

MAR14-2013-020194

Abstract for an Invited Paper  
for the MAR14 Meeting of  
the American Physical Society

**After the War: Stories of the women who did scientific and technical work on the Manhattan Project**

RUTH HOWES, Retired

When the Japanese surrendered on September 2, 1945, the crash research program of the Manhattan Project abruptly ended although the labs continued to produce nuclear weapons to supplement the single implosion bomb ready for deployment. The older (over 25) members of the scientific staff at Los Alamos and other Manhattan Project sites were eager to return to jobs at universities and in industry, and the younger staff members wanted to finish graduate degrees. Women were no exception to this rule. In addition, the government launched a huge propaganda effort to persuade women to leave the workforce and make jobs available for returning GIs. Doors that had been open to women scientists and technicians abruptly closed as the economy returned to a peacetime footing. Stories of the women scientists and technicians of the Manhattan Project illustrate the strategies they used to meet these challenges as well as their remarkable determination to continue their careers.