

Capitola cottage finds its place in S.C. history

By **RAMONA TURNER**
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The 10-by-20-foot Oak Drive cottage the city saved from demolition may have built around 1915 to house tourists visiting the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

That's one of the stories Carolyn Swift, Capitola Historical Museum director, is trying to flesh out about the white structure that's now the museum's neighbor.

In the days after an Oct. 25 Sentinel article about the cottage's new location, Swift received a number of calls from people wanting to help piece together its history.

Jean Moorhead, 86, said her family used to live across the street from the cottage's Oak Drive location.

"It was my understanding that Tom Brett, who owned the property, brought the cottage to Capitola from Cottage City, which was next to the Casa del Rey property across from the Cocoanut Grove," she said. "It was when they built the parking lot. They had little cottages in there and when they got rid of them, Tom Brett brought it to the property to make a little rental out of it."

Cottage City was replaced by the parking lot in 1941, Swift said.

Brett's son Stanley confirmed his father owned the property and the cottage.

"It was built there in the 1930s," he said, saying it was erected by his father, who made some additions to it. "I lived there for several years with my first wife after World War II. After I moved, my aunts and uncles would spend the night when they came to visit, but my parents never rented it out."

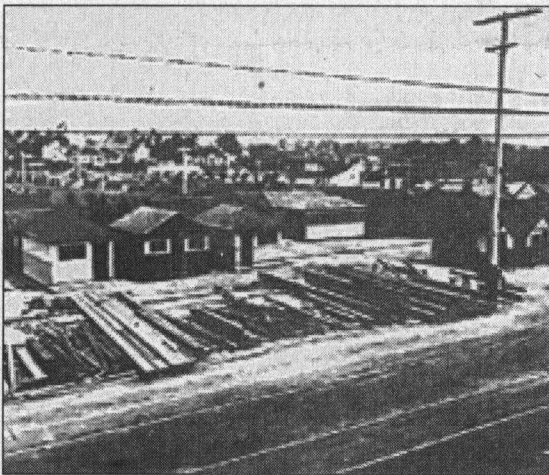
Swift hopes to find out more about the cottage to give "it a broader significance."

"A cabin like this is representative of resort cottages found along the coast, including Santa Cruz, Seabright, Twin Lakes and Capitola," she said. "I would guess the construction date

is circa 1915."

Officials with the Santa Cruz Seaside Co. said they were not familiar with the Capitola cottage. But, they said, the company has saved and restored several cottages from that era in the area of Riverside Avenue and Third Street.

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The cottage above, which now sits next to the Capitola museum, is thought to have originated around 1915 as part of Cottage City on Beach Street, left, a collection of cottages built for visitors to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. The cottage is thought to have been moved to Capitola when the Seaside Co. built a parking lot in 1941.

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