



THE MIRIMAH MOSQUE, ISTANBUL, TURKEY

This issue's limited edition signed print by Ladd P. Ehlinger is of the Mirimah Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Mirimah Mosque is named after a Princess daughter of Suleyman the Magnificent and Hasseki-Hurem. Princess Mirimah was the benefactor/donor of the funds to build the mosque. In 1539, she married Rustem Pasha, who later became Grand Vizier. She died in 1558.

Some historians are inclined to date the mosque at the time of her marriage, but a later dating is more likely due to the style and architectural developments of the mosque.

Sinan was the architect of the Mirimah Mosque (see E&A Newsletter, 3rd Quarter, 1990) and while the date of the Mirimah Mosque is not known, dates of other Mosques in various stages of development are known. The progression of Sinan's architectural ideas can be traced through these other Mosques, and thus the Mirimah Mosque is believed to have been designed around 1555.

Sinan tried for the first time in this building to support the dome entirely on the exterior walls, without use of half-domes and huge thick walls to buttress the thrust (brace against the horizontal force) produced by the dome. In the Suleyman Mosque and in Sinan's archetypal inspiration, Hagia Sophia (see E&A Newsletter, 1st Quarter, 1989) the main dome is braced by large half domes and large wall buttresses. The walls in these earlier works also do not have the clarity and crispness that those of the Mirimah Mosque possesses. The walls are treated as in-fill screens within the huge skeletal-like main arch/walls that support the dome, and they are perforated with fenestration (window openings) to the degree that they almost disappear when inside the main space of the interior, while at the same time flooding the interior with an even light from all sides.

This quality of even light makes this Mosque a premier example of the goal of the Mosque: an inward oriented building whose prime purpose is contemplation and prayer.

The exactitude and crispness of the spaces coupled with the simplicity of the interior furthers this objective as well. Without the half-dome solution of bracing, the light level is even because of fewer shadowed spaces, and the detailing of the supports for the dome enhances this quality.

The low buildings in front of the Mirimah Mosque are called a medrese, which is technically a theological school. Sometimes hospitals, orphanages, and caravanserayes (hostels) were combined with the Mosque in one complex. In Sinan's works there is a strong hierarchical order to the buildings in that the Mosque always dominates the medrese and any other buildings, and when the climate permitted, the buildings formed the arcaded sides of a courtyard open to the sky which served as a transition to entry of the Mosque.

In the nineteenth century, the building was seriously damaged by an earthquake. The upper part of the minaret was damaged, as was the interior near the springline of the dome.

IN DEFENSE OF THE IMPERIAL SYSTEM

The imperial system of measurement is three dimensional, it is composed of recognizable solid objects. These objects present themselves in the mind, not as abstractions or ideas, but as comprehensible things. It is true whether speaking of capacity, weight, volume, mass or length. It follows that the basic units both increase through stages, and decrease by fractions, which are also recognizable as objects, not abstractions. The imperial units have evolved as practical tools of trade and are needed to work in harness one with another and have a recognizable family likeness and compatibility.

The metric system by contrast, is purely linear and sterile, an endless succession of marks on a scale on which no number has any greater significance than any other. As a comparison, the meter is defined as 1,650,763.73 wavelengths of orange-red light emitted by the krypton-86 atom, while the yard was established as the distance from King Henry I's nose to his fingertips. While not possessing

krypton-86 atoms or having ever met King Henry, I have a better feel for the yard.

It can be argued, of course, that this is just all a temporary teething problem, but the fact remains that the metric system is not popular in the United States. No one is jumping up and yelling 'woopee, let me have a .1134 kilogrammer' (McDonald's quarter pounder).

What is being lost in adopting the metric system is the safety harness of the mental arithmetic check, much the same as was lost when the little black box replaced the slide rule. We will go through the mechanics, physical, not mental, of solving the problem and will accept the answer having very little inclination as to whether the answer is right or wrong or whether the solution to the problem is correct or not.

The artisans were rendered extinct by the unions; the perfectionists will be killed off by the bureaucrats; and the monkeys will run the zoo.

RJH

E&A ALABAMA WELCOMES...

Peter J. Baricev, AIA brings to our Huntsville office his approximately forty-nine years of varied experience as Project Manager and Chief Architect on numerous projects. He has practiced throughout the South in such places as Pascagoula, Biloxi and Hattiesburg, Mississippi and New Orleans, Louisiana.

His projects include design, contract administration and construction documents on hospitals, airport terminals, churches, university buildings, jails and dormitories. Not to mention a county courthouse, a shopping village, barracks, residences, apartment complexes, a mobile home park, a public library, doctor's clinics, gymnasias, food processing plants, warehouses and a country club. Add that to fire stations, banks and branch banks, motel additions, department stores, elementary, junior high, and high schools and you'll know why we use the term varied!

Peter is a past member of the boards of directors of the South Central Mississippi Chapter of the American Red Cross, and a past member of the City

Planning Commission of Pascagoula, Mississippi. His two adult children have families of their own and reside in the South. Perhaps this contributed to his decision to relocate from his current residence in San Francisco to Huntsville. Whatever the case, we are thrilled to have him as a member of our ever growing team!

E&A LOUISIANA WELCOMES...

Native New Orleanian Daniel B. Rogan Jr., AIA recently returned from Tampa, Florida to join our Architectural staff. A 1968 graduate of De la Salle High School, he received his Bachelor of Architecture from Louisiana State University in 1974.

Dan has spent the past five years in Florida acting as Project Architect on specialized medical and institutional projects such as a multi-story ACLF addition to a Florida hospital and Medical Diagnostic buildings on the US Eastern seaboard. Previously, he spent nine years in private practice in New Orleans as a principal of an Architectural and Design-Build firm whose projects ranged from religious and commercial to residential and multi-family projects. Representative projects include: Moody Air Force Base (UEPH) in Georgia; Northwest Memorial Hospital/MRI Suite in Chicago; Sowela Technical Institute in Lake Charles, La.; Memphis Outpatient Diagnostic Center; Gulf Federal Bank Tower and Fairman's Restaurant in Metairie; and American Airlines Airside "F" renovation at Tampa International Airport.

Professional affiliations include the Florida Central Chapter of AIA and State of Louisiana Architectural Registration. His wife and two children ages 5 and 8 in Tampa are expecting to join him in New Orleans within the next month. We are pleased to have him on our staff and (like Dan) hope his whole family is soon resettled here!

TROY B. PELIAS

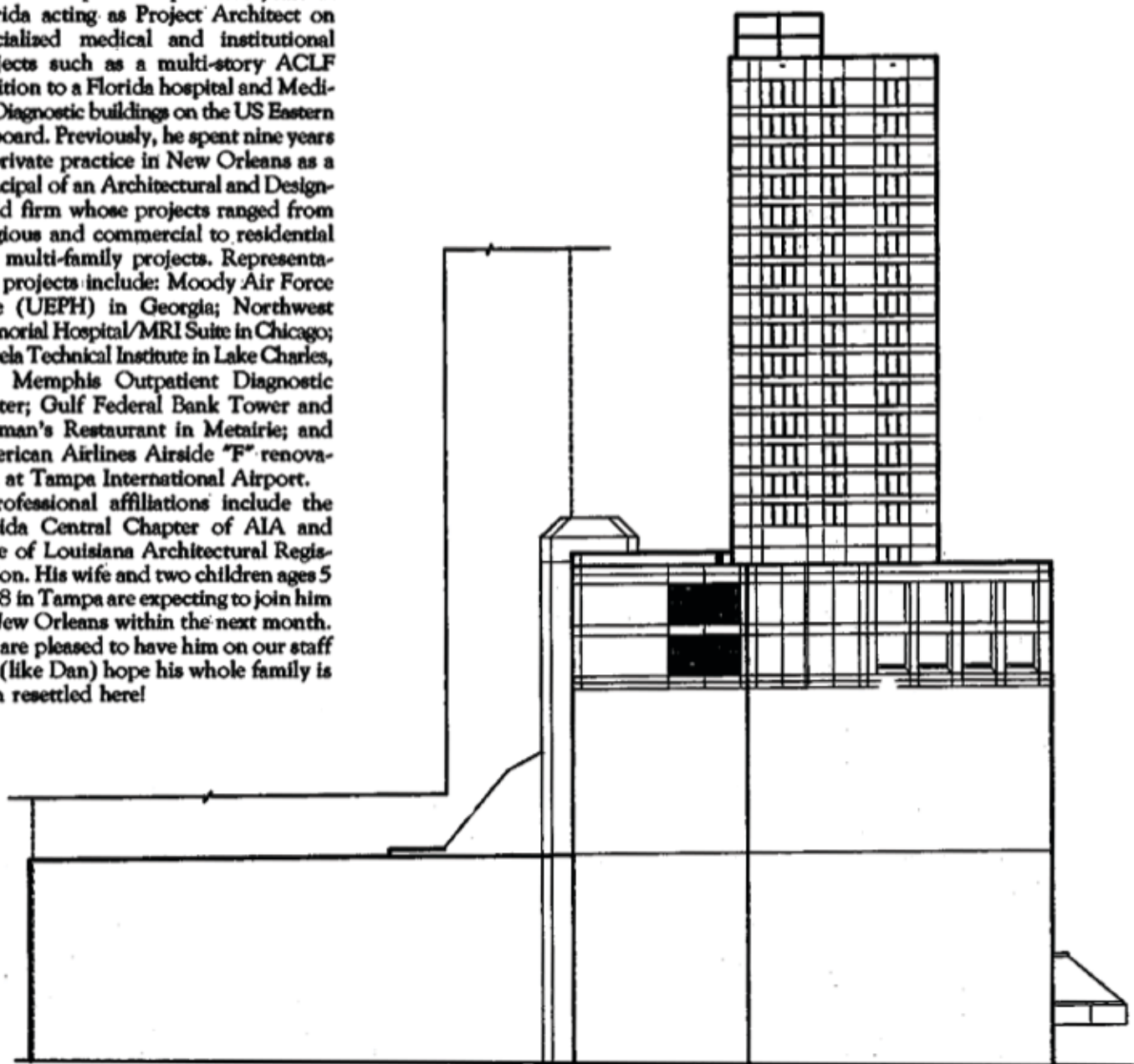
During the summer of this year, Troy joined our Architectural staff in E&A's Louisiana office. He received his Bachelor of Architecture in May 1991 from Louisiana State University where he was a student member of the American Institute of Architects and spent a semester studying abroad in Innsbruck, Austria.

His fifth year design thesis featured a minor league baseball stadium situated in Baton Rouge (who at the time was the forerunner in Louisiana for acquiring a team). Currently, his thesis is entered in the 1991 Gimeor Design Competition which concentrates on the Macintosh design program known as MacArchitron. We are proud to have him on our staff and wish him the best in the competition!

NEW ON THE SCREENS

In years past, we would have titled this article "New On the Boards", to reflect what new work we had on the drafting boards. Since we now do everything on computer (and have since 1982), the title obviously ought to be as current as the process, much to the chagrin of the purist old-timers among us.

E&A's New Orleans office is working on a major forensic project: investigating the causes of roof and wall leaks, both design and construction; and designing repairs/replacement of same on the Westin Canal Place Hotel with a budget of approximately \$8 million, for the Travelers Insurance Company, Owner.



EAST ELEVATION - WESTIN HOTEL, CANAL PLACE