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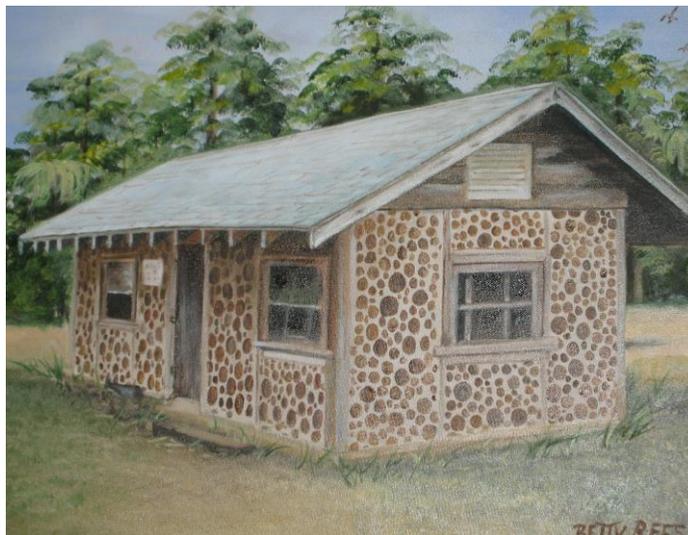
The Cookie House

Florida Master Site File 8CH00642

Relocated to 2300 Placida Road, Englewood

Formerly the personal laboratory and office of John Bass, Jr. in the 1930s, the "Cookie House" log cabin was built on the old Bass laboratory site on New Point Comfort Road in Englewood. The structure takes its name from its unusual architectural design and log "stovewood" construction. It was built with disks cut from lighter-knot pine logs, each up to ten inches in diameter, stacked on edge in cement mortar mixed with beach sand, resulting in the appearance of a white plate full of brown cookies.

The small structure is the only known building of this type in Florida. Originally, there were many such cabins on the site, believed to have been built in the 1930s to house lab employees. The others were demolished when Merchants' Crossing Shopping Center was built. Only this one cabin remains today, and it is recorded at the Division of Historical Resources in Florida Master Site File #8CH642.



Oil-on-canvas painting by Betty Reese, 2000. (CCHC collections)

The Bass Biological Laboratory and Zoological Research Supply Company was founded in 1931 by John Foster Bass, Jr., of Chicago. Recognized as the first full time marine station in Florida, the lab off New Point Comfort Road on Gottfried Creek

PARKS RECREATION & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Historical Division

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attracted visiting scientists from all over North America and Europe, including Donald Zim, Stewart Springer and Archie Carr. Bass died in 1939. The facility closed in 1944 after cataloging 470 marine and terrestrial creatures, but it inspired the birth of the Cape Haze Marine Lab founded by the Vanderbilts in the 1950s, which moved to Sarasota in the 1960s to later become today's internationally-known Mote Marine Laboratory.

The 7-acre Cookie House property remained under Bass family ownership until 2001, when Triple Diamond, Inc., purchased it. The land is currently zoned for single-family residences, and recently it was sold to the Waterford NPC, LLC, development company in Venice, Florida. Both the former owner and the new owner worked with Charlotte County government to preserve the historical building by relocating it to nearby Cedar Point Environmental Park, chosen because it is similar to the original location in the estuary of the Lemon Bay coastal area.



A Charlotte County Historical Marker was sponsored by Waterford and dedicated at the original site on February 20, 2008, and a professional Preservation Plan was completed by Stevenson Architects, Inc., in June of 2008.

In 2009, Charlotte County's Historical Advisory Committee decided to work with local groups and individuals to raise funds to ensure stabilization of the Cookie House, despite the effects of the current economic recession and budget cuts. Phase 1 of the Restoration Budget is expected to cost just under \$15,000 for stabilization, and Phase 2 for restoration is budgeted at about \$45,000.

The Cookie House is an important historical resource which will be preserved and opened to the public for special historical exhibits and educational programs. This includes interpreting not only the unique architecture of the cabin itself, but also its association with the Bass labs and their significant work in marine science and natural history during the twentieth century. Saving it will benefit both present and future generations.

Charlotte County Historical Center
December 15, 2009