

**TOWARD  
FULLER  
LIVING** Through  
Public Housing and  
Leisure Time Activities

By ABRAHAM GOLDFELD

THE  
National Public Housing Conference  
Publisher

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# Toward Fuller Living

through

## PUBLIC HOUSING and LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

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By ABRAHAM GOLDFELD

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*Published by*

THE NATIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING CONFERENCE

112 EAST 19TH STREET

NEW YORK CITY



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD .....	3
INTRODUCTION .....	5
PUBLIC HOUSING AND LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES .....	7
EUROPE SHOWS THE WAY .....	10
SUNNYSIDE .....	15
"THE TOWN FOR THE MOTOR AGE" .....	32
WORKERS CAN COOPERATE—THE AMALGAMATED HOUSES.....	37
LAVANBURG HOMES .....	41
A NEGRO HOUSING PROJECT—THE DUNBAR APARTMENTS ...	44
THE ROAD AHEAD .....	46
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	55

## Foreword

GOOD housing is, after all, not an end in itself, but only a means to attaining the good and abundant life which is, consciously or unconsciously, the objective of all of us. Its importance lies in its powerful aid to physical, mental and moral health, which are themselves the elements out of which a wholesome family life is built. Family life means more than its biological functions. Recreation and education are normal human needs. Children and adults need indoor and outdoor play space. They also need social contacts. Family life at its best expands into neighborhood life.

Mr. Goldfeld's study of public housing and leisure is most timely. The National Recovery Act offers opportunities for the rapid spread of low-cost housing over the nation which would have sounded like a pipe dream two years ago. The Division of Housing in the Administration of Public Works is concerned not only with house plans and lay-outs but with the provision of parks, playgrounds and other recreational facilities. It is especially interested in problems of management and of policy during the twenty-five to thirty years' life of its contracts. It hopes to safeguard the continuance of socially useful policies even after the federal loans have been repaid.

A great deal of pioneering work, with much setting of standards and establishment of precedents, is likely to be done within the next few months. We have so little American experience to guide us that what we have becomes particularly precious. Even so, we are much better off in the field of the architect and city planner than in what might be called social engineering. Mr. Goldfeld has rendered a real service in bringing together the available facts concerning five outstanding American experiments in organized community life.

As supervisor of the Lavanburg Homes from the beginning, Mr. Goldfeld has had a uniquely valuable experience. He has had to face the whole range of problems, from the first sifting and selection of tenants, through the routine of house management and rent collecting, to the organization of various social and educational activities for men and women, boys and girls. At every step, decisions had to be made on fundamental policies. To his combination of social vision and practical judgment are to be attributed the success of a difficult undertaking, which had no precedents in the United States to guide it.

When he points to the fact that four of his five exhibits (the exception being Radburn, the latest in date) made the mistake of not planning adequately for the social and recreational life which ought to have been foreseen, when he shows that a majority of people do take advantage of opportunities offered, and that they do in varying degrees take over the responsibilities of management, he speaks with the authority of first-hand experience. If those who are planning housing developments profit by the lesson, they will not only include in their original lay-out ample space indoors and outdoors for leisure-time activities, but they will give at least as much thought to the recreational direction as to the business management of their new community.

EDITH ELMER WOOD

## Introduction

HERE is practically no written material available on the subject of social, recreational and educational activities in housing developments. Today millions of dollars have been made available for new housing by the Public Works Administration. Several states have passed laws providing for public housing. Announcements of a number of municipal housing projects have been made. The majority of these developments will be large scale operations in which thousands of families will dwell, and naturally the question of their participation in social, recreational and educational activities is a vital one.

In the future the success of the public housing movement will be measured chiefly on the basis of its contribution toward making human life happier and richer. Fruitful and satisfying use of leisure time is one of the ways to be happy. Public housing bodies therefore cannot fail to take this splendid opportunity to include in their plans facilities for leisure time activities.

In order that public housing may benefit by the experiences of older developments this study has been undertaken.

Sunnyside built in 1924, the Amalgamated Houses, Lavanburg Homes and Dunbar Apartments built in 1928 and Radburn commenced in 1929, represent housing developments to which thought and effort had been given to incorporate in their plans facilities providing the residents with opportunities for recreation, social participation and education.

It would be erroneous to assume that these projects are the only ones in this country in which social activities in connection with housing are to be found. There are several others where some sort of social activities are carried on, but in none of them are they as comprehensive as those described in this pamphlet.

European housing projects with social activities are presented because of their great influence on our concepts and because they show that the trend toward inclusion of opportunities for social, recreational and educational activities in housing is a universal movement.

Sunnyside has been studied most extensively by the writer because it was the first planned housing development in New York City. Here considerable effort has been made to meet the social and recreational needs of the residents.

The others included are:

Radburn, because it is unique as a modern town created from the ground up by the City Housing Corporation, where community life with various activities has been recognized as an important part of the project, and plans for which were considered before the actual construction of the buildings. Just as plans were drawn for dwellings, so plans were made for playgrounds, parks, swimming pools and other recreational and educational facilities;

Amalgamated Houses, as it is the first project built under the New York State Housing Board auspices and because it is a cooperative housing development;

Lavanburg Homes, because it is the only non-profit making housing development in this country and takes in the lowest economic group so far reached by new housing;

Dunbar Apartments, because it is the first Negro housing development where social and recreational activities have been provided for the residents.

In the preparation of this study the writer was given helpful assistance and suggestions by the following people, to whom he acknowledges his gratitude: Mr. Alexander M. Bing and Mr. Herbert Emmerich of the City Housing Corporation, New York City; Mr. Louis Brownlow and Mr. Charles S. Ascher of the Public Clearing House, Chicago, Ill.; Dr. Frederick Thrasher, New York University; Mr. C. V. McLaughlin, Representative of the City Housing Corporation at Sunnyside; Mr. Ralph McClintock, Director of Sunnyside Park; Mr. Abraham Kazan and Mr. Herman Liebman of the Amalgamated Housing Corporation; Mr. and Mrs. Roscoe Conkling Bruce of Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments; and Dr. Carol Aronovici of Columbia University and the Sunnyside residents who so cooperatively answered the writer's questionnaire.

ABRAHAM GOLDFELD

New York, April, 1934

## Public Housing and Leisure Time Activities

**T**O A man standing in line before a factory gate, begging for work at an employment agency, or tramping city streets in the drab and desperate search for a job of any sort, discussion of the use of leisure is touched with a tragic irony. At the time of this writing there are in the United States millions of men and women for whom the word leisure has this ironic implication.

Leisure, as used here, however, has nothing to do with the enforced idleness of the unemployed or the pastimes of the wealthy.

This is written in the early part of 1934 at a time when the whole social order in America is in flux. Optimistically, perhaps over-optimistically, the author looks forward to a new order where genuine leisure shall be no longer an incidental to the processes of production, a by-path from the main highway of toil, but rather the goal of all common effort. Of all the products of our power-driven civilization it seems to him the most precious is leisure.

Like so many other of our heritages from Puritan and pioneer beginnings, we are beginning to question the grim philosophy that man lives to work. Rather we maintain that man works to live and that leisure is of the essence of life itself. We have heard much of "the dignity of labor," chiefly from those who have used it to rationalize their exploitation of labor. It is time that we considered "the dignity of leisure."

The other day a minister mounted his pulpit to bemoan the fact that if shorter work hours were universally introduced in industry, the resultant leisure would demoralize our workers. Satan, he warned, would soon be busied with these idle hands. Let us be generous and assume that this holy man has never set foot inside a modern factory. A few hours spent in watching the hard-driven fingers of an operative at work on a repetitive machine-process might make him wonder whether that God whom he professes to worship intended that His creations should be thus debased. If our minister believes that the Lord in driving Adam from the Garden of Eden cursed him by ordaining that he should earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, let him remember that it was a curse and not a blessing. It shows small faith in the fundamental decency of human beings to



become alarmed over what may happen if they are allowed a little more time to themselves.

Over against this tight-lipped school of propagandists for the blessings of toil, we find another school in many respects no more beguiling. Its followers, from the megaphoned "activities director" of a summer camp to the bespectacled personnel manager of a company-union factory, are laboring at regimenting other people's leisure. Abhorrent to them is Walt Whitman's conception of the good life as loafing and "inviting the soul." If there is to be any loafing it is to be done only in the "loafing period," following which there will be setting-up exercises and rehearsals for the pageant. We have then, to add to the other paradoxes of American life, the presence of a great army of well-intentioned persons who earn comfortable livings by making other people uncomfortable. I take it that John Whitecollar and Joe Mechanic both have pretty good ideas of what they mean to do on their days off. Alert social workers long since discovered that whether it is food or advice that is handed down from above, the recipient remains singularly unresponsive.

While it is true that leisure, directed, controlled, supervised, is in reality no leisure at all, it is likewise true that leisure in the modern world is a very different thing from such leisure as people could enjoy fifty years ago. The amazing emergence of organized sports, the arrival of motor-cars, motion-pictures and the radio all follow the surge towards collectivism which marks this age out from every one that preceded it. The most militant individualist must now admit that just as it is impossible for all except hermits and multi-millionaires to live for themselves alone, so it is impossible for the run of men to spend their spare time in solitude, desirable as that might seem. "Cabin'd, cribbed, confined" in cities as the majority of Americans are, they must take their leisure where they find it, and for most that is in and about their homes.

Complexities of modern city life, pressures of a power-driven civilization, harassing as they are for adults, bear down with oppressive weight upon the children. The stark fact stands out that today for the child of the average city worker the street alone is the great outlet for recreation. An occasional settlement house or play-ground thinly scattered over great areas, cannot meet the competition of the motion-picture house, the pool-room, the swarming life of the streets. There is little in the dingy home surroundings of the tenement child to keep him at home. To play, the chief concern of the growing child, he must be with his fellows, and the

setting for his play is almost of necessity on the street, with all its physical and moral hazards.

Up to a short time ago this situation was taken for granted by the majority of our "city fathers." Lacking any adequate weapons for the attack upon the problem, in New York, for example, they set aside certain streets as "play streets," through which traffic was not supposed to pass. Increasing congestion soon made these play street restrictions impossible.

Public spirited citizens everywhere recognize today that cities exist for other and finer purposes than the mere sheltering of workers around factories and offices. In the rush of industrial growth it has been forgotten for more than a century that workers are also human beings. Now we must tear down and create anew—this time to provide for the human needs of city dwellers, over and above stark considerations of bread and butter. To make our cities homes rather than barracks we must hereafter include in our rebuilding a wide range of facilities for true communal living.

"With the return of entertainment to the home," writes Lewis Mumford, one of the pioneers of the new housing, "through the mechanical invention of the phonograph, the radio, the motion picture and the near prospect of television, the house has made up by gains in recreational facilities what it has lost through the disappearance of earlier household industries. Hence the proper design of the house has a new importance, in that with greater leisure for the whole community more time will probably be spent within its walls and environs. The garden and the playground belong to the functions of the modern house; they are essential parts of its equipment and must be planned and financed with it."

No small part of the attempt to haul ourselves out of the mess into which the depression has plunged us is the farflung plan for housing contemplated by the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, through public housing bodies and limited dividend housing companies.

In connection with the housing program of the Administration, Secretary of the Interior Ickes has said that in the permanent reconstruction which must follow the present emergency, "the reform of our housing on a tremendous scale must take a first place." As part and parcel of any such nation-wide housing reform there must be provision for recreation and education such as that provided by the developments herein described.

## Europe Shows the Way

**B**ETWEEN the days of the caveman and the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, the subject of housing seems rarely to have been thought of consciously as a social problem. It became such a problem almost overnight, however, with the sudden influx of rural populations into the factory centers of the British Isles towards the end of the eighteenth century. Housing as we conceive the question today dates only from that time.

In the beginning of attempts to make adequate provision for the new urban populations, the attack was from the point of view of "welfare." Robert Owen, the youthful manager of a cotton mill at New Lanark in Scotland, prevailed upon his Board of Directors to set up reasonably decent housing facilities for the workers, simply as a humane measure. To the astonishment of participants and observers, the mill continued to make money; and to this day many industrialists and civic leaders regard good housing as a mere investment in efficiency.

In the course of the next century after Robert Owen's early efforts, the idea grew that providing good but cheap housing to a slightly higher income group than he had had in mind might be made commercially profitable, and the so-called "Garden City" movement gained momentum. This was an attempt, under private auspices, to plan whole residential communities as suburbs of large cities, and revealed the presence of a modicum of social consciousness. England led the way in this form of group housing, also, as it had in welfare housing.

What is important to us here is that in both these schemes, elementary as they now seem in view of what some countries have done since the War, the necessity for social and recreational opportunities was seen without question. All work and no play was seen to be not only inhumane but unprofitable.

In France and Italy, before the War, several philanthropic agencies built modern multiple dwellings for the housing of the lower, but never the lowest, income group. All of these buildings include such communal services and facilities as laundries, day nurseries, and play-space. As far back as 1906 the State Employees of Rome formed a cooperative housing society and built dwellings that provided facilities for a library, reading

rooms, lectures, games, a gymnasium, tennis courts, and other activities for its tenant-cooperators.

All these attacks upon the problem were mere gropings, experiments in miniature, leading toward the solution that was adopted after the War under the pressure of necessity.

By the end of the War, all the old forms, social, political, industrial, and financial, had broken down, more or less completely in different countries, but in all to some extent. The governments of Europe were faced with an actual shortage in even tolerable housing. Grave and immediate social and political consequences threatened, as the result of the black depression that settled over the continent instantly upon the end of the fighting.

None of the earlier attempts to house the population satisfactorily had ever affected more than a tiny fraction of those needing proper housing. After 1918 the need was urgent for cheap housing on such a scale as had never been contemplated before. Only governments had both the capital and the social vision required for doing the job. By common consent, the municipality was the governmental unit accepted as the best fitted for acting in the emergency.

The outstanding pioneer in public housing, of course, is the Socialist City of Vienna.\* Socialists the world over have held up the municipal housing projects of Vienna as brick-and-mortar models of what the co-operative commonwealth might look like. They have pridefully shown spacious, sun-flooded apartments of genuine architectural beauty, comparable to any American apartments in exclusive residential districts, wherein workers, skilled and unskilled, may be housed at amazingly low rents. More than 50,000 families have been comfortably housed amid the beautiful surroundings of the 54 municipal developments in the city. They have the luxury of light and air, unknown to our slum dwellers; their children can play upon enclosed grounds away from traffic, and go to the best of kindergartens and schools.

The new houses include wading pools, play spaces, nurseries, and gymnasiums. In cooperation with various city departments, the muni-

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\*Since the first writing of this section, the world has been treated to the spectacle of the virtual destruction of the Vienna projects by the present Austrian government. Early in February, 1934, the Dollfuss forces, in attempting a complete suppression of the Socialist Party, centered their armed attack upon the municipal houses. What will be the fate of the usable portions remaining is still unknown. Everything said here, therefore, is to be construed as of the past.

pality provides libraries and medical and dental clinics for the people living in the new apartments. In the booklet, "The Housing Policy of the Municipality of Vienna" published by the city in 1926, we find the following information on "guiding ideas for workers' dwellings in Vienna":

"Our efforts have always aimed at getting court-yards so large that they allow of being ornamented with gardens, and that the sun can as far as possible reach all the living-rooms. In addition to its importance in lighting and airing the dwellings the garden plot in the municipal building can also—and this is no less important,—offer playgrounds for children and resting-places for adults. In this respect one of the chief improvements in the construction of dwellings has been achieved by the Municipality. Several of the dwelling-house plans include also stone paddling pools, very popular in summer and in winter serving as skating rinks.

"Whenever the family income is meagre and both parents have to earn, the supervision of the children becomes a problem difficult to settle, consequently, in the very earliest Municipal buildings attention was paid to the urgent necessity of constructing a nursery with adjoining rooms in which in bad weather children can play and study under the supervision of a neighbor. This accommodation is situated on the ground floor immediately behind the playground and court-yard. In many instances it has proved still more expedient to staff these nurseries with trained supervisors and to develop them into regular kindergartens or children's day nurseries. The playroom is always equipped with lavatory arrangements, cloakrooms and, wherever possible, a common room with a little stock of books or a training workshop is built on. Again and again we find in the large blocks of buildings, space set apart for people's libraries, consulting centres for consumptives and mothers, common rooms for necessary catering business for cooperative societies, for sickness insurance societies and so on."

No one can write with any certainty today of conditions in Germany. For years her municipal housing projects and architectural adventuring have held the interest of leaders of the new housing. What has happened or what may happen to the German developments described here is difficult to tell because of the Nazi revolution.

In Berlin, one of the outstanding housing corporations, Dewog A.C., was sponsored by the German Trade Union Organization. In its buildings, provisions are made for kindergartens, nurseries, and playgrounds; rooms are provided for the meetings of tenants. The tenants elect delegates who meet with the management to discuss plans for improving their life in the buildings.

The combination of the new architecture and intelligent town planning is seen at its best in the famous "satellite" suburbs of Frankfurt, Germany. There apartments face upon garden spots where no roads pass.

Clarence Stein, architect of Sunnyside, Radburn and the new Hillside housing project in Bronx subsidized by the government, using these Frankfurt units for text, prophesied recently in the *New York Times*:

"A group of towns or neighborhoods will form a regional city. It will consist of a constellation of unit communities separated by great areas of natural green but bound closely together by 'townless-highways.' These will permit safe and speedy communication because they will by-pass all towns and will be accessible only at a limited number of stations. A regional city, or group of towns, although retaining all the virtues of the smaller center, will at the same time be able to support large-scale centralized functions such as universities and technical schools, financial and administrative centers, a regional theatre, museums and stadia for various athletic events. The great communal buildings will take a form quite different from that which they do at present. Above all they will be more spacious and more intimately related to the out-of-doors. The theatre, for instance, will be in a park where one may walk and drink at intermissions—and where out-of-door spectacles can be given. The art galleries will also open out on gardens in which sculpture will find a natural setting. Museums will no longer be mausoleums enclosed by blank walls."

No visitor to Soviet Russia in the years immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution returned with other than direful tales of Russia's housing dilemma. Revolutions and counter-revolutions had swept across the country. Anything but the struggle for mere existence was out of the question. Fighters have no time for building. Even ordinary repairs on already outworn structures were neglected so that Moscow and Leningrad gave the appearance of devastated cities, shabby, down-at-the-heels, crumbling to decay.

Into these cities after the Revolution, brought there by the industrialization policies of the government, swarmed armies of peasants. In Moscow, alone, there was an annual increase of 300,000. Every available bit of shelter from the palaces of the ousted nobility to the homes of the ousted bourgeoisie was requisitioned. Families were huddled together under unspeakable conditions. Even with the most rigid rationing of housing and with the most ardent pressing of new building programs, life in the Russian cities as lately as 1929 was according to a sympathetic observer,\* an "excruciating torment."

Today, slowly, building begins to catch up on the huge arrears left by the War and the Revolution. To be sure, there are few "model towns" in sight. Hastily constructed apartments of stone and stucco, however, are gradually pushing aside the flimsy, squat, wooden houses wherein the

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\*Arthur Feiler: "The Russian Experiment" (Harcourt, Brace & Co.).

workers lived under the old regime. The Soviets, as yet, cannot build many permanent homes for their workers comparable to the municipal homes in Germany and Vienna, though that goal is of course very much in the minds of the makers of the new Russia.

Against this dark picture of under-housing, overcrowding, must be held the brighter one of the achievements of the Soviets in providing recreational and educational facilities for the masses. No communal undertaking, factory, workshop or farm, for one moment neglects the all-important part played by leisure under the Soviets. Communist sympathizers cover all this new world of kindergartens, children's schools, children's villages, rest rooms, sanatoria, parks of "Culture and Rest," clubs for workers, for intellectuals, for peasants with the one word "education." Enemies of the Soviets cover it with the one word "propaganda." Yet there, amazingly, it is. Nowhere else on the globe is its far-flung counterpart. From the new city which has sprung up by the great Dnieper dam at Dnieprostroï with its stucco apartments built around a theatre, a library and other recreational facilities, to the nurseries and kindergartens of the most remote collective, there is mass concentration on the cultural development of an entire nation.

The Russian city worker leaves for his factory from an apartment turned over to him and his fellows by the Government and managed by a tenants' trust. Groups of tenants, through elected representatives, are responsible for the physical maintenance of the building and the social programs carried on in connection with it.

These social activities include kindergartens, nurseries and health units run by special committees which conduct periodic health examinations, supervise the cleanliness and sanitary conditions of the apartments, give health lectures and cooperate with local governmental health authorities. The committees have charge of the inevitable club room where tenants come together for discussion of every topic under the sun and where courses are given in home-making, sewing, cooking and care of children. In many instances there is a collective kitchen and a collective laundry. This is but a rough outline of what planned leisure under a planned economy is doing for a large number of men, women and children. Soviet Russia is not yet a Utopia for the workers. Life is still hard there. But it is to Russia that any serious student of the possibilities of the new leisure must look today if he would have a comprehensive forecast of what civilized communal living might be like.

## Sunnyside

ANY EXAMINATION of the problem of community planning in this country must take into early account the development known as Sunnyside. Scarcely ten years old, it is new enough to be definitely "modern" in spirit and purpose, but old enough to have revealed weaknesses in its plan. It seems, therefore, the logical starting point for our present survey.

One of the by-products of the last war was the problem of housing the "white-collar worker." From time to time in newspaper articles and periodicals there appeared anguished protests from the middle-class people over the lack of decent accommodations at reasonable rentals. The real estate men were charging all that the traffic would bear. Brain workers, skilled manual workers and the like were presented with leases which had the economic effect of pistols levelled at their heads. Unorganized, inarticulate, this class was sorely neglected by every public agency.

Then in 1924, a group of public spirited men and women in New York, among them Alexander M. Bing, Dr. Felix Adler, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and Robert E. Simon formed the City Housing Corporation. This organization was limited by charter to issue shares of \$100 each with dividends not to exceed six per cent. The idea took hold. The total capital raised was around \$3,000,000 and building at Sunnyside began in that year.

The Corporation acquired from the Long Island Railroad a 70-acre tract near the Woodside yards of the railroad at Long Island City. It is an area equal in size to that between 42nd Street and 59th Street and between Fifth and Madison Avenues in Manhattan.

From 1924 to 1929 the Corporation built on this property 577 one, two and three family houses. Modern-minded architects, specialists in community planning were called in and given free hand. The result is a group of attractive homes, built of soft colored brick, well-planned and well-designed. There are also 68 cooperatively owned apartments in two units and several separate groups of apartment buildings, containing altogether 251 apartments.

The layout provides a permanent garden and play space, one of the outstanding attractions of the development. One-third of the land is used



for houses, the remaining two-thirds being devoted to gardens and lawns. Restrictions and easements have been made as a means of protection against unsightly buildings and misuse of the property. The houses surround a large open space with lawns on the street side. Each house has a garden in the rear. A central garden containing play spaces for small children and benches for mothers unites the individual gardens of the block. Originally the interior blocks were to provide recreational space for children of all ages but the noise made it necessary to make other provisions for the older children. A three-acre park and playground was given in 1926 to Sunnyside residents for their permanent use by the City Housing Corporation.

Angelo Patri described this feature of the Sunnyside development in the *New York Evening Post*, January 24, 1927, as follows:

"The only place I have ever seen that made provision for the coming children was at Sunnyside, the settlement just across the river from Manhattan Island. In that delightful little village there were places set apart for the children and so arranged that they increase the beauty of the spot and its value. And there is a park where older ones may have their noisy team games without disturbing anybody. Cosy corners for little sand-box youngsters are so placed that the mothers can watch from the windows if they care to do so. The houses count in a room for them too. But that is in a village of houses. There are no huge structures of ten and twenty stories edging the street line and hitting the sky."

The community of Sunnyside numbers approximately 1200 families with a total of 5000 individuals. There are a number of Germans, Irish, and Jews, with native Americans predominating.

Economically the group belongs to what is usually termed the middle class, and came from widely various parts of the metropolitan area. According to the report of the Corporation available to the writer (dated March, 1928) 566 Sunnyside property owners were engaged in about twenty kinds of occupations, ranging from domestic service through sales and office and mechanical work, to the professions of teaching and medicine.

In reply to a questionnaire sent by the writer, some of the reasons for selecting Sunnyside as a dwelling place were given as follows:

<i>Reasons</i>	<i>No. of times mentioned</i>
Park, neighborliness, pleasant social contacts . . . . .	30
Nearness to city—convenience in reaching it . . . . .	23
Space devoted to grounds . . . . .	17
Community spirit and life . . . . .	16
Abundance of sunshine and air . . . . .	12

Opportunities and facilities for children .....	9
Court plan of housing .....	8
Quietness .....	6
Pleasant environment .....	5
Attractive little houses .....	5
Class of people .....	5
Suburban atmosphere .....	5
Layout .....	4
Outdoor charm and open air .....	4

## *BEGINNINGS OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION*

In order to carry out the provisions made in its declaration of restrictions, the City Housing Corporation appointed a committee of five persons to act as trustees for each block. This committee consists of two representatives of the Corporation, two resident owners of the block, and one person not affiliated with either the City Housing Corporation or the block property owners. The committee was given the power to supervise and regulate the layout, lighting, upkeep, maintenance, improvement, and use of all the entrances, central courts, walks, driveways, sewers, drainage, water pipes and lines and to adopt by-laws, rules and regulations in this connection. They are also to enforce and collect the payment of monthly or annual block maintenance charges, the rate to be decided upon by the committee, and to make disbursements for block improvements or repairs. At the present time, the block maintenance charge is approximately fifty cents a room a month.

In November 1924, soon after the first unit opened, the dwellers felt the need of a neighborhood association, whose purpose was to enable home owners and tenants to discuss their common problems and to act on local matters which were not under the jurisdiction of the trustees. The Corporation, recognizing this need and wishing to assist in promoting the community organization, appointed Mr. Charles B. Barnes as its representative to act as an administrator and organizer. His job was not to influence the policy of the activities to be carried on but to bring about consensus of opinion in community matters and to carry out the wishes of the majority.

At the present time the Sunnyside Gardens Community Association is a flourishing organization. It has a membership of over five hundred families. Its objectives are "to promote the civic and social interests of the residents, to cooperate in the maintenance of Sunnyside Park, to im-

prove the conditions and appearance of the community, to protect and maintain property rights, and to link together all the organizations which have been or may be formed in the community." All residents of Sunnyside Gardens are eligible for membership, subject to the approval of the membership committee. (The membership privileges have been extended to the residents of the Phipps Houses—a model housing development built by the Phipps Estate, a limited dividend company, in 1930 on land adjoining Sunnyside and previously owned by the City Housing Corporation.) Annual dues are \$12 per family. Membership in this Association entitles the family to all the privileges of the park, which is limited to their use alone; to the benefits gained by cooperative buying as well as membership in all the clubs.

Recognition of the park as a notable asset to the community has been indicated by many persons. Dr. Jay B. Nash, Professor of Physical Education at New York University, declared at one of the meetings of the Community Association:

"I have visited and inspected practically every residential area in the metropolitan district and have acted as consultant for playgrounds throughout the State and the country. I would not want to move out of Sunnyside to any locality within counting distance of New York City. The more I see of Sunnyside, the better I like it.

"Play is the most important thing in a child's life in building up reserves of health and character to draw on in the stress and strain of adult life. It is just such playgrounds as this one in Sunnyside Park that give children the necessary outlet for their play instincts. It is an asset that hundreds of communities would pay thousands and thousands of dollars to have. We are very, very fortunate in possessing this fine playground."

#### *ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION*

The activities sponsored by the Community Association are numerous and include the following:

**COMMUNITY PARK**— This is a three-acre playground and recreational field which was deeded to the community by the company at a cost of about \$125,000. The Park and Recreational Committee employs a full time park director who is responsible for the activities. The park is approximately four hundred by two hundred feet in area. It is iron fenced. There is one set of see-saws, ten swings, one gym frame, one jungle gym, three eight-foot slides, two four-foot slides, equipment for

basket-ball, six handball courts and three tennis courts. Playground and gymnasium apparatus are provided for adults. A Cabin in the park serves as a centre for various activities. During the winter months, they include the following:

**GIRLS' HANDICRAFT**— The girls' handicraft and play period is conducted by a paid, trained assistant from November 1st to March 1st. One winter the girls made paper flowers and theatrical costumes for a play to be produced by the children's dramatic group.

**BOYS' HANDICRAFT**— A varying number of boys make objects of wood, metal and soap two afternoons a week under the supervision of the Park Director. At the time of the author's visit interest was concentrated on toy-making. Elephants, birds and wagons were among the completed exhibits. A large supply of mechanical equipment has been added to that with which the group started and the recent acquisition of several electrical jigsaws has offered new opportunities to the boys to make toys, small furniture and puzzles.

**CAMPFIRE GIRLS**— The Cabin is the appropriate headquarters of a group of girls from ten years up who are taken on trips to places of interest when they are not occupied with the leather and bead work and games sponsored by the Campfire program.

**UNUSUALS**— An older group of girls, from fifteen years up, obtained permission from the Park Director to form a club of those who played together in the park. About fifteen girls belong to "The Unusuals," whose avowed purpose is "to promote sociability and literary interest." The club program consists of bridge, talks on "Women's part in the Prevention of War," the life and customs of other lands, attending the theater in groups, etc. They hold most of their meetings in the Cabin, but vary this with an occasional social evening in homes of the members.

**MOTION PICTURES**— On Saturday afternoons throughout the indoor season moving pictures for children are shown in the Cabin. Educational films are obtained from the Y.M.C.A. library without cost and comedies and animal pictures balance the programs for which an admission of five cents for children and ten cents for adults is charged. Due to limited space and fire hazard a number of children usually have to be turned away so as to avoid overcrowding.

**ATHLETIC CLUB**— As the only gymnasium in the community is the one in the local public school a group of boys between fifteen and

eighteen meets there to play basket-ball. When baseball is in order this group makes use of the Park facilities.

During the spring and summer activities held in the open consist of:

**C H I L D R E N ' S G A R D E N S** — The children of Sunnyside cultivate individual plots under the direction of an experienced garden teacher. Bronze, silver and gold medals are awarded for the best plots. An entrance fee of fifty cents is charged each participant and the seeds, tools, fertilizer and other needs are furnished gratis.

**H O R S E S H O E P I T C H I N G** — This pastime has won a large following of boys and men. Three courts are constantly in use and more space is needed.

**T E N N I S** — The tennis courts are heavily patronized by the adults. A number of tournaments for adults and children have been held. Instruction classes are held for women, boys and girls. A twenty-five cent court fee was charged at first and later demands justified raising this to a sliding scale up to \$1.00 an hour on Sunday afternoons. No one is permitted to use the courts more than twice weekly and all must make reservations beforehand. The income from the courts is turned over to the Community Association.

**H A N D B A L L** — This game is played both during the summer and winter months. During a recent winter season a Round Robin Tournament was held with thirty entrants. An entry fee of \$1.00 was charged to help meet the cost of repairing the wall of the court.

**S T O R Y T E L L I N G** — This pastime has been popular with the children. Over forty boys and girls attend sessions held one afternoon a week conducted by one of the residents.

**D A N C I N G** — During the summer, dances are held in the park every Saturday night under the auspices of the Activities Committee. Barn and Pajama dances and other variations have added to the novelty of the affairs.

**G A M E S A N D T O U R N A M E N T S** — Games are played in the park during the summer evenings. About fifty children take part at one time in such games as dodge-ball, races, follow-the-leader. Tournaments are arranged for boys in horse-shoe pitching, tennis; and for girls in hop-scotch, jacks, rope jumping, soap bubble blowing and sand modelling.

Besides the activities which take place in the park and in and around the Cabin, the Community Association sponsors the following:

**F O R U M** — Under the supervision of a Board of Directors consisting of six members the Forum has from the beginning conducted meetings dealing with such topics as Censorship, Negro Education, Literature, Labor Racketeering, Progressive Education, Soviet Russia, Crime Prevention, Birth Control and Disarmament. These meetings have been unusually well attended and the lively discussions indicated the keen interest and appreciation the Sunnyside residents have for this activity. The Board of Directors has worked out a plan of securing speakers and rotating the chairmanship.

**A T T I C C L U B** — After an exhibition in April 1930 of the work of artists living in Sunnyside, the Attic Club was organized under the auspices of the Forum. Its purpose is to further the interests of Sunnyside artists and to develop art appreciation in the community. Anyone may submit a painting or drawing and if the work is approved by the organizers he is accepted as a member. The members meet weekly and draw from life, the amateur artist being assisted by the professional. Through the cooperation of various members, free-lance work has been secured for a number of artists. In addition the group has been responsible for lectures on art and an exhibit at which several paintings and watercolors were sold.

In addition to its classes and exhibits, the Attic Club gives open affairs at which noted writers, poets, musicians and other exponents of the arts who live at Sunnyside contribute their talents to programs of great appeal. The dues are \$2.00 a year and twenty-five cents a meeting to cover the cost of the professional model for the sketching classes. Recently a loan fund was initiated by the club for its unemployed members. Approximately \$200 was realized from the sale of pictures and several members have been able to borrow much needed small sums of money.

**P L A Y H O U S E G R O U P** — This activity consists of a group of adults who are interested in staging plays. The group has been in existence for several years. About four plays are presented each year, for which the subscription price is \$1.50. Readings of the best plays of the year and other literary events are held by members of the Theatre Group. In 1932 the members staged three plays: "Trifles," "No 'Count Boy," and "Fire Hot." The following season five plays were produced, all of which were described as World Premieres. A Players group, started among the mem-

bers of the Playhouse, to study the technique of acting, in 1933 branched out to put on their own season of plays and pot pourri entertainments of one-act plays, skits, dance groups and monologues. In 1930, the group entered the Belasco Cup contest for Little Theatres. Experimental players from many states were represented, yet the Sunnyside group was one of the four selected to compete in the finals.

**THE LITTLEST THEATRE** — A group of six- to ten-year-old children have put on several productions suitable to their age and interests in the studio under the direction of a volunteer resident of the community. The first production "Hiawatha's Wooing" was characterized by remarkable poise and charm on the part of the children. Subsequent efforts in which the children constructed the scenery, made up the plots and acted with seriousness and spontaneity were "Cinderella" and "Adventures in Toyland."

**GARDEN CLUB** — The purpose of this club is to encourage home owners to plan attractive gardens so as to beautify their surroundings. Monthly meetings are held at which addresses on various phases of horticulture are given by garden experts.

**BOWLING CLUB** — The largest and most successful adult activity, in the opinion of the Park Director, is the Bowling Club. The club meets two evenings a week at the Sunnyside Bowling Alleys, a commercial establishment. Team and match games and sweepstakes add interest to the sport and occasionally the membership arranges an all day outing and picnic. A Women's Bowling Club was formed later and meets on two other nights of the week at the same alleys. About twenty women attend each session.

**BRIDGE CLUB** — Bridge enthusiasts have formed a club where they play together on two days a month. Membership dues of fifty cents a month and twenty-five cents guest fees are used to purchase prizes.

**PLAY SCHOOL** — In the summer of 1932 a play school was organized under the auspices of the Child Study Association of America in cooperation with the City Board of Education and the Sunnyside Educational Committee. Five teachers and three volunteer instructors carry out the curriculum for the children who numbered one hundred and thirty-seven in the first year of the school. The popularity of the new venture led to the establishment of a Fall and Winter Play School and now it is an all-year feature of the community.

The parents' interest in their children's play school led to the formation of a Parents' Association. This organization meets to hear lectures and has discussions on pertinent subjects presented by representatives of the Child Study Association. There are also "work periods" in which the mothers fashion and paint equipment to be used by the children in their work. Very recently the school added two handicraft classes to its program, one for children who had previously been members of the Play School and another for their parents.

**SUNNYSIDE NEWS** — This monthly publication plays an important part in the activities of Sunnyside. It is the medium through which the residents learn of various events taking place in the development. It also acts to stimulate interest and participation. The publication of this interesting organ began one year after the founding of Sunnyside.

A great deal of effort has been made to have members of the community take personal interest in the paper by contributing articles, notices, criticism and suggestions.

### *INDEPENDENT ACTIVITIES*

**SUNNYSIDE PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL** — The most outstanding organization run independently of the Community Association is the Sunnyside Progressive School.

The school now has an enrollment of over fifty children from two to seven years of age. Five teachers, one nurse-secretary and a cook-cleaner make up the staff. The nursery opens at 8:45 and closes at 3:30. The children are fed and they take their naps there. A number of working mothers keep their children at the school.

Policies and plans are in the hands of the executive committee of parents consisting of the president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, with three members at large. This committee, together with the teacher-director prepares plans for the school. The parents attend meeting once a month. The monthly fees are \$23.50 for the morning session or \$33.50 for morning and afternoon sessions. The greatest part of the money goes toward the teachers' salaries.

The school is sponsored by the Sunnyside Progressive Education Association in which membership is open to residents and all who are interested in educational development along progressive lines.



UNITED PARENTS ASSOCIATION—This organization is open to all men and women in the Woodside community who wish to assist in team work between home and school. Meetings are held frequently and lectures are arranged. A bulletin issued each month informs the members about programs, time and place of meetings. Picnics and trips to places of interest are included in the program.

HEALTH CENTER—Mothers are able to keep close watch over the health of their babies by attending baby health conferences conducted by a Henry Street nurse one afternoon a week with follow-up work the next morning. Children of school age may be weighed and measured on Saturday mornings by the nurse, who may also be called upon for nursing service in the home.

JEWISH CENTER—The Jewish Center was organized several years ago by a number of Jewish residents in the community. The activities are open not only to Sunnyside residents but to those who live in the vicinity. The membership is approximately 350. There is a Sisterhood, a Young Folks' League, Talmud Torah classes, and religious services on Friday evenings. Forums and classes are held for members and their friends.

The Center is governed by a board of trustees, consisting of two representatives from each activity held at the Center. The trustees engage a rabbi and a sexton, who have charge of the Center's activities.

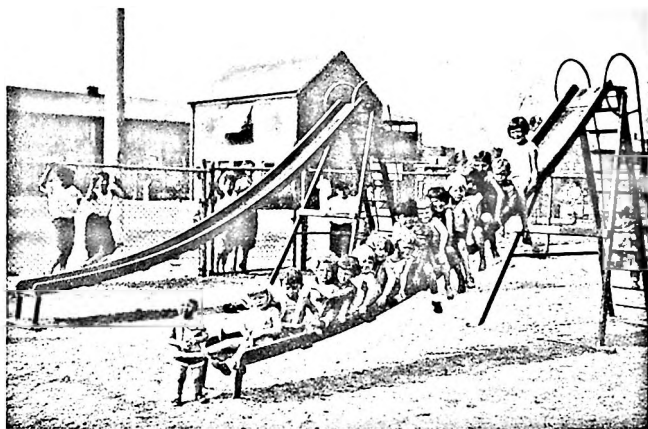
### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

How did this great number of activities originate? Were they superimposed by some company official who perceived in them an opportunity for sales talk? Did some agency introduce them for the purpose of enlarging its own program? Or did the residents themselves feel a need for these activities? All the writer's interviews brought the same reply, which was: "All the activities have been created because of the desire of the residents to have them."

In describing how various activities originated, the Park Director pointed out that the Community Association assists in organizing only those activities that are requested. For instance, at one time during the summer, one of the residents who was interested in archery came to the park and started shooting. Others watched him and became interested, so a regular class was formed with a leader who teaches the technique of



*Tennis at Sunnyside*



*The happy hunting-ground of the midgets at Sunnyside*

making bows and arrows. Some of the children's activities were started by the Park Director—if the activity did not develop it was dropped.

A company representative sums up the corporation's attitude toward activities as follows: "The company has no responsibility for the plans and policies in connection with social activities. The whole matter is left entirely in the hands of residents who, through elected officers, run the social activities. An effort is made by the company to interest all the residents in belonging to clubs, groups, the Park, and the Community Association because it feels it would be beneficial to them and furthermore increase the usefulness of Sunnyside. The sales force tries to sell the idea of participation to newcomers. The Community Association is informed of the arrival of a new resident and the officers try to induce him to join. If this fails nothing further is done about the matter." However, the company's representatives at present are frequently called upon by the Community Association for advice on administrative and legal matters and in the early stages of community development the company provided a paid administrator to assist the community in its various social problems. Membership drives are conducted by the Community Association through the medium of the Sunnyside News, and a house to house canvass is carried on once a year.

About 500 families belong to the Community Association and the approximate membership of the various activities is as follows:

Forum .....	150
Tennis .....	125
Jewish Center .....	100
Bowling .....	100
Children's Gardens .....	65
Bridge Club .....	60
Theater Group .....	60
Attic Club .....	40
Boy Scouts .....	20
Boys' Handicraft .....	20
Girls' Handicraft .....	20
Campfire Girls .....	15
Girls' Club (Unusuals) .....	15

From a questionnaire distributed among the residents of Sunnyside it was learned that of the 118 families who replied that they took any part in social activities, 62 of them participated in no fewer than six ac-

tivities each, and twenty of them participated in anywhere from a dozen to eighteen.

Only 26 families replied that they took no part at all in the activities offered, for reasons ranging from the vague, "Have had no time; will join" to the definitely antagonistic "not interested," and including the understandable reasons that the adults in some families were too fully occupied with the care of small children to spare the time, and that other activities outside the development supplied all the families' needs.

One of the residents interviewed stated that the various committee meetings, lectures and other activities keep him too busy, and that Sunday is his only time for relaxation. One person stated that he lives in Sunnyside chiefly because of the air and sunshine and the play space which offers safety to his children. He thinks the social activities tend to bring about an undue familiarity with the intimate details of one's neighbor's life.

A prominent sociologist, who lived at Sunnyside for some time said that he did not enjoy living there because "people expect you to participate in things." "Many people like to be there," he continued, "but I have no need for that as I am busy elsewhere."

According to the Park Director, participation in social activities depends upon the season of the year, many more taking part during the summer months when the park activities are numerous. He also states that many more would join if the Association had better quarters, the Cabin being the only place available to the children during the winter months.

### *COMMUNITY PROBLEMS*

The relationship between the Sunnysiders and their neighbors is an interesting community problem. Though many Sunnysiders are friendly with people living outside of the development, the latter cannot take advantage of the recreational facilities of Sunnyside, with the exception of the Phipps residents, because the deed of the park and the restriction agreements setting up the open courts limit their use to residents only. The Park Director says that on many occasions people who could not belong offered to pay more than the regular members but their offer was declined. This stand was taken, he explained, because there is not enough room to satisfy the needs of Sunnysiders. The feeling of possession and

property rights toward the park is just as strong among the children as the adults. Frequently during the summer months one can hear some child remark about a stranger, "He does not belong here." On the other hand, there are children who occasionally try to smuggle their friends in.

Children seem to present a problem to many. Conflicting opinions have been expressed on this subject, several of which follow:

"Why not one street in which children would be forbidden?"

"There is rowdyism—broken milk bottles such as I have never seen elsewhere."

"A stricter control should be exercised over the children's play habits and going to bed. Notwithstanding all of the open spaces and facilities for play, children are allowed to play in the streets until late in the evening."

"Boys from other neighborhoods destroy our trees, grass and hedges."

"Allow children to play in the center courts. Provide more play equipment."

"Children under three years of age ought to be allowed more freedom to play in inside courts, as they are not old enough to play in the playgrounds without supervision."

"A great number of persons forget that they were children and complain of trifling things or actions by their neighbor's progeny."

"Restrictions should be placed on children playing in the apartment courts."

"It would be well not to sell houses to people who hate children in general. There are few such people who constantly make trouble and unhappiness for everyone else. Such people should not live in a community where practically every home has children in it. (This is unbiased because I have not had trouble myself)."

"A park, baseball field and other playgrounds should be provided for the neighboring children, for their sake and so that they will not be a nuisance to others."

It is interesting to note that objections advanced in regard to children have been mainly made by those who do not have children of their own.

### *PAID PERSONNEL*

In order to carry on various activities the Community Association employs a paid staff. At present their staff consists of a Park Director, a woman assistant, a caretaker and a gateman. The director is a young man, a college graduate, who before coming to Sunnyside worked at a New York settlement. He attended a recreational school for a year and took his Master's Degree at New York University. His educational background and experience qualify him to conduct community, social and recreational activities. He is responsible to the park management com-

mittee, which includes the chairman of the personnel committee and the chairman of the activities committee of the executive committee. The woman assistant is employed three periods a week in the afternoon during the winter months. She helps with girls' clubs, story-telling and other activities. The caretaker is employed full time as is the gateman, who sees that only people who belong to the Community Association and pay dues use the park. No staff meetings or conferences are held; it is up to the Park Director to conduct activities as he sees fit. There are four or five leaders with whom the Park Director consults individually. The Director has found that although a number of residents at Sunnyside have been interested in giving their time, they gradually tire of their job. Furthermore, he feels that he cannot make the same demands of volunteers that he can of paid workers and therefore favors the latter.

### *PHYSICAL PLANT, EQUIPMENT, AND FINANCES*

The extent and nature of social and recreational activities depend largely on the facilities available for the purpose. In Sunnyside, the consensus of opinion of the paid staff, company representatives and residents is that the physical provisions for activities are inadequate. For instance, the community lacks a large assembly hall with a seating capacity of 500. At present for its large meetings and dances the Association must use available rooms elsewhere.

The Cabin in the park, with a capacity of one hundred and twenty-five, is inadequate for the needs of the community. According to the Park Director, "it should have been made large enough to hold at least two hundred people. There are times when a group as large as five hundred wishes to use the Cabin." It is approximately twenty by forty feet in size and is built of wood. It is lighted by electricity and heated. The equipment consists of a piano, a small pool table, a ping-pong table, a box hockey game, about fifty folding chairs, a number of benches, and tools for handicraft. There is also some scenery which is kept on the stage. The Park Director points out that the Cabin's location is not satisfactory, as it is situated in the center of the park where it interferes with ball playing and similar sports. The location of the park itself is poor since it is situated at the end of the development, making it necessary for many children to walk blocks before reaching it. This situation exists because the need for the park was not foreseen at the time when plans for the development of this project were made.

At the time of this study, the Community Association was spending \$1,500 for park improvements and repairs. Some of the major improvements consisted of flooring for the park cabin, additional handball courts, raising the height of the court fences and building a lodge for the gatekeeper which can also be used for an office. The Committee used free labor supplied by the Emergency Relief Committee.

Besides the Cabin, several community rooms are available for meetings. These are situated in the apartment houses owned by the company. One room is forty by forty feet, one kitchen six by fourteen, one committee room twenty by eight. They are equipped with toilets and electric lights. The rooms are rented at the following rates: for private use of tenants, \$4.00, for one meeting from eight to twelve P.M.; to committees and community groups, \$1.00. The company equipped the rooms at its own expense with two pianos, tables, two hundred folding chairs and kitchen equipment. The company pays for electric lights and janitorial service. The cost of upkeep is approximately \$1,400 a year, while the income amounts to about \$600, leaving a deficit of \$800 to be met by the company. The keys to the rooms are kept in the office where each group must call for them.

The money available for recreational activities is an important factor. At Sunnyside finances are budgeted. The budget is presented to the Association and is passed upon by the membership.

In July 1930, the City Housing Corporation set aside \$50,000 of the company's stock; the income from which, amounting at that time to about \$3,000 a year, was to be turned over to the committee administering Sunnyside Park for any necessary purpose. Although this income is insufficient to carry out the plans of the Association, some of the residents consider the \$12 dues excessive.

It is the opinion of several company officials that a mandatory fee for community activities charged to each property owner from the beginning of the development would have solved the problems of finances. This arrangement is working out more or less satisfactorily at Radburn.

### *OBSERVATIONS AND CRITICISMS OF SUNNYSIDE*

In Sunnyside the residents, coming from various sections of the metropolitan area with its social, economic and racial cleavages and conflicts are participating in a variety of social and recreational programs.

These activities exist because of the initial planning on the part of the company and the interest in social participation of the residents. It is evident that though the company is very much interested in the maintenance and development of these activities, it allows complete freedom and self-expression to the residents.

However, the company should have given more thought to the physical equipment necessary for the social life of the community at the time of construction. In a way this deficiency might serve as an advantage since the community itself is brought to deal with the problem, and pressing needs make people work together. Still, the lack of a clubhouse with a gymnasium and club rooms is evident.

Some members of the Sunnyside Community Association advocate having a manager for all social activities under the auspices of the Community Association. This would insure better planning and coordination. It would also make it possible to keep records of the actual number of children participating, the turnover in membership and other important data which at present are not available.

The opinions of Sunnysiders about Sunnyside are varied, interesting, illuminating and frequently conflicting. Some of the comments are as follows:

"While I am in Sunnyside and not of it, I regard it as a successful and significant experiment. As an educator (at present, university instructor) I am familiar with the theories—the sociological principles involved in the plan. I defend it against the charges of some sociologists that community enterprises are impossible in the large city."

"We are making big progress, but we need the help of a big—yes, a very big brother or sister or father, or I should say mother organization to guide, help and keep us together on the same plan as you would adopt to promote harmony in the home. This is an experiment and should be fostered and encouraged in every way possible. Keep this up and going and you will do much to counteract the evil influences ensnaring youth, and build up a future man- and womanhood that will be an asset to any community."

"We are happy at Sunnyside and are glad we bought here even though our appreciation of the City Housing Corporation would be deeper if we had received better value in our house for our money, meaning, of course, better supervision during construction and better materials in plumbing, neglect of which has been a great burden to purchasers of limited means."

"As in all other projects, there is a gradual tendency to capitalize on athletic activities such as tennis rates, which are becoming higher each season. A



community center would abolish the need for paying for hired community rooms. On the whole, however, I firmly believe it is a model community."

"I am looking forward to having my family grow up here both because I like the people and because of the many activities, social and creative, offered to children, and because of the Progressive School."

"Community life as such is impossible in Sunnyside or any other section of greater New York. One's friends are likely to live in widely scattered parts of the city and they constitute one's real community; mere physical nearness of sleeping quarters can scarcely constitute a satisfactory basis for joint activities. I believe the whole theory of community activity rests upon the false assumption that people who buy houses in the same locality have the same tastes, desires and backgrounds. Emphatically they do not. They merely have approximately the same incomes."

"The fact that we live so close to one another makes it possible for one's neighbors to know all about one's home. This has a tendency to produce a 'keeping up with the Joneses' attitude. I know of at least four couples who have employed maids since coming up to Sunnyside and got along very nicely without them before coming here."

"There might be more community service, mechanics, painters, plumbers and the like—similar plans developed in cooperative housing plans. It does not seem possible to enlist enough leadership to carry the Community Association and its enterprises. Probably a trained leader, giving full service, might stimulate such activity. There is always a conflict between those residents who want to live their own lives without participation in community affairs, and those who want to extend the scope of community activities."

"Community organizations provide a means of bringing those with common interests into contact—making living in the city more agreeable. When arriving home from work in the city, it is much like leaving the city behind for the day escaping into suburban surroundings. More and better Sunnysides should be built for the ultimate welfare of New York City."

"Sunnyside has at present more activities than any other community of its size in the world. The activities are numerous for every one's interest, from our infants to the aged persons. In our park we have everything imaginable, but we need a swimming pool and a recreation building which would complete our community."

## “The Town for the Motor Age”

**A**BOVE New Jersey flat lands, once given over to truck gardening, reaches the little community known as Radburn, one of the best examples in this country of intelligent town planning.

Driving into Radburn along one of the broad highways leading from the Washington Bridge across the Hudson, your eye first picks out the gleaming slate roofs of a group of apartment houses. If you do not know Radburn, you conclude that here is an exceptionally attractive real estate development hidden away not far from the picturesque little Saddle River, five miles west of Hackensack. It is not until you enter the town built around the apartments with their signalling weather-vane of four wild geese, that you realize that you have come upon an exciting adventure in community living.

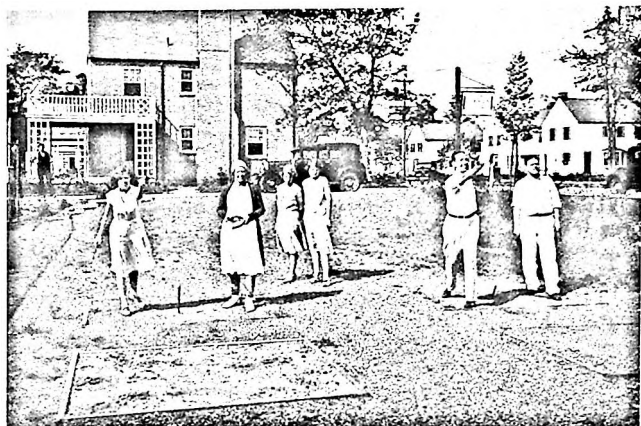
For there some 1,800 men, women and children are living in a manner that is as far in advance of that of their neighbors in the drab small towns near by as the six cylinder automobile is in advance of the ox-cart.

Across the two square miles of Radburn march charming little houses of brick veneer, clapboard, stucco or shingle, each enough different from that next to it to give it distinction, all surrounded by velvety lawns, clipped hedges, banks of flowers.

The impression of Radburn is that of a well-kept country estate, with the apartment group as manor house. There is here an ordered beauty in refreshing contrast to the grid-iron starkness of the industrial towns thereabouts.

One of the first things you notice is that Radburn has made a right about face from the usual real estate development. Instead of facing the street, the front doors of Radburn open on parks and play-spaces. If you live at Radburn you receive all who come by automobile at your back door opening onto dead-end streets along which the houses are grouped. From your front door runs a path through the lawn connecting with the foot-way systems in the parks beyond, while the motor-ways connect with wide traffic avenues, under which are passes through which children may go safely to school or to play.

The slogan of Radburn is “Safe for Children” and the entire planning of the town has been done with the younger generation very much in



*Radburn adults enjoy a game of quoites*



*The swimming pool—the most popular place at Radburn during summer days*

the center of the picture. The fact that today a house in Radburn which does not contain at least two children is regarded as a curiosity is tribute to the foresight of the planners.

With the experience of Sunnyside behind them, the men and women of the City Housing Corporation ventured into more ambitious fields in the laying out of Radburn in 1929. There was much newspaper talk at the beginning of the project about setting up a town in which industrial workers could live far enough away from cluttered power sources for spaciousness and sunlight, yet near enough to be within easy reach of the factory gates. Paterson, the silk center of the north, not many miles from the site selected for Radburn, was, in those early days, supposed to furnish the majority of the town's residents. The effects of the depression, however, and the rates that it was necessary to charge for such houses as were planned for Radburn soon proved the impossibility of any such project. Today Radburn is almost entirely a "white-collar" community, shunned ostentatiously by workers who live in Fairlawn, Hawthorne and other towns nearby.

Its technicians, engineers, teachers, bankers, brokers, junior executives commute to New York in their own cars or busses or the Erie Railroad, for the most part oblivious to the activities of the surrounding Jersey borough.

When the City Housing Corporation came to plan activities for Radburn, it departed from the voluntary method of subscribing for the various activities which had been followed at Sunnyside. At the Long Island community, the Community Association was allowed to grow up with the development of the community; at Radburn it was created at the outset. At Sunnyside membership in the Community Association is optional while at Radburn it is mandatory. The membership dues at Sunnyside are used for the Association needs which are recreational and educational in their nature. At Radburn the membership fee to the Community Association is not only for recreational and social activities but for municipal services such as garbage collection, snow removal, care of parks, swimming pools, playgrounds, street lights and special police. It is important to remember that Sunnyside is part of the City of New York and receives all these services from the municipality. Radburn, on the other hand, must provide them within itself.

One of the objects of the Radburn Association is to enforce the Declaration of Restrictions which was drawn up to maintain the character

of the community. This Declaration calls for the prohibition of "change or use of or exterior change in or addition to the premises," or the erection of fences, signs, awnings and radio poles without the approval of the Association. The existing setback of the house from the lane and walk and the existing free spaces at the sides of the buildings must similarly be maintained. No business or trade of any kind is permitted in any Radburn home. The Association is also authorized to "fix, collect and disburse the annual charges, maintain the necessary community services, parks and recreational facilities."

The Association finances the social activities. If an activity appeals to most of the residents, no fee is charged, but if there are only a limited number interested a small fee is charged for operating costs. The trustees of the Association determine the general policies and pass on the annual budget. A manager is employed by the Association to handle the administrative details and he employs whatever other assistance he may require.

With a distinctly different purpose and function another organization came into being shortly after the first residents came to Radburn. The first Citizens' Association composed of residents over twenty-one years of age and living in the neighborhood unit served by the first Radburn school was organized in 1929. The two primary functions of the Citizens' Association are to serve as an open forum for the consideration of matters of common interest to the neighborhood and to promote and build social, recreational and educational activities.

The Association functions through these standing committees: Adult Education, Arbitration, Children's Work, Civic Affairs, Dramatics, Entertainment, Garden and Parks, Library, Music, Police and Fire, Public Health, Publicity, Public Works, Reception, Safety Council, Sports and Games. The chairmen of these committees together with the elected officers of the Radburn Citizens' Association meet monthly to discuss Association affairs and plan for general meetings of the Association which are held on the first Tuesday of each month. Dues in the Citizens' Association are fifty cents a year.

Social, educational and recreational opportunities in Radburn are so varied and numerous that every member of a family can find some activity of interest during leisure hours. For those who enjoy sports, there are two swimming pools, an indoor gymnasium, basket-ball courts, fully equipped playgrounds for children, tennis courts, riding, shooting and

bowling. A carpentry shop which is used by the children in the daytime, under the direction of an instructor, is open to adults in the evening. There is a kindergarten for five-year-old children and a progressive nursery school for children from two to four years of age. There are also a health group, stamp collectors club, scouts, bridge, dances and other social activities entirely within the community or in cooperation with neighboring groups. Women's activities such as sewing for the Red Cross and nearby hospitals, a gymnasium sponsored by and for the men as well as a diversified schedule of lectures of special and general interest are included in the program. The lectures cover child study discussions, American politics, public speaking, first aid, French literature and language, home decoration, psychology and the layman's aspects of medical, dental and prenatal care.

A fee of one dollar is charged for the discussion courses with the exception of those in Child Study, Drama Reading, Estates and Investments, Economics of Health Practices, Nutrition and Clothing courses which are free. The selection of courses was made in accordance with the replies received from residents to a questionnaire in which they were asked their preferences. It is interesting to note that most of the lecturers are Radburn residents who are experts in their particular fields and are well known far outside their locality.

An amateur theatrical organization, the Radburn Players, offers opportunity for further study in all phases of the theater such as acting, coaching, play reading, children's dramatics, publicity, stage mechanics and scene painting. The Players give a play each month and exchange performances with other Little Theatre Groups such as the Sunnyside Players.

For lovers of music, there are the Friends of Music Group and the Radburn Singers. Both the audience and performers at musical evenings are composed of residents for the most part. The Friends of Music also sponsor a course in Music Appreciation.

In order to preserve and improve the gardens in Radburn, the Radburn Garden Club was formed. Its members have lectures and discussions on general and specific phases of the technique of the subject and participate in flower shows and community garden competitions.

A Well Baby Clinic is sponsored by the Radburn Association and the Public Health Committee of the Citizens' Association and is held one morning a week in the rooms of the Children's House which have

been set aside for the purpose and equipped as office, laboratory and waiting-room. A qualified nurse specialist makes a weekly check-up of babies up to two years old and gives advice on diet and care. Treatment is either referred to outside doctors or given by the doctor in charge outside of clinic hours.

Through financial cooperation of the Radburn Association the residents may avail themselves of the Visiting Nurse service of the borough and have care and treatments at a fixed moderate charge.

A library has been established by donations, money raising activities of the Citizens' Association and cooperation of the New Jersey Library Commission. Special juvenile books have been placed in each classroom of the school, and in cooperation with the Parent-Teachers Association a large number of books on Progressive Education and allied subjects have been made available in conjunction with the child study courses.

The Association supplements the history courses of the public school with showings of historical moving pictures. The programs are rounded out by suitable comedies, and a charge of ten cents for children and fifteen cents for adults is made.

## Workers Can Cooperate — The Amalgamated Houses

SUNNYSIDE and Radburn are commercial enterprises, limited in profit, socialized in outlook. There is, at the upper end of New York City, a development which has its origin in the needs of the workers and which springs from the amazing energy and keen intelligence of the rank and file of toilers. This is the group of apartments built and maintained by the Amalgamated Housing Corporation, an organization which owes its life to the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union.

Following the conception that a union to be of lasting significance must do far more than to protect the jobs of its members, it has attempted to bring the organization into human contact with the everyday lives of the rank and file both on and off the job. The towering apartments near the green spaces of Van Cortlandt Park, New York, are substantial proof that given progressive leadership, living wages and a forward-looking philosophy of conduct, American workers can solve their own problems in their own way, without the necessity for helping hands stretched out by the government or any other agency.

The Amalgamated Housing Corporation is a genuine cooperative—all tenants owning stock in the project.

The buildings occupy forty-seven per cent of the ground on which they are built. They comprise eight different buildings, some four-story walk-ups and some six-story, elevator-serviced. All are built around large courts with flower beds and fountains. No house is more than two rooms deep, so that each apartment faces the court and the street. Fine gravel driveways lead up to all the entrances. There are about six hundred and twenty-eight apartments comprising twenty-four hundred rooms, and housing twenty-eight hundred people, mostly Jewish, but including many Germans and Italians. Many of the tenant-owners come from the men's clothing and ladies' garment workers' unions, some are city employees, some are firemen and letter-carriers.

The Amalgamated Houses offer a variety of social activities, which are under the direction and supervision of a paid educational director and a volunteer educational committee elected by the cooperators. Sev-



eral of the social rooms are on the ground level, but most of them are in the basement. They include twelve clubrooms, of which ten are well lighted and ventilated, and two auditoriums, one seating two hundred people and the other four hundred. There is a large, well kept, well supervised playground for the children of the houses. The library contains some five thousand volumes and is in charge of a paid librarian.

Practically all the cooperators participate in social activities. All activities are designed to be of general cultural value, suitable for everyone. Adult activities consist primarily of lectures, debates, current events and talks on child psychology. In addition, a Board of Education English class for mothers meets twice a week.

The Educational Committee concerns itself mostly with children from kindergarten age up. The children are encouraged to participate in elocution, music, dancing and art development. A summer camp is conducted on the premises with paid counsellors; the children go swimming in the morning in a private pool, and in the afternoon they participate in athletics. The charge for the season is \$8.00 a child.

Various cooperative enterprises are conducted by a commissary department. Among these are grocery and dairy stores, a fruit and vegetable market, milk, electric and ice distribution, laundry and bus services and a tea room. The total amount of business approximates \$4,500 a week. Barber, tailor and butcher shops are also located on the premises.

The Amalgamated has one very definite policy in regard to social and cultural activities and that is summed up in the phrase, "no outsiders." The enterprise is conducted wholly for the cooperators.

The Administration consists of a Board of Directors, one of whom is a member of the State Board of Housing. The Board appoints the manager. There are three representative committees elected by the tenants. The House Committee concerns itself with the house in general. The Educational Committee is responsible for social activities and publications, and the Commissary Committee is in charge of the service department. There is also an assistant manager, an office staff of five people, an educational director, a librarian and the various instructors. All together, about thirty-five paid employees are responsible for the functioning of the organization.

The Amalgamated Houses furnish conclusive proof that organized labor can cooperate in a social as well as an economic field. Making a due allowance for the pride of a sponsor in his project, we find in the

following statement of Mr. A. Rabinowitz of the New York State Housing Board who has been interested in the Amalgamated development since its inception a human and intensely interesting comment on the extent of workers' cooperation:

"Every activity that was started was cooperative. They were an isolated community in the Bronx. The nearest shopping centers were perhaps half a mile away. They began to create activities that have preserved their independence as a community. They established a commissary which at the beginning went in for groceries, fruit, meat, milk and laundry.

"The price of groceries purchased by the tenants was somewhat less than they would have had to pay in the neighboring grocery stores, and after paying for the administration, they were left with a profit of about \$750 per month. Last year there was rebated to the cooperators more than \$7,500.

"A cooperative venture in the purchase of milk saved 4½ cents per quart on every bottle of milk consumed. There are 1,000 quarts of milk consumed per day.

"The grocery store alone does \$2,000 worth of business a week, and as another indication of their financial genius—the capital used in this business is \$2,000. How many businesses do you know that have such a turnover on so small a capital?

"Then the Amalgamated went into the laundry business, thereby revolutionizing the lives of these women so far as the family washing was concerned. In the past, the women of the Amalgamated spent the average of sixty cents per week for soaps, sodas, etc. By contracting for all the laundry consumed in the house, these women were able with the same amount of money that had been previously spent in soaps and sodas, to get the laundry done without the back-breaking labors.

"Other accomplishments were also quite extraordinary. There was a demand for a library. The buildings contributed the space, the cooperator-painters did the painting and the cooperator-electricians wired the room. The women co-operators gave a bazaar and raised \$2,700 with which they bought books. The place is as charming as you will find anywhere and it has a librarian in charge from 3 to 10 P.M. In the afternoon, in addition to her duties, she helps the children with their lessons.

"It was necessary to have a clubroom and the same performance was repeated. The carpenters, plumbers, painters, electricians and the various other mechanics were called in—each contributed what he could and they now have a most attractive room set aside for recreational purposes.

"There is a huge auditorium in the building. It was necessary to decorate it. The various committees took charge—they bought out a performance in a theatre and made a profit of about \$1,300 and with the proceeds, a painter living in the house decorated the auditorium beautifully. There are endless numbers of these activities going on today. They have a tea room, similarly built and furnished by the cooperators. That tea room is a most-interesting place.

After dinner the heads of families congregate there and the purchase of a five cent glass of tea gives a fellow the right to make a speech—and the things discussed there and the problems solved are very illuminating. It is a great outlet for blowing off steam. These men are employed in their various trades and are continually scheming and planning and thinking of their own problems and the problems of the world, and in that tea room they give expression to those accumulated thoughts.

"The surroundings that they have created for themselves are beautiful and charming and belie the charge that people and not buildings make slums. They came from quarters that were filthy and vile and unsanitary, not of their own choice. They moved to quarters that are beautiful and clean and have every modern facility comparable to any buildings anywhere in New York City. They treasure them. They keep their apartments and the courts immaculate.

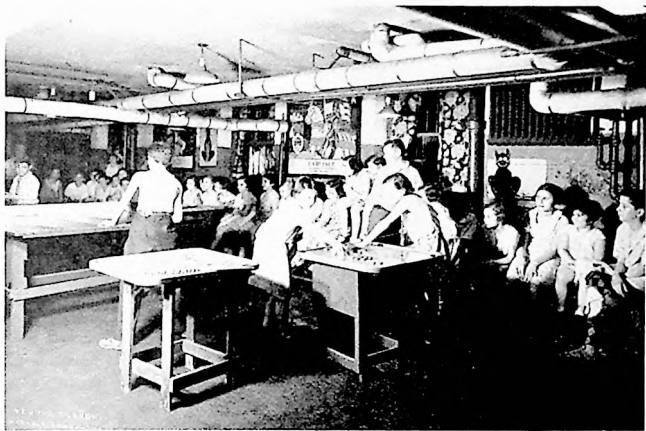
"The way these people hurdle serious problems and being educated to hurdle them is quite extraordinary. For instance: Families with children at the adolescent age have quite a problem. There are some 40 children of that age in this colony. By each family contributing a very nominal sum, something like 50 cents a week, they were able to employ a social worker who takes the children after school, walking, hiking, biking, and keeps them physically employed while they bridge that difficult period.

"Last summer, they arranged for the use of a swimming pool nearby and at a cost of \$16 for the summer of twelve weeks, 200 of the children were kept in a modified camp with the swimming facilities attached. It is only by the entire community acting together that such things are possible.

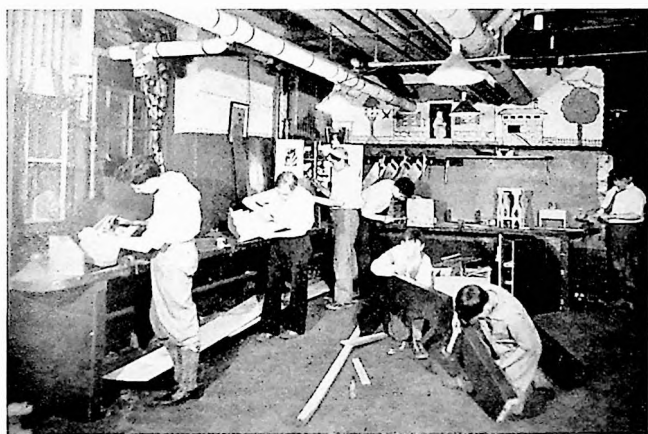
"The finest instincts in these people are continually being brought out—each cooperator feels he owes something to the community. There were two wood-carvers living in the building—they volunteered to teach some of the boys wood-carving and a class was established. It is interesting to see some of the fine things those boys produced.

"The cooperators write their own plays and act them. The resourcefulness with which they raise money for their different activities is amazing. They needed some money for some activity or other, a little while ago, and they staged a debate between Norman Thomas and Scott Nearing. They paid these debaters \$75 apiece and cleared something like \$225.

"Examples could be multiplied indefinitely. The other thing that impresses one most is that each resident is helping to raise the standard of the whole. These people have changed their attitude toward one another. Their manners have changed and their whole mode of life has changed. They have changed, facially and physically."



*Ping-pong, crockinole and other games at the Lavanburg*



*Lavanburg work shop for the older boys*

## Lavanburg Homes

**T**HE Lavanburg Homes differ from all other developments considered herein, in that they were very consciously planned as an experiment, and are subsidized heavily enough to allow more complete freedom in experimentation than most housing ventures can afford. They derive their value for study not so much from the volume of good housing they provide as from the fact that, being free to try almost anything, they constitute an excellent yardstick and guide for those planning slum clearance on as large a scale as is now contemplated by the Federal government.

Built in 1927 by the Fred. L. Lavanburg Foundation, a philanthropic body, the apartments occupy a lot 210 feet long and 100 feet deep. They are six stories high and form a great E, with the long line at the rear and two large open courts facing the street. There are 110 apartments, consisting of three, four and five rooms. The apartments are equipped with modern conveniences, such as steam heat, hot water, electricity, gas ranges, ice-boxes, and tiled bathrooms with showers. Tenancy is limited to families with small children whose income does not permit the renting of modern apartments at prevailing rates, but whose standard of cleanliness gives promise of their profiting by good surroundings. Three hundred and sixty children and 200 adults live in the house.

Occupationally, the tenants are typical of the section of the city in which the Homes are located. Of more than forty kinds of work engaged in by them, the following suggest the general level of skill and income:

Cloak Operators	Peddlers
Taxi Drivers	Sales Clerks
Barbers	City Laborers
Waiters	Conductors
Painters	Plumbers

Facilities are provided in the basement for various community activities. An assembly hall is available for theatricals and parties, and there are club rooms for juvenile and adult clubs. On the roof there is a large screened-in, equipped playground, protected by a parapet, the roof itself being tiled and supported by steel beams with concrete arches.

The policy of the Lavanburg Homes in regard to social activities is

contrary to that of other housing projects in that all children of the neighborhood are welcome to participate.

At present, about forty group activities for children and adults are carried on in the Social Center, among them being Arts and Crafts groups, Stamp club, Dramatic clubs, Bookbinding and Drawing classes, Free play rooms, Game rooms, a Kindergarten, a Newspaper, edited by the boys and girls, and adult clubs and discussion groups.

During the summer months a play school is conducted on the roof from one to five P.M. by the Board of Education. The activities carried on during the rest of the year are held from seven-thirty to nine-thirty every evening except Saturday.

The Mothers' Club, supported by fifty per cent of the mothers living in the building, meets every two weeks for recreational and educational programs such as lectures, debates and concerts. The Fathers' Club is attended by about thirty-five per cent of the fathers. They have their own club rooms where they gather evenings. The chief interest at the present time is the administration of a loan fund. Money for the fund is obtained by running dances, theater parties and various other forms of entertainment. Only tenants of the house may borrow money. The fathers and mothers also visit places of interest together, such as a night court, a telephone exchange, a Chinese theater, a radio station, a newspaper plant and the like. An English class for mothers is conducted twice a week.

Checkers, ping-pong, declamation and other contests are held for children. Motion pictures are shown in the building, and the children are frequently taken on hikes and outings, including visits to the circus, children's opera and theater. In 1930, a baby health contest was arranged by the Mothers' Club. Twenty-six babies between the ages of six months and four years were examined by a Board of Health doctor, a local practitioner and a neighborhood dentist. Prizes were awarded to the healthiest babies.

A Roof Association composed of mothers and fathers, organized for summer activities, takes charge of the evening recreation on the roof of the building. They sponsor a Fourth of July celebration, dances and similar entertainment.

Approximately 95% of the families residing in the building participate in the social activities. The cost is met by the Fred. L. Lavanburg Foundation and in 1932 it amounted to approximately \$3,000.

The supervisor in charge of the development, a trained social worker, is responsible for the building management and the social activities. A recreational director is employed to supervise activities in the Social Centre. Paid leaders include a carpentry instructor, a music teacher and several game room aides. Of the some twenty volunteer leaders in charge of the various groups and clubs several are mothers and fathers. New York University also sends sociology students for field work practice. The Mothers' and Fathers' Clubs are autonomous although the supervisor maintains close contact with them.

## A Negro Housing Project— The Dunbar Apartments

**T**HE Paul Laurence Dunbar Apartments, built in Harlem in 1928 by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., are co-operatively owned by their tenants. The six independent buildings, two rooms deep, enclose a large rectangle devoted to gardens and a playground. There are 511 apartments, of from three to seven rooms, with a total of about 2400 rooms. Every room has cross ventilation and plenty of light.

The tenants comprise a highly varied group. According to a report of the manager, the following occupations were represented in 1928, the latest date for which figures are at hand:

Chauffeurs	Clerks
Domestic Service	Dressmakers
Laborers, unskilled	Letter Carriers
Messengers	Doctors
Writers	Porters
Stenographers, typists	Teachers
Artists	Dining Car Waiters
Business men	

Day and night activities are encouraged among both children and adults. A Nursery and Kindergarten are supplied with teachers by the New York Kindergarten Association, and are supported in part by a charge on the families taking advantage of them. Here mothers may leave their small children for part of a day or for all day.

The playground is equipped with slides, see-saws, sand piles, and gymnasium apparatus, and is supervised by a paid director.

For older boys and girls there are clubs and an athletic field. A special effort is made to attract adolescent boys into the house activities and away from the bleak and demoralizing commercial amusement places of the neighborhood. Facilities for games, boxing, indoor athletics, and the quieter recreations are provided, and are utilized at present by some forty boys regularly. Boy and Girl Scout troops provide outlets for the energies of a number of others.

For adults there is a Forum which meets twice a month on Sunday





*The favorite sport of Dunbar Seniors*



*A happy morning in the Dunbar Kindergarten*

afternoons and offers to the tenants an opportunity for discussion on current events and problems under the leadership of guest speakers. The Men's Club meets once a week for general social activities, and is attended by about 75 men.

The women are formed into two organizations, one social and the other economic in purpose. Besides the usual Women's Club there is also a Housewives' League for those interested in economic cooperation, where the members may discuss their household problems and study ways and means for doing their work and buying their supplies most economically.

In many ways the most valuable contribution of the project to the welfare of the tenants is a formally organized Placement Bureau. To quote from the management's own description of this activity, "If a tenant-subscriber is out of employment, he cannot meet his monthly payment to the Corporation. . . . Which is more helpful and constructive—to dispossess him by summary process, or to get him another job?" The obvious answer to this rhetorical question is the motive for maintaining this employment service.

The Project is not entirely cooperative, in that many of the social activities are paid for or contributed to by the builders. On the whole, however, the success so far of Dunbar goes far to disprove the common belief that Negroes are not equipped to live on equal terms socially and intellectually with a northern white urban population.

## The Road Ahead

AT THIS point the reader may say, "All this is very good, but how does it apply to the housing needs of the mass of workers? You have told of a few communities, in and about New York City, where it does seem that a more satisfactory way of life may be had. But there is no indication that this is by any means possible for the great majority of city dwellers, nor that the majority of our leaders in the fields of the arts, governments, business, or labor are much concerned with these matters."

Until a very short time ago this complaint about the indifference of our leadership might have been well grounded. It is true that only here and there were voices raised against the onrush of speculative activities that seemed destined to condemn the bulk of our city people to move forever amid the shadows of skyscrapers in a hopeless slum-shoddiness. So fast has been the tempo of these past years, however, that all our concepts as to what goes to make a civilized community have undergone an almost overnight change. With a suddenness so startling that it has left the most optimistic proponents of public housing a little bewildered and unprepared, the Government of the United States has rushed into the field with offers of loans for building and a demand for their speedy use. We no longer are talking wistfully about what might some day be, but about what will be—if necessary, in spite of us.

When Mr. Ludlow, Chairman of the Committee on Industrial Relations of the American Institute of Architects says: "It is possible that skyscrapers will not be built again for many a long day—perhaps never," he is spokesman for a growingly influential school of thought among his fellow-architects. He is aware, alertly so, of the "new factor in the situation that will mean great building along another line. This is the shorter hours of labor and the longer hours of leisure. Whether the outcome is a five-day or a four-day week, the average man and woman will have an unprecedented amount of leisure time that will be filled with recreation and amusement."

And as the leaders among the architects realize that the new leisure necessarily brings in its wake the new building, so too both the leaders and the rank and file of our workers are looking forward to their utilization of increased leisure if and when they win it.

For example, in a report issued in July 1932, on "Housing of Union Hosiery Workers in Philadelphia" made by the Graduate Department of Social Research of Bryn Mawr College in conjunction with the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, Locals 1 and 39, Philadelphia, it was reported that of the one thousand three hundred and eighty-five families visited, eighty-one per cent indicated their interest in sports. Seventy-one per cent said they would like to have a swimming pool. Of the various sports, baseball interested forty-three per cent, while twenty per cent expressed the desire for tennis courts and ten per cent each voted for football, handball and basket ball. Some mentioned quoits and indicated interest in quoit courts nearby which has provision for night use. Of those interviewed, thirty per cent indicated a desire for a playground and it is interesting to note that while appreciation was expressed of the existing city playgrounds several complaints were also registered. These were: no provision was made for the care of small children; the playgrounds were not open enough hours of the day and week and those that existed were not in the immediate neighborhood. It was definitely indicated that children will not go to any great distance to reach a playground; and that when they play in the streets it is not because of preference but on account of the lack of playgrounds in the immediate neighborhood.

The report concludes:

"It seems quite clear from conversation with the workers that the desire for competitive sports, both for exercise and pleasure, was not being fulfilled at the time, due partly to expense, and partly inaccessibility."

The architects' discussion of the report of the hosiery workers' study contains this significant and forward looking statement:

"We have tried to find a formula to express the problem of 'human minimum equipment,' to work for the creation of planned communities rather than agglomerations of human beings.

"The shorter working week calls for better communities, equipped with cultural advantages and recreational facilities. Housing, in the last analysis, is no longer so much a question of naked shelter only. It is the demand for the re-organization of rotten communities into stable, sane and healthy societies."

With millions of dollars made available by the Federal Public Works Administration for large scale housing projects and the great stride made by the public housing movement the ideas of architects are no longer dreams unlikely of fulfillment. Not when we have Sunnyside, Radburn,

Amalgamated and other recent housing schemes as forerunners of the new era in large scale planning.

This is the time for those responsible for planning new housing schemes to study what already has been discovered through actual experience. Many costly mistakes can be avoided if enough consideration is given to leisure time needs and the facilities for conducting them. Practically all the present housing developments indicate inadequacy and lack of forethought in their planning along these lines.

This much at least can be said for social, recreational, and educational activities in connection with housing; they have definitely taken root. It is natural that the Public Works Administration should demand in every plan submitted for its approval provision for such activities. Agreement on this point is international. Housing schemes developed in and by the cities of London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin, Moscow, Amsterdam, and others, all have some type of social activities organized. Just as much as cross ventilation, good heating, and plenty of sunlight and air, modern housing standards require the provision of playgrounds and nurseries for children, meeting rooms for clubs, and auditoriums for entertainments and lectures. Experience has demonstrated that when opportunity for the fuller use of leisure time presents itself, the majority of residents take advantage of it.

One can deduce the following: given physical facilities and the necessary stimulus human beings take advantage of opportunities for social, recreational and educational development. Furthermore there is a marked change in the attitude of the tenant or tenant-cooperator toward the new environment. We all know of the general lack of interest, of carelessness and of the poor cooperation of the average tenant. In model housing projects the residents take pride and interest and responsibility in the venture.

The manager of the Dunbar Apartments gives the following testimony:

"The attitude of our tenant-owners toward the property of the Corporation has, almost from the beginning, been admirable. Not a single case of vandalism, however trivial, has yet come to our attention. Far from deteriorating the value of the property, our tenant-owners have been steadily and intelligently enhancing its value. For each of us knows that the housing project, taken as a whole, is his home. And it's a foul bird that soils his own nest."

At the Lavanburg Homes the tenants collected funds and planted

trees in front of the buildings. Several fathers and mothers have volunteered their services in helping to conduct social activities.

Not only the adults but children too develop a different attitude. When no provisions are made for play the energies are frequently directed into anti-social channels: breaking windows, writing with chalk on the property, stealing and a hundred and one other pastimes are invented by them for amusement. When playgrounds, game rooms, workshops and other facilities are offered—the energies are spent in a wholesome and constructive manner. How could three hundred and sixty children at the Lavanburg Homes live without provision for recreation? What a tremendous problem they would make for the management, if it were not for the various activities organized to keep them occupied.

There is no uniformity as to the kinds of activities offered. In some developments these are few in number and the facilities very simple, while in others there is a large number of activities with a pretentious physical set-up. A great deal depends upon the size of the housing community and the cultural interests of its residents, also their ability to finance the activities.

In all these developments the manner in which activities are carried on differs greatly. The Progressive School in Sunnyside is the last word in progressive education. On the other hand, there is frequently found a boys' club with spiritless and stereotyped routine. Some activities are spontaneous, alive, satisfying and constantly growing, while others are dull, declining and disappearing.

Another, and an extremely important variation of the housing projects, is in the personal relationship between the management and the residents and between the various members of the community. The cooperation between the management and the residents in some developments is very close and highly satisfactory; in others the opposite is true. The importance of a harmonious constructive attitude on the part of both the management and the residents is obvious. There is no doubt that lack of cooperation or antagonism on the part of the person who is responsible for the management of the housing development spells a hundred and one difficulties for healthy growth of community life. The question of selecting qualified personnel for conducting housing developments is essential. The training must not only include knowledge of building management and of housing problems but also the knowledge of social problems and their possibilities of solution. The Octavia Hill plan

of training women to be successful resident house managers by emphasis on the business and construction angle on the one hand, and on social work technique on the other, has evidenced its value in England where it started and in Holland where it has been copied and developed further.

In all the housing developments where social activities flourish the people who are in charge have decidedly a social point of view and employ qualified workers to conduct activities. At Sunnyside it is the Park Director who takes charge; at Radburn it is the Manager of the Community Association; at Lavanburg it is the Supervisor and the Recreational Director; at Amalgamated it is the Educational Director.

There are still other factors that have bearing on the conduct and success of activities in housing developments. Homogeneity or the lack of it among the people who constitute the community is important. The Amalgamated population having been a homogeneous cooperative group even before the advent of the housing development, through its participation in the Amalgamated Union, indicates this in its successful program of cooperative business enterprises. Another factor of import is the previous background of the residents. People who have been participants in settlement programs readily adopt similar activities when they are incorporated in the housing scheme, such as in the case of Lavanburg. On the other hand, a suburban and higher income group, as in Radburn, demands a more costly, sophisticated and varied program of activities.

Then, the layout of the development itself presents its problems of planning and supervision. A multiple dwelling in the heart of the city and a wide-spread suburban community covering a large area naturally differ along these lines. In multiple dwellings in the city the space devoted to social activities is usually in the basements or on the roofs. In the suburban developments activities are decentralized and distributed over a considerable area.

In all of the private projects described the housing company provides the physical facilities for carrying on a recreational program. It is the company that plans, at the time when a draft of the entire development is being drawn up, the kind of rooms to provide, their locations, the space to be reserved for playgrounds and similar considerations.

In these matters, there is a great deal that the architects and builders must learn from the housing developments already in operation. Practically all the existing developments are handicapped by lack of space, inadequacy of equipment and the location of facilities. Of course, in some

instances, the best arrangements possible have been made. However, many of the mistakes could have been avoided if more thought and study had been given to the planning. For instance, as has been pointed out before, Sunnyside needs a large auditorium, a gymnasium and a swimming pool. Dunbar apartments indicate similar needs. Amalgamated discovered the need for an auditorium after the first unit was completed and was able to rectify this mistake only through the development of additional units. At the Lavanburg, there is also a need for a gymnasium and an auditorium. Daytime activities such as kindergartens are carried on in Lavanburg and Amalgamated in basement rooms with inadequate natural light. At Lavanburg, where the roof is used extensively, a large number of vent pipes obstruct freedom of motion; while six entrances to the roof make supervision very difficult. Lack of toilets for the users of the roof has been a source of much concern to the management and has been but lately corrected. While some of these mistakes can be rectified, at a greater cost than if originally provided for, many cannot once the building is erected.

At this point it might be well to present a summary of the basic physical requirements for carrying on an adequate social activities program. These considerations are obviously minimal. They are intended to serve only as a suggestive guide to detailed planning, and not as an inclusive list.

Of all the errors and omissions common in previous project plans, the lack of a large auditorium is the most common and the most serious. Some other details can be added after the building is presumably completed, but not a meeting hall nor a gymnasium. The auditorium should be large enough to accommodate mass meetings, lecture audiences, parties, dances, and even a theatrical audience. It ought, among other things, to be equipped with a stage and plenty of lights.

The gymnasium may be built in the basement or on the roof, but built it must be, somewhere. It should be both large enough and well enough equipped so that there will be no need for tenants to seek supplemental quarters outside.

Free play space, for both children and adults, is essential, not only outdoors, but indoors. Outside, there should be adequate playground space, tennis courts, possibly a wading pool, and enough room to build bowling alleys and quoit courts if the demand requires. These spaces had best be located within sight of the apartments, but not enclosed so that the noise arising from them reverberates through the buildings.



All daytime activities should be provided for in such locations, whether in the basement, on or near the roof, or in middle floors, that they have a generous supply of daylight, and if possible, of sunlight. Rooms intended chiefly for use in the evening must be well lighted and ought to have many electric outlets for occasional use.

Adequate drinking water and toilet facilities might seem obvious necessities, but have frequently been omitted. Although they can be added as the need arise, it is cheaper and more satisfactory to provide them at the outset, at all strategic points.

Ventilation, either artificial or natural, or both, must be consciously provided for in all rooms, the small as well as the large, where groups are expected to congregate.

For the purpose of supervision, the indoor activities had better be grouped closely together.

Closet and storage space is much better provided in the original plans than by makeshift arrangements later. Social activities demand a fairly large stock of supplies; and theatrical properties, folding chairs, and other pieces of furniture will need to be stored.

And finally: all space allotted for social activities should be much larger than anyone not experienced in the field is likely to believe necessary. New needs arise constantly, and no one can possibly foresee every type of facility that may be required. The construction of indoor space should be sufficiently open so that partitions can be set up or taken down at a minimum expense of time and money. Most of the individual rooms should be suitable for use by more than one activity. In a word, the whole layout should be highly adaptable to changing needs.

Public housing will benefit greatly, as to type of activities to be provided for, by consulting not only those who are in the housing field, but also settlement and recreational workers. Probably there are no better informed people than settlement workers as to the technique of conducting social, recreational and educational activities. For generations they have been pioneers in establishing this work in tenement neighborhoods. Through the tireless efforts of settlement workers the whole field of leisure activities has been expanded and developed—summer play schools, playgrounds, swimming pools, community centers and recreation in school buildings have been brought about largely through the stimulus, the leadership and experimental work at first carried on in settlement houses. A well planned and conducted settlement usually carries on a variety of

group activities, including clubs, sports, classes of many kinds, dramatics and others.

Naturally a wealth of material has been gathered by settlement people which should be utilized by those who will conduct or are conducting the social activities of housing developments.

In the case of the Lavanburg Homes it has actually become a settlement house as a large number of children from the surrounding neighborhood participate in the activities. Recognition of this community function recently led to its inclusion in the membership of the United Neighborhood Houses. Large scale developments for low income groups will necessarily tend to become centers of settlement activity for the residents and in some cases for the immediate neighborhood.

For those who are interested in the field of adult education, public housing offers tremendous possibilities for the development of a comprehensive program in that field. Courses at Radburn, open forums at Sunnyside, lectures and debates at the Amalgamated, Mothers and Fathers' Clubs at the Lavanburg, all are mediums through which the participants willingly and eagerly share experiences with each other and together seek the meaning of life. These groups are very much like those visualized by E. C. Lindeman who says of adult education:

"Small groups of aspiring adults who desire to keep their minds fresh and vigorous; who begin to learn by confronting situations; who dig down into the reservoirs of their experience before resorting to texts and secondary facts; who are led in the discussion by teachers who are also searchers after wisdom and not oracles: this constitutes the setting for adult education, the modern quest for life's meaning."

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A copy of the morning paper lies on the writer's desk. Across its front page march headlined stories of catastrophes, mass insecurities, revolutions, wars and rumors of war. In the baleful light of these world problems what he has been discussing here might seem of little moment. Leisure and the happiness that leisure can bring, communities comfortably housed, joyously playing together—what place have these in a world seething with malice and hatreds? What becomes of the home and its rounded life, of neighborliness and friendship and quiet laughter in black times like these?

Fair questions these and yet—yet it is not forbidden for men to hope. Death comes when the dream is gone from an individual, a nation. And there are those in this country and overseas still possessed of a dream—

of fair cities, where life takes on significance and depth, where neighbor does not turn against neighbor, friend against friend, but all go forward together toward new horizons of greater happiness. True, in that which H. G. Wells calls "the race between education and catastrophe," catastrophe may win. True, too, that so far we have hardly tapped those immense reservoirs of good-will which lie beneath all our national and international structures. It so happens that there is in man the spirit of mutual aid as well as the combative, competitive spirit. It is to this spirit that the pioneers of public housing appeal.

The battle for adequate public housing is not won; it is only just well begun. But we cannot longer defer building on the ground that we do not know enough about the subject. We know, on the basis of the experience all too briefly discussed here, what can be done, what ought to be done. The only question is whether we have the intelligence and the will to use the information we possess.

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