

“All Over New Mexico”

The Dale Bellamah Addition and Other Midcentury Borderland Neighborhoods



JERRY D. WALLACE

“It won’t be my fault if a shortage of housing exists in Las Cruces,” Dale Bellamah stated to the *Las Cruces Sun-News* on 6 May 1952. “We are building 32 houses now and have immediate plans to step up the pace as soon as possible.”¹ The Albuquerque-based Bellamah delivered on his promise. Five days later, he announced the arrival of Doña Ana County’s largest and newest subdivision, the Bellamah Addition. The new “planned community of 278 homes” sat southeast of downtown Las Cruces and within walking distance of New Mexico State University (see fig. 1).² The convenient location attracted many potential homebuyers, and most residents welcomed the new subdivision given that the demand for housing had grown dramatically in post–World War II southern New Mexico. Bellamah’s willingness to accept Federal Housing Administration and

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Fig. 1. Downtown Las Cruces in 1973 Looking South towards El Paso. This photograph captures the urban renewal peak. Main Street is turning into a pedestrian thoroughfare with a canopy, and the city adds a race track for automobile passage. On the left, or east, of Main Street is the Mesquite Neighborhood, home at the time to a predominately Hispanic population and the homes cluster together with little foliage. To the right, or west, of Main Street is the Alameda Neighborhood where affluent white Las Crucesians reside in homes on large lots. The original Bellamah Addition is just out of sight in the top left corner. Photo courtesy of the Las Cruces Urban Renewal Agency Records, 1966–1974, MS. 0478, New Mexico State University Library, Archives and Special Collection.

Veterans Administration loans and his implementation of modern conveniences, such as curvilinear streets and city utilities, made his company highly successful not only in New Mexico but also in west Texas and southern Colorado.³ Later, Bellamah used his experience in Las Cruces for neighborhood design and home development in numerous cities throughout the Southwest, including Albuquerque, Roswell, Alamogordo, Artesia, Los Lunas, Carlsbad, Hobbs, Deming, Las Vegas, and Santa Fe in New Mexico, Lubbock and El Paso in Texas, and Colorado Springs in Colorado. Bellamah revolutionized home building in Las Cruces and fulfilled his promise to “make better homes, for more people, for less money . . . all over New Mexico.”⁴

Bellamah’s design of Las Cruces’ neighborhoods in the early postwar period is worthy of further examination. Historians and historic preservationists have

generally overlooked his efficient construction of mass-produced homes on a large scale in predominately small towns and cityscapes—urban sites that researchers have traditionally ignored in community building studies in the Sunbelt states. Scholars have tended to marginalize Bellamah's legacy, instead giving their attention to developer William Levitt on the East Coast or concentrating on Sunbelt cities such as Albuquerque, Phoenix, Denver, Houston, Dallas, and Atlanta. One notable dimension of Bellamah's success was his application of Los Angeles-based developer Clifford May's idea, to mass-produce the California ranch home, and to incorporate Southwest Borderlands architectural styles. In the process, he influenced southwestern regional values during the Cold War by championing the virtue of home ownership and cultural conformity that in turn shaped neighborhood design and identity. Particularly significant in understanding Bellamah's legacy is that he built not only single homes but also subdivisions. Rather than designing neighborhoods based on race, Bellamah constructed entire communities reflecting and promoting patriotism, conformity, and prosperity; these communities would deeply influence the culture of the American Southwest during the Cold War.

Dale Bellamah was often described as an egomaniac, a man never shy to brag about his accomplishments. To oversee his home building empire in the early 1950s, he created Dale Bellamah Enterprises; by 1960 this umbrella company managed sixteen subsidiaries that specialized in home and land development, finance, rental houses, realty, and insurance sales throughout New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado.⁵ Bellamah Enterprises was headquartered in Albuquerque with regional branch offices in Santa Fe, Las Cruces, Hobbs, and El Paso, and later in Colorado Springs. At first, company personnel from Albuquerque traversed the state, city to city, conducting Bellamah's business before he hired local men and women in those respective areas.⁶ By 1956 company policies dictated that all Bellamah employees live in the neighborhoods they were developing. Dale and Jeanne Bellamah maintained a house in Las Cruces and in other areas they developed throughout the Southwest.⁷ A group of top executives managed his massive home building and subdivision empire. Affectionately, Bellamah referred to them as his "brain trust" because all held college degrees and graduated with honors.⁸ Clearly, he believed that touting this experience gave his company creditability.

What Bellamah created under this vast corporate empire was a one-stop shop for home buyers. His companies were responsible for the purchase of land, the platting of subdivisions, and the design, sale, and management of homes.⁹ Bellamah often boasted in local and regional newspapers that his companies brought hundreds of new jobs to the areas he developed through subcontracting or the use of local businesses in home and subdivision construction.¹⁰ From

1951 through 1972, Bellamah Enterprises worked with Albuquerque-based architecture firms such as Brittelle, Ginner, and Dekker to build commercial spaces such as banks, hotels, and occasional shopping centers. Additionally, when constructing shopping centers and later hotels and motels, his companies partnered with the regional architecture firm, Flatow, Moore, Bryan and Fairburn.¹¹ Travis B. Shaw, a former architect for the Federal Housing Administration, oversaw most of the home designs in the early stages of Bellamah's empire before shifting to shopping centers and shopping villages. By the late 1950s, Bellamah Enterprises created the Architect Control Committee to supervise home design and development as well as subdivision construction and design. This part of the company employed architects mostly from the University of New Mexico.¹² E. Price Hampson, a mechanical-engineer graduate from the University of New Mexico, was one of the pioneers of Bellamah's subdivision development and long-term community development. Hampson joined Bellamah Enterprises shortly after construction began on the Las Cruces Bellamah Addition in 1952; he was instrumental in land acquisition and subdivision and neighborhood design throughout the region until his death in 1968.¹³ Once reflecting pointedly on a Bellamah subdivision project, Hampson proclaimed, "We believe the results are nothing short of stupendous and we don't think any builder in the whole southwest has ever offered a series of homes so completely planned out beforehand."¹⁴ Bellamah was also proficient at using local and regional newspapers, magazines, and journals to advertise his development and build his brand, creating rich sources for scholars today in the process.¹⁵

Despite this well-documented trail of Bellamah's career, little scholarship has focused on his company.¹⁶ Scholars' attention to Bellamah is relegated to a few paragraphs looking at growth in Albuquerque after World War II or to a footnote discussing the top developers in New Mexico responsible for transforming the state's cultural landscape in the early Cold War period.¹⁷ Such scholarship also tends to focus on Bellamah's indirect contribution to Albuquerque's postwar zoning and planning issues, and not on the legacy of his architectural style, subdivision development, and mass-production techniques.¹⁸ In particular, most discussions are limited to Bellamah's work in the Albuquerque area, despite the fact that he constructed the majority of his developments elsewhere. Scholars have been less concerned with Bellamah as a significant developer than developers generally, most often merging his design work and contributions with three other regional developers: Edward Snow, Sam Hoffman, and Fred Mossman.¹⁹ Recently, a few internet blogs and websites have documented Bellamah's work, but their contributors are interested more in understanding the midcentury modern craze sweeping contemporary culture than in exploring



Fig. 2. Four Homes with the Same Design in the Original Bellamah Addition. Each home is made from cinderblock, which has been painted to hide this exposed building material. Photo by the author.

Bellamah's role in shaping neighborhood identities throughout New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado.²⁰

During his lifetime, the local press in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Las Cruces amply covered Bellamah's accomplishments. This documentation provides a snapshot of his prolific career and captures his achievement in becoming the sixth-largest home builder and subdivision developer in the world by 1960.²¹ The purpose of this article is to evaluate the work of Dale Bellamah as both a subdivision designer and home builder and to investigate the way in which his work constructed regional identity in the American Southwest. Bellamah offered many residents of the Borderlands the opportunity to own a home and, in doing so, profoundly shaped a sense of place unlike any other regional developer. Bellamah called the Las Cruces neighborhood "The Bellamah Addition" (in some records referred to as "The Dale Bellamah Addition") and almost every city in New Mexico that he designed featured this exact neighborhood plan, known as a "plat," (see fig. 3). Finally, this article demonstrates that Bellamah's small-scale, mass-produced homes and neighborhoods shaped or influenced more-affluent communities in northern New Mexico. When Bellamah's

visions of transnationalism and transnational history to regional arenas can result in the marginalization of local ideas and interactions.²⁵

Applying the concept of translocality to Bellamah's neighborhood and architectural designs demonstrates that he shaped a sense of place throughout the Borderlands by building essentially the same neighborhood (the Bellamah Addition) in numerous towns and cities in New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado. In each case, he followed the design templates he established in the Las Cruces Bellamah Addition. In essence, Bellamah's neighborhoods became mobile as he replicated them in other Borderlands communities. Without the translocal framework, much of the significance of Bellamah's story remains invisible. Unlike May and Levitt, who received a great deal of attention because of their influence on the concept of home ownership at the national level in the early Cold War, Bellamah's work continues to inform local understandings of place in a national context. The translocal helps unpack this story, because unlike architects and developers who tended to build only houses, Bellamah designed entire neighborhoods and subdivisions in multiple communities. Finally, a sidebar of this conversation about mobility is that most of the residents in these small-town communities were themselves not locals, but rather transplants who had relocated to New Mexico because of World War II or new business or professional opportunities resulting from the early Cold War military-industrial complex.

Urban historians have not explored Bellamah's place in the larger historical narrative, but their examinations of the housing industry since the end of World War II contribute to understanding Bellamah's legacy. Their broad overviews identify three key processes that shaped home ownership in the early Cold War period: transportation, government subsidies, and consumerism.²⁶ In sum, based on the legal and financial processes of home ownership without the Federal Housing Administration's thirty-year mortgage, the aid of IRS tax deductions, or veterans housing benefits and the automobile, home ownership in the postwar period would have been less widespread among Americans and would have had far less impact on national culture. Almost all of Bellamah's homes were purchased by Federal Housing Administration (FHA) or Veterans Affairs (VA) loan recipients, a situation that partly explains his enormous success as a home builder. The national trend of home ownership in the early Cold War era, enabled by FHA and VA loans, neatly linked political conformity, American patriotism, a growing focus on American prosperity, and the act of making a sound financial decision. Bellamah benefited greatly from this timing.

Placing Bellamah's work in the larger context of Sunbelt home ownership also helps us understand the growth and development of these Borderlands communities. Scholars in the 1970s first enumerated the regional processes that shaped the Sunbelt in the early Cold War era, including industrialization,

defense spending, urban development, commercial farming, and oil and gas development. They concluded that civic boosterism and government subsidies to economic and industrial growth, rather than political and social ideas, shifted the industrial center of gravity away from the declining Rustbelt and toward the rising Sunbelt.²⁷ Moreover, their scholarship produced a compelling observation: these new Sunbelt cities such as Denver, Phoenix, and Houston, or those old southern cities that benefitted from new government subsidies, took on characteristics different from those of their eastern and midwestern counterparts: they developed self-sufficient suburbs. In effect, the federal government's willingness to pour money into the Sunbelt's infrastructure created unique urban patterns that allowed self-sufficient communities to develop on the fringes of major cities.²⁸ Bellamah's hometown of Albuquerque illustrates this phenomenon but these processes also shaped development in Las Cruces, Santa Fe, Alamogordo, and El Paso.²⁹ Government spending generated self-sufficient neighborhoods around the centers of these cities.

By the 1990s, many historians and geographers began to abandon the idea of the Sunbelt as a place. Labeling it the "Vanishing Sunbelt," this group of scholars believed that the Sunbelt as an academic field and a regional space was too hard to define. Instead, they concluded that regionalism offered a better and more generic framework in which to understand the cultural patterns that flourished below the thirty-seventh parallel of North America.³⁰ The rise of New Western History in the late 1980s also played a key role in short-circuiting this new but underdeveloped field of Sunbelt history. The new generation of western historians challenged the field's lack of gender, class, and race analysis in histories of the same western spaces which some Sunbelt scholars were engaging. In short, the new western historians argued that these Sunbelt metropolises had created a new sense of community and identity and therefore needed further investigation by professional scholars trained in race, class, and gender.³¹ This same argument for nuanced regionalism applies to the historical understanding of Bellamah's architectural designs and community development. In effect, an understanding of Bellamah's work confirms the significance of the Sunbelt.

Bellamah's legacy as one of New Mexico's most-prolific home builders has been little-documented by the Albuquerque media in the past sixty years. Instead, most newspaper articles have pegged Bellamah's life as a rags-to-riches story: he was a southwestern Horatio Alger, the classic self-made man.³² These stories undoubtedly played well to the public, but some journalists have tried to place Bellamah's success into a larger regional and historical context. Their stories fit snugly in the context of cultural conformity during the early Cold War, a time when men and women knew their place in American society. These stories, dubbing him the "Hispanic Levittown" developer, demonstrate how

Bellamah and his homes shaped a new southwestern identity throughout the state. Bellamah and his inexpensive, unostentatious homes gave comfort and stability to New Mexicans benefitting from postwar affluence and easterners moving to the region during stressful times. This security was all the more important to residents at a time when the federal government claimed that the nation's social and political values were under attack by internal and external enemies—the communists. Bellamah's claim of building homes "All Over New Mexico" takes on a different meaning when historians look at a postwar regional identity through the way that people consumed his home designs and inhabited his community spaces (see fig. 2).³³

Bellamah was born to Lebanese parents in Socorro, New Mexico, in 1914. At a young age, his family relocated to Albuquerque's Barelás neighborhood near the railroad depot where his father owned a small community grocery store, sometimes referred to as a liquor store. While growing up, Bellamah spoke Lebanese, Spanish, and English. In fact, English was his third language. As a teenager, Bellamah delivered telegrams for Western Union and later attended the University of New Mexico while he worked for the Santa Fe Railroad. From 1943 to 1945, Bellamah joined the armed services, showcasing his own patriotism by fighting in the war. After returning to Albuquerque in early 1946, he sold the family liquor store and used the money from that sale to build three homes near Kirtland Air Force Base, a decision that would change his life and, eventually, the New Mexican cultural landscape as a whole. Within two years, the young developer managed to build more than 100 homes, and by 1960 more than 3,500 homes in Albuquerque under the Dale Bellamah brand.³⁴ In the early years of his home development, Bellamah held business partnerships with B. O. Shepard and Fred Mossman, two Albuquerque home builders and developers.³⁵ Mossman rivaled Bellamah's work by building more than 7,500 upscale homes for affluent New Mexicans with his business partner Edward Gladden in Albuquerque's Northeast Heights.³⁶

In 1951 Bellamah ventured out on his own and expanded his operation to other New Mexican cities, including Las Vegas, Alamogordo, Las Cruces, Hobbs, Roswell, and Santa Fe. In 1958 alone, Bellamah set a regional record in New Mexico and west Texas by building 1,259 homes, claiming to break the previous record of 750 in one year.³⁷ In 1959 Bellamah built more than 1,500 homes and in 1960, breaking his previous record, built more than 1,900.³⁸ By 1960 he declared that he had constructed more homes in New Mexico than anyone.³⁹ At this time, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Life Magazine*, and *Reader's Digest* credited him with being the sixth-largest developer in the world.⁴⁰ Before he died unexpectedly in 1972, Bellamah had broadly and deeply influenced postwar regional identity in the southwestern Borderlands with his neighborhood

design and architectural styles. Under his company's name, Bellamah Enterprises built approximately 2,300 homes in Las Cruces and close to 15,000 homes in the American Southwest as a whole.⁴¹

Because of his middle-class upbringing and his service in the U.S. Army, Bellamah targeted the state's market for new homes among federal employees, both military and civilian, including those working on military bases and at national laboratories.⁴² During the military buildup of World War II, the federal government spent more than forty billion dollars on infrastructure development in the American West—roads, bridges, and highways—as well as on military bases and research laboratories, shipyards, and aeronautical facilities. Gerald Nash, the leading historian on this subject, declared that the American West, for the first time in U.S. history, had become a viable economic region, one no longer dependent on the East for capital, banking, and other resources.⁴³ The government chose to invest heavily in the West during the war due to its generally temperate climate, its rather sparse population, its vast open spaces, and its abundance of natural resources. By 1945 the American West was home to more people than before the war, and many new cities or existing cities, such as Los Alamos and Las Cruces, expanded seemingly overnight. These developments demonstrate the remarkable growth made possible by the federal government's need for new spaces in which to produce weapons systems, ordnance, food, clothing, and other products for the war effort.⁴⁴

Toward the end of the war, Las Cruces, a small southwestern city, benefited from such federal spending in the American West. In February 1945, the government selected the Tularosa Basin just east of Las Cruces as the site for the White Sands Proving Grounds (renamed the White Sands Missile Range in 1958), a missile and rocket-testing area. From 1945 to 1947, the U.S. Army transformed the base of the San Andres Mountains into a military city. Afterward, virtually every rocket and missile ever produced by the U.S. Army was first tested in the Proving Grounds' forty-by-one-hundred-mile test strip.⁴⁵ The new testing facility attracted an eclectic group of army and civilian professionals, along with their families, and the population of Las Cruces grew from twelve thousand in 1950 to thirty-two thousand in 1960. By 1960 Doña Ana County as a whole was home to just over sixty thousand residents.⁴⁶ These relocated professionals created a demand for housing that would keep southern New Mexican contractors and builders busy well into the late 1980s.

Although military spending represented the driving force behind Las Cruces' population boom in the 1950s, the land grant college of New Mexico State University also drew people to the region. At the height of World War II, six hundred students were enrolled at the institution, then known as New Mexico College of Agricultural and Mechanics Arts. In the early 1950s, enrollment grew

exponentially when the G.I. Bill opened the way for returning veterans to get an education. Just as Las Cruces experienced a housing shortage, so too did the growing state college. In 1955 the student population reached two thousand, and over the next decade, the university built student housing and dorms for the nearly five thousand students expected by the early 1970s. When New Mexico A&M changed its name to New Mexico State University in late 1958, it signaled that in conjunction with many other developments, Las Cruces was growing into a modern municipality.⁴⁷ The Bellamah Addition, located ten blocks from campus, had provided nearly one thousand new residences for the growing university population by 1959.⁴⁸

From 1952 to 1961, Bellamah reshaped the southeast side of the Las Cruces cityscape. Known locally as “the Bellamah area” (between what are today Lohman and Missouri, and Solano and Triviz), the homes in this new planned community initially departed from the city’s traditional Anglo and Mexican streetscape neighborhoods, even though, as evident later, Bellamah’s neighborhoods eventually came to resemble them. The Bellamah project ushered in a new era of neighborhood identity grounded in patriotism, conformity, and prosperity.⁴⁹ These mass-produced residences, uncommon in Las Cruces and other southwestern towns and cities before World War II, came to dominate the cityscape, and within a decade would represent the majority of home development in the city and the state.⁵⁰

Because Princess Jeanne Park received so much national attention, it is easy to assume upon first glance that this Albuquerque neighborhood influenced Bellamah’s smaller community designs in the southern part of the state, but this was not entirely the case. A closer examination reveals that ideas developed in Albuquerque and Las Cruces cross-fertilized one another. The first of Bellamah’s Las Cruces developments was built in three phases: the Bellamah Addition, Bellamah Annex, and Bellamah Manor. The first emulated Bellamah home designs in Albuquerque’s Southeast Heights, and Bellamah’s Princess Jeanne Park neighborhood in Albuquerque served as the model for the last two phases. However, Bellamah then went on to use home designs in Las Cruces as models for Princess Jeanne Park, Bellehaven, and Dietz Farms in Albuquerque.⁵¹

Street names in the Bellamah Addition such as Princess Jeanne Drive, Bellamah Avenue, Bellamah Circle, and Bellamah Drive, for instance, later appeared in subdivision plans in Alamogordo, Albuquerque, Roswell, Santa Fe, and Hobbs. Bellamah also named many of the streets in his subdivisions after employees to reward their dedication and loyalty to company values. For example, Lees Avenue in Las Cruces honored Paul Lees, Bellamah’s brother-in-law.⁵² Bellamah’s environmental sensibilities were reflected in streets named after trees in all of his subdivisions, including Mulberry, Spruce, Aspen, Poplar, Ash, Redwood, Mahogany, and Walnut. This convention started first in Las Cruces

and then appeared in Alamogordo, Hobbs, Roswell, and Albuquerque before returning to the Loma Heights subdivision in Las Cruces in the 1960s.⁵³ This was partially inspired by the tree-planting program that Paul Lees, Las Cruces' director for Bellamah Enterprises, introduced at the outset of the original Bellamah Addition. Actual trees and grass also became an iconic part of Bellamah's vision in New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado home development.⁵⁴ This prestige exemplified the translocal in action, for Bellamah's ideas and names, seemingly uninfluenced by national trends, moved between the cities he developed in the American Southwest.

Bellamah's subdivision and neighborhood designs emerged organically, shaping local and regional communities by focusing on development in small markets. Successfully transplanting his neighborhood plan from Albuquerque to Las Cruces proved to Bellamah and other southern New Mexico developers that assembly-line home building could also work profitably in smaller home markets.⁵⁵ Las Cruces became the template for small-scale neighborhood development, making the city an important case study of Bellamah's home building throughout the state and region. Because the state mostly consists of small towns and villages rather than large metropolitan areas, this model explains the extension of Bellamah's influence over the cultural landscape in New Mexico and the Southwest.

In all three phases of the Las Cruces Bellamah area, the developer offered a selection of simple homes that featured a flat-roofed, ranch-style residence emphasizing affordability and bedroom space over other luxury features (see fig. 2). Bellamah used economical design to establish himself as one of the city's top home builders in a time of great housing need in Las Cruces. The Bellamah Addition (located between Walnut and Solano and Lohman and Idaho) used simple amenities and a few name brands as selling points, especially Queen Mary showers, birch wardrobe closets, Formica counter tops, air conditioning, steel casement windows, and factory-built cabinets.⁵⁶ However, most of Las Cruces' building and retail economy did not offer top-of-the-line products at the time of the Bellamah Addition's construction, meaning he could not offer them in the homes of this particular subdivision.⁵⁷

In the next phase, the Bellamah Annex (located between Idaho and Missouri and Solano and Triviz), Bellamah placed an emphasis on the needs of the homebuyer, as competition from other home developers had resulted in a frenzied market. He introduced three additional home plans into the Bellamah area: the El Dorado, the Monterrey, and the Capri. (These styles would also dominate the final phase of construction in Bellamah Manor.) These three models shared architectural styles with homes in the Bellamah Addition, featuring a simplified ranch-style home but offering more options. Each home had a centered door entrance with a large window to the right and two smaller windows to the left, except for the Capri, which had only one small window. The windows were

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DALE BELLAMAH ADDITION in *Las Cruces*

Fig. 4. "The Dale Bellamah Addition in Las Cruces," Original Broadside, 1952. At first, the original addition only offered three homes with limited amenities. Photo courtesy of the Dale Bellamah Homes Records MS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.

set in steel casements. A low-pitched roof with shingles and a small doorway porch rounded out these pedestrian designs. Flanking one end of the home was a single open carport.⁵⁸ The carport was the single most-defining feature of all three building phases in the Bellamah area, and its incorporation into home design signaled Las Cruces' growing dependency on the car, which was simultaneously becoming a significant feature of neighborhood design in early Cold War southern New Mexico. In addition, the carport reflected the reality that



Fig. 5. Dale Bellamah's "Princess Jeanne Park," Pamphlet. This promotional material showcases the park's Colorock and Pueblo floor plans, as well as various elements of the wife-planned homes. Courtesy of the Dale Bellamah Homes Records MS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.

the automobile was now an integral part of domestic life rather than a feature to hide away behind the home.⁵⁹ Bellamah probably adopted this feature from Clifford May's California ranch homes, given that May was the first architect to move the garage from the back to the side of the house.

To make his homes affordable, Bellamah used cinder block as the basic material in all three phases of construction. Bellamah's records do not indicate why cinder block was preferred, and city directories between 1952 and 1957 show very few cinder-block manufacturing industries operating in Las Cruces. Bellamah may have considered transporting building material from Albuquerque, but this would have cut into his profit margin and made it harder to sell homes. In the end, Bellamah partnered with an El Paso concrete firm, Atlas Building Products of El Paso, that provided concrete blocks, stucco, prestcrete, sackrete, roof and floor slabs, and Hycal Lime products.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, many residents complained because the cinder block was exposed both indoors and outdoors. The lack of insulation allowed winter condensation to gather on the walls and turn to ice, and in the summer this moisture became mold. Keeping Bellamah homes warm or cool in the New Mexico climate proved difficult because of the cinder block, which absorbed and released heat in the summer and trapped the cold during the winter (see fig. 2).

All the model homes had the same ranch-style or open-floor plans that were common in Dale Bellamah Homes. The common space consisted of a living room and kitchen located at the entrance of the home, followed by the private space of the bathroom and bedrooms toward the back. The promotional material does not list the exact square footage for each model, but the smaller models were roughly nine hundred square feet and the larger models twelve hundred. The largest of these models, the El Dorado, provided for the growing family of the early Cold War era and could be built as large as fifteen hundred square feet. This four-bedroom, two-bathroom house featured a large living room and modern kitchen equipped with electric range outlets, an ample utility room, Formica counter tops, and an electric water heater.⁶¹ The El Dorado showcased the latest amenities available in postwar Las Cruces and was the top-of-the-line model in the city's original Bellamah Addition.

By the time Bellamah finished construction on the final phase of the Bellamah area, three elementary schools—Conlee, Hermosa Heights, and University Hills—had been built, as well as Lynn Junior High School.⁶² Promised in his literature, these public schools were part of Bellamah's neighborhood design throughout the region.⁶³ In addition, the space located north of the school would later become Young Park, one of the defining features of the Bellamah area neighborhood.

Later development in Las Cruces was deeply influenced by Bellamah's Princess Jeanne Park in Albuquerque (at the intersection of Eubank and Constitution). Examining this development is crucial to understand Bellamah's larger body of design work. The Bellamah Addition, Annex, and Manor were only the beginning of neighborhood development for Dale Bellamah Homes in Las Cruces. Loma Heights followed. This high-end subdivision project was patterned after Princess Jeanne Park, a development that shifted the way Bellamah approached architectural design. Although Princess Jeanne Park brought an end to large-scale development in Albuquerque for Bellamah because of zoning regulations and a slower market, it set the stage for the last large neighborhood development in Las Cruces until the early 1980s.⁶⁴

Bellamah first introduced New Mexicans and Americans to Princess Jeanne Park, "America's Most Honored Subdivision," in 1954.⁶⁵ Like many of his residential projects, the park was named after his wife and given the name Princess Jeanne because Bellamah had recently discovered that he descended from Arabian royalty.⁶⁶ Princess Jeanne Park was ambitious by national standards and unthinkable by New Mexican standards. This cutting-edge subdivision sat on 327 acres of land, cost more than fifteen million dollars to develop and, when completed, boasted more than sixteen hundred Bellamah homes dotting the east mesa landscape in Albuquerque. The project would go on to win a number of

local, state, and national awards.⁶⁷ Although Princess Jeanne Park helped Albuquerque meet the demands for postwar housing, it also illuminated a much bigger problem in Albuquerque and Las Cruces: unregulated home development.

In Princess Jeanne Park, Bellamah offered only two architectural designs: the Colorock and the Pueblo.⁶⁸ The two distinct styles illustrated that Bellamah understood the tastes and needs of his middle-class clientele in central New Mexico. The Colorock resembled the affluent ranch houses that covered the United States, particularly the suburbs and, on the façade, tended to express older ideals of home ownership. Meanwhile, the Pueblo style emulated the Pueblo Spanish Revival, an architectural style that came to dominate the Albuquerque and Santa Fe cultural landscapes. Pueblo Spanish Revival architecture had become recognizable as “Santa Fe style” due to the fact that it incorporated Indigenous, Spanish, and Mexican notions about home design and use.⁶⁹ The Pueblo style also reflected a romantic understanding of the cultural environment with which New Mexicans and other Americans were comfortable. Some residents loved the southwestern regional style of New Mexico and wanted the Pueblo style look in their home, while others enjoyed the Colorock that emulated a simple version of Colonial Revival style that was popular in the eastern part of the United States (see fig. 5).

The Colorock and Pueblo-style residences had three different floorplans—two-, three-, and four-bedroom options that could be augmented or redesigned to meet a growing family’s needs. But it was the bells and whistles inside the home and the interior layout that Bellamah used as the bigger selling point. These homes boasted top-notch post-and-beam construction, large Queen Mary showers, “Sun-Tan” bath heaters, butterfly and solar roofs, factory-made cabinets, natural birch kitchens, wardrobe closets, sliding glass doors and large glass windows for natural sunlight and ventilation, Talk-a-Radio intercommunication systems to communicate with family members in any room of the house, and, finally, door chimes.⁷⁰ Another feature that Bellamah trumpeted in his marketing literature was the garbage disposal, which he claimed would make weekly trash pick-up wholly unnecessary.⁷¹ To illuminate the classiness of this community, Bellamah used top-of-the-line name brands and amenities in his Princess Jeanne homes.

Bellamah also incorporated the indoor-to-outdoor concept into his Princess Jeanne Park subdivision. The concept, first developed in Clifford May’s ranch homes in California and featured in two *Sunset Magazine* books in 1946 and 1958, emphasized a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor spaces. May later made an affordable version of this house called “Cliff May’s Magic Money House” in the early 1950s, which Bellamah’s work strongly emulated, despite not specifically drawing rhetorical attention to it.⁷² The Bellamah model that finally and clearly emphasized outdoor living was The Solar Queen in Albuquerque

Your NEW plan for living... UNDER THE SUN!

The Solar Queen

IN
DALE BELLAMAH'S
FABULOUS
Princess Jeanne Park

Homeowners in Dale Bellamah's fabulous Princess Jeanne Park enjoy many extra benefits, among them unmatched recreational facilities, including the beautiful State Swimming Pool, and the pride that comes with living in "America's Most Honored Subdivision." In Princess Jeanne Park, the new homeowner finds himself surrounded by other beautiful homes of functional, breath-taking design, where pride of ownership is demonstrated by green lawns, shrub trees and flower beds blooming with color. All this with the majestic Sandia Mountain Range furnishing a backdrop of ever-changing color. Won't you join us in America's happiest community!

A lighter, brighter, happier home, warmed and illuminated by the beautiful Southwestern sun! That's Dale Bellamah's brand new "Solar Queen," designed and constructed to offer today's home buyer a harmonious blending of sunlight and shade, outdoor and indoor living! The "Solar Queen" is truly a "four season" home, with contemporary designed woodburning fireplace to serve as the focal point of your winter evenings; a spacious, 600 sq. ft. outdoor living room for fresh-

air living in spring, summer and fall, and year-round controlled sunlight. The homeowner's lifelong dream of a place to sit has become a vivid reality in Dale Bellamah's fabulous new "Solar Queen."

THESE EXTRA QUALITY FEATURES ARE STANDARD EQUIPMENT

- 1170 sq. ft. of living area plus a bonus of 400 sq. ft. outdoor living room.
- Fireproof, weatherproof, cushioned adhesive floorboard siding for maintenance-free years.
- Control heating system - forced warm air in every room.
- Beautiful wood-burning fireplace of contemporary design.
- Sweeping studio ceilings.
- Weatherstripped, lockable, sliding Aluminum windows.
- Sliding glass doors and clerestory windows - a massive area of glass.
- Mr. and Mrs. wardrobe closets with a built-in vanity in the master bedroom.
- New Sun-Tan bath heaters.
- Staggered kitchen with mahogany cabinets and streamlined terrace bar.
- Copper range hood with exhaust fan and built-in light.
- Waste-disposing garbage disposal unit.
- Monogrammed-Honeywell top-light switches.

AWARD WINNING
Princess Jeanne Park

Service Warranty
MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

LOW DOWN PAYMENTS
Monthly Payments Lower Than Rent
Approved for GI and FHA Financing

The Solar Queen - OPEN NOW

Princess Jeanne Park

Fig. 6. "The Solar Queen." This promotional material touts Bellamah's use of the livable patio, marketing New Mexico's yearlong great weather. He utilizes gender to sell the Solar Queen. Photo courtesy of the Dale Bellamah Homes Records MS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.

(1955) and later The Prince in Las Cruces (1968) (see fig. 6).⁷³ The livable patio, also billed as the "outdoor living room," used sliding glass doors and clerestory windows to facilitate the smooth shift from indoors to outdoors. Bellamah was wise to tout this feature in his homes given the region's favorable weather nine months out of the year. This approach represents one of the few times that the environment shaped the way Bellamah thought about home ownership in New Mexico; it also offers yet another example of how the translocal influenced the design and layout of homes throughout New Mexico through its use of the environment as a selling point.

In addition to the homes, Bellamah also tried to sell potential residents on the idea that they would "be living in perhaps one of the most exclusive subdivisions in the entire Southwest . . . unequal in comfort . . . yet harmonious."⁷⁴ To live up to this vision, Princess Jeanne Park also included a recreational center that featured a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a bathhouse. He also worked with the local school board to set aside land for a future junior high and elementary school. The school was later named Andrew Jackson Junior High.⁷⁵ Bellamah even went so far as to design another strip mall, named Princess Jeanne Shopping Center, fit with a grocery store and other modern necessities to woo his customers.⁷⁶

Bellamah's Princess Jeanne Park won a number of national awards in 1954 and 1955. The National Home Builders Association awarded the Practical Builder Trophy to Princess Jeanne Park and Bellamah for excellence in merchandising homes.⁷⁷ As part of National Home Week, *Better Homes and Gardens* selected the subdivision as the model "Home For All America" showcasing this "most unusual housing development in the Southwest."⁷⁸ Such praise allowed Bellamah to cite Princess Jeanne Park as award-winning in most of his marketing literature, but it also showcased the idea that New Mexico was becoming modern in the context of the larger home building trend nationwide and that Bellamah's homes were indeed worthy of national praise.⁷⁹

Finally, although Princess Jeanne Park was cutting-edge for New Mexico, it was hardly groundbreaking given the success of Levitt, May, and even fellow Albuquerque-developer Hoffman, who would later be crowned the fourth-largest home builder in the United States.⁸⁰ What was significant about this colossal Albuquerque subdivision, however, was that it allowed Bellamah to graduate from building entry-level homes for returning veterans to constructing more-upscale homes for the burgeoning middle class, and in the process, helped push New Mexico further into modernity in the mid-twentieth century. Following his success in Albuquerque, regional ideas about home ownership shaped Bellamah's brand identity throughout the state.

In early 1961, Bellamah broke ground on Loma Heights, his newest subdivision in northeast Las Cruces (located between Martha and Spruce and Solano and Triviz). By this time, Las Cruces had over one thousand Bellamah homes and Bellamah had become the city's most-prolific home builder.⁸¹ Bellamah modeled Loma Heights after Albuquerque's Princess Jeanne Park as well as the Bellehaven subdivision, a neighborhood touted as a high-end community. It's clear, however, that the original Bellamah Addition influenced Bellehaven's design (located at the intersection of Wyoming and Indian School), demonstrating that Las Cruces and Albuquerque influenced one another reciprocally. This new and upscale planned community in Loma Heights catered to the growing professional community of scientists, engineers, technicians, bureaucrats, and military personnel employed at nearby White Sands Missile Range. The subdivision's location easily accessed Highway 70, allowing for a streamlined commute up and over the Organ Mountains to the country's leading missile installation and development facility.⁸²

Three planned communities comprised Loma Heights: Loma Heights, Loma Heights South, and Yucca Heights. The back end of the subdivision, on the east, butted right up against Interstate 25. Bellamah touted modern home designs with the latest amenities. Added values included nearby schools and shopping centers. He also boasted that "scientifically planned curvilinear streets control

intro-residential traffic and protect your children at play.”⁸³ In addition, the new subdivision fully recognized Las Cruces’ population boom alongside a new, wealthier demographic looking to purchase better-quality homes closer to work.

In the initial phase of Loma Heights (today, from Martha to East Madrid and Solano to Triviz), Bellamah introduced a new catalog of houses that departed from the simple cinder block homes of the older Bellamah area. The first phase saw Bellamah transplant four models that had been very successful in the Princess Jeanne Park neighborhood in Albuquerque: the Acoma, the Isleta, the Zuni, and the Laguna homes.⁸⁴ These new homes played into the region’s cultural identity by incorporating Pueblo Spanish Revival architectural features within ranch-style floor plans. Most models were twelve to fourteen hundred square feet with two to four bedrooms. Aside from an enclosed garage, these new homes also featured an outdoor living room, which included an open back porch with a roof. Some of the later homes in the Bellamah Annex in the original neighborhood also incorporated these living spaces at the end of construction (see fig. 7).⁸⁵

The building materials for Loma Heights also changed dramatically from the original Bellamah Addition neighborhood. Lumber and stucco sometimes replaced cinder block, as Warren Lumber Company and other lumberyards were able to meet more of the demands of the growing home building industry in the area. In addition, Crown Plastics and Fred’s Welding and Sheet Metal provided heating and air conditioning services. Finally, the services of J & J Cabinet and Fixture and Valley Transit Mix Company allowed Bellamah to offer better-quality construction and material than were found in the previous neighborhood.⁸⁶ Throughout the 1950s, as Las Cruces rapidly expanded to become the second largest city in the state, a growing commercial economy provided the services, commodities, and products needed to support the rising demand for housing.

The next phase, Loma Heights South (intersected at East Madrid to Spruce and Solano to Triviz), incorporated more of Bellamah’s Princess Jeanne Park ideas. This practice showed his sensitivity to the state’s modern regional identity. In Loma Heights South, and later in Yucca Heights (located north side of Spruce between Solano and Triviz), Bellamah at first introduced five new home models with eight different floor plans and allowed homebuyers to mix and match floor plans with architectural designs. The new home models included the San Carlos, San Fernando, San Diego, San Antonio, and Capistrano, and a few years later, the De Soto.⁸⁷ These models incorporated two architectural floor plans, Ranch and Pueblo Spanish Revival, which added to the growing southwestern vernacular style that still blankets so many neighborhoods in New Mexico. The Bellamah Homes promotional material also evolved from one large broadside



Fig. 7. "Loma Heights," Promotional Leaflets Championing Bellamah's Upscale Neighborhood in Las Cruces, 1961. More spacious homes with lots of upgrades allowed the company to market to a professional clientele. The closed garage signaled the new status of the car in Las Cruces. Photo courtesy of the Dale Bellamah Homes Records MS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.

to a carefully curated catalog with flashcards featuring detailed drawings of the homes as well as floor plans that listed amenities available to potential homebuyers (see fig. 7).⁸⁸

Like the original Bellamah homes, Loma Heights residences also offered an expanded ranch-style floor plan. In the front of the home, the common space had the traditional living room and kitchen, but in these new homes, a dining area separated the living room from the kitchen, and a family room (in addition to the living room) added a more luxurious and spacious feeling. All the new homes offered at least one full and one partial bathroom to meet the needs of the busy and growing families that were fueling the baby boom of the early Cold War era. Finally, an enclosed two-car garage, whose interior door opened into the family room, rounded out these new Bellamah homes.⁸⁹

Loma Heights models were by far the most luxurious. Bellamah's published literature that had touted Princess Jeanne Park as a "wife-planned" community directly influenced the interior design of the homes in the Loma Heights neighborhood.⁹⁰ The wife-planned community also inspired home design in

Alamogordo and El Paso and introduced Bellamah's "Talking House," a modern home design equipped with an intercom system so the family could communicate with one another from room to room.⁹¹ In the kitchen, Bellamah included top-of-the-line appliances and cabinetry, such as a General Electric range and oven outfitted with a Swanson range hood with exhaust fan, a General Electric garbage disposal, and Kemper Riviera cabinets. Bathrooms featured custom-built medicine cabinets, Moen Dialcet temperature bath controls, a Pryne ceiling heater, and handy Kleenex dispensers. Bedrooms included full-length mirrors and large closet spaces.⁹²

Finally, large picture windows and a sliding glass door leading to the outdoor living room or patio capped off Bellamah's selling points for these new upscale models.⁹³ In addition, Bellamah introduced a new home design, the Prince, which offered the seamless indoor-to-outdoor design featured in the Loma Heights subdivision. The other design amenity that set off Bellamah's newer homes from the earlier subdivision was the garage. While a number of Bellamah homes in Loma Heights had carports, the majority sported one-car and, in the later addition of Yucca and South, two-car garages.⁹⁴ More space for cars in Bellamah's Loma Heights residences reflected both growing wealth and the ubiquity of the automobile in American family life. Loma Heights also had one elementary school, Loma Heights, and a large park, Apodaca, outfitted with a baseball field, swimming pool, and picnic area. One block north of Loma Heights was the Las Cruces Country Club, with an eighteen-hole golf course and a swimming pool. In 1958 the country club expanded its facilities to include a covered patio, new basement, and, most importantly, a large ballroom designed to handle weddings and special events.⁹⁵ Bellamah used the country club's proximity to attract upscale homeowners to Loma Heights and, later, to the more affluent Elks' Club neighborhood that he tried to develop in the early 1970s before his death.

Stepping back and considering Bellamah's body of work as a whole, it's clear that ideas about gender deeply shaped not only conceptions of home ownership in the Borderlands, but also architectural design and postwar suburbanization. Bellamah's wife, Jeanne, introduced the wife-planned community and home styles such as the Princess, the Duchess, and the Queen. Perhaps as a result of his wife's influence, Bellamah understood that women actually made most of the decisions when it came to home details, and that therefore they were the customer and targeted demographic for developers. He began to customize his home designs with women in mind, down to details such as more luxurious countertop materials, bigger closet spaces, and more brand-name appliances that he believed would appeal to female consumers (see fig. 8). Bellamah expanded on the wife-planned community in Las Cruces' Loma Heights



Fig. 8. "The Wife-Planned Home," Transitioned into the Wife-Planned Community. An extension of earlier promotional material, this pamphlet emphasized gendered names for homes and listed the selling points that made these homes desirable for women. Photo courtesy of the Dale Bellamah Homes Records MS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.

subdivision and named most of the streets after women. For example, Loma Heights and Loma Heights South (today, at the intersections of Martha and Spruce and Triviz and Solano), used a variety of women's names for street names, including Anita, Connie Lou, Dorothy, Coleen, Margaret, Betty, June, Debra, Jenice, Jayne, Doree, Carlen, Penny, Darlene, Phyllis, Flora, and Louise, just to name a few. Whereas other developers appeared not to take women's opinions much into consideration, Bellamah consciously embraced gendered ideas about design and layout. In essence, Bellamah realized that women wielded significant consumer power in the region and were often instrumental in choosing their family's living space.⁹⁶

Bellamah's success in shaping a new sense of community in the Cold War Southwest also tells us much about changing conceptions of race and class.⁹⁷ When Bellamah started building in Las Cruces, the city was racially divided, and Main Street served as the de facto racial barrier. Affluent white Las Cruces lived on the west side of Main Street, while people of color, mostly of Mexican descent, lived east of Main Street (see fig. 1). Bellamah ignored this conventional racial division and built homes instead focused on ideas about class. His subdivisions, constructed near New Mexico State University, ignored the existing Main Street line. As a savvy entrepreneur, Bellamah saw a new economic

Fig. 9. Bellamah Homes Advertisement. Bellamah regularly used the male figure in advertising until 1960 to promote conformity, patriotism, and American prosperity through home ownership. Photo courtesy of the Dale Bellamah Homes Records MS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico.



opportunity and the potential for profit in rethinking neighborhood segregation and building for everyone. Bellamah had personally experienced both poverty and affluence, perhaps leading him to see himself as the person to enact this change in Las Cruces and other places in the state. On the one hand, by promoting the idea that everyone could own a home, Bellamah's neighborhood designs worked to allow consumers to overcome class divisions. On the other hand, Bellamah simultaneously marketed his homes along existing class lines by promoting neighborhoods that would appeal to upper-class consumers. In either case, changing ideas about class and race clearly undergirded his developing conceptions of neighborhood design.

By the mid-1960s, Bellamah Homes began moving away from large-scale home construction and neighborhood design to focus instead on shopping center development, of which he became the largest developer in the Southwest.⁹⁸ But even after Bellamah's sudden death in 1972, his company continued to develop and design living communities in Las Cruces, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Colorado Springs. For example, the Dale Bellamah Corporation designed and developed the Bellehaven Addition in Colorado Springs in 1974, a project that was in production before he died.⁹⁹ The company also tapped into the trailer park movement between 1973 and 1975 and constructed mobile communities in Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and Colorado Springs.¹⁰⁰ In Las Cruces, Bellamah established several more significant neighborhoods that showcased his legacy. In a particularly exclusive community design, Bellamah planned Glendale Gardens, an elaborate neighborhood located off Valley Drive not far from

Las Cruces High School.¹⁰¹ This community featured large ranch-style homes on oversized lots. For those families with fewer resources, Bellamah Homes continued to offer modest homes in the Vista Encantada neighborhood, which included affordable single and multifamily housing units, and later established a mobile home community near the heart of the city.¹⁰² By the end of the 1970s, Bellamah Homes also designed one of the city's first planned mobile-home communities: Winterhaven, just off Burke Road near the Rio Grande.¹⁰³

In 1973, within a year of Bellamah's death, Bellamah Enterprises merged with Ernest Hahn Inc. of California, though the company remained autonomous in New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado in commercial and home building. At this time, the company reorganized itself under The Bellamah Corporation and later conducted a substantial amount of business under The Bellamah Community Developers, at which time the corporation built a number of shopping malls, hotels, and motels. In 1978 Hahn sold the company to TAMCO, a New York-based realty company, but Bellamah employees managed to buy the remaining stock. In the early 1980s, the Bellamah Cooperation merged with Meadows Resources and became a subsidiary of Public Service Company of New Mexico. At first, the company did reasonably well, but was forced to file Chapter 11 bankruptcy in June 1989 before converting to Chapter 7 bankruptcy in early 1990, when the company's business finally terminated completely.¹⁰⁴

From 1947 through 1990, Dale Bellamah's residential developments deeply influenced the built environment of the American Southwest. Bellamah's promotional literature boasted that "more people in New Mexico live in Dale Bellamah Homes than in any other kind," and indeed his affordable, ranch-style homes sprouted up in nearly every major city in New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado during the Cold War.¹⁰⁵ His economical, assembly-line construction methods produced economical houses that gave many New Mexicans the opportunity to own a new home, and the developer used Las Cruces as a proving ground in which to expand this type of production outside of Albuquerque.

In Las Cruces and in many of New Mexico's small municipalities, Bellamah provided something these cities lacked—a sense of neighborhood identity that moved beyond race. From its founding in 1851, Las Cruces only recognized two neighborhoods, Mesquite and Alameda. In the 1950s, Bellamah's work helped Las Cruces focus instead on ideas of patriotism, prosperity, and conformity, and in doing so linked them to the broader cultural landscape of the state and the nation. That is to say, eventually the translocal and the national crossed paths. In Loma Heights in particular, Bellamah's architectural styles departed greatly from the Alameda district's early twentieth-century Colonial, Mission Revival, and Pueblo Spanish Revival, and the Mesquite district's Mexican

Streetscape style. Instead, the developer slowly arrived at a more-modern southwestern or New Mexico vernacular.

As Las Cruces continues to reconsider some of its twentieth-century landmarks within its built fabric, nominating places to the state and national registers and protecting the homes in these neighborhoods should be of paramount importance. Perhaps even more importantly, as Las Cruces grows and continues to expand, Bellamah's ideas serve as food for thought. In effect, Bellamah provided New Mexicans with the American Dream. Although we may not equally embrace all of his values the same way today, in a moment when American prosperity seems very much under siege, his work serves as a reservoir of ideas about how to either preserve such values or rethink them.

Appendix: Provisional List of Bellamah Neighborhoods in the Borderlands

Main (Dale) Bellamah Additions

Las Cruces, NM 1952
Hobbs, NM 1956
Alamogordo, NM 1956
Albuquerque, NM 1959
El Paso, TX 1960
Roswell, NM 1960

Additional Bellamah Neighborhoods

Albuquerque, NM
Princess Jeanne Park 1954
Bellehaven 1959
Dietz Farms 1960

Las Cruces, NM
Bellamah Annex 1954
Bellamah Manor 1956
Loma Heights 1959
Loma Heights South 1962
Glendale Gardens 1964
Encantada Park 1973
Winterhaven 1980

Santa Fe, NM
La Resolana 1960 (at first called Bellamah Addition)
Vista Del Sol 1965

Lubbock, TX

Broadmoor Addition 1960

Colorado Springs, CO

Bellehaven Addition 1973

Albuquerque, NM Neighborhoods with Individual Bellamah Homes

Monterrey Hills

Ridge Crest

Hoffmantown

Kirtland Addition

Parkland Hills

Mesa Vista Hills

Bel Air

Notes

1. "More Homes in City Slated as Shortage Looms," *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 6 May 1952.

2. "Dale Bellamah Homes Proudly Presents the Town and Country Home of 1952 Open House," advertisement, *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 11 May 1952.

3. "Yes, See Why at . . . Dale Bellamah Addition in Las Cruces," promotional pamphlet, folder 2, box 1, Dale Bellamah Homes Records, 1954–1959, MSS 646 BC, Center for Southwest Research, Zimmerman Library, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico [hereafter Bellamah Homes Records, CSWR, UNM]; and "Bellamah Gives Many Reasons To Buy Home," *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 22 November 1953. Bellamah did not invent the curvilinear street design. For more on the invention of curvilinear street design, see "Vista Larga Residential Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (NPS Form 10-900), 22 February 2016, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service; Federal Housing Administration, *Planning Profitable Neighborhoods*, Technical Bulletin 7 (Washington, D.C.: FHA, 1938); and Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820–2000* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003), 123–24. Bellamah simply emulated new ideas about subdivisions and neighborhoods, exemplifying the translocal, a concept discussed later that shows how local ideas influence nearby communities.

4. "Success Fascinates Bellamah," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 5 June 1960; "Bellamah," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Tribune*, 9 August 1962; "A Promise Fulfilled . . .," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 29 October 1968; "Dale Bellamah Corporation to Continue Its Expansion," *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 9 September 1973; and "Bellamah Firm Opens Major Sub-Division," *Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph*, 20 December 1974.

5. "Bellamah Energy Pays Off: Housing Empire in 10 Years," *Alamogordo (N.Mex.) Daily News*, 23 March 1958; "Success Story Is Behind New Bellehaven," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 8 February 1959; and "City Planning Commission To Hear Zone Change Request," *Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph*, 11 March 1973. A preliminary list of Bellamah's companies is as follows: Dale Bellamah Homes of New Mexico Inc., Dale

Bellamah Building Company, Dale Bellamah Land Corporation, Dale Bellamah Corporation, Dale Bellamah Subdividers Inc., Dale Bellamah Land Company Inc., Dale Bellamah Commercial Properties Inc., Dale Bellamah Estates, Dale Bellamah Housing Company, and Dale Bellamah Realty. After his death, several more companies were newly established: Bellamah Community Corporation, Bellamah Community Development, Bellamah Group, Bellamah Housing Corporation, Bellamah Realty, Bellamah Property Managers, and Bellamah Associates LTD.

6. "Modest Beginning Mushrooms Quickly into Huge Business," *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 22 November 1953.

7. "New Housing Subdivision to Be Built," *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 15 July 1956.

8. "Dale Bellamah Heads \$7 Million-A-Year Business," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 11 May 1957; "Bellamah Firms Result of Hard Work," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 8 February 1959; and "Bellamah's General Manager Has Hand in Many Activities," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 8 February 1959.

9. "Dale Bellamah Addition Set For El Paso," *Alamogordo (N.Mex.) Daily News*, 6 March 1960; and "Bellamah Firms Result of Hard Work."

10. "Bellamah Unveiling Trio of New Alamo Home Models," *Alamogordo (N.Mex.) Daily News*, 3 August 1958; "New Bellamah Homes Start 'Tales' Today," *Alamogordo (N.Mex.) Daily News*, 23 March 1958; "Talking Houses Well Insulated," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 11 May 1957; "Builders Announce Plans for 1,000 Santa Fe Homes," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 21 February 1960; "Bellamah Says 200 Units Sold," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 1 May 1960; and "Construction Boosts Santa Fe Economy . . .," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 29 October 1968.

11. "Plaza Princesa Opens," *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 29 October 1968; and "To Build New \$8 Million Motel in Colorado Springs," *Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph*, 17 June 1973.

12. "Latest Building Ideas Used in Planning New Barber's," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Tribune*, 30 January 1958; "Center Is Slated For Expansion," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Tribune*, 30 January 1958; and "Bellamah Opens New Subdivision Today," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 8 February 1959. See also Robert T. Wood, "The Transformation of Albuquerque, 1945-1972" (Ph.D. diss., University of New Mexico, 1980), 182-83; and "Twentieth Century Suburban Growth of Albuquerque," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (NPS Form 10-900-b), August 2000, United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 33-34. David Kammer authored a slightly modified version of the latter work: "Albuquerque: Post-War Suburban Expansion, 1945-1959," 14 February 2014, newmexicohistory.org/2014/02/14/albuquerque-1945-1959/.

13. "2 Bellamah Officials Die in Air Crash," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 17 October 1968.

14. "Bellamah's General Manager Has Hand in Many Activities."

15. Wood, "The Transformation of Albuquerque, 1945-1972," 171-72, 313.

16. "The Hall of Famer," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, n.d., clipping, folder 3, box 1, Bellamah Homes Records, CSWR, UNM; and Eileen Welsome, "Dale Bellamah and His Princess Jeanne Ruled the Land," *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Tribune*, 28 September 1990.

17. Wood, "The Transformation of Albuquerque, 1945-1972," 171-80; and "Twentieth Century Suburban Growth of Albuquerque, New Mexico."

18. Robert T. Wood, *The Postwar Transformation of Albuquerque, New Mexico, 1945-1972* (Santa Fe, N.Mex.: Sunstone Press, 2014), 112-14; Henry J. Tobias and Charles E.

Woodhouse, *Santa Fe: A Modern History, 1880–1990* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001), 154–58; and “Twentieth Century Suburban Growth of Albuquerque, New Mexico,” 41.

19. Wood, *The Postwar Transformation of Albuquerque*, 106–7; and “Vista Larga Residential Historic District,” 26.

20. Monika White Ghattas, *Los Arabes of New Mexico: Compadres from a Distant Land* (Santa Fe, N.Mex.: Sunstone Press, 2012), 141–43; Wood, *The Postwar Transformation of Albuquerque*, 107–10; Wood, “The Transformation of Albuquerque, 1945–1972,” 175–90; and Paul Weideman, “Once Upon a Time in Albuquerque: Photographer Kaylynn Deveney and the Storybook Ranch Home,” *Pasatiempo*, 8 January 2016, https://www.santafenewmexican.com/pasatiempo/books/readings_signings/once-upon-a-time-in-albuquerque-photographer-kaylynn-deveney-and/article_ef482f6e-b597-11e5-8563-57f655975b73.html.

21. “Dale Bellamah Is Sixth Largest Building Firm in World in 1958, Records Show,” *Albuquerque (N.Mex.) Journal*, 5 February 1959; “New, Low-Cost Homes Planned by Bellamah,” *Alamogordo (N.Mex.) Daily News*, 20 September 1959; and “Instant Livability: Wife Planned Homes,” *Las Cruces (N.Mex.) Sun-News*, 8 December 1959.

22. “Dale Bellamah Addition in Hobbs (1956), in Alamogordo (1956), in Lovington (1956), and Princess Jeanne Park (1954),” promotional broadsides, folders 1 and 2, box 1, Bellamah Homes Records, CSWR, UNM.

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for scholarship that looks at neighborhood identities in the Sunbelt and Borderlands. These works introduce a new way of looking at the built environment through the idea of Mexican-American streetscapes. This concept is important, because the two Bellamah neighborhoods discussed at length in this article resemble Mexican streetscapes, a neighborhood type that is common in the Sunbelt corridor between Los Angeles and San Antonio.

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