

WAGGA WAR EFFORT

C.U.S.A. RECREATION HUT

Opened at Wagga A.I.F. Camp

SPLENDID STRUCTURE FOR
SOLDERS' COMFORT

Lieut.-Col. Ford Performs Official Opening

Lieut.-Colonel H. C. Ford, officer commanding the A.I.F. camp at Wagga, at the request of the Bishop of Wagga (the Most Rev. Dr. F. A. Henschke) yesterday afternoon officially declared open the C.U.S.A. hut at the camp for the use of the trainees.

Despite the unpleasant weather, there was a particularly large crowd outside the building for the ceremony. The Wagga Citizens' Band, under the direction of Bandmaster W. S. Hill, rendered appropriate numbers, after which His Lordship addressed the gathering and paid tribute to the many honorary workers who had assisted in erecting a structure whose value was worth about £900, and one of which the Catholics of this community were indeed proud.

The building, which is 80 feet x 30 feet, will be used throughout the week for the recreational, writing and reading needs of the troops, and on Sunday mornings Masses will be said, a sanctuary having been installed at the western end of the hut.

Erected on brick foundations, the structure is built of timber and fibro cement. On the eastern and southern ends, and over the entrance which faces the north are the letters C.U.S.A., which is the abbreviation of Catholic United Services Auxiliary. The hall proper is 68 feet, and at either side of the sanctuary is a small office.

The hut is already equipped with a latest model radio, the gift of Philips' Lamps (Australasia) Pty. Ltd., through the local agents, M. Rava & Co., and the executive is now anxious to receive a piano, either as a gift, or as a loan until the duration of the war, deck chairs, seating, books, papers, magazines and anything tending for the comfort of the soldiers.

The official party comprised the Bishop, the Mayor (Ald. H. E. Gissing) and Alderman and Mrs. J. Halloran, the president of the Mitchell Shire (Councillor D. L. Cox), Mr. C. L. Daley, representing the Kyeamba Shire, Mr. A. Howard Smith, representing the president of the M.P. and A.A., and Mrs. Howard Smith, the officer commanding the camp (Lieut.-Colonel Ford) and Mrs. Ford, together with Major Dodds and the Adjutant (Lieut. Allen), Mr. E. Partridge, representing the R.S.I.L.A., the Ven. Archdeacon West and Mrs. West, representing the Anglican Community,

Archdeacon West and Mrs. West, representing the Anglican Community, Mr. R. Johnston, Mr. J. P. O'Regan, M.L.C., the Very Rev. Father Larkins, Adm., the Rev. Fathers Gilby, Desmond and Captain Chaplain J. J. Lyons, C.S.S.R., of the Albury A.I.F. Camp, and the following who are members of the C.U.S.A. executive, of which the Bishop is president: Dr. A. C. Moran and Mr. A. D. Ryan (vice-presidents), F. J. Brady (secretary), J. V. Doyle (treasurer) and the ladies' executive comprising Mrs. M. A. Byrnes (president), Miss M. Rudd (secretary), Mrs. R. Langdon, Miss T. Hudson and Mrs. H. C. Worch, of Albury.

BISHOP'S ADDRESS

The Bishop said that they had gathered there on a very unpleasant afternoon for a very pleasant function—to bless and open the new C.U.S.A. hut. "C.U.S.A.," said His Lordship, "is a State-wide organisation and is affiliated with similar organisations in all States of Australia. Our object is to supply huts and comforts to the soldiers in camp, in and outside of Australia."

"This hut is only one of many similar ones that have been or will be opened in various camps in Australia."

lar ones that have been or will be opened in various camps in Australia. As soon as this organisation was formed, we, in Wagga, asked to have a hut on the ground here, and to show our goodwill, collections were made throughout Riverina to supply funds for the erection of this hut. Father Clarke, the organiser of C.U.S.A. in this State, gave permission, and I think it is three weeks or a month ago to-day that we decided to go on with the work. A certain amount of money was allotted to us. However, we had rather more ambitious schemes and decided to put up something really worth while.

"We felt that the soldiers were making big sacrifices in leaving comfortable homes, coming here, and undergoing rigorous training for our defence," said the Bishop, "and only the best is good enough for them, and we decided to put up a hut that would be a source of pride to ourselves, and a source of comfort to them."

"As you can see this is rather an ambitious scheme and its costs more, much more than that which was allotted to us. However, thanks to the unity and good spirit that exists in Wagga and Riverina, we have been able to build this hut almost within the amount of money allotted us."

His Lordship then thanked all those who assisted, and gave individual praise to the following:—

Mr. Steve O'Halloran, who designed the building and supervised its construction in an honorary capacity; Mr. William Lowe, who acted as honorary contractor; Mr. R. O. Geale, who directed the plumbing voluntarily; Mr. Theo. Smith who was the honorary electrician; the various master builders and their staffs who assisted in working bees, as carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, electricians, and carpenters' laborers, and painters, some of whom worked under electric light until 10 and 11 o'clock at night, and the ladies who provided a luncheon and several afternoon teas for the working bees.

GENEROUS FIRMS

The Bishop also thanked various firms for their generosity and said that some had donated materials and others supplied them at cost. He mentioned that the plastering material had been supplied at cost, and the work done gratis, whilst the three brick manufacturing firms had supplied the necessary bricks running into several thousands. He thanked Mr. Lowe for the part that he had played, and said that when he was called up by the military, Mr. Charles Fitzgerald had taken over and seen the construction through to a successful conclusion, the previous day.

His Lordship thanked the Ven. Archdeacon West for having lent the chairs and tables for the occasion, the M.P. and A.A. trustees for making available the site, which he considered the best on the ground, the Wagga Citizens' Band for their assistance, the R.S.I.L.A. for the use of the microphone and amplifier, and the O.C. for his generous assistance throughout. He stated that C.U.S.A. was not out of the wood yet and needed more money. The building could have been erected at less cost, but as the comfort of the soldiers was involved, C.U.S.A. decided to push on with the work, and several workmen

involved. C.U.S.A. decided to push on with the work, and several workmen had been employed. However, some benefactors had even paid the wages of some men.

Gifts of £50 from the Wagga Mayor's Patriotic Fund, and £10 from the Ganmain Patriotic Fund were gratefully acknowledged by the Bishop, who also thanked Phillips' Lamps for the donation of the radio, those who had run social functions, and the school children who had contributed their pennies. During this week the furniture and fittings would be installed.

On his own behalf, the C.U.S.A. executive and Catholics generally, and especially on behalf of the soldiers who would enjoy the benefits, and those Catholics who would attend Masses therein, the Bishop extended his sincere thanks.

The Mayor (Ald. H. E. Gissing) extended his congratulations to C.U.S.A. on having accomplished a very fine work which was greatly needed. Referring to the Bishop's reference to unity, the Mayor said that he was very proud of the complete unity which existed in this district in patriotic movements, and said that it was not excelled elsewhere. He mentioned that in seven weeks the band of women at the rest room at St. John's Hall had served 12,000 suppers to soldiers without charge. (Applause.) Similar work was done at the recruiting depot.

The facilities provided at C.U.S.A. and the Church of England hut would add to the enjoyment of the troops, and he congratulated all concerned with C.U.S.A. on the very fine result achieved.

C.O.'s THANKS

Lieut.-Colonel Ford said that he had looked forward to the establishment of this hut for some time. One of the worries of a C.O. was not only the teaching of drill to the men but the question of the men occupying leisure time. Efforts had been made to provide reading material, but that was not sufficient. Then the church bodies came along and sought his advice, and he immediately suggested the provision of such huts. He was very grateful for their ready co-operation, and judging by the patronage accorded the other hut, which he had seen full on many occasions, the C.U.S.A. hut was also going to be a tremendous success.

Not only from a selfish point of view was he pleased, but because he knew that the men would be well catered for in C.U.S.A., which would provide comforts during their leisure hours approaching those of their homes, and would also provide comforts within the camp instead of the troops having to go into town. He was sure it would be appreciated and provide recreation and a little bit of home life for all.

The president of the Mitchell Shire Councillor D. L. Cox added his congratulations and said that such a hut was good for the body and good for the mind—food that fed the soldier in the right way and made him fit and well and ready to represent his country. The hut would provide recreation for the men at night. All wanted the Australian soldiers to come back with the name of their predecessors—that of being "dinkum" soldiers and "dinkum" men. He hoped that the C.U.S.A. hut would help

soldiers and "dinkum" men. He hoped that the C.U.S.A. hut would help them attain that.

The Ven. Archdeacon West offered his congratulations to C.U.S.A. upon the erection of such a hut which would serve a worthwhile purpose. It was a splendid achievement, not only from the building point of view but also from the recreational and social standpoint. He could only offer his congratulations and he knew that the hut would be largely availed of. Concluding, he thanked the organisers for the privilege of saying a few words.

Mr. Alan Howard Smith, on behalf of the M.P. and A.A., congratulated C.U.S.A. and said that it was only three weeks ago that the executive had discussed with him the question of site, and now the structure was completed.

At this stage Mr. Brady read apologies from the president of the M.P. and A.A. (Mr. J. Banks), Ald. J. C. Blamey, the town clerk (Mr. F. H. Burns), Mr. Tom Collins, M.H.R., Mr. M. Kilpatrick, M.L.A., the president of the Kyeamba Shire (Cr. J. M. O'Brien) the president of the Wagga sub-branch of the R.S.S.I.L.A. (Mr. John Graham) and Mrs. B. J. Mahon, of the Mt. Erin Ex-Students' Association.

HUT OPENED

Lieut.-Colonel Ford, at the request of the Bishop to declare the building officially open, said that he considered this a great honor. He was unaware until that day that he was to be so honored and he thanked the organisation and those behind it. The privilege, he said, was one which he highly valued. He then declared the building open and trusted that it would add to the spiritual and material value of the troops.

The building open, the large crowd then filed through its doors and many words of appreciation of the excellent workmanship were heard. Certainly the troops will enjoy much comfort in this building, which will be completely furnished during the week.

VISITORS ENTERTAINED

At the conclusion of the ceremony of opening the C.U.S.A. hut, a party of distinguished guests, accepted an invitation from Ven. Archdeacon S. J. West to visit the Church of England recreation hut. Here they were hospitably entertained by the ladies, who had earlier dispensed refreshments to a large number of soldiers. In the party were the Most Rev. Dr. Henschke, Bishop of Wagga Wagga, the Mayor (Ald. H. E. Gissing), Major Dodds, Very Rev. Father Larkins, Adm., Rev. Father Gilby, Ven. Archdeacon West, Mrs. West, and Captain Chaplain Father Lyons of Albury A.I.F. Camp.