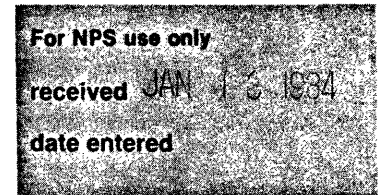


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THE DUCK HOUSE
Description

(C.I.M.S. 1111)

The Duck House is a one-story frame, vernacular stick style building. It was conceived and used for only short periods of time as a hunting camp, and is therefore simple in design and rustic in its finishes.

The building is "L" in plan with a wrap-around front porch. One of the side porches has been enclosed and the other is partially infilled. There is a small rear addition in the ell. Constructed on a pier foundation with diagonal braces, the building is in the path of encroaching sand dunes, and sand has covered part of the front porch floor.

A corrugated metal hipped roof forms a wide porch overhang which is supported by posts with diagonal bracket supports. Most of the porch railing is missing, as are the windows and doors. The exterior finish is horizontal clapboard sheathing on the main part of the building and rear addition, and vertical tongue and groove siding on the porch enclosures. Openings are framed with simple 1 x 4" surrounds. The inscription "Radio-Armoury" has been carved into the door surround of the small porch enclosure.

The interior finish is of horizontal tongue and groove siding on walls and ceilings; floors are similar. Moldings are plain 1 x 4" surrounds. There are two fireplaces with simple molded firebox surrounds topped by a bracketed mantel shelf. A central hall is flanked by one room on the right and is two rooms deep on the left.

Although the building has not been in active use for fifty years and has deteriorated somewhat, it retains its architectural integrity; the only missing elements are the windows and doors. It conveys its purpose as a simple recreational structure.

Significance

Primarily significant in the area of leisure/resorts, the Duck House was built about 1900 as a hunting camp for the exclusive use of the Carnegie men and their male guests. (The Carnegie women would take day-trips to "Squawtown," several miles north of Plum Orchard, for entertainment.) Though unassuming in appearance, the Duck House illustrates the type of recreational facilities constructed on the island for use by the Carnegie family and their guests. This is the only such building remaining, as other structures, such as the beach houses, were probably of less permanent

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construction. The Duck House represents the type of sporting activities engaged in by the elite class at the turn of the century, and the types of entertainment structures built at their vacation retreats. The building was abandoned during the 1920s as the Carnegies began to spend less time on the island.

The building has gained significance in the military area during modern history as a point from which the local Coast Watch detachment surveyed the coastal area for signs of German submarines or saboteurs during World War II. The Coast Watch maintained a look-out tower near the Duck House and survey positions at High Point and Dungeness, as well as horseback and foot patrols. Several of the rooms in the Duck House still bear the incriptions of designations assigned them by the Coast Watch. Cumberland Island was one of several positions set up along the east coast during World War II as part of a Coast Guard defense system.