

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

U S O

★ ★ ★

NUMBER TWO

★ ★ ★

715 Commerce Street
Tacoma, Washington

YMCA Operated



September 4, 1942—March 30, 1947

THE UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICE
THE NATIONAL TRAVELERS AID ASSOCIATION
THE NATIONAL JEWISH WELFARE BOARD
THE SALVATION ARMY

BRIEF HISTORY

USO No. 2 was dedicated September 4, 1942. Those who played an important part in establishing this club were: The Reverend D. C. Stephenson, J. C. Haley, James L. Beck, Rabbi Bernard Rosenberg, Senator Harry P. Cain, then Mayor of Tacoma, C. J. Shaw, Dr. L. C. Bowling, and the late Dr. E. E. Elmore.

An interesting feature of the building which we presently occupy is the fact that it housed the Army-Navy Club during World War I.

The club operated under the direction of Ray L. Vaughn, until December of 1943, when he was transferred to the Buchanan Street USO Club in San Francisco, California. Bennie D. Brown, who was then assistant to Ray Vaughn, became Director of the club, and has continued in charge. His program assistants are Verneta E. Hill and Marie S. Jackson.

After operating for two years, it became increasingly apparent that more space was needed to accommodate the large crowds of service men and service women stationed at Fort Lewis and the surrounding areas. A committee was appointed to work out plans to be presented to the Community Council, USO Council and Council of Social Agencies. This committee reported that the building to the north of the original club building could be renovated and conditioned for approximately \$10,000.00. The money was appropriated by our USO National Headquarters for this expansion.

Dedicatory services for this new annex took place July 23, 1944. Commander Seabury C. Mastick, national chairman of the Army-Navy YMCA delivered the principal address. The Mayor of the city, and many high ranking officials from Army and Navy participated in the dedicatory program, which was broadcast by Radio Station KMO of the Mutual Broadcasting System. This expansion made USO No. 2 one of the most beautiful clubs on the Coast.

The following facilities have been available to service personnel: dark room, music room, hobby room, game room, showers, sleeping accommodations (under the supervision of the Council of Churches), library and snack bar.

The number of our hostesses and volunteers has always been small. However, they all deserve a place in the sun for their long hours of untiring service. They realized that we were handicapped because of the scarcity of volunteers, and have done double duty at times, to help us carry on our work more effectively. The club has been in operation for four and one half years, and during this time nearly a million service personnel, war production workers, and civilians have passed through our doors.

There are six national agencies which operate USO clubs throughout continental United States. They are: The National Catholic Community Service, National Jewish Welfare Board, Salvation Army, National Travelers Aid Association, the Young Women's Christian Association and the International Committee of Young Men's Christian Associations. This club is operated by the last named organization, with offices at 347 Madison Avenue, New York City.



Where The Mountains Meet The Sea

USO No. 2, located at 715 Commerce Street, in the heart of downtown Tacoma, is just one half block from the City Hall. The windows of the library and game room look out over the sparkling blue waters of Puget Sound, and beyond in the distance may be seen the beautiful Cascade Range and majestic Mount Rainier, eternally covered with snow. (snow capped) Ships bringing wounded and war-weary veterans from the South Pacific theatre of war have been berthed at vast piers just a stone's throw from the club. The Fort Lewis and McChord Field bus stations are less than two blocks away, and Union Station, where fast trains leave hourly for all parts of the nation, is within walking distance. A strategically located unit, USO No. 2 is one of the most beautiful USO clubs on the Pacific Coast, if not in the entire United States.

**MEMBERS OF
USO COUNCIL OF TACOMA**

1947

James Anderson
Mrs. Gordon Baker
James Beck
Joe C. Beckman
Ella Bennett
Bennie D. Brown
A. B. Comfort
Mrs. Alice Creswell
L. L. Dawley
Mayor Val Fawcett
Mrs. James Garvin
Edward J. Gazecki
Fred Haley
Eva Hancock
Arthur Hayes
Miss Verneta Hill
Dr. Lewis A. Hopkins
Warren Y. Hull
Morris Kleiner
Mrs. James M. Koon
Bernice Landry
Rev. O. G. Loftness

Leo McGavick
Mrs. C. E. McIntyre
J. E. Morris
M. J. Muckey
Mrs. Bruce Nelson
Jacqueline Noel
Ralph Noerenberg
Mrs. C. C. Parker
Charles T. Pearson
James Phillips
Arthur Rowan
Lester Seinfeld
Erna Servoss
C. J. Shaw
Roy Smith
Mrs. Calvin Stewart
Mrs. C. A. Strong
Ernest Tanner
Major William Thompson
Rev. Loyal Vickers
Mrs. Corydon Wagner
Herbert W. Ward

**Past Council Chairmen
PAST COUNCIL CHAIRMEN**

MRS. F. R. TITCOMB EARL MARBLE

Present Staff:

Bennie D. Brown, Director
Verneta E. Hill, Program Assistant
Marie S. Jackson, Program Assistant
Helen B. Stafford, Office Manager
Jacqueline Spearman, Program Secretary
Rose Bowers, Canteen Manager
Iona Lander, Canteen
Lennie Hayes, Housekeeper
Henry Hollins, Custodian

Former Staff Members:

James Allen
Cleora Cabell
Jesse Henderson
Druetta McCabe
Willard McCleary
Paul McCree
Edwin E. Parker
Eugene Perry
Caesar E. Smith
Holloway Smith
Ray L. Vaughn

OPERATING COMMITTEE . . . USO No. 2



Bottom row, reading from left to right: Mrs. Maude Leonard, Miss Ella Bennett, Mr. Arthur Hayes, Chairman, Mr. Arthur Dixon, Mr. James Beck.

Top row, from left to right: Reverend E. B. Wilson, Mr. Ernest Tanner, Mr. James Claxton, Reverend Noble Lee, Mr. C. J. Shaw.

Absent when this picture was made: Mr. Fred U. Harris, Mr. Barney Rucker, Mr. Jack Tanner.

The Operating Committee of USO No. 2 did more than just advise. In the darkest days of the war, when our load was heaviest, they came into the club and worked behind the Snack Bar, in the check room, conducted games and gave counsel. When troop ships were returning veterans from the Pacific theater of war at Christmas of 1945, in such large numbers, that Fort Lewis separation center could not accommodate them, and the club was forced to operate on a 24-hour basis, members of the Operating Committee volunteered to man the club all night to relieve the professional staff.

MRS. MAUDE LEONARD . . . 5,000 hours



We are proud of all of our volunteers, and today we are giving due recognition to those who have labored diligently in this club. Mrs. Maude Leonard, as Chairman of the Religious Education Committee and the Hospital Committee, and member of the Operating Committee, tops the lists of all volunteers in hours served. Even though the USO is closing, Mrs. Leonard has agreed to continue her work for the men at Madigan General Hospital by heading the committee on Recreation and Home Hospitality. GOOD LUCK! MRS LEONARD!

HOSTESS AWARDS

75 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteers

Mrs. Lurline Allen
Mrs. James Claxton
Mrs. Allie Crowell
Mrs. E. E. Elmore
Mrs. Sarah Jenkins
Mrs. Catherine Johnstone
Mrs. Carrie Majors
Mrs. Barney Rucker
Mrs. Ernest Tanner
Mrs. W. H. Walker
Mrs. Joe Williams
Mrs. E. B. Wilson

Junior Volunteers

Betty Biffle
Mrs. Janice Brown
Esther Fuller
Nettie Cabell
Marie Gaston
Justina Hampton
Jessie Jefferson
Marie Jordan
Mrs. Iris Leath
Vera Mae McGuffery
Lulla Mitchel
Mrs. Sadie Myers
Margaret K. Smith
Flora White
Mrs. Edward Wilson

150 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteers

Mrs. A. L. Buck
Mrs. Ella Davis
Mrs. Grace Dupree
Mrs. Henry Ellis
Mrs. Eddie Gibson
Mrs. Carroll Jenkins
Mrs. Frances McDaniels
Mrs. Catherine Myers

Junior Volunteers

Mrs. Sadie Armstead
Mrs. Florence Bailey
Elma Barnes

150 HOUR CLUB

Junior Volunteers

La Verne Biffle
Mrs. Lucie Blanco
Charlotte Brooks
Velma Brooks
Mrs. Helen Brown
Mrs. Myrtle Brown
Lois Carper
Mrs. Arrye Carter
Thelma Cleveland
Mrs. Gwendolyn Dickens
Mrs. Fannie Franklin
Josephine Gayle
Betty Houston
Mrs. Barbara Jackson
Arzel Jefferson
Mrs. Millicent Jones
Margie Luckett
Mrs. Viola Ruther
Ora Shortridge
Eloise Washington
Marian Webb
Doris Wilson
Dolene Woods
Phonsenette Woods

300 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteers

Mrs. Mary Cabell
Mrs. Maxine Chew
Mrs. Janice Duerson
Mrs. Annie Dupree
Mrs. Wortha Hamilton
Mrs. Minnie Harris
Helen Lennox
Mrs. Eliza McCabe
Mrs. Edna Moore
Mrs. Mary Pryor
Mrs. Lena Smith
Mrs. Atha Taylor
George W. Hamilton

Junior Volunteers

Mrs. Mary Ellen Hallion
Alee Hampton
Jacqueline B. Spearman
Bernice Thomas
Mrs. Mary White

500 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteers

Ella Bennett
James Claxton
Arthur Dixon
Fred U. Harris
Rev. Noble Lee
Barney Rucker
C. J. Shaw
Rev. E. B. Wilson

1,000 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteers

Mrs. Lila A. Brown
Mrs. Ethel Butler
Mrs. Laurel Covington
Rev. J. E. Roberts
Robertta Weber

1,000 HOUR CLUB

Junior Volunteers

Jacqueline A. Gibson
Bettie Rucker

2,000 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteers

James L. Beck
Mrs. Sarah Bryant
Mrs. Arthur L. Hayes
Arthur L. Hayes
Mrs. Helen B. Stafford
Ernest Tanner

5,000 HOUR CLUB

Senior Volunteer

Mrs. Maude Leonard

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CERTIFICATES

All-American Youth Revue—Edgar Johnson, Conductor

Allen AME Church—Rev. Noble Lee, Pastor

Bethlehem Baptist Church—Rev. E. B. Wilson, Pastor

Elks Lodge—Fred Chew, Exalted Ruler

Soroptimist Club—Mrs. Blanche Wilkinson, President

The requirements for the Distinguished Service Awards are prescribed by our National Headquarters. In the Tacoma area organizations which have been active in USO clubs are eligible for this award if they have met the standards set up by the National office.



SUNDAY DINNER IN A REAL HOME—Pfc. Maurice Hylton, 230 West 111th St., New York City, registers with USO Hostess Justine Hampton, 2309 South Eye St., Tacoma, in the Commerce Street USO Club in Tacoma, Washington where USO lists home folks who are glad to entertain GIs with real hospitality.



At ease and thoroughly relaxed at one of our cabaret parties.



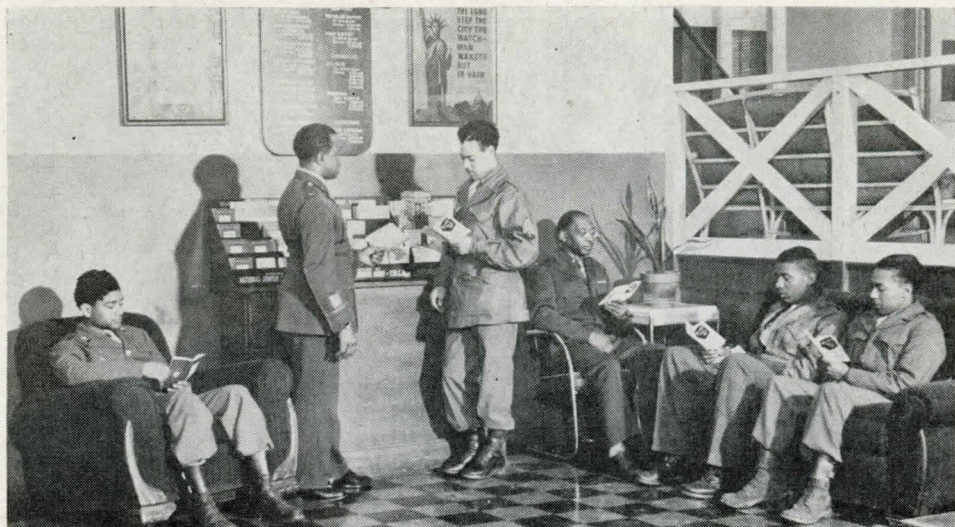
The main auditorium of USO No. 2 was decorated with beautiful transparencies by the Washington State Progress Commission. This project was under the supervision of Bert Smyser. The cabaret setting above indicates the tremendous amount of space available for activities of this type.



This group of Junior Hostesses entertained the BSO (Boys Service Organization) as well as the thousands of servicemen who came into our club.



The smiling faces of these senior hostesses indicate the cheerful manner in which they went about the job of serving coffee and sandwiches each Sunday evening at 5:00. These Sunday evening Coffee Hours were one of the most popular activities of the club, for the lonely GI knew he was sure of a cheery greeting, and a friendly word of welcome from these motherly hostesses.



The spiritual needs of our service personnel were adequately cared for at USO No. 2. Over 750,000 pieces of religious literature were distributed during the 4½ years of the club's operation. The above photograph indicates the serene atmosphere enjoyed by service men on Sunday mornings during our meditation hour.



Advice from an elder is often a boon to young servicemen. George W. Hamilton, 5331 North Highland, Tacoma, senior host at the Commerce Street USO Club in Tacoma, is shown discussing problems with Corp. James A. Kelly, 624 Orange St., Henderson, S. C.; Pvt. Theodore Thomas, 250 Manhattan Ave., New York City and St./M 1/c George Prater, 917 Titsingh Ave., Port Arthur, Texas.



One of the toughest things about the Army was being away from home at Christmas. To be hospitalized, in addition, was doubly hard. USO No. 2 came to the rescue with Christmas parties such as the one in the above photograph. Jolly hostesses, a "real" Santa Claus, and a gift for each GI made time hang less heavily on the hands of these men—all patients from Madigan General Hospital, Fort Lewis, Washington.



Springtime, laughing children, flowers, Easter rabbits,—all these things spell joyous entertainment for the service man. The above photograph shows a group of youngsters who gave an Easter program at USO No. 2 for men from Fort Lewis, McChord Field and surrounding areas. After the program, the children distributed Easter eggs to over 500 men. The fellows enjoyed the affair so much that a repeat "command" performance was given the following Sunday at Chapel No. 4, Fort Lewis, Wash.



The above photograph shows a happy group of Wacs appearing on a special Mother's Day program which they arranged and put on at USO No. 2.

As soon as it was apparent that women would be needed to prosecute World War II, USO immediately began making plans for services to woman. They too, enjoyed the facilities of our club and similar clubs all over the United States. During the early part of 1944 when the housing situation in Tacoma was acute, USO No. 2 set up 75 beds to take care of the week-end overnight housing needs of these young women. When informed that USO No. 2 had set up temporary sleeping quarters for service women, Captain Irma Cayton, Company F—Wac Service Command Unit 1907, stated: "It is indeed gratifying to know that USO will provide overnight sleeping facilities for our girls when they are in the city of Tacoma. This clearly indicates that USO and the community appreciate the contribution women are making to the war effort."



The photograph above shows one of the unique activities held in our club. "Be Kind To Animals" week was celebrated with a mammoth dog show. Service men assisted in planning and putting over the program. There were ribbons for the prize winners—all owned by youngsters in the city. Large dogs and small were running throughout the building much to the delight of the GIs. The above photograph was published in the National Humane Review.

THE LITTLE THINGS

Dusty and dishevelled, she stepped wearily from the taxi in front of the USO Club—one arm full of nondescript bundles, in the other, a tired, crying baby. Straight to the office, she came: "Can you help me find my husband? He was supposed to meet me at the station, but he wasn't there."

It was an old story—wife and baby arrive, husband is confined to camp, or meets the wrong train.

But USO is prepared for just such emergencies. A friendly worker takes the tired wife to the ladies lounge, and while she freshens up, a telephone call is put through to the Red Cross at the Post. Warm milk for the baby, hot coffee for the mother and in no time at all, an anxious GI rushes in, and life is good again for another service man and his family.

* * * *

Another young wife arrives—no husband on hand. Call after call to his Company by Red Cross reveals no information as to his whereabouts. After a day of fruitless effort, the USO worker takes over personally and drives the frantic wife to the Army Post. Enlisting the aid of a friendly Chaplain, they finally locate the missing GI in the Stockade, where he is serving a six-month sentence. His wife may not even see him except for one hour on Sunday afternoon.

The Chaplain acts as intermediary, and carries messages back and forth between husband and wife. Finally after two heart-breaking weeks, the wife gives up the struggle with army red tape, and returns to her home in Mississippi.

* * * *

"This is Special Service Office calling from Fort Lewis, Washington. We have a problem confronting us, which we think you people in USO may be able to help us solve. There are several hundred Negro Wacs coming into Fort Lewis soon, and we understand that it will be difficult for them to locate suitable overnight housing facilities, when they have weekend passes. Have you any suggestions as to what can be done?"

The hostess replied: "At the present time, I am not sure, but we will take the matter under advisement, and consult with our Operating Committee. I will call you back as soon as anything definite is worked out."

After conferring with the Operating Committee, the club Director wired the New York office for advice. An immediate answer was received by wire: "Suggest that you set aside a portion of your building, install curtains and set up cots for overnight housing."

No sooner said than done, and overnight housing became a reality for several hundred Wacs at Fort Lewis.

PROGRAM

- The Star Spangled Banner *Audience*
- Invocation *Rabbi Bernard Rosenberg*
Temple Beth Israel
- Vocal Solo *Cpl. Charles Collins*
Accompanist, Captain Joe Jordan (ret.)
- Greetings on Behalf of the Operating Committee *Mr. Arthur L. Hayes*
- Greetings on Behalf of the City of Tacoma *Mayor C. Val Fawcett*
- Introduction of Regional Officers:
Remarks *Mr. Merle Piper*
Pacific Regional Supervisor, Army-Navy YMCA
- Remarks *Miss Eva Hancock*
Area Representative United Service Organizations
- Vocal Solo—"THE PALMS" *Mrs. E. E. Elmore*
- Greetings on Behalf of the State of Washington *Governor Mon C. Wallgren*
- Report of the USO Reconversion Committee *Mrs. Fred Haley, Chairman*
- "God Bless America" *Audience*
Led by Captain Joe Jordan
- "What USO Has Meant to the Army" *Major-General Paul W. Kendall*
Commanding General of Fort Lewis and the Second Infantry Division
- Song Honoring the Second Division
Composed and Played by Captain Joe Jordan
- "The Work of the USO in Relation to the Navy"
. *Rear Admiral George H. Fort*
Headquarters, 13th Naval District, Seattle, Washington
- Presentation of Awards *Mr. Ralph Noerenberg*
Chairman, USO Council of Tacoma
- Benediction *Mr. E. B. Wilson*
Bethlehem Baptist Church

MRS. ELIZA McCABE—*Mistress of Ceremonies*

USO MUSIC FESTIVALS

Summer in the Pacific Northwest is a season of rare beauty, and USO personnel in the area, realizing the appeal of the great outdoors, planned a gigantic Music Festival in July of 1945.

Point Defiance Park, where the Festival was held, has one of the most beautiful natural amphitheaters in the entire United States. In the background, stately swans floated gracefully on a quiet lagoon, and the flowers which bloomed in almost tropic profusion, outdid the brilliant coloring of the massed flags of the United Nations, which formed a backdrop for the performers on the stage.

Army and navy personnel participated in this program, and more than 10,000,000 persons were in attendance. Popular demand from both the Army and Navy for a repeat performance was accepted as a challenge by the USO clubs, and another outdoor Festival was planned in July of 1946, at the same park. This was indeed one of the most stimulating events ever held in the Pacific Northwest for the entertainment of service personnel. Thousands of men from the Army and Navy were brought in from Seattle, Bremerton, Fort Lewis, McChord Field, Fort Lawton and Tacoma Naval Barracks to witness this second mammoth USO Music Festival.

Some of the best musical talent in the country was available at the surrounding military installations, and they gladly responded to the call to participate. In addition to military personnel, the most outstanding civilian talent was also secured.

To help celebrate the event, Colonel Maxwell G. Keller, Commanding Officer of the Madigan General Hospital, installed the Hush-a-Tone System in the wards, to enable the men unable to attend the event, to hear the program.

The magnitude of the event and the splendid array of talent so interested Radio Station KMO that the entire program was broadcast over the Mutual Network.



Robert Brown of the Navy, then stationed in Bremerton, Washington, sang "Because" and "Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen." Mr. Brown is a well known Baritone soloist, and before entering the service was the featured soloist of Al Sears' Band of New York City.



Cpl. Neil Tweedon of Chicago, Illinois, sang "No More Trouble." He was accompanied by the 362nd Army Band, directed by Warrant Officer, Charles S. Spaulding of Boston, Mass. Cpl. Tweedon is a nationally known singer.



The Pacific Northwest 70 piece Youth Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Dr. Francis Aranyi. Their performance was hailed as outstanding and equal to the performance of many adult symphony orchestras.



Joseph S. Powe, with back to camera, is directing the Bremerton Naval Ammunition Depot Choir as they render "Joshua Fit The Battle of Jericho." Before coming into the Navy, Mr. Powe was director of the famous "Wings Over Jordan Choir" which is heard each Sunday morning over the Columbia Broadcasting System.



A part of the crowd of more than 10,000 people which attended the second annual USO Music Festival at Point Defiance Park in Tacoma, Washington.



DORIE MILLER, HERO OF PEARL HARBOR. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, Dorie Miller, messman, manned the gun of a wounded comrade, and shot down four Japanese planes. He was decorated with the Navy Cross, and later killed in action. Dorie spent many evenings in USO Number Two. He is shown above with Druetta McCabe, then hostess at this club.

And So, Thanks and Farewell!

The sands in our glass are running low—our song is sung. To the many friends and volunteers of USO Number Two, who gave so unstintingly of their time and energy, go our best wishes.

We hope that the pattern of cooperation fostered by USO Number Two in this community, will ever remain a challenge to other organizations interested in intercultural and interracial understanding. The crystal ball tells us that there is a bright future for all mankind if the spirit of cooperation which was so manifestly obvious in USO Number Two is continued in the world of tomorrow.

History will record our good deeds and our bad, and the scale must tip in favor of the good deeds, if mankind is to survive.

—BENNIE D. BROWN, *Director*



This booklet was made possible for distribution to our volunteers by the following concerns: B. A. Almvig Music Company, Carstens Packing Company, Phil J. Clary, Cliff Sign Company, Cozza Poultry Company, Harold E. Dahl Company, Electric Motor Service Company, Jordan Baking Company, Medowsweet Dairies, Inc., Murtough Supply Company, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Oursler Pie Company, Paulson Products Company, Stevens Motor Company, St. Helen's Florist Company, Tacoma Auto Sales Company, Tacoma Billiard Supply Company, Jesse O. Thomas Company, West Coast Grocery.