



Events highlight area's atomic history

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As several stories in this issue of *Community Connections* mention, 2018 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of Los Alamos National Laboratory—not just the institution but also its people. For 75 years, the people of northern New Mexico have contributed to science in support of national security and a more stable world. In recognition of that contribution, the Laboratory recently held a celebration for employees and their families in downtown Los Alamos.

In addition to various Laboratory events, the greater northern New Mexico community is hosting events to coincide with the anniversary. In Santa Fe, the New Mexico History Museum (in collaboration with the Bradbury Science Museum, the Santa Fe Opera, the Los Alamos Historical Society, the Atomic Heritage Foundation, and the National Museum of Nuclear Science and History) is offering a fascinating perspective into the state's role in building the world's first atomic weapons through its "[Atomic Histories: Remember New Mexico's Nuclear Past](#)" exhibit. Manhattan Project and Cold War artifacts will be on display, including lead scientist of the Manhattan Project J. Robert Oppenheimer's desk chair and a full-size replica of the Fat Man weapon developed at Los Alamos.

Visitors to the exhibit can take a walk through time, tracing the arrival of scientists in New Mexico and the secret construction of Los Alamos. Historical accounts from local residents provide a unique perspective on the impact of the first nuclear tests in Tularosa and Alamogordo.

The exhibit also highlights iconic works by artist Meridel Rubenstein, including installations commissioned for the first SITE Santa Fe biennial to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first atomic test.

In July and August, the Santa Fe Opera will offer six performances of *Doctor Atomic*, which explores the events leading up to the Trinity test—the world's first detonation of a nuclear weapon, which took place in southern New Mexico on July 16, 1945. The opera's source materials include declassified government documents and letters and interviews from people who took part in Project Y (the Los Alamos branch of the Manhattan Project).

On July 27 and Aug. 2, the Bradbury Science Museum Association, the Los Alamos Historical Society, and the Friends of the Manhattan Project National Historical Park will host guided bus tours of historic sites and museums, leaving from the opera house parking lot. Participants will also have dinner at historic Fuller Lodge, which was originally the dining hall for the Los Alamos Ranch School before becoming an important hub for Manhattan Project scientists in the 1940s.

As we go into August, Los Alamos Historical Society is hosting a [garden party](#) on Aug. 7 at the Hans Bethe House for those traveling to the opera from Los Alamos. The Hans Bethe House, located on historic Bathtub Row, is where physicist Hans Bethe lived with his wife, Rose. Bethe won the 1967 Nobel Prize in physics; his home is now part of the Los Alamos Historical Society.

The Laboratory has been part of the fabric of the region for 75 years, and we hope that through these exhibits and events you'll take the chance to explore a little of the historical, social, and cultural significance of this unique facility.

—Kathy Keith

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