

HISTORY  
OF THE  
Highland Park Army and Navy  
Center

BLANCHE MASON TELLIS  
JESSIE ORTON JONES





THE Highland Park Army and Navy Center was opened and is conducted for the purpose of giving men in uniform a suitable place for relaxation and refreshment during their leisure hours. Realizing the effect that a good home always has on a man's life, the attempt has been made to put as much of that spirit as possible into these rooms. It is hoped that every man who enters here will feel that spirit, and respect it, and that he will never do anything here nor knowingly permit anything done to desecrate it. Anything that will help you or add to your comfort you have a right to ask for here. If you do, it will help us to make the work count for more with the men who come after you. As we cannot follow you to other camps, we should like to hear from you if you are transferred. Tell us if you need recreation centers in your new location or, if you find something better than our Center there, write and tell us of improvements we could add. When you are sent to France, drop us a line, for we are always interested in you, and a card from "over there" will inspire the boys who are taking your place here. Self addressed post cards will be given you, when you leave, upon application to the attendant at the Center.

If you want news from Highland Park and will say so, we will write you, too.

*Don't forget when you are out in the front line that the heart of the Army and Navy Center is with you and that the great Citizen Army of America is backing you up.*





A citizen of Highland Park, Mr. A. W. Fletcher, who was familiar by experience with the temptations and loneliness which attend the army life, gave the use of the splendid rooms at 380 Central avenue for an

### *Army and Navy Center*

Other citizens have helped to furnish and equip it. There is a large social room, a game room, writing room, smoking porch and toilet conveniences. A committee of Highland Park women conduct the work in co-operation with the men at Fort Sheridan.

The rooms are open from 9 a. m. to 9 p. m. A paid caretaker will soon be in charge. The men are coming in large numbers. Several hundred came the first day. It is without question the best social headquarters for soldiers on the North Shore.

Highland Park citizens should support it liberally with pride and satisfaction.

MYRON E. ADAMS,  
Chaplain R. O. T. C.  
Fort Sheridan



HISTORY

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HIGHLAND PARK ARMY AND NAVY CENTER

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## HIGHLAND PARK ARMY AND NAVY CENTER.

The Highland Park Army and Navy Center appeared out of the nowhere in answer to a demand. With the coming of the war Fort Sheridan, at the gates of Highland Park, and Great Lakes Naval Training Station, just beyond, began to fill rapidly with men. Of these the first to appear in numbers about the streets of Highland Park were the student officers of the first training camp, who arrived early in May, 1917. Their hours of duty were long and their work hard but a few hours of leisure were given them each day. As no provision had been made---absolutely none---for their reception and entertainment, they continued to stand, first on one foot and then on the other, about the streets and in the shops. They were as good as they could be, but lonely and already somewhat disillusioned as to the glories of war. The townspeople viewed them with an unenthusiastic eye and encouraged young daughters to stay near home. Patriotism in bulk is magnificent but an individual unattached young soldier, in the street, looks a little like a public menace. Of course the men felt the coldness.

It was after several weeks of this that the idea that something must be done began to germinate all over town at once. It happened, however, that Mrs. George R. Jones and Miss Blanche Mason were the first to act. On June 21 an article by Miss Mason appeared in the local paper, announcing the project to open a public sitting room for soldiers with, possibly, magazines and



news papers and, perhaps, a phonograph or some other giddy merry-making device of the sort. Plans were general and vague. A touching story was told of a certain young lad who had gone to church three times on a preceding Sunday because he had nowhere else to go. It was supposed that this tale might quite possibly touch the heart of Highland Parkers. It did.

The response was instantaneous. Everything was offered, from free service by local scrub women to free use of a magnificent main floor suite of rooms, next to the post office, by A. W. Fletcher---a civil war veteran and land owner of Highland Park. All offers were accepted with glee. When one has nothing everything is something. Two days after the appearance of the article a meeting was held at the home of Mrs. George R. Jones, attended by a hastily collected committee and addressed by Mr. Myron Adams, chaplain to the R.O.T.C. Mr. Adams greeted the scheme with enthusiasm and urged haste. He also suggested the name "Army and Navy Center", which was adopted. It is hard to realize that that name could ever have had a genesis yet it was at that time brand new and we firmly believe that we were the first of the myriad Army and Navy Centers, Army and Navy Clubs and the like. In fact, more than a month after the founding of the Center, government inspectors (then making their initial rounds) visited the Center and viewed it with surprise, declaring it to be the first thing of the sort that they had seen and announcing their intention of spreading the idea to all the camps and military assembling points of the country. And thereafter many delegations from near and far came to inspect and question, with a view to establishing



similar organizations at home.

At the first meeting the Administrative Committee was formed, including the following persons:-

Miss Blanche Mason.....President.  
Mrs. C. A. Winston.....Vice President.  
Mrs. George R. Jones.....Treasurer.  
Miss Amy Rothschild.....Secretary.

Patronesses: Mrs. J. McGregor Adams, Mrs. Ferdinand Wiegand, Mrs. T. C. Boynton, Mrs. Robert Gregory, Mrs. C. N. Kimball, Mrs. Albert Paul Smith, Mrs. Annette R. Jones, Mrs. Julius Rosenwald, and Mrs. W. A. Alexander.

Committee: Mrs. A. A. Putnam, Mrs. R. C. Jacobsen, Mrs. Lloyd Bergen, Mrs. Sewall Truax, Mrs. J. L. Holbrook, and Mrs. Fletcher. Mr. Myron Adams served in advisory capacity.

One week after the appearance of the original appeal, the Press printed a short, businesslike paragraph, asking for contributions of certain articles----a masterly miscellany including flags, phonograph records, magazines, chairs, stationery, clothes-brushes, screens, rugs and liquid soap----to be sent to the Army and Navy Center, next door to the post office, west. Thus briskly did the organization announce its identity and address to the public. This was June 28. It is a delightful fact that not one article that went into the furnishing of the Center was purchased, with the exception of the linoleum for the floor, which was secured at a very special price. And yet the furnishings of the rooms were sturdy, comfortable, harmonious and charming.

The Army and Navy Center opened its doors to men in uniform on July 4th, 1917, and was promptly filled to overflowing. The front room, with large double plate glass windows opening on



Central Avenue, contained easy chairs, reading tables, books, newspapers and magazines, a piano, a victrola, a davenport, mandolins, banjos and guitars. Just back of this came the card and game room with, later, pool tables. To the left was a writing room with all writing materials furnished. This room has averaged five hundred letters a week. Farther back were toilet and lavatories, with running hot and cold water, soap and towels, and, at the very rear, a large and comfortably furnished screened-porch. In a remote corner, tucked out of sight, a little kitchenette made it possible for the committee to plan Saturday and Sunday parties with refreshments for the men. And beyond the kitchenette what had once been a large wall safe was converted into a repository for cakes and cookies, housewifely members of the committee looking with some complacency upon the sturdy steel doors and combination catches. However, in the end the safe was never locked and the sweets that did disappear simply caused no uneasiness at all to the benign matrons of the house. In fact a candy jar, always full, was soon established in an accessible corner, where it has had its habitat ever since.

The guiding principle upon which the Center began its career was that the soldiers should be made welcome, provided with comforts and let alone. With this idea in mind the executives engaged a man as director and care-taker (Mr. West, of Evanston, succeeded in the autumn by Mr. Williams) and arranged to have the rooms open from four to ten every afternoon and all day on Saturday and Sunday. These hours were arranged largely for the convenience of the R.O.T.C. and the militia (later <sup>2</sup> Illinois Artillery of the Rainbow Division) then at Fort Sheridan, but in



the early fall it was thought desirable to keep open-house from nine in the morning to ten at night, which has since been done. During general hours no women (friends of the men or members of the committee) were expected to be in the rooms, except on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, when groups of ladies served cake and lemonade or, in cold weather, sandwiches and coffee, to all who came. At first these hostesses were chosen from among the members of the rapidly growing Center committee but later it was found necessary, for the sake of efficiency, to make permanent plans for the entertainments and then under the able management of Mrs. Sewall Truax (Chairman of the Entertainment Committee) seven organizations of women (Highland Park Womens' Club, Ossili Club, D.A.R., Luther League, Mothers' Club, St. Mary's Court and the Womens' Catholic Order of Forresters) took turns in providing week-end refreshments and hospitality for the boys. (Item--- Fifteen to twenty cakes were provided per Sunday and consumed to the last crumb.). During the first summer the local chapter of the Daughters of the American Flag brought baskets of flowers every Saturday to decorate the rooms for the week-end parties.

The first and greatest problem on the Center, of course, was that of finance, but two important factors helped to make this less of a burden than might have been expected. Mrs. George R. Jones (Chairman of the Finance Committee and Treasurer) turned out to be a wizard at business management and the town itself appeared to have been waiting with baited breath for the invitation to give. In the week of the opening of the rooms Mrs. Jones sent out several hundred printed cards, asking for pledges of monthly donations and, without delay, the cards began



to return with pledges attached. The wheels of the Center had been set into motion with practically no expenditure of money--- thanks to the amazing generosity of everyone. But running expenses, during the summer, amounted to about \$150.00 per month. In the later fall, when the activities of the Center had somewhat elaborated themselves and the committee also felt it very imperative to pay at least part rent to the good Mr. Fletcher (who had up to this time donated the entire suite of rooms, rent free) monthly expenses rose to nearly \$300.00. By this time, however, the Highland Park Defense Council had taken over all subscription gathering for war work in Highland Park and, after December, began to supplement the budget of the Center. This state of affairs continued until late spring when, in anticipation of a Community War Chest, the mayor of Highland Park dissolved the Defense Council. However, the War Chest campaign failed and for a short time the finances of the Center were in a desperate condition. At this juncture the National War Camp-Community Service in Washington was appealed to with very satisfactory results. In June Mr. William J. Hopkins of Washington was sent on to organize the War Camp-Community Service of the North Shore and especially of Highland Park. He engaged Leon Harris (a trained social worker) to take the directorship of the Center and arranged to have the national committee meet the deficit of the finance committee. From November, 1918, all expenditures of the Highland Park Army and Navy Center are to be met by the Illinois branch of the War Camp-Community Service.

From its infancy the Center has bred subsidiary war activities. No sooner was a want felt than some one brought



it to the attention of the committee in meeting and, in practically every case, the committee itself undertook to develop the new work in one of its own branches or else sponsored the enterprise in the hands of some other organization. In this way a certain number of Ravinia Park tickets were provided free at the Center each week (through the aid of Mrs. T. C. Boynton and Louis Eckstein); weekly open-air vespers were conducted in Lake Front Park, beginning August 5, 1917, under the management of Mrs. Robert Gregory---attendance always several hundred; dinners at nominal prices were served at the Highland Park Club to the student officers (suggested and sponsored by the Center); a rooming house for women relatives of men at the post was opened by the Y.W.C.A. (suggested and sponsored by the Center); a large military ball in honour of officers at the post was given at Exmoor Country Club in August (suggested and sponsored by the Center); the freedom of both golf clubs was granted men in uniform (through the instrumentality of the Center); many men in uniform were entertained in private homes (arrangements made through the Center), etc.

As the winter advanced the activities of the Center grew. When the open-air vespers had to be abandoned a mens' Sunday evening club was organized to take their place. In October a suggestion box was put upon the wall with a request for suggestions from the men as to what might be done to add to their comfort and happiness. As Thanksgiving time approached a movement was set on foot to place men in private families for Thanksgiving dinner and on the Saturday before Thanksgiving a gorgeous supper (of turkey, cranberries, escalloped oysters,



mince pie, rolls and so forth) was served free to several hundred men. This affair was partly in honor of Thanksgiving and partly, too, as a farewell to the second R.O.T.C.

It was at this time that the following letter was received from Colonel Ryan, the K.O. on the post.

Dear Madam:- I have your kind invitation of November 20 and regret so much that a previous engagement will prevent my being present at your informal Thanksgiving supper, Saturday, November 24. I wish, however, to take this occasion to thank you and, thru you, your excellent organization, the Highland Park Army and Navy Center, for the great good you are doing and have done for the members of the training camp. It is very much appreciated by them, by the enlisted men and by me and you deserve sincere thanks for your kindness.

I am very sincerely yours,

J. A. Ryan.

In November, also, Myron Adams, speaking before the Woman's Club, referred to the Center as the "most effective piece of cooperation done entirely by women that he had ever had the privilege to watch". Needless to say, many letters of thanks came from the soldiers themselves, of which one particularly enlivening one contained the information that the writer was reminded by Center hospitality of the Biblical passage:- "I was athirst and they gave me drinks." To counteract the effect of the above we have, however, the following letter from a jackie:-

"It seems that several people of Highland Park, in fact many other places, think that entertainments and clubs for soldiers and sailors are doing no good. I was in the navy before



this war started and was aboard ship with men from all stations of life. There used to be a great deal of drinking done by old sailors and new as well, but since there have been other entertainments the amount of drinking has lessened more than anyone in civil life realizes. Many people see less drinking among men in uniform and say it is because the law prohibits the sale of liquor to men in the service. I know positively that anyone in a uniform can get liquor any time he wants it, regardless of the law. It is not the law that prevents men from drinking but entertainments of the nature you get at the Highland Park Army and Navy Center."

On November 22<sup>1917</sup> Miss Mason resigned the presidency of the Committee to go into other war work and her place was temporarily filled for some weeks by the vice-president, Mrs. C. A. Winston. In January<sup>1918</sup> Mrs. George R. Jones was elected president and Mrs. R. A. Jacobsen vice-president and Mrs. Martin Insull second vice-president. At the same time Miss Miriam Steever became treasurer but very soon withdrew in favor of Miss Virginia Insull. Later Miss Insull was succeeded by Mrs. Harry Mills, who remains treasurer at the present time. In January, also, Mrs. Carl Pfanstiehl and Mrs. Frank Cain came in to take up special work in connection with publicity and Miss Anna McKenzie, of the Highland Park Library, took charge of the periodicals and books. It was during her regime that the sign on the shelves: "Take a book and keep it. If you like it, pass it on.", helped to put many hundreds of books into circulation among the men. Later in the spring Mrs. Richmond Dean withdrew, Mrs. Alvar Bournique taking her place. Also, in April, Mrs. Lloyd Bergen became vice-



president and Miss Adele Everett took her place as chairman of the House Committee.

The Christmas, 1917, party was given largely for the benefit of the men of the 40th Infantry (at that time on the post under Col. Burkhart) who, with plenty of time and little to do, had been haunting the Center at all hours. These were regular army men and at first they accepted all favors with the remark: "You are making a mistake. You don't mean us. Nobody does anything for us. We are regular army men." Later, when they had been reassured as to the sincerity of Center hospitality, their gratitude was unbounded. The Christmas decorations of the Center consisted of holly and greens with a Christmas tree in each front window. On Christmas day a small Santa Claus (Mrs. George Jones' little daughter) distributed small silk bags filled with many treasures and acted as small sister to all the men in the Center for the afternoon. A barrel of apples was rolled out onto the floor; cakes, cookies, coffee and ice cream cones were served and the men danced. Many of them remarked that it was the best Christmas they had ever had and one man said the Center gift was the first Christmas gift he had received in seven years. About two hundred men were placed for Christmas dinner in private families.

It was on Christmas that the hospital auxiliary work was started under the guidance of Mrs. Jacobsen. On that day she visited the post hospital with a car full of fruit, flowers, books, and delicacies which she distributed through the wards, together with one of the little silk Christmas bags from the Center for each man, including sick prisoners. Seventy-five bags



were also sent to the hospital at Great Lakes Naval Training Station. From that day the hospital branch of the work has grown. It became the routine of a committee (especially identified with the North Shore Garden Association) to visit the hospital twice a week with fresh flowers, at which time Mrs. Jacobsen also listened to special requests from individual men and, if possible, supplied the wants. As soon as the weather grew fine a brigade of machines went, at regular intervals, to take the convalescents out to ride.

On Easter Sunday, in response to a special appeal, Mr. and Mrs. George Jones and Mrs. Carleton Vail went to the hospital to give a musical program. The gratitude of the men was spontaneous and so profound that a new committee was promptly formed which, under the leadership of Miss Priscilla Carver, has provided weekly concerts on Sunday evenings in the hospital ever since. The hospital work, on the whole, has turned out to be one of the most vitally successful branch activities undertaken by the Center and, in view of the fact that Fort Sheridan is now to be used exclusively as a base hospital, it seems probable that this work is yet to grow in scope and usefulness.

On Easter day a party was given. The rooms were decorated, cakes with candy bunnies on top were served and Louis Kreidler (of the Chicago Opera Association) sang.

Among many helpful suggestions found in the Center request box came, sometime in February, a request for inexpensive dancing lessons. A week or so later such a class was opened, to meet on Tuesday evenings at the Elm Place School. Forty men enrolled, Col. Alvar Bournique gave his services and a charge of



twenty-five cents was made to cover the cost of music. On April thirtieth, at the close of a course of ten lessons, a lovely cotillion was held at the Highland Park Club for members of the class. Mrs. Searcy of the Y.W.C.A. brought a group of charming girls to act as partners and so occurred the first party of Highland Park girls and enlisted men. Previously these soldiers had been let carefully alone. So successful and satisfactory was this affair that almost immediately the Good Comrade Club and other girls' organizations were formed with the object of providing amusement for the regular soldiers. A second dancing class was organized in May and proved quite as successful as the first.

In May the Center, in answer to an urgent appeal, began to serve Saturday night canteen suppers, at ten cents apiece. This was practically the first service for which a charge of any sort had been made. Needless to say the charge was quite out of proportion to the meal. With the canteen service came a new and very utilitarian move to provide men on leave with living necessities, and this was especially conducted for the Jackies who, if they are to have liberty and leisure during leave of absence, are required to stay off the station for meals and lodging. Shortly after the institution of the canteen the Center director, Mr. Harris, began to permit stray Jackies to sleep on Saturday nights in the Center rooms, whereupon every available space, including both pool tables, was regularly filled with slumbering men. In September the rooms of the Christian Science Comforts Committee were offered to the Center as Saturday night lodgings for a few more sailors and the movement has since grown until plans are now afoot which will provide for the permanent reception of



several hundred Jackies per Saturday on cots set up in the high school gymnasium. Also the high school (entertaining what was originally the overflow from the Center Saturday evening parties) now holds regular Saturday carnivals for nearly a thousand persons.

At the end of the first year of service, ~~June~~<sup>July</sup> 4th, 1918, the Highland Park Army and Navy Center held an anniversary party. During one year this organization had entertained several thousand soldiers and sailors (often two hundred in a single evening), founded and sponsored more than a dozen auxiliary war activities, spent uniformly little modest sums of money, and contracted no debts. Its original committees remained practically intact and it had never closed its doors, except for one week's hasty renovation in the spring, during which week the streets of Highland Park were full of mournful men in khaki, thinking doubtless what are wont to be the thoughts of men--of all places and times---during spring house-cleaning. From all parts of America and Europe the Center postal cards (given out to the men in the writing room) had come back with messages of affection and gratitude.

During the summer the open air vespers and other activities of the previous summer were resumed. Under the guidance of Miss Anna McKenzie a hostess room was also opened in the Y.M.C.A. of Camp Perry at Great Lakes, where there had been no hostess room before. Also, during the summer, a motor service for pedestrian soldiers was managed by Mrs. Frank R. Terry under the motto: "Hooverize your back seat."

In November Mrs. Jones resigned the presidency, which was assumed by Mrs. R. C. Jacobsen, while Mrs. F. R. Terry



# WAR RECREATION WORK AT D. S. HIGH SCHOOL

## WEEK END WORK PLANNED

### Soldiers and Sailors to Have the Benefit of Swimming Pool, Gym, Books, the Tennis Court and Grounds

Highland Park will soon enlarge her service for the men in uniform according to the statement of Dr. P. C. Wolcott, chairman of the War Camp Community Service board. Plans have been matured and a definitely organized movement is now under way, to make the Deersfield-Shields high school a community center for the boys in service.

Dr. Wolcott, representing the high school board, together with Mr. Sandwick, was in conference with Mr. Lies, Chicago and North Shore chairman of the W. C. C. S., on Tuesday of this week at the high school.

The plan is to make the high school practically a week end hotel for sailors and sailors—a place where they can get their meals Saturday and Sunday, their lodging for the night, and can enjoy all the splendid facilities of the high school building—the swimming pool, the gym, the books, tennis court, and grounds.

The present students' dining room will be used as the sailors' dining room (for it is chiefly sailors who come here now), and the boys' gym will be requisitioned for sleeping quarters where temporary cots will be set up for the night. The board hopes to be able to provide meals, lodging and entertainment for five hundred men in uniform every Saturday and Sunday. Local talent, of which we are not wanting, will volunteer their services as entertainers, and the high school students will contribute their share.

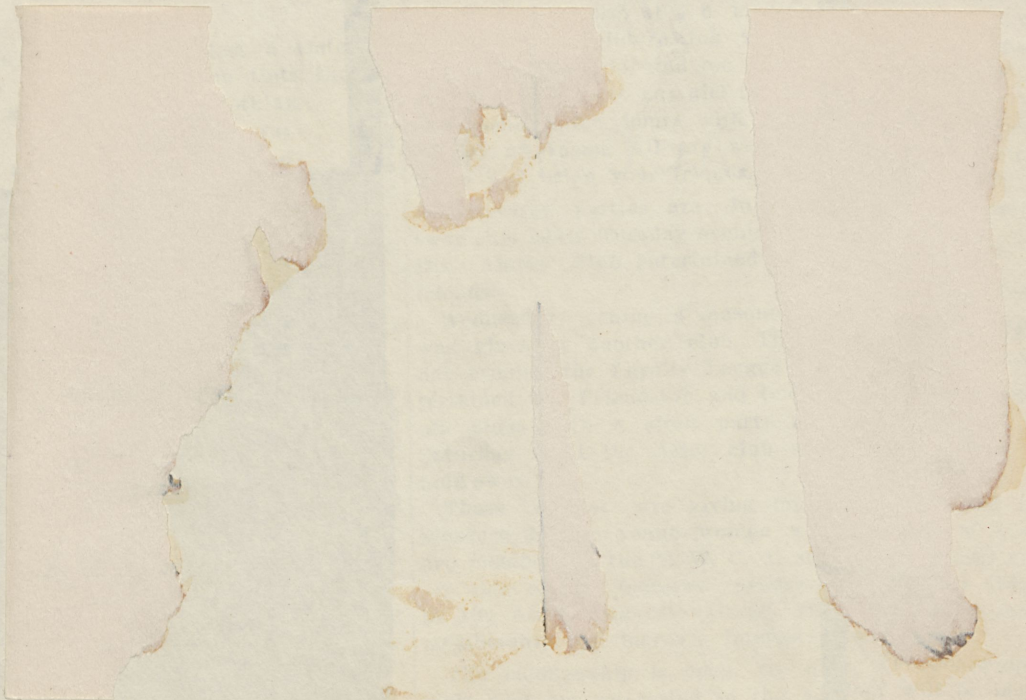
This is a vast undertaking, and an enormous enlargement of the previous war recreation activities of this city, but in light of the successful efforts which have marked its history for the past several months, there is every reason to believe that the W. C. C. S. board, together with the high school authorities, will carry this project through with their accustomed suc-



became vice-president.

We are now approaching the Christmas season again and the war is said to be at an end. But the work of the Highland Park Army and Navy Center has not yet reached a period. There are still many thousands of Jackies at Great Lakes and the government has made Fort Sheridan into a base hospital for the men who are coming back. Fighting in Europe is over but the service of those gallant lads who gave the best they had is not. They still serve and while they need the Center her doors will stand open to them. The screened porch in the rear has been remodeled into a fine new living-room with a big open fireplace across one side. About this, on cold winter evenings, the crippled men may sit, discussing the past and perhaps not pondering too grimly upon an undetermined future, lying beyond.

*Blanche Mason Tellis.*





## WAR RECREATION BOARD NOW ACTS FOR UNCLE SAM.

The War Recreation Board of the State Council of Defense has received from Washington appointment to be the War Camp Community Service board for the territory including Chicago, the North Shore towns and Waukegan, for the duration of the war. It will have as its chief of staff Eugene T. Lies of Washington, formerly general secretary of the United Charities in Chicago. Mr. Lies will be general superintendent of the work in Cook and Lake Counties.

Clifford W. Barnes is president of the board, Jacob M. Dickinson, vice president and Clarence S. Pellet, executive director. Frank D. Loomis, secretary, is in charge of the offices at 120 West Adams street. W. E. Hopkins of Washington, who has been here in the interests of organization, has opened an office in Evanston.

After Nov. 11-1918

## WAR CAMP COMMUNITY SERVICE

Only those who are closely associated with the work can realize how much the war camp service means to the men in the service. It is the policy of this organization to make each club or center established by them, radiate as much home atmosphere as possible, and these places have meant home to thousands of boys.

A little incident occurred the other day that will illustrate how the men often feel. A man came into the Army and Navy Center Saturday afternoon and shook hands with the different ladies who are on our regular Saturday Center committee. One of the ladies asked, "Haven't you moved to Camp Custer?" He said, "Yes, I am from Camp Custer, but I had two days' furlough and came here to spend them at the Center, for this place is more like home to me than any place I know."

He spent the two days with us—at night he slept on one of our cots in the basement. He is a member of the 40th Infantry that was stationed at Fort Sheridan so long. These men were in constant attendance at the Center when off duty and became very much attached to the place. We have received many letters and cards from them since they moved to their new quarters. One man wrote, "This place is all right, but it aint got no class to it like the one you got in Highland Park. We fellows shore do miss them Center rooms and that swell feed the ladies used to hand us on Saturdays and Sundays."

A lady in Highland Park received a letter from a friend of hers in London. She said she met an American bluejacket and he was telling her what wonderful things had been done for the soldiers and sailors in Chicago and along the north shore. He mentioned fortunately Highland Park and said he never would forget the great times he had while a guest in one of the homes there.

What are you doing for the boys in our country's service. Does your latch string hang out to them or is your home a sort of holy of holies from which an invitation is never extended?

On behalf of the War Camp Community Service let us thank all those who have extended Thanksgiving invitations to soldiers and sailors. There will be a Thanksgiving party at the Center Thursday evening.

The dances given at the High School have undergone several changes and are now being conducted in a very systematic way. Last Saturday evening a very enjoyable time was had. Besides dancing there was vaudeville.

Among the star acts were "Jacks of All Trades," Paul C. Lanning, an extremely clever whistler, Mr. Miller, heavy weight club swinger. Miss Brady delightfully sang a group of Irish songs.

A ten-piece orchestra from Great Lakes furnished music for dancing.

Don't forget the jubilee peace party next, Saturday evening.

## WAR CAMP COMMUNITY SERVICE

Are you doing anything personally to show the true spirit of hospitality to our soldier and sailor boys? Are you not making plans to divide your home comfort with our boys this winter? Do you know that Uncle Sam is building an enormous Base Hospital at our doors; that there will be 4000 or over beds in it; that there will be 600 medical officers and a large corps of hospital attendants, to say nothing of the number of sick and wounded? The slogan of war camp community service is, "Surround the camps with hospitality!" To do this effectively, our people must render home, church and community service to the boys. Our Army and Navy Center does a big work but its scope is limited by its small capacity for numbers. Our churches, clubs and other organizations recognize their duties and fulfill their obligations. Our war camp community service board is now planning great things and if its budget is allowed by the central lodge it will have the finest week end hospitality center at the Deerfield-Shields High School

that can be arranged. Hundreds of boys will be entertained Saturdays and Sundays, refreshed physically and mentally, housed and furnished a swim, a show, dances, games and club rooms. Then there will be entertainment for the sick at the Fort hospitals, music, refreshment and good cheer. It is hoped and expected that the Saturday evening affairs at the Highland Park Club and other friendly centers may be continued for the medical and other officers and the vital spirit of neighborly cheer radiate to the Naval Station and the Fort more warmly than ever before. YOUR help is needed for this big program. You can entertain one or more boys at your cheerful home over the week end and give them the friendly tone that helps morale so much. You can share your happy hearth with the men who are going to fight to keep its fire burning in liberty and freedom. Have you thought about it? Are you ready to do your pleasant duty? Of course you are and now is the time to start.

Many boys were glad to find our Army and Navy Center again open and dispensing true helpfulness. It has made some admirable changes, putting in basement dressing rooms and using the ground floor space more advantageously.

Mr. Harris is being congratulated on his new assistant director weighing nine and three-quarter pounds, who arrived this week in good health.

There will be two big Hallowe'en parties this week. One at the Trinity Parish House on Saturday evening, and another at the Army and Navy Center on Sunday.

The regular Saturday suppers will be served at the Center; also refreshments Sunday afternoon. The Center would like a typewriter for the writing room, a blacking outfit for our basement and also a good sized mirror.



## Recreation Programs in Wartime and Peacetime

When William J. Hopkins arrived in Highland Park in June of 1918, he came with orders from the newly-created War Recreation Board in Washington to organize a War Camp Community Board for servicing Chicago, the North Shore towns and Waukegan. Eugent T. Lies, formerly general secretary of United Charities of Chicago, was Chief of Staff and General Superintendent of Cook and Lake Counties. Clifford W. Barnes was President of the Board, Jacob M. Dickenson Vice President, and Clarence S. Pellet, Executive Director. Frank D. Loomis, as Secretary, was in charge of the office at 120 West Adams Street, Chicago.

Dr. P. C. Wolcott was appointed Chairman of the Highland Park Board with a large committee under his direction. The name of the Army and Navy Center was retained as well as the same center with an annex next door and overnight rooms above. Mr. Leon Harris came as full-time director. With financial support of the government guaranteed, enormous enlargement of the previous war recreation activities of the city were put into operation. Plans were worked out for using the Deerfield-Shields High School as a week-end hotel for service men with meals served on Saturdays and Sundays. On Saturday evening, November 9, when some 400 soldiers and sailors were being entertained at a high-school dance, it was announced that word had been received of the Kaiser's abdication. Of course everybody went wild! But it was not until Monday, November 11, 1918, that authentic news of the Armistice was broadcast to all of us.

For some time after the close of World War I, War Camp Community Service continued to operate in Highland Park for the benefit of returning service men. Then in February, 1920, it was replaced by Community Service Inc. supported by public subscription and with a program for civilians carried on in the same Fletcher Building on Central Avenue. It was learned, in June 1923, that this



property was being purchased by Mr. Pearl who intended to build a movie house on it. Considering the prominent position this would occupy facing north on Sheridan Road, it seemed it would be less than an asset to the town. A committee of women from the Community Shop and Community Service Inc. called at the Highland Park State Bank to discuss what seemed to them a better plan. It was to raise money from interested citizens to issue bonds on the property for its purchase by Community Service Inc. There were no more loyal citizens than Mr. Erskine and Mr. Grant and before we left the bank they had promised to halt negotiations with Mr. Pearl and to start working on our project.

The frontage of Mr. Fletcher's property was 75 feet on Central Ave. On this piece there were two buildings comprising two stores and three flats as well as a vacant area at the back extending 200 feet to the alley. It was not difficult to sell \$1000 mortgage bonds on this fine investment with promise of good interest and an early retirement. So the deal was completed for \$30,500.

Community Service Inc. was now in the real estate business. The responsibility of managing it rested largely on our able Treasurer of the Board, Mrs. Grundy, of the North Shore Trust & Savings Bank. She collected the rents, paid the interest, and eventually paid off all the bonds. Then it seemed best to sell the property. In the meantime prices had gone up. At a date I am unable to ascertain, we sold it to, of all people, Mr. Pearl for \$70,000! He seemed a safe owner then as he had already built his Alcyon Theater farther east on Central Ave.

Then it became necessary to elect presidents and board members of Community Service who were gifted in finance. Our vast funds were deposited in the Highland Park State Bank the greater part of them invested in securities. Also a token recreation program was carried on. George Sheuchenpflug, Mr. X, was engaged as secretary and he directed boys' and girls' activities in the rooms of



the local chapter of the Elks, in churches and schools, and in the vacant Old City Hall.

And so, with wisdom and loyalty and perhaps a little luck, the Highland Park State Bank and Community Service, together, came through the depression unscathed. By 1939 our officers and trustees found themselves with \$60,000 still intact. In December of that year, the City was contemplating selling the Old City Hall property. Marshall Field had been bidding on it. The evaluated price was \$37,075 for lots #19, #20, and #21 in block 7 and the buildings standing on them. Highland Park did not need a great merchandising firm in its midst. We found that local merchants adequately met our needs. The Community Service Board was tired of carrying on a recreation program without a center and in guarding a small fortune as well. Wasn't this the time to turn our funds over to the City in exchange for this fine corner with ready-made facilities for our work? An offer was made of \$40,000 for the property with the understanding that Community Service would remodel and furnish the Old City Hall and would occupy it for the purpose of carrying on a recreation program until such time as the city would decide to conduct its own recreation activity. Our offer was accepted and on June 30, 1940, the Old City Hall was opened as Community Service Center. It had been remodeled and tastefully decorated and furnished in Williamsburg style.

The civilian activities continued successfully until World War II brought other responsibilities to our doors. In order to persuade us to include service men in our program, the War Department made large appropriations to us. In the spring of 1941, when the government wished to erect a U.S.O. building in Highland Park, we made over lot #21 to the City for that purpose. This building reverted to the City at the close of the war. It was sold in 1950 to the Order of the Moose for \$18,000.



In April 1944, Highland Park Community Service was dissolved and all its assets were turned over to the City to be used by the newly created Playground & Recreation Board. These assets comprised lots #19 and #20 with all buildings, improvements and furnishings. Subsequently lot #19 and the Old City Hall were sold to the V.F.W. for \$25,100 and lot #20 was sold to Frank Leonardi for \$24,130. So altogether the City of Highland Park realized \$107,230 on property which was valued at \$37,075 in 1939, with a profit of \$70,155.

(These figures were obtained from Mr. Frank Ollendorff, Assistant to Manager of Highland Park, 1964-66)

Jessie Orton Jones







Last Saturday evening, November 9, about four hundred, including soldiers, sailors and young ladies attended the dance at the Deerfield-Shields High School in the boys' gymnasium.

It was a big party and everybody entered in with the right spirit. There were lively circle games as well as the dancing.

Down stairs in the girls' gymnasium table games were played by those that did not care to dance. Several young ladies from Evanston had charge of these. The best of the whole affair was the ten-piece jackie orchestra that played for the dancing to show their appreciation for all that the North Shore people had done for them these past months and also to promote the spirit of the work of the United War Work campaign for the comforts of the boys "over there."

The young people were entertained by James McSherry, a sailor from Great Lakes, who clogged and jigged. Captain Martin recited several original war time poems.

At the height of merriment Mr. Stewart Reed Brown announced thru a megaphone that word had been received by wireless that the Kaiser had abdicated. Great shouting, cheering and whistling followed and the jackie orchestra showed their enthusiasm by playing the Kaiser's death dance.

A large party will be given next Saturday evening, November 1, at the D. S. H. S. The boys' gymnasium will be used solely for dancing and all games will be played in the girls' gymnasium. The high school orchestra will assist down stairs. It will be our good fortune to have with us again the jackie orchestra on next Saturday evening.

## WAR CAMP COMMUNITY SERVICE

At last the good news has arrived. The Central Powers have thrown up the white flag and the Allies are victorious. The day of thanksgiving and rejoicing is at hand. But don't let a one of us forget that there is still a lot of important work to be done. The men in service will need the backing of civilians now more than ever.

The big drive for funds that is now being made by the United War Workers has just begun and everyone should subscribe as liberally as possible to this great cause. The organizations represented are the Y. M. C. A., Knights of Columbus, War Camp Community Service, American Library Association, Jewish Welfare, Salvation Army and Y. W. C. A.

They propose to raise \$170,000,000. Highland Park's quota is \$50,000. Let us go over the top. It is a recognized fact that it has been largely through the efforts of these organizations that the morale of the men in uniform has been kept up to such a high standard of efficiency.

It will be many months and perhaps years before the soldiers and sailors will be mustered out and return to civil life. And just as long as there are men over there and in camp at home there will be urgent need for this work. Here in Highland Park the community work is going to be done on a much larger scale than ever.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8, 1920

## WOMEN FIRST

The financial report of the Community Shop published in the last week's issue of The Press presents a picture of very excellent work well done. Although the Community Shop is only six months old, its donations to various worthy enterprises already amount to nearly four thousand dollars.

Prominent among these donations is the pledge of two hundred dollars a month which the committee of sixty has guaranteed the Army and Navy Center for its future support. For four months past this sum has been paid to the "Center" so that, by the first of February, they will have a little nucleus of eight hundred dollars in the bank to their credit. With such a start from this organization of women, surely it is not too optimistic to hope that the people of Highland Park will answer to the needs of the "Center."

## WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THE CENTER?

The "Center" is here to stay. Let who will disparage its usefulness, this tiny little beginning of a community house is too valuable for us to lose. There are too many people in Highland Park who appreciate its importance in this community, to permit it to become a thing of the past.

And who are the people who refuse to believe in the moral influence of the "Center" in our town? Are they the ones who are most often seen there? Are they the women who have served, entertained, cooked, and baked for these young men throughout the war? Are they the ones who have chaperoned the dances, and watched the happy young people from every part of town enjoy the hospitality of the "Center?" Are they the ones who have gone down into their pockets and helped support this enterprise?

No, they are none of these. The people who have done these things have come in direct first-hand contact with the Center and all its varied activities. They have seen the boys and girls enjoy themselves and heard the testimony of many a homesick boy that he would not know what to do if it hadn't been for the Center.

Someone objects that there is no longer any necessity for such an institution. Let them drop in and take a look around on any Saturday night. They will find that the two large rooms are not adequate to hold the crowd and furnish them with elbow room to move about. And when they have satisfied themselves on the number of boys who frequent the Center, let them stop and watch their wholesome enjoyment for as long as they like.

There will always be some people everywhere, however, who can not see the necessity of others enjoying themselves. To this small class, the world, the sunshine, the fresh air, the warm clothes, and the nourishing food, were made only for the privileged. Let the other fellow look to it. If he hasn't the good things of this world, it is his own fault.

This is a narrow philosophy, but, for the sake of speculation, let us follow it up to its logical conclusion. Suppose we do live only for ourselves, and refuse to see the lack of advantages of the young people of our town. Suppose the doors of the Center were closed, and the young men who flock there every night were turned loose on our streets. Are we willing and ready to face the consequences of this great insurgency of youth turned over to the town to enjoy themselves as best they can, to preempt our beaches and parks, to walk our streets, and to draw to Highland Park eventually a class of beings, with whom we have not yet had to cope?

While we are considering the future of the Center, while we carefully weigh its advantages, it is well not to be too sentimental. Let us look the matter straight in the eye. And let us not forget that, during the entire period of the war, Highland Park never had reason to complain of the conduct of the thousands of men in service who, when off duty, made this town their home.



# Ser. . . Purchases Old City Hall For Community Center

Thursday, December 14, 1939

## CITY COUNCIL ACCEPTS \$37,100 BID

At last Monday's Council meeting, the mayor and commissioners unanimously accepted the bid for the old city hall and fire station property which had been made at the previous Council meeting by the Community Service, Inc. and placed on file for public inspection. As reported in last week's NEWS, this offer of \$37,100 was the only bid received. It was in excess of the valuation of \$37,075 placed upon the property by the valuation committee of the North Shore Realty board.

A further offer of \$2900.00 from Community Service, Inc. (making a total of \$40,000.00 in all) was placed on record for any furnishings of the old city hall and the right to the use of the fire station property within six months after the delivery of title to the property.

### Start Immediately

In presenting to the Council the desirability of this sale in the public interest, Renslow P. Sherer, president of Community Service, stated that the property would be promptly put in shape for a Community Center and that every effort would be made to make it interesting and attractive - particularly for the youth of the community.

Preceding the Council meeting, former Mayor Hastings had pointed out that the location was ideal for a Community Center, the valuation a generous one and that all citizens were benefited by making constructive use of the property for community purposes.

### Gift to City

Mrs. George Jones also emphasized the fact that the trust fund of \$60,000.00, carefully conserved throughout the past twenty years, was in reality a gift to the city inasmuch as it would all be used in the citizen's interest-part in the purchase of real estate and part in improving the property and providing the facilities.

"This should not be looked upon as a mere real estate transaction," Mrs. Jones said, "but of permanent value to the city itself in view of the great need of providing interesting, constructive use of the leisure time of our young people."

After the bid was accepted, Mayor Ronan stated that while he realized that \$40,000.00 was a fair price under all the circumstances, the city had hoped to obtain \$5,000 to \$10,000 more because of its need of funds. "But," he added "because of the splendid use to which this property will be put and to which it lends itself so well, the Council feels more than justified in making its contribution to so important a permanent institution for the good of the community as a whole."

Gentlemen:

I have just seen what can be done when a group of intelligent and civic-minded citizens carry out plans which have been discussed for many years.

The dedication ceremonies of the new Community Center, Sunday, were very lovely. Highland Park was well represented at the services, which were very impressive.

However, I was actually amazed when I entered the Community Center. One could hardly believe that the old city hall could be so magnificently remodeled. The old building would never be recognized.

Nothing has been omitted. There are rooms for all types of games, parties and studies. The walls and ceilings have been entirely redecorated, lovely drapes are hung in all the rooms and each room is fully equipped to suit its purpose.

I am sure there won't be a person in Highland Park who won't be able to make use of the Center at some time. And I feel a vote of thanks should go to the men and women who so ably planned and completed all details of the remodeling. They've done a fine job and we can well be proud of our Community Center in every respect.

A Highland Parker

ion, Thursday, July 4, 1940  
in

## Ceremonies Mark Opening Of New Community Center

Appropriate speeches and ceremonies marked the opening of Highland Park's new Community Center over the past week-end.

Festivities opened with a tea Saturday afternoon in the Center, given for members of the community who planned the remodeling of the old city hall into the Community Center. Saturday evening the Highland Park Young Mens club entertained with a dance in the Center ballroom.

A parade was staged Sunday afternoon by the Boy Scout Drum and Bugle corps. Following the parade, speeches were given by Highland Park officials and members of Community Service Inc., owners of the Community House.

### Sherer Speaks

President of Community Service, Renslow Sherer, spoke of the usefulness of the Center and outlined the activities planned for the general public in the new building. He thanked those who cooperated with his organization in the planning of the Center and presented the key of the building to Mayor Frank Ronan.

Mayor Ronan discussed the trials connected with the finding of a suitable location for the Community Center and stated that the present site is the best possible location, due to its accessibility. He stated that credit should go to Mr. Sherer, George Jones and James Martin for the effort and time spent completing plans for the Center, and accepted the key on behalf of the city.

Recalling the Highland Park hospital dedication in 1918, James Martin, chairman of the Community Center committee, introduced Former Mayor Samuel M. Hastings, who officiated at the hospital ceremony. Mr. Hastings spoke of the many dreams of Highland Park, all of which have been accomplished, the latest being the erection of a Community House, a dream of Highland Parkers for many years.

### 'Perfect City'

"We have a perfect city," Mr. Hastings said, "It is amazing how many things have been done in the past 71 years in Highland Park. We have beautiful streets, wonderful parkways, splendid woods, the lovely Memorial park, a fine hospital, many churches schools and the new city hall square. And we're just starting."

George Scheuchenpflug, known as "Mr. X," secretary of Community Service, was introduced and expressed the thought that, "You'll all come in and see me."

"America" was sung, and a detailed examination of the building conducted.



# New City Center Really 'Hub of the Town'

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

HIGHLAND PARK, Ill.—The "Hub of the Town" is the way residents now refer to their Community Center. For although just a year old, it has already become the focal point of many of their community activities. Practically everyone in Highland Park uses the Community Center at one time or another, whether it be for a friendly ping-pong match, to develop a roll of film in the dark room, attend a business luncheon, or take part in a hobby show.

Opened last April in the old City Hall, the Community Center has been designed, planned and operated to provide for all of the recreational needs of the community and hospitality for all ages.

Table tennis, chess and checkers keep the game room busy from early in the morning until late at night, for here is a place where young people, boys in particular, are urged to spend their leisure time. Just last month the adjoining fire station was taken over as a new athletic department. The garage was turned into a squash and handball court and the dormitory into a small gymnasium for workouts and special classes for both men and women.

## Camera Room Popular

One of the most popular spots in the building is the dark room, headquarters for several camera clubs. The equipment here is available to local residents to use. Men who like to putter around do so in the craft shop equipped with power tools and machinery for wood and metal working. They have formed their own craft guild. Because of one man's hobby, that of making chess sets and painting chess boards, chess has become one of the major activities in the Center. Several boys model airplane groups. Classes in clay modeling, metal work and arts and crafts also meet here.

The city's old courtroom is now its community hall and ballroom, scene of teas, luncheons, banquets, hobby shows, garden and flower shows, dances and community parties. Here young people can dance to the strains of a 10-piece orchestra for a quarter apiece and here any local organization can give a major social event with a completely equipped kitchen at their disposal for payment of a small fee. Smaller offices have been turned into special meeting rooms for clubs and organizations.

Heading all of the activities is the executive manager, George Scheuenpflug, known more simply to everyone as "Mr. X," who in his own words has "free lanced recreation wherever he could find a place for it in Highland Park," until the Center was opened. It is his job to see that everyone has a good time, whether it be merely to

read a book or magazine in the corner library or to meet a friend or have a business conference in the Colonial Lounge.

The Community Center has probably become so much a part of the community because it is a gift of the community and its residents. Unlike many similar projects often supported by public funds, it is financed by private subscription and all of its furnishings and equipment have been donated or purchased with private funds.

The Center represents a 20-year plan of a group of public-spirited citizens and is the outgrowth of an Army and Navy recreation center of World War days, established for men from Fort Sheridan and the Great Lakes Naval Training Center. That original recreation center was also the gift of citizens and is generally believed to have been the first of a myriad of Army and Navy centers that later dotted the country.

## Peacetime Need Seen

It was these same citizens who saw the value of a directed recreation program for a community in peacetime and who continued the work in a small way. For many years recreational activities were carried on in the various schools and in whatever free rooms and space could be found.

Finally, through careful investment and management of funds, the old City Hall was purchased and remodeled. Then came donations from all quarters. One resi-

dent donated a grand piano, the Rotary Club gave equipment for the craft shop, Boy and Girl Scouts gave a drinking fountain and statue of the Town Crier. Others furnished kitchen and dark-room equipment at close to cost, women made drapes and curtains, men furnished labor in landscaping and planting.

And the donating goes on, for aside from "Mr. X" practically all of the leadership and teaching done at the Center is by volunteers. Housewives give their time for bookkeeping and registration, a young man teaches the model airplane classes, and the chess club has a teacher. And so it goes on. Plans of the sponsors are to build a large gymnasium as an addition in the rear and, judging from the interest already shown, there isn't much doubt on the part of any citizen but what it will soon be done.



## No. 5 Juvenile Hobbyists at Community Center

Adult Highland Park hobbyists who want to see real enthusiasm and accomplishment in the arts and crafts would do well to come over some morning to see the hive-like activity at the Community Center work shop when fifteen or twenty deeply interested children are working.

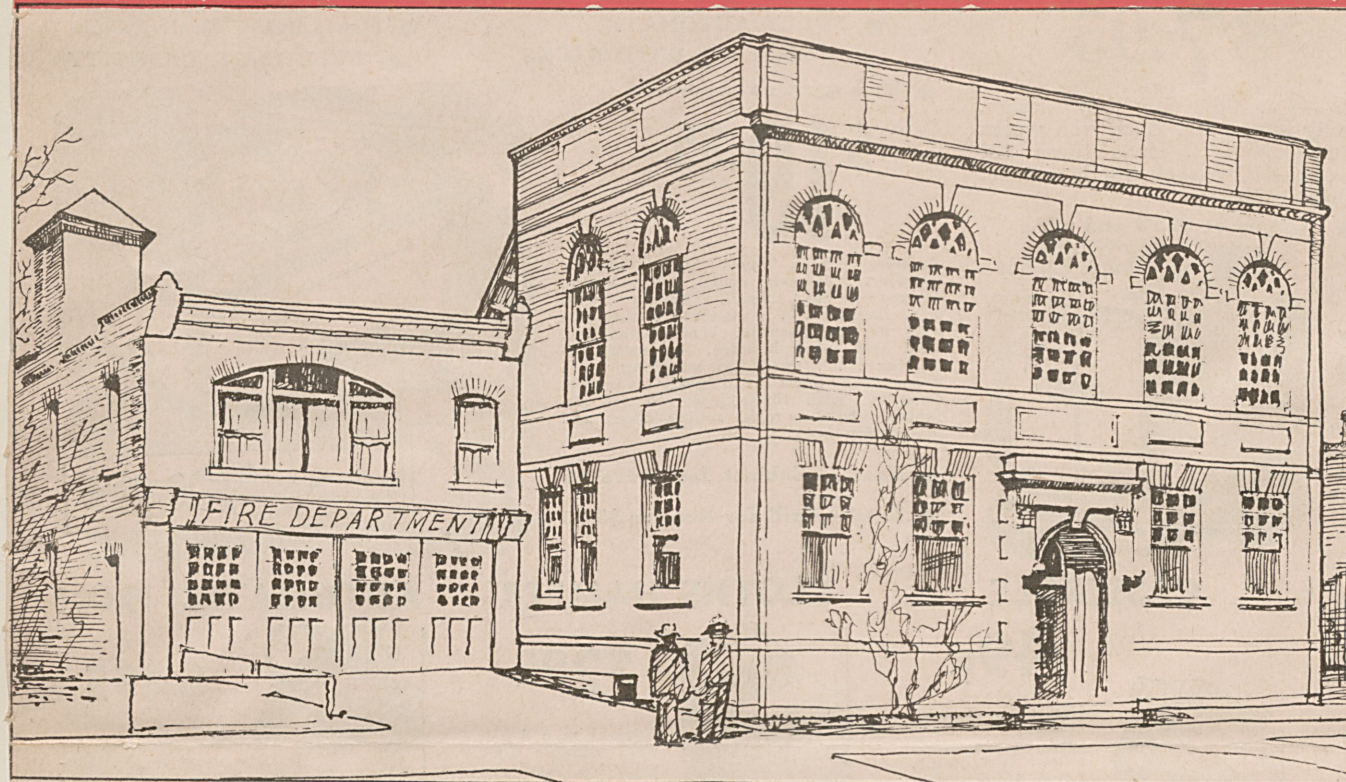
Under the capable direction of

Mr. X, each child is given the guidance necessary to the accomplishment of some one project, whichever may have been chosen by the child. At one work table the visitor sees metal workers hammering out dishes, young artists making designs for needlework or paintings, other children working with jigsaw, file and buffer, building such practical devices as letter openers and other utilitarian bits for household use.



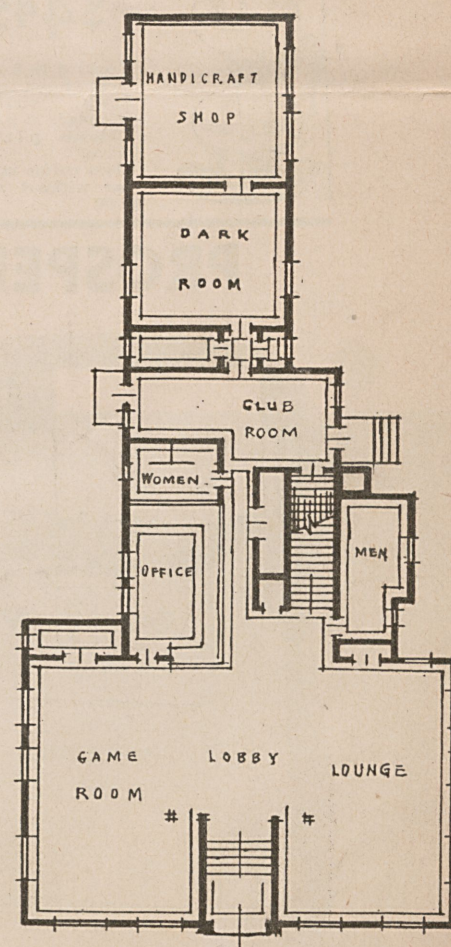
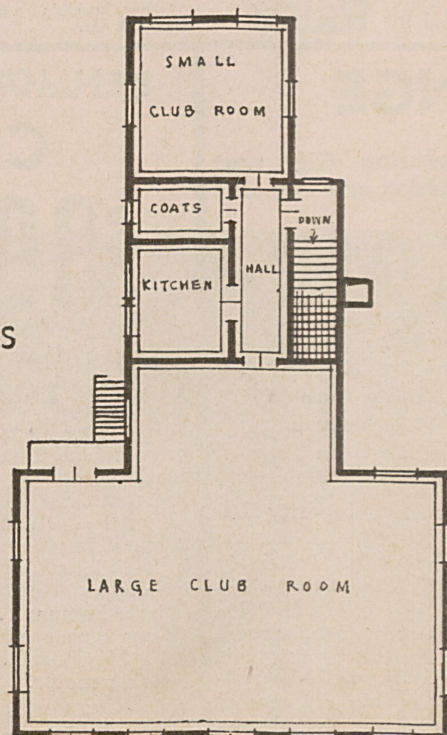
# HIGHLAND PARK

# News



## "NEW" COMMUNITY BUILDING

Right: PLANS FOR  
FIRST AND  
SECOND FLOORS



Community Service has purchased the site and buildings of the old City Hall and Fire Station at Greenbay Road and Central Avenue and plans are rapidly being made to transform it into a Community Center. Above is shown the buildings and proposed plans for converting them into recreation and club rooms. (Story on page 5)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1939



HIGHLAND  
PARK

# News



## The Community Center

entrance will be the gateway to varied activities for the citizens of Highland Park. The newly remodeled building will be formally dedicated Sunday afternoon.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1940



# COMMUNITY CENTER OPENS SUNDAY

## Announce Opening Program For New Community Center

### DEDICATION TAKES PLACE THIS WEEK END

The program which will mark the opening of Highland Park's new Community Center was outlined by Chairman James Martin at Monday's meeting of organization representatives in the Center.

Following is the approximate program for the coming week-end: Saturday afternoon, June 29, a preview of the new building will be presented by Renslow Sherer, president of the Community Service, Inc., owners of the Community Center, to the committee who worked with him in the planning of the building. Tea will be served from 4 to 6 o'clock.

The Highland Park Young Mens club's first dance will be given Saturday evening in the Community Center, featuring the music of the Townsman orchestra.

#### Dedication Ceremony

The formal dedication program will take place Sunday afternoon. The City Council has authorized the blocking off of Central avenue from 2 to 4 o'clock. Services will take place in front of the building, including flag raising by the American Legion, invocation, presenting of the Center keys to Mayor Frank J. Ronan, a talk by Former Mayor Samuel M. Hastings and a public reception in the building. Music during the reception will be provided by the Friends of Music organization of Highland Park, under the direction of Everett Millard Jr., and the Boy Scout Drum and Bugle corps will announce the opening with a parade at 2 p. m.

One member of each Highland Park organization will be on the welcoming committee and arrangements are being made to have a hostess in each room of the Center.

#### Organizations Represented

Organizations represented at the meeting and in the planning of the new Community Center include the following: League of Women Voters, Boy and Girl Scouts, North Shore Yacht club, Y. W. C. A., Highland Park Woman's club, Deere Park association, Elm Place Parent-Teacher association, Royal Neighbors, Highland Park Choral club, First National Bank, West Ridge Community club, School District 108, Skokie Ridge Dramatic club, Briergate Community club, Marion Avenue West association, Park District, Rotary club.

Chamber of Commerce, American Legion, Sunset Improvement association, Women's auxiliary of Highland Park hospital, D. A. R., Greenbay Road P. T. A., Highland Park Music club, Infant Welfare, Legion auxiliary, Lake Front Safety committee, Ridgewood Park association, Lincoln P. T. A., Sheridan Rifle and Pistol club, fire department, Presbyterian church, Highland Park

Hospital, Lions club, Eastern Star, A. O. Fay lodge, Highland Park Young Mens club, Men's Garden club and the Highland Park library.

#### Invited To Game

Following Sunday's ceremony and inspection, visitors are invited to attend the Highland Park Young Mens baseball game at the high school athletic field.

Several articles are needed to complete the furnishings of the Community Center, among them, andirons, screens for the fireplace, lamps for the club room, occasional tables, grand piano, radio, victrola, picture frames and rugs for the lounge room.

The building owned by Community Service, Inc., includes the old city hall which has been remodeled into the Community Center, property in the rear, which will be transformed into athletic rooms, and the fire station which will house the Community Chest.

#### Retain Funds

The cost of the city hall amounted to \$40,000 and the amount in the Community Center fund was \$60,000. A total of \$15,000 was spent on the rehabilitation of the building. Enough funds have been retained to operate the house until the Community Chest lends aid and revenue is obtained from the proposed bowling alleys and renting of rooms for dances. There are no membership dues and the house is the property of all Highland Park citizens.

The public is invited to attend the grand opening Sunday, inspect the newly remodeled Community Center and plan to make use of the Center's facilities at any time.



# Dedicate Community Center Sunday



*The beauty and charm of classic simplicity distinguishes the main portal. Copper lanterns shed their light on flowering window boxes.*

Spencer Post of the American Legion. Commander McCaffrey will be assisted by members of the American Legion Ladies' Auxiliary, the Color Guard of the Libertyville American Legion Post and the Highland Park Boy Scouts Drum and Bugle Corps.

Following the flag raising ceremony, James L. Martin, chairman of the reception committee, will introduce Renslow P. Sherer, president of Community Service, Incorporated, who will formally present the keys of the Center to Major Frank Ronan, Mayor of Highland Park. Mayor Ronan will accept the keys in behalf of the citizens of Highland Park.

The presentation of the keys will be followed by an address by Samuel M. Hastings, former mayor of the city.

The singing of "America" by the assembled audience, led by Highland Park Community Choral Club, under the direction of Mrs. Edgar A. Jenkins, will conclude the formal part of the program.

After the singing, the Center will be opened to the public for inspection. Entertainment during the inspection and reception will be provided by the Friends of Music under the direction of Everett L. Milard.

To facilitate handling the large crowd expected at the dedicatory ceremonies, Central avenue will be blocked off on Sunday between the hours of 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. This action was made possible by a special vote of the city council at its meeting on Monday evening.

Sunday, June 30, 1940, will go down in the history of Highland Park as one of the red-letter days in the life of the community, for on that day, after 22 years of planning and work, Highland Park's Community Center will throw open its doors to the public for the first time.

Final plans for the formal opening of the Center, for which everyone connected with the project has been arduously working for many months, were perfected and completed at a meeting in the organization's headquarters on Monday evening under the direction of James L. Martin, chairman of the reception committee.

The schedule calls for the program opening the Center to start at 2:00 p.m. with a parade staged by the Highland Park Boy Scouts drum and bugle corps.

Promptly at 3:00 p.m. the dedicatory ceremonies will begin with introductory remarks to the assembled throngs by James L. Martin, chairman of the reception committee. Mr. Martin will be followed by Henry A. Hansen, American Legion chaplain, who will give the invocation.

Then will follow a flag raising ceremony led by Leslie B. McCaffrey, commander, Dumaresq

The officers, board of directors and members of the various committees of the Center, who have worked unceasingly toward the goal of bringing the Center into the realm of reality, can well be proud of their efforts. From the very inception of the idea of a Community Center, the men and women behind the project have kept foremost in their minds the watchword of an organization for all the people and not a favored few.

Renslow P. Sherer, president of the Center, in every step in the planning and building of the organization, has ever stressed this creed of all-inclusiveness. That this idea has born fruit is evidenced by the wide variety of people from every walk of life in the community who have shown an intense interest in the Center and its activities.

With this credo of service to the community as its guiding star, the Center cannot fail in the fulfillment of its purposes. The presentation of the Center to the community is indeed a red-letter event in the history of the city.



# COMMUNITY CENTER DEDICATION CEREMONIES







Over 1,000 persons visited Highland Park's new Community Center Sunday afternoon and witnessed the dedication ceremonies in which local officials and Community Center representatives participated.

Shown in the upper left is George Scheuchenpflug, "Mr. X," secretary of the Community Center, leading the group singing of "America." Mayor Frank Ronan, holding the key to the Community Center, is in the background. Center, president of Community Service, Inc., owners of the Center, Renslow Sherer addresses the gathering. Introducing a guest speaker is James Martin, chairman of

the dedication committee, top right, flanked by Boy Scouts and American Legion officials. Commander Leslie McCaffrey is at the left and Chaplain Henry Hanson at the right.

Awaiting their turn to speak, center left, are Former Mayor Samuel Hastings, Mayor Ronan and Mr. Martin. Center right, children inspect the new box hockey game in the game room of the Center. "Timer" Inman tries out the ping pong table, lower left. A part of the crowd viewing the Center are pictured in the lower right.



SPECIAL SOUVENIR EDITION  
COMPLIMENTS

# The Highland Park Press

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1940

## COMMUNITY CENTER WELCOMES ALL

by RENSLOW P. SHERER  
President, Community Service, Inc.  
*To the Citizens of Highland Park:*

With the opening of the Community Center on June 29 and 30, 1940, there is beginning to take shape the Recreation Center which a small group of women began to plan and save for over 20 years ago.

Three cardinal points have been kept in mind over the years:

It would serve the whole community—all could enjoy its facilities. Thus, community life and activities would revolve about a Center and become more closely knit and neighborly.

It would serve young and old, but would emphasize its activities for young people. Recreation would be wholesome play and more—it would “re-create” by offering an attractive meeting place, expert supervision for group activities and facilities for creative work, play, and exercise.

It would be managed by a representative group of citizens operating under a “non-profit charter” and financed by the citizens to supplement such modest revenues as might come from the rental of certain facilities.

The dedication ceremonies have pledged the directors to the perpetuation of these policies from this point on, the development of this idea is in your hands. It can be as useful as you care to make it and will grow soundly in its development of additional facilities and services if there is a need for them and an alert citizen interest in their development.

The experience of other communities points to the likelihood of such development. In Winnetka, the community is said to revolve about the Community House. The young people of that community look upon it as a prized possession and their parents realize the constructive value it has been, in providing wholesome recreation, organized play and creative work and hobbies.

And in its national aspects, the Community Center idea is of increasing importance. Thousands of communities have recognized the need for such centers, both because of increased leisure time and because of unemployment problems of youth. Adult education groups, Americanization classes, hobby groups, etc., have proved invaluable in broadening individual horizons and developing better citizens. Naturally, the Community Center provides a logical focal point in a community for such activities.

Young Men's and Young Women's clubs are readily organized and easily maintained once a central public meeting place and recreational center has been formed. This is well illustrated by the success the Highland Park Young Men's club has already obtained by a large membership and a full schedule of athletic and other worthwhile activities. One amusing sidelight on this is the statement of Winnetka Community House director that on Hal-

lowe'en night “the kids and the policemen are enjoying the community show.”

As Professor Charles E. Merman, long a student of government, has said, “As the cities go, so goes the nation.” If every community does a good job of running its affairs, providing efficient service, schools, and healthful recreation, the national problems will be fewer and more easily solved. This is truly “The American Way.”

Outstanding communities like Highland Park can set an example worthy of its people and tradition in rounding out through the development of the Community House and ultimately through an enlarged Community Center, the service to youth and all citizens in better community living.

### Officers and Directors of Community Center

Current officers, directors and committee chairmen for the Center include the following: F. J. Ronan, honorary president; Renslow P. Sherer, president; J. B. Garnett, vice-president; R. L. Erskine, treasurer.

Executive committee: Renslow P. Sherer, J. B. Garnett, R. L. Erskine, Mrs. Tom R. Wyles, Clarence Witt, A. T. Sihler.

Board of Directors: H. B. Aiston, K. G. Anderson, W. J. Curotto, D. J. Davitt, Harry Earhart, R. L. Erskine, J. B. Garnett, Mrs. B. K. Goodman, Leon F. Harris, A. C. Houser, Mrs. J. S. Johnson, Mrs. Geo. R. Jones, Albert Larson, Mrs. Thos. Marks, J. L. Martin, Mrs. P. M. Murray, Mrs. F. C. Noerenberg, C. E. Pfister, Mrs. Charles Rubens, Renslow P. Sherer, Leo J. Sheridan, A. T. Sihler, M. W. Stin, A. H. Swanson, Richard Taussig, Cloud Wampler, C. H. Witt, C. G. Wright, Mrs. T. R. Wyles, H. A. Zischke.

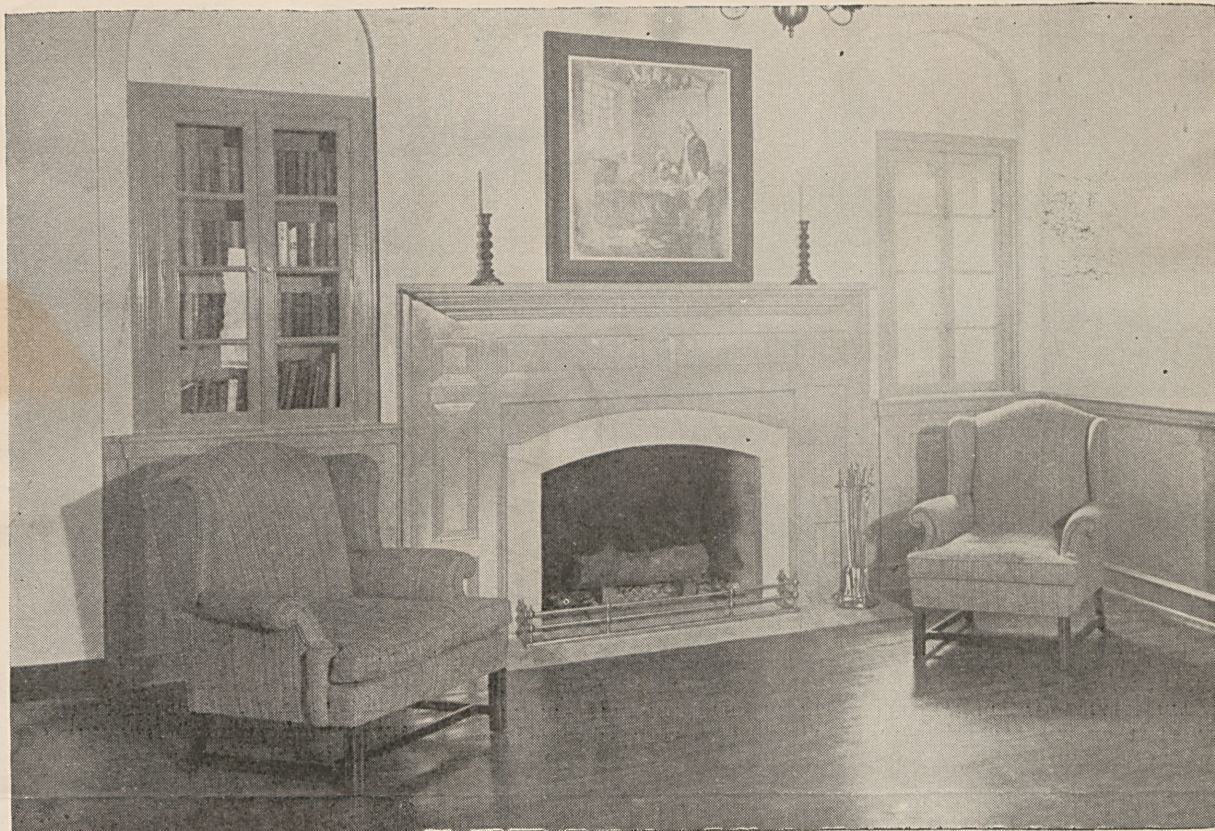
Advisory Council: F. N. Bard, F. Adele Everett, Harold M. Florsheim, E. Boynton, Wm. M. Dooley, Mr. Earl W. Gsell, Sam'l. M. Hastings, Geo. R. Jones, Geo. A. Mason, Mrs. O. L. Olesen, Frank J. Ronan, Maurice L. Rothschild, Mrs. M. R. Stern, John L. Udell, Gen'l. Robt. E. Wood.

Director and secretary, George Scheuchenpflug.

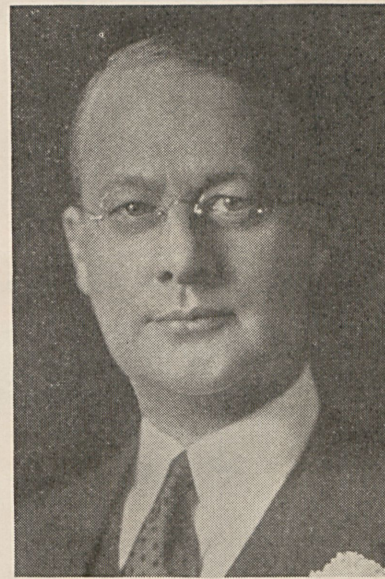
Committees: Finance, A. T. Sihler, chairman; House, J. B. Garnett, chairman; furnishings and equipment, Mrs. George R. Jones, chairman; Youth activities, Harry Earhart, chairman; Public information, A. C. Houser, chairman; Rifle and pistol, F. W. Parker Jr., chairman.

Committees for various other activities including art, camera, crafts, drama, music, etc., will be announced shortly.





Built at a cost of more than \$700, this authentic reproduction of a Williamsburg Colonial fireplace, expresses a warm welcome. *from Market Sq. Tavern.*



High in the ranks of those who have given untiringly of their efforts to further the cause of the Center are, left to right: Renslow P. Sherer, president, Mrs. George R. Jones, chairman of the Furnishings and Equipment Committee, and James L. Martin, chairman of the Dedication Reception Committee.



# HISTORY OF COMMUNITY CENTER

by Blanche Mason Tellis  
and Adele M. Everett

The Highland Park Army and Navy Center, predecessor of the Highland Park Community Center, appeared out of the nowhere in answer to a demand. With the coming of the war Fort Sheridan, at the gates of Highland Park, and Great Lakes Naval Training Station, just beyond, began to fill rapidly with men. Of these the first to appear in numbers about the streets of

Highland Park were the student officers of the first training camp who arrived early in May, 1917. Their hours of duty were long, and their work hard, but a few hours of leisure were given them each day. As absolutely no provision had been made for their reception and entertainment, they continued to stand, first on one foot and then on the other, about the streets and in the shops of the city.

After several weeks the idea that

something must be done began to germinate all over town. It so happened, however, that Mrs. George R. Jones and Miss Blanche Mason were the first to act. On June 21st an article by Miss Mason appeared in the local paper, announcing the project to open a public "sitting room" for soldiers, with possibly, magazines and newspapers and, perhaps, a phonograph or some other merry-making device. Plans were

general and vague. A touching story was told of a certain young lad who had gone to church three times on a Sunday because he had nowhere else to go. It was supposed that this tale might quite possibly touch the heart of Highland Parkers. It did.

The response was instantaneous. Everything was offered, from free service by local scrubwomen to free use of a magnificent main floor suite of rooms by A. W. Fletcher—a Civil war veteran of Highland Park. All offers were happily accepted.

Two days after the appearance of the article a meeting was held at the home of Mrs. George R. Jones, attended by a hastily collected committee and addressed by Mr. Myron Adams, chaplain of the R.O.T.C. Mr. Adams greeted the scheme with enthusiasm and urged haste. He also suggested the name "Army and Navy Center," which was subsequently adopted. It is hard to realize that that name could ever have had a genesis, yet it was at that time brand new, and it is generally believed that Highland Park was the first of the myriad of army and navy centers that later dotted the country.

At the first meeting the administrative committee was formed, including the following persons: Mrs. J. McGregor Adams, Mrs. Ferdinand Wiegand, Mrs. T. C. Boynton, Mrs. Robert Gregory, Mrs. C. N. Kimball, Mrs. Albert Paul Smith, Mrs. Annette R. Jones, Mrs. Julius Rosenwald, Mrs. W. A. Alexander, Mrs. A. A. Putnam, Mrs. R. C. Jacobsen, Mrs. Lloyd Bergen, Mrs. Sewall Truax, Mrs. J. L. Holbrook, and Mrs. Fletcher. Miss Blanche Mason was made president. Mr. Myron Adams served in an advisory capacity.

One week after the appearance of the original appeal, the Highland Park Press printed a short paragraph, asking for contributions—a masterly miscellany including flags, phonograph records, magazines, chairs, stationery, clothes brushes, screens, rugs, and liquid soap—to be sent to the Army and Navy Center, next door to the Post Office, west.

The Army and Navy Center opened its doors to men in uniform on July 4th, 1917, and was promptly filled to overflowing.



*A quiet nook of the lovely Williamsburg lounge room. Flowered draperies softly shaded lamps and ferns breathe hospitality.*



*Comfortable furniture and a quiet, restful atmosphere characterize the Club Room. Available for small meetings, luncheons, etc.*



The first and greatest problem, of course, was that of finance, but two important factors helped to make this less of a burden than might have been expected. Mrs. George R. Jones became chairman of the finance committee and treasurer. The town itself appeared to have been waiting with baited breath for the chance to support the center. In the first week Mrs. Jones sent out several hundred cards asking for pledges of monthly donations and, without delay, the cards began to return with pledges signed. The wheels of the center had been set into motion with practically no expenditure of money, thanks to the amazing generosity of everyone. Running expenses during the summer amounted to about \$150 per month. In the later fall, when the activities of the center had been somewhat elaborated, this figure rose to nearly \$300. By this time, however, the Highland Park Defense Council had taken over all subscriptions for war work in Highland Park, and, after December, handled the budget of the center. This state of affairs continued until late spring when, in anticipation of a Community War Chest, the mayor dissolved the Defense Council. Subsequently, the War Chest campaign failed, and for a time finances of the center were in a desperate condition. At this juncture the National War Camp-Community Service in Washington was appealed to, with satisfactory results. In June Mr. William J. Hopkins was sent on to organize the War Camp-Community Service on the North Shore and especially of Highland Park. He engaged Leon Harris to take the directorship of the center. From November, 1918, all expenditures were met by the Illinois branch of the War Camp Community Service.

In November, 1917, Miss Mason resigned the presidency to go into other war work, and her place was filled by Mrs. George R. Jones.

At the end of the first year of service, July 4th, 1918, the Army and Navy Center held an anniversary party. During one year several thousand soldiers and sailors had been entertained and more than a dozen auxiliary activities founded and sponsored. From all parts of America and Europe postal cards, sent out from the center's own writing room, came back with messages of affection and gratitude.

We are now approaching July 4th, 1940. The first World War is long past, and the history of the Army and Navy Center as an organization for the soldiers and sailors of that war is a closed chapter. But today, Highland Park has grown into a city with a city's problem and needs, and a new center is being dedicated; its doors are being opened to all citizens, young and old. Another crisis is upon the world. Perhaps the most striking urgency of this present situation is that of drawing closer together in community bonds. It is hoped that a real contribution may be made to that need through the new Highland Park Community Center.

After the War Camp, Community Service was no longer needed a group of people who had been active in the original project, and who realized the value of directed recreation in peace time, decided to continue their activities along smaller lines.

Hence on February 19, 1920, this group incorporated as a recreational agency. Members of the group signing the incorporation papers included Frank L. Cheney, George A. Mason and Fred D. Silber.

Expenses for the activities of the center were carried on by subscription until June, 1923. At that time a committee of women was organized, who bought the property on Central avenue, where the Dutch Mill shop, Chamber of Commerce and Picchietti Brothers grocery are now located. Purchase of the property was financed by this committee through the sale of bonds in the amount of \$30,500.

This property was turned over to Community Service. The interest on the investment was used for such activities as were practiced and the principal was held in reserve for the ultimate purchase of a Community House.

Later the property was sold for \$70,000. By the careful handling of the funds realized from this sale by the able trustees of Community Service, the organization was subsequently able to buy the property and building known as the Old City Hall, and to remodel it as it now stands.

For years the recreational activities of Community Service were carried on in the various schools of the community, and for some time the local chapter of Elks donated the use of their rooms on Laurel avenue for this purpose. George Scheuchenpflug, assisted by Ray Cox, directed the organization's various recreational activities.

Subsequently these facilities were no longer available for Community Service's use, and the activities once more were returned to the city's various schools, where their headquarters remained until the purchase and remodeling of the center's present property.

## CENTER INSPIRED BY COLONIAL AMERICA

by Leon F. Harris

At long last the Community Service of Highland Park has acquired a building in keeping with the spirit of the work for which it was organized twenty-two years ago. The old City Hall building, an architectural reminder of the Georgian buildings of the early Republic, and reminiscent of the beauty created by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in the restoration at historic Williamsburg, is a fitting background for the many civic services planned for the citizens of Highland Park. The interiors have been planned to meet the usefulness of the building, yet keeping as close as possible to the old Colonial spirit in architectural detail and decorations.

## STEP BY STEP PLANS FOR FUTURE GROWTH

by J. B. Garnett

When the directors of the Community Center learned of the possibility of purchasing the Old City hall property, they studied very seriously the growth possibilities of this piece of property. They realized that a gymnasium and other athletic facilities were greatly desired by the public in general. However a large gymnasium could not be financed through the present funds. Further study showed them that they could complete the first step which in the course of three or four years could be developed more fully.

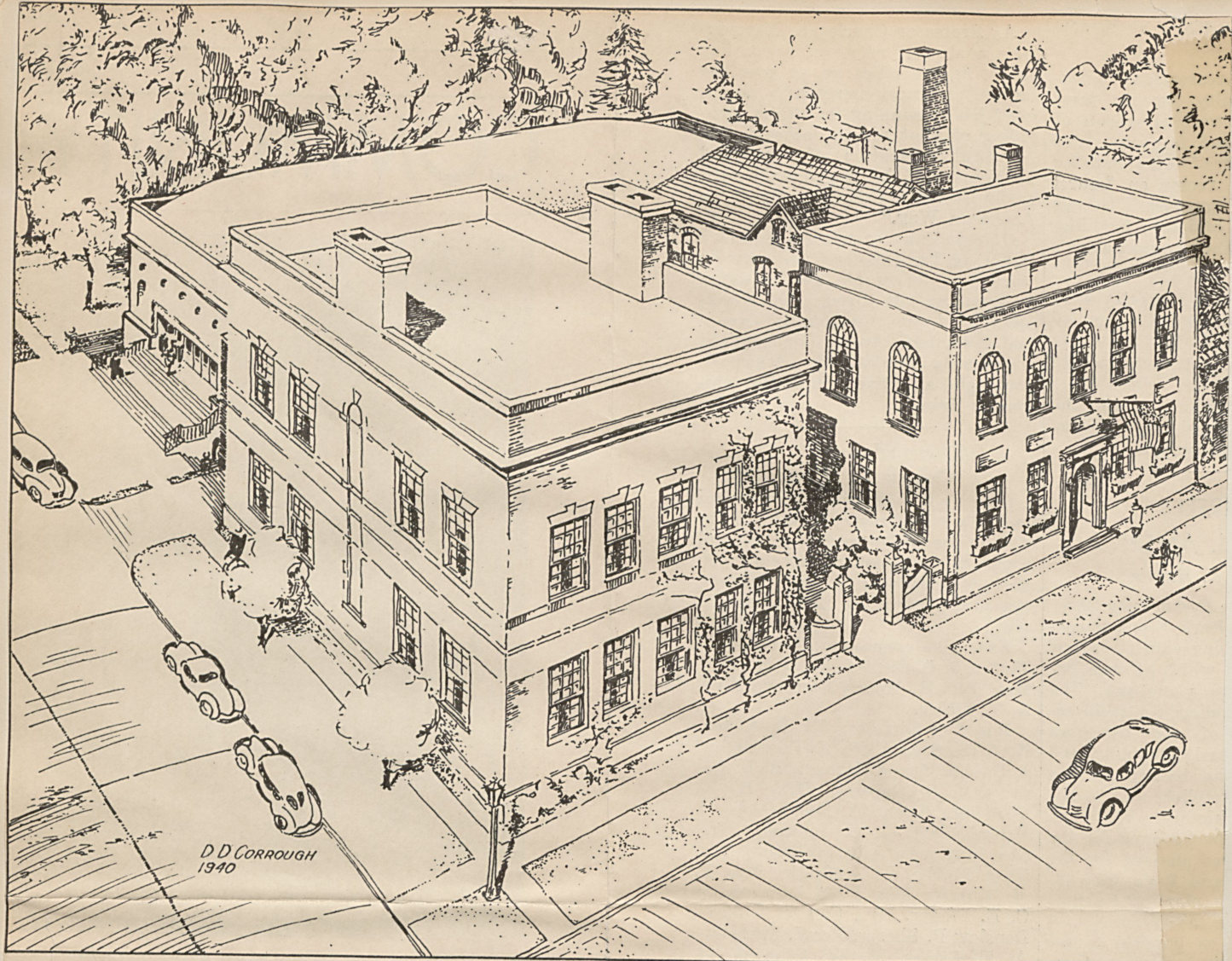
As a result of this study, Step No. 1 of our contemplated Community Center has been developed and is about to be opened. This includes a large community hall, a very beautiful club room, lounge, game room, dark room for camera work, a craft shop and a complete kitchen.

Step No. 1a is the development of a boys and young mens' club quarters out of the present fire station.

Step No. 2. As soon as the necessary financial arrangements can be made, a two-story unit, including a large 70x100 ft. gymnasium and stage on the second floor and possibly bowling alleys, game room, handball courts, craft shop and showers on the first floor, will be planned.

Step No. 3. In the projected thinking another building, directly west of the present building. Here could be housed permanent headquarters for many social service and community activities.





*Architect's sketch indicates how community home can be expanded to meet future needs of Highland Park.*



*The beauty and charm of classic simplicity distinguishes the main portal. Copper lanterns shed their light on flowering window boxes.*



# NEW CENTER FILLS LONG FELT NEED

Center Fills Long Felt Need — Building Planned to Provide Focal Point for Community Activities — Project Designed to Grow with City.

By George S. Scheuchenpflug  
(Mr. X.)

The "Hub of the Town" is a saying that ably describes the thought of what the Community Center ought to be in our community. To this effect the present building was planned, so as to carry out certain important community uses. Anyone entering the building is met at the service desk where he may ask questions concerning the community and secure information pertinent to the goings-on in Highland Park. In the lobby there is a phone booth, and beautiful drinking fountain designed by Franz Plunder. These are for the purpose of serving the immediate needs of the passerby. To your right as you enter, there is a well equipped lounge, Early American in character, where one may arrange to meet friends, read a book, have a conference with business associates, or wait to meet the family who have gone shopping. Washroom and toilet facilities are conveniently provided. At the left as you enter, is a game room which includes ping pong table, game tables and other game facilities which will be available for use at certain periods.

Community camera clubs that meet at the Community Center, as well as other interested camera enthusiasts will have a well equipped dark room wherein they may develop, print and enlarge pictures — an ideal place to work on this interesting hobby.

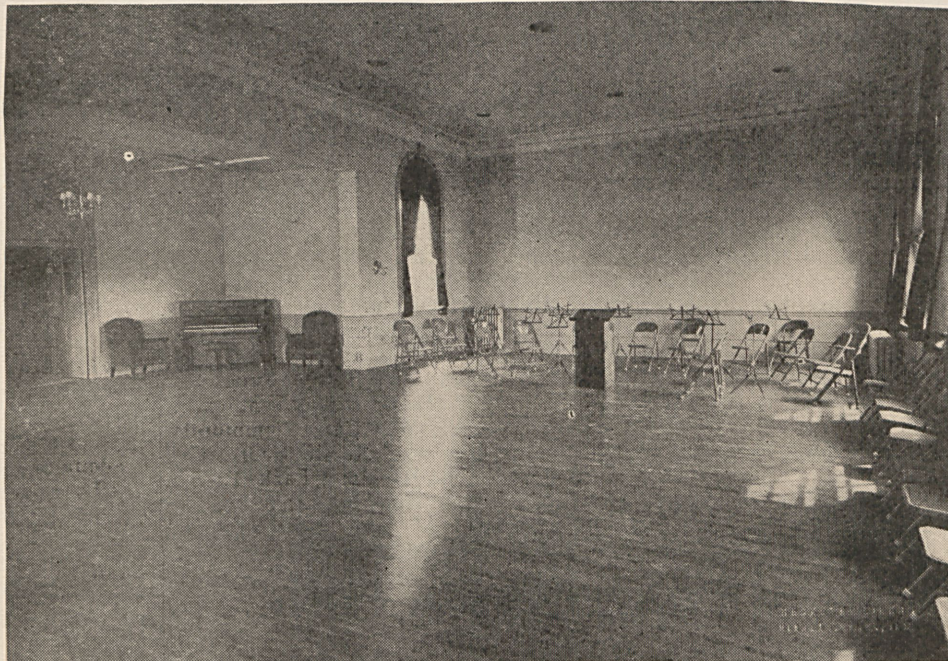
There will be a craft shop equipped for simple

and useful craft activities such as woodworking, metal working, clay modeling, and the like. The necessary tools and equipment will be installed. The shop will be available for group work at certain periods during the day and evening, and also will be open for individual usage if not previously reserved.

The Community Hall offers to Highland Park a beautiful and spacious room in which many worthwhile activities can be conducted. Some possible activities are — badminton, discussion and lecture groups, drama groups, concerts, banquets, dances, card parties, etc. In conjunction with the Hall, adequate kitchen facilities have been provided. Here light luncheons, afternoon tea and coffee can be prepared and served. When more elaborate meals are prepared by caterers, such meals can be kept hot in a bain marie (a type of steam table).

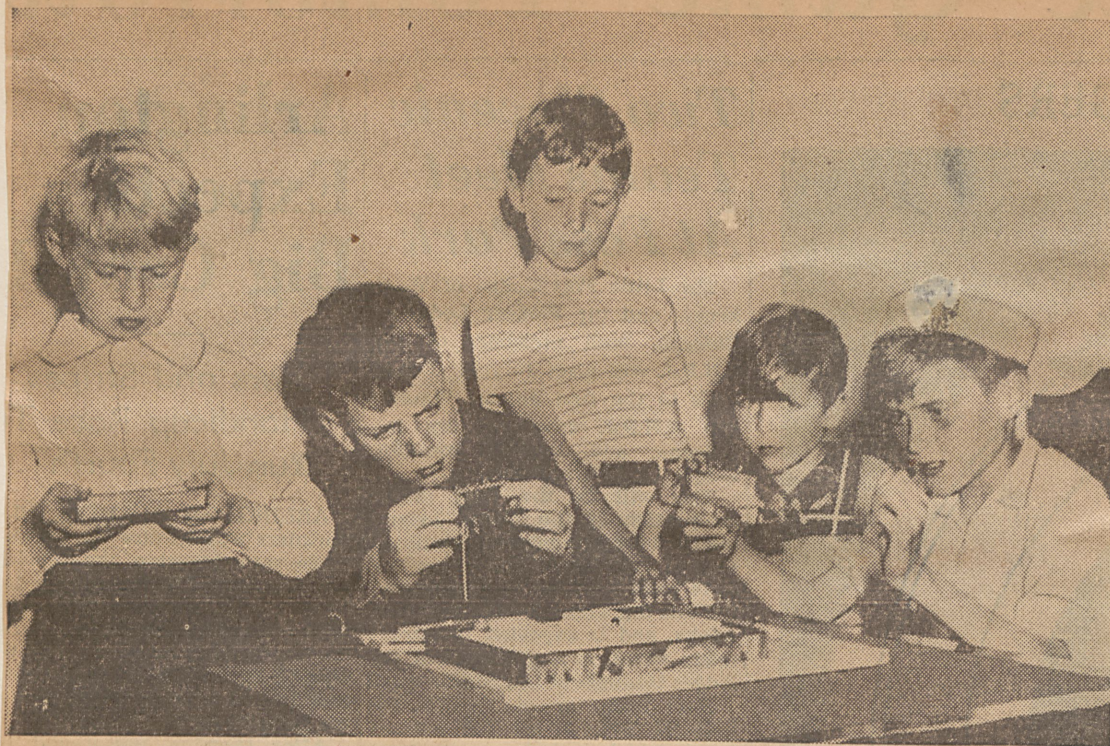
On the second floor there is a smaller club room which will be available for groups such as directors' meetings, chess clubs, stamp clubs, camera clubs, card clubs, classes in bridge, art, and the like. Arrangements can be made for kitchen use also in connection with this room. The combined use of these two rooms for an afternoon card party or lecture, make an attractive combination.

Storage space is provided for clubs meeting regularly at the Center.



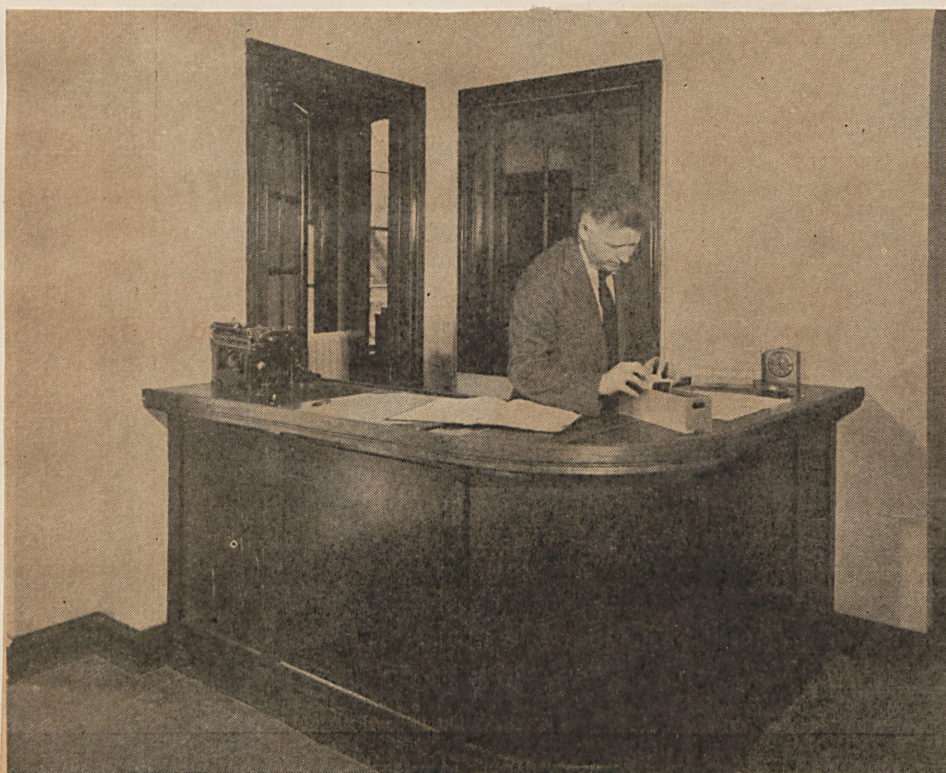
*A view of the Assembly Hall and Ball Room. Here many important meetings and brilliant social affairs will take place.*





**ALREADY IN USE**—The game room, designed to help youngsters while away rainy afternoons, received the unqualified approval of these lads, who were trying to

solve a variety of puzzles provided for their amusement. Left to right are John W. Eubanks, Don Martin, Tom W. Schramm, Don Domke, and William Peddle.



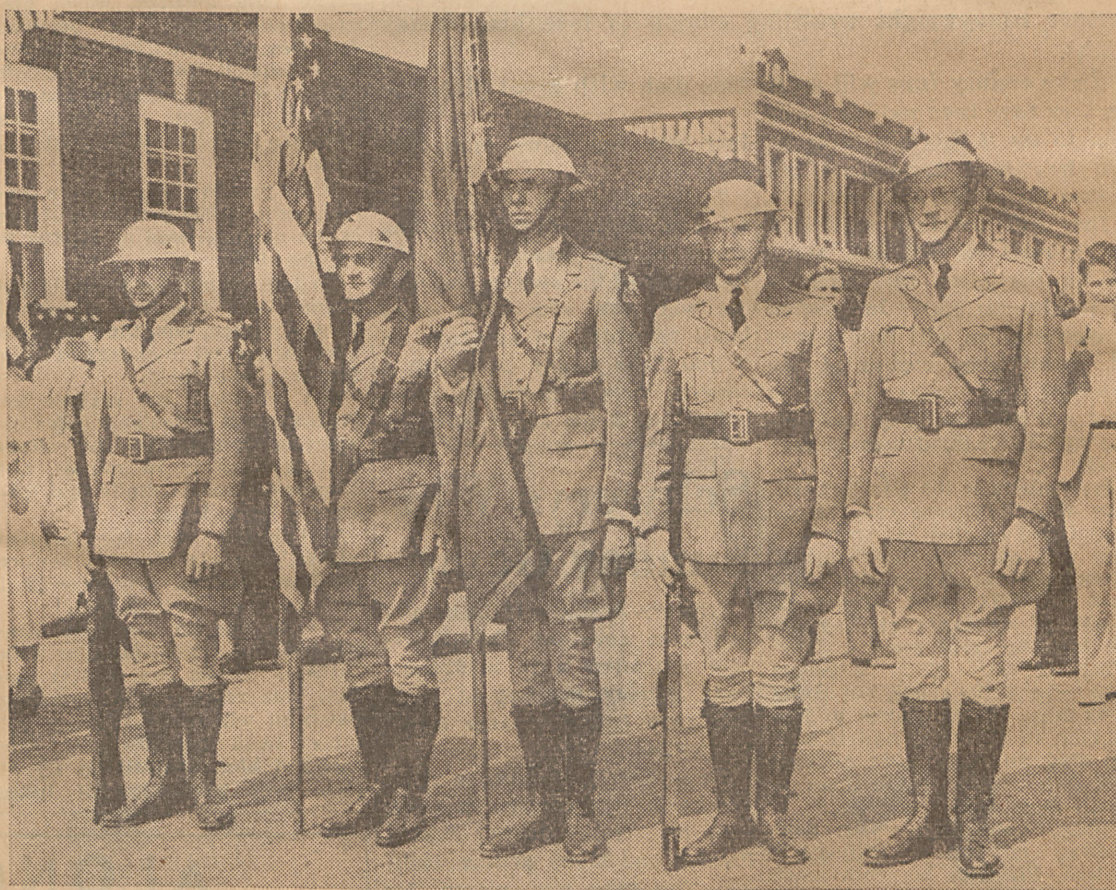
*He's everybody's friend. George Scheuchenpflug (Mr. X), executive manager of the Community House, at his post in lobby.*





**EN MASSE**—Highland Parkers turned out in large numbers to attend the formal dedication. This picture, taken from an apartment building across the street from

the new center, shows a portion of the crowd that gathered on Central ave., which was blocked to traffic during the ceremonies.



**COLOR GUARD**—The color guard from the Libertyville Legion post took charge of the flag raising ceremony. Members of

the guard are Clyde Brown, Dr. Stuart A. Matthews, William Nickoley, Wesley Froland and William Hagerty.

—Waukegan Post Staff Photos





## Community Center Directors

Newly elected officers of the Highland Park Community Center are shown following the election Monday evening. Left to right, R. L. Erskine, treasurer; J. B. Garnett, vice president; Renslow Sherer, president; Mayor Frank Ronan, honorary president; Mrs. George R. Jones, vice president, and George Scheuchenpflug, secretary.

Thursday, December 19, 1940

## HOLD OPEN HOUSE AT COMMUNITY CENTER

### "Little Symphony" In Orchestra Program Xmas Eve

You are invited to a "curtain raiser" to one of the most precious Christmas seasons you have ever known, a "precious" because we have "peace on earth" in a war torn world about us!

At the Community Center at sundown (four o'clock by your watch) the doors on Christmas eve will swing back to welcome you in the hall and Williamsburg lounge, pungent with Christmas balsam and fir, a crackling fire on the hearth, candle-light and a steaming wassail bowl and Christmas cakes.

Best of all up-stairs in the big red draped assembly room, there will be a concert by the Community Center's own "Little Symphony" under Everett Millard's conducting, playing a program consisting of an Eighteenth Century Christmas Concerto by Torelli, a Bach Suite, a seldom heard Haydn Concerto by a well known Chicago pianist and a fantasy on Christmas Music.

So check the day and the hour and should you forget, you will hear the music, which will be amplified that shoppers on Central avenue will hear. Come with your bundles and your family and your friends. There will be hostesses from the Community Center and from the Highland Park Music club to welcome you and to lead you in the carols, which will be sung around the Christmas tree after the orchestra program.

"Father Christmas" came to Highland Park early this year and gave this splendid Center to us last summer. It is yours and mine so—"come all ye faithful" and let us enjoy it together at this most joyful season and be thankful.

Helen Abbott Byfield,  
Music chairman.



# H. P. Groups Unite to Get U. S. - Built Service Club Bldg

Negotiations are under way between the city of Highland Park, the Community Center, the U.S.O. Development committee, and the Federal Government for building a large Service Men's club in Highland Park, so designed as to be of permanent value to the city after the emergency as well as to take adequate care of the increasing demands for recreation facilities in the Fort Sheridan area.

The Community Center directors have agreed to give the city a portion of their property if an appropriate building will be erected by the government at federal expense. This property, located on Green Bay road just north of the Community Center buildings, is 50x150 feet and valued at approximately \$17,500. It is estimated that the cost to the government of the building and equipment would be from \$40,000 to \$50,000.

Plans are being drawn by Architect Raymond W. Flinn for a proposed structure 50x135 feet consisting of meeting rooms, large recreation hall, and other facilities which will be adequate for a Service Men's club near such an important defense area as Fort Sheridan. It is a single story structure with an inside height sufficient for use as a gymnasium for the Community Center when the emergency is over, as it is the purpose of the Federal Government to construct emergency centers of this nature so that they can be converted to permanent usefulness to the community.

"The Community Center directors," said Renslow F. Sherer, president, "are ready to transfer this valuable ground to the city as a gift for this worthwhile purpose because the city is the most logical unit to make formal application for the building and also because we believe the entire Community Center properties should ultimately be turned over to the city as a gift when the community is ready to set up a recreation commission and to unify all recreational facilities and programs of the municipality. Recreation, like education and health, is a municipal function and should, as in most progressive communities in the country, be co-ordinated, controlled, and maintained by the city government and the citizens as a whole."

Edwin C. Jones, field recreation representative Federal Security Agency, states that many applications for defense centers are being made all over the country and it is difficult to estimate when this project, which is as yet in the formative stage, will be approved.

Mayor Ronan, long identified with the Highland Park Community Center as vice-president and now as honorary president, has expressed the city's attitude in a recent letter as follows:

"I have been very favorably impressed with the offer of the Community Center to turn over the lot adjoining their establishment facing on Green Bay road, giving title to the City of Highland Park in order that the city may offer the lot to the government for one of their proposed recreational centers.

"The City of Highland Park stands ready to do this without cost to the federal government, providing satisfactory arrangements can be made with the federal government for a structure suitable to the site and appropriate to the emergency and permanent recreational usage."

World War II

## H. P. Community Center Helps To Initiate War Effort

The Community Center idea is an outgrowth of the last World War. At that time a group of patriotic men

and women operated in Highland Park the War Camp Community Service. They had headquarters at Central Avenue and Sheridan Road and conducted a program somewhat like our USO of today. These same people after the war continued the idea under the name of Community Service of Highland Park.

Because of the Center's background, it at once assumed leadership during the present war and helped in Civilian Defense in as many ways as possible. Some of these activities to help the war effort have been:

1. Helped plan the Soldiers and Sailors Center before the advent of the USO.
2. Gave the city a 50x150' vacant lot so that the USO Center could be built upon the site.
3. Donated space so that the Army would have headquarters when they erected the USO.
4. Donated space for registering all who wished to help in Civilian Defense.
5. Assumed leadership in Red Cross First Aid instruction. Classes conducted day and night until the need was met.
6. Donated space for Civilian Defense classes and schools of all sorts.
7. Community Center was the site of the mock air raid in Highland Park.

8. Donated space for Victory Garden mass meetings.
9. Increased the usefulness of the Center's game rooms and employed an after school game leader so that boys and girls would have a place to play.
10. Donated space for Red Cross Accident Prevention course.
11. Present staff member of the Center is training chairman for Civilian Defense in Highland Park.
12. Provided housing facilities for Co-ordinating Council who have had an active part in the war effort.
13. Initiated the idea and carried to fulfillment the plan for a Municipal Playground and Recreation Board.
14. Space is always made available for Bond Committees, Red Cross Committees, O. P. A., USO, etc.
15. Headquarters for the Share-the-Ride Committee.

The Community Center's Executive Board consists of:

R. P. Sherer, president; Mrs. David Levinson, vice-president; R. L. Erskine, treasurer; Harry Earhart, R. W. Flinn, Mrs. Charles Rubens, Mrs. J. Sigurd Johnson, Mrs. Tom R. Wyles, Mr. J. B. Garnett (Honorary President).

- 1941 -

## F. D. R. APPROVES USO CENTER FOR HIGHLAND PARK

A \$62,000 PWA appropriation for a United Service Organizations recreational center in Highland Park, to serve soldiers of Fort Sheridan, was approved today by President Roosevelt, according to Senator Scott W. Lucas.

The building, according to Architect Dana Corrough of Highland Park, will be a one-story structure on Green Bay road, adjacent on the north to the Highland Park Community Center. It will house a lounge, auditorium, offices, refreshment facilities, game rooms and standard USO equipment, he said. Plans for a similar center in Highwood have been drawn up, Mr. Corrough said, and are awaiting presidential approval.

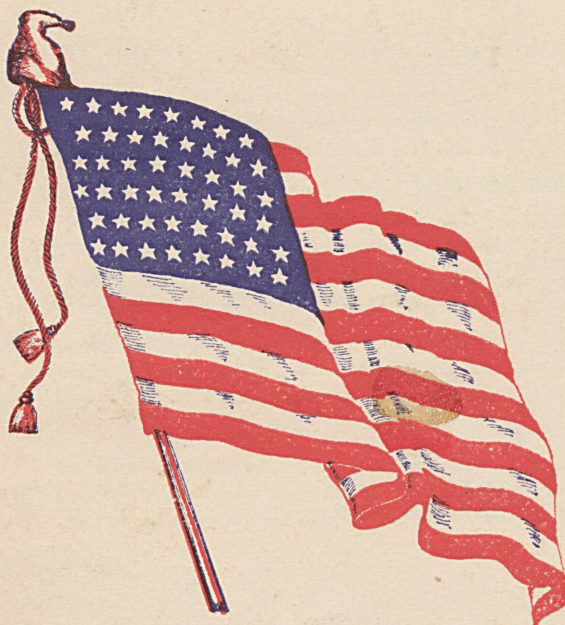
Senator Lucas also said that the President approved a \$70,850 appropriation for a USO center in Champaign for the benefit of Army men from Chanute Field, at near-by Rantoul.



# DEDICATION PROGRAM

Saturday, January 10, 1942

Five o'clock p.m.



*The U. S. O. Club*

21 North Green Bay Road  
Highland Park, Illinois

## Service Club Dedication December 22

Construction is being pushed in Highland Park, on the USO recreation building, in order that soldiers and sailors from Fort Sheridan, and the Great Lakes Naval Training Station, may be able to enjoy Christmas in the new center.

Lieut. D. C. Lamoreaux, officer in charge of construction of the Highland Park and Highwood USO recreation centers, from construction division of the Quartermaster Corps, said that work on the new structures would be completed by December 22, 1941.

Lieut. Lamoreaux stated that the Highland Park USO recreation building is being completed in record breaking time. The project was turned over to the United States Army September 30, 1941, and since that time bids, plans, specifications and construction have been accomplished.

A program for the flag raising ceremony is being prepared to take place at 10:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. December 22, 1941. Officers, enlisted men from the United States Army and the Navy, and prominent local people will be present.

The recreation center was constructed to comfortably seat four hundred people in the auditorium, which has been wired for sound movies, broadcasting and amplification of phonograph music and contains a large stage.

Spacious lounges, club rooms, ladies' powder rooms, check rooms, offices, soda bars and kitchens, shower rooms, locker rooms, have been provided for the convenience of the service men at the center, Lieut. Lamoreaux stated.



#### Facts:

Preliminary plans for the defense program were begun by the Highland Park Defense Committee, the Federal Security Agency and the Highland Park Co-ordinating Council.

The local and surrounding communities have done their part in entertaining thousands of soldiers and sailors in the club at homes and in entertainment since May, 1941.

The Constructing Quartermaster Corps of the U. S. War Department completed the building on December 22, 1941, in record breaking time.

The complete project in which all have had such an important part will constitute a valuable contribution to our program for victory.

## DEDICATION PROGRAM Highland Park U. S. O. Club

HON. FRANK J. RONAN  
Presiding

FLAG CEREMONY - - - - Boy Scouts of America

SPECIAL MUSIC—4:30 to 5:00 p.m.

OPENING SONG - - - - "Star Spangled Banner"  
Daniel Cobb

INVOCATION - - - - Lieut.-Colonel Arthur Ewert  
Post Chaplain

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

ADDRESS OF WELCOME - - - - Hon. Frank J. Ronan  
Mayor of Highland Park

PRESENTATION OF KEYS - - - - D. R. Kennicott  
Regional Director, Federal Works Agency

ADDRESSES IN DEDICATION - - - - Honored Guests  
Major General J. M. Cummins, U.S.A. Commandant Sixth Corps Area  
Admiral John Downes, U. S. N. Commandant 9th Naval District  
Colonel F. C. Rogers, Commandant Fort Sheridan  
Harper Sibley, President United Service Organizations  
Charles P. Taft, Ass't Director Defense, Health and Welfare Service

SONG - - - - "America"  
by Assemblage

BENEDICTION - - - - Cecil R. Miller  
Chaplain, Great Lakes Naval Training Station

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Statement - by Frank Ollendorff

The Army and Navy Center occupied a store owned by Abel Fletcher on Central Avenue, facing Sheridan Road, throughout the period of our involvement in World War I. As Community Service Inc. a civilian recreation program continued on at the same location thereafter. The small adjoining store was taken over by the Highland Park Thrift Shop. The Boards of these two organizations undertook the responsibility of the purchase of this entire piece of property in June, 1925. Mr. Pearl was, at that time, planning to buy it with the idea of putting up a movie theater there. Feeling this would be detrimental to the best interests of Highland Park, loyal citizens bought bonds for financing the deal and Mr. Fletcher was paid in full for his property - \$30,500. The title was put in the name of the incorporated Community Service. Their treasurer, Mrs. Grundy of the Nor Shore Trust & Savings Bank handled the transaction. Both of the occupying organizations vacated so that the maximum rentals could be realized. Over many years, these were collected regularly and the bonds paid off so that the day came when Community Service found itself owner of a fine piece of property completely clear. Then it seemed wise to sell it. I do not have the date of this sale but the selling price was \$70,000. A token program of community recreation had been carried on without a center but with a director who used the rooms of the local chapter of Elks and various schools and churches for his activities. This continued until the end of 1939. At that time Marshall Field & Co. was bidding on the property at the corner of Central Ave. and Greenbay Road on which stood the handsome Old City Hall, the Fire Station and the Jail. Community Service still had \$60,000 in the bank. On December 14, 1939, they made an offer to the City Council of \$40,000 for this property retaining a sufficient sum for remodeling and furnishing the Old City Hall as a recreation center. They also agreed to operate a program of recreation until such time as the City would take this over at which time they agreed to return the property to the City. This was a good offer and it was unanimously accepted. You know the sequel to this story. Lot #21 was returned to the City in 1941. On it the Government erected a U.S.O. building and handed all over to the City at the close of the war. It was sold in 1950 for \$18,000 to Lodge 446 of the Order of the Moose. Lots #19 and #20 had been returned to the City in 1944. There were sold to the V.F.W. and to John F. Leonardi respectively for \$25,100, and \$24,130. So the City of Highland Park collected in all \$107,230 for a property valued at \$37,075 in 1939.



# Highland Park Community Center

549 CENTRAL AVENUE

TELEPHONE 2442

HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS

## NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETINGS

### TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Notice is hereby given of a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Highland Park Community Center.

The meeting is to be held on Wednesday evening, May 3, at 8 p.m. The meeting is to be held in the lounge of the Community Center.

The purpose of the meeting is (1) To adopt the necessary resolution to recommend that the corporation be dissolved; and (2) To adopt a plan of distribution of assets of our corporation. (As you know it is our plan to turn over our assets to the City of Highland Park to be used by the Playground & Recreation Board.)

The above resolution and plan of distribution is then to be presented to the members of the corporation having voting rights, for action.

April 24, 1944

George Scheuchpfler Secretary

### TO COMMUNITY CENTER MEMBERS:

Notice is also given that following the special meeting of the Board of Directors, there is called a special meeting of the members of the Community Center. It will be held on the same date and at the same place.

The purpose of the meeting is to act on (1) a resolution to dissolve the corporation; and (2) a recommended plan for the distribution of the assets of the corporation known as the Community Center.

April 24, 1944

George Scheuchpfler Secretary

P.S. Will you please make every effort possible to attend this most important meeting. The Executive Committee hopes for a 100% meeting. Dont fail them.

"Mr. X"



CHICAGO TRIBUNE, SATURDAY, APRIL 17, 1965

## Highland Park Sets Bond Vote

Highland Park residents will vote Tuesday on a \$150,000 bond issue to build an addition to the municipal recreation center at 1850 Green Bay rd.

The two-story addition will be built on the north side of the existing center, which was built in 1949 and 1950 with a \$200,000 bond issue. Those bonds are to be retired this year.

Officials of the playground and recreation board said that the addition is needed to accommodate expanding population. They estimated that the population of Highland Park will expand to 50,000 by 1980. The present population is 29,000.

The addition would provide three assembly rooms, four social rooms, three reading rooms, three indoor game rooms, three arts and crafts rooms and seven multiple use rooms.

The present recreation building has a gymnasium, a community room, a recreation room, an arts and crafts room, a meeting room, and three rooms used for club meetings.