

Federal Works Agency - John M. Carmody, Administrator Vol. 2, No. 11 - September 10, 1940 U. S. Housing Authority - Nathan Straus, Administrator

Miami Project Complete Now Has Homes for 966 Low-Income Families

With the opening of the second addition to Liberty Square by the Miami housing authority recently, the largest Negro housing

thority recently, the largest Negro housing project in the South and the sixth largest in America is complete. (See picture, below.)

The original Liberty Square is one of the first 13 housing projects to be developed by the Housing Division of PWA. It is located on a 63-acre tract within the city limits and has 243 dwelling units. Two additions of 352 and 378 dwelling units each, built with USHA aid, complete the project. All 973 units are located on the original 973 units are located on the original tract of land.

Project Quickly Occupied

The Miami authority has set an enviable record in filling these projects. The first addition, which opened July 1, 1940, was completely occupied within 3 weeks, and the second addition had 33 percent of the units rented before it was opened. The entire Liberty Square, when completely filled, will house approximately 4,000 individuals, or 10 percent of Miami's Negro population.

Tenants are chosen from families of the lowest income group who are living under insanitary conditions. The maximum approved annual incomes of Negro families admitted to Liberty Square Addition range from \$495 to \$869, and the average monthly rental is \$11.63. This includes water, gas, and electricity.

Each unit is equipped with gas stove, electric refrigerator, lights, hot and cold water, and window shades. Modern laundries are

(Continued on page 6)

Citizens' Committee Investigates, Then Says Toledo Program Is Okay

A "BRASS TACKS" investigation of the public housing program in Toledo, Ohio, by a special citizens' committee proved a boon to the Toledo Metropolitan Housing Authority recently when the investigating committee turned in practically a blanket approval of the Toledo program, stressing eight major conclusions:

Toledo's slum areas are a disgrace to the city, and their elimination would be a moral and economic benefit.

2. The shortage of low-cost homes has increased, while private capital has concentrated on the building of more expensive dwellings. The TMHA has sought to improve the living conditions of low-income

3. Families evacuated in the construction of new projects, such as the Albertus Brown and Port Lawrence Homes, should be given every opportunity of moving into the new dwellings. The committee pointed out that this was not done in the case of the Brand Whitlock Homes.

4. The city and the Authority should co-operate more fully in eliminating substandard dwellings in proportion to the newly built living units. The committee sug-gested landlords be required to obtain cer-tificates from the city inspection division that their rental properties are fit for habi-

5. The Authority should endeavor to relax its requirements so that direct-relief clients would be eligible for residence in its dwell-

6 In connection with this recommendation the committee urged that landlords of relief clients be obliged to repair dilapidated homes and to pay all taxes and assessments before receiving cash from the City Relief Administration.

The committee praised the Authority for its social and educational supervision, which it declared is relieving the city of expenses formerly involved in those areas. It recommended further attention be paid to health and welfare problems.

8. It recommended study of the possibility of obtaining Federal subsidies for building cheaper housing projects to provide the lowest income groups with adequate hous-ing. It suggested single units as cheaper than the present apartment type dwellings and pointed to the need for homes for such persons as now are forced to live in shack

The committee defended the low cost of the housing program as a means of improving the lots of unfortunate American families and declared all citizens should sup-

port the Authority in its long-range aims.

The report of the special citizens' housing committee and the investigation which pre-ceded it are perhaps unique in low-cost housing history.

To begin with, the committee was named

at the behest of a councilman known to be unfriendly to housing.

It was of dubious legal status inasmuch as the housing program is nearly complete, and inasmuch as State and Federal statutes authorize creation of TMHA and prescribe it receives a gravell as that of other political. its course as well as that of other political subdivisions.

If, however, critics of low-cost housing hoped to attack it as a national institution (Continued on page 2)



UK LIBRARIES

Alamito, First USHA Project In El Paso, Texas, To Open Some Time In September

Alamito, first project of El Paso's \$2,676,000 USHA-aided low-cost housing program, will be opened to tenants during September, according to C. W. Harper, Executive Director of The Housing Authority of the City of El Paso, Texas.

Tays Place, the second project, named in honor of a pioneer Eniscopal minister and

Tays Place, the second project, named in honor of a pioneer Episcopal minister and humanitarian of El Paso, is under construction and is scheduled for occupancy during January.

The housing authority of El Paso plans to move 349 families into the Alamito project on the opening day, filling all available dwellings units.

dwellings units.

Less than a year ago, sprawled over the site of Alamito, were 198 shacks. Today 61 modern brick buildings, offering every opportunity for better living, occupy the site. Provided for the tenants of the project will be gas ranges, gas space heaters, refrigerators, automatic hot-water heaters.

For the recreation of the tenants, the El Paso Public Library has established a branch library in the Administration Building. The authority has provided a large auditorium for gatherings and social functions

The dwelling units are 3, 3½, 4½, and 5½ rooms and will rent for \$13 to \$15 monthly, the rent including utilities.

With approximately 50 percent of El Paso's 107,268 population Mexican, the first project, for Mexicans, will reach that strata of the city's dwellers who most need adequate housing, according to Mr. Harper. Surveys conducted by the housing authority estimate that of El Paso's 12,500 Mexican families, approximately 9,500 live in substandard homes in blighted areas.

Located in South El Paso in the heart of

Located in South El Paso in the heart of the Mexican section of the city, the Alamito project is bounded by Virginia, Second, Fifth, and Fourth Streets. Adjacent to Alamito is the Alamo School, the Guadalupe Day Nursery, and the Alamo Park.

Toledo Program Approved By Citizen Investigators

on the basis of the Toledo report, their hopes were rudely dashed to the ground by the committee's report.

Only in one particular—the recommendation that projects cheaper in rental be undertaken—can the report be said to be even remotely unfavorable. Objections to the local program which were specifically treated in the report were found to be groundless.

To the contention that tax-exempt Federal housing projects are a burden to tax-payers, the committee announced that no proof exists. The area in which Brand Whitlock Homes was built had a tremendous accumulation of delinquent taxes, and TMHA paid \$23,500 in delinquent taxes before starting construction.

The elimination of slum areas by the projects has reduced the cost of municipal services. Exorbitant rentals are charged for substandard dwellings, and a serious housing shortage exists.

"The Courageous Dr. Christian"

An Indictment of Slums

And the Civic Inertia Which Allows Them to Exist

"The Courageous Doctor Christian," an RKO-Radio picture produced by Stephens-Lang and starring Jean Hersholt, brings a slum to Main Street with a spinal meningitis epidemic in tow. It is an unusually effective presentation of the slum problem brought uptown, where it has to be solved by the community rather than by the individual slum victims.

Jean Hersholt as Doctor Christian, popu-

Jean Hersholt as Doctor Christian, popular screen and radio personality, is a tenacious crusader who refuses to allow a vicious shantytown to nullify all of his struggles on behalf of community health. The early efforts to promote a slum clearance project are defeated, but an unexpected move on the part of the shantytowners themselves arouses complacent city officials to a realization of the awful toll a slum can exact from an unprepared community

Made without any reference to or advice from USHA, the picture does not pretend to be a guide in obtaining USHA assistance or in planning local housing projects. There are, indeed, some slight inaccuracies. But it is a dramatic demonstration of the slum problem and a convincing argument for the USHA plan. It has already been shown in some 3,000 motion-picture theaters all over the country and, before its run is over, will be shown in 5,000 more.

At the request of a local housing authority, theaters showing RKO-Radio pictures might be glad to obtain "The Courageous Doctor Christian" for their regular program and possibly arrange a private preview showing for officials of local civic groups.

The committee reported that the charge that persons of high income are living in the projects could not be substantiated, but that in a few instances persons whose incomes have increased since moving into the project are still living there because they are unable to lease other residences.

Brand Whitlock Homes was the first

Brand Whitlock Homes was the first Toledo project. The Weiler Homes was the second. The Albertus Brown and Port Lawrence Homes were authorized, and one of them is under construction. The Toledo Metropolitan Housing Authority needs only to obtain the final approval of Council for a site for its Garden Homes project to complete its program under the present appropriation.

The report, coming as it does from unprejudiced examiners, will doubtless hasten the completion of the final project.













DEFENSE HOUSING . . . 1917 . . . Should This Happen Again?





Defense workers in Youngstown, Ohio, live here. The buildings have been condemned, but there is nothing better.

The tent city (above), erected in Newark, N. J., to house evicted tenants during the first World War, foreshadows what may happen today unless proper steps are taken immediately to prevent it. The pictures on this page show defense workers, their homes, their work, and the homes they may have under the USHA program. The attractive home at the bottom of the page (center) was built with USHA aid as a model home by the Housing Authority of the County of Beaver (Pa.).





John Kelley, defense worker, with his son on the porch of their substandard home in Titusville, Pa.



V. R. Clayton, machinist, forced to leave his home when the bathroom floor collapsed.

Marshall Alley in Aliquippa, Pa., where defense workers live in dilapidated company homes.

USHA Defense Housing Calendar

of Local Housing Authorities and War and Navy Departments

DEFENSE HOUSING **AMENDMENT PASSED** June 28, 1940

Projects Approved By President

July 25, 1940

Corpus Christi, Tex.

Pensacola, Fla.

Portsmouth, Va.

Newport News, Va.

Projects Approved

By President

August 9, 1940

Columbus, Ohio

Bremerton, Wash. Charleston, S. C.

Newport, R. I. Anchorage, Alaska Canal Zone Mare Island, Calif. Portsmouth, N. H.

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Construction Starts

July 27 - Montgomery, Ala.

Aug. 20 - Corpus Christi, Tex.

Aug. 21 - Portsmouth, Va.

Sept. 1 - Columbus, Ga.

Sept. 4-Rock Island County, III. (E. Moline)

Sept. 30 - Newport News, Va.

Sept. 26 - Nortolk, Va. Sept. 30 - Rock Island City, III.

Oct. 1-Bremerton, Wash.

Nov. 8 - Newport, R. I. Nov. 17 - Hartford, Conn.

Tenants Move In:

Dec. 2 - Montgomery, Ala.

4 - Pensacola, Fla. Dec. 18 - Portsmouth,

Dec. 30 - Charleston,

Dec. 30 - Columbus, Ga. Dec. 30 - Corpus Christi,

Projects Approved By President August 27, 1940

Hartford, Conn. Montgomery, Ala. Norfolk, Va. Rock Island City, III. Rock Island County, III. (E. Moline)

N JUNE 28, Congress passed defense housing legislation. Less than a month later the first defense housing project was under construction. By December 2, it will be tenanted, and, during that month, tenants will move into five others. Such a rapid production schedule is possible only because the production machinery already is running smoothly.

USHA's enviable labor relations record is an important factor in speedy production of defense housing. Of equal importance are facts and people who understand them. Nearly 500 local housing authorities that have been studying their housing needs (and in many cases providing for them) give the program a much-needed supply of both facts and experienced working personnel. These local authorities, with the permanent interests of their communities at heart, will not jeopardize their long-range housing programs by building barracks. They will plan for speed and economy; but also for permanence.

Tenants Move In:

Jan. 25 - Norfolk, Va. Jan. 30 - Newport News, Va.

30 - Rock Island City, III.

Bremerton, Wash.

Hartford, Conn 4 - Rock Island

Mar. 15 - Newport, R. I.



First family moves into bathtub at Piedmont Courts, Charlotte, N. C., without benefit of tenant selection. Manager's problem now is how to combat "cats in bathtub" stories.

Blind Girl at Lamar Terrace Wins College Scholarship, Is Given Seeing Eye Dog

A USHA home, a Seeing-Eye dog, and a scholarship to the University of Mississippi is a combination which is giving Lena Jones (lower right), blind 22-year-old junior at Ole Miss, a lot of confidence in the democratic way of life.

Miss Jones, who lives at Lamar Terrace, recently completed USHA project in Memphis, Tenn., has been blind since birth. But pluck and intelligence have enabled her to overcome her difficulties. When she and her dog, Gail, go up to the University this fall, she will be the first blind girl in the history of Ole Miss to take a Seeing-Eye dog to school with her.

Lena attended the Mississippi School for the Blind. When she was a senior in high school there she was asked to play the piano, which she had been studying for 12 years, for visiting State legislators. She played some of her favorite compositions, among which are Chopin's Preludes Nos. 7 and 20. "I happened to be in the mood to play that day," Lena explained.

One of the legislators, very much impressed by the blind girl's playing, said he intended to sponsor a bill to provide college advertions for blind bich-school seniors.

educations for blind high-school seniors.

After a short time, Lena said, "the principal asked me to teach a class, and told me to pray as I'd never prayed before. After class he told me I was going to college."

Lena is working for an A. B. degree. In her 2 years at the University she has made A's in the majority of her subjects.

Some time ago the Memphis Lions Club, hearing of her unusual courage and ability, sent her to Morristown to get a Seeing-Eye dog. The dog and girl completed their adjustment and coordination course in the minimum time of 4 weeks. Friends who have guided Lena around the campus in past years will not be needed in that capacity any more.

past years will not be needed in that capacity any more.

Gail, the dog, will be 3 years old December 20, weighs 50 pounds, and eats one and one-half pounds of raw meat and from one-half to one pound of biscuit a day. She is one of hundreds of Seeing-Eye dogs which have been trained during the past few years to guide and protect their blind human companions.



FROM THE

Administrator

Defense: In the War emergency of 1917, additional housing for defense workers was urgently needed. The Federal Government entered the housing field for the first time to meet that need.

Today, there is need for additional housing for workers at shipyards, air bases, munitions plants, and near factories expanding to fill orders for the weapons and materials of national defense. But fortunately there is today an existing functioning governmental agency which has undertaken a defense housing program. The 498 active local housing authorities scattered all over the country are advising on local housing needs and the construction of new homes.

These local housing authorities have demonstrated their ability to do the job by achieving, under the USHA program, average costs about 20 percent lower than the average of private residential construction in the same communities. The local authorities have done this while paying prevailing wages to labor and while building soundly for a 60-year life.

Local leadership familiar with local needs will insure the building of defense housing so planned and designed as to be permanent community assets. When the emergency is over, these homes, built to house families of the lower salaried workers in national defense, will be used to house families from slums and areas of blight.

The USHA program marches on as a mighty arm of national defense and social progress.

Nathan Thans

Miami Project Complete, Homes for 966 Families

(Continued from page 1)

built throughout the project for the convenience of the tenants. Apartments accommodate families of from two to convenience

date families of from two to seven members. The project is landscaped with palms, tropical flowers, shrubs, and trees, and the grounds are largely tenant-maintained. The community building houses the main offices and serves, with its large auditorium, as a community center for adult recreation and training classes in such useful skills as tailoring, general sewing, cooking, and nursery school. Well-equipped and supervised playgrounds are available for the children.

Some wished home be farm in installe forward the farm in a tell is proud initial stated the farm of th

Monday The bus Christi,

At the Fireside of the Ellis Family

First USHA Rural Housing Tenants



On the stand during the ceremonies were local and visiting civic leaders. Former New York City Tenement House Commissioner Langdon Post, now with USHA, was one of the principal speakers, with George M. Hamilton, Chairman of Georgia's State Housing Board.

USHA Projects Are Planned for Use



of the crowd at the ceremonies.

Monday is washday at every USHA low-rent housing community. The busy housewife above is a tenant at Kinney Place in Corpus Christi, Texas.



Mother's clothes can dry and the children can play and never the twain need meet at Kinney Place, where wise planning has provided space for both activities.

August Construction Report Shows 12 Projects Opened

On August 9, President Roosevelt approved loan contracts for five USHA-aided defense housing projects, and approved allocations for four Army and Navy defense housing projects. Of the latter, three will be constructed by the Navy Department (600 units in Mare Island, Calif.; 400 units in Balboa, Canal Zone; and 400 units in Portsmouth, N. H.), and one (325 units in Anchorage, Alaska), by the War Department. The remaining five defense housing projects and five more approved on August 27, will be constructed by local authorities with USHA aid.

On August 23, the President approved loan contracts for 44 USHA-aided projects. Of these, 22 were resubmissions of loan contracts previously approved. Loan contract funds for two projects were rescinded during August. The total number of USHAaided projects under loan contract was 453 at the end of August (this figure does not include the four projects to be directly constructed by the Army or Navy).

The following projects entered the construction stage during August:

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Athens (Ga3-1-A)	100 units
Baltimore (Md2-3)	688 units
Beverly (N. J18-1)	71 units
Biloxi (Miss5-2)	96 units

Biloxi (Miss5-3)	96 units
Bridgeport (Conn1-2)	516 units
Columbus (Ga4-3)	612 units
Columbus (Ohio-1-4)	334 units
Corpus Christi (Tex8-4)	250 units
Darlington County (S. C5-1)	200 units
Fort Wayne (Ind3-1)	120 units
Hammond (Ind10-1-R)	400 units
Harrisburg (Pa8-1, Pt. II)	24 units
New Bern (N. C5-1)	116 units
New York (N. Y5-6)	1,166 units
Phenix City (Ala5-2)	206 units
Phoenix (Ariz1-2)	150 units
Portsmouth (Va1-1)	300 units
San Antonio (Tex6-3)	796 units
San Juan (P. R2-4)	84 units
Toledo (Ohio-6-4)	134 units
Waco (Tex10-1)	102 units
Waco (Tex10-2)	140 units
Washington (D. C1-4)	313 units

Twelve projects have been reported as opening for occupancy in the period July 20-August 17, as follows:

Annapolis (Md.-1-1), College Creek Terrace.

Cleveland (Ohio-3-1), Kelyton Village. Charlotte (N. C.-3-2), Fairview Homes. Cleveland (Ohio-3-1), Valleyview Homes. Honolulu (T. H.-1-1), Kamehameha Homes. Houston (Tex.-5-1), Cuney Homes. Huntington (W. Va.-4-2), Northcott Court. Knoxville (Tenn.-3-1), Western Heights. Louisville (Ky.-1-1), Clarksdale. Mobile (Ala.-2-2), Orange Grove Homes. Pittsburgh (Pa.-1-2), Bedford Dwellings. Raleigh (N. C.-2-2), Halifax Court.

Construction Report Weekly Data

Item	Week ended	Week ended	Week ended
	August 30, 1940	August 23, 1940	September 1, 1939
Number of projects under construction ¹		255 94,433 \$410,444,000 \$4,346 \$2,729	92 39,377 \$182,417,000 \$4,633 \$2,905

Summary of USHA Program as of August 31, 1940

Item	Projects under loan contract ¹	Projects under construction ¹	Projects being tenanted 4
Number of projects Number of local authorities represented	453 187	267 140	62 51
Number of States represented Value of loan contracts	5 36 \$651,905,000	5 30	5 20
Number of dwelling units in projects Number of units opened for occupancy	151,853	97,450	24,873 19,621
Total estimated development cost ⁶	\$726,494,000 \$667,633,000	\$458,256,000 \$421,481,000	\$120,167,000

¹ Includes projects which have been completed.
¹ Includes: (a) Building the house, including structural costs and plumbing, heating, and electrical installation; (b) dwelling equipment, architects' fees, local administrative expenses, financial charges during construction, and contingency expenses; (c) land for present development; (d) nondwelling facilities.
¹ The cost of building the house, including structural, plumbing, heating, and electrical costs.
¹ As of August 17, 1940.
¹ Includes over-all cost of new housing plus the cost of purchasing and demolishing old slum buildings and the cost of land bought for future development.

Note: This table includes all projects which are being developed by local housing authorities with the assistance of the USHA; these projects may either be part of the authorities' regular slum clearance program or they may belong in the defense housing category. In addition, as of August 31, the USHA had allocated to the Army and Navy funds for the direct construction of 4 projects to contain 1,725 dwelling units and to be built at a total estimated development cost of \$7,225,000.

Schedule of Bid Opening Dates 1

		1
Project location, number, and name (when available)	Number of units	Date of opening
Bayamon (P. R.–3–5): Dr. Agustin Stahl Chester (Pa.–7–2) Cincinnati (Ohio–4–2): English Woods Cleveland (Ohio–3–3):	133 300	9-18-40 9-30-40
Cincinnati (Ohio-4-2): English Woods	750	10- 3-40
Cleveland (Ohio-3-3): Outhwaite Addition	449	9-16-40
Columbus (Ohio-1-3): West Rich Street	252	9-27-40
Danville (Ill11-1): Fair Oaks Park	179	10- 3-40
Danville (Ill11-2): Beeler Terrace	50	10- 3-40
Granite City (Ill5-1): Ridgedale Homes Hattiesburg (Miss1-1)	151 120	10- 1-40 10- 2-40
Hopewell (Va5-1)	96	9-17-40
Hopewell (Va5-1) Jersey City (N. J9-2). Key West (Fla13-1). Key West (Fla13-2)	450 136	9-16-40 $10-3-40$
Key West (Fla13-2). Lawrence(Mass10-1).	84 291	$ \begin{array}{c cccc} 10 & 3 & -40 \\ 10 & 3 & -40 \\ 9 & -17 & -40 \end{array} $
Los Angeles City (Cal.–4–4): Rancho San Pedro Manati (P. R.–3–2): Felix Cordova Da-	296	² 10- 1-40
	. 194	9-23-40
Marietta (Ga10-1): Clay Homes	108	9-10-40
Marietta (Ga10-2): Fort Hill Homes	120	9-10-40
New Bedford (Mass.–7–2): Presidential Heights.	200	9-12-40
Newark (N. J2-8): Felix Field Court New Orleans (La1-1, Pt. II): St. Thomas Street	300	9-26-40
St. Thomas Street	36	9-12-40
Newport News (Va.– 3–2, Defense) Norfolk (Va.–6–1, De-	350	9-12-40
fense) Pelly (Tex12-1)	500 30	$9-25-40 \\ 9-12-40$
Pelly (Tex12-2) Philadelphia (Pa2-3) Ponce (P. R1-5): Caserio Borinquen	30 1, 250	9-12-40 9-17-40
Caserio Borinquen	340	9-28-40
San Antonio (Tex6- 1-A)	248	9-25-40
1-4): Valencia	278	210- 1-40
San Francisco (Cal.– 1–5): Cogswell	228	29-16-40
Spartanburg (S. C.–3–2): Hub City Courts Washington (D. C.–1–7):	120	10- 7-40
1-7): Navy Yard	314	9-17-40

1 There is usually a 30-day period between bid advertising and bid opening

2 Information not definite.