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## Trailertown Collection MTU-015

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Description is in English

Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country  
Historical Collections

1400 Townsend Drive  
Houghton 49931

[copper@mtu.edu](mailto:copper@mtu.edu)

URL: <http://www.lib.mtu.edu/mtuarchives/>

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections
<b>Title:</b>	Trailertown Collection
<b>ID:</b>	MTU-015
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	Circa 1950-Circa 1960
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.02 Cubic Feet 2 folders
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English .
<b>Mixed Materials [sc_box]:</b>	MTU 1
<b>[folder]:</b>	2-3
<b>Abstract:</b>	Collection, circa 1950-circa 1960, on the Garnet Hill Trailer Park in Houghton, Michigan, also known as "Trailertown." With housing shortages at the college, and no married housing, the trailer park was used by Michigan Technological University students from the 1940s through the 1960s. Includes photographs, scrapbook pages and reminiscences from past residents.

### Preferred Citation

MTU-015, Trailertown Collection, Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections, Houghton, Michigan.

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## Biography

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Michigan Tech has struggled with housing shortages from time to time, but the period immediately following World War II proved particularly challenging. With only a single purpose-built dormitory, Douglass Houghton Hall, and a limited number of local rentals, the college was unprepared for the influx of veterans seeking an education on their G.I. Bill funding. Tech responded to the crisis in a number of ways, including an addition to DHH and

the erection of temporary housing in the Woodmar neighborhood. However, another option existed for students seeking a "home of their own" in Houghton. Many simply brought their homes along with them. The original sites for mobile homes were on the edge of Portage Lake near the maintenance building and Pilgrim Terrace on the Isle Royale sands. In the summer of 1949, the college's administration closed the waterfront trailer park due to the cost of operating it; residents moved to a new trailer park on Garnet Street in Houghton, joining the influx of students from the Sault St. Marie branch and other incoming veterans. By 1957-1958 the student directory listed more than 25 residents of the Garnet Hill Trailer Park. Some quickly dubbed the hilltop park "Trailertown." Despite its privations, trailer living offered many advantages to Tech students. First and foremost, it offered young married couples a much-needed option for private housing. The park was self-governed, with monthly residents' meetings, elected officials and established policies. For all of the hardships, most former residents recall their time in the trailer parks with great fondness (excerpted from Michigan Tech Magazine, December 2004)

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## Collection Scope and Content Summary

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Collection, circa 1950-circa 1960, on the Garnet Hill Trailer Park in Houghton, Michigan, also known as "Trailertown." With housing shortages at the college, and no married housing, the trailer park was used by Michigan Technological University students from the 1940s through the 1960s. Includes photographs, scrapbook pages and reminiscences from past residents.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Statement

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## **Access**

Available for use in the Michigan Technological University Archives and Copper Country Historical Collections.

## **Conditions Governing Use**

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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- Oral histories
- Scrapbooks
- Trailertown -- Michigan -- Houghton
- Houghton (Mich.)
- Photographs