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## Hundred-year-old boatshop arrives at Cortez museum



SUN PHOTO/CINDY LANE

Now: The 1907 Asa Harmon Pillsbury Boatshop is the newest addition to the Florida Maritime Museum at Cortez.

**By Cindy Lane**  
sun staff writer

CORTEZ – The 1907 Asa Harmon Pillsbury Boatshop arrived at the Florida Maritime Museum this month, the latest in a series of historic structures to be relocated to the grounds of the newly-opened museum.

Brett Johnson, of R.H. Johnson and Sons, moved the building with a sheriff's escort from Snead Island Boatworks in Palmetto across the Manatee River to Manatee Avenue, down 75th Street, then west down Cortez Road, according to museum site coordinator Roger Allen.

In 1907, the boatshop was the first building constructed at the new Snead Island Boatworks, operated by Edward Pillsbury and his son, Asa Pillsbury, who earned notoriety for his craftsmanship in building small skiffs and runabouts, including skipjacks and sprits'l skiffs.

When the boatworks outgrew the small shop, a larger shop was built and the original building was used as a machine shop, housing a large lathe, small milling machine, grinders and other metalworking equipment.

When the property was sold to E.E. Bishop in the late 1930s, the Pillsbury family loaded the old boatshop onto a truck bed and moved it to their home three miles away, where they used it as a machine shop to service the Pillsbury dredging company's equipment.

When the Pillsbury family was subdividing its property in 2003, one of the new property lines was drawn through the old boatshop. Rather than see it torn down, Albert Pillsbury decided to donate the building to Manatee County. His friend, Jim Alderman, arranged to have the boatshop moved back to Snead Island for repair and stored it there until the move last week.

At its new home, the boatshop will house maritime exhibits. It is the third historic building to be restored on the grounds, with the 1912 schoolhouse and the 1890s Burton/Bratton store.

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