

**Head out of Fuller Lodge, heading towards Central Ave. As you walk towards the street, you will see these other sites of note:**

### ASHLEY POND

Located across the street from Fuller Lodge, the pond began as a natural depression used by homesteaders and was later enlarged by the Ranch School for swimming, canoeing, and winter ice sports. It was named for the school's founder, Ashley Pond Jr. During the Manhattan Project, the Lab was built around the pond, and firefighters frequently drew water from it to combat fires caused by experimental work. After the war, lab buildings were relocated to South Mesa and the community began to grow. Residents advocated for preserving the pond as a public park, which it exists as today. The Ice House Memorial on the park site notes the original Ice House of the Ranch School, which was later used to store the plutonium core during the Project.

### OPPENHEIMER & GROVES STATUES

Located between Central Ave and Fuller Lodge, this statue of the men of the Project is modeled after a photo taken of them on the site of the Trinity Test. The statues are generally life-sized of the stature of the men at the time of the test.

**Continue on the sidewalk along Central Ave, then cut through the parking lots for Fuller Lodge. Follow the sidewalk on the left side of the road, passing the sign for the Senior Center until you see a stone building marked as 1251 Bathtub Row.**

### 5. POWER HOUSE & BATHTUB ROW

This stone building replaced the Ranch School's wooden power house, which burned down in 1933. During the Manhattan Project, Los Alamos faced a severe housing shortage, and the building was remodeled into living quarters for scientists. George Kistiakowsky, the explosives expert who helped design the implosion mechanism for the plutonium bomb, lived here while testing explosives in the surrounding forests—tests that even created an early ski slope on Sawyer's Hill. The Bathtub Row sign notes its address, a street name that became popular during the Manhattan Project as these homes, existing from the Ranch School, were the only ones with bathtubs in them. Due to cast-iron rations and logistical challenges, the other homes in town had only stand-in stall showers. The homes you see on Bathtub Row today are all from the Ranch School era and were used as housing during the Manhattan Project.

**Cross Bathtub Row, walking along Juniper St, heading back towards the fenced Rose Garden. Retrace your steps past the Romero Cabin & Ancestral Pueblo Site, continuing down the sidewalk until you see signs for the Hans Bethe House.**

### COLD WAR ERA:

Norris Bradbury became the second director of the Los Alamos National Lab in 1945 and continued his leadership through the Cold War era until 1970. During that time, much of the Lab was directed by the Atomic Energy Commission, including working on the development of the Hydrogen Bomb and, later, developing best practices for mass assembly of nuclear weapons. In the 1950s, the Lab was relocated from its temporary buildings surrounding Ashley Pond to its current location on South Mesa. This allowed the town of Los Alamos to become open to the public while the lab remains guarded. During the Cold War, the town served as a practice site for policies of the Civil Defense Administration, such as publicly assigned bunkers.

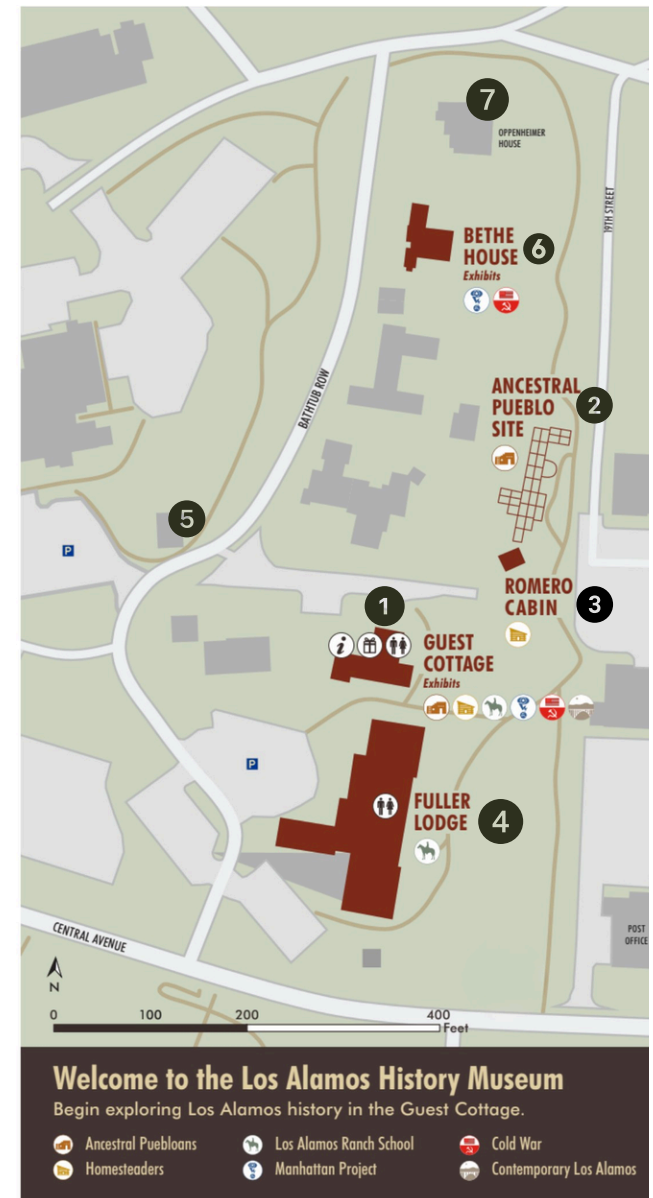
### 6. BETHE HOUSE

The original Ranch School cottage on this site burned in 1931 (when it was discovered 30 gallons of corn liquor was aging in the house), and the current house was built in the same year for the school's finance director. During World War II, the house became home to several prominent scientists, including Nobel Prize-winning chemist Edwin McMillan and his wife Elsie. After the war, Nobel physicist Hans Bethe and his wife Rose lived here; Bethe played a major role in the theoretical work that made the implosion design of the plutonium bomb possible. The house is named in his honor and now interprets Cold War history, including the evolution of Los Alamos as a national laboratory.

**Head next door, down the street from the Bethe House to see the exterior of the Oppenheimer House.**

### 7. OPPENHEIMER HOUSE

This stone cottage was originally designed by A.J. Connell, director of the Ranch School, for his sister May Connell, an artist and teacher. From 1943 to 1945, it became the wartime home of J. Robert Oppenheimer, his wife Kitty, and their children Peter and Toni. Afterwards, the house came under the ownership of the Atomic Energy Commission, then was sold to private owners. One couple, the Suydams, lived in the house from 1956 until their passing in 2020, when the house was bequeathed to Los Alamos Historical Society.



# LOS ALAMOS HISTORY MUSEUM CAMPUS TOUR

**Begin your tour at our main museum site, also known as the Guest Cottage.**

## 1. GUEST COTTAGE

Originally built in 1918 as the infirmary and nurse's cottage for the Los Alamos Ranch School, the Guest Cottage later became lodging for visitors and staff of the Ranch School. During the Manhattan Project, it was used as Leslie Groves's quarters when he was in Los Alamos. Today, the building is the core of the Los Alamos History Museum, with exhibits that trace over 800 years of life, from the Ancestral Pueblo era through the creation of Los Alamos National Laboratory.

**Head out of the Guest Cottage, taking a left. Head around the fenced rose garden, towards the log cabin. Just past the log cabin is the Ancestral Pueblo Site, featuring rocks preserved in the shape of the original floor plan of the site.**

### ANCESTRAL PUEBLO ERA :



Families here practiced dry farming—growing corn, beans, and squash—and supplemented their diet with hunting, gathering piñon nuts, and using obsidian for tools. By the late 1400s and early 1500s, drought, depleted soils, and the need for more reliable water sources prompted residents to relocate to the Rio Grande Valley. Today's local pueblos, including San Ildefonso, Santa Clara, Pojoaque, Tesuque, and Nambé, are descended from the people who once lived on the Pajarito Plateau.

## 2. ANCESTRAL PUEBLO SITE

This site was home to 2–3 families of Tewa-speaking Ancestral Pueblo people who may have migrated from Mesa Verde or Chaco Canyon during the 1200s. Their homes included sleeping quarters, cooking areas, and storage rooms arranged around a semi-circular kiva used for ceremonies, governance, and community life. This site is not claimed by any modern-day pueblo, leaving us with questions about who lived here. For more on Pueblan dwellings, we recommend visiting nearby Bandelier National Monument.

**Head back towards the museum, stopping at the cabin you passed earlier.**

### HOMESTEAD ERA :



During the Homestead Era, there were over 30 homesteads on the Pajarito Plateau. Many families lived in the Rio Grande valley, but pursued supplemental

farming on the plateau, mostly using the land for bean farming and livestock raising, despite the harsh climate and short growing season. A critical homestead was that of the Brook Family. Originally from Illinois, Harold Brook moved his family to New Mexico to grow beans. His wife named their homestead "Los Alamos," Spanish for "cottonwoods." The name stuck after investor Ashley Pond purchased the site in 1916 for the start of the Ranch School.

## 3. ROMERO CABIN

The Romero Cabin was built in 1913 by Victor Romero on Pajarito Mesa, where Hispanic homesteaders farmed and grazed livestock seasonally. The small door was designed for protection and insulation. At its peak, this house held 2 parents and 6 children. Built on what is now TA-55, a modern plutonium facility, the cabin was moved to town in 1985 and restored in 2011.

**Continue down the sidewalk towards Fuller Lodge (the multi-story wood and stone building). Inside Fuller Lodge, you can find displays on the Ranch School and historic rooms up the carpeted stairs next to the lobby.**

### RANCH SCHOOL ERA :



The Ranch School opened in 1917 with the goal of providing an Ivy League education with rugged ranching and outdoor opportunities. Ashley Pond Jr., a former Rough Rider, funded the start of the school and hired AJ Connell, a Santa Fe Boy Scout troop leader, as school director. Much of the school's culture was based on Boy Scout principles, including the uniforms and the separation of boys by physical maturity into patrols rather than grades. At its peak, the school held nearly 50 students. Boys slept year-round on screened-in porches in the Big House (a black and white photo of the Big House can be seen on the backside of the building across the street from the Pueblo site). School days started with calisthenics, then breakfast, followed by classes in the morning and outdoor activities after lunch. Activities could include horseback riding, trail building, camping, or other recreational activities. All teachers at the school were Ivy League-educated men and called "masters." Masters also led discussions at the meal tables focusing on current events, art, and philosophy. A photo of the 1934 Ranch School class can be found in the lobby of Fuller Lodge. The Ranch School remained in operation until January 1943, when it the site was commandeered by the War Department.

## 4. FULLER LODGE

Fuller Lodge was designed by renowned architect John Gaw Meem and built from 771 hand-selected logs to serve as the dining hall for the Los Alamos Ranch School. It is named after Edward Fuller, a Ranch School staff member who passed away from polio, and whose father was a large donor to the school. In 1942, General Groves recognized the strategic value of the Ranch School campus, and Fuller Lodge played a key role in his decision to locate the Manhattan Project here. During the war, it became the social and administrative heart of the secret scientific community, hosting meals, meetings, dances, and informal gatherings. After the war, it was owned by the Atomic Energy Commission and the Tudor-style stucco and stone wings were added to create hotel rooms for the town. In the 1960s, it was sold by the AEC to the county and continues today as a center for community life - hosting concerts, weddings, and public events.

### MANHATTAN PROJECT



Leslie Groves was chosen by the War Department to lead the top-secret atomic weapons project after successfully building the Pentagon under time and under budget. He then selected J. Robert Oppenheimer, a leading figure in the collaboration of physics in the US, as the scientific director of the project. Oppenheimer had often visited a ranch in nearby Pecos and had a particular love for Los Alamos, so he suggested the site as a home for "Project Y," the research and development branch of the Manhattan Project. Groves appreciated Los Alamos for both the remote location and the developed infrastructure from the Ranch School, particularly Fuller Lodge. Originally estimated to have a maximum population of 1500 during the Project, the site instead held over 6000 at its peak as more scientists were brought in to work on developing plutonium to use in weapons development. All Los Alamos residents checked in with "gatekeeper" Dorothy McKibbin at 109 East Palace in Santa Fe, where they were given their ID badges in order to get into the secret town. All mail was routed through PO Box 1663, with letters and phone calls censored. The average age of the Project was only 25–28 years old, with a resulting baby boom of 86 babies being born in the first year alone. Those here lived in secrecy of the work on "the gadget," with many employees and their families unaware of exactly what the "gadget" was. Housing, fresh food, and off-hill trips were limited as part of life during the Project.