



ARRANGED BY THE CURUNDU CIVIC COUNCIL YOUR HOSTS FOR THE EVENING

7:30 P. M. OPENING CEREMONIES AT CURUNDU THEATRE

Invocation by Chaplain Palmer P. Pierce

Address of Welcome by H. W. Northrop, President of Curundu Civic Council

Address by Major General Glen E. Edgerton, Governor of The Panama Canal

Address by Lieutenant General George H. Brett, Commanding General, Caribbean Defense Command

8:00 P. M.

INSPECTION OF CLUBHOUSE, COMMISSARY AND POST OFFICE

EXHIBITION BOWLING MATCHES AT CLUBHOUSE

UNTIL

DANCING IN CLUBHOUSE BALLROOM - Music by Sixth
Air Force Orchestra

11:00 P. M.

ICE CREAM, CAKE AND COCA-COLA SERVED IN CLUBHOUSE RESTAURANT THROUGHOUT THE EVENING - No charge

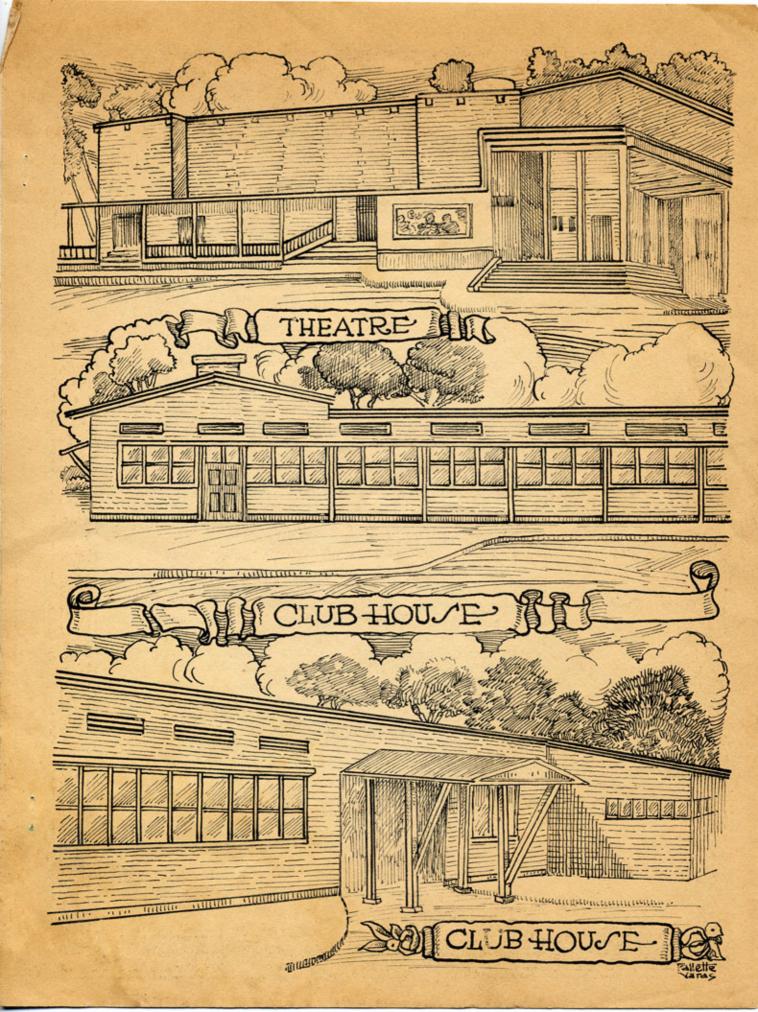
8:45 P. M.

ABBOTT & COSTELLO IN "HIT THE ICE" AT CURUNDU THEATRE - No Charge

BEFORE THE CLOSE OF THE EVENING, GOVERNOR EDGERTON WILL MAIL THE FIRST LETTER AT THE CURUNDU POST OFFICE

CURUNDU CENTER - CURUNDU, CANAL ZONE

AUGUST 31, 1943



To The Residents

The Community Center is completed, and is turned over herewith to you of Curundu for your use and enjoyment.

As finally constructed, the Community Center, nestled as it is in the palm of the hand of which the various streets constitute the fingers, and grouped around the four corners of 4th and Main Streets, includes a theatre, a post office, a commissary and a clubhouse. The area immediately surrounding the Center is elaborately paved and landscaped, with ample parking areas provided.

The theatre, built to accommodate over 900 patrons, is completely inclosed and ventilated, and will be operated by the Army Motion Picture Service.

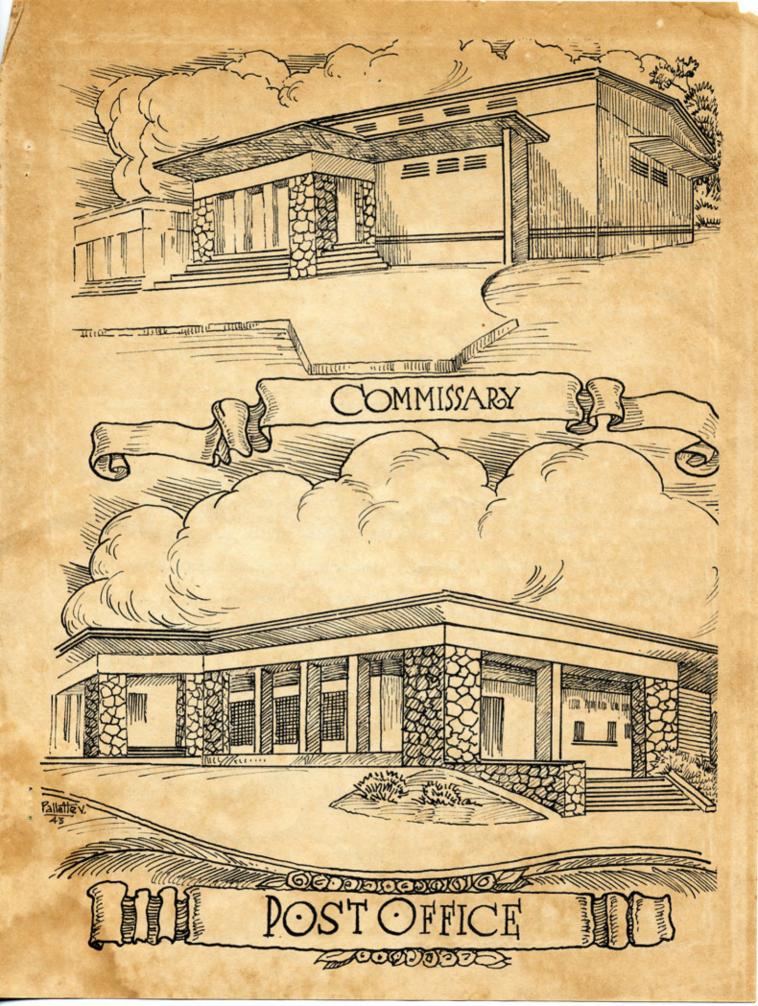
The post office, operated by the Bureau of Posts of The Panama Canal, contains not only postal facilities, but also the offices of the Housing Manager. The post office officially opens for business tomorrow, 1 September 1943.

The commissary, operated by the Panama Railroad Commissary Division as a branch of that system, will be stocked with the essentials for a community of this size. In addition to food, a few selected articles of daily use, such as bowling shoes, will be placed on sale.

The clubhouse, operated by the Panama Engineer Division, contains a number of activities beneath its roof. A large ballroom will be available for dances, lectures, bridge parties, meetings, and other activities of similar scope. A cafeteria restaurant, operated by a concessionaire, can seat 150 at one time. Provision for expansion far beyond this seating capacity has been arranged, however. A soda fountain and newsstand, as well as refreshments to be served in the bowling alleys, will be operated by this concessionaire. A barber shop and beauty parlor, operated also by concession, will furnish tonsorial needs at standard prices. Eight bowling alleys, two pool tables, and one billiard table, operated directly by personnel of the Panama Engineer Division, will be available.

All of the above facilities, intended to be self-supporting with questions of profit of secondary interest, are presented for your recreation and entertainment. I sincerely hope that you will enjoy them.

Colonel, Corps of Engineers Division Engineer





AUTUMN, 1939. Machete gang starts clearing site for Curundu Heights.

FEBRUARY, 1940. Footings poured for quarters.

MAY, 1940. First residents move into frame quarters at Curundu Heights. Among them are Raymond V. Parker, now heading the Electrical Unit, Engineering Branch, Panama Engineer Division, Tivoli Office, and George Foote, of Supply Branch, Corozal. Marguerite Riley, Chief of the Fiscal Sub-Unit, and Viola Riley, of the same office, follow shortly. Early residents refer to area as "Buzzards Roost," because during first weeks they lived without gas, electricity, ice.

AUTUMN, 1940. Acute shortage of quarters for employees of War Department. Plans are made to relieve this and provide for incoming employees of the Panama Air Depot, then already under construction. A "Low-Cost Housing" project is authorized and site selected in uncut jungle on Albrook Field for the community now called "Curundu." Construction begins in November, with the building of the main highway.

FEBRUARY, 1941. Construction of "Low Cost" quarters starts and moves briskly.

SPRING, 1941. Bachelor quarters occupied though doors are missing, there are no screens in windows, and nearest running water is a construction hydrant two blocks down the road. Insects, iguana, snakes, coati, monkeys, wild pigs and other creatures still sharing the area cause inhabitants to refer to it by comic-strip names. Among the more popular are "Punkin' Center" and "Skunk Hollow," the latter a neighborhood well known to friends of "Lil' Abner."

JULY 2, 1941. Leonard T. Collins, his wife, and eight children become first occupants of family quarters. He was then working with construction crew, is now Carpenter Foreman with the Manufacturing Branch, Maintenance Section, Panama Engineer Division. Louise Vargas, still in the Housing Manager's Office, came the next day, and Neuman Dudrow, Plumbing Foreman, followed shortly.

AUGUST, 1941. Rene Espejo, Chilean artist, now with Manufacturing Branch, Corozal, paints a portrait of Odie Skunk as a decoration for the front of the bachelor barracks. Every taxi-driver in town now knows the road to "Skunk Hollow."

DEC. 6, 1941. Six-sevenths of quarters in present Curundu are substantially complete except for grading, roads, walks, drainage, etcetera.



DEC. 7, 1941. Japanese attack Pearl Harbor. Machinery, men and materials are diverted from present Curundu to more urgent projects.

S. J. Sperendi, Chief, Purchasing and Contracting Unit, Panama Air Depot, and R. L. Hamblen, Principal Storekeeper, become first PAD residents of Curundu.

JANUARY, 1943. Urgent projects have progressed to point where basic plans for community can proceed. Drainage problems are analyzed in greater detail than at first contemplated.

FEBRUARY, 1943. Some 200 women employees of the Panama Engineer Division arrive from the States and are quartered in the Northern section of present Curundu. Name of area is changed from "Skunk Hollow" to "Jungle Glen" in official mail.

MARCH, 1943. Curundu Heights, Diablo Terrace and area surrounding present community center designated as civilian areas by order of Commanding General.

SPRING, 1943. Controversy breaks out over whether name of area is "Skunk Hollow" or "Jungle Glen." Colonel George Mayo, Division Engineer, appoints committee to consider suggestions, recommend a permanent name to the Commanding General.

Community center buildings are designed by architects and engineers of the Panama Engineer Division, who carefully coordinate design with needs of using agencies. Theatre is started April 14th, Clubhouse May 4th, Post Office May 11th and Commissary June 4th.

Name "Curundu" overwhelmingly approved at mass meeting; it is submitted by committee and adopted by Commanding General. Street names are chosen and signs put up at corners.

JULY, 1943. Curundu Civic Council chosen by formal vote of residents in Curundu, Curundu Heights and Diablo Terrace.

AUG. 31, 1943. Theatre, Commissary, Post Office and Clubhouse - including a ballroom, bowling alleys, game room, cafeteria-restaurant, soda fountain, newsstand, barber shop and beauty parlor - are ready for operation following the Grand Opening tonight. Parking facilities and
roads are ample, drainage is provided for, sidewalks are laid on
Main Street, basic landscaping is finished and the grounds made
ready for residents to complete the landscaping of the whole area
according to master plan.

From The Gouncil

The Civic Council hopes that this event will bring a closer mutual understanding between the residents and their elected representatives on the Council, and will foster a healthy feeling of community spirit and neighborliness.

The aims of the Civic Council are broadly: to develop individual interest in the general welfare of our community; to provide a forum where we, the residents, can present, discuss, and consider matters of importance for the interest of the community at large; and to bring to the attention of the proper authorities recommendations for improvements of conditions and activities pertaining to our general welfare.

The Council needs your support, both moral and active, in order that we may attain our aims, and make our community one in which we can well take civic pride and interest. You will be given the opportunity to offer such support at open meetings of the Council which will be held periodically and frequently henceforth.

In closing, the Council, on behalf of all the residents, wishes to express its deep appreciation to Colonel George Mayo, the Division Engineer, Panama Engineer Division, for the keen personal interest he has taken in this project from the first preliminary sketches to the opening ceremonies tonight. We wish to thank him and his staff for the excellent work accomplished in the short months since the release of men from toppriority war-work became possible, and for its culmination in the beautiful buildings and area which are now your Community Center.

The Council in return promises close cooperation with the Maintenance Section of the Panama Engineer Division, to the end that civic interest is developed and maintained at a high level — resulting in individual interest in maintaining wholesome, clean and picturesque surroundings.

THE CURUNDU CIVIC COUNCIL

H. W. NORTHROP
President

IRA J. VANN Vice-President S. J. SPERENDI Secretary-Treasurer

WALTER C. BLACKBURN

CLARE E. HAMILTON

VICTOR PESEVENTE

MAUREY P. BOONE

EDWARD J. LEVY

J. FRANK SHIPLEY

CLAUDE R. STONE

BRAYTON A. TRUMBLE

