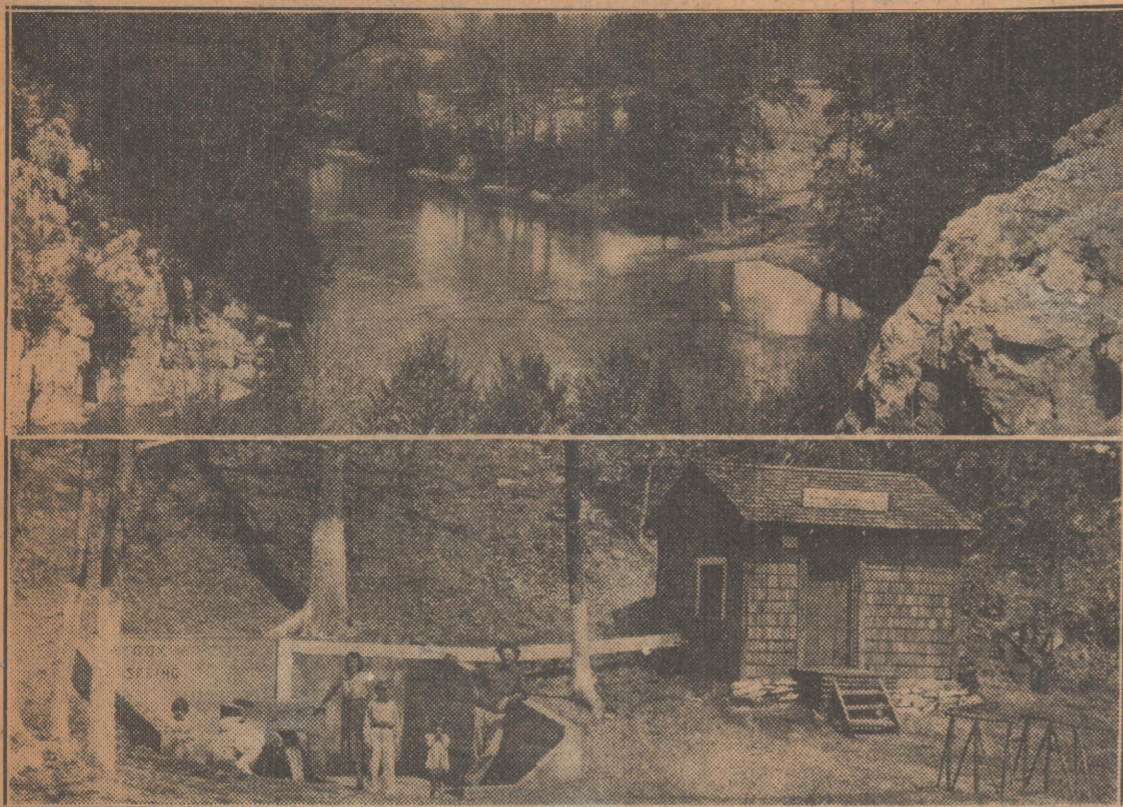


Famous Spring in Montgomery County Will Be Made the Center of a Beautiful Memorial Park

May 13, 1934



ABOVE: CADDO RIVER NEAR COX SPRING BELOW: COX SPRING.

Old Friend Believes That Nothing Would Have Pleas'd the Late Levi J. Witherspoon More Than Making This Wonder Spot Available to the People of Arkansas.

Special to the Gazette.

Arkadelphia, May 12.—Ten miles west of Norman in Montgomery county, in the midst of the Ouachita mountains, is Cox spring, a cold, clear issue of pure water that comes bubbling up from way down, flowing more than 5,000 gallons an hour. Cox spring is within 50 feet of State Highway No. 8, a much-traveled road from Fort Smith and Oklahoma points southeastward through Mount Ida, Norman, Caddo Gap, Glenwood, Amity and Arkadelphia, to go on to Fordyce and southeastern Arkansas.

Cox spring, in its beautiful mountain setting, is an ideal spot for a park and will become just that within the near future.

Until his death in 1933, there lived in Norman for many years Levi J. Witherspoon, one of that community's leaders. He was general manager of the Black Springs Lumber Company. Mr. Witherspoon was not only a good business man, he worked always for social betterment.

Memorial Proposed.

At a recent meeting of the stockholders and officers it was voted to set aside 40 acres, including Cox spring, as a memorial to Mr. Witherspoon and to erect a marker on a monument there. This roadside park will be open for the wayfarer to drink his fill of refreshing mountain spring water. On the hillside there will be plots of ground free for Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and other responsible organizations to build their lodges and huts and make their trails. Near the spring will be a park house and lodge, a concreted swimming pool fed by the spring, an athletic field, and woodland paths along bubbling streams in the valleys.

I. D. Jones of Arkadelphia, vice president of the company, who long was associated in business with Mr. Witherspoon, and possibly was his closest friend, has been given the task of building the park. He said the work will begin this week on a native stone and concrete swimming pool, a lodge hut built out of native logs, mountain trail, athletic field, and the memorial site.

"Knowing Mr. Witherspoon as I did," said Mr. Jones, "I am sure nothing would have pleased him more than to see this 40-acre tract covered with lodges of young people's organizations and patronized by girls and boys from all over the state." Organized groups

who are interested may write to Mr. Jones, Arkadelphia, for information.

David Neal Graves of Arkadelphia, now engaged in the project of transforming Petit Jean mountain and its 3,000 acres into a state park, will assist Mr. Jones by designing the Witherspoon memorial at Cox spring. Just back of the spring, in a small grass-sodded square against the incline of the mountain side, will be placed a huge boulder and the bronze tablet affixed to it. The spring will be enclosed in a shallow pit floored and walled with vari-colored slate that abounds in that vicinity.

Spring Has Enormous Flow.

Some idea of the capacity of Cox spring can be obtained from the fact that National Forest C. C. Camp No. 750 at Slatington uses its water for every purpose, including fire protection, and still does not tax it heavily. A pumping station lifts the water to a tower on the hillside there and this gives it pressure through the pipe to Camp Slatington, a half mile away. The Black Springs Lumber Company gives the water to the forestry camp and the officers and men have done much to enhance the environs of the spring.

One hundred yards west of Cox spring flows the Caddo river, which is merely a spring-fed, fast-flowing mountain brook at this place. But Cox spring and many others feeding it make of the Caddo quite a stream 20 miles south-eastward.

The spring is named for an old-time mountain family by the name of Cox, some of whom live at Norman and other towns not far away. The spring was known to stage line travelers some years before Arkansas was admitted as a state.

The old road which is now No. 8 was established in 1832. It must have been a trail for pioneer, Indian, and outlaw even before that. An ancient beech tree close by the road bears scores of initials and dates, nearly every square inch of bark having been carved on trunk and limbs up 10 or 12 feet from the ground.

A Picturesque Region.

The Ouachita National Forest, containing thousands of acres of fine timber, adjoins the Cox spring tract. One of the forest watch towers is a few miles west of the spring.

In this section are veritable mountains of crystal and slate. The canyons and ravines are things to marvel at for their green beauty and there is a spring rivulet flowing through every valley. At one extreme is the dark green of the pine and at the other the light green of the small hardwoods. Everywhere are the dogwoods and other flowering trees. Small wonder that Albert Pike, famous Arkansas poet and the world's greatest Mason, chose a greenclad eminence in these Ouachita mountains for his wilderness home. The old Pike homestead is situated a short distance west of Norman.

Mr. Jones, who has lived in western Arkansas all his life, knows all the history and the lore of these hills. He points out trails still used by deer and wild turkey, recalls some old village, the site of which is now almost concealed by the abandoned homesteads have crumbled into decay. He knows where the James boys rode in their outlaw raids and escapes and the grottoes where they took shelter at night; where the fish bite best and where the squirrels love to play.

Beautiful Scenery Abounds.

Not the least of the pleasures connected with a visit to this woodland and mountain paradise is the scenic roads that lead into it. On the way northward and westward to reach there, one passes through Glenwood-on-the-Caddo and Caddo Gap, both famous for their scenery that clusters round about the beautiful stream and the large rocks and boulders that hang over the water. Coming towards Cox spring the Oklahoman travels by way of Mena which sits amid some of the most rugged mountain country in Arkansas including Black mountain. There are 20 "peaks" in the Ouachita mountains, each more than 2,000 feet high. These mountains are heavily wooded and carpeted in colors most restful to the eye. The road on to Fort Smith is paralleled by the same kind of beauty. Off to the right, also in the Ouachita range, towers Mount Magazine, highest of all Arkansas hills, and majestic Blue Mountain, not far from Booneville. There are other roads just as enchanting for the vacation tourist or for the week-end traveler. It is hoped that Cox spring and Witherspoon Memorial Park will be a little oasis in the big oasis of the Ouachitas.

For other material see Caves, Miscellaneous, 273
National Forests, National Parks, State Parks.
Highways, Little Rock

MOUNT MAGAZINE HIGHWAY FAVORED

Believed It Would Restore Popularity of Once Famous Resort.

Special to the Gazette. 8-20-33

Booneville, Aug. 19.—Interest is being shown among residents of this territory, including Yell and Logan counties over the prospects of the construction of a road to the top of Mount Magazine, highest point in the Mississippi valley. A bill to be considered in the present session of the Arkansas General Assembly, provides for the construction of the road on money to be borrowed from the Federal Works Board, and the creation of a commission to handle the business of the road.

Twenty-five years ago, a first class hotel was maintained on the western crest of the mountain. Hacks carried passengers and luggage to the top and the accommodations were typical of resorts of those times. But with the development of resorts in Western states, interest lagged and now the hotel stands almost past repair, its only inmate, a man who sees about the mountain interests of the owner.

The mountain is approximately seven miles long and on the eastern end in Yell county, are five or six recently built summer cottages. Excellent water is pumped from a large spring, which also furnishes water for a swimming pool.

Springs Damaged Badly.

The west end of the mountain will primarily be benefited by the proposed road. Water once plentiful on the west end is now a scarcity. Careless visitors have filled up wells and dynamited springs until there are only two wells and one spring, Dripping Springs. (Meteor Spring to the old timers) which is barely trickling water.

Underbrush has covered the once well kept grounds, vineyard, and orchard of Chalmers Ferguson, famed poet-hermit of Mount Magazine, who lived 13 years on the bench below the old hotel.

The mountain rises 2,832 feet above sea level and because of this elevation, which makes it one of the highest if not the highest peak between the Allegheny mountains and the Rocky mountains.

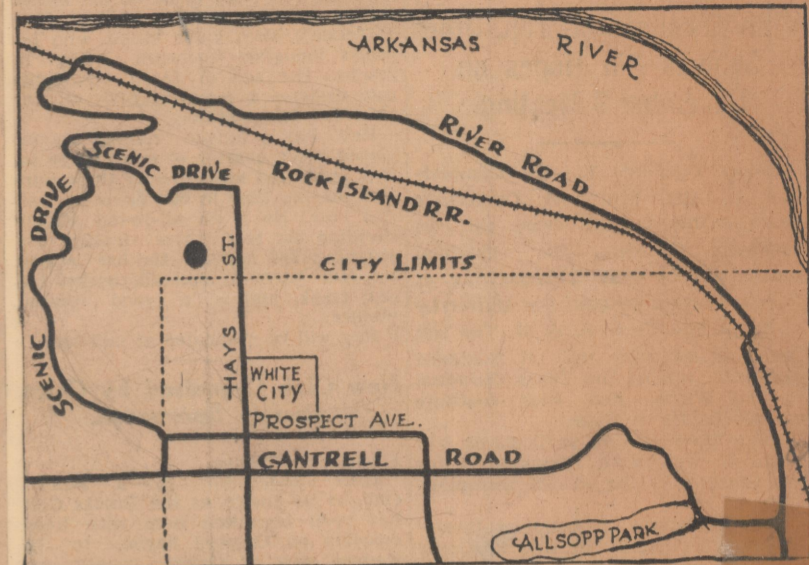
Route Defined.

The road would be built from a point near the town of Blue Mountain, in a northerly direction to the top of Mount Magazine at the west end of the mountain. From there the road would run approximately one-half mile along the north edge of the top of the mountain; "thence in a southerly direction along the top of said mountain to the south edge of the top of said mountain back to the top of where the road reaches the west end of the mountain."

The estimated cost of the road is \$150,000. It is pointed out that the cost might be cut to \$100,000 and that the maximum cost would not be over \$200,000.

The maximum cost would not be over chell, Belleville; Charles I. Evans, Booneville; Vincent M. Miles, Fort Smith; John E. Chambers, Danville; and Fred S. Armstrong, Fort Smith.

Showing Location of Roads West Of City for Which CWA Aid Desired



This sketch shows the scenic drive just beyond the city limits from White City, for which funds from the Civil Works Administration will be asked to complete work partially done. The project includes the river road, the loop from the end of Prospect avenue and back along Hayes street to Prospect, and the connecting link between the loop and the river road. The loop already has been graded, but the stretch to the river road is yet to be built. It is planned to surface the entire project and to complete the connecting road.

Right-of-Way Provided.

The county judge already has provided a right-of-way of 50 feet for the river road. The old road was abandoned after the 1927 floods blocked passage about four miles up the river. Cypress brake, a swampy section about a quarter of a mile long, on the south side of the road, has been condemned by the county Health Unit and will be drained and cleared.

The proposed route will cut back southward and join the ridge road 2,700 feet toward White City.

Motorists who wish to drive over the roads on the ridge may go north off Prospect avenue on Hayes street to the bluff overlooking the river, and then turn left, keeping all right hand roads until the point is reached where Pinnacle mountain and the river with its double channel and island are visible.

It is planned to connect the loop with the old river road at this point.

On returning to Prospect avenue, the autoist should turn left and follow all right hand roads.

The project also includes the abandoned county road which parallels the Arkansas river, connecting with the Cantrell road near West Rock.

Mayor Knowlton, County Judge Cook and others have shown interest in the scenic drive and an application for funds from the Civil Works Administration for completing the work probably may be granted in the next few days.

Through the aid of the relief agency and the county, a road has been constructed from the end of Prospect avenue northwestward through a wooded section to the point of a ridge overlooking the old river road and the Arkansas river, and back southeastward to Hayes street, almost to Prospect avenue.

CWA Funds Requested.

It is proposed that civil works funds be used to build a road to connect the old river road and the point overlooking the river with a loop drive, thus completing a road which would take Little Rock motorists through scenic beauty unsurpassed within miles of the city. The distance of the proposed loop from Cantrell road over the old river road to Prospect avenue is approximately five and a half miles.

The project to be submitted to the CWA will seek funds to complete the loop and surface the old river road and the newly built road upon the ridge overlooking the river.

The old river road turns off Cantrell road over a culvert, just beyond West Rock. Plans have been made and work already started to widen the culvert about 50 feet and pave it, to take out a sharp curve.

Judge John F. Chambers of Danville spoke in the interest of the area. A petty cash fund of about \$30 was made up for telephone and telegraph expenses in the interest of securing options from those who have not signed up.

CWA MONEY MAY FINISH SCENIC ROAD

Project West of City Sponsored by Garden Clubs Partially Carried Out.

Nov. 27, 1933

What probably is Little Rock's most beautiful drive lies half-finished just beyond the city limits between White City and the Arkansas river.

Its scenic qualities are such that the Federated Garden Clubs of Greater Little Rock has sponsored the building of the road and obtained the aid of the county Emergency Relief Administration in furnishing labor for the project.

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Mount Magazine Recreational Area Project Discussed.

June 11, 1935

Special to the Gazette. Booneville, June 10.—Approximately 200 men attended a meeting of Mount Magazine Recreational Area Association here tonight. Executive officers as well as many visitors were present. Senator Charles I. Evans, chairman of the association, presided.

W. L. Hall, head of the Mount Magazine submarginal area, in which the proposed recreational area would be located, spoke on the progress that had been made regarding the taking of options on the 150,000 acres slated for purchase by the government. A project has been submitted for the recreational area in the form of a formal application for \$2,328,340, of which \$589,000 would be expended for materials and \$708,000 for labor. The balance would be for the purchase of additional land.

It was said that 42 per cent of the area now is under option. Development of the area, which includes the top of Mount Magazine, highest peak between the Rockies and the Alleghenies, according to the formal application would furnish work for 1,300 men for two years. Of the actual mountain top of 1,922 acres, a total of 1,274 acres is under option.

Judge John F. Chambers of Danville spoke in the interest of the area. A petty cash fund of about \$30 was made up for telephone and telegraph expenses in the interest of securing options from those who have not signed up.

Newport's Community Center

Residents of Newport Have Transformed a 150-Acre Tract of Land Into an Educational and Recreation Center. A Donation From the Late Col. H. L. Remmel Started the Project.

BY TOM SHIRAS.

Community planning for the past 15 years by the progressive residents of Newport, county seat of Jackson county, nestling snugly among old and dignified forest trees on the banks of the beautiful White river, has given that town a magnificent community center.

Newport residents may differ on many questions, but they are a unit on civic development. Their Community Center is a matter of personal pride with them, and they have good reason to be proud of this 150-acre tract of woodland, flowers and shrubbery, which they have developed into an educational, recreational and social center.

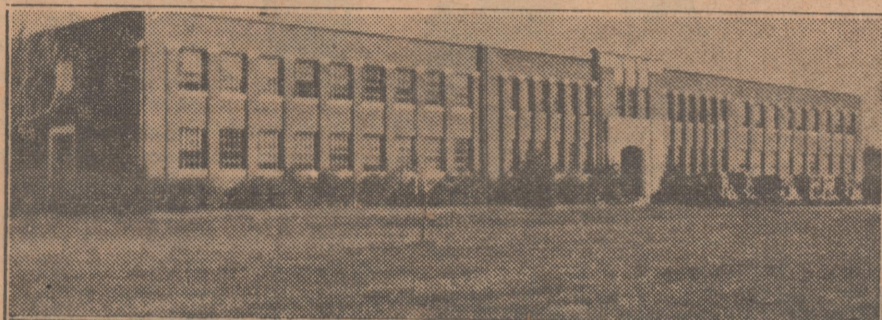
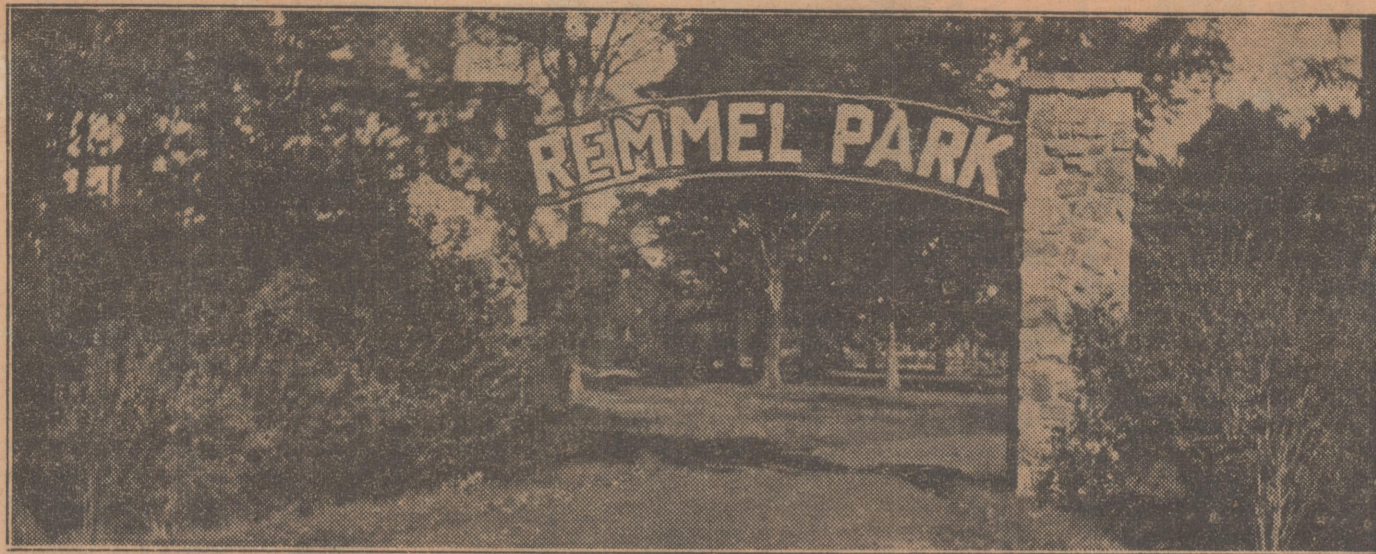
Fifteen years ago, the 150 acres were not much more than a bramble tangle in an untamed forest, with an old river bed, cluttered up with sunken logs and other objectionable debris. Today it is a beautiful park, with the old river bed transformed into a beautiful lake, clean and rippling and well stocked with game fish.

Development of the Community Center started about 15 years ago, when the late Col. H. L. Remmel donated 40 acres of the tract for park purposes. This was the nucleus around which the center was built, and the park bears the name of its donor.

At that time Newport had a Civitan Club and this organization did the first work on the park, cleaning it up, setting out shrubbery and laying walkways. When Mrs. E. L. Willis, widow of a pioneer physician of Newport, died eight years ago, she made a provision in her will for further improvement of the tract. Administration of this provision was left to a committee of four Newport business and professional men, and they constructed a fine swimming pool, built of concrete and surrounded by an ornamental iron fence, at a cost of \$40,000. They also installed ornamental entrance gates to the park, and have made other improvements that have enhanced both its beauty and convenience.

The old river bed lies along the east side of the park, in the shape of an arc. No doubt one time back in the dim yesterdays, it was a graceful bend in White river. But the river abandoned it in one of its playful moods and went roaring out across the bottoms, to make another bed better to its liking. When residents of Newport conceived the idea of making a lake of it, it seemed to be an almost impossible task. It was full of old sunken logs and other trash. The only aquatic life it contained were rough fish, gar and turtle. The city raised \$3,000 and invited the Fish and Game Commission to join in the effort of cleaning out the lake.

With an adequate force of men equip-



Above—The entrance to Newport's community center.

Left—The Newport High School and the community center lake.

gives it a nice water frontage. Huge, mature forest trees scattered in small groves over the course, combined with the well kept greens, have added natural beauty to the Community Center and the course furnishes another very popular recreational diversion.

Most people associate a school of any description, in their minds, with happy, playing children, with adequate playgrounds on which to spend their pent-up energy. A school located on a crowded city street seems to carry with it an air of oppressed youth. When the Newport School Board began to cast around for a site for the new high school, they evidently had some such thought in mind, for they turned toward Remmel park, with its forest trees, green lawns, shrubbery and placid cool shade. After a great deal of planning, they purchased 35 acres adjoining the park, lying between the park proper and the golf course, with the swimming pool to the rear, and the lake in the background.

Immediately after one drives through the park gates, he gets the first view, through the forest trees, of the magnificent high school building, a two-story brick, modern in every appointment. The first thing one is conscious of on seeing it the first time, is its multitude of windows and the simplicity and convenience of its architecture. Even in late autumn when the writer visited the Community Center, a space of 30 or 40 feet deep running the full length of the building was a galaxy of colorful autumn blooms, that blended beautifully into the deep green
(Continued on Page 5.)

and trash were removed. The residents ped with the right kind of gear, the logs knew they would get a lot of rough fish when they seined it, and invited the countryside to a fish fry. On the day of this event they ran a gas line, to furnish fuel to fry the fish, to the bank of the lake, and the boys with the big seines got busy. Besides the turtles and gar caught, they took over 6,000 pounds of rough fish and the fish fry went down in the annals of the state as the largest ever held to that date. The lake was then stocked with game fish by the Fish and Game Commission, and it is now one of the

popular angling grounds of Jackson county.

It is a beautiful lake. Dignified old cypress trees line its banks, and green lawns roll gently from the higher ground to the timber at water's edge. Besides the splendid fishing it affords, the lake is used for boating and aquatic sports.

When the Newport Country Club was organized several years ago, the members naturally turned in the direction of Remmel park for their golf course. They leased 80 acres adjoining the park, and developed it into a beautiful course. It lies along the upper neck of the lake, which

field, but lie directly in front of the main building. A steel bridge across the upper end of the lake gives easy ingress to the school children and residents of East Newport.

The American Legion post at Newport also selected Remmel park as a location for its new hut, and constructed a beautiful building out of native logs, built along pioneer architectural lines. Flanked with flower beds and shrubbery, it fits naturally into the surrounding woodland landscape, and rounds out the Community Center into a solid unit of civic endeavor.

A large band shell, from which political oratory flows every campaign year, and where other public speakers greet the Jackson county public, is located between the Legion hut and the high school building. It is also used for outdoor programs of all sorts.

The feminine touch is apparent throughout the center. One sees it especially in the neat arrangement of the flower beds and shrubbery. Most of this landscaping has been directed by the women of Newport, and their work has given the center

an air of cultural beauty that otherwise would be lacking.

Newport is fortunate in the manner in which it handles its community affairs. Through the city's Community Council all interests have an equal voice in all questions that deal with the welfare of the town. There are a few more than 20 civic, social, industrial and professional organizations in the city, and the Community Council is composed of the secretary and president of each organization. The council has been a big factor in the development of the Community Center, especially during later years.

(Continued From Page 3.)

shrubbery in the foreground. The forlorn bareness of many institutions of learning is absent from this one. It carried with it an atmosphere of cultural beauty, of vigorous, healthy young souls.

About 300 feet across the gravel driveway from the main building, is the Smith-Hughes school, where boys and girls learn all the rudiments that go into the foundations of practical living. It is a large, one-story frame building of the cottage type, set in a green lawn, bordered with flowers and shrubbery, close to a small grove of beautiful forest trees.

The driveway between the main building and the Smith-Hughes school leads to the baseball and athletic field. It is an unusually large field, and even Babe Ruth would have to knock two home runs to put the last one over the fence. The permanent grandstand seats 1,500 people comfortably, and there was recently installed a system of floodlights for night games. The field is fenced with an eight-foot cypress board fence. The football gridiron and tennis courts are not included in the

Park, Remmel