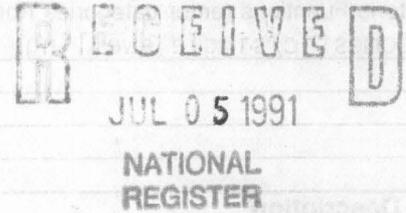


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



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.

1. Name of Property

historic name Michels, John J., House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1121 East Houghton Avenue not for publication
city, town Houghton vicinity
state Michigan code MI county Houghton code 061 zip code 49931

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<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>1</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number 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 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. See continuation sheet.
Nathaniel B. Yerkut 6-27-91
Signature of certifying official Date
Acting State Historic Preservation Officer
State or Federal agency and bureau

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:) _____
Delous Byers 8/5/91
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action
Entered in the National Register

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)

Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone

walls Wood/weatherboard

roof Asphalt

other N/A

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Description

Located on the south side of Houghton Avenue in a turn-of-the-century residential neighborhood a few blocks uphill from and east of Houghton's central business district, the Michels House is a two-story, narrow-fronted and deep, hip-roof building having a clapboarded exterior and simple detailing colonial in inspiration. Standing on a hillside that rises steeply to the south, the north-facing house rests on a foundation finished in reddish, locally obtained Jacobsville sandstone that rises a full story above ground level in front. A Tuscan-column verandah with turned-baluster railing at the first-floor level wraps around the north front and east side, its front forming a quarter-circle in front of the house's northeast corner. The porch stands on a high base of wooden posts with lattice-work aprons enclosing the spaces between the posts. Shallow, two-story, gable-roof projections -- the west-side one slant-sided and the east having a squared-off form -- bump out from the center of the house's side walls. A semi-octagonal, hip-roof dormer projects from the center front of the house's hip roof.

The house's walls are clad in narrow-exposure clapboarding, without corner boards, between a wooden water table at the base and a broad, dentilled frieze below the main cornice. The two subsidiary side gables also have a clapboarded finish. A short staircase located near the house's northeast corner leads to the verandah. From the verandah, two entrances -- one near the west end of the north front and the other into a glassed-in part of the porch at its southeastern end -- provide access to the building's interior.

The main north-side entrance leads through a small vestibule into the front stairhall, which contains a dogleg flight of stairs on its right-hand (west) side. At the far end of the hall, a narrow archway leads into a rectangular den. Opposite the staircase, a broad opening from the hall provides access to the rectangular living room, which occupies the remainder of the house's front section. Another broad, square-head doorway opens into the dining room to the south. The dining room contains the house's only fireplace and a built-in china cabinet. This room has a semi-octagonal east (outside) end with the second exterior door in one of the slanting sides and a window in the other. In the back of the house, reached from the dining room, are the kitchen and pantry and a small bathroom and staircase to the basement.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2

Five bedrooms -- small, rectangular rooms except for a larger one above the dining room that, like it, has a semi-octagonal east end -- are grouped about a central, north-south-running hallway in the second story. A large bathroom is located at the house's southwest corner. A staircase off the rear end of the hallway provides access to the large attic space that is open except for a single bedroom in front for which the large roof dormer provides light.

The Michels House has remained in the ownership of its builder's family since its construction and retains its original finish to a very high degree. The floors downstairs are of hard maple, while those upstairs are of pine. The trim in the downstairs rooms is of various woods in the different rooms, while upstairs it is generally of yellow pine.

The front hall and living room are finished in oak. The hall staircase has a heavy, square-plan staircase newell, turned-baluster railing, panelled apron, and built-in bench. Lincrusta lines the wall beside the staircase to a height of three feet. The archway into the den has a crescent-shaped, pierced-work grille, while the square-head opening between the hall and living room sports a "colonnade" comprised of pedestal-supported columns flanking the central walk-through and upholding an elaborate, three-part, pierced-work grille.

Quarter-sawn sycamore panelling with a dentilled upper molding lines the dining room walls to a six-foot height. The room's other woodwork, including architrave door and window trim, a built-in china cabinet containing drawers and cabinets in the base and mirrored display shelving above, and a mantelpiece, are also of unpainted sycamore wood. The fireplace has a tall mantelpiece consisting of fluted Ionic columns flanking a shelf-capped firebox and rectangular mirror above and extending up to a flat shelf-entablature. The fireplace front is finished in glazed tile and the hearth is of quarry tile.

The den's trim is of birch. The room's plastered walls are covered in Lincrusta up to a plate rail about six feet above the floor.

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)
Commerce

Period of Significance
1903-1926

Significant Dates
1903

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

John J. Michels

Architect/Builder

John J. Michels, builder

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

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS): None
 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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.344 acres

UTM References

A 116 381880 5219400
Zone Easting Northing
C _____

B _____
Zone Easting Northing
D _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot A lying between Blocks 21 and 22 of Sheldon Columbian Add. to the City of Houghton and Lots 10 and 11 of Block 22 of Sheldon Columbian Add. to City of Houghton, MI.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Entire lot associated with the house.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert O. Christensen, National Register Coordinator
organization Bureau of History date April, 1991
street & number 717 W. Allegan St. telephone 517/335-2719
city or town Lansing state MI zip code 48918

United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1

Significance

The Michels House was the home of prominent Houghton building contractor John J. Michels from its construction in 1903 until Michels' death in 1926. Michels served as the contractor for many large building projects in the Houghton area carried out during the area's early twentieth-century boom period.

John J. Michels (1869-1926) was the grandson of immigrants from Rhenish Prussia who settled in Wisconsin in the 1850s and the son of Michel Michels, a carpenter who settled in Houghton about 1878 or 1880 (the sources differ slightly). Described as a "natural mechanic" in his biography in Sawyer's History of the Northern Peninsula, John J. Michels worked in a furniture store, at a mine, and at a stamp mill before becoming a carpenter at the Huron Mine. After a few years he became a contractor and builder. Michels' obituary notice in The Daily Mining Journal states that at the time of his death he had been a contractor in Houghton for thirty-five years.

John J. Michels built, in the words of the Mining Journal's obituary, "some of the largest public and business buildings in the community. The new Houghton high school, his last big job, is a monument to his honesty and ability as a building contractor, it being recognized as one of the best built structures in the district." The obituary and contemporary newspaper articles name Michels as the contractor of the following buildings -- many of them landmark structures in their communities -- in the Houghton area:

Houghton High School, Houghton
West Houghton/Douglass School, Houghton
Isle Royale School, Dodgeville, built 1913
Trimountain School, South Range
Osceola High School, Dollar Bay, built 1914-15
St. Ignatius School, Houghton, built 1912
Houghton Public Library, Houghton, built 1909
Houghton Flour Mill, Houghton, built 1919
Copper Range Railroad Painesdale Depot, built 1916
Twin Lakes Club Clubhouse, Twin Lakes, built 1915
Presbyterian Church, Houghton
Congregational Church, Hancock
Odd Fellows Temple, Houghton, built 1910-11

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

John J. Michels reportedly also built a number of important houses and several commercial buildings in Houghton, and constructed housing and worked on other building projects for the Osceola, Copper Range, and Isle Royale Mining Companies. He also did highway and water system work, including constructing a water system for South Range in the early 1910s. Michels seems not to have been the Houghton area's leading contractor in the early twentieth-century era -- that distinction probably belongs to Herman Gundlach, Sr., who built a great number of the largest public and commercial buildings in Houghton in those years -- but certainly played an important role in the area's building construction business during this era of great local growth and prosperity.

John J. Michels is thought to have constructed his own house, which was completed about 1903, and lived here until his accidental death shortly after Christmas in 1926. His widow, Caroline Witte Michels, resided here until her own death in 1950. A son, Graham Michels, continued the contracting business after his father's death and also resided here until his death in 1978. One of Graham Michels' sons, Paul G. Michels, of Rhinelander, Wisconsin, now owns the house.

Bibliography

Sawyer, Alvah L. A History of the Northern Peninsula of Michigan and Its People. 3 vols. Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1911. Vol. 2.

"The Cause Of Education In Osceola Township." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Dec. 14, 1914. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Houghton Flour Mill Is A Modern Plant." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Jan. 8, 1920. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Houghton's New Library Opened To The Public." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Undated clipping. Copy in Michels House working file.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

"Isle Royale School' To Open October 20." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Nov. 15, 1918. Copy in Michels House working file.

"John J. Michels Is Killed When Fly Wheel Falls." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Dec. 29, 1926. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Library Given Over To Public." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Undated clipping. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Painesdale Station To Have Parked Grounds." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Jan. 20, 1917. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Roads And Other Roads." The Daily Mining Journal, July 9, 1914. Copy in Michels House working file.

"St. Ignatius School To Be In Use Next Monday." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Dec. 31, 1912. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Trimountain School Is Ready For Pupils." The Daily Mining Journal. Undated clipping. Copy in Michels House working file.

"Twin Lakes Club Formally Opened." The Daily Mining Journal, Houghton, MI. Oct. 5, 1915. Copy in Michels House working file.

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

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

Photographs

Photographer: Sue Belanger, Wilcox Camera Shop, Houghton, MI

Date: April, 1991

Negatives: Paul Michels, 124 High View Park, Rhinelander, WS 54501

1. Exterior from NE
2. Exterior from NW
3. Exterior from SW
4. Detail of living room and stair hall
5. Detail of built-in china cabinet, dining room
6. Fireplace detail, dining room

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

CLASSIFICATION

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

resource type count

PROPERTY NAME: Michels, John J., House

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

MULTIPLE NAME:

historic current

STATE & COUNTY: MICHIGAN, Houghton

DESCRIPTION

DATE RECEIVED: 7/05/91

DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/18/91

DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/03/91

DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/19/91

DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

descriptive text

REFERENCE NUMBER: 91001018

SIGNIFICANCE

NOMINATOR: STATE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 8/5/91 DATE

Entered in the
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTMs acreage
boundary justification verbal boundary description

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

RECOM./CRITERIA presentations sketch maps USGS maps photographs

REVIEWER _____

DISCIPLINE _____ OTHER COMMENTS

DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

Phone

Date

Signed

CLASSIFICATION

___count ___resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

___historic ___current

DESCRIPTION

___architectural classification
___materials
___descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- ___summary paragraph
- ___completeness
- ___clarity
- ___applicable criteria
- ___justification of areas checked
- ___relating significance to the resource
- ___context
- ___relationship of integrity to significance
- ___justification of exception
- ___other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

___acreage ___verbal boundary description
___UTMs ___boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

___sketch maps ___USGS maps ___photographs ___presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

_____ Phone _____

Signed _____ Date _____



Michels House
Houghton, MI
#1

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BY KODAK

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BY KODAK



Michels House
Houghton, MI
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Michels House
Houghton, MI
3



Michels House
Houghton, MI
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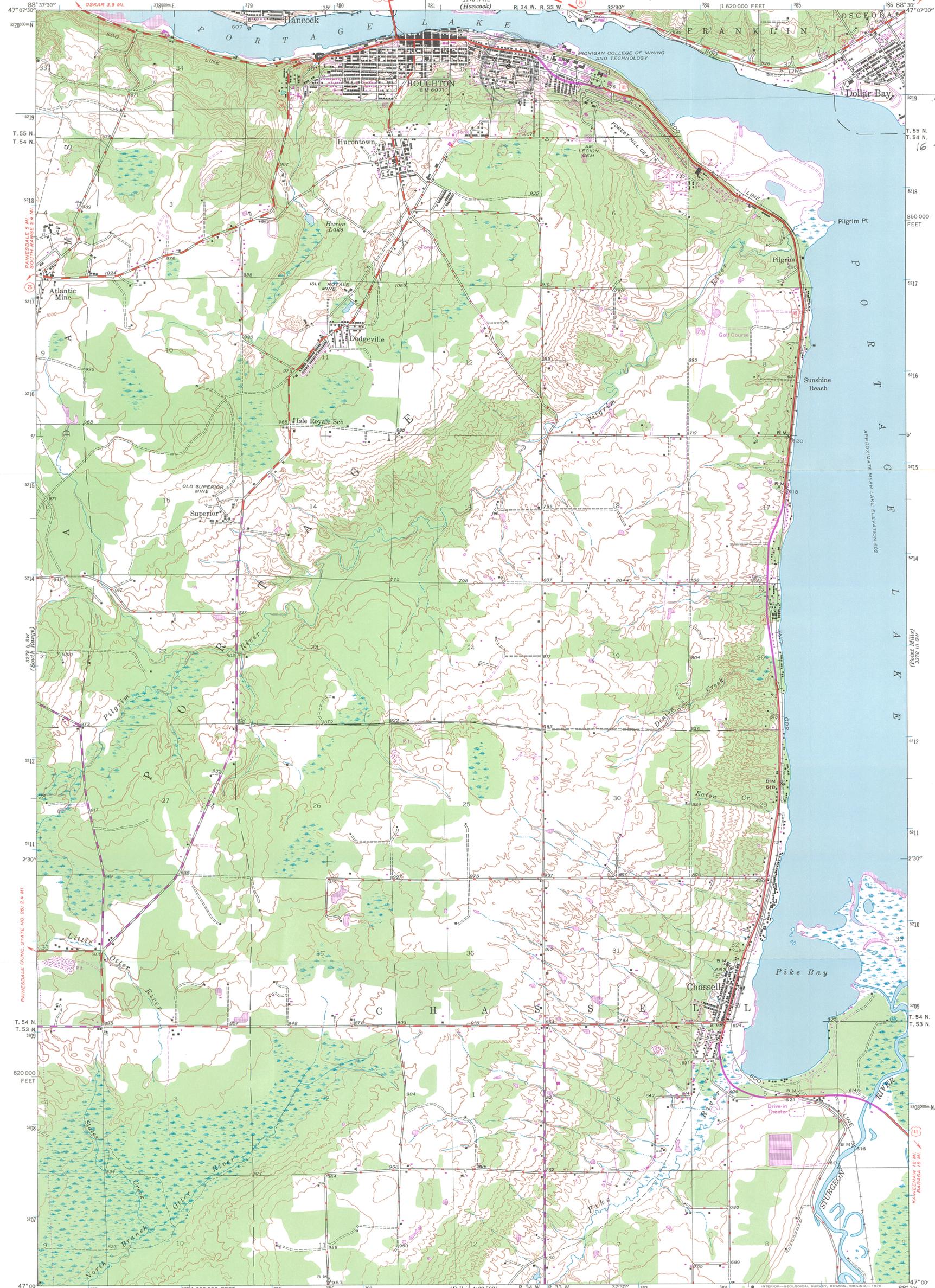
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Michelo House
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John J. Michaels House
Houghton, Houghton
Co., MI
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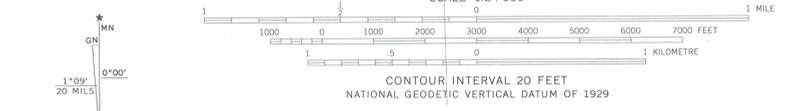
Map by the Geological Survey
1946

Legend:

- Depressible hard surface
- Heavy duty road
- Secondary hard surface
- all weather road
- more than two lanes indicated along road with tick at point of change
- Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1975. This information not field checked

Red Classification

- 1947
- Loss surface, graded
- Unsurfaced, graded
- Dirt road
- State Route
- U.S. Route
- Scale



Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system,
north zone
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue



CHASSELL, MICH.
SE/4 HOUGHTON 15' QUADRANGLE
N4700—W8830/7.5

FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

1946
PHOTOREVISED 1975
AMS 3278 II SE—SERIES V882

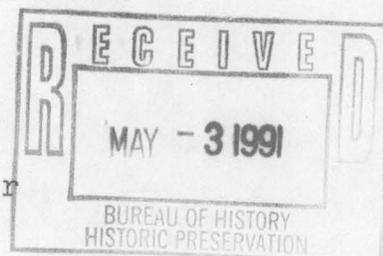
PAUL G. MICHELS AND ASSOCIATES
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
124 HIGHVIEW PARKWAY
RHINELANDER, WISCONSIN 54501

715 - 369-3634

April 29, 1991

Bureau of History
Michigan Department of State
Lansing, Mich. 48918

Att: Kathryn B. Eckert,
Acting State Historic Preservation Officer
Bureau of History



Dear Ms. Eckert:

This is in response to your letter of April 17, 1991 concerning the consideration for nomination of my house, The John J. Michels House at 1121 E. Houghton Ave., City of Houghton, Houghton County, Michigan to the National Register of Historic Places by the Michigan Historic Preservation Review Board. The house is currently on the State Historic List.

Since I cannot attend the meeting in Lansing on May 23, 1991 due to long standing vacation plans. On that date I will be returning from Canada. We are traveling with other people so changing plans is quite involved. Believe me, if it were not for these elaborate plans I would come to Lansing in person. Because of these plans I am going to present my thoughts herein and am humbly asking that you give these written thoughts the same credence as if they were expressed by me in person. In lieu of my personal attendance, my brother, John J. Michels II will attend. He can speak in my stead and can answer any questions you may have.

Just as my grandfather, John J. Michels, who built the house, and my father before me, I have been in the building business all of my professional engineering life and am interested in historic preservation of buildings, structures and places. I am currently involved in the historic preservation of a building in Bessemer, Mich.

From an architectural viewpoint would be an exceptional addition to the National Register. It is essentially in original condition. The house has been in our family since its construction in 1903. Therefore its originality can be verified by myself, my brother and my sister who have actually lived in the house. I am endeavoring to bring the house back to its original state by correcting minor changes and repairing areas that need it. This summer, finances permitting, I will have it painted. National listing would assist in these matters from a financial standpoint. The inside has excellent examples of architectural woodwork representative of the period. The front room arch has a large amount of feret work. The dining room is paneled in quarter sawn Sycamore up three quarters of the wall height terminating in a plate rail. The fire place accented with

PAUL G. MICHELS AND ASSOCIATES

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
124 HIGHVIEW PARKWAY
RHINELANDER, WISCONSIN 54501

715 - 369-3634

Page 2
4-29-91

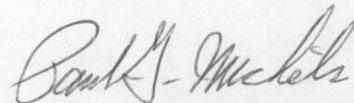
Michigan Bureau of History

glazed tile and has a quarry tile hearth. The trim downstairs is oak, birch, and sycamore. As an example of the excellence of this work, the door between the den and the dining room is birch in the den and sycamore in the dining room to match the wood trim in each room. This is just one instance of the beauty of this house.

My grandfather, John J. Michels was a well known contractor and citizen of Houghton. He was a village trustee and a member of the Houghton County Road Commission. He served on various volunteer committees in support of community activities such as a new baseball field. He furnished, at his own expense, band uniforms for the high school band, and he donated a complete stained glass window for the St. Ignatius Church in Houghton. He is mentioned in the publication titled "A History of Northern Peninsula of Michigan and it's People" by Alvah L. Sawyer. Vol. II. Many of Houghton's and surrounding vicinity's business and public buildings and private residences were planned and constructed under his direction. He came from humble beginnings and through his own efforts succeeded in life and surely left his mark in Houghton. During his lifetime the Copper Country was developing and reached its zenith. He contributed substantially to this development. Please do not think that my absence is an indication of the amount of interest I have in this nomination. I assure you that I am vitally interested. My brother will attend and his personal presence will attest to this interest.

I respectfully ask the board to approve this nomination. I will greatly appreciate your favorable action.

Sincerely,



Paul G. Michels, P.E.

cc: Mr. Robert O. Christensen
Mr. John J. Michels, P.E.



June 24, 1991

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Chief of Registration
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
U.S. Dept. of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are National Register of Historic Places nomination materials for the John J. Michels House in Houghton, Michigan. I certify that the intent-to-nominate notification requirements have been fulfilled. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register.

All notarized statements of objection and written comments concerning this nomination submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you are enclosed.

Please direct all questions concerning this nomination to Robert O. Christensen, National Register Coordinator 517/335-2719.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn B. Eckert".

Kathryn B. Eckert
Acting State Historic Preservation Officer
Bureau of History

Enclosure