

Camp News

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“ LIKE HOME ”

SERVICEMEN'S CLUBS.

SPENDING WEEK-END LEAVE.

Little groups of soliders chatting over cups of tea, airmen and sailors lying stretched at their ease, reading magazines, and here and there a back bent industriously over a writing desk. Cigarette smoke drifts up, a head nods sleepily to the unheeding radio, and smiling girls carrying trays, with aprons tied over their frocks, weave in and out among the tables.

It's not home, but it's the next best thing to thousands of boys from other towns, who might otherwise spend a lonely Sunday leave in Auckland. The city is fortunate in the canteens and clubs it possesses, and in the cheery helpers who give so much of their time making leave pleasant for the boys. Recently, a "Star" reporter made a tour of these clubs, and proof that servicemen had fallen for their comforts was seen in the large numbers who made themselves at home throughout the day.

The first call was made at the Toc H Club for Servicemen in Customs Street where a delicious smell of bacon and eggs floated out, indicating that breakfast was still "on." Half-past ten, too, which suggested that even soldiers sleep in sometimes! Men of all arms of the forces were gathered in groups about the pleasant, airy room, lazily content. Not a sound came from the billiard and ping pong room! Perhaps it was too early in the day. Now and again a coin clattered over the counter, and the girl helper smilingly handed a sailor a packet of cigarettes or a soft drink. Behind the scenes, other helpers were buzzing about, amiably getting in each other's way, preparing meals (which are served at cost price at this club), sterilising utensils and checking in hats and coats. Everything that could be done to make things pleasant for the men seemed to have been thought of. There was a wash-room where they could shave, and each man was given his own towel. A very popular feature of the Toc H programme is the Sunday evening sing-song. Another service of the club is to provide billets for servicemen.

Sandwiches and Salads.

Down a flight of steps and into the lounge for the forces which is run by the women's organisation of the National Party. Here, a combat was going on between the piano and the radio—with the piano winning, hands down. The young airman seemed to be playing purely for his own enjoyment, and no one paid any attention to the rollicking tunes that followed one another tirelessly. One man, a tanned, hardy veteran of the last war, was lying fast asleep on the sofa, and the others seemed intent on catching up on their letter writing and reading. In the dining room every table was

occupied, and the pseudo-waitresses were being kept busy with morning tea. Quick fingers were also at work piling up sandwiches in the kitchen, while others were arranging salads in lettuce leaves. An electric refrigerator kept things cool, and the steriliser wasn't there just for show! In a little room off the dining room two women helpers were themselves enjoying a well-earned cup of tea. This day a junior branch of an electorate was in charge, each electorate taking a turn for a week. All meals and facilities at the lounge are supplied free. Much appreciated is the lending library, men being able to obtain books from the hostess. The organisation has its own darning service.

Servicemen were just trooping in to the big assembly hall for dinner at the Y.W.C.A. As each man entered he was greeted with a friendly word

by the hostess, while the others waited and new potatoes were being served. Apple pie and cream were there ready for the next course. In the kitchen several women were clearing up the remains of the preparation before the next big job—washing up. And when it is known that 300 men are expected for meals, there's some washing up to be done! Delicious-looking home-made fruit pies, tarts and scones were laid on the tables, for the Sunday Club of the Y.W.C.A. aims to provide as homelike an atmosphere as possible for the men. A long-range plan has just been formed, under which groups of from 20 to 24 workers will take their turn each Sunday. It is emphasised that the service is not costing the general association anything.

Home Away from Home.

At the Carrie Hostel, founded for

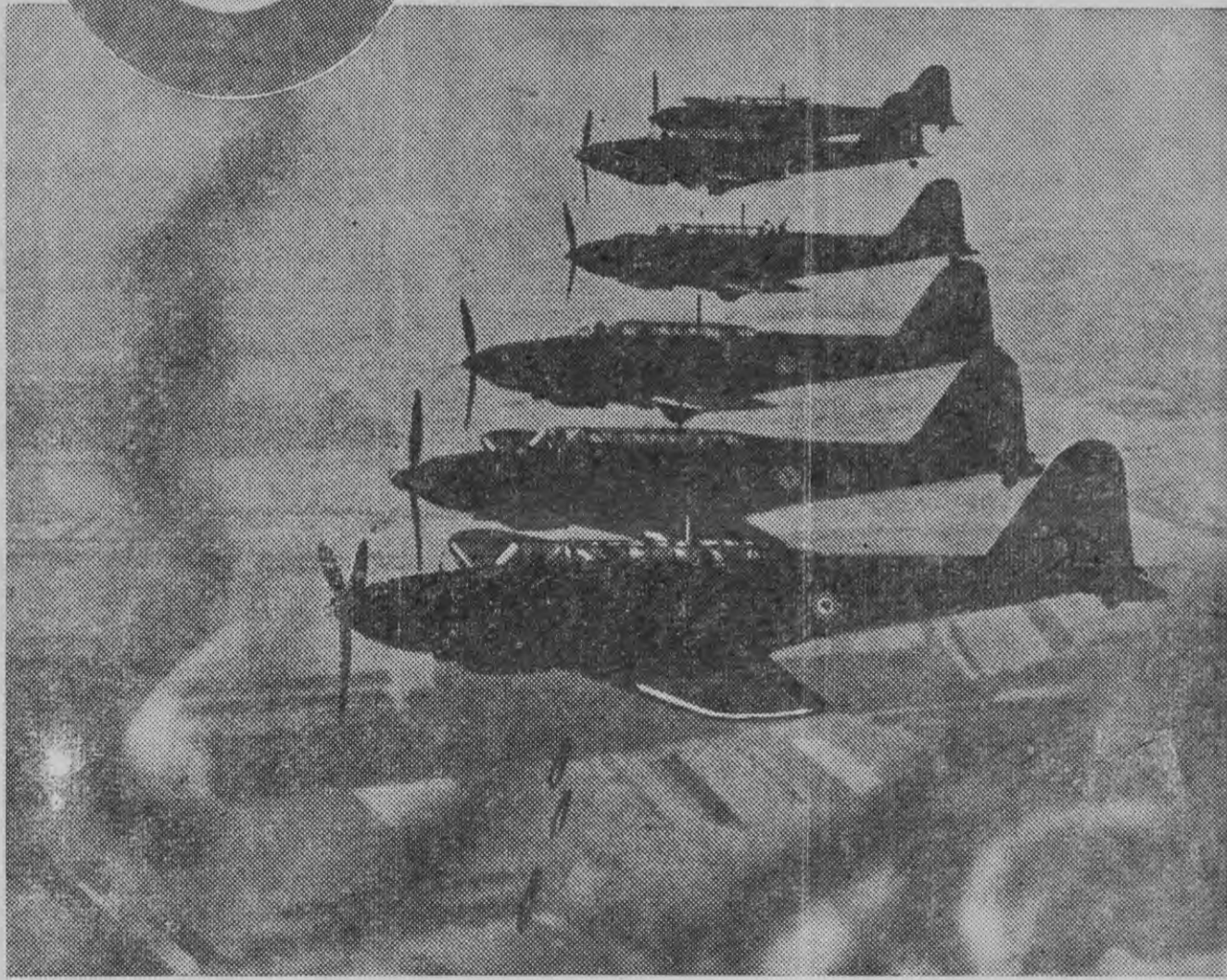
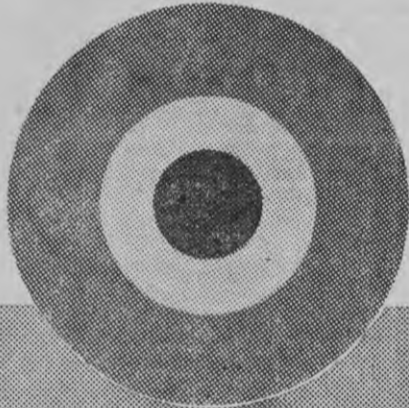
their turn in the lounge. Meat, salad men of all services, it was found that the birds had flown. It was three o'clock, and a strange quietness had settled down upon the building. The dormitories were silent, and a solitary soldier was writing in the lounge. All the others, apparently, "had gone out for the afternoon." But as is the way with all homes, they would all come trooping back for dinner! A bed and a meal costs a shilling each at this hostel. Generous gifts of food are sent in by private people and patriotic concerns. Returned soldiers do their bit by cooking, making beds and cleaning.

These are the comforts that Auckland's clubs offer servicemen. In a pleasant, homelike atmosphere they can drift in at any time during the day to while away an hour, and know they will be welcome.

RHYMES FOR THE AIR FORCE NURSERY — No. 2

Ethelbert Muffit

Was sent out to rough it
From (censored) on (such-and-such date);
“Let that smoke be a lesson”
He said, bombing Essen,
“That Greys (the tobacco) is Great!”



GREYS IS GREAT — BECAUSE ONLY A PERFECT TOBACCO CAN GIVE YOU A PERFECT SMOKE