1955

Our Replanned Pammel Unit

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Recommended Citation
Klingaman, Judy (1955) "Our Replanned Pammel Unit," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 35 : No. 6 , Article 3.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol35/iss6/3

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Even more important than studying, is “family hour” shared by Mel and Helen Newton and their sons Dan, 3, and Ted, 7. The story’s hero—Davy Crockett!

Second in a series of four

It’s home for us—

Our replanned Pammel unit

By Judy Klingaman
Textiles and Clothing Junior

“WE HAVE RABBITS, swings, sand and children in our yard at all times and we love it.” Mel and Helen Newton and their boys, Dan, 3, and Ted, 7, live here—1084 Pammel Court.

The moment you step inside the door you realize that this attractive home did not just happen but was planned. Before the Newtons moved to Pammel, Helen drew plans of their new home to scale and determined what furniture they could fit in and how best to arrange it. “If only the rooms were just a few feet larger!” Helen says. “Space, or lack of it, is the main disadvantage.”

Their piano didn’t travel with them but followed soon after when Ted became interested in piano lessons. Even with the piano and TV set, the 13’ x 10’ living room is comfortably and attractively arranged. The walls are white with soft shades of brown and green, and a green fiber rug is on the floor. The peach of the pleated theatrical gauze draperies is repeated in plump sofa pillows.

The boys have bunk beds, two chests, bookcase, desk and the clothes drier (this saves kitchen space) in their room. Drawers of the chests are alternating rosy red, chartreuse and green-blue. The other furniture and walls are a pearl gray accented with a splash of color in the rosy red bedspread.

In the master bedroom, the much used sewing machine doubles as a night stand. The material of the cheery flowered curtains (these were shortened to fit their new house) is repeated in a bed flounce and cover and is just right with the blue-green walls.

When the Newtons moved in, they put doors on the kitchen’s open shelves to make closed cupboards. A linen closet was made by adding doors to the hallway shelves. Other new additions were fiber rugs and new kitchen linoleum. “The paint was definitely not washable,” Mel points out, “and came right off when we cleaned woodwork and doors; so we repainted after living here one year.”

“Since I’m in school, too,” says Helen, an Applied Art junior, “I find it easiest to spread my housework out.” Usually she cleans one room a day and dusts and vacuums elsewhere as needed. “I do at least one washer load of clothes in the automatic each day—sometimes two or three. The clothes are dried later in the day and put away.” The big jobs, such as washing curtains and windows, are saved for between quarter breaks.

A typical day? Here it is best described by Helen. “Our days are determined by our college schedules. We have classes set up so one of us can be at home to care for our three-year-old, Mel gets breakfast and makes Ted’s lunch, I make the beds, help the boys with their clothes and help Ted with his piano lesson. The one of us not having an 8 o’clock does dishes. What free hours I have in the morning I spend...
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 informa
dal 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.

“We were 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.”

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.

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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January, 1956