



IS IT A HOUSE OR ISN'T IT? Located west of Homestead, this energy efficient house literally breathes.

STAFF PHOTO BY EDOERLIES

## Architect Creates Extraordinary House

By PAUL BROOKSHIRE  
Editor

**HOMESTEAD — Unique. Extraordinary. One of a kind. Unconventional. Unparalleled.**

Those have been some of the words to describe a house that has risen in a pine and palmetto thicket west of Homestead.

Although it is unfinished, the house has attracted wide attention because of what some people call its "strange appearance."

"It looks as if it were built to be the home of E.T.," said one of the men connected with its conception.

Allan Ira Bass, Homestead architect, designed the house with the aid of his assistant, Robert Barnes.

They are very proud of their creation.

"It's energy efficient. It's built to take advantage of all that Florida has to offer," they say.

They describe the house this way: A five-level circular

house. Actually, two octagons merged with each other.

There are balconies around the house, two atriums, a spa, a greenhouse, two freestanding gas fireplaces, winding staircases that lead from floor to floor and a "funnel" in the house's center.

A spire will be placed on top of the house to accentuate all the positive things about the structure.

The house literally "breathes." The funnel, with a clerestory at its peak, will be the lungs.

The builders believe the house would be perfectly liveable without air-conditioning except for about two months of the year.

The sliding glass, solar bronze windows, plus ceiling fans will assist in cooling or heating the house.

"This is not a house," says Richard Mullins, a builder. "It is a work of art."

In fact, it is such architectural rarity, that Bass and Barnes plan to enter it in a nationwide design contest.

The house is the dream of a man named Raymond Pereira, a former fighter pilot in Vietnam.

And therein lies a story. Although it is Pereira's dreamhouse and he wants to live in it, he may never do so.

He has listed it for sale. The price: \$350,000 (unfinished).

"Finished the house probably would be worth \$450,000," says Clell Villella of Dorris Company, who has it listed.

Mullins said: "I think he could get almost anything he asks for this house."

Pereira's business interests are now centered in Key West and that is one reason he has it listed. He is busy restoring the old Strand Theater on Duval Street for a supper club. He plans to live in Key West.

Although several weeks away from being finished, the house—which is located on SW 312th Street at 193rd Avenue—already has a hint of history and legend.

The special lighting is being done by Jerry Ewing, who was lighting engineer for the famed Watergate complex in

Washington.

In addition, the red cypress that is being used throughout the house, is actually cut in 1949 out of the Okeefeenokee Strand.

"The logs are one of a kind, high-water red cypress," said Mullins. "We found them almost by accident."

In addition to cypress, cherry, mahogany and teakwood are being used in the house. Stained glass will go into some of the windows.

"This house is unequivocally and undeniably the most unique house in South Florida," says Villella. "It has so many extras it is impossible to list them all."

A house that actually breathes.

One with a Watergate connection.

And built from old Okeefeenokee cypress.

The house already has taken on a personality of its own.