



ARCHITECTURE

EHLINGER & ASSOCIATES

FOURTH QUARTER 2014



Ehlinger & Associates extends Seasons Greetings to all of our friends who receive the newsletter. Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, and Happy New Year.

Memorial Presbyterian Church, St. Augustine, FL © 2014 Ladd P. Ehlinger



Memorial Presbyterian Church

This issue's limited edition print of a sketch by Ladd P. Ehlinger, AIA is of the Memorial Presbyterian Church in St. Augustine, Florida. This church was built by Henry Morrison Flagler in 1889 in

dedication to the memory of his daughter Jennie Louise Benedict who had died in childbirth that year. Flagler was John D. Rockefeller's partner in Standard Oil, and had branched out on his own as a developer of St. Augustine as a resort town for his rich east coast friends. He originally came to St. Augustine in search of a better climate for his terminally ill wife and was so impressed that he decided to stay and make a go of it after she died. Not only did he build several hotels and other resort type businesses in St. Augustine, he built and operated the railroad that would bring you there. Flagler was one of the original "Robber

Barons" of the U.S. in the late 19th century. Flagler retained the New York architectural firm, Carrère & Hastings to design the Memorial Presbyterian Church. These were the same architects that he had also retained to design two hotels, several other churches, and numerous homes and businesses in St. Augustine.

The church is a very interesting design that was both eclectic and pioneering. The style is Byzantine and is reputed to have been inspired by St. Mark's in Venice, Italy, but the structure, materials and detailing were as contemporary as one could get at that time. The basic structure was bearing reinforced concrete walls com-

posed of Portland cement mixed with crushed coquina stone as aggregate, with structural steel spanning members. The dome was roofed in copper. Doors and other appointments were of Santo

Domino mahogany. Decoration was in applied Terra Cotta ornament that was ubiquitous at that time, especially in New York and Chicago, but this Terra Cotta was fashioned by Italian artists. No expense was spared.

On the church property is also a mausoleum where Flagler, his first wife, his daughter and granddaughter are all buried. Like all of Flagler's projects, this one is aesthetically consistent and complete, and is a tribute both to Flagler and his architects.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Robert Sheridan Allbritton was born in Shreveport, Louisiana on July 10th, 1987 as the third of four boys. He attended Captain Shreve High School and graduated in May of 2005, and then attended the University of Louisiana at Lafayette where he received his Bachelor of Science in



Architecture in May of 2011 and his Master of Architecture in December of 2012.

In school he developed a passion for restoration and urban design, working on projects such as an adaptive re-use of Fort

Proctor, located in St. Bernard Parish, as well as working with the Lafayette Consolidated Government to produce preliminary drawings for the McKinley St. Streetscape Design Project. This passion only grew when he was able to start his masters program living in Florence, Italy. For a two month summer semester he learned about the architecture and urbanism of some of the great cities in Europe through photography, sketching, and walking through those spaces.

After graduation, he moved to New Orleans, Louisiana to begin his career as

an intern architect. As he looked for work as a designer, he spent the first eight months living in the city working as a brick mason's skilled laborer for Mike's Masonry. Robert enjoyed this time spent working inside buildings in the French Quarter, growing his enthusiasm for the restoration of old buildings and learning first-hand about their construction.

In October of 2013 he was employed by a firm, where he was able to work inside some of the great buildings in the French Quarter, Garden District, and Uptown neighborhoods, measuring, recording, and creating existing condition packages. Wanting to further his education as an architect and to begin preparation for the architectural registration exams, he began working for Ehlinger & Associates, P.C. to learn how architecture is properly constructed.

The Tiny House Movement

About a decade ago, before the collapse of the real estate market, a small reactionary movement began against the fast-paced construction of the so-called McMansions; large suburban houses, over 4000 s.f., built to the most basic of standards, but decked out with expensive finishes and amenities.

This reaction: the tiny house movement, is defined as a fully functional home, under 1,000 s.f. (typically 400-500 s.f.), but the smaller it is, the more deserving of the label "tiny". Originally born from the "sustainable" mindset, the movement gained traction after the real-estate collapse, the not-recession that is arguably still ongoing, along with the rise of both the anti-corporate/anti-agenda 21 conspiracists, as well as post-apocalyptic, off-the-grid, doomsday movements. It has evolved into a conglomeration of varying, even opposing belief systems that results in a similar outcome: what is the minimal amount of housing space that one, or a family, can occupy, yet still maintain modern technological comforts?

As opposed to very small accommodations in areas where space is expensive and at a premium, like Japan, New York, or London, the tiny house movement is deliberately creating confined living spaces for the occupants, either from the mindset of having a smaller impact on the world, for cost reduction (they generally cost \$20,000-\$50,000 to be considered "tiny", and monthly utility costs are likewise minimal), or those



seeking a different lifestyle, supposedly a simpler and more free lifestyle, unencumbered by the high maintenance requirements of larger spaces, but likely slapped with the reality that maintaining a confined space is just as, perhaps even more difficult than 'standard' sized houses.

Tiny houses can be mobile, and are occasionally constructed off-site and moved to a final location, but to distinguish them from trailer homes, they are generally built as traditional frame houses unique to each owner, and are not premanufactured.

While well less than 1% of the design and construction market, tiny houses receive a disproportionate amount of attention because of their unique nature and the variety of design and technological solutions derived to pack as many comforts into as small a space as possible. Smaller appliances and plumbing furnishings, like ovens, washer/dryers and sinks, tend to be a limited market and are more costly than their standard or even oversized counterparts, but the savings from building smaller outweighs such added expenses. Given the favorite American past time of watching television (and now, watching internet streaming), however, it's arguable that the tiny house movement would never have had a market without the introduction of the slim-panel display, allowing the TV to be placed anywhere on an unused wall.

Most of the design effort for a tiny house is spent on utilizing limited space



for a variety of functions. An eating area might also double as the living room, so features such as tables folding into the wall, Murphy beds, and unconventional storage locations (like lifting floor panels, or drawers in stairs) are often utilized.

The exterior appearance is perhaps the most difficult aspect of designing a tiny house. Architecturally, they tend to be simply miniature versions of any particular architectural style, from a craftsman cabin, to Victorian overdetail, to sharp and sleek modernism. Some approach absurdism in their stretch for individual expression, like a room-sized gourd hanging from a tree.



Most tiny houses, however, present as an update to more traditional styles, and tend to resemble the Shotgun Houses of New Orleans, or the Dog-Trots of Alabama.

Due to zoning regulations in most cities and suburbs, it's very unlikely to come across a Tiny House as the sole structure on a lot in these areas. There are usually minimal construction sizes set, but occasionally one might be built as a guest house, and not as the prime residence. Most Tiny Houses are appearing as second houses in remote locations where there are no zoning regulations, and are used more similarly to the Russian practice of having a Dacha in the country, which is a great irony to the underlying purpose of having a Tiny House to begin with. But, there are indeed a growing group of people who are choosing to live in Tiny Houses as their primary residence.

R. Perrin Ehlinger, AIA