

## Rites Mark Opening of Servicemen's Club



Major W. S. McEarchen of the San Bernardino Air Technical Service command is shown with staff members of the Court Street U.S.O. club following dedication ceremonies Sunday at the club's new building. Left to right: Miss Corrie Saville, club secretary; Major McEarchen, Miss Florence A. Robinson, assistant director; Clifford V. Horne, staff assistant; Miss Ethele Love, bookkeeper.

# Court Street USA

\*USO= UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATION

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# Founded in 1942!

To support the growing number of Black servicemen stationed at Norton Air Force Base since Blacks were excluded from the white USO.



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# Overcoming Resistance



USO  
COURT STREET  
SAN BERNARDINO

DEDICATION  
PROGRAM

Court Street USO Club  
San Bernardino, Calif.

Sunday, January 14, 1945

2:30 P. M.

Army and Navy Y.M.C.A.  
Operating Agent

When first proposed, 200 downtown business men protested "locating a Negro USO in that part of town." Mr. Glenn Snyder, YMCA chair, convinced the council to keep the proposed location. Later some businessmen commented on how successful the Court Street USO was in the neighborhood.

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# Social Space

The Court Street USO at 663 Court Street became an important social space for Black servicemen & the growing Black community.



 **SERVICEMEN GREETED**—Typical scenes at the Court street U.S.O., where recreation and quarters for servicemen are provided. The Court street club will be dedicated at a public ceremony beginning at 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

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Black social clubs like Le Circle Charmant, Eastern Stars, and Cosmos Club hosted dances and social activities for Black soldiers including trips to Murray's Dude Ranch, a Black owned dude ranch and vacation spot in the high desert.

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# Networking for Civil Rights

Key Leaders: W.S Johnson,  
Charity Looper, Dr.  
Howard Inghram, Ralph  
Johnson (son of Alice  
Rowan and Frank  
Johnson), Marie Muckleroy,  
Orville Diggs, Rev T.A.  
Patterson.

The Court Street  
USO organizing  
committee and  
lists of  
volunteers reads  
like a Who's  
Who of 1940s  
Black San  
Bernardino.

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# Double V for Victory

## St. Paul African Methodist

Sixth and Harris. Rev. J. L. Boyd. 11 a.m. sermon by Rabbi Henry A Morfield: "What Are We Fighting For?" 7:30 p.m. address by Burdette Hockaday. Court Street U.S.O. director.

The Court Street USO became a space for the Black community to fight for civil rights victories at home and in the war abroad.

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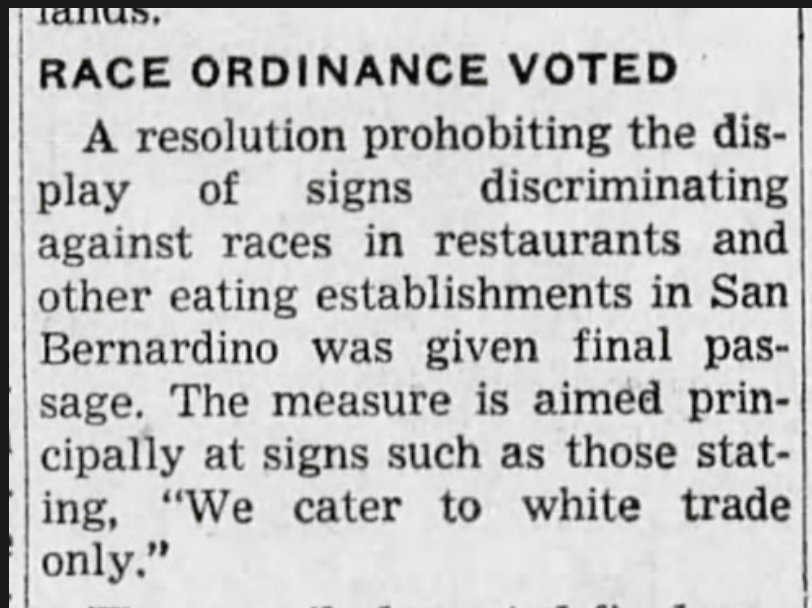


USO leaders helped pass the city's first civil rights law prohibiting "White Only" signs.

“November 3, 1943, USO Director W. Burdette Hocaday, Red Cross representative John T. Long, and Reverend J.L. Boyd of St. Paul A.M.E. appeared to demand the city council take action.

Approved, on December 17, 1943, ordinance no. 1704 passed. Businesses that discriminated by “color or race” would be subject to a \$100 fine and/or imprisonment.”

*Fight for  
Victory at  
Home*



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# Center of Black Political Action

2 Day Conference at Court  
Street USO in 1946  
on  
"Better Employment  
and Housing"

Central Council President J.  
Robert Smith welcomed  
politicians with this challenge,  
"We are interested in knowing  
first hand, before election day,  
whether the platforms of any of  
the candidates means anything  
to the Negro."

## Negroes to Hear Eight Candidates

The San Bernardino Central council made up of delegates from all the Negro organizations in San Bernardino and vicinity will sponsor a two-day convention, Saturday and Sunday at the Court street U.S.O. Mayor W. C. Seccombe will deliver the address of welcome at 10 a.m. Saturday, J. Robert Smith, president of the council announced today.

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# Photo Credits

Thank you to the University of Minnesota Libraries and the San Bernardino County Sun Newspaper (at newspapers.com) for providing visual resources:

1943 - 1945."Club Histories. Army-Navy Clubs. San Bernadino, CA (African American), 1943-1945.." University of Minnesota Libraries, Kautz Family YMCA Archives., Accessed February 23, 2022.

<https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll356:4291>



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