

## Natalie Heron - [tinyrefuge.wordpress.com](http://tinyrefuge.wordpress.com)

### *Basic Stats:*

- What is(are) your name(s)? **Natalie Heron**
- What do you do for a living? **Community Worker for a small not-for-profit, I match volunteers with people with an intellectual handicap or autism.**
- How many people do you/will be living in your tiny house? **Myself and my two dogs (though am planning on building with possible cohabitants in mind)**
- What part of the country do you live in? **I live in the West Island of Montréal, Québec, Canada**
- How many square feet is your house? **It will probably end up at 147 sq ft.**
- When did you start your build? **September 3 2013**
- Is your house complete? **No**
- Have you been documenting your tiny house build and if so, where can people find that information? **I have started a blog at [tinyrefuge.wordpress.com](http://tinyrefuge.wordpress.com)**

### *Background:*

- Why did you decide to build? **Over the past 8 years I have moved 7 times and lived out of a suitcase more often than I can count. I have owned 2 homes over 2,100 miles apart and can foresee moving again. This time I'd like to take my house with me, a tiny house makes sense for me.**
- What was your life like before your tiny house? Were you fairly active, have you always had 'projects' going on? Were you fairly sedentary and looking for a change? Did you tend to work too much? **I am a bit of an introvert and a homebody, though I am comfortable in social situations and am very outgoing, I find myself feeling depleted after spending time with people. I am hard working and very interested in creating a sustainable life for myself.**
- How did you come to hear about the movement, figure out it was right for you and get started? **I went to a friends wedding last year and heard other friends talking about their upcoming tiny house build. I was fascinated by the concept of tiny living and started researching it voraciously. I just kind of knew it was right for me. It resonated with me. So I bought plans 6 months later and went to a workshop.**
- What is/was your design inspiration? **I will be building a modified Tumbleweed Cypress 20 with dormers, no porch with the door on the long side of the house. My floorplan be closer to Protohaus'.**

### *Technical:*

- How do/did you find the time to work on your house with a job, kid(s), relationships, AND building a house? Did you do anything special to keep the balance? **I build on weekends, am single and hired someone to help with the build, so things are moving quickly.**
- Have you run into any problems with your local codes? How did you solve them? **I was able to speak with the City Planner of the municipality that I live in and RVs are allowed to be parked in this municipality and as I am building what is considered a vehicle, I don't need any building permits. I may run into issues with my composting toilet as they are not legal in Québec.**

- Where did you get the tools that you use? Were they yours, borrowed, rented etc.? **I bought myself a good drill. Many members of my family have pretty good collections of tools, my carpenter has a nail gun, I have a mitre saw and a circular saw.**
- How long did (are you expecting) construction to take? **My first goal is to get the house framed, sheathed, wrapped, get the roof and siding on before November when Winter will come in and then work on the interior of my house from then on.**
- Have you/were you able to stay on schedule? **The weather has cooperated so far.**
- What is/was the most time consuming portion of your build? **So far the most time consuming has been the Roof.**
- What is/was the most limiting factor for your build? **Weather, waiting for supplies to come in – my ridge beam was delayed by almost 2 weeks, and only being able to build on weekends.**
- Is your house on a trailer? If yes, how do you attach to the trailer? How do you move your tiny house? (Do you have a truck, do you hire it done?) **My house will be on the trailer. It is attached to the trailer with lag bolts, Simpson Strong Ties that attach the frame of the house to rods welded onto the trailer and screws up through the decking into the subfloor. I do not have a truck and will probably rent a truck from Uhaul or the like to move my trailer.**
- Do you have accessory houses/dwellings that you use to supplement storage/working/living? **I am hoping to have all my possessions within my house.**
- Where did you get your plans? **Tumbleweed**
- Have you consulted any 'professionals'? (structural, mechanical, plumbing, design etc.)? **I have consulted 2 carpenters, a cabinet maker, a city planner, an electrician, Tumbleweed staff, and will be consulting a plumber in the near future.**
- Are you insuring your house? With who? **Not sure yet.**
- Have you been using any sponsorships to help fund your house? How do you go about finding that sponsorship? **No.**

*Specifics:*

- What sort of items do you have for cooking? **I enjoy cooking a great deal and will downsize my kitchen a fair amount. I am holding onto my Kitchen Aid hand blender and mixer. As for my pots and pans, I am not sure what I will keep.**
- Are you tied to the power grid or are you off grid? **I am planning to wire the house so that I can be tied to the power grid or off grid**
- Are you going to have a washer and/or dryer? **I am planning on using a small portable machine.**
- Where does your water come from? **I will have the ability to be tied into city water and to be able to carry in my water and fill my fresh water tank.**
- What kind of toilet are you going to have? **Humanure composting toilet – ie a bucket.**
- What do you use for a heat source if anything? **I am very torn about my heat source. Eventually I would like a wood stove like the Kimberly stove, but due to recent municipal bylaw changes and for budget reasons, I will be starting with a Dickinson Newport propane heater.**
- What are some of the space savings tricks you used? **Still learning**
- What do you have for insulation? **Rockwool in my subfloor and an eco friendly as possible spray foam insulation throughout the rest of the house and rigid xps boards between the sheathing and the exterior siding.**
- Where are you planning to park your tiny house? **Still to be determined – for the next 6 months at least my house will remain in my parents back yard (the build site)**

*Personal:*

- How much will/did your tiny house cost? **\$27,000 to \$30,000**
- What is/was the most expensive part of your house? **So far, the trailer**
- 'Best' injury story (worst injury)? **Knock on wood only splinters so far.**
- What has been your biggest accomplishment with your tiny house? **The build itself.**
- What is/will be the biggest benefit to living in a tiny house? **I am looking forward to living in a home I built (with help) and that reflects my values.**
- Is there anything you'll miss about living in a standard house? What will you miss the most? **Laundry.**
- What has been the scariest part about building your own house? **The mistakes that are made and those get less and less scary as the build progresses.**
- If you could change one thing about your house what would it be? **Nothing yet.**
- Did you have cash in hand to complete your build, pay as you go or take out a loan to construct your house? **I am using my credit line and will pay it off with the sale of my home on the East Coast.**
- Have friends and family been skeptical or supportive of your ideas? **A bit of both.**
- Is there anything else you would want other people to know about your house and build? **Most of what I want people to know is on my blog.**