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MISSION
Los Alamos Historical Society preserves, promotes, and communicates the remarkable history and inspiring stories of Los Alamos and its people for our community, for the global audience, and for future generations.

VISION
Los Alamos Historical Society is respected worldwide as the source and repository for the compelling history of Los Alamos and its people from prehistory to contemporary times.

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ON THE COVER
Dance at Fuller Lodge during the Manhattan Project.

A SPECIAL GOODBYE

We want to say thank you and goodbye to Ann Beyer and Ruth Sherman the Historical Museums’ longest serving volunteers. Beyer (pictured on the left) Volunteered with us nearly 23 years. Sherman was with us almost 12 years. Both Retired in October.

CHECK OUT OUR REDESIGNED WEBSITE
Have you visited www.losalamoshistory.org lately? The Historical Society’s website has been updated with a new look and is now viewable on phones and other mobile devices. It’s easier to find what you’re looking for, easier to be in touch, and easier to purchase products or make donations.

Mark Rayburn, a local graphic artist who grew up in Los Alamos, spent six months going through our extensive site and updating the look and the codes. Some pages are still under construction, but we couldn’t wait to show it off. Take a look and send us your feedback at info@losalamoshistory.com.

Articles provided by Los Alamos Historical Society
Graphic Designer: Claire Roghal & Associates Ltd.
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Improving upon our successful and popular “Experience Auction,” formerly held during May’s Annual Membership Meeting, the Los Alamos Historical Society hosted the auction this year during its first-ever gala event on Sept. 5 at Fuller Lodge.

The event started off inside historic Hans Bethe House and with a beautiful New Mexico autumn evening it provided the setting for a wonderful three-course dinner of Native American foods provided by the Manhattan Project restaurant out on the lawn of Fuller Lodge, followed by dancing to the Los Alamos Big Band.

Auctioneer Jeff Favorite entertained a crowd of more than 100 guests, encouraging them to bid on items such as a hot air balloon ride at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, a visit to Ashley Pond’s first ranch school in northeastern New Mexico, and the popular tour of Dorothy McKibbin’s 109 East Palace office. In addition, Society board member Shay Burns Kendricks organized an extensive silent auction with jewelry, art, and other tempting items. The Society raised $6,800, of which $2,800 will go to a new drip irrigation system at the historic Hans Bethe House. The rest will be used for operating expenses, including new computers for Bathtub Row Press, the Society’s publishing arm.

The board and staff of the Historical Society extend a special thank you to Zena Thomas, who headed the gala committee and did a superb job of organizing this year’s event. Mark your calendars now for September 12, 2015, the Second Annual Los Alamos Historical Society Gala and Experience Auction.
Los Alamos History Award

The Los Alamos Historical Society presented the 2014 Los Alamos History Awards to Clay and Dorothy Perkins and Helene Suydam and her late husband, Jerry. Both of these families have donated historic Bathtub Row homes to the Society—the Hans Bethe House from the Perkins and the Oppenheimer House from the Suydams.

“These donations will have a major impact on how we are able to tell the stories of Los Alamos,” said Ron Wilkins, president of the Los Alamos Historical Society. “They will also allow us to preserve these historically significant buildings for both present and future generations. We could not have done this without the generous donations by the Suydams and Perkins.”

The Hans Bethe House will be used to tell stories of the Cold War in Los Alamos, from the growth and development of the Laboratory to the town and its businesses to the impact the community has had on arms control. The Oppenheimer House will serve as a museum to Oppenheimer’s intellectual legacy, exploring questions such as what it means to be a patriot and a transformational leader. The houses will also provide new programming space for events ranging from chamber music concerts to salons to classes for small groups.

Neither house is open to the public, but exhibit and landscape planning is underway, with input from the Perkins and Mrs. Suydam. The Los Alamos History Award is an annual award that recognizes individuals who have made a significant contribution to preserving the world-changing history of our community. Factors that weigh heavily in consideration for the award include depth and breadth of achievement over time, volunteer commitment, and a lasting impact. Both individuals and organizations are eligible. Self-nominations are not allowed. Awardees will be selected by a group that includes Los Alamos Historical Society staff and board members, appointed by the Society’s president. Therefore, staff and board members are not eligible during the period of their active service.

Nominations are open to the public starting in the summer. Look in your June 2015 newsletter for the form.

“Manhattan” TV Series Brings New Visitors to Los Alamos

The launch of cable television series on WGN America has created an increased interest in the history of Los Alamos and may have contributed to a significant uptick in visitation at the Historical Museum. During the 13-week first season of “Manhattan,” the Museum saw a nine percent increase in visitation, and many of those visitors had questions about the show.

A fiction piece set during the Manhattan Project, “Manhattan” strives to portray more of the emotional history than the technical history of the era. While not historically accurate in many respects, some elements of the show were on the money. The writers and producers stressed that they did not intend the show to be a documentary but wanted to explore family relationships in light of the project’s secrecy. They also wanted to address modern issues of government secrecy and security through a historical lens.

The Historical Museum staff developed an interactive exhibit about the show that allows visitors to ask questions and make comments about “Manhattan.” Still on display in the Manhattan Project room, the exhibit also encourages visitors to learn more about Historical Society publications, such as Standing By and Making Do: The Women of Wartime Los Alamos, that address issues in the series. Each Sunday during the season, the Historical Society and Time Out Pizzeria hosted a viewing party and post-show discussion. Between 30 and 50 people attended each week. Based on the discussions, Historical Society staff members researched the questions that came up and then posted answers on the Society’s webpage and Facebook page. (The discussions are still available at www.losalamoshistory.org/manhattan_discussion_intro.htm.)

“Manhattan,” which averaged 1.7 million viewers each week, has been renewed for a second season. It is expected to begin in July 2015.

New in the Shop

Goodnight iPad, a parody of the much-loved bedtime story, Goodnight Moon, is available in the Museum Shop. Certain to become a classic for the plugged in generation, Goodnight iPad will provide many moments of hilarity and fun into the future.

Several popular Manhattan Project books, including Robert Norris’ acclaimed biography of Gen. Leslie Groves, make great gifts for the history buffs in your life. Stop by and browse today.

Find Us on Facebook
Volunteer Retirement & Volunteer Needs

With grateful yet sad hearts, the volunteers, staff, and board members of the Los Alamos Historical Society bid farewell in October to two of the Historical Museum’s longest serving volunteers, Ann Beyer and Ruth Sherman. (Pictured on page 2) “Ann and Ruth have been true stalwarts,” said Kathy Ankeny, Museum Shop manager for the Historical Society. “We are going to miss them, and our visitors won’t have quite the same experiences without these two ladies sharing their vast knowledge and wonderful storytelling.”

Beyer has worked with the museum nearly 23 years, volunteering after her retirement from Los Alamos National Laboratory as a research librarian. “I have a closet history major, and my uncle was president of the Wisconsin Historical Society. With my expertise as a librarian, I think I could answer visitors’ questions,” she said.

Sherman, a retired chemist, began volunteering nearly 12 years after she was turned down for the job of Museum Shop manager. “I didn’t get it, but I went ahead and volunteered. It turned out to be a good thing. I found I really enjoyed it,” she said.

Both Sherman and Beyer said their favorite part of the job was meeting the people coming into the Museum. In the last year, more than 35,000 visitors from 41 countries and every state in the union visited the Historical Museum. With these retirements and other volunteers moving or returning to school, the Historical Museum is in need of volunteers. Museum volunteers greet visitors, orient them to the Museum, answer questions about the community and its history, and sell items in the Museum Shop. Shifts are available from one to four times a month (or more!). They last three hours (mid-October through March) or three and a half hours (April through mid-October) and require some computer skills. Shifts are also flexible, so time off for travel, appointments, or other needs can be accommodated.

Benefits of volunteering in the Museum include discounts in the Museum Shop, a free polo shirt with the Museum logo, advance notice of exhibits and special events, and volunteer appreciation activities throughout the year, including special volunteer-only trips to places like Puye Cliffs and the Valles Caldera. Additionally, training with local history experts is provided.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Museum Shop Manager Kathy Ankeny at 505-695-5250 or Executive Director Heather McClenahan at 505-662-6272.

Staff Changes

Don Cavness has been hired to fill the much-needed position of curator of the Los Alamos Historical Museum Archives. Don also serves as a guide at the Bradbury Science Museum and has helped develop collections management policies there. Since the archives and collections moved from Fuller Lodge to the new facility in the Municipal Building in 2013, donations have increased significantly in number and size. Don will help catalog these items, which will be of use to the Museum for exhibits as well as to future researchers. His job will mostly entail working with the three-dimensional objects in the collection, allowing archivist Rebecca Collinsworth to focus on the documents and photographs.

The Society recently lost Museum Educator Natalia Ronquillo y DePaula, who moved to Washington, D.C., when her husband received a change of station assignment from Los Alamos National Laboratory. After a wide-ranging search for a new educator, the Society went no farther than one of its own staff members, Aimee Slaughter, to fill the position. Aimee, who was hired part time as the Publications Outreach Manager in 2013, will assume a full-time schedule in performing both jobs. Her skills and personality are well-suited for these roles that involve education and outreach to the community.

Secret Project Notebook

The Secret Project Notebook, published by Bathtub Row Press of the Los Alamos Historical Society, is back in print and will soon be available as our first-ever ebook!

Written by award-winning author Carolyn Reeder, The Secret Project Notebook is a historical novel for young adults. A seventh-grader, named Fritz, has just arrived in the secret city of Los Alamos during World War II. Exactly what are his father and other scientists working on at the lab? Fritz is determined to find out. With the help of his classmates Kathy, Fritz searches for clues. He records each observation and every rumor in a notebook he doesn’t dare let out of his sight. Fritz explores the area with his friend Manny, becomes involved in a prank with unintended consequences, and gets into serious trouble when he and Manny show too much interest in a restricted area.

The ebook version of The Secret Project Notebook became available December 1st in all major ebook formats and stores. The softcover version of the book is available now in the museum shop. We celebrated the launch of the ebook at our Cider Monday event in the Museum on December 1st. A new tradition, Cider Monday is a take off on “Cyber Monday” for holiday shopping and allows visitors to support local authors and artists while enjoying a realizing time with a cup of hot cider in the Museum.
Calendar of Events

Noontime with the Collection
(formerly Brown Bag with the Collection)
February 3, 2015
Winter Tales of Los Alamos

Exhibits

November-December
A renowned scientist and expert on Native American pottery, Frank Harlow is also an artist who has created thousands of paintings over the years. See examples of his wide-ranging work.

January-February
“Paintings by Frank Harlow”

March-April
Punched in Art with Fred Lopez

Film Festival

On the Front Lines: The War Years
Thursday, January 15, 2015 at 7 p.m.
Free in Fuller Lodge

On December 8, 1941, the Disney Studio was taken over by the military as part of the war effort. Walt Disney spent the next four years creating and producing training, propaganda, and educational films for the Armed Forces. Join us for a selection of shorts that include: Donald Gets Drafted, Private Pluto, Home Defense, and Commando Duck, and more with an onscreen introduction by film historian Leonard Maltin. (90 mins.)

Regulus
Thursday, March 19, 2015 at 7 p.m.
Free in Fuller Lodge

Regulus documents a nearly-forgotten era of U.S. Navy history and the birth of a submarine capable of launching a nuclear missile. Using never-before-seen footage, Regulus: The First Nuclear Missile Submarines takes the viewer back to the days just after WWII, when the U.S. Navy began top secret tests with modified German V-1 “buzz bombs”. The goal was to develop a submarine-launched guided missile and, eventually, to develop a missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. The tests would lead to the development of the Regulus, a nuclear capable, air-breathing cruise missile that flew like a jet aircraft. Join us for this documentary narrated by Roy Scheider (50mins).

The Los Alamos Historical Society and Museum

Open free of charge every day except New Year’s Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

May 1-October 15
Weekdays 9:30-4:30
Weekends 11-4
October 16-April 30
Weekdays 10-4
Weekends 11-4

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Los Alamos Historical Society 2015 Membership Form

Please detach and return to the Historical Museum

Name:
Address:
City: ___________________________ State: _______ Zip: ___________
Email (optional):

Check one: _______ Renewal _______ New Member _______ Gift _______ Donation

☐ Heritage Benefactor $2500+
☐ Heritage Supporter $1000-$2499
☐ Heritage Contributor $500-$999
☐ Heritage Friend $100-$499
☐ Family $50
☐ Individual $40
☐ Student/Senior Individual $35
☐ Youth, 18 and under $10

$ _______ Additional Contribution

Total:$ __________________