

# Meldrim Cottage, 91 Coquina Avenue, Davis Shores St. Augustine

City of St. Augustine  
75 King Street  
St. Augustine, FL  
32084

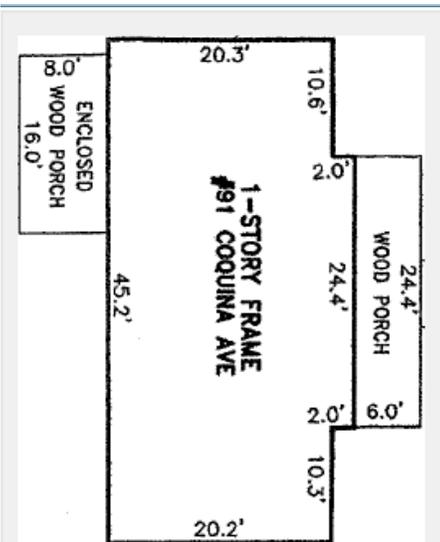


Architecture: National Folk Building (frame vernacular) ca. 1946



The one story cottage is wood frame construction with 960 square feet of interior space divided into a parlor room, kitchen, office, bathroom, and three bedrooms. A front porch projects under a flat roof creating 146 square feet of covered area and a rear porch adds another 128 square feet. The cottage appears to be in good shape making it an ideal candidate for

preservation or relocation. The surrounding property is being improved for a public park and to manage adjacent storm water facilities.



Significant details include the ship lap siding, wood windows, decorative exterior woodwork, coquina concrete pier foundation, horizontal wood paneled doors, and pecky cypress and pine tongue and groove interior paneling. The roof is framed with heart pine members visible in the attic.



*Parlor with pecky cypress paneling, plaster ceiling, pine flooring*

Wood materials of the exterior siding, roof framing, pecky cypress and pine paneling, wood flooring, and windows appear to be in exceptional condition. Exterior elements and the wood flooring need sanding and renewed protective coatings.



*From the top: building survey, roof framing, tongue and groove paneling*

American folk housing evolved in style and material from earlier rustic traditions when railroad systems could transport lumber over long distances and increase accessibility to decorative details. While lumber would have been easily accessible for this building based on the history of this family in the timber industry, the architectural influence of the period between 1890 and 1940 is inherent in the form of the massed plan and side gable roof. In Florida, the character of the Meldrim Cottage can be considered as the descendent of the vernacular Classic Cracker style.

## History:

Records indicate that James S. Meldrim acquired title to this property in 1946 from Col. Charles R. Tully and over time the property continued to be occupied by Mr. Meldrim, his widow Mrs. Lillian Daniels Meldrim, and lastly by their daughter Ms. Jo Meldrim. James and Lillian had three daughters including Carolyn Meldrim Moor, Winifred Meldrim Apfeldorf, and Ms. Jo Meldrim. Evidence that this structure existed by 1952 in this location is visible in a USDA aerial photograph. The 1943 aerial image does not extend to this location and there is some question as to the exact date of construction for the Meldrim Cottage.

Davis Shores was a development vision stimulated by the Florida real estate boom and promoted locally by D.P. Davis in 1925 but would soon crash with only a dozen buildings constructed. Development as seen today did not occur in great stride until the immediate post-WWII period and forward. The Meldrim Cottage pre-dates the renewed investment in Davis Shores which explains why the building is distinguished from its surroundings. A few other buildings join the Meldrim Cottage as an outlier in the neighborhood and speculation remains on their potential relationship to worker housing for the failed Davis Shores development.

The Meldrim family operated a turpentine and timber farm in St. Johns County as early as 1934 led by James Meldrim and his father J.W. Meldrim which was the longest operating turpentine camp in northeast Florida. Ms. Jo Meldrim acquired interest in the company upon her father's death in 1969 which uniquely ties this cottage to the Meldrim family's business as records indicate she continued to occupy the residence. Historic buildings also still remain in their timber farm/turpentine camp near the St. Johns River. With advocacy support from the North Florida Land Trust, the State of Florida purchased 5,236 acres of the Meldrim's working timber property offered by Ms. Jo Meldrim for a conservation easement in 2016 which adds to the St. Johns River Blueway project to connect Watson State Forest to County Road 13.



*1952 USDA aerial map*



*Vintage features and wood paneled doors*

## Building Offer:

The City of St. Augustine is offering the building to an interested party for relocation. As an incentive, the City is offering financial support of \$5,000, the cost of regular demolition services that would otherwise be incurred to remove the building from the city's inventory. Applicable building permit fees will be waived by the City. Additional expenses or fees associated with structure relocation, including applicable insurance, shall be the sole responsibility of the acquiring party.

The City strongly desires to have the house relocated and preserved.

*To inquire, please contact:*

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