

Newsletter

Volume 27, No. 2

JUNE 2008

Of Interest:

- Our newest book, *The Forgotten Physicist: Robert Bacher*, is now available in the Museum Shop and on our website.
- Visit our booth at ChamberFest, "Rockin' 50s" and win a prize for playing our quiz!
- Visit our website at www.losalamoshistory.org for the latest information on Historical Society events.
- **Help Needed!** Assistant docent coordinator and shop scheduler. Must have computer to communicate. Call Irene Powell at 662-8923.
- Thank you, Los Alamos Garden Club, for planting flowers in our boxes!

The Jensen Family Diary

Among the treasures in the collection of the Los Alamos Historical Society is a photo



Dot Jensen and her baby, Lynn

album and scrapbook that belonged to Dorothy and Ken Jensen, who first came to Los Alamos with the Manhattan Project. The items in the scrapbook include the instructions for the notorious "Black Beauty" stoves that tortured many housewives in the early days of Los Alamos, a sample ballot from when Ken ran for Town Council, and Dorothy's memories about the pictures and items.

The Jensens were also featured in *Look* magazine in 1947, as a young, up and coming couple living in a secret city.

Their photos, memories, and more begin on **Page 8**.

Museum Shop to Undergo EXTREME MAKEOVER!

The popular television series isn't coming to Los Alamos — as far as we know — but the Museum Shop is about to be radically transformed, just like the homes on the popular show. With new paint, a refinished floor, new shelving, and new merchandise, expect a whole new look and feel to the Shop.

The Museum Shop will still be the best source in town for books on the history of Los Alamos and the Manhattan Project. In addition, visitors will find more Los Alamos-

centric items, including souvenirs, postcards, gift items, and toys.

A grand reopening will be scheduled for later this fall after Los Alamos County work crews are able to refinish the floor.

We are looking for volunteers to help with the makeover project. We need help with cleaning, painting, installing shelving, and providing snacks for the laborers. If you can help out on a weekend later this year, please contact the Historical Society office at 662-6272.

WESTERN UNION

The time shown in the dateline on the telegram is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of recipient is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.
NW230 GOVT DL=WUX WASHINGTON DC 12 333pm

K S JENSEN, PALMER PHYSICAL LABORATORY=
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRINCETON NY=

YOU WILL SHORTLY RECEIVE AN OFFER OF A POSITION FROM J R

OPPENHEIMER OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE. I HOPE VERY MUCH THAT

YOU WILL ACCEPT THIS POSITION AS I BELIEVE YOU CAN THUS

RENDER A MAXIMUM CONTRIBUTION TO THE WAR EFFORT =

JAMES B CONANT.

This is the telegram that brought the Jensen family to Los Alamos in 1943. They moved from a room in Pojoaque's Rancho Ancon to a Sundt apartment on the Hill (see diagram on next page) and finally into a duplex at 3500 Arizona.



Dorothy Jensen arrived in Lamy in 1943. This photo is on display in the Los Alamos Historical Museum.

Arriving at Lamy, June, 1943

Our instructions were to proceed by bus to 109 E. Palace Avenue in Santa Fe. No talking to anyone.

stayed at Dude Ranches. I remember the measles quarantine and the 20 minute drive to the hill up an arroyo. Our room was center with a corner fireplace. How the high-balls and swimming in the pool fooled us. Remember



Ancon Ranch

the pregnant cow, the horses and dinners by the pool. What luxury!

We all lived together for three months. The Major died in 1945, and Marian kept it open for guests.

She remodeled the ranch and straightened all the doorways that were 100 years old in parts of the house.

I remember highballs mixed by "Postie" and meals made and served by Manuelita. Remember her sopaipillas with jelly. Music on records in the library and what records! Remember the coffee hunt, the picnic tables at Little Frijoles, that wonderful party where no one felt pain; Postie's medals; Ed's haircut; Ken's haircut.

Ancon Ranch - [owned by Major and Marian Post]

[Also at the guest house for 8 were Babs and John Wieneke, Ed and Elsie MacMillan and Stella and Tony ?.]

There was no housing on the Hill as yet. Everyone

Probably a note from Ken Jensen to his wife, Dorothy:

At last we have the detailed plans of the new two room apartments. I believe you will be as pleasantly surprised at how they look as I was.

The rooms are larger than those in the present three room apartments. The living room there was 12 x 17' 6" and the new one is 13' x 18.' The present bedrooms measure 10' x 12' while the bedrooms in the new apartments are 11'4" x 12.'

The new living rooms have very good wall space for bookcases and drop leaf tables and radios and the like, and have no closet door which can be left free for opening. The new bedrooms have two good-sized closets, and the bath opens off the bedroom. It has the usual shower and is 4' square.

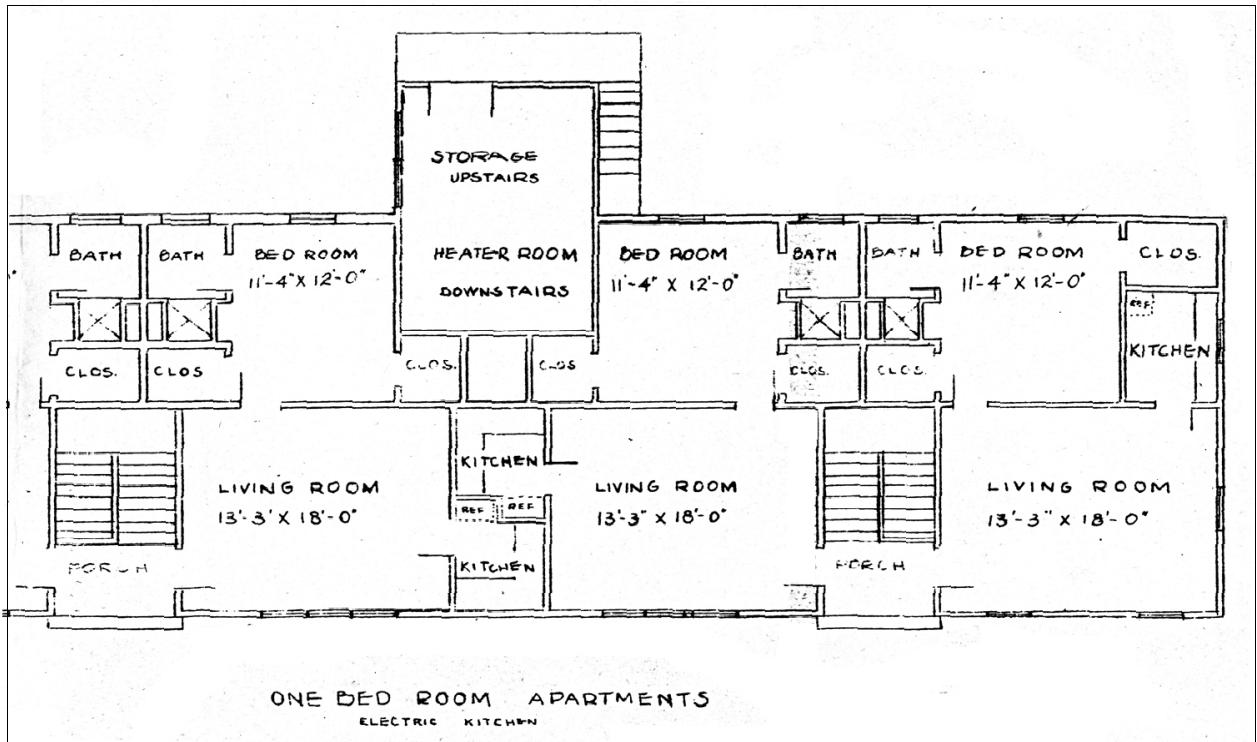
The kitchens are compact. The standing space is 3' x 3,' but there is a lot of cupboard space, and the usual good refrigerator. The cooking facilities will consist of a two-burner and grill electric stove with a port-

able oven that fits over the plates to get heated, and is then removed to the grill to stay hot. Those of us who know how it is to live with the "Black Beauty," and come home at 6 P.M. to cook dinner, think that this is a wonderful improvement. Instead of waiting twenty minutes for the "Black Beauty" to warm up all over, and getting hot and flustered in the process, one can just flip a switch and put the pots on. Dinner will be cooked faster and with less annoyance to the cook. If you do not want to eat at home there is a mess hall very near where you will be able to get your meals at the usual hours.

There are eight apartments in each building. If you examine the floor plan you will find that the noise insulation between apartments on the same floor is good. You have only the kitchen or the bathrooms adjoining.

On the whole we think that the architect has done a very good job of designing and outfitting these apartments.

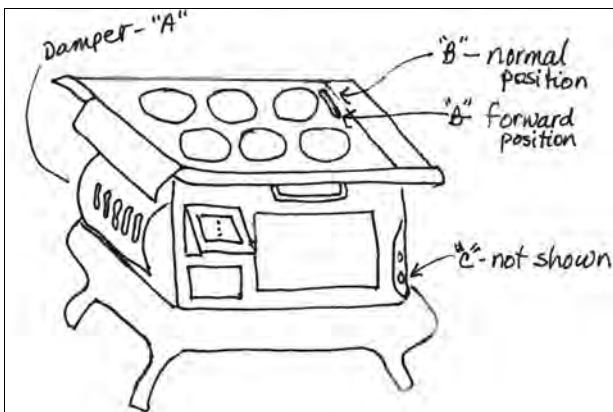
Continued on Page 10



We are very sorry that so many false rumors went about concerning them, and that we were not able to give you this information earlier. The working drawings have just been completed.

Instructions for using the infamous Black Beauty stove:

For the housewife that is not any too well acquainted with coal cooking ranges, the following brief pointers have been compiled. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES USE GASOLINE, KEROSENE OR ANY OTHER VOLATILE OIL FOR STARTING THE FIRE. USE PAPER AND WOOD.**



A sketch from the album of the infamous "Black Beauty" stove, the bane of Los Alamos homemakers during the Manhattan Project.

Before starting the fire, make sure that the damper "A" is open and the lever "B" is in the back position. Good combustion of fire depends entirely on the draft or circulation, that is, air must have access to the base of the fire and gases must be carried away. Therefore, always leave an air space of (at least 1.5 inches) between the burning material and the top of the stove. Also, the ash box should be kept clean; ashes must not be allowed to touch the grate. After the fire is well started, damper "A" may be closed or partly closed, depending on the conditions. Do not attempt to damper the fire by using the lever "C" with "A" open, as this may force carbon monoxide into the room. To use the oven for baking, open the draft passage around the oven by turn-

ing lever "C" (on the lower right of the stove) to front and pulling it to the right where it will lock. When this has been done "B" should be moved to the forward position in order to force all the hot gases around the oven.

Comments from Dorothy Jensen about the stove:

When we finally did move, here is what we were given to cook on. Using wood didn't last long - soon we had them modernized by putting in an oil tank and we lit the stove with a large cotton wick that turned into a torch when lit. What a dirty job that was. We soon bought an electric roaster. Eleanor and Louis Hempleman lived above us and many a burned roast came sailing down.

"Tilano"



Indian Chieftain of San Ildefonso - 80 odd years old. In his dances, he takes his braids out and his hair comes to his waist. He helped Miss Warner in her dining room down by the Rio (the tea "House at Otowi Bridge"). How he

would tease about second helpings and how he reacted to pie!

From the Denver Post, April 5, 1947:

"Despite the fact that 6,000 persons live at Los Alamos, only 1,012 votes were cast in the community's recent town council election.

The four elected to the Town Council were: Canfield (358 votes), Mac-Millan (320 votes); Jensen (301 votes) and Wieneke (280 votes).

(See sample ballot on the next page)



The Jensens, right, with their friends and neighbors, the MacMillans.



The Jensen's backyard on Arizona Ave.

Fun and Games on the Hill:

Lyrics to "How Nice to Be a Physicist" written April 27, 1947 by Arthur Roberts:

"How nice to be a physicist in 1947: to hold finance in less esteem than Molotov does Bevin. To shun the importuning men with treasure who would lend it, to think of money only when you wonder how to spend it... Oh--- on second thought, you can have whatever can be bought."



A jeep trip to Bandelier National Monument.

To hear this song in its entirety, visit our podcast at <http://www.losalamoshistory.org/podcasts/1947.mp3>

SAMPLE BALLOT
FDR
LOS ALAMOS TOWN COUNCIL ELECTION
November 4, 1947

Indicate choices thus (X)

PART A. CANDIDATES FOR ELECTION TO TOWN COUNCIL. VOTE FOR FOUR ONLY.

JANE BEAUCHAMP	()	T. W. HILL	()
BECKIE BRADFORD	()	JANE HOWES	()
EDWIN BROOKS	()	KENNETH S. JENSEN	()
GILBERT L. CAMPBELL	()	J. C. KYRIACOPULOS	()
FRANK C. DI LUZIO	()	WM. L. STROHECKER	()
M. J. GUIDER	()	STEPHEN WARNIAK	()
CLAUDE E. HALL	()	WM. W. WELLBORN	()
JAMES W. HIBBETTS	()	JOHN R. WIENEKE	()

PART B. REFERENDUM. The Town Council By-Laws now state that eligible voters must be over twenty-one years of age and that members of the Town Council must likewise be over twenty-one years of age. By action of the Town Council the three alternatives below are referred to the voters for choice. **CHECK ONE ONLY.**

1. The minimum age for voting in Town Council elections shall be twenty-one (21) years and the minimum age for membership in the Town Council shall be twenty-one (21) years. ()
2. The minimum age for voting in Town Council elections shall be eighteen (18) years and the minimum age for membership in the Town Council shall be twenty-one (21) years. ()
3. The minimum age for voting in Town Council elections shall be eighteen (18) years and the minimum age for membership in the Town Council shall be eighteen (18) years. ()