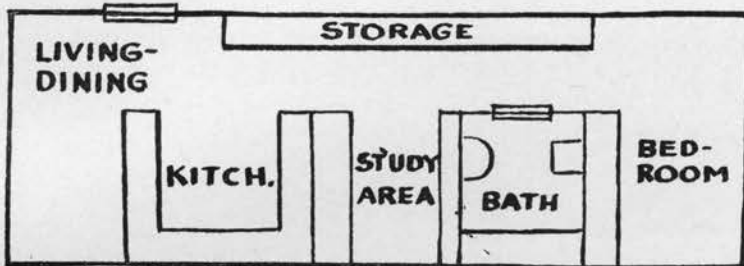


First in a series of four

It's home for us—

A trailer for two

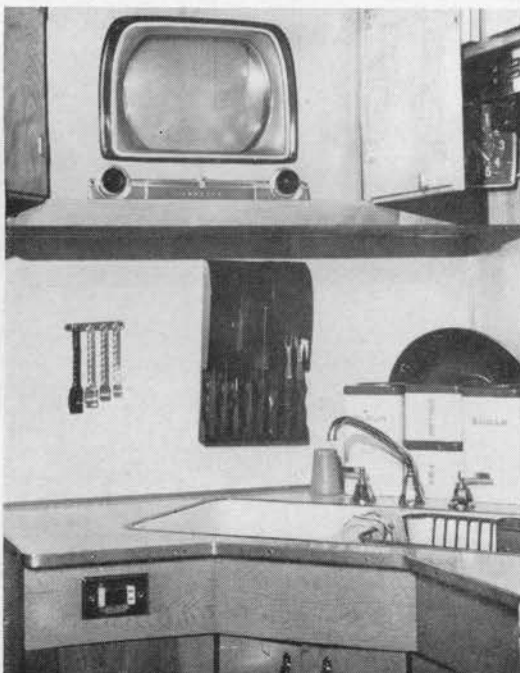


By Nancy Merchant
Child Development Junior

The study area in this 35-foot trailer once held double-deck beds. Wayne moved in a desk, study lamp and folding chair to meet his study needs.



With space at a premium the Steckelbergs make use of every inch. Note (below) how cupboard doors hide the kitchen television when not in use.



"TRAILERS ARE PERFECT for busy college couples," says Shirley Steckelberg. "It only takes me 20 minutes to clean each day plus a thorough cleaning every Friday morning."

Shirley and her husband Wayne, a sophomore in Veterinary Medicine, have lived in their 35-foot trailer since their marriage in July, 1954. They decided to live in the Downtown Trailer Court close to where Shirley works at the Ames Public Library, yet near enough the college for Wayne to economically share in a car-pool.

They bought their second-hand trailer in Omaha for \$2200. It came completely furnished, with kitchen appliances, bed, dresser, table and chairs. Rooms in their trailer include the living room, kitchen, two bedrooms and a bathroom.

They "remodeled" the green and aluminum trailer to give Wayne a place to study, removing the double-deck beds in the bedroom next to the kitchen and converting the space into a den. Between cleaning and remodeling spells, Shirley and Wayne watch TV on a 12 inch set above the kitchen sink, easily viewed from any spot in the living room.

Furniture expense included a "hide-a-bed" sofa, rug, overstuffed chair and an end table for the living room and a desk and bookshelf for Wayne's den. Shirley made dark green living room drapes, featuring a stenciled S, and green curtains for the bedroom and kitchen.

Monthly expense for trailer living includes \$20 for lot rent plus electricity, water and heating bills.

"People who plan trailers make use of every inch for storage . . . they're geniuses," claims Wayne.

"We don't have much of a storage problem as long as we keep only one season's wardrobe and one set of dishes in the trailer. Trailers are small, but neither of us is home long enough to find it confining," explains Shirley.

Shirley works a split schedule — three mornings, three evenings and five afternoons each week. When she has the morning off, she prepares dinner at noon and lunch at night; when working during the morning and afternoon she fixes lunch at noon and has the dinner that evening. Wayne and Shirley arrange their working schedules (Wayne has a part-time job)

(Continued on page 7)

cleaning, ironing or taking care of Dan. Sometimes he needs help with his play so I can't plan to do too much housework.

"Our lunch is an easily prepared meal—we both help. Dan rests or naps in the afternoon and I have time then to study if I'm not in class. After Ted comes home from school about 4 o'clock, whoever is here gets dinner. We never plan to study between 4 and the boys' bedtime as that is our family hour. After dinner the boys are bathed and prepared for bed. Then Mel and I read to them, play games or watch TV for awhile. I've found I can iron while watching TV. The boys are in bed by 7:30 or 8 p.m. and we usually go to bed about 10:30."

Study time, too, is planned—usually after the boys are in bed. Rather than stay up too late at night the Newtons rise early in the morning to study before the boys wake up.

Schedule sound tight? It is—but in spite of all there is time for fun and socializing! Parties are very infor-



Helen Newton has utilized the space in her Pammel Court home down to the last inch. The clothes drier, located in the boys' room, is between the bunk beds and closet area. Clothes hang above.

mal due to the space problem. Everyone is welcome to stop in at any time. Quite often the Newtons and their "knocking neighbors" (the affectionate term for the people on the other side of the wall) have a coffee break about 10 in the evening. "We can go there or they come here, feeling close enough to our sleeping children to hear them through the not-so-sound proof-wall if they cry or call."

Mel and Helen like Pammel Court especially since they can live on less money than elsewhere in Ames. Their monthly rent, water and electricity usually comes to about \$27. Oil for winter heat and the water heater comes to \$100 per year while the bottle gas and automatic dryer add another \$32 a year to their expenses.

Apart from the light expense is the advantage of being close to the campus and being with other couples who are also in school and have similar problems

and interests. "Neighbors here usually know about each other's little arguments and when the kids get into mischief or are sick or hurt.

"Were we not such good friends as well as neighbors, the noise situation might be annoying, but as it is we don't seem to mind our neighbors hearing or knowing about our family life. For living as closely as we do, we have an exceptionally happy relationship in our neighborhood.

"We feel it is the best way to live while attending college. It costs less, provides contacts with other married students, and we feel it is especially desirable for couples without children or with only young children and babies."

A trailer for two

(Continued from page 5)

so they can always eat together. Shirley shops at least twice a week because storage space is limited but buys meat only once a week and stores it in the freezer division of the refrigerator.

The 17 trailers in their court are about 15 feet apart and vary in size from 29 to 45 feet. Noise doesn't travel except during the summer when doors and windows are open. With such a small distance between trailers, car parking is a problem. Each trailer is allowed one parking space and there is a small parking area at the end of the wash-house where Shirley does her weekly laundry. Since only one couple in the lot rents a garage, car parking is a real problem if too many have company the same evening.

There are party limitations in a trailer, of course. Most of the Steckelberg's entertaining consists of just one other couple, although they have entertained two other couples for dinner before.

The Steckelbergs say naturally there are some disadvantages to trailer living. They list the advantages as: (1) easy to care for; (2) exterior is nice; (3) it's a chance to be on your own and live in your own quarters; (4) no restrictions on redecorating the interior; (5) neighbors are far enough away so that any extra guests or noise doesn't matter. Disadvantages include: (1) too small for much elaborate entertaining; (2) storage space limited; (3) kitchen is small for ease in cooking and lacks much counter space; (4) bathroom is very small.

Shirley and Wayne urge other couples to try trailer living. "If they can find a trailer that fits their needs, we definitely encourage it."

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