

United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of PropertyHistoric name: Mollere House

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. LocationStreet & number: 39881 Beach RoadCity or town: Ponchatoula State: Louisiana County: TangipahoaNot For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___X___ statewide ___X___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

___A ___B ___X___C ___D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Carrie Broussard, State Historic Preservation Officer Date
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, & Tourism
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

**State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register
___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:

☒

Public – Local

☐

Public – State

☐

Public – Federal

☐

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	☒
District	☐
Site	☐
Structure	☐
Object	☐

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Modern Movement

Other: Wrightian

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: Concrete slab

Walls: Glass, brick, structural plywood

Roof: Single membrane roof

Other: Chimney: sheet metal suspended above a masonry hearth

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Mollere House was constructed near LA Hwy 22 in Ponchatoula, Louisiana in 1958. It is situated in a large cleared lot on a level plateau surrounded by dense woods, with quiet residential Beach Road to the East, Hwy 22 to the North, and the Tangipahoa River to the West, with the house overlooking the river. Historic aerial photographs show that the hardwood forest was left intact in the entirety of the site with the exception of the house's own footprint.

It is a single-story, single-family dwelling, whose original purpose was primarily as a vacation retreat for the Mollere family. It was constructed on a concrete slab foundation and lifted onto four structural pillars that are located in the interior of the building and dually function as closets. The exterior walls are primarily formed by large sheets of glass, with masonry and wood sections for added support. The roof is a unique design by Albert Ledner, a "space frame" created from small section lumber and metal ties, and hoisted onto wooden support posts situated in the interior of the house. Ledner designed the house in the Modern style. Influenced by Wrightian ideas, Ledner forged his own unique design philosophy, with this house being an excellent example of a transitional work from early in his career. The only major alterations to the building have been the addition of a bathroom, a bedroom, and a dining room with the existing screened footprint. Overall, it retains its character defining features and historic integrity.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Narrative Description

The Mollere House is located in Ponchatoula, LA on a rural lot off of Hwy 22, and is surrounded by woods. The setting was historically much more rural than it is now, but the house is still surrounded by thick brush and trees. Standing at the front door, it remains impossible to see any other structures or roadways, and this emphasizes a connectiveness with nature. The house is situated at the rear of the property, near the Tangipahoa River, and is a single story, wood framed house constructed on cast-in-place concrete slabs laid just above grade. The house includes a flat, single membrane roof. With the exception of the front entryway, all four façades include the same features and level of detail. This theme of uniformity exists throughout the building, and allows the natural landscape to be the focal point of the property.

The roof wraps downward in order to partially cover the simple, flat wood fascia. The fascia cantilevers over the facades' clerestory windows and exposed rafters. Slanted, wood framed screens start underneath the clerestory windows and extend out to the ground, jutting out approximately three feet from the building. (*Photo 2*) These screens wrap around the entire house (with the exception of the front entryway) and create a continuous terrace. This terrace precedes the house's full pane, wood-framed walls, and is infilled with crushed granite. Tiled areas are scattered throughout the terrace to allow for outdoor furniture. On three sides of the house, braces extend from the roof to the ground at angles to provide additional support and blend almost seamlessly with the wood framed, slanted screens. The cantilevered fascia and the slanted screens allow the house all the advantages of natural light, while mitigating the drawbacks of direct, Southern Louisiana sunlight. A single, original masonry wall exists at the east façade for structural purposes and extends halfway down the façade, interrupting the openness of the building only as much as necessary. The northeast elevation includes the recessed front entryway which has simple, square columns, a tiled walkway, and a set of broad two paneled doors. The house's floating ceiling starts at the recessed entryway and continues throughout the interior; one of the many ways the interior/exterior line is blurred.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

The interior starts with a foyer and leads into the main living area along the northeast side of the building. The living area is spacious and open, and flows straight into the kitchen and dining areas, divided only briefly by the freestanding fireplace. *(Photo 7)* The fireplace's square hearth is constructed of light, tan brick, and is cantilevered ever so slightly above the finished flooring. The cantilever creates a delicate note to something that could otherwise be perceived as bulky. The hood is poured concrete and the chimney is finished with 3-ounce copper over Kraft paper. *(Figure 3)*

Flooring throughout the house is white pre-cast concrete tiles with light grey-blue designs meant to mimic marble. *(Figure 4)* Interior walls and doors are simple Lauan wood panels stained the same deep, cherry throughout the house and accented only by simple flat trim stained a slightly different hue. These panels have been replaced due to flood damage, but they still reflect the historic character of the building and closely match the original panels. Wooden paneling on the interior facing walls, and the glass and screen porch wrapping around two walls, gives the impression of seamless transition from the wood finished interior and the forested exterior. Clerestory windows exist at interior rooms and skylights at inner hallways, allowing the natural light to yet again find its way throughout each space.

The building is anchored both structurally and visually by what appear to be four heavy wooden pillars, but are actually 2x4 wood and plywood framed boxes that serve as closets, which support a "floating" roof system. During construction, the framed roof structured was constructed from pre-shaped pieces of wood and assembled at grade and then lifted into place onto the four structural pillars. This allowed the roof framing system for Ledner's innovative roof design to be left exposed, revealing a pleasing "space frame" grid of wooden timbers and metal rods. *(Figure 6)*

In between each "space frame", the wood ceilings are finished with a square piece of burlap. *(Photo 20)* The hallway leading to the bedrooms is at contrast with the expansive living areas. It is narrow and solidly paneled, with a low ceiling. Alternating ceiling panels are removed, to reveal the truss space above the compressed space of the hallway. *(Photo 10)* Many of Ledner's

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

character defining “finishing touches” such as the inverted fans around the fireplace, as well as the recessed accents lights and integrated shelving at the support pillars remain intact.

Few alterations have been made to the Mollere House since its original construction. Alterations include replacement of kitchen countertops and appliances, in-kind replacement of the screen material, and the enclosure of the sleeping terrace at the northwest elevation (Photos 3-5, 13) by previous owners. The sleeping terrace enclosure was done by moving the original glass panels out by about 10’-0” to create more conditioned space. (*Figure 28*) The glass panels were reused and installed in between structural members that were already present. This change is almost imperceptible from the exterior and there is no impact to the character-defining features of the screen walls or space-frame roof. The enclosed spaces have now been repurposed as a second bathroom, additional bedroom space, and a larger dining area. At the interior, the change is slightly perceptible via a small threshold in the floor.

The house was originally designed to function as a camp, with the large hearth relied upon as the heat source and the substantial ventilation allowed by the wrap around porch for cooling. Today, the house has central air conditioning and its interior mechanical equipment is hidden within wall cavities as to not disrupt the “space frame” ceiling.

Despite these few alterations, the overall attitude of the Mollere House and its character defining features remain very much intact. The original drawings show that there have been very few interior plan modifications outside the enclosure of the sleeping terraces, and the original circulation patterns between the private sleeping areas and the open living areas remain intact. (*Figure 27*). The integrity makes this vacation retreat even more significant.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☐ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☐ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☐ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1958

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Ledner, Albert C.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Mollere house qualifies for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C for Architecture. The Mollere House is architecturally significant for Modernism on a local and a statewide level and represents the work of a master, Albert Ledner. The house is a representative work of Ledner, who was a well-respected Louisiana architect. The Mollere House has design and engineering elements which are representative of Ledner's unique approach to structural design and his inventive use of materials in unexpected ways. The building is well preserved, retaining its important character defining features from its year of construction in 1958.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

To establish an architect as a master, nominations often highlight the accolades or awards they have received from architectural organizations, contemporary architectural journals, or subsequent scholarship that recognizes the significance or influence of their work. A comprehensive understanding of the architect's body of work is essential when making the case for their importance. When considering the level of significance, it's important to evaluate the scope of their projects and determine whether their impact is local, statewide, or national.

Criterion C: Architecture

The Mollere House represents Albert Ledner's approach to Modernism in a rural Louisiana setting. Ledner strategically blurred boundaries between the exterior landscape and the interior environment in a way that is both evocative of Frank Lloyd Wright and other Modern masters, but also simpler and deferential to vernacular, Louisiana architecture.

Albert Charles Ledner

Albert Charles Ledner was born January 28, 1924 in the Bronx, New York. When he was an infant his family relocated to New Orleans, where he would live the majority of life. Ledner graduated from the New Orleans Public School System, and enrolled at Tulane University School of Architecture. In his second year of college, World War II broke out. He left the university to volunteer in the United States Army Corps. After his military service, Ledner returned to New Orleans, completing his architecture degree at Tulane in 1948. The institution

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

was a hub for modernist-leaning architecture students in the post-WWII era, when many architecture schools still primarily revered the Beaux Arts school of thought. It was at Tulane that Ledner first became familiar with Frank Lloyd Wright's work, and he became intrigued by the work going on at Wright's Taliesin East school.

Ledner briefly (for 3 months) studied under Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, and then returned to New Orleans in 1950. By 1951, Ledner had started his own practice. "As a young architect, Ledner developed a decided point of view and once said, 'I just thought the Frank Lloyd Wright organic approach was so much more in keeping with the American spirit than the International Style.'" ¹ Ledner dedicated his practice "not to the Bauhaus-based Modernism largely dominating U.S. architecture of the time, but to the more adventurous variety associated with Wright. And unlike many Wright disciples, Ledner was able to escape the intimidating shadow of the master's creations to explore his own related design inspirations." ² Ledner's success in following Wrightian principles while escaping his "shadow," coupled with Ledner's incorporation of vernacular architecture, formed his individual design philosophy and elevated him as master architect within Louisiana. Ledner's philosophy would evolve slightly over his decades-long career, but certain calling-cards like his playful geometry and vernacular references can always be found. These calling-cards are perfectly exemplified in the Mollere House.

Ledner proved himself a remarkable architect even with his earliest works. At the age of 26, Ledner obtained his first commission to design a house in Metairie, Louisiana for C. V. Goldate (*Figure 4*). The Goldate house is remarkable for its proliferation of both gabled and flat roof lines, which seem to converge over the main entryway. The Goldate house landed Ledner an article in *House Beautiful* magazine, titled "A New Kind of House for New Orleans." This catapulted his popularity, and Ledner would go on to design over forty residences including the locally well-known Galatoire House (*Figure 5*), Leonard "Cointreau" House (*Figure 6*), and Sunkel "Ashtray" House (*Figure 7*) which are all on Park Island in New Orleans. These residences exemplify his design philosophy which combines Wrightian principles with more playful geometry and the Louisiana vernacular. According to Docomomo, "Ledner would later be asked to design three buildings in Manhattan in the 1960s for the National Maritime Union as well as other parts of the country. However, it is many of the private homes he designed in and around New Orleans, including the Mollere House (*Figures 1,2,3,8,9,12,27,28*), that are among his most notable works." ³ The Mollere house was commissioned by Jules G. Mollere, Jr., in

¹ Wicks, Amanda. "Chronicles: A Spot on the Bayou," *New Orleans Magazine*, February 2007.

² Dixon, John Morris. "In Memoriam: Remembering Albert C. Ledner, pioneering New Orleans Modernist," *The Architect's Newspaper*, November 27 2017.

³ Docomomo US, "Explore Modern Designers: Albert Ledner," Available URL: <https://www.docomomo-us.org/designer/albert-ledner>

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

1958 and used as a retreat for his family for decades. Ever the Modernist, Albert Ledner continued to receive commissions through the 1990s, and then passed away in 2017.

While Ledner was not honored with major awards during his life, his work was well-respected, and he has received even greater posthumous recognition. For example, Ledner was honored by Docomomo and AIA New York with a documentary showing about his life and work, which aired November 2017 (created by his daughter, Catherine). AIA Boston, the New York Times, and the national Architect's Newspaper all published lengthy obituaries celebrating Ledner's architectural achievements. Ledner's National Maritime Union building in New York (1964) received a posthumous "Modernism in America" award in 2018 from Docomomo US, the organization that spearheads appreciation of American Modernism. In Louisiana, the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans has featured Ledner's residences in the *Preservation in Print* magazine, and they have organized tours of his Lake Vista and Park Island homes. Hammond, Louisiana has also published online materials and tours featuring Ledner's work. Ledner's son has said that his father's "legacy is his relationship with all his clients – he was like a tailor for them, customizing each building."⁴

Comparative Analysis: Modernism in the United States

Modern architecture in the United States has no distinct beginning, but it formed around the turn of the 20th century, flourished in the 1920s and 1930s, and evolved through the 1970s. Modern architecture encompassed several "individual design movements that expressed modern ideals in different ways," as written by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.⁵ These design movements included everything from Art Moderne in the 1930s to the International Style in the 1960s-1970s, and also included the more generic, amalgamation of Mid Century Modern in the 1950s-1960s. For purposes of this nomination, the term, "Modern architecture" or "Modern" will be used to reference the whole, larger movement, unless specific subsects are being discussed. Modern buildings and their architects connected with concepts of progress, industrialization, technology, and new building materials, and explored the relationship between those concepts and nature. "Modernism began as a rejection of historical tenants and imitations of past forms, searching instead for an [architectural] language that expressed a more honest reflection of the contemporary world."⁶ In the United States, master architects including Philip Johnson, Frank

⁴ Sissen, Patrick, "Albert Ledner: A New Orleans Architect as Playful as his Hometown," *Curbed*, August 16 2018.

⁵ National Trust for Historic Preservation, "What is Modernism?" Available URL: <https://savingplaces.org/modern-architecture>

⁶ Rost Architecture, "A Brief History on the Beginnings of Modern Architecture," 2019. Available URL: <https://www.rostarchitects.com/articles/2019/1/2/a-brief-history-of-modern-architecture>.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Lloyd Wright, and Richard Neutra worked in the same “Modern idiom” that also shaped Albert Ledner’s work within Louisiana.

In 1927-29, architect Richard Neutra designed the Lovell “Health” House in California’s Hollywood Hills. Neutra designed a house with a steel frame on a regular grid and coated it with a “kind of sprayed-on concrete called gunite.”⁷ Architectural historian Dell Upton writes that, “this modular structure established a uniform ordering matrix, and the house looked as though *it might have been* made of mass-produced parts, [thereby] standing at a turning point in the architectural appropriation of technology in the United States.”⁸ Neutra was a well-respected veteran of Modernism by the time that Ledner completed the Mollere House in 1958, and there are moments when inspiration is evident. Like Neutra, Ledner also created “picturesque signs of modernity” and celebrated the “making” of buildings with a combination of technology and carpentry. In the Mollere House, Ledner’s structural columns that also function as closets are an excellent example of how he combines technology and carpentry: the custom-built closets serve a structural purpose and are wrapped in *what might have been* mass-produced wood panels in a way that lets the closets easily blend into the structural matrix of the whole and also celebrate natural, organic pattern-making.

One of the most celebrated hallmarks of Modern architecture is Frank Lloyd Wright’s Fallingwater (1935-6) in Bear Run, Pennsylvania (*Figure 10*). Fallingwater was a vacation retreat for a family of Pittsburgh department-store owners, and it shows Wright’s mastery of the Modern paradox: he creates something that is both completely organic and completely industrious. In the context of Fallingwater and Modern architecture, the “organic” was something “unforced, a faithfulness to the inherent qualities of things, and also a reference to uncorrupted nature.”⁹ This organicism is a paradox in many ways, for while Fallingwater does not necessarily impede or corrupt the waterfall, it sits directly on top of it, becoming “one” with nature while making few attempts to actually blend-in with anything natural. Wright further accomplishes the Modern paradox of the “organic” by creating cascading levels of monolithic, perfectly horizontal concrete balconies: the cascading effect references the waterfall and natural rock formations, but the rigidity of the concrete is faithful to its own inherent properties. Wright also uses a steel structure to create the impressive cantilevering, which results in a heavy structure that floats impossibly above the water. This floating structure is a major moment in Modern architecture and Fallingwater; it celebrates the inherent capabilities of steel construction while also giving a nod to the airiness of the natural surroundings.

⁷ Upton, Dell. *Architecture in the United States*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 170.

⁹ Upton, 128.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Albert Ledner was inspired by his mentor and brief employer Frank Lloyd Wright, and that inspiration is evident when examining the Mollere House and his other works. Ledner embraces the paradox of creating something organic within an uncorrupted natural space while also creating something that is rigid, industrious, and honest to the inherent qualities of the building materials. This is a Wrightian design philosophy that Ledner explores with his residences, but specifically with the Mollere House. The Mollere House was built as a vacation retreat for a New Orleans businessman, much like Fallingwater was built as a retreat for Pittsburgh business-owners. The Mollere House incorporates honest rigidity of building materials (there are endless straight lines and 90 degree angles created by steel, glass, and wood framing), but Ledner also uses these materials in a way that creates an organic airiness or openness. For example, Ledner's steel and wood matrix ceiling structure floats above angled, screen walls; the screen material makes the walls appear only half-there, which further emphasizes the floating ceiling structure above. This design choice is an excellent example of how Ledner incorporated a Modern and Wrightian language of using rigid materials to create organic airiness, and yet, Ledner went one step further to adapt that language to the Louisiana climate with the vernacular tradition of the wrap-around porch, proving himself to be a master architect.

The floating ceiling structure, which is predominantly wood framing, creates yet another organic/rigid push-pull moment. The ceiling matrix, when viewed from the interior, creates a floating "tree canopy" that references the natural, wooded area of the site, yet embraces the inherent rigidity of the framing materials. Ledner never tries to recreate the curved and irregular shapes of an actual tree canopy, but rather relies on the overlapping wood framing and the exposed grain of the wood panels to build a "forest" within the actual forest. He uses rigidity to create something organic and deferential to its environment, and also calls to mind Louisiana's vernacular building traditions of timber framing and the screened porch. This is an example of how Ledner takes tenants of Modernism and Frank Lloyd Wright (the relationship of the organic and the rigid) and adapts them to the Louisiana environment with nods to vernacular practices. The success of his design is paramount, specifically through building function with radiation, conduction, and air movement (see section below), thus proving Mollere to be the work of a master.

Neutra and Wright were early Modern masters of US Architecture that inspired Albert Ledner, but they were by no means Ledner's only source of inspiration. Philip Johnson's Glass house in Connecticut (1949) is "one of the nation's greatest Modern architectural landmarks." (*Figure 11*)¹⁰ Inspired by the Farnsworth House of the internationally famous Modern architect, Mies van der Rohe, Johnson's Glass House includes all-glass exterior walls and no interior walls,

¹⁰ National Trust, "What is Modernism?"

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

which was “a radical departure from houses of the time.”¹¹ The Glass House, like the Mollere House and Fallingwater, was another retreat house located in wooded nature (in this case, Connecticut), and it is credited for “ushering the International Style into residential American Architecture along with its innovative use of materials and its seamless integration into the landscape.”¹² The Glass House is visually much lighter-on-its-feet than the Mollere House, and its glass walls remain squeaky clean and ever-shiny compared to Mollere’s scratchy, semi-transparent screens that seem bespeckled with mosquitos (a tell-tale sign of their utility). Ledner is more Wrightian, while Johnson is more International Style, yet the concept of a “permeable” envelope is fundamental to both retreat houses. This is yet another example of how Ledner drew inspiration from the contemporary masters of US Modern architecture and adjusted for the Louisiana climate and his own instincts for the organic.

Another interesting moment of comparison between Wright, Johnson, and Ledner is in their treatment of the masonry fireplace (*Figure 01,12*). The large, masonry fireplace is a visual calling-card of Modern residential architecture in the United States that can be seen in countless examples of both high-style and simpler residential examples. Frank Lloyd Wright incorporates central, large masonry fireplaces in many examples of his work (Still Bend, Barton House, Robie House, and 2206 Parklands Lane in Minneapolis represent a few examples). These fireplaces are heavy and even extreme, and their thermal mass would have radiated heat long after any fire was extinguished. This would have been useful in the cold environments of Wright’s designs. In the Glass House, Philip Johnson has a singular, large curved masonry room that incorporates both the fireplace and the bathroom. Johnson’s circular fireplace/bathroom is the building’s most prominent punctuation; it is a dense piece of architecture surrounded by light and glass. Like the Wright examples, Johnson’s fireplace structure would have used thermal mass to safely and effectively heat the building long after a flame had died.

Ledner also includes a central masonry fireplace in the Mollere House, but it is much smaller than the Wright or Johnson examples, which is fitting for the Louisiana climate (*Figure 12*). Ledner’s fireplace seems to float above the floor with a cantilevered hearth and has a relatively small burn footprint that is captured by a large, angular copper chimney piece above. The design of this fireplace showcases Ledner’s understanding of the Louisiana environment. He understood the concept of hearth-and-home within residential architectural, he embraced Modern geometry, but he did not need Wright or Johnson’s examples when it came to passive heating and cooling in Louisiana. Ledner adapted the concept of the Modern masonry fireplace to the Louisiana climate in the Mollere House by shrinking it and reducing the amount of masonry (thereby reducing its thermal mass). The Mollere House would have relied on the quick-release method of

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

convection (air circulation) to heat the building through its open flame, rather than the slow-release method of radiation through masonry surrounds. This made better sense for the Louisiana environment where winter nights get chilly, but rarely freezing, and continuous heat sources are less necessary. Ledner did use radiant or thermal mass in the Mollere House, but it was to the opposite effect as Wright and Johnson. The floors of the Mollere House are a combination of concrete and tile, and they remain cool-to-the-touch. These cold floors can absorb heat from the interior air via radiation and they can absorb heat from bare feet and thin soles through conduction, thereby relying on their thermal mass to help cool the building and its inhabitants. This is proof of how Ledner used the inherent properties of concrete and tile (modern “masonry”) to help passively cool the building, which is a vernacular practice in Louisiana and throughout the southern United States. This passive cooling method is also an example of simple physics (a type of “organicism”) at work. Ledner’s successful pairing of “organic” physics with the inherent properties of industrious materials to create a design that is fitting for the Louisiana climate shows how the Mollere House does more than just copy ideas from masters like Wright and Johnson; it is a masterful example of Modernism in its own right.

As Modernism in US Architecture advanced through the 1950s there was an attempt to “lead [residential architecture] out of the bondage of handcraftism and into industry.”¹³ John Entenza, a publisher for Arts + Architecture magazine between 1945 and 1962, argued that Modern architects should create “prototypical ‘good’ designs based on ordinary building products and (after 1950) he promoted steel framing for domestic architecture.”¹⁴ While these architectural ideals were promoted for the masses, they were typically only built for the wealthy consumer who could afford them at the residential level, and then after the 1960s, this ‘good’ architecture became more focused on commercial buildings and the “architecture of capitalism.”¹⁵ Ledner’s design for the Mollere House incorporated steel structural elements (tension rods) for domestic architecture as well as ‘handcraftism’ in the wood paneling, millworks details, custom framing connections, and the custom fireplace. This shows how the Mollere House (1958) is therefore an example of Modernism at a turning point. There is both craftsmanship and industry; a softness and hardness; the organic and the inherent honesty of man-made materials at work. Ledner’s collection of these paradoxes into one structure that also honors its sense of place in Louisiana shows how the building is a significant piece of Modern architecture in the field of Design and Construction in Louisiana, and supports Ledner as a master architect.

Comparative Analysis: Modernism in Louisiana

¹³ Upton, 171.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Ledner's work throughout the United States is notable, but the majority of his works are concentrated in south Louisiana where he worked concurrently with other Modern architects of state or regional prominence. These include the Wiener brothers, Curtis & Davis, August Perez, and John Desmond.

In Shreveport, Louisiana, half-brothers Samuel and William Wiener had careers in Modern architecture that spanned the early 1920s to the late 1970s, and as such, they were working both before and contemporaneously to Albert Ledner.¹⁶ The Wienerbrothers designed over 130 buildings over their careers, many of which are clustered in Shreveport, but also located in New Orleans. Their portfolio, like Ledner's, included residential, commercial, and civic structures, "many of which were celebrated at the time for their innovative design."¹⁷ A biographer of the Wiener brothers describes them as "experimental and daring, theirs is a uniquely Modern architecture, adapting the high design of Bauhaus and Art Deco to the Louisiana geography in the service of architecture as a 'social, public, and functional art.'"¹⁸ This relationship to the Louisiana geography highlights a similar approach to Modernism from both the Wieners and Ledner. Earlier residential works by the Wiener Brothers such as the Preston House (1935, *Figure 22*) and the Wile House in Shreveport (1933) are International Style with Art Deco influences, and Woodlawn Highschool (1958, *Figure 23*), with its colorful, geometric façade, is classic Bauhaus. The James Muslow House and the Wm. Wiener House in Shreveport (1954, *Figure 24*) show similarities to Philip Johnson with their glass-and-steel boxes. We therefore see the evolution of several Modern idioms through the Wiener brothers. We encounter slightly less variety in Ledner's works, although he is still a master of Modern architecture in Louisiana. Ledner was certainly not stylistically static, but there are repetitive elements in his work like the porthole windows (in the Maritime buildings) and the triangular roof elements (in the Fasullo House [1959, *Figure 25*], the First Unitarian Church [1955, *Figure 26*], and the Ledner residence [1961, *Figure 19*]) that create cross-references and help viewers think, 'this looks like a Ledner.' These recognizable elements are Ledner's calling cards, creating an architectural consistency that supports his status as a master of Modernism in Louisiana.

Other contemporaneous Modern architects in Louisiana included Curtis & Davis from New Orleans, August Perez, and John Desmond, who practiced in Baton Rouge and Hammond, which is the closest neighboring community to Ponchatoula. Curtis and Davis did build residences, but they are best known for the Louisiana Superdome, the New Orleans Public Library, and skyscrapers in downtown New Orleans. Their style was more streamlined and akin to the

¹⁶ "Unexpected Modernism, the Wiener Brothers Story," made possible through the National Park Service. Available URL: <https://unexpectedmodernism.com/about/>

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

International Style; the Superdome is famous for its monumentality and continuous, clean-line curves, while even Ledner's largest structures, like the Maritime Buildings in New York and Baltimore, incorporate small, intimate moments bespeckled with architectural oddities like porthole windows. The differences between Curtis & Davis and Ledner reveal that Louisiana Modernism made room for several iterations, and that Ledner stood in the shadows of no one, never copying a larger firm's approach.

August Perez Jr. had a career anchored in New Orleans that spanned 1940-1978. Perez's son, August Perez III, would pick up the Modern baton in the 1970s, and would go on to become a national figure in Post Modernism. The father, August Perez Jr., designed notable Modern projects including the International style Louisiana Supreme Court building in 1959 and the 1940 Art Moderne Blue Plate Foods building in New Orleans. Like Ledner, Perez and his firm were "prolific" in designing everything from residences to offices to public buildings in New Orleans and other parts of the South.¹⁹ The curving, white concrete layers of Perez's Blue Plate building are similar in size and materiality to Ledner's Maritime building in New York, but Ledner's example (which is 20 years after Perez) is far more playful and experimental. Unlike Ledner, Perez practiced almost exclusively in the International Style, which dominated US architecture in the 1950s, while Ledner championed the "more adventurous Modern variety associated with Frank Lloyd Wright."²⁰ Ledner's focus on the interplay of organic and industrious materials at the Mollere House separate him from figures like Perez, and push him closer to figures like John Desmond.

John Desmond is the Louisiana Modernist most similar to Albert Ledner, and his work is located closest to Ponchatoula in nearby Hammond. In sponsoring a walking tour of Modernism in Hammond, the Hammond Historic District described how, "Desmond incorporated local historic design elements into his New Formalist modern designs in Hammond. Louisiana modern architecture is distinct because of its keen relationship to the Louisiana historic built environment and natural surroundings."²¹ The John Desmond house in Hammond is similar to the Mollere House with its combination of organic millworks, "floating" roof structure, and glass walls on a residential scale. Desmond's work often included "the modernist approach of isolating each functional, structural, and enclosure system with an identifiable spatial rationale," and he used

¹⁹ Southeastern Architectural Archive, "August Perez and Associates." Tulane University. Available URL: <https://seaatulane.blogspot.com/2018/03/august-perez-and-associates.html>

²⁰ Dixon, John Morris. "In Memoriam: Remembering Albert C. Ledner, pioneering New Orleans Modernist," *The Architect's Newspaper*, November 27 2017.

²¹ "Mid Century Modern Walking Tour," Hammond Historic District. 2018. Available URL: <https://www.hammondhistoricdistrict.org/midcentury-modern-hammond-walking-tour>

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

“strong horizontal lines” to contrast with the verticality of the native pine trees.²² This interaction with Louisiana’s natural surroundings is similar to Ledner’s Mollere House, and the approach of using enclosure systems as structural and functional spaces is also encountered with the Mollere House closets.

These similarities seem to be the product of each man’s own penchant for combining Louisiana vernacular with Modernism. There is very little evidence to confirm if Ledner and Desmond were champions of each other’s work, or friendly competitors, or unfriendly competitors. John Desmond enjoyed a prolific career; he is credited with starting the first Modern architecture firm in the Florida Parishes of Louisiana, and he and his firm received thirty national, regional, and state AIA design awards.²³ Desmond achieved fame outside of Louisiana by publishing drawings for national and even international magazines and journals.²⁴ Ledner, on the other hand, designed and built large, eye-catching buildings in major cities throughout the United States. Both Modernists had a lasting impact on Louisiana architecture, and their similarities further support Ledner’s role as a master architect, for they prove him to be among the very best practitioners of Modernism in Louisiana.

While Ledner, Perez, and the Wiener Brothers were embracing the evolving Modern architecture, the two other prolific architects in Louisiana were adhering to historical revival architecture. “The two seminal historical revival architects in 1945-65 Louisiana were undoubtedly A. Hays Town of Baton Rouge and William King Stubbs of Monroe. Both were trained in the traditional Beaux Arts approach to architectural historicism, and both were fairly deep in middle age at the moment Modernism seemed to sweep all before it.”²⁵ Hays had also practiced sparsely in the Art Deco style, but found his niche with historical revival residences around Lafayette and Baton Rouge. Compared to Ledner’s Modernism, the historical revival styles of Town and Stubbs represented the other side of the coin of Louisiana’s architectural tastes. Towns designed the historic revival Hilliard Museum in Lafayette as a replica of Louisiana’s Hermitage Plantation. It is a replica in everything but finishes; the building included VCT and laminate at the interior. This “untrue” architecture is distinctly not modern and opposite of Ledner’s approach, but was also popular. The popularity of Town and Stubbs suggests that Louisiana Modernists like Ledner, the Wiener Brothers, and Perez were never guaranteed their success; not everyone in Louisiana embraced Modern architecture, and some

²² Ibid.

²³ Desmond, Michael. “John Jacob Desmond,” *64 Parishes*, January 6 2011. Available URL: <https://64parishes.org/entry/john-jacob-desmond>

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ “Louisiana Architecture 1945-1965; The Past as Inspiration.” Produced by the Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism. Available URL: https://crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/hp/nationalregister/historic_contexts/historicismfinal.pdf

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

outright rejected it. This makes works by Ledner all the more special and interesting, for he successfully sold the Modern idiom in a place where it was environmentally and culturally challenged. Ledner created buildings like the Mollere House that perfectly combine the Louisiana vernacular with the Modern in a palatable way that proved commercially successful. This again reveals how the Mollere House is an example of a work of a master.

Comparative Analysis: Ledner's Portfolio

The Mollere House is a unique and significant building within Ledner's portfolio and within its setting of Ponchatoula. In Ponchatoula, a small community that has no other substantial Modern residences, the Mollere House is a stand-out residence and a lone piece of Modern architecture located in a rural/wooded setting. The fact that it is isolated from other Modern residences enhances the building's architectural significance and showcases Ledner's ability to adapt his architecture for any location.

The Mollere House has a different geometry and experimentalism than Ledner's other residential works. For example, the Kleinschmidt House (1951, *Figure 13*), the Roth Residence (1954, *Figure 14*), the Halle Residence (1958), and the Quinn Residence in New Orleans (1967, *Figure 15*) all show Ledner using strategically placed, rectilinear windows and glass panels in alternating combinations with large swaths of brick walls. These houses are classic Mid Century Modern designs from Ledner's early career. They reveal his design philosophy (playful geometry, Wrightian principals, and references to Louisiana vernacular), but in much more subdued ways than the Mollere House. The street-facing surfaces for these urban residences include more solid masonry surfaces than glass, so that the Modern invitation to let-the-outside-in exists, but is very controlled. The relationship between the outside and inside environments at the Mollere House (a rural retreat) is much less formal and less controlled: the screened walls angle out towards the ground, leaning into the land in a relaxed way, rather than rising abruptly from a concrete driveway like Ledner's other residential examples. Furthermore, the screen walls of the Mollere House allow the exterior air to literally pass through part of the envelope. There is no natural "passing through" a brick wall or even a fixed window at Ledner's other residences.

Another way in which the Mollere House stands out amongst Ledner's portfolio is its geometry and the ceiling matrix. The ceiling matrix, which creates a series of squares throughout the interior that repeat to form a long, horizontal rectangle at the exterior, is similar in geometry and material arrangement to Frank Lloyd Wright's Seth Peterson Cottage (also 1958). Both houses are relatively small residential projects that include clerestory-level "squares" that combine to create a sort of Modern, floating entablature. Ledner used this element successfully at the

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Mollere House, but did not noticeably incorporate this design into any of his other residential works, proving once again that Mollere is an exceptional example of his work.²⁶

As Ledner's commissions with the Maritime Union increased in the 1950s and 1960s, he began incorporating other geometries like porthole windows, circles, and triangles (some like flying sails) into both his residential and commercial projects. His ability to playfully pair different geometries within a variety of settings while still maintaining a signature aesthetic is part of what makes him a master architect. For example, in the Martini Residence in Covington (1961) we see Ledner use long, low triangular walls along the entryway, creating almost a bunker-like building that is evocative of the Cold War culture. In the Kierr Office Building in New Orleans (1960), the rectangular entablature is present, but it's dotted with circular openings and sits heavily atop large concrete columns. These buildings are both low and heavy, and do not have the lightness of the Mollere House; a contrast that appropriately coincides with their respective settings and uses. Even some of Ledner's works that pre-date the Mollere House, like the National Maritime Union Building in New Orleans (1954) and Ledner's own Studio / Residence in New Orleans (1955), incorporate triangular clerestory windows that create a sense of lightness at the roofline, but remain more rigid and less Wrightian than the Mollere House. Mollere is the only known example of a rural residence within Ledner's portfolio. The ability for Ledner to adapt his designs for both rural and urban settings while remaining true to Modern idioms and vernacular precedents reveals his architectural range. As both a rural outlier and a strong example of Ledner's architecture, Mollere House is a cornerstone example that supports Albert Ledner as a master architect.

As Ledner's career advanced into the 1960s and 1970s, he designed at least seven major office buildings for the Maritime Union, all in major port cities around the United States. Most of these Maritime Union buildings are monumental in their use of concrete, are geometrically playful, and are terrific examples of how Modern architecture evolved through different sub-types. For example, Ledner's Headquarters for the National Maritime Union building in New York (1963, *Figure 20*) was geographically close to Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Guggenheim Museum (1939, *Figure 21*), and it clearly references this early example of Modern mastery. Wright stacked rings of heavy, white concrete levels in an ascending pattern, and the building is anchored on its corner site by solid, imposing yet undulating concrete massings. At Ledner's Maritime building, he also stacks layers of heavy, white concrete levels in an ascending pattern, and his building is also anchored on its corner site by an overall concrete massiveness. Both buildings immediately attract the eye; Wright's museum does a better job of inviting visitors

²⁶ Based on images of his extant buildings and the drawings of non-extant buildings available through the Southeastern Architectural Archives at Tulane University.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

with its undulating lower level (it's a museum) while Ledner's building (an office) lacks the inviting curves and creates a more hard-line, exclusive façade. Ledner's scalloped edging along the bottom of each concrete level creates a sense of playfulness that is almost counter-intuitive to the rest of the building's austerity, but like Wright, it's the combination of playful impossibilities and material honesty – the organic paradox of Modernism – that Ledner masterfully achieves.

Conclusion

As Modernism in US Architecture advanced through the 1950s, historian Dell Upton describes how there was an attempt to "lead [residential architecture] out of the bondage of handcraftism and into industry."²⁷ John Entenza, a publisher for Arts + Architecture magazine between 1945 and 1962, argued that Modern architects should create "prototypical 'good' designs based on ordinary building products and (after 1950) he promoted steel framing for domestic architecture."²⁸ While these architectural ideals were promoted for the masses, they were typically only built for the wealthy consumer who could afford them at the residential level, and then after the 1960s, this 'good' architecture became more focused on commercial buildings and the "architecture of capitalism."²⁹ Ledner's design for the Mollere House incorporated steel structural elements (tension rods) for domestic architecture as well as 'handcraftism' in the wood paneling, millworks details, custom framing connections, and the custom fireplace. This shows how the Mollere House (1958) is therefore an example of Modernism at a turning point. There is both craftsmanship and industry; a softness and hardness; the organic and the inherent honesty of man-made materials at work. Ledner's collection of these paradoxes into one structure that also honors its sense of place in Louisiana shows how the building is a significant piece of Modern architecture in the field of Design and Construction in Louisiana, and a work of a master architect. Ledner continued designing Modern residences into the late 1970s and early 1980s, but it is his work between 1950 the early 1970s that represents the apex of his career and design philosophy.

One of Ledner's clients, Mr. Klingman, described "Al" Ledner as "one of the first people, not just in New Orleans but around the country, to incorporate historic elements in such unusual ways in a modern project. It sounds simple today because lots of people do it now. But in the 1960s no one was doing this."³⁰ This type of testimonial proves that Ledner was innovational with his designs and recognized for his acumen. Wayne Troyer, a noted New Orleans architect and preservationist also described how Ledner "creates spaces which are interconnected,

²⁷ Upton, 171.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Langenhenning, Susan. "Albert Ledner's Legacy: New Orleans architect peppered the country with modern marvels," *New Orleans Times-Picayune*. August 24 2017.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

expansive and connected to the landscape. In many of his projects, space seems to be continuously unfolding without the constraints of traditional rectilinear rooms.”³¹ This level of respect from within the architectural community also supports Ledner’s status as a master architect.

The Mollere House is significant in Architecture under Criteria C as the work of a master architect. It is the stand-out work of a prolific but under-recognized artist who studied and took inspiration from Frank Lloyd Wright, but shaped his own style. The house is unique in Ponchatoula, and it is unique within Ledner’s own portfolio and possesses high artistic values. The method of construction, using common materials in innovative ways, is evidence of Ledner’s inquisitive nature and aptitude for engineering. The building’s unassuming form and proportions, and its integrated setting on the banks of the Tangipahoa set in dense hardwood, all accomplish a feeling of unpretentious functionality and harmonious integration into nature. Furthermore, the house maintains its historic integrity. It has been well preserved and retains important character-defining features including the wrap-around pyramidal screened in porches, the cast concrete floor tiles, stained plywood interior paneling, central fireplace hearth, and exposed framework of light wood and steel rod frame roof. For these reasons, the Mollere House qualifies for the National Register under Criterion C / Architecture on a state level of significance as the work of a master.

³¹ Ibid.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Additional Historic Context

A full list of Ledner's works is provided below.³² Ledner's Mollere House (1958) represents the earlier part of his career, which spanned 1950-1997. Ledner worked on residential projects throughout his career, and these residences are concentrated around the Greater New Orleans Metro area including the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain and down to Houma, Louisiana. Ledner also completed several large commercial and office buildings throughout his career, and a significant portion of these commercial structures were major office buildings for the Maritime Union which are scattered throughout the country (Baltimore, New Orleans, New York, Norfolk, San Francisco, Houston, and Mobile...all major port cities).

A List of Albert Ledner's Residential Works

1. Goldate Residence (Demolished), 311 Cuddihy Metairie LA | 1950 | *Figure 4*
2. Levy Residence (Demolished), 327 Arlington, Metairie LA | 1951
3. Kleinschmidt Residence, 15 Swallow, New Orleans LA | 1951 | *Figure 13*
4. Shaw Residence, 101 Moss, Kenner LA | 1952
5. Teasdel Residence (Demolished), 522 Woodvine, Metairie LA | 1952
6. Samuel Residence, 5 Hawk, New Orleans LA | 1953
7. Roth Residence, 4116 Vincennes, New Orleans LA | 1954 | *Figure 14*
8. Ledner Residence and Studio, 5328 Bellaire, New Orleans LA | 1955 | *Figure 19*
9. Buwie Residence (Demolished), 5540 Bellaire, New Orleans LA | 1956
10. Farwell Residence, 872 Crystal, New Orleans LA | 1956
11. Gross Residence (Demolished,) Dunn St and School St, Houma LA | 1957
12. Halle Residence, 4200 Cadiz, New Orleans LA | 1958
13. Fasullo Residence, 35 Howard, Gretna LA | 1959 | *Figure 25*
14. Mollere House, 39881 Beach, Ponchatoula LA | 1958 | *Figure 1,2,8,9,12*
15. Martini Residence, Tchefuncte Club Estates, Covington LA | 1961
16. Sunkel Residence, 8 Park Island, New Orleans LA | 1961 | *Figure 7*
17. Paillet Residence, 885 Crystal, New Orleans LA | 1961
18. Perloff Residence (Demolished), 4512 Henican Plan, New Orleans LA | 1963
19. Matherne Residence, Main St and Service Rd, Houma LA | 1964
20. Galatoire Residence, 11 Park Island, New Orleans LA | 1962 | *Figure 5*
21. Quinn Residence, 5424 Bellaire, New Orleans LA | 1967 | *Figure 15*
22. Miller Residence (Demolished), 6321 Patton, New Orleans LA | 1969
23. Leonard Residence "Cointreau House," 9 Park Island, New Orleans LA | 1972 | *Figure 6*

³² This list was compiled from the Southeastern Architectural Archives at Tulane University and their files on Albert Ledner's complete portfolio.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

24. Posey Residence, 9728 Robin, River Ridge LA | 1979
25. Olagues Residence, 413 Sauve, River Ridge LA | 1979
26. Moradian Residence, 1725 Lakeshore, New Orleans LA | 1978
27. Ziblich Residence, Lot 1174 Sunnybrook, Picayune MS | 1972
28. Moses Residence, 6050 Chestnut, New Orleans LA | 1982
29. Shalet Residence, 15 Tern, New Orleans LA | 1987
30. Gainsburg Residence, Henley Field, Mississippi | 1985
31. Leonard Residence, 5814 Gwin, New Orleans LA | 1997

A List of Albert Ledner's Commercial Works

1. Singer Co. Office Building, 4900 Washington, New Orleans LA | 1952
2. First Unitarian Church, 1806 Jefferson, New Orleans LA | 1955 | *Figure 26*
3. Mollere Commercial Building, 2341 Metairie Rd, Metairie LA | 1953
4. Raymond Kerr Office Building, 2233 Simon Bolivar, New Orleans LA | 1960
5. Four Freedoms Inc Apartments, W 16th Street New York, NY | 1965
6. South Central Bell Co (Demolished), 3321 Hessmer, New Orleans LA | 1967
7. NMU Office Building, 2731 Tchoupitoulas, New Orleans, LA | 1954 | *Figure 18*
8. NMU Hiring Hall (Demolished), 111 Canal, Mobile AL | 1955
9. NMU Office Building (Demolished), Broadway and Fairmount, Baltimore MD | 1965
10. NMU Headquarters, 30 7th Avenue, New York NY | 1963 | *Figure 20*
11. NMU Building Annex, 355 W 16th, New York NY | 1965
12. NMU Lodging Building, 363 W 16th, New York NY | 1967
13. NMU Office Building (Demolished), Bute St and Posey Ln, Norfolk VA | 1965
14. NMU Office Building, 1602 (now 7600) Navigation, Houston TX | 1965
15. NMU Building, 91 Drumm, San Francisco CA | 1966

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Additional Figures



Figure 1. Freestanding fireplace at living room.



Figure 2. White pre-cast concrete floor tiles with light grey-blue designs, meant to mimic marble.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 3. The Mollere House's "space frame" roof under construction, 1959, Tulane University Special Collections



Figure 4. Construction of the Goldate House. Still from Catherine Ledner and Roy R. Beeson. "Designing Life: The Modernist Architecture of Albert C. Ledner." Short film. Release August 25, 2017.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 5. Residence for Mrs. Leonie Galatoire, Park Island, New Orleans, LA. The Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.



Figure 6. Leonard "Cointreau" House. Image from Zillow.com

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 7. Residence for Mr. and Mrs. A.C. Sunkel, Park Island, New Orleans, LA. The Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.



Figure 8. Albert Ledner at the Mollere House, undated, still from Catherine Ledner's film.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

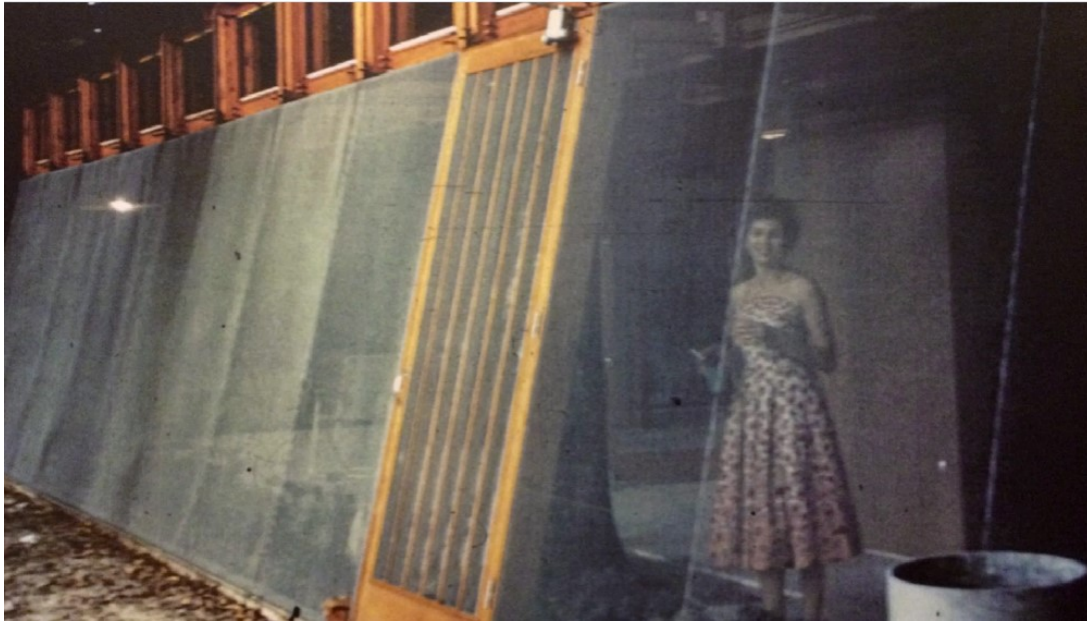


Figure 9. Mollere House, 1958. Albert C. Ledner Office Records. SEAA-179, Folder 1. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

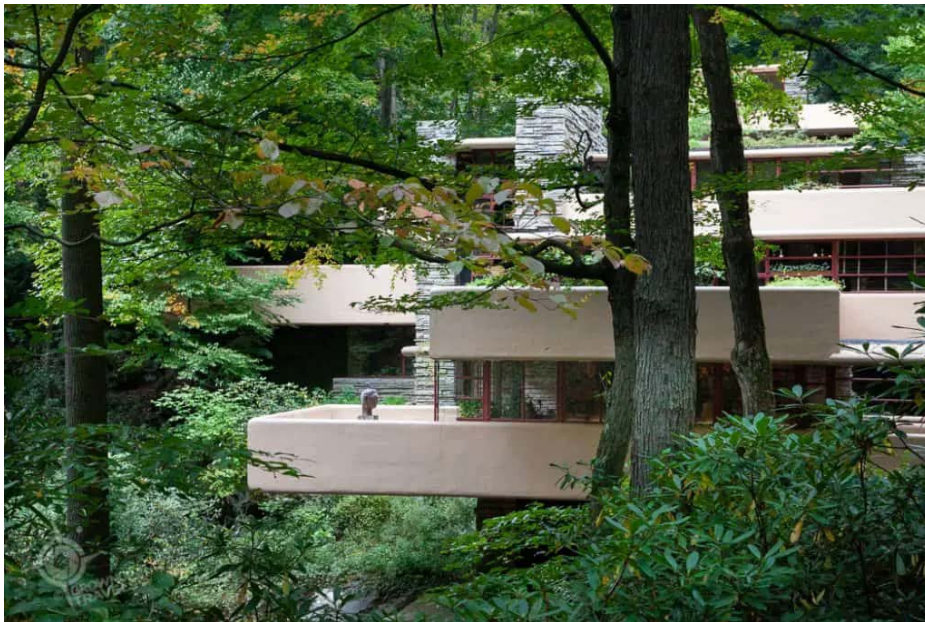


Figure 10. Fallingwater. GrowUpTravel.com. Photo by Jane Canapini.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

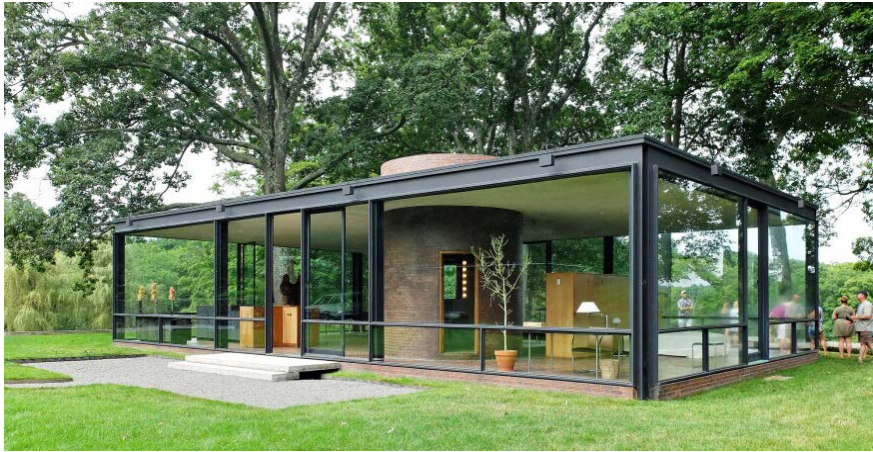


Figure 11. Johnson "Glass" House. ArchitectMagazine.com



Figure 12. Mollere House fireplace, viewed from kitchen and dining area to living room. Photo by Southkick Rolf Preservation Works.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 13. Kleinschmidt Residence, 15 Swallow Street, Lake Vista, New Orleans, LA. "Modernist Marvel: Johnson family restores Albert Leder-designed home in Lake Vista," Preservation in Print. June 1, 2023.



Figure 14. Roth Residence, 4116 Vincennes Place, New Orleans, LA. Redfin.com.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

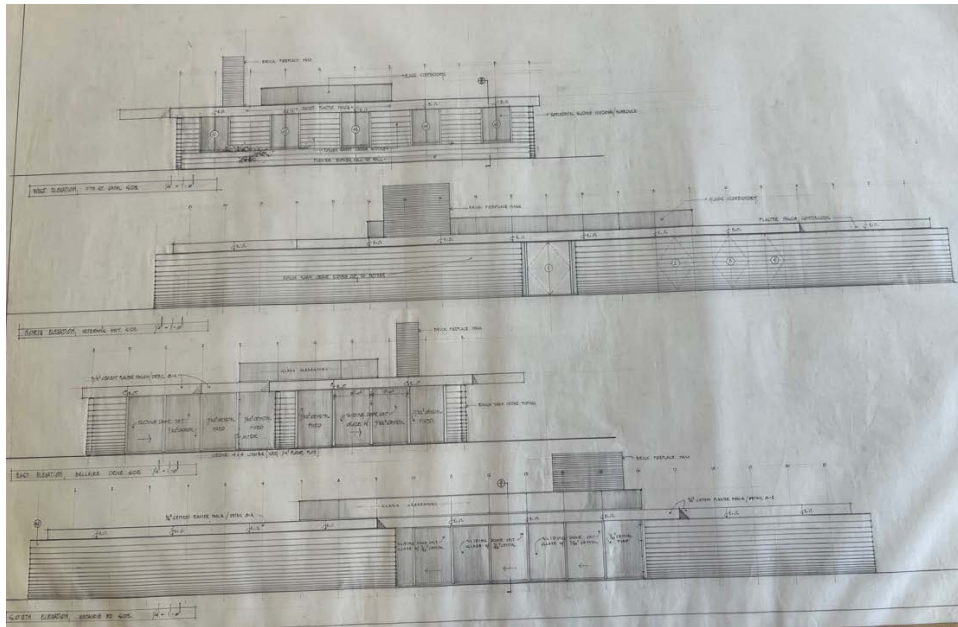


Figure 15. Residence for Dr. and Mrs. James Quinn, Sheet 4. Albert C. Ledner Office Records. SEAA-179, Folder 2. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.



Figure 16. Peterson House. FrankLloydWrightSites.com. Photo by Yvonne Carpenter-Ross, Northern Sky Designs.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 17. Office Building for Raymond Kierr, Simon Bolivar Avenue, New Orleans, LA. Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.



Figure 18. The National Maritime Union of America: Office Building for the National Maritime Union of America, C.I.O., Tchoupitoulas Street and Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA. Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 19. Albert Ledner's Home and Studio. 5328 Bellaire Drive, New Orleans, LA. "Lovers of Art and Architecture, a Gem of a House Beckons," *Preservation in Print*. May 16, 2018.

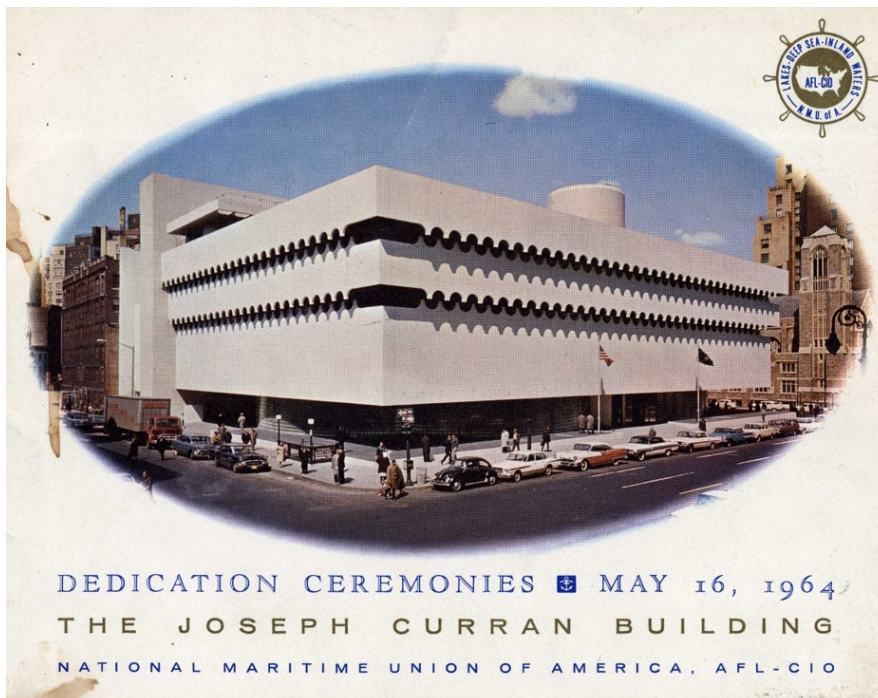


Figure 20. Headquarters for the National Maritime Union, New York, NY. Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 21. The Solomon Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY. ArchDaily.com

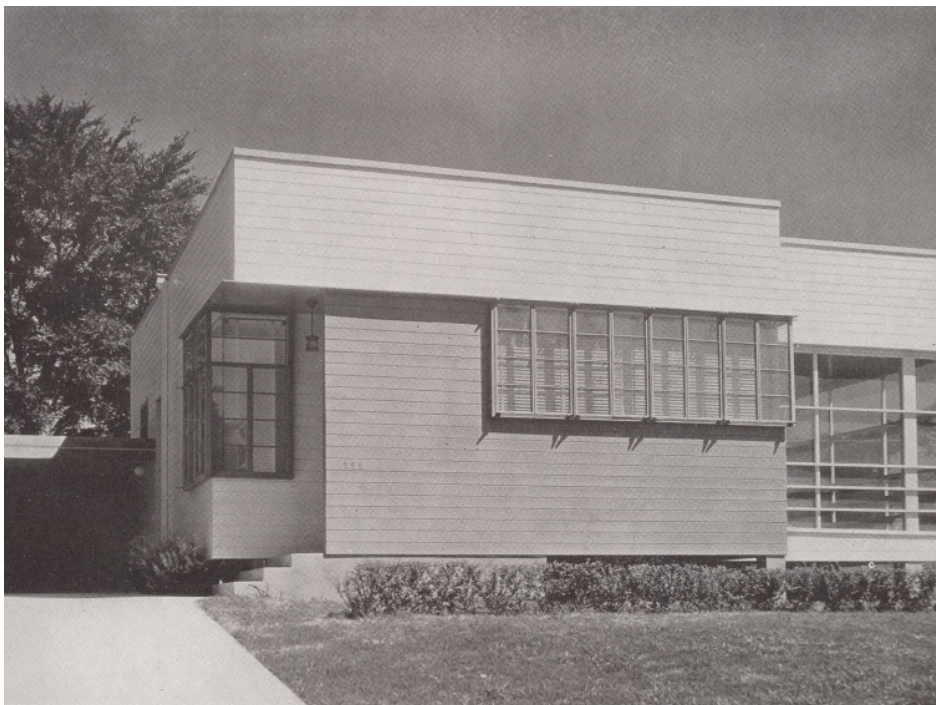


Figure 22. John Preston House, 940 College Street, Shreveport, LA (originally on Jordan Street). Unexpected Modernism, The Wiener Brothers Story. UnexpectedModernism.com.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 23. Woodlawn High School, 7340 Wyngate Boulevard, Shreveport, LA. Unexpected Modernism, The Wiener Brothers Story. UnexpectedModernism.com.



Figure 24. William B. Wiener House, 2 Longleaf Lane, Shreveport, LA. Unexpected Modernism, The Wiener Brothers Story. UnexpectedModernism.com.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana



Figure 25. Residence for Mr. Joseph Fasullo, 35 Howard Street, Gretna, LA. Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

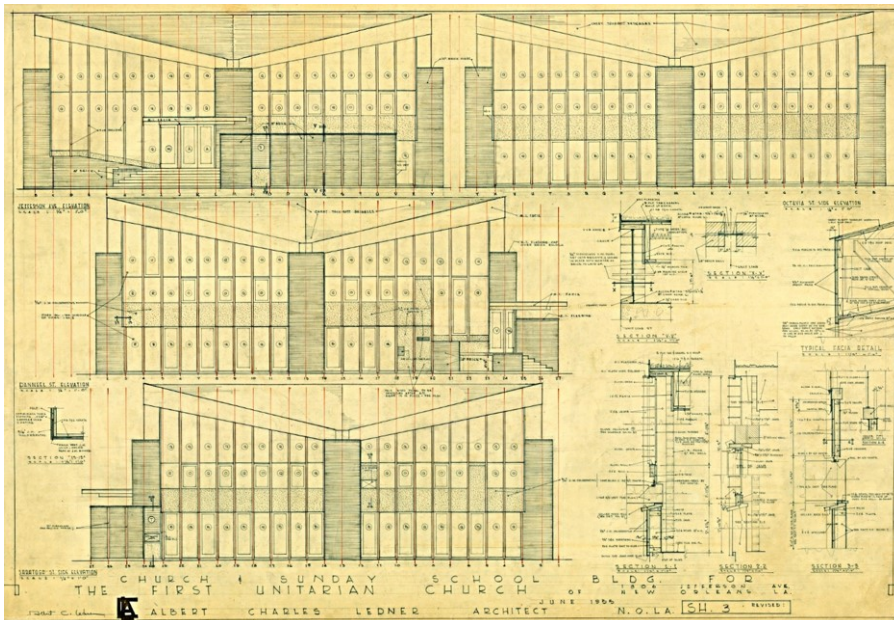


Figure 26. First Unitarian Church and Sunday School, New Orleans, LA. Organic Modernism of Albert C. Ledner. Tulane University Special Collections, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

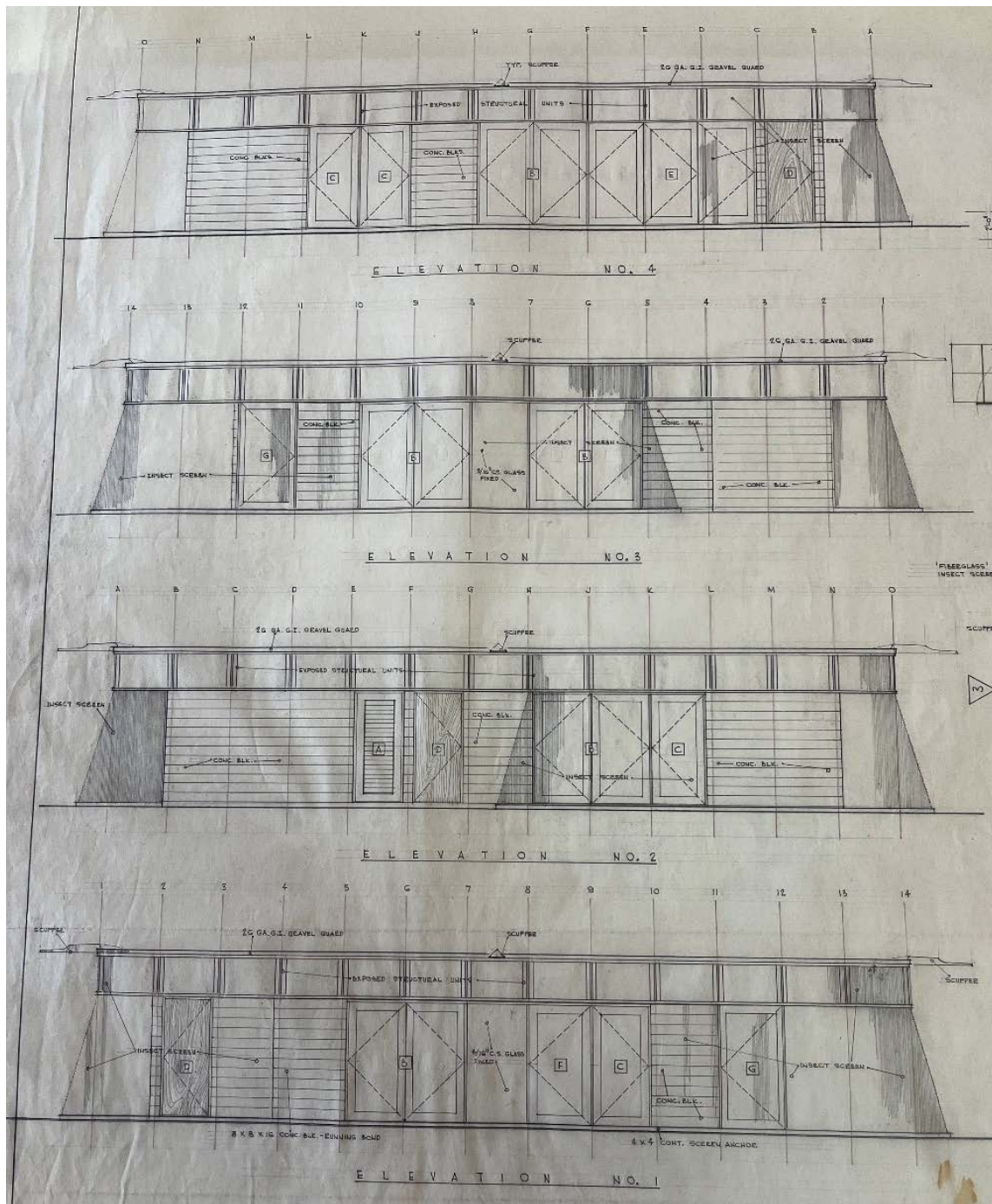


Figure 27. Albert Ledner's Drawings for the Mollere House, courtesy of the Southeastern Architectural Archives at Tulane University.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

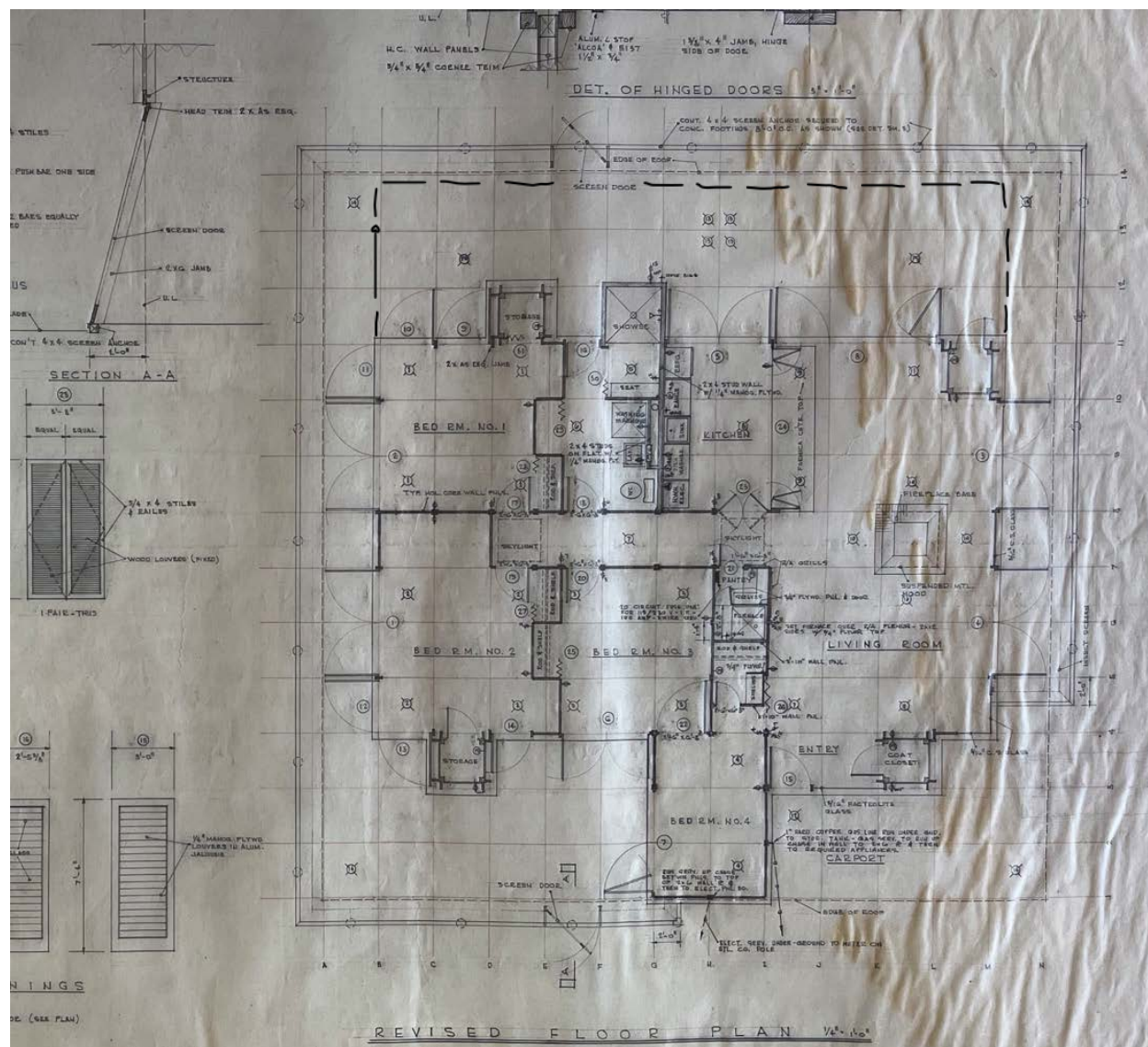


Figure 28. Albert Ledner's "Revised Floor Plan" for the Mollere House, courtesy of the Southeastern Architectural Archives at Tulane University. The dotted line shows where the sleeping terrace was enclosed to expand the dining room, bedroom, and provide space for a second bathroom.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

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7. Louisiana Office of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism. "Louisiana Architecture 1945-1965; The Past as Inspiration." https://crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/hp/nationalregister/historic_contexts/historicismfinal.pdf
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10. Stock, Francine Judd. "A Gem of a House Beckons." *Preservation In Print*. New Orleans: Preservation Resource Center, May 2018.
11. Southeastern Architectural Archive at Tulane University Special Collections: Albert C. Ledner. https://exhibits.tulane.edu/exhibit/ledner_seaa/
12. United State Patent Application 396, 241. chrome-extension://efaidnbmninnibpcapjpcglclefindmkaj/https://patentimages.storage.googleapis.com/cf/30/cb/e688e4d8d16082/US3826341.pdf
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14. Tangipahoa Parish Clerk of Court.
15. Tangipahoa Parish Assessor. <https://search.tangiassessor.com/>
16. "Unexpected Modernism, the Wiener Brothers Story." National Park Service. <https://unexpectedmodernism.com/about/>

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

9. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.37 acres

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 30.442744 Longitude: -90.334686

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☐ NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Bounded to the west by the Tangipahoa River, to the east by Beach Road, to the North by LA Hwy 22, and to the south by the property boundary of 39843 Beach Road.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The chosen boundaries reflect the property historically associated with the resource.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Nora Goddard, Michelle Duhon, Juliette Hotard, and James Rolf
organization: Southkick Preservation/Rolf Preservation
street & number: 4516 Magazine St
city or town: New Orleans state: LA zip code: 70115
e-mail: mduhon@southkickrolf.com
telephone: 504-541-4114 504-609-3890
date: July 3, 2024

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Photo Log

Name of Property: Mollere House

City or Vicinity: Ponchatoula

County: Tangipahoa

State: LA

Photographer: Rick Fifield, AIA

Date Photographed: 12/12/2023 (Photographs accurately depict the current appearance and condition of the resource)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo # 1. General view showing the southeast (left) and northeast (right) elevations of the building, looking west.

Photo # 46. General view showing the northeast elevation of the building, looking southwest.

Photo # 3. General view showing the northeast elevation of the building, looking southwest.

Photo # 4. General view looking along the northwest elevation of the building, looking southwest.

Photo # 5. General view showing the northwest elevation of the building, looking northeast.

Photo # 6. General view showing the main living area on the northeast side of the building, looking northwest.

Photo # 7. General view showing the main living area on the northeast side of the building, looking northwest.

Photo # 8. General view showing the main living area on the northeast side of the building, looking southeast.

Photo # 9. General view showing a hallway near the center of the building, looking southwest.

Photo # 10. General view showing a bedroom in the north corner of the building, looking southeast.

Photo # 11. General view showing a bedroom in the north corner of the building, looking northwest.

Photo # 12. General view showing a sitting room off of the bedroom in the north corner of the building, looking northwest.

Mollere House

Tangipahoa Parish,
Louisiana

Photo # 13. General view looking through glazed wall from an interior sitting room, to an exterior patio, and into the interior main living area on the northwest side of the building, looking northeast.

Photo # 14. General view showing one of 4 structural cores that supports the space frame roof, which is functional used as a closet, in the sitting room off of the bedroom in the north corner of the building, looking south.

Photo # 15. General view showing the historic bathroom on the northwest side of the building, looking north.

Photo # 16. General view showing an exterior patio in the south corner of the building, looking southeast.

Photo # 17. General view showing paired corner doors from an exterior patio into a bedroom in the south corner of the building, looking northwest.

Photo # 18. General view showing an exterior screened corridor on the northeast side of the building, looking southeast.

Photo # 19. Detail view showing a typical connection point in the wood spaceframe roof structure in the main living area on the northeast side of the building.

Photo # 20. Detail view showing the wood spaceframe roof structure in the main living area on the northeast side of the building.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

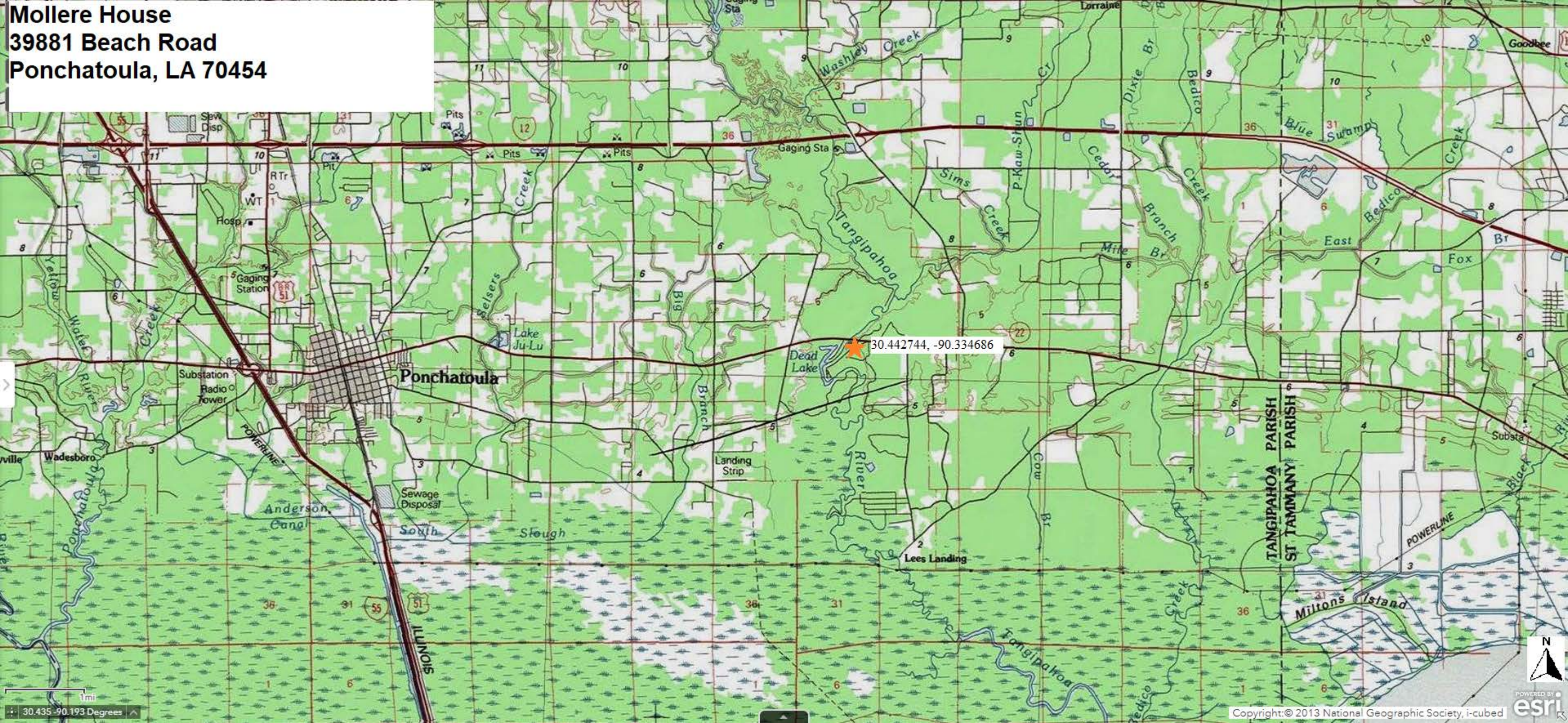
Tier 2 – 120 hours

Tier 3 – 230 hours

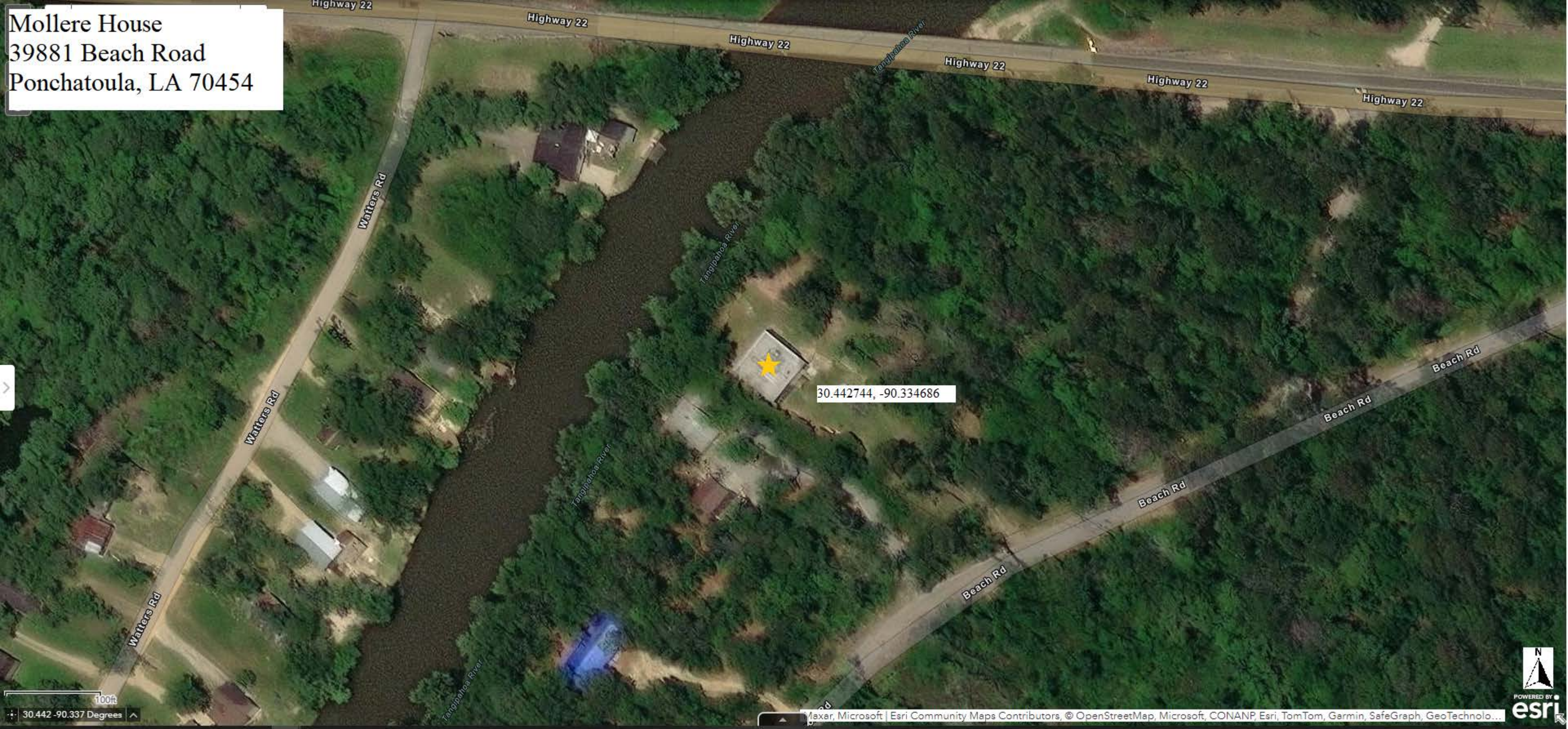
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Mollere House
39881 Beach Road
Ponchatoula, LA 70454



Mollere House
39881 Beach Road
Ponchatoula, LA 70454



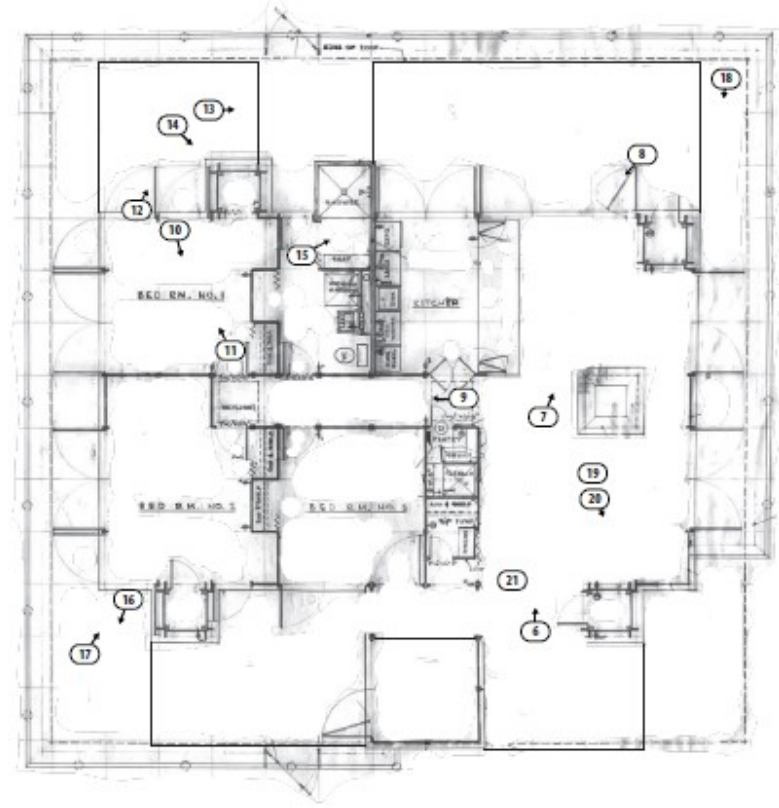
30.442744, -90.334686

NORTHWEST

3

5

4



SOUTHEAST

1

2

NORTHEAST

SOUTHWEST



Photo # 1. General view showing the southeast (left) and northeast (right) elevations of the building, looking west.



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