Ahnapee made it impractical to locate such facilities anywhere but along the riverbanks. The choice of a site was further limited by shallow water about 600 feet up river from the mouth and by the fact that the water in the river iced over beyond this point for the same reason. These restrictions concentrated the fishing shanties along both the north and south shores of the river for a distance of about 600 feet from the mouth of the river. The minimum width of each fisherman's dock area was pretty much determined by the maximum length of his boat, which varied historically from about 20 feet in the 1890s to a maximum of about 45 feet by the 1930s.

²⁵ Wyatt, Barbara (Ed.). Op. Cit., Vol. 2. (Industry), pg. 18-5.

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Because most Algoma fishermen tended to fish for the same types of fish, the equipment used by each with essentially the same at any given time, and their onshore needs were also essentially identical. Consequently, the designs of their buildings and support facilities tended to run to type. Historic photos of the mouth of the Ahnapee dating from around 1900 show that the earliest shanties were all small windowless gable-roofed one-story square or rectilinear-plan frame construction buildings. These buildings did not have basements and their walls were originally clad in wooden boards that were later covered over with tar paper or with rolled asphalt siding, the feature for which they are perhaps best remembered. The area around each shanty was given over to the large wooden reels and racks on which nets were dried.²⁶ As the fishing industry developed, more and more of these shanties were built, and by the early 1930s, both shores of the Ahnapee as far as the Sixth Street bridge were lined "cheek-to-jowl" with the docks and shanties of the Algoma fishing fleet.

By 1930, many of the older shanties were starting to wear out, and fishing boats were getting longer and could carry larger loads. As a result, the older shanties were becoming too small to meet the needs of the fishermen. The result was that during the first half of the 1930s, most of the original shanties were either extended by additions or they were demolished and replaced with larger buildings.²⁷ Fortunately, many of these second generation buildings survived until quite recently and they can be seen in numerous photos (for many years Algoma's picturesque harbor was said to be one of the ten most photographed spots in Wisconsin). These photos show that the new shanties were essentially identical in design and construction to the older ones, but a little larger, and that they tended to have more windows than their predecessors.²⁸

The Art Dettman shanty was the last of the second generation of shanties to be built on the Ahnapee and it was essentially identical in appearance to its predecessors except for being slightly broader. It too featured the simplest wood frame construction, and had walls clad in courses of shiplap boards that were covered over by rolled asphalt.²⁹ Such low-cost construction was consistent with the constraints imposed by the Great Depression, but it was also consistent with the real needs of the fisherman, who spent most of his time (and money) on his boat. It was the boat, after all, that was the essential component of the fisherman's life, while the

²⁶ Algoma Record-Herald. "Fishing's heyday," February 11, 1981, pg. 6.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Algoma Record-Herald. "Gill net fishing provided a glow to Algoma history." April 21, 1976. This article has a picture taken in February of 1958 that shows a good representative view of the north side of the riverbank.

²⁹ Algoma Record-Herald. February 26, 1970. This article shows an excellent view of the Dettman shanty and "The Caroline" that Art Dettman said was taken not long after the building was constructed in 1935.

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shanty was used primarily for storage, fish cleaning, and net mending.³⁰

When the Dettman shanty was constructed it is believed that there were at least thirteen others in the immediate vicinity.³¹ These buildings continued in active use as long as fishing held out, and most of them survived into the 1950s, but the waning of the fishing industry made it difficult for their owners to justify putting more money and effort into them. In the years that followed, the shanties were either lightly used for such things as storage or summer sport fishing stations, or they were left unused, and as they deteriorated they were demolished and most were not replaced. This process was accelerated by the rising Lake Michigan water level, which forced many owners of shoreline property to take steps to save it. In the process, the owners were forced to take a hard look at what were now often greatly deteriorated buildings.

"It had to come," said fourth generation commercial fisherman Andy LaFond. "The buildings were rotten. You can't work out of a tarpaper (sic) shack forever." "You kind of hate to see them go, said commercial fisherman Chuck Bowman. "Sure, with the high water we had to do something anyway, but the new metal buildings don't look the same."³²

These words were uttered in April of 1987. By the end of that year three more of the surviving shanties had been demolished, bringing the total number to its present level.

With the benefit of hindsight, such matter-of-fact decision-making may seem regrettable, but it is hardly surprising. Astylistic Utilitarian form vernacular buildings such as these were built to serve specific utilitarian needs and when they become obsolete, their owners are seldom in a position to conserve them for possible reuse at a later date. Thus, it is the more fortunate that the Dettman shanty has enjoyed such good maintenance over the years and that it should now be in the hands of an owner who respects and understands its historic importance.

³⁰ In 1932 a 42-foot boat might have cost \$1800 for the hull, \$3100 for the diesel engine, and another \$500 for the mechanical net lifter. By comparison, the cost of a well equipped, electrified shanty was probably not much over \$1000. Interview of George Bohman, conducted by Gerard D. Schmitz, March 19, 1973. Unpublished Mss. in the vertical files of the Algoma Public Library.

³¹ Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Fire Insurance map of Algoma, Wisconsin, October 1923. This map shows that there were nine shanties on the north shore at this time and historic photos of the shore make it clear that still more buildings were built later on. Mrs. Dettman, in her 1992 interview, says there were thirteen in 1935.

³² Algoma Record-Herald. "Harbor Changes." April 9, 1987.

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Owner

Mr. Gerald J. Haegele
c/o Jag Inc. Outdoor Advertising
77 Steele Street
Algoma, WI 54201

Mr. Gerald J. Haegele
3 Danby Place
Lantana, FL 33462

9. Major Bibliographical References

ACKERMAN, MRS. D. V. and MRS. H. V. FOSHION. "Women's Club Reviews Algoma History: Learns About Pioneers." Algoma Record-Herald. February 13, 1948.

Annapee Record. September 27, 1894. Special (Annapee) Edition.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): X See continuation sheet

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A	<u>1/6</u>	<u>4/6/5/5/8/0</u>	<u>4/9/3/9/4/8/0</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

This parcel of land is located in Government Lot Three, Section 26, T25N, R25E lying south of Church Street in the City of Algoma described as follows: Commencing at the SE corner of the SW¹/₄ of the NW¹/₄ of Section 26, thence due South along the One-
X See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries enclose all the land historically associated with the Art Dettman Fishing Shanty.

____ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Timothy F. Hegglund/Consultant for Mr. Gerald J. Haegele

organization N/A date February 14, 1992

street & number 1311 Morrison Street telephone (608) 251-9450

city or town Madison state WI zip code 53703

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Bibliographical References, Continued

Algoma Record-Herald. June 14, 1935; October 4, 1935; December 27, 1935; February 13, 1948; February 26, 1970; April 26, 1976; April 28, 1976; May 5, 1976; August 18, 1976; August 25, 1976; September 22, 1976; February 11, 1981; April 9, 1987; August 13, 1987; August 11, 1988

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History of Northern Wisconsin. Chicago: The Western Historical Society, 1881, pg.

Interview in Algoma with George Bonman, conducted by Gerard D. Schmitz, March 19, 1973. Unpublished Mss. in the vertical files of the Algoma Public Library.

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Muench, Henry G. Algoma Record-Herald, April 26, April 28, May 5, August 18, August 25, and September 22, 1976.

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Boundary Description, Continued

sixteenth line extended a distance of 226.10 feet to the point of real beginning, thence North 58° 47' West a distance of 123.37 feet; thence South 28° 11' West a distance of 164 feet more or less to the water's edge of the Ahnapee River; thence Southeasterly and Northeasterly along said water's edge a distance of 202 feet more or less to the 1/16 section line extended; thence due North along the 1/16 line extended a distance of 75 feet more or less to the point of beginning.