

A STUDY OF
THE LEISURE TIME CRAFT PROGRAM
FOR SOLDIERS AT FORT LEWIS

by

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CHAPTER I

A PROBLEM

How to occupy oneself during off-duty hours has been of concern to men at every army camp, even though not always recognized as a problem, and often accepted as a traditional part of "being in the army."

At Fort Lewis the meager recreational facilities provided for the peace-time garrison of regular army men were badly overtaxed when the Post became a training center for inductees before the U.S. entry into World War II. With the beginning of the war, Fort Lewis became one of the larger training camps in the country, mushrooming to provide quarters and training facilities for about 90,000 men. While the recreational facilities lagged still more both in physical proportions and in attention given, for the men the problems multiplied.

Men from all parts of the country, from all walks of life and of widely differing ages, customs and interest were thrown together in new and strange ways of working and living. The training routine was both physically exhausting and mentally trying. Living quarters, mostly of a temporary nature, offered the barest of necessities and imposed not only a barren existence, but what often seemed intolerable impositions and unwanted proximity. Men were away from their homes, families and friends, some for the first time. Their habit patterns were broken, the training bewildering, the routine deadening. Willing and able though they were, they found work and environment both strange and distasteful as well as nerve-racking. Added to all this was the

ever-present spectre of uncertainty. There were the personal risks spoken of so lightly and taken so gallantly, the gnawing personal problems about wife or sweetheart, children or ageing parents, illness, housing, clothing or money. Many emotional drains helped create the spectacular mental ills so highly publicized. More than that, the many mental strains were recognized as an insidious and elusive military problem. To officers and others who saw the soldiers as men and individuals it was a matter of further concern and a problem of wider and lasting significance. The urgency of the training left no chance for great basic changes, even if there had existed such a desire. The one avenue open was constructive use of free time and facilities to use that time.

Inadequate Facilities. The existing recreational facilities were mostly of an athletic nature, inadequate for the number of men on the Post and unsuited to the interest, ability and need of the majority. Beer halls and movie theatres were provided on the Post. The latter provided a passive recreation for many, of which they tired but went back to in desperation. The beer halls, while popular, added to the existing problems in general, and became in many cases a hazard for the men and their welfare, in the long run.

Various civilian organizations of the near-by cities offered some recreational facilities, foremost of them the U.S.O. and Service Clubs. These were inadequate for so large a number of men even if they could have been reached. Transportation facilities were far short of the need, in view of the fact that the training program left little free time and imposed many restrictions.

At the Fort Lewis Station Hospital the Red Cross was attempting a very limited craft program, carried out in a half-hearted manner and, of course, available to a relatively small number of men. Each Service Club likewise set aside a room for hobby work. These lacked equipment, and no provisions were made for instruction, making their value doubtful.

Summary of Chapter I. The purpose of this paper is to trace the partial solution of this problem from its inception as an experimental and somewhat revolutionary idea, through the war and the first years of peace. The modifications, changes and additions made were learned from experience and in the main dictated by necessity. By making this information available it is hoped it can be both an inspiration and a help in establishing other craft programs.

CHAPTER II

A SOLUTION

A New Idea. Col. Alvin L. Merrill, Special Service Officer at Fort Lewis, saw that the existing athletic, entertainment and recreational facilities were not adequate, nor sufficiently challenging. From lifelong dealing with men he keenly understood their problems. He made a further study of the various activities then conducted on the Post, the number of men interested in each and the number of men not reached by them. By further questioning of the men not interested in the current activities, Col. Merrill discovered the needs for various activities to provide for thousands of men who, during their temporary army life would enjoy and benefit from continuing their established hobbies and interests. He saw the necessity of providing opportunity for development of other interests and of satisfying those men craving an educational challenge. In partial answer to the problem he conceived the idea of consolidating a number of hobbies under one roof--a Hobby Center.

A Plan Proposed. During the hectic months after our entry into the war, there was scant chance of the Army supporting a new venture. Thus it came about that Col. Merrill first explained his tentative plans of a consolidated Hobby Center to a Military Affairs Committee of the Kiwanis Club of South Tacoma and asked for their support. This meeting was held in the home of Mr. A. G. Hudtloff, Superintendent of Clove Park Schools, in February 1942, and attended by the Special Service Officers of the neighboring military installations of McChord Field and Mt. Rainier Ordinance Depot.

The plan was enthusiastically received. However, upon closer study, the Kiwanis Club found they were unable to underwrite the whole program but pledged their support. It was significant that this initial plan secured the permanent interest and support of Mr. Hudtloff.

The Plan Received Support. Col. Merrill then submitted his plans for a hobby craft center to Col. Ralph Glass, Commanding Officer of Fort Lewis. Col. Glass enthusiastically endorsed the plans and promised his aid in carrying them out.¹ To help get started he gave Col. Merrill complete control of all suitable tools and property on the Post turned in to the Army by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

There remained two major problems: (1) That of finding suitable quarters for such a hobby center, and (2) securing and financing a corps of competent instructors.

Construction of a new building for recreation purposes was not permitted under existing military regulations but Col. Merrill saw possibilities in an old railroad shed, a roof supported on posts and centrally located on the main Post. The necessary approvals for the use, repair and refitting of this building were secured, and plans for construction of suitable facilities went ahead.

There remained the problems of securing and paying competent instructors. It was here that Mr. A. G. Hudtloff's earlier interest in the plans bore fruit. Mr. Hudtloff was the Superintendent of the Clover Park Schools, located some three miles north of Fort Lewis.

1. Personal Files of Col. Alvin L. Merrill

Between October of 1940 and March of 1943 this school system had provided educational facilities to more than 8,000 officers and enlisted men from Fort Lewis, Mt. Rainier Ordnance Depot and McChord Field.

This program was carried out with vision and cooperation on the part of school officials, teachers and the commanding officers, and special service officers of the nearby army post. Funds were made available through the Clover Park Schools, under provisions of the laws of the State of Washington for Adult Education.¹

With Mr. Hudtloff's interest in the plans for a unified recreation center as Col. Merrill proposed, it was but a step from the school-centered program for relatively few, to a program located where large numbers of men could get to it. It was through Mr. Hudtloff's help that the interest and support of Mrs. Pearl Wanamaker, Superintendent of Public Instruction in the State of Washington, was secured, making it possible to provide instructors for the hobby center under the Adult Education Program, administered by the Clover Park Schools.

While the preparation for housing the unified recreational center went on at Fort Lewis, Mr. Hudtloff recruited from his own and neighboring schools a corps of instructors known for their ability, and who were willing to accept the extra load, at relatively small pay, as part of their contribution to the war effort.

The Plan Took Form. The remodeled railroad shed was 213.5 feet long, 59.5 feet wide, comprising an area of 12,702 square feet, not

1. State of Washington. L. '09, p. 313 Sec. 9

counting the addition of a boiler room 19.5 by 16.5 feet.

The floor was a smoothly finished concrete slab on which were placed the partitions of 2" x 4" studdings which were then covered on both sides with "Firtex", as were all walls and the ceiling. The building ran east and west, with as many windows on the south and north walls as sound construction would permit. Except for the office space at the west end a corridor ran from the main entrance the full length of the building with classrooms arranged on both sides. The north side held the woodshop, archery shop, music room, a small classroom used variously for orientation lectures, language classes and meetings, a storage room and the drawing and painting room next to the offices. Across the hall on the south side were the photography room, the sculpturing room, the woodcarving shop, and the leather craft room. At the east end, the metal shop was directly across the hall from the woodshop. The arrangement of the shops was made with the idea in mind of localizing all noise and disturbance at one end of the building. There was no known reason for the architect placing the metal shop with a southern exposure.

Each shop was provided with a sink and hot and cold running water. There were a ladies' and a men's wash room, each with ample facilities. The building was heated by steam and conventional radiators placed under the windows. The windows provided the only means of controlling ventilation. They were also provided with shades that served no great purpose after the dim-out restrictions were lifted.

Light was provided by the conventional incandescent lamps hung too high to be adequate, one of the few things that remained typical

of classrooms. This was later remedied by lowering the lights in some shops and by installing additional lights over the machines in others.

The woodwork remained unfinished, and the white side of the Fir-tex gave the walls their color. The outside of the building was sided and painted a cream color. With its shrubbery and plot of lawn by the main entrance, and the smooth well-graveled parking area, the Hobby House was attractive and inviting, at least as compared with other buildings in its vicinity and with the beer hall across the tracks.

CHAPTER III

THE HOBBY HOUSE IN OPERATION

The Opening. August 1, 1943 was set as the opening date for the Post Hobby House, as the unified recreational center had been named. For some weeks preceding that date its location, purpose, scope and opening date were advertised by posters and notices, and through the various available military channels to bring it to the attention of the greatest possible number of personnel.

To further acquaint the men with this new venture the Hobby House was opened for inspection the Sunday preceding its going into operation.

Each room was new and fresh and clean, complete with the available equipment. In addition, there were exhibited on white paper-covered tables in each room samples of the kind of work one could expect to do in that shop. This work was either the instructor's own, or the work of former students. Each table had an attractive poster making further suggestions for work in the same craft. An enlisted man with a distinguishing armband was stationed in each room and supplied with mimeographed sheets of information about the Hobby House. Each instructor was in his room to answer questions in regard to the work itself and to establish contact with interested persons.

Initiated by the Post Commander, Col. Ralph Glass and his official party, there was a steady flow of officers, enlisted men, some nurses and a few civilians through the Hobby House until it closed that evening. Much interest and curiosity was shown, but relatively few questions were asked, and opinions generally withheld at this stage.

When the Hobby House officially opened the following evening, there was present a notable number of those who had been visitors the day before, a phenomenon that has remained characteristic of the Hobby House. The evident scepticism with regard to the whole venture, expressed most often by men of the regular army, quickly disappeared as one after another became absorbed in some project in one of the shops. Men in increasing numbers came to look, and returned to participate in the activity of their choice. By the third day there was a queue waiting for the door to open, and many men remained after the class hours until Charge of Quarters turned out the lights.

Organization of Classes. It was originally planned to run two semi-formal, two-hour classes each evening. In anticipation of school-like classes the shops were wired for class bells that were never even installed. When the Hobby House opened each one who wanted to work was expected to register by filling out a card which he deposited with the instructor in the shop of his choice. The cards had spaces for name, grade and organization as well as hobby and age, over or under 21. At the bottom of the card were places for marking attendance for two months.

The matter of semi-formal classes seemed questionable in view of the irregularity of hours of duty of various men and groups and the uncertainty of transportation for those not quartered in the immediate vicinity. When the Hobby House got under way it became apparent at once that many men wished to stay all evening, or for whatever length of time they had. Still others wished to spend some time in several

shops, while some merely visited and vicariously enjoyed the hobbies of others. The cards became meaningless deadwood as the men were tired of filling out forms and following routine. The idea of formal classes was abandoned.

The shop doors were opened at 6:00 P.M. and remained open until 10:00 P.M. and often later, for anyone interested, until the building was locked for the night. Each man sought the level of his interest, and brought his project or problem whenever he could get to the shop.

There was no attempt to segregate beginners from the more advanced, or to teach on a group basis. Nor were there any restrictions between shops. If portions of a man's work could be done better or more easily, or tools were more readily available in some other shop, that was where he took his project.

There was no recognition of rank, color or creed in the Hobby House. It was not uncommon to see a rookie and a colonel working side by side, sharing ideas and tools. In the words of the Army Times headlines:¹

FORT LEWIS HOBBY HOUSE KNOWS NO RANK

"..... No suggestion of rank in the Hobby House. Every person registered in one of the classes or shops becomes a student or worker, with all activities based on the same level....."

It was a house of hobbies and a house of working democracy.

The Hobby House was open four hours every evening, Monday through Friday. When it first opened, classes were run in the same manner on

1. Army Times, pp. 10, March 13, 1948

Sundays, from 2:00 P.M. until 10:00 P.M. When it was learned that the State of Washington could not pay instructors for Sundays and the Army had no available fund, Sunday classes were discontinued. But they were resumed more than a year later, financed by the Army, to fill a very real and urgent need for recreational facilities.

Attendance. Attendance reports were required as a basis for payment of instructors under the Adult Education program of the State of Washington. These were, as mentioned, collected and tabulated by the Hobby House co-ordinator from the Clover Park Schools. Attendance was also the Army's sole criterion as to whether the experiment would be worthwhile, a worry that was short-lived.

As mentioned under class organization, provision was made for keeping attendance records on the registration cards issued the first few weeks the Hobby House was in operation. In a matter of days it became obvious that it was all but impossible to keep such records because attendance of any individual was irregular, uncertain and beyond his control. Furthermore, the number of registration cards grew every day, representing some who came often and others who never came back. Perhaps less than half the men became known to the instructor by name, which would have increased further the difficulty of taking attendance.

Two somewhat parallel and overlapping means of taking attendance were therefore used. Everyone entering the Hobby House was required to sign in at the desk of the Charge of Quarters at the entrance. The total attendance was taken from that list. While this count would unavoidably include visitors who failed to designate themselves as

such, it is unlikely that they exceeded in number the men so eager or busy that they failed to sign in.

In addition to this list each shop had its own attendance sheet which those working there were expected to sign. While these lists gave no true indication of the total attendance, as a man often signed up in several shops, they did serve to indicate the attendance in each shop and its relative popularity.

In the early days of the Hobby House the attendance sheets were to be filled out with name, rank and organization. This was thought to serve as a check as to whether the various units knew about the recreational facilities of the Hobby House and provided opportunity for the men to attend. However, the enlisted men in particular felt that the rank and organization request was a trap to check on their activities and whereabouts and they often failed or refused to fill it in. For this reason the rank and organization designation was omitted until the Hobby House was thoroughly recognized.

Actually these attendance records were little more than a daily count of numbers with no indication as to who was new, nor of the frequency or number of return trips of anyone. Each instructor turned in his attendance sheet to the Director of the Hobby House each evening. These reports were then forwarded to the co-ordinator assigned to the Hobby House by the Clover Park Schools. Had it otherwise been feasible to check on the number and frequency of returns, the uncertainty and secrecy of troop movements and other factors beyond control of the individuals would have made such a study quite meaningless.

However, a closer study of the data in Appendix I, II and III yield some interesting facts pertinent to any leisure time program.

As mentioned earlier the Sunday operation of the Hobby House, when it was first opened, was discontinued for lack of funds to pay the instructors. There were also doubts among some Army personnel whether there would be adequate attendance on Sundays when men had time to go elsewhere. However, when Sunday operation was resumed late in 1944 attendance proved adequate for continued support by Army funds. For January, February and March 1945 there was an average Sunday attendance¹ of 719 men, as compared with an average week-day attendance for the same period of only 449, an average difference of 270. This speaks for itself.

From the data in Appendix II it is apparent that certain days of the week had poorer attendance than others. By re-arranging that data in the following manner some pertinent facts are more clearly discernible.

Ranking of Days of Low Attendance			
Day	Days in Period	No. of Times Lowest in Attendance	Rank
Monday	12	2	3
Tuesday	12	2	3
Wednesday	12	1	2
Thursday	12	0	1
Friday	12	7	4

1. Appendix I

Two things are obvious, Wednesday and Thursday were the days most favorable for Hobby House attendance, and Friday was the least favorable. That Friday was the least favorable can be explained, as it was by the men, by the so-called "G.I. parties", or preparation for Saturday's inspection, and perhaps in part by dances and preparation for week-end passes.

Were all the facts known perhaps Monday's and Tuesday's relatively low attendance was explainable by military assignments or perhaps it expresses in some degree a need for recuperating from Sunday's recreation, or a change of activity.

Other factors influencing attendance of many, although not evident from these figures, was pay day and the money available. Weather and various sports also influenced the attendance. It seems these generalizations can be drawn:

The leisure time craft activities were attractive enough to draw good Sunday attendance in spite of other attractions.

That the use of the Hobby House was in direct ratio to the leisure time available.

That the attendance was influenced by the use of and need for the projects made.

That those with strong hobby interests were less susceptible to pay-day "sprees" and irregularities.

Publicity. In an effort to bring the opportunities of the Hobby House to the attention of as many as possible, a problem complicated by constant movement of troops during the war, there was carried on

a continuous publicity campaign. Starting with the pre-opening announcements in the Post paper and through channels to the Special Service Officer of each unit, it was followed up in a varied and thorough manner.

Bulletin board notices in the quarters and throughout the Post called attention to Fort Lewis' unique establishment, the Hobby House, and carried invitations to come and work or just visit.

Pictures of various activities in the Hobby House, taken by the Signal Corps, were printed in Army publications and metropolitan papers with stories of the Army's venture in recreation and morale building.

Handbills, in mimeographed form, cleverly written and well illustrated were distributed through the various units as well as in the Hobby House.

Displays of things made in the hobby shops were arranged at various places on the Post, and in the adjacent cities of Tacoma, Seattle and Olympia. In the Hobby House shops and corridors were continuous exhibits of projects, and photographs of men working. Finished products lined the wall of the lounge. Related to these were various other exhibits that added interest to the Hobby House. Near the entrance but perhaps examined the least was a case of athletic trophies. Strategically located was a well-kept bulletin board, vitalized with maps and original and striking illustrations highlighting current events. Another well-kept and very attractive board about 4 feet by 12 feet held exact replicas of service ribbons and decorations, with red strings leading to complete descriptions and a map showing the different theatres of operation.

A sign, reading HOBBY HOUSE and visible for blocks, was placed along the ridge of the roof of the building and after the dim-out restrictions were lifted, remained well lighted every evening the hobby center was open. The front of the Hobby House and the parking area was likewise well illuminated.

Loudspeakers mounted on the roof of the Hobby House broadcast a program of music and invitations for fifteen minutes at the opening time each evening.

The orientation program of each new unit included information about the Hobby House. In some instances after the war, tours were conducted through the shops to promote constructive use of leisure time.

Word of mouth remained, in spite of all, the most effective means of publicity. A man would bring a friend, and he another, to set the ball rolling. In many cases officers with the welfare of their men at heart would bring them along, singly or in groups. Men coming from other camps had "heard about the Hobby House". So effective was the word-by-mouth story that in the fall of 1945 one officer said: "I first heard about the Hobby House from one of the replacements in the jungle of New Guinea."

Unsuccessful Crafts. All the shops experienced temporary fluctuations in popularity and attendance. In a few cases the attendance was so irregular and became so small that the classes had to be discontinued. Briefly they were as follows:

Drawing and painting classes occupied a large room when the Hobby House opened. These activities enjoyed a measure of success while

patronized by some successful artist then stationed on the Post, and who created a following. Never truly popular these classes lingered for a year and a half before they were discontinued for lack of attendance.

Shellcraft was tried next in the same room. It flourished for a while, about the time when the first veterans came back from the Pacific. The novelty of their treasures of sea shells spurred the interest. By the end of the war there were few or none interested in shellcraft, and the shop was closed.

Archery seemed quite popular and promising when the Hobby House first opened. It occupied a small but thriving shop, but lack of sustaining attendance forced it to close in less than a year.

Sculpturing and modeling occupied a small room and had very meager attendance until it merged with and became part of the woodcarving shop.

The reasons for these failures were many, sometimes obscure and elusive but not without importance. In order of importance the teacher ranks first. In regard to the crafts that failed the teachers were specifically at fault in one or more of the matters of attitude, enthusiasm, personal appearance, ability to understand and get along with other people.

Other causes of failure was the lack of suitability, purpose and usefulness of the craft to the particular group at the particular time. This was also contingent upon the interest and background of the persons concerned.

In the matter of failures and of fluctuations in attendance, the music room furnished the most striking example of the difference in interest in different groups. Although neither a craft nor unsuccessful the music room is mentioned to illustrate the value of background and taste in the starting, development and pursuit of any interest. Equipped with a very fine phonograph and record library of classical music, the music room was intended as a place where men and officers could go to write letters or just relax while listening to their favorite music played upon request, or to the programs arranged by the instructor.

During the war years when the men on the Post represented somewhat of a cross section of the men of the country, the music room was very popular and crowded to capacity. From observation and a speaking acquaintance with many of these men it seemed they were rather well educated, and they had in common a somewhat developed taste in music. There was in other words, a process of selection in operation. After the war when soldiers on the Post were on the average much younger and more immature, at a time when out of one division of about 12,000 men, 263 were enrolled in literacy classes below the 6th grade,¹ the music room, with its fine facilities, and by far the most attractive room on the Post available to enlisted men, was always nearly and sometimes completely empty.

Administration. The administration of instruction was handled entirely by the State of Washington Adult Education Program, through

1. Hobby House File 330:11

Mr. Huddloff and the Clover Park Schools. The direct contact with the Hobby House was delegated to one man designated as Co-ordinator, which title describes his work, as it could scarcely be called supervision. The co-ordinator collected the attendance reports, kept the instructors' time, secured instructors and substitutes, delivered the payroll, visited the shops and called the very infrequent staff meetings.

The Hobby House itself was administered wholly by the Army. As originally organized it was under the Post Special Service. Along with the army re-orientation and the discontinuance of Special Service, the Hobby House was successively under Morale Service, Information and Education, and finally by itself as the Post Hobby House under the financial administration of the Post Central Fund.

Throughout these changes the administrative staff remained the same, and consisted of:

One officer, Director of the Hobby House, charged with its operation and administration.

One Sergeant who served as purchasing agent, handled the receipts and did the detail work on inventories and budget estimates.

One corporal who supervised the clean-up detail and looked after maintenance and repairs.

Two privates who assisted the corporal in his duties.

These four enlisted men also served as Charge of Quarters on a regular roster. The duties of Charge of Quarters were many and varied. He opened the Hobby House, supplied directions and information, checked

tools in and out of the tool room, collected attendance sheets, handled the cash for sale of materials. After he had checked the rooms and locked up for the night he had to check the cash receipts, enter the sales in a form provided for the purpose. Any shortages had to be made up by him, any surplus was set aside for possible claims, and if none, eventually used for balancing shortages.

For help in cleaning up the rooms four men were usually drawn daily from the Post Labor Pool.

Accident Prevention. The army's extensive accident prevention campaigns reached the Hobby House mostly in the forms of posters, printed slogans and handbills. Of these the posters were most numerous and, no doubt, most effective. Many of them were masterpieces of eye-catching design, color and penetrating directness. The ones used in the Hobby House were selected with an eye to applicability and were strategically placed. Posters of a general nature were placed in the hall, by the doors, over the attendance sheets, or by the coat racks. Those pertaining to a particular tool or machine were so located that the operator could hardly avoid seeing them. The safety kits found on the wall in each shop, seemed sardonically to be a favorite location for a safety reminder.

The supply and changing of the posters were cared for by the administration and consequently fluctuated somewhat with the transfer of key personnel.

All power tools had signs directing their users to obtain information and permission to operate from the instructor in charge.

Some had, in addition, safety suggestions pertaining to guards and usage and there was some attempt to mark danger zones with red paint. The latter lacked uniformity and plan of execution.

Periodic inspection by the Post Safety Officer was routine and sometimes resulted in minor changes. While these, on occasions, seemed petty, they served a real purpose in maintaining safety consciousness.

Not counting small cuts and bruises, normally taken care of by the instructor with the help of the first aid kit, there were three accidents the first five years the Hobby House was in operation. Two of these happened on power machines and were incurred while operating them without permission or in violation of the posted directive. The directive from then on became an order which safeguarded the army more than the men. It is of interest and importance that by official inquiry, made as a result of one of these accidents, it was found that the accident was caused in a large measure by the use of the shop for other than instructional purposes, and specifically by the removal of the guard over the circular saw by a Post maintenance crew.

In evaluating this safety record it is necessary to point out the large number of men using these shops,¹ that many of these men had never seen power tools, let alone used them, that the classes were large and so unstable that no safety instruction could be given

1. See Appendix III

except individually, necessitating extreme alertness by the instructor. In view of these facts the safety record seemed quite good.

The Cost of Operating the Hobby House. In any venture, institution or business, cost is an important and practical consideration.

Having started out with tools turned in by the Civilian Conservation Corps, an old building remodelled with "certain non-allocated funds",¹ helped along with money "earned by Special Service",² and then successively under various service branches and the Post Central Fund but without separate accounting, the Hobby House had an obscure financial background.

Even after regular inventories and budget estimates were started in 1946 there was no separated account of the operating cost and therefore no available figures. The budget estimate had but one constant figure, that of the instructors' Sunday salaries. Otherwise it was but a guide for the Central Post Council in allocating funds for material. This did in the main deal with supplies that were re-sold anyhow. The budget estimates for the months of January, February and March 1947 are included in Appendix IV to illustrate the wide dispersion of estimated cost of materials for various shops.

While there are no figures on the cost of heat, light, power, actual maintenance costs, nor pay of the Hobby House army personnel, one estimate of operation cost is found in a report to Fort Belvoir

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1. Col. Merrill's Files
 2. Letter from Col. Merrill

in 1946,¹ as being \$.30 for each man per month. At first glance this figure seems very reasonable, but upon closer scrutiny the actual operating cost appears high even though this figure apparently included the cost of instruction.

Week-day teaching instructors received \$120.00 a month at a pay rate of only \$1.50 per hour. For ten week-day instructors, plus the Sunday salaries of \$619.00 the monthly cost of instruction thus amounted to \$1819.00. The recorded attendance for 1946 (given in Appendix III) totals 205,398 men, a monthly average of 17,116. Dividing the monthly instruction cost of \$1819.00 by the average number of men in attendance per month (17,116) it is found that the cost of instruction amounted to only 10.62 cents per man, or 10.62 cents per visit actually. The remaining 19.38 cents, out of the 30 cents as stated cost, seems to be proportionately very generous for the remaining operating costs. Obviously the cost per visit would be higher in times of low attendance, which might have been the basis for the statement to Fort Belvoir. Considering that for each visit the cost of operation and instruction and the cost of materials to the men combined was less than the price of a ticket to the movie theatre it seemed very reasonable.

Loss of Tools. The loss of tools can be a problem in any shop. At the Hobby House it became a highly variable problem and showed some interesting though elusive aspects.

1. Hobby House Files 33:11

When the Hobby House opened, each room was equipped with a tool board that could be closed and locked. Each instructor arranged the tools to suit himself but it remained his responsibility to see that they were returned to the board. This system met with various degrees of success in different shops, seemingly depending on different factors worth considering: The instructor, the tools, the men and the circumstances. The instructor was, as could be expected, the most important single factor. Right from the start some of them experienced difficulty in getting co-operation in cleaning up and returning the tools to the board with an accompanying loss of tools. Some instituted a system of deposits on tools while others, who had larger classes had no difficulty. That this problem rested largely upon the instructor, rather than any peculiarity of the shop or tools, became apparent after a plan of two teachers working on alternate days came into use. In the same shop tools would be lost under one teacher while there were no losses under the other.

Tools themselves differed in potential disappearance. It seemed that the general usefulness and obtainability of the tools were the deciding factors. For example, pliers were very difficult to keep, particularly while they were off the market. One shop that had no difficulty with tools solved the plier trouble by welding a chain to them and using the tool board lock to secure it to a piece of scrap too big for any pocket.

The men who came to the Hobby House differed greatly in the matter of carrying off tools. On a basis of individual difference

this was to be expected, but there was a great difference on a group basis. While there are no available figures to substantiate this statement, the consensus of opinion of the instructors is presented for what it may be worth: During the time when most of the men at Fort Lewis and those patronizing the Hobby House in particular, were men from the Middle West, the loss of tools was a minimum. When those men were replaced with groups mainly from the large eastern cities, loss of tools became at once a problem. Some instructors felt that the loss of tools paralleled the high attendance of certain while racial groups who peculiarly patronized some crafts heavily and others very seldom.

The men of the regular army also seemed to feel that government-owned equipment was expendable. They consequently used tools carelessly and took small pains to return them.

Circumstance seemed to be an important factor in the matter of keeping tools. Just as certain tools such as pliers seemed to fill a particular need to men going overseas, so other tools apparently were needed or deemed desirable by men going home, having acquired somewhat of a carefree attitude toward both equipment and standards during their army life. This seemed substantiated by the fact that when Fort Lewis became a Separation Center, the loss of tools rose to an all-time high. It was during this time that a central tool room was put into operation, and a system of having the men make a deposit and sign for the tools was initiated. While it did reduce tool losses, it incurred a great deal of discontent because of inconvenience and delay, with the result that some of the instructors were

later permitted to keep what was considered "non-critical" tools in the rooms.

No doubt many tools were carried off accidentally, as indicated by returns made by "buddies" of men who couldn't get back. For everyone who was careless about returning tools, there were many who were actively concerned that there would be tools at the Hobby House for others who came there. The latter particularly found expression in men bringing tools and materials to the Hobby House shops from their outfits, unmentioned sources, and through unauthorized channels.

Materials and Supplies. When the Hobby House first was in operation it was thought the materials could be supplied to the men free of charge. When the attendance quickly grew beyond all expectations, materials became a problem both as to cost and obtainability. The latter was particularly a problem in the metal shop. Not only did it have the largest attendance for almost two years, but metals and metal-working tools were at a premium. The "scrap piles" of the instructor and his friends tided the shop over until various contacts were made enabling the Hobby House to obtain some metal on the Post. However, files and hacksaws were soon worn out. There was at the time no fund, nor provision for any funds for replacement of expendable tools. Metal-working tools were furthermore obtainable on high priority numbers only.

At this stage the men working in the metal shop each contributed 25 cents for new files. This money the instructor took to the Director of the Hobby House with the suggestion that the Army had the necessary priority. The files were purchased and delivered in short

order. To assure funds for replacements of tools and materials 20 cents was charged for each knife made, as hunting or combat knives were then made to the exclusion of almost everything else.

As the other shops became short of materials, a similar system of making a nominal charge was adopted. Using the money thus collected Special Service assumed the function of purchasing agent for the Hobby House. It evolved slowly as a democratic, collective way of providing for the needs with the means at hand.

For some time this was a haphazard procedure of getting materials when obtainable, with whatever money was available, without any accurate check nor any permanent records of receipts and expenditures in this early period.

Rapid turnover of key personnel added immeasurably to the problem of planning and continuity. Although various ways of inventory and checking were tried periodically the Hobby House had been in operation almost two years and suffered some financial difficulties before a revolving fund for supplies, regular inventories and monthly budgets for each shop were established.

The materials for use in the shops were sold as near cost as was consistent with balancing the budget. It is noteworthy that relatively little salvage or surplus material was obtained by the Hobby House except miscellaneous metal scraps, some aircraft aluminum, some reject plastic bomber blisters and a few old rifle and sub-machine gun scabbards of leather. On the other hand both power and hand tools were secured in ample quantities after the war to replace the badly worn equipment.

The Projects. The projects undertaken and made at the Hobby House were of a great variety. In their free selection they were an important factor in its success on one hand and a limitation to instruction in some other respects.

All projects were individually chosen and no prerequisites were demanded. This did not, as it would seem, exclude the possibilities of the instructor making suggestions at some stage in the construction. While some men did come to the Hobby House armed only with a hope of finding something of interest, indicated by such questions as, "Sir, what can you make in this shop?" The majority got ideas from the projects displayed in the showcases, the work of others in the shops, and some had plans of their own. As could be expected, the plans presented were in keeping with the men and their backgrounds and ranged from nebulous notions measured off with gesticulation to carefully made drawings with dimensions and notes. Everyone was encouraged to make plans and drawings to assure success and make it possible for the instructor to check with the worker, but it was not demanded.

While it would have been highly desirable to have everyone make drawings it became evident that those most in need of it were the least willing and able to do so and tended to become easily discouraged. There were others who sought no advice or help to start with but later presented themselves in a ripe learning situation with the stock question, "Sir, this thing is all fouled up; where do we go from here?"

The distinguishing feature of the majority of the projects was that they filled some need, had some particular purpose, or represented the expression of an idea. A typical example was the making of knives by men who expected to go overseas. Knives were unobtainable at the time and so literally thousands were made in the metal shop. When the need subsided, there followed a variety of activities from casting of silver, hammering of copper, remodeling of rifles, and making general repairs, to building motor scooters and even to constructing a veterinarian's operating table!

The woodshop projects also showed a very practical trend: a shelf for the washroom, a crib for the baby, a crate for shipping something home, a cedar chest, a phonograph cabinet, or just a ping-pong paddle. Many large and fine projects were undertaken, particularly after the war when the men were reasonably certain of their station. Furniture led the list but there were several boats made, ranging from sailing flatties to family-size boats for fishing on Puget Sound. The largest and most elaborate project undertaken, a joint wood-shop and metal-shop project, was a house trailer intended for taking the family home and seeing the country upon leaving the army.

As indicated by a monthly budget of roughly one thousand dollars in 1946-47,¹ leathercraft was flourishing. Much leatherwork was correlated with the metal work, particularly in the matter of scabbards and sheaths for knives, tools and pistols. This was highly reciprocal

1. Appendix II

in terms of catches, rings, clasps and buckles fashioned in the metal shop for the leather projects.

While the projects were as varied as the backgrounds and interest of the workers, there was, however, such a preponderance of bill folds and ladies purses that the instructor found it helpful to make templates of light gage sheet aluminum for the most popular patterns.

The woodcarving shop maintained a good enrollment on what seemed a phenomenally uniform project of carving the tops for coffee tables. With few exceptions, variations of the same design were used. While some never got beyond the beginning stage, hundreds were finished and shipped home or fitted onto ready-made tables, or completed in the woodshop. Carving the table tops provided many a pleasant social opportunity as couples often worked on one piece of wood. This and other factors mentioned elsewhere, under instructor-student relationship, helped to account for the shop's popularity.

The photography laboratory operated at capacity practically all the time. It provided somewhat of a studio for taking photos of projects, still life, sweetheart, baby and buddies, to trying out cameras brought back from overseas. The darkrooms likewise served both for developing snapshots and more professional attempts, and for making prints of overseas and action pictures.

Many conventional and weird model aircraft with an equal variety of power plants were constructed, tested and rebuilt in the model shop. A model railway, sponsored by the Hobby House, was started in an adjoining room, permitting a permanent tract, but it could not

compete with the model aircraft. The shop was also equipped with ventilators and exhaust fans permitting breaking-in and test-running the motors, the noise and fumes of which were excellent advertising. Beside the actual construction of models the shop became a trading center, particularly for model motors and accessories.

Toward the end of the war a plastics shop was set up and experienced varying degrees of success. Even though the material was largely surplus or at least low-priced, as plastics go, the shop was never very popular. The projects made ranged from furniture to jewelry, preponderantly the latter. Floral designs, carved from the back and dyed, seemed the most popular. The shop was reasonably well equipped and the instructor provided good samples of projects to be made, but apparently the material had no wide and lasting appeal except for a rather small group.

Besides being generally practical, many projects made in the Hobby House gave expression to the workers' desire for beauty, however groping the effort. Closely related to that was the making of gift articles. Due to movements of troops, assignments in military problems, furloughs and other factors, the attendance figures are not a complete and reliable index to the popularity of the Hobby House nor to the gift-making seasons it experienced. A closer look at the figures in Appendix II presents a somewhat different picture. Dividing the receipts by the number of men in attendance, to the nearest whole cent, we find the average cost of materials for each visit to the Hobby House. For the year 1946 the average spent was 12.5 cents

per person for each visit, certainly a price well within the means of anyone. However, for the period between November 1 and December 1 the average amount spent was 16.7 cents and for the three weeks of December 1 to December 21 the figure rose to 17 cents for each visit, an increase of 27.7 per cent of the yearly average. This leads to the conclusion that the making of Christmas gifts was an important part of the program.

From this it seemed clear that expenditures for materials and likely the elaborateness of the projects and the success of the craft program were influenced by seasons, customs and social factors.

Teacher-Worker Relationship. When the Hobby House was inaugurated, the Army anticipated the possibility of disciplinary problems occurring. It seemed not too unlikely, particularly as a large beer hall paralleled the building less than half a block away. Instructors were informed that no misconduct was to be tolerated; nor were they to cope with such. They were merely to report it. However, the happy fact is that disciplinary problems, other than minor theft of tools reported earlier, simply did not occur. Any inclination of anyone to display egotistical tendencies was levelled off effectively by the rest of the men long before it became a problem. There was no ripe situation for a disturbance among the people in the Hobby House. The very interest and industry of the shops seemed to beget interest. Whether potential trouble-makers did not come to the Hobby House, or stopped in and became interested, no one knows. It is likely that both occurred. Occasionally men came to the Hobby House

while under the influence of liquor, but no one created a disturbance. On the contrary, the man would often excuse himself for having been drinking and ask permission to come back and start a project some other evening.

The lack of formality and artificial barriers put everything on a man-to-man level. Interest being the keynote, the instructor-worker relationship was an exceptionally happy one. While there was no occasion to enforce rules and impose discipline from without, a true discipline grew from within. The all too prevalent traditional concept of teacher-versus-student was replaced with a teacher-and-student attitude that found many expressions in cooperation and mutual fellowship. It is noteworthy that with all the informality of the shops the men still almost invariably addressed the instructors with more respect and courtesy than is commonly the case in our schools and colleges.

Most instructors, in common with thousands of other people, asked service men to their homes for dinners. Others took men from their shops along on hunting and fishing trips or picnics. Many lasting friendships grew out of these associations. And it was just as common for men to ask instructors out for a cup of coffee, or a meal at the service club or officers' club, or proffer some favor. That these invitations were more than passing pleasantries was shown by the many letters the instructors received even to the present writing, and by the number of men who came back through Fort Lewis from overseas and made an effort to see the Hobby House instructors. Nor is one likely to forget the handclasps and words of men who upon leaving

came in to express their appreciation.

Along with the free selections of crafts and hobbies there seemed a tendency to select or gravitate toward instructors as well. It could be expected that men of like or similar interests would tend to get together. It seemed, furthermore, that an instructor with many and wide interests could, through them, draw other men and get them started on new interests.

While no doubt the influence of the teachers' personalities reached even farther, the subject is elusive and somewhat speculative. One example of teacher influence was so frequently mentioned by the men themselves, however, that one could not escape noticing it. In one of the shops the instructor was a motherly lady the same age as mothers of the men in the army. Her shop was always well attended by serious-appearing young men, and variously and jokingly referred to by many as the "homesick boys' refuge" or "mother's place".

To the extent that such statements were true, it was a fine service, and likely took place in other shops in some measure. It would seem to emphasize the need of selecting instructors for the position rather than for the subject, and the value of making the selection upon qualities that may not be measured in grade points.

The fine teacher-worker relationship extended to the Hobby House administrative staff as well and facilitated prompt and complete cooperation in all matters. At no time did there arise any unwholesome rivalry, nor interference of one with the other. It rather

seemed that the Hobby House directors went out of their way to aid instruction in every manner possible. The evaluations these men made of the teacher-worker relationship should be all the more significant. Col. Merrill, who instituted the Hobby House and directed it during the critical first few months, expressed the thought in a letter to the writer that "had it not been for the teachers the success of the Hobby House would never have been accomplished".

Three and a half years later, Capt. Youngberg, then Director of the Hobby House, began one of his reports with the following sentence: "The success of the Fort Lewis Hobby House is due primarily to its staff of instructors....."¹

1. Hobby House Files 33:11

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

Evaluation of the Craft Program. The brief span of time since the inception of the Hobby House and the wide dispersion of those who used it, to all walks of life and all parts of the country, makes anything but a partial evaluation impossible. How important and how far-reaching are the effects of this leisure-time program of crafts can never be calculated. However, there are some significant indications of its evaluation by those acquainted or connected with in some manner.

As an army installation, the merits of the Hobby House were measured in terms of its usefulness to the Army, quite aside from any social significance or possible projection to civilian life of the interest and habits established. Individual officers understood and were interested in its carry-over possibilities but to the Army the Hobby House was a means of maintaining that elusive quality of morale; of stabilizing men by giving them some work of interest in their spare time; of keeping men satisfied. To quote from a report in the Hobby House files:¹

"One of the first of its kind sponsored by the Army, the Fort Lewis Hobby House is crusading for a morale-lifting pattern that is spreading to army posts throughout the country and allied lands."

1. Hobby House File 330:11

That the Hobby House fulfilled these purposes to the satisfaction of the Army is shown both in the above statement and by the fact that it was maintained through the war and beyond in spite of shortages of material, personnel and housing. The latter was particularly critical and on more than one occasion was the Hobby House building considered for other purposes, but each time the craft program prevailed.

Furthermore, from its experimental beginning under Special Service the Hobby House was continued in operation to the present writing and has become a separate organization. It is considered a permanent establishment on the Post. The Army's esteem of the Hobby House is also reflected in the provision of more than \$600 monthly for instructors' Sunday salaries alone.

The relatively quick recognition of the value of the Hobby House program is shown in the following self-explanatory letter to the Commanding General of the Ninth Service Command from the Director of Morale Services. It was written within three months of the opening of the Hobby House.

SPSPX 201 Merrill, A. L. Colonel

26 October 1943.

Major General David McCoach
Commanding General
Ninth Service Command
Fort Douglas, Utah

Dear General McCoach:

The excellent work being done in Special Service by Lieutenant Colonel A. L. Merrill at Fort Lewis has been brought to my attention. His efforts deserve commendation.

As you know there is increasing emphasis on orientation and the off-duty education program, and Colonel Merrill has anticipated this trend. The construction of facilities such as the Hobby House and the initiation of an education program based on the expressed needs of the men is most praiseworthy.

We are pleased with his achievements.

Yours sincerely,

F. H. OSBORN
Major General
Director for Morale Services

Further indication of the Army's evaluation of the Hobby House was the establishing of smaller hobby centers at McChord Field and Mt. Rainier Ordnance Depot. Special busses and trucks were also put on a regular run to the Post Hobby House from North Fort Lewis while that training center was in full use.

Nor was the recognition confined to the above posts. Letters of inquiry and request for aid in setting up hobby centers came from army camps in all parts of the country. The following letter from Camp Crowder, Missouri, was typical:

ARMY SERVICE FORCES
Seventh Service Command
Camp Crowder, Missouri

4 January 1945.

Subject: Inauguration and Operation of a "Hobby House".

To: Commanding General, Fort Lewis, Washington.

Attention: Special Services Officer.

1. Information is requested reference the inauguration and operation of the "Hobby House" which it is understood is such a success at your station.

2. This information is requested with the view to establishing a similar project here at Camp Crowder and your cooperation will be appreciated.

For the Commanding General:

JOSH H. GROCE,
Major, Signal Corps
Special Services Officer

As a result of aid and information given and following the lead of the Fort Lewis Hobby House, Camp Crowder had at the time of closing what Major Ivan Cahoon, Special Service Officer of the former Seventh Service Command, believed to be the best crafts program in the country. It included two barracks for leather tooling and dark rooms for photography, one barracks for sea shell work, oil painting and pastel, one barracks for radio workers and builders, two barracks for sheet metal work, one barracks for silk screen activities and one large building with band saws, planers, lathes and other wood working machinery. Three barracks were used for storage of leather, lumber and various tools required for the overall program.¹

The Army also flew an officer from the Universal Military Training Experimental Unit, Fort Knox, Kentucky, to Fort Lewis in 1946 for the sole purpose of obtaining first hand information on the craft program and to see the Hobby House in operation, with a view to establishing a similar center at Fort Knox.

In an interview with the writer, this officer summed up his impressions in the remark that he did not know how money could be spent better than the 30 cents per man per month spent on the Hobby House.

The Value of the Hobby House to the State of Washington. As noted earlier the establishment of the Hobby House was made possible by the Washington State Department of Education providing instructors under the Adult Education Program. That the Hobby House has received

1. From a report to Col. Jesse S. Burbage, Special Service Officer Fifth Army.

continuous support from the State Department of Education is perhaps the most eloquent evaluation possible.

While it might be said that the morale and conduct of troops within its boundaries was important to the State of Washington and that likewise a small percentage of those attending the Hobby House were native sons, there was a broader aim.

In this era of tax sensitivity, pressure groups, and special interests it is especially significant that the State Department of Education believes that what benefits the men of the country benefits Washington and has thus seen fit to continue this long-range investment in citizenship, in peace as well as in war.

Evaluation by Those Who Used the Hobby House. While the considered worth-whileness of the Hobby House in the eyes of the Army and the Adult Education Program of the State of Washington was important and necessary, it served but as instrumental in maintaining the program. What the Hobby House did to and for the men at Fort Lewis is of supreme importance and best attested by the men themselves.

The praises of the Hobby House as "the best thing the Army ever did" was exceeded only by the enthusiasm of those who worked there. This praise, so frequently spoken, and often the theme and spirit of letters to instructors from men who had moved on, is substantiated and documented by the continued high attendance.¹ It was, as noted earlier, one of the most effective means of publicity.

1. Appendix III

No one who worked with the men could help responding to their enthusiasm and gratefulness for the opportunities the Hobby House offered. Nor could one fail to be touched, even moved to pity, over confessions by some of struggles to keep sober, to hang on to the self that the men still cherished and of the part the Hobby House played in helping them.

It was assuring that the men found something worthwhile in the Hobby House when they sought help in planning how they would have shops when they "got out," shops with craft programs for family and friends. Typical of such Hobby House inspired planning is the following letter from an ex-soldier.¹

1. Hobby House File 33:11

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION

Hammond, Indiana

R. Wayne Cunningham, Director

Phone 1564

29 April '46

Special Service Officer
Fort Lewis, Washington

Dear Sir:

Upon my discharge from the service I have been working for the City of Hammond in the Recreation Department.

The City of Hammond has a large Civic Center of which in the near future we are going to build a War Memorial for our buddies. The thing I am interested in is a large Hobby House for this War Memorial.

While at the Fort, I visited the Hobby House very often. Of 15 posts and camps at which I was stationed, over a span of five years, I liked the Hobby House of Fort Lewis the best.

Would it be possible for you to send me all the data on the Hobby House, such as cost, different projects, etc.

Thanking you very kindly, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Vic Mettler

More immediate use was made of the craft idea by officers and enlisted men who expected to have time on their hands while still in the service and prepared for such eventuality by obtaining or making tools and gathering information and material. Perhaps the most notable example of this was a group of officers from the 303 General Hospital. Each one did some work in several of the shops at the Hobby House but specialized in one particular craft so that he could in turn teach it to others. They secured patterns, books and bibliographies, took notes, purchased the essentials of tools when obtainable and made others in the Hobby House, all in anticipation of setting up a hospital somewhere and being able to "help men keep their sanity," as one of them put it.

That their craft program took roots when their unit was transferred to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, and was still flourishing at their station in the Pacific when the war ended¹ is of somewhat secondary concern at this stage. For the present purpose the important thing is the evident value these medical men placed upon the craft program for themselves and others, for the sick and the well.

1. Letter to the writer from Capt. N. D. Schwartz, 303 General Hospital.

Summary. The continued success of the Hobby House has brought it out of the experimental class and shown beyond a doubt that this program for constructive use of leisure time served a real purpose and filled the need of many. Its very success would seem to suggest that the program could be expanded or varied to serve an even larger number. In contemplating such an expansion, or the extension of a unified hobby program to other settings, many benefits and conclusions can be drawn from the groundwork already covered by the Hobby House program.

It is clear that where the population warrants it, a program of this nature can be operated most economically on a large scale. From the standpoint of housing, heat, light and maintenance that fact is fairly obvious. The experience of the Hobby House has shown that the administration can be held to a minimum. The duties of the Hobby House Director and his staff were in reality mainly those of a business manager and a custodial crew. These duties and the clerical work and relatively small administrative work as regards instruction is, of course, most economically handled when duplications are avoided by concentrating the activities. There are some less obvious advantages of concentrating and centralizing the program. There is the elusive but important matter of atmosphere, created spontaneously by people with common or related interests getting together. There is the opportunity of seeing the work of others, to see shops in operation, to try different things without becoming deeply involved, nor becoming conspicuous. There is a degree of security in a social sense in having a large number of people interested in the same thing.

The recognition of something being worth-while might be the very thing a person needs to carry on. As noted with the Hobby House, the concentration of the Hobbies was a promotion scheme in itself. If a person did not find what he wanted at first, he could hear and see, even small other activities going on, as in the case of model motors, and chances were good he could at least find something of interest in the building.

The Hobby House seemed to lend substance to the truism that most men want to be better than they are, and are willing to make an effort in that direction. To say it differently, men avail themselves of the opportunities present if they are at all attractive. And again, the cost of operating the Hobby House shows that the price of making craft opportunities attractive is not exorbitant. The fact that many men worked on their projects at odd hours, Saturdays and Sundays in their quarters with little or no equipment, showed how valuable the encouragement of the Hobby House was to them.

One of the most disheartening and yet challenging experiences at the Hobby House was that it takes interest to beget interest. The literal truth of that "to him who hath shall be given" became so apparent in that the men with an education and background, who already had something to fall back upon, were the ones who tended to avail themselves most readily of the Hobby House facilities. Those who seemed to need most a purpose, a stabilizer, an interest, were much less apt to find a starting place. It was a repetition of the vicious circle of the lag of social development everywhere: where the need of improvement was greatest, the awareness of the need

was the least acute. The redeeming observation was that through the patience and kindness of those with active interests others found encouragement and new horizons. A sharing democracy seemed natural to the craft shops. One phase of this sharing, while not part of the program for soldiers, seems too significant not to mention. It was the quite regular attendance at the Hobby House of teenage boys who lived on the Post; and of some boys from neighboring communities even as far away as Tacoma. Some of them came to the Hobby House for years. It was evident that working and associating with the men lent stature to the boys in their own estimate at least, and even more interesting how readily, even eagerly, many of the men accepted and helped the boys and treated them as "regular fellows." The craft program not only served well the purpose for which it was instituted, but held promise of possibilities beyond that.

While the Fort Lewis Hobby House proved by actual successful operation the feasibility and desirability of a large scale unified craft program as a leisure time activity, the philosophy of it was well expressed long ago by John Dewey when he said:

Education has no more serious responsibility than making adequate provision for enjoyment of recreative leisure; not only for the sake of immediate health, but still more if possible for the sake of its lasting effect upon habits of mind.¹

A few reminders will serve to show how well crafts fulfill these requirements. Any craft, any project, requires a plan, an orderly

1. Dewey, John, Democracy and Education. p. 241.

procedure, a continuous application of effort. Besides tending to establish such habits of mind, the crafts help to develop dexterities and skills of a practical nature, useful and valuable in everyday life. Projects produced can themselves represent time invested rather than time merely pleasantly passed. To illustrate the universal applicability of crafts as a leisure time activity, one needs but compare them with almost any sport. Practically all sports are limited to certain ages; the majority of sports require a partner or team mates, many require expensive installations and equipment. Crafts can be participated in by anyone from children to the aged, the sick, the crippled and the well, singly or in groups, at home or in camp and with but a minimum of space and a very small investment in equipment.

With these points and the success of the Fort Lewis Hobby House in mind, it seems craft programs might be projected to civilian life as a possible partial solution to some of the many social problems and ailments. While it is realized that there is no panacea, it appears that all worth-while forces need to be marshalled.

The thought presents itself readily that extensive craft programs would aid in solving the problems of juvenile delinquency.

That idle time and lack of some constructive activity has bearing upon this problem can hardly be doubted. Whoever heard of a pressing juvenile delinquency problem in a farming community, where interests and activities abound? In this respect the problem parallels the situation coped with so well by the Hobby House at Fort Lewis. As the Army has a high percentage of very young men since the end of the war, the parallel is drawn even closer, and the

success of the Hobby House proffers an ever stronger suggestion of the possibilities in extending the craft program.

The first and the loudest objection is likely to be that it would cost money, a great deal of money, which it would. From an equally practical viewpoint it might be asked whether it would cost any more or as much as juvenile delinquency costs the taxpayer now, after the damage has occurred, and the post mortem cures attempted are of doubtful value - without attempting to estimate the human loss nor to assay the attending misery. Again, the Hobby House has shown that the cost need be neither exorbitant nor prohibitive. It has further shown that the informality and fellowship seemingly inherent in a craft shop offers the finest opportunities for friendship and constructive associations. The artificial segregation of the youth from the adults as in the conventional school does not need to exist in a craft program. Working alongside the adults provides a youngster the opportunity for help and can offer the recognition he seeks and needs.

If the older generations have ideas and ideals to offer, the opportunity to share them is never better than across a work bench nor is confidence more easily won than by working at mutual interests. And many can be reached informally and effectively in the shops who can not be reached by lecture, literature or church. Along with the possibilities offered by a craft program it needs be remembered that the greatest challenge to all, and the very foundation of progress is to arouse and maintain the will to learn.

Criticisms. With its unquestioned success, the Fort Lewis Hobby House still had its shortcomings - admittedly more easily seen in retrospect.

To better evaluate the fluctuations the Hobby House underwent, it is necessary to remember that as far as the Army was concerned the Hobby House was not a philanthropic venture but itself a tool that served a purpose to the Army first of all and secondarily and incidentally, served the men.

As such a tool of the Army the Hobby House found itself on occasions buffeted by the jealousies and whims of a professional militarism that counts all things expendable for the sake of its glorification and survival. When men of such leaning could not usurp the credit for its success or use the Hobby House for their own ends, they even sought to destroy it. The result was periods of uneasiness and uncertainty and shortage of funds and materials that can not be laid to the Hobby House and the men immediately in charge.

With changes in command and the many war-time demands, the Hobby House sometimes suffered downright neglect. Perhaps the most notable was the lumping of the Hobby House and the Post weekly paper into a joint budget, much to the disadvantage of the former until separate accounting was established.

The Hobby House would have benefited if a system of budgeting and accounting had been worked out from the very first. In justice it must be said that no one could foresee an attendance so overwhelming that the free supplies on hand would prove wholly inadequate. But money could have been saved and disappointments avoided if a

system of accounting had been established as soon as the situation became apparent. The criticism is directed at the slowness in establishing order and providing supplies.

Practically no books or magazines were provided as reference or source of ideas for the work in the shops at the Hobby House. While the apparent demand was not great and there would have been additional work in keeping records of such material it would seem to have been well worth trying.

Establishing a central tool room and a system of checking out tools on a deposit had many arguments in its favor. But nothing in the Hobby House met with as much disfavor among the men, especially because it smacked of the very regimentation that the Hobby House helped them escape. The slowness and cumbersomeness of the central tool room was an annoyance and an affront to the teachers who had capably taken care of the tools in their own rooms. The whole arrangement illustrated most clearly how ill fitting a blanket order can be.

Some effort should have been made to save waiting and grievance by having the tool room attendant know the tools. It would have been well if the Charge of Quarters, who also tended the tool room, could have been selected with more of a view to his ability in meeting the public than was often the case.

The extent of supervision of instruction might be questioned. It might be borne in mind, however, that there was no course of study to be completed, but it was rather a house of hobbies, therapeutic in its intent. Possibly both teachers and shops that failed

could have been saved by proper supervision. Whether the gain would have been greater than that which was derived from establishing different shops is a moot question. It needs be borne in mind too, that it is easier to make changes in the teaching corps than to find one man capable of supervising well a wide variety of activities. Where the student-teacher relationship was so direct and individual the selection of the teacher was likely more critical than the amount of supervision in the classroom.

Recommendations. Recommendations for hobby centers can be but general and must be interpreted in terms of the particular situation and modified to fit changing needs. Only one thing holds true, whether it is a community-centered program or neighborhood boys invited into one's shop: Something done is better than despairing.

In setting up any hobby center crafts to be offered should be selected only after careful evaluation of already existing interest, a variety of which is found in every community. These interests vary with the locality, social and racial factors, fads and seasons of the year, but provide the logical starting place. For an example, where skiing is an established sport the making of skis and skiing gear would catch the interest of many and enable them to enjoy both the work and the sport. Toward spring boat building or fly-tying might interest the same group. Whatever the starting place, leave opportunity for new interests to appear and encourage their growth.

Basic hand tools pertinent to the crafts attempted should be provided in adequate numbers to avoid much waiting. Nothing will discourage students more quickly than wasteful waiting and inactivity.

This is especially true of youth. An orderly, convenient way of obtaining and returning tools and securing materials as well as information and help is a necessity for a successful shop. Unlikely as it is to happen, there should not be an evident oversupply of tools, as such a condition tends to create carelessness and lack of respect.

Power tools would in many cases be both desirable and necessary for part of the work and certainly would help to create interest for those who have no other access to such tools. Valuable training can be derived from their use as well. Care need be exercised, however, lest the participants in the craft programs develop a sense of helplessness without such tools, leading to discouragement in continuing the work at home.

Recognition is always important. A community crafts center should receive recognition by displays and exhibits and proper publicity in the local paper. But it should receive recognition first of all by being established in a pleasant room and in attractive surroundings as being worthwhile in itself. If a hobby center is to serve its community it should never be permitted to seem makeshift and second-rate. The satisfaction of true recognition comes not from verbose publicity but from the attention and active interest shown by sincere fellow men.

The selection of instructors is as important as it is difficult. Without attempting a discourse on the subject it might be summed up by saying that a fine craftsman without teaching ability and a deep interest in his fellow men has but little to offer. Nor is a person with nothing to offer but an interest and "a way with boys" likely

to have much success. The person selected to teach crafts on a voluntary attendance basis must have a great deal of substance to him and a rare combination of skill and understanding and a contagious interest in wholesome living.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A comparison of Sunday attendance and the average daily attendance of the corresponding week for the three month period of January, February and March, 1945.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Sunday Attendance</u>	<u>Average Weekday Attendance</u>
January 7, 1945	524	391
January 14, 1945	534	351
January 21, 1945	649	345
January 28, 1945	578	293
February 4, 1945	439	276
February 11, 1945	449	296
February 18, 1945	539	444
February 25, 1945	1372	687
March 4, 1945	898	605
March 11, 1945	916	501
March 18, 1945	768	576
March 25, 1945	962	629
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8628	5394
	Average Sunday attendance	719
	Average weekday attendance	<u>449</u>
	Difference in averages	270

APPENDIX II

A comparison of the number in attendance Sundays and the low day of each week during the three month period of January, February and March, 1945.

<u>Day and Date</u>	<u>Low Days</u>	<u>Sundays</u>
Friday, January 5	295	
Sunday, January 7		524
Friday, January 12	324	
Sunday, January 14		534
Friday, January 19	301	
Sunday, January 21		649
Friday, January 26	319	
Sunday, January 28		578
Wednesday, January 31	256	
Sunday, February 4		439
Tuesday, February 6	239	
Sunday, February 11		449
Friday, February 16	252	
Sunday, February 18		539
Monday, February 19	378	
Sunday, February 25		1372
Friday, March 2	461	
Sunday, March 4		898
Friday, March 9	385	
Sunday, March 11		916
Tuesday, March 13	383	
Sunday, March 18		768
Monday, March 19	519	
Sunday, March 25		962
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4112	8628

APPENDIX III

Weekly Accounting Report

December 31, 1944 through December 28, 1945

<u>Date</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Averages per capita</u>
Dec. 31, '44 -- Jan. 5, '45	\$270.11	1673	\$.16
Jan. 7 - Jan. 13	342.77	2460	.14
Jan. 14 - Jan. 19	337.65	2298	.15
Jan. 21 - Jan. 26	344.94	2378	.14
Jan. 28 - Feb. 2	315.55	2043	.15
Feb. 4 - Feb. 9	353.30	1821	.19
Feb. 11 - Feb. 16	367.21	1931	.19
Feb. 18 - Feb. 23	426.32	2760	.15
Feb. 25 - Mar. 2	477.31	4810	.10
Mar. 4 - Mar. 9	446.68	3924	.11
Mar. 11 - Mar. 16	305.87	3424	.09
Mar. 18 - Mar. 23	261.99	3649	.07
Mar. 25 - Mar. 30	303.43	4107	.07
Apr. 1 - Apr. 6	416.10	3780	.11
Apr. 8 - Apr. 13	376.49	4205	.09
Apr. 15 - Apr. 20	402.93	3932	.10
Apr. 22 - Apr. 27	467.92	4038	.12
Apr. 29 - May 4	426.22	3567	.12
May 6 - May 11	389.37	3465	.11

cont. - Weekly Accounting Report

<u>Date</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Averages per capita</u>
May 13 - May 18	\$369.44	3447	\$.11
May 20 - May 25	394.00	3792	.10
May 27 - June 1	428.48	3712	.12
June 3 - June 8	442.40	3829	.12
June 11 - June 15	390.67	4096	.10
June 17 - June 22	377.98	3479	.11
June 24 - June 29	316.96	4489	.07
July 1 - July 6	428.79	3750	.11
July 8 - July 13	457.17	4265	.11
July 15 - July 20	411.38	3944	.10
July 22 - July 27	435.90	4019	.11
July 29 - Aug. 3	585.00	4629	.13
Aug. 5 - Aug. 10	686.63	6034	.11
Aug. 12 - Aug. 17	684.48	4672	.15
Aug. 19 - Aug. 24	698.34	5270	.13
Aug. 26 - Aug. 31	807.51	6013	.13
Sept. 2 - Sept. 7	697.08	5313	.13
Sept. 9 - Sept. 14	665.34	5114	.13
Sept. 16 - Sept. 21	732.82	5257	.14
Sept. 23 - Sept. 28	692.75	5804	.12
Sept. 30 - Oct. 5	572.31	5188	.11
Oct. 7 - Oct. 12	704.06	4572	.15
Oct. 14 - Oct. 19	678.04	4702	.14

cont. - Weekly Accounting Report

<u>Date</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Averages per capita</u>
Oct. 21 - Oct. 26	\$566.07	3901	\$.15
Oct. 28 - Nov. 2	652.74	4163	.16
Nov. 4 - Nov. 9	555.10	4314	.13
Nov. 11 - Nov. 16	603.09	3483	.17
Nov. 18 - Nov. 23	671.93	3797	.18
Nov. 25 - Nov. 30	858.92	4702	.18
Dec. 2 - Dec. 7	935.51	4581	.20
Dec. 9 - Dec. 14	708.15	4146	.17
Dec. 16 - Dec. 21	547.00	3993	.14
Dec. 23 - Dec. 28*	396.39	2663	.15

*Closed Dec. 24 and 25.

APPENDIX IV

BUDGET ESTIMATE JANUARY 1947

Leather	\$948.00
Maintenance	40.00
Metal	54.00
Model Aircraft	361.19
Music	10.00
Photography	261.36
Plastic	43.22
Shellcraft	156.72
Woodcarving	74.40
Woodwork	284.65
	<hr/>
	\$2193.54
Sunday Salaries	<u>619.00</u>
	<u>\$2812.54</u>

BUDGET ESTIMATE FEBRUARY 1947

Leather	\$1418.40
Maintenance	130.00
Metal	45.80
Model Aircraft	316.00
Music	32.65
Photography	267.50
Plastic	88.62
Shellcraft	156.72
Woodcarving	140.50
Woodwork	215.70
	<hr/>
	\$2811.89
Sunday Salaries	<hr/>
	619.00
	<hr/>
	\$3430.89

BUDGET ESTIMATE MARCH 1947

Leather	\$1792.75
Maintenance	40.00
Metal	29.40
Model Aircraft	321.94
Music	47.00
Photography	155.68
Plastic	109.35
Shellcraft	3.00
Woodcarving	143.50
Woodwork	243.75
	<hr/>
	\$2879.47
Sunday Salaries	<u>619.00</u>
	<u>\$3498.47</u>

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