

Wisconsin Historical Society: J.M. Allmendinger Shipwreck placed on the State Register of Historic Places

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Mequon, Wis. – The Wisconsin Historical Society placed the J.M. Allmendinger Shipwreck (Vicinity of Mequon, Ozaukee County) on the State Register of Historic Places on May 18, 2018.

The J.M. Allmendinger, built in 1883 and sunk in 1895, shipped lumber on the Great Lakes and is one of only a few known small-sized steam barges in Wisconsin waters. This wreck site presents a rare opportunity to study and learn about Great Lakes lumber steam barge construction.

The J.M. Allmendinger was one of only two vessels built by shipwright Albert Burgoine. Part of this ship's construction includes a traditionally-English construction feature called rising wood. While little is known about the man who designed this ship, the presence of a rising wood suggests European influence on Burgoine's shipbuilding methods. The use of rising wood as extra longitudinal support is usually found in English construction methods and has not yet been found in any other vessel in Wisconsin waters.

This indicates that the vessel's construction is unusual in American ship construction; further analysis of the hull construction may further inform our understanding of the work of the shipwright Albert Burgoine, his methodology, and the small construction variations that occur in primitive shipbuilding facilities.

State laws protect this shipwreck. Divers may not remove artifacts or structure when visiting this site. Removing, defacing, displacing, or destroying artifacts or sites, is a crime. More information on Wisconsin's historic shipwrecks may be found by visiting Wisconsin's Great Lakes Shipwrecks website.

The State Register is Wisconsin's official list of state properties determined to be significant to Wisconsin's heritage. The State Historic Preservation Office at the Wisconsin Historical Society administers both the State Register and National Register in Wisconsin.

To learn more about the State and National Register programs in Wisconsin, visit www.wisconsinhistory.org.