**News from Children’s Museum of Oak Ridge**

**For Immediate Release – Sept. 10, 2018**

**Contact:**

**Beth Shea, CMOR Executive Director Kay Brookshire, Media Consultant**

**(865) 482-1074 (865) 483-4644**

[**bshea@childrensmuseumofoakridge.org**](mailto:bshea@childrensmuseumofoakridge.org)[**kbrookshire@bellsouth.net**](mailto:kbrookshire@bellsouth.net)

**AMSE Flat Top House to Have New Home at Children’s Museum of Oak Ridge**

The Flat Top house restored for visitors at the American Museum of Science and Energy will move on Oct. 2 to its new home at the Children’s Museum of Oak Ridge, not far from its original location in Oak Ridge.

The Children’s Museum today kicked off a Go Fund Me campaign, inviting the community to help raise $25,000 to support the move and the ongoing preservation and maintenance of the Flat Top.

The Children’s Museum offered to give the Flat Top a new home when AMSE, now closed temporarily as the museum moves to Main Street, announced its move. Its new location doesn’t have space to keep the Flat Top as an exhibit.

The Children’s Museum does have room for the Flat Top on its property southeast of the museum building at 461 W. Outer Dr.

“Here at the Children’s Museum, the Flat Top will invite visitors to touch history and to learn more about life during the Manhattan Project, when thousands of workers flocked to Oak Ridge to work on a secret project for the war effort in the early 1940s,” said Beth Shea, Executive Director of the Museum.

The AMSE Foundation presented the deed to the Flat Top as a gift to the Children’s Museum, also contributing $5,982 to assist with the moving the small, prefabricated Flat Top, to ensure that the Flat Top would continue to be a historical exhibit.

“We are grateful to the AMSE Foundation for this gift,” Shea said.

The Flat Top’s original home at 68 Outer Dr. was east of the Children’s Museum’s West Outer Drive location.

“We are bringing the Flat Top home to a Manhattan Project neighborhood,” said Lee McGetrick, CMOR board member who is serving as project manager for the move. Moving the Flat Top will require help in managing traffic and ensuring safety as the house is transported across town to the Children’s Museum.

“We at the Children’s Museum feel a responsibility to commit to preserve historic Manhattan Project structures such as this house and to educate the public about them and the unique history of the Secret City,” McGetrick added.

Marian Phillips, CMOR board vice president, announced today that the Children’s Museum has received a $10,000 contribution from the family that donated the Flat Top to AMSE. Dr. Kenneth Smith and his family are contributing to the second move that will preserve this piece of Oak Ridge history.

The father of Dr. Smith’s late wife, Isabelle, bought the Flat Top at auction in 1948. Her father, Thaddeus Fitzpatrick, moved the house to Tazewell, TN, for use as a summer home. Sixty years later, in 2008, the Smiths donated the Flat Top to AMSE.

Phillips also announced that the Children’s Museum is kicking off the Go Fund Me campaign today, aiming to raise $25,000 to support the move, preservation and maintenance of the Flat Top.

“The Flat Top will need some immediate preservation and maintenance work once it’s moved. We will also create an interpretive program that will educate visitors about this style of housing as part of the unique history of Oak Ridge,” Phillips said.

To learn more about the Go Fund Me campaign, see its web site at

<https://www.gofundme.com/save-the-flattop-house>. The site may also be accessed through <http://bit.ly/GoFundMeflattop>.

In the yard beside the Flat Top at the museum, the National Park Service will plant a Victory Garden, similar to gardens families cultivated during World War II. Visitors will learn about life during the war and the importance of these gardens to the war effort.

One of thousands of prefabricated houses built to house workers and their families, this Flat Top is a small two-bedroom home with a combination living-dining room and one bath, just 576 square feet. Its flat roof gives the house its name.

Unlike many flat tops that have been modified or moved, this Flat Top retained its original fixtures and design through a move outside Oak Ridge for use as a summer home. AMSE staff realized this Flat Top was historically valuable because its flooring, cabinetry, light fixtures and plumbing are all original, McGetrick pointed out.

As a permanent exhibit, the Flat Top will add yet another element to the museum’s exhibits of Oak Ridge history, including “Difficult Decisions” and the Ed Westcott Room.

###