

EVOLUTION AND HISTORY OF THE VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL

PARTICIPATING VETERAN GROUPS IN THE VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL

GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

A patriotic society of former soldiers and sailors who served honorably in the Union forces during the Civil War, or who were members of state militia on active duty and subject to national call at the time. The first local group or post of the G.A.R. was established at Decatur, Ill., April 6, 1866. The society continued to grow until 1890 when the membership became 408,489. The final encampment was held in 1949 and the last survivor, Albert Woolson of Duluth died in 1956 at the age of 109.

Wallace-Reynolds Post #32 G.A.R.

The Grand Army of the Republic was the first of the veteran organizations to play a significant role in the creation of the Santa Cruz Veterans Memorial Hall. Chartered as the Baker Post #6 in 1868, they disbanded in 1872, and were issued a new charter as the Wallace Post GAR #32 in 1881. Over the years they continually occupied quarters in the I.O.O.F. building. The break-off J.F. Reynolds GAR Post #78 met in the Masonic Building on Pacific Avenue. After merging in 1895 as the Reynolds Post moved back to the I.O.O.F. Hall on Pacific Avenue and the combined Wallace Reynolds Post remained there until September of 1932. After 1933, due to their age, meetings became less frequent and were often held in private homes, however, their auxiliaries (Womens Relief Corp, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and Daughters of Union Veterans). The last member of the Wallace Reynolds Post died in 1948 and while post officially closed with him, the auxiliaries continued to occupy the Veterans Hall at various times until the 1960's.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion was chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic, mutual-help, wartime veterans organization. a community-service organization which now numbers nearly 3 million members-- men and women-- in nearly 15,000 American Legion Posts worldwide. These Posts are organized into 55 Departments one each for the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, France, Mexico, and the Philippines.

The American Legion national headquarters is in Indianapolis, Indiana with additional offices in Washington, DC. In addition to thousands of volunteers serving in Leadership and program implementation capacities in local communities to the Legion's standing national commissions and committees, the national organization has a regular full time field staff of about 300 employees.

American Legion Post 64, was chartered on September 12, 1919. The local post began meeting in the Chamber of Commerce building at 28 Pacific Ave. In 1920 they apparently moved to 104 Front Street where they remained until relocating to Hackley Hall at the 58 Center St prior to 1924. They remained there until some time in 1928 when a move into quarters at 306 Pacific Ave took place. In 1929 they moved to the Alexander Building at 12 Pacific Avenue which was their home until their final move into

the current Veterans Memorial Building in September of 1932. Although activities were reduced at the end of the 1990's a resurgence has taken place in membership activities beginning in 2001.

THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

With a rich tradition rooted in the 19th century, the Veterans of Foreign wars is today the oldest major veterans organization in America. Celebrating its centennial in 1999, it entered the 21st century with 1.9 million members, VFW's 9,500 Posts count members from W.W.II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf and all the expeditionary campaigns through Bosnia.

From national headquarters in Kansas City, MO and its Washington Office, VFW administers a host of programs and pursues issues of national importance to veterans.

The four cornerstones of VFW's foundation include preserving veterans rights, advocating a strong national defense, promoting patriotism and offering community service. VFW achievements range from helping pass GI Bills for three generations of war vets to making the Star-Spangled Banner the national anthem to providing \$2.6 million in college scholarships for students each year.

The initial Santa Cruz Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 888 was chartered and installed on March 12, 1922 at the IOOF hall on Pacific Ave in Santa Cruz. They are believed to have continue to meet their until some time prior to 1926 when they moved to 54 Center St (Hackley Hall).. In 1927 they moved to 109 Pacific Ave where they remained until their move into the Alexander Building at 12 Pacific Ave in 1929. In September 1932 they joined other veteran organization in moving into the new Veterans Memorial Building . VFW Post #888 was later to become the Bill Motto Post # 5888 and received their charter

on _____. Today they are actively involved in feeding homeless veterans and interacting with the Santa Cruz Schools by sponsoring veteran/student programs.

UNITED SPANISH WAR VETERANS

The Spanish American War lasted fewer than four months (1898). Conditions of the subsequent peace treaty obliged Spain to relinquish sovereignty over Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippine Islands and Guam to the United States. On the American side the war was fought entirely by volunteers. More than 392,000 rushed to join the military services and 11,000 died, mostly from tropical diseases such as yellow fever. Members of the United Spanish War Veterans were those in good standing in the Army, Navy, or Marine Corps of the United States, including medical personnel, Philippine Scouts and other organizations of native troops maintained by the War Department in the Philippine Islands, who served at any time during the insurrection in the Philippine Islands prior to July 4, 1902. Each "camp" of the United Spanish War Veterans was named for a significant participant in the War. The Nelson A. Miles Camp [San Francisco], for instance, was named for Lt. Gen. Nelson Appleton Miles, who had been the youngest commanding general in the Civil War, and was Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army during the Spanish American War. An April 30, 1977 newspaper article reported that there were 400 Spanish war veterans still alive in the nation (with 107 in California), that their average age was 98 years and that a group of 17 had gathered that year.

The Harry Speas Camp of United Spanish War Veterans was chartered on May 1, 1926. Their initial formation meeting took place at the Chamber of Commerce Building in Santa Cruz on March 27,

1926. In 1928 moved into quarters at 158 Front St. They probably used that facility for meetings until their move into the Alexander Building on Pacific Ave approximately 1929. They were among the initial occupants of the Veterans Memorial Hall in September 1932. They continued to remain at the Veterans Memorial Hall until the demise of the organization probably in the 1950's.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Treaties are signed and the battles of nations end, but the personal battles of those disabled in war only begin when the guns fall silent. These men and women must struggle to regain health, reshape lives shattered by disability, learn new trades or professions, and rejoin the civilian world. At each step, they need help to help themselves. For three quarters of a century now, that aid has come from the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), a nonprofit organization of more than one million veterans disabled during time of war or armed conflict.

Formed in 1920 and chartered by Congress in 1932, the million-member DAV is the official voice of America's service-connected disabled veterans -- a strong, insistent voice that represents all of America's 2.1 million disabled veterans, their families and survivors. Its nationwide network of services -- free of charge to all veterans and members of their families --is totally supported by membership dues and contributions from the American public. Not a government agency, the DAV's national organization receives no government funds.

The Disabled American Veterans (of World War) was chartered on January 9, 1933 at Brownies Tavern in Santa Cruz. They were to continue to meet at that facility, but by May 31, 1933 they were occupying facilities within the Veterans Memorial Building which they continue to occupy to this date. The name was changed to The Disabled American Veterans at the outbreak of World War II. The local post changed their name to the Ed Meugge Post in the 1990's

ALL OF THE ABOVE ORGANIZATIONS MAINTAINED AUXILIARIES WHICH ALSO UTILIZED THE VETERANS MEMORIAL BUILDING FOR THEIR MEETINGS AND EVENTS..

CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE VETERANS MEMORIAL HALL.

1923/01/19 SC Evening News (8:3) Committee Meeting For Raising of Auditorium Funds

A joint committee from the American legion and the San Lorenzo Improvement club are to hold a meeting at the St. George hotel this afternoon to formulate further plans for the erection of a civic auditorium in Santa Cruz as a memorial for the local post of the American Legion. Wm. Gardner, one of the active members of the San Lorenzo club who has drawn up a petition to circulate for funds, informed The News this morning that this work will be undertaken immediately.

The petition to be circulated bears the following heading:

“Petition for a public auditorium dedicated to the American Legion in memory of valiant services by boys over there.”

All money collected will be deposited in the Santa Cruz County National Bank.

The petition is to be circulated by members of the American Legion and San Lorenzo Improvement club.

The preliminary progress thus far made has been most encouraging.

1923/01/20 SC Evening News (8:2) \$1000 Already Pledged for New Auditorium

The San Lorenzo Improvement association is gradually piecing together a structure of public opinion in favor of the building of a civic auditorium by popular subscription as a memorial to the boys who served on the land and sea in the world war. The proposed site is the property at the corner of Maple street and Pacific avenue, adjoining the miller building and running back on Maple street for a distance greater than 300 feet. The club members are most enthusiastic over the prospect of raising the necessary money for the project and will appeal to all ex-servicemen and patriotic citizens generally to get behind the solicitation plan when it is started and help make the auditorium a reality.

Santa Cruz is one of the few communities of any size in the state which has not done something to memorialize the valiant boys who went to the front in the war against Germany, many of whom never returned. The San Lorenzo club has come to the front with a concrete plan to erect such a memorial.

At this date the club has pledged \$500 and Morris Abrams a similar amount as a starter for the subscription list.

(SC Evening News January 23, 1923 4:40)

Correction In Location Made

It was incorrectly stated in Saturday's News that the location of the proposed civic auditorium was at the corner of Pacific avenue and Maple street. According to Miss Laura Welker, secretary of the San Lorenzo Improvement association, the proposed location is at the southeast corner of Laurel Street and Pacific avenue, 304 feet on Laurel street, and embraces the entire block bounded by Pacific, Laurel, Front and East Spruce street.

1923/01/27 SC Evening News (6:3) Proposed Auditorium Meets Approval of American Legion

At a well attended meeting of the San Lorenzo improvement club held at the Laurel school kindergarten last evening the building of the proposed auditorium as being outlined and promoted by this progressive club, was discussed from many angles and at the close of the meeting upon motion of Laura C. Welker \$500 was voted by the club as a subscription toward the purchase of the site for the auditorium.

Ray Greenfield, commander of the local American Legion, was present with other members of the legion committee, and addressed the club offering on behalf of the American Legion every assistance possible toward the building of the proposed auditorium.

City Commissioner George Pratchner and F.H. Strikeman were present and offered valuable suggestions; also F.M. Garrison of the Santa Cruz Realty board.

Morris Abrams, probably the best informed member of the club upon the actual cost and work which will be necessary to build the auditorium, gave most valuable information already gathered, and told of the success of other cities in maintaining auditoriums of great seating capacity for conventions, etc.

The plan submitted in colors by W.A. White, the local contractor shows a magnificent design of building with a seating capacity of 3,900 on the main floor and a balcony seating 1500. Photographs of the drawing was ordered by the club and will be shown at the local theaters soon upon the screen.

Mrs. Elmer Winnie entered upon her duties as secretary of the club last evening and something like 20 new members were admitted to the club. A communication from the chamber of commerce relative to the coming drive for members of that origination was acted upon favorably.

If the auditorium is built the club desires it to be understood that it will be dedicated to all ex service men and no organization in particular, and Commander Ray Greenfield said last evening that this matter was fully in accord with the members of the American Legion.

1923/02/03 SC Evening News (4:3) General Committee to Work Out Auditorium Plan Along Business Lines; Many at Meeting

As a result of an interesting meeting at the St. George hotel last night attended by representatives from the majority of the civic improvement clubs and other organizations of the city and in charge of the civic auditorium committee of the San Lorenzo Improvement association, a general committee from the citizenship will be appointed by the San Lorenzo club for the purpose of investigating fully all angles of the proposed erection of a memorial auditorium in Santa Cruz and make a report when their work is completed. It was the prevailing sentiment at last night's meeting that the auditorium when established would be at least self supporting.

C.J. Dahl, president of the San Lorenzo club, presided last night and called on W.M. Gardner to outline the work of the club so far on the auditorium project. Mr. Gardner related what is now so generally known in Santa Cruz concerning the earnest desire of his club to supply a long felt want in Santa Cruz and at the same time provide a memorial to the veterans of the world war from this county. He said that tentatively the club held an option on the J.P. Smith estate property at the southeast corner of Laurel and Pacific avenues embracing an entire square block, at a price of \$22,000. the proposed building with seating capacity between 3,500 and 5,000 would cost \$80,000. Several plans of financing had been discussed, public subscription, stock company, issuance of bonds, as examples. He expressed the conviction that some plan could be developed that would assure the auditorium and described such an addition to the town as an asset, and a much needed improvement.

Following Mr. Gardener's remarks representatives of the various clubs gave their views on the subject. C.G. Dake, of the Exchange club, said that the location was a most important factor and

should be approached with care. He said that he had understood that the city had once offered a part of the city hall lot for a civic auditorium and believed that the offer should be investigated. G.S. Newstead for the Realty board, G.S. Tait, for the American Legion and J.W. Dickinson, made encouraging talks promising support as soon as the movement was whipped into shape. Morris Abrams, and enthusiastic backer of the project from the start and a liberal donor to the project, was strong for a location where parking conveniences could be found and urged the acceptance of the Laurel and Pacific lot for that reason.

Bob Jones and H.R. Judah, Jr. cautioned against letting too much sentiment interfere with the practical side of the construction problem and the later overhead and upkeep charges that must be met in order that the civic auditorium shall not become a public charge and a drag on the city or some disorganized body in the town. Mr. Jones dwelt on the many needs of the city at this time, naming water, sewer, lights and street work as important to be considered along with the proposed auditorium and for that reason the project should be floated safe from probability of disaster and erected as a business proposition producing enough income to at least pay all charges against the property each year. He said that conventions were a necessity for good business in Santa Cruz and the auditorium provided the place to hold them. Mr. Judah advised that business methods be employed from the first in launching the auditorium plan and pointed out that the failure to make itself supporting would be a deterrent to future public activity and all that the building would stand in later years as a tombstone instead of a memorial.

Commissioner George Pratchner endorsed the idea and promised to help but was not in position to speak authoritatively for the city.

W.O. Kerrick, a member of a former auditorium committee told of the previous investigation and the negotiations with Fred H. Jennings, who wanted theatre space in the building. The old committee put the proposal up to Mayor Kratzenstein who asked representatives from every organization in the city to send delegates to a general meeting. Only a small number responded so the matter was dropped. Mr. Kerrick said he believed the project could be put over but advised that it be done on the safe business lines. Dr. G.C. King made similar remarks, endorsing the business plan of procedure.

It was finally decided that the San Lorenzo club would appoint a general committee to handle the project

Among those present last night were:

City council, George Pratchner; chamber of commerce, W.O. Kerrick, H.E. Emigh; Rotary club, H.R. Judah and Bob Jones; Exchange club, C.G. Dake, O.B. Hayes; American Legion, Ray Greenfield, G.S. Tait, Michael J. Leonard, Lloyd Bowman; American Legion auxiliary, Mrs. Lloyd Bowman, Mrs. O.B. Hayes, Mrs. Ray Greenfield; War Mothers, Mrs. P.T. Phillips, Mrs. Edith Dodge; Realty board, G.S. Newstead.

A liberal attendance was present from the San Lorenzo club, including Miss Laura Welker, secretary, Mr. and Mrs. O.J. Cook, Morris Abrams, Z.T. Croop, W.M. Gardner, C.M. Anson and President C.J. Dahl, who made a very acceptable chairman and who kept the subject matter well in hand with those who spoke.

1925/01/02

SC Evening News

GAR Mtng Facility

The matter of furnishing the local GAR with a suitable headquarters and meeting place was further considered by the city council at its meeting this morning, during which time the house next door to the fire department was dropped from the list of prospective locations.

It was brought out by Commissioner Balzari that the Grand Army men did not want a place that necessitated the climbing of stairs, and would like, if possible, a place on the East side as the majority of the veterans were residents of that section. Commissioner Balazari was thereupon instructed to investigate Soquel avenue locations with a view of securing a meeting place thereon.

1926/07/20 SC Evening News (8:3) Supervisors Building for War Veterans

A memorial building for ex-servicemen will be built in Santa Cruz, it was yesterday voted at the meeting of the board of supervisors, the funds for the purpose to total about \$60,000, to be raised by means of the three-mil tax plan.

Stanley Tait and Emmet Rittenhouse were spokesmen for the delegation present, comprising representatives of the Grand Army of the Republic, Spanish-American War Veterans, the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Santa Cruz has no centrally-located meeting place, the speakers asserted, adding that many other cities of the state have secured such buildings through operation of the three-mill tax.

Supervisor Rostron explained that the arrangement would raise about \$20,000 the first year, with a one-mill tax, and the remaining \$40,000 with the two-mill tax the second year.

Supervisor Lewis, of Watsonville, cast the only opposing vote, the plan carrying 4 to 1.

1927/03/26 SC Evening News (2:5) Veterans Favor New Building; Action is Taken

Santa Cruz county war veterans numbering four organizations, held an enthusiastic joint gathering last night, the main object being to give endorsement to the proposed veteran building that is likely to be erected by the supervisors in the near future. Organizations having representatives present at the meeting were the G.A.R., United Spanish War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion.

It was the unanimous sentiment of those present to bend every effort in having the structure contemplated built. Following a general discussion, the following committees were appointed with power to act, and report back at the next meeting.

Spanish War Veterans- Dr. J.A. McGarry, R.W. Lewis, A.O. Woodworth

Veterans of Foreign Wars- J.J. Johnson, L.S. Pringle, E.C. Rittenhouse

American Legion- P.M. Levy, D.C. Moore, William Davenport, Jr.

The committee are organized under the chairmanship of Dr. J.A. McGarry and William Davenport Jr. is secretary.

1927/07/08 SC Evening News (6:4) Memorial Site Purchased by County Board

Building of a war veterans' memorial auditorium in Santa Cruz was assured by the board of supervisors yesterday when by unanimous vote it was decided to immediately pay Hoffman estate \$10,000 on the purchase of the large building adjoining the post office on Water street. One execution of the deed the balance of \$8,000 will be paid by the county.

Money for the auditorium is authorized to be raised by levy of a special veterans memorial tax. In as much as only \$11,119 of the total to be raised stood in the fund yesterday, considerable discussion

between Supervisor C.B. Lewis of Watsonville and representatives of the Santa Cruz veterans' organizations took place yesterday before a final vote on the proposition was taken. The Watsonville supervisor was assured that an adequate appropriation as additional moneys for the fund are raised will be made for the needs of Watsonville veterans.

It is proposed to include a memorial building comfortable club and meeting quarters for all veteran organizations, as well as armory in the basement.

Following authorization of the initial purchase expenditure the supervisors were warmly thanked on behalf of all local veterans by Emmett Rittenhouse. The American Legion, United Spanish War Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and Grand Army of the Republic were represented at yesterday's board meeting.

1927/10/12 Santa Cruz Sentinel GAR Attends Memorial Hall Meeting

A meeting is to be held this evening at the library by four war organizations, The Grand Army of the Republic, Spanish War Veterans, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, to discuss the new memorial building that is to be built near the post office.

The four organizations will have a big membership present for the meeting and it is hoped that something definite will result from the meeting. All members of the four organizations who can be present are urged to be on hand for the meeting.

The time is eight o'clock at the library.

1928/06/25 Watsonville Evening Pajaronian Dr. H.G. Watters Suggests Choice of Good Sites for Memorial Structure Here.

Prospects for Watsonville obtaining a memorial headquarters building seemed bright yesterday, following a meeting held at Santa Cruz and Watsonville and by Dr. H.G. Watters, who led the local delegation to the supervisor's meeting in hopes of getting the memorial tax as provided by an act of the legislature.

Santa Cruz Legionnaires also turned out in large and convincing numbers while Veterans of the Civil War, the Spanish American War, veterans of foreign wars and representatives of women's auxiliary organizations were in attendance to loan their support to the cause.

Dr. H.G. Watters, when called upon to speak stated that there are four very good sites in Watsonville, the best two being where the Methodist church now stands and the corner where the old Christian church was located.

Dr. Watters, who is a member of the veteran's County Council, referred to harmonious work that had been performed among all the representatives of different service organizations. He pointed out that present quarters in Watsonville were inadequate to meet the needs of service organizations and added that the American Legion post of which he is commander has gone deeply into Boy Scout work and that additional accommodations were badly needed.

Thomas S. MacQuiddy, principal of Watsonville Union high school was another Watsonville speaker at the gathering. Mr. MacQuiddy stated that the meeting interpreted the spirit of the county and what had been promised the veterans will be given them. Mr. MacQuiddy said the present situation in Watsonville was not tenable. "We took steps in Watsonville at the close of the war to care for veterans but now with new organizations there is not standing room. The Building we owe to the veterans and their families and to the oncoming generations."

The chairman was Assemblyman B.B. Snyder and he quoted from the political code giving the authority to the board of supervisors to levy a tax for the procuring and establishing of veterans' homes and meeting places. He also quoted the amendment to the act made in 1927.

Santa Cruz Has Lot

He stated that they were not unmindful of what had been done by Santa Cruz in the purchase of the lot, that they had the victory highway marker and they were sure the citizens would back the building project.

George W. Smith, who was on the exemption board during the war, spoke feelingly and referred to the supervisors as zealous for the city's honor during the war. That demands made by the federal government by the sheriff, the late H.V. Trafton of his office, (district attorney) were all met by the board. That they came now in the same spirit for the veterans.

Dramatically he told how the war still lingers in the community, of wrecks who are at home and in the hospitals. He pleaded for the keeping of the veterans together in these days when the American family is breaking down. He touched upon radicalism as still existing, it having permeated the institutions of higher learning.

Mayor Baker Speaks

Mayor C.H. Baker spoke of it as a most just demand which had been put in effect by the legislature and senate of the state and that we should not put off from time to time something that is good.

Miss Stella Finkeldey referred to her Red Cross work as coming in contact with war wrecks, mentally and physically. At present there are 25,000 in hospitals not sufficient for them, the California hospitals having 2,000. In her welfare work she finds the necessity of a home. She touched upon the group of '61 fast passing away who will not have long the joy and privilege of their home, but spoke for them also the boys of '98 and 1917.

Comrade Read spoke for the G.A.R. There was a touch of pathos as he told of the comrades unable to attend the present meeting place because of the climbing of the stairs and that they would like to see the memorial hall before they passed away. These veterans had the place of honor at the meeting, the front row.

Isaiah Hartmen represented the San Lorenzo valley. He agreed with Comrade Read and stated what they did they should do now. He touched on the promises made to the boys who went to war.

A.M. Baldwin gave a review of the matter of a building for the 14 units of the organizations representing over 1000. Building had been build in the state ranging from \$16,000 to \$25,000 in cost. They had seen plans ranging from \$30,000 to \$80,000 and one was needed for Santa Cruz and another for Watsonville. That one between those prices would meet requirements and could be pointed to with pride. All they asked was that procedure be taken in the matter. That they would be willing to leave the matter of construction to the supervisors and a committee representing all veterans organizations would be willing to meet with them.

A Veteran Speaks

S. Leask of the exemption board stated he wondered why we can not do something to show our spirit.

A.A. Morey, who first saw service in 1864 at the age of 15 years and 2 months and who had been prominent with the naval reserves, favored this home and spoke of those who had seen service and danger and treatment as brutal as in any war. He was strong for the home.

“Dad” Story spoke for the nine remaining members of the G.A.R. post at Watsonville and broke down completely.

E.C. Rittenhouse, a veteran of the Spanish American war and of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, was short in his effective remarks and referred to his advising as to this work with the board. He knew they would levy the three mills tax provided by law and we know we are to get it, give it while we can enjoy it.

Cox’s Letter Read

A letter from A.P. Cox of Redwood Lodge approving the move was read.

Supervisor Rostron said it was the proudest moment of his life to hear representative citizens say they would go without roads. There was a time when they were not so generous. He gave interesting road history. He was especially happy over the spirit of harmony existing among those before the body.

The chairman then announced that the representatives would withdraw, leaving their request in the supervisors’ meeting.

1929/05/08 SC Evening News (9:3) Veterans Assure Supervisors of Agreement With County Plans

A veterans’ building for Santa Cruz will be given serious consideration next July when the county budget is made up, according to Chairman George N. Ley of the board of supervisors.

A group of delegates from the various veterans’ organizations of the city appeared before the board yesterday afternoon, led by Emmet C. Rittenhouse, who acted as spokesman. Those who accompanied were J. Holtslander, commander of the Grand Army of the Republic; Don C. Clayton, commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; R. L. Lewis, commander of the Spanish American War Veterans; Charles H. Parker, commander of the American Legion; and A.M. Holbrook, secretary of the Santa Cruz City Veterans council.

The delegates presented to the supervisors a resolution signed by the commanders of each organization, which read as follows:

Whereas, it has been suggested by non-veteran parties that the proposed veterans building should be constructed on some other site than that provide by your honorable body,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Santa Cruz City Veterans’ council in regular called meeting, that the veterans’ organizations of this city take this means of assuring your board that the site selected by you meets with their entire approval; and we further desire to express our appreciation of your action in behalf of the proposed buildings.

And, whereas, it has been suggested that the proposed veterans’ memorial building be combined with a larger auditorium at a total cost of \$200,000,

Now, therefore, be it resolved by this council that we believe a building sufficient for the needs of the veterans and their auxiliary organization of this city, and a credit to the people of Santa Cruz city and

county, can be constructed at a cost of approximately \$60,000.

Respectfully submitted

Santa Cruz City Veterans Council R.D. Shuttier Chairman, A.M. Holbrook, Secretary. Approved.

1930/02/02

Santa Cruz Sentinel

G.A.R. Weapons to Museum

Old Time Muskets Going on Display at City Museum

A collection of olde Civil War muskets and other firearms that had been in the Grand Army headquarters here for many years will be placed in the city museum, at the Art Crafts hall in Seabright. Jed Scott curator at the museum, made arrangements yesterday to have the collection located at the Seabright show place.

In addition to this display of guns there will be several old time sabres, daggers and other firearms that will add greatly to the collection of relics. J.W. Coddington has a sabre that is highly prized. It was picked up on one of the battlefields during the Civil War. The sabre belonged to a secessionist officer.

Another article of historic value is a fife that was blown by Scott's father during the war. He was a member of the 72d Illinois Regiment and Scott highly prizes the old musical instrument and will carefully guard it.

Scott is enthusiastic in his efforts to provide a modern fire proof museum building for Santa Cruz and has hopes that before long some definite move will be taken to bring about this much needed improvement.

The Seabright museum is located in a building not fitted for the collection but has been improved and made presentable until such a time as the city can afford a modern museum building.

1930/09/13

SC Evening News (3:1)

Auditorium Is Held Possible With Vet Hall

Action by the board of supervisors Thursday adopting resolutions for submission to the people at the November election of a referendum on the question on whether or not the legal tax shall be imposed for the construction of Veterans memorial halls in Watsonville and Santa Cruz has revived the thought in this city of combining with the veterans and raising enough to build a structure large enough to house an auditorium.

The taxation will produce \$60,000 approximately, for the Santa Cruz building

County Owns Tract

The property is an l-shaped piece surrounding the United State post office and already belongs to the county. This property has a frontage on Front street of 61.28 feet with a depth of 120 feet.

The rear section of this lot joins the rear of the remainder of the property which fronts on Water street with a frontage of 70.68 feet and a depth running 180 to 190 feet.

Watsonville Plans

It is understood that in Watsonville private funds are to be provided to the veterans to be added to the \$60,000 raised by taxation and a fine appearing building would be erected containing facilities for general public use and enjoyment well beyond the needs of the veterans themselves.

There doesn't seem to be any good reason why, in Santa Cruz, a similar situation could not be brought about. This at least is the opinion of several citizens who have expressed themselves on the question.

**1930/09/15
(Editorial)**

SC Evening News (12:1)

Memorial Halls for War Veterans

The matter of building memorial halls for veterans, one for Santa Cruz and one for Watsonville, which has been hanging fire for so many month, will be placed before the people of this county in November for their vote.

The county board of supervisors has passed an ordinance calling for the levying of a tax of one and one half mills on each hundred dollars of assessable property in the county each year for three years, to raise \$120,000 for the two buildings. this procedure is in accord with the state law on the subject.

The buildings will be used by veterans, soldiers and marines of all wars. the proposition affects 1500 residents of the county, including 700 members of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, United Spanish War Veterans, and the Grand Army of the Republic, together will all auxiliary organization.

Most of the counties have erected such memorial halls under authority of the state law. It is time that Santa Cruz should act in the matter, and it is good to know there will be very little delay.

1930/009/25

SC Evening News (1:5)

County Supervisors Limit Veterans Hall Total

Cash to \$120,000

A stormy session of the finance committee of the county supervisors and representatives of the Veterans' organizations of the county followed the regular meeting of the supervisors Tuesday afternoon, it was revealed today.

So far as could be learned this morning Chairman George N. Ley and Supervisor C.B. Pinkham two of the members of the finance committee, were present when a delegation of the veterans appealed to the committee for funds additional to what had been contemplated at the afternoon session of the board when a resolution which called for the vote of the people in November on a proposal to raise a total of \$92,000 from taxation to build memorial halls at Watsonville and Santa Cruz was adopted.

Previous Budge Items

A total of \$120,000 for memorial hall purposes had been pledged by the board of supervisors, if the people were willing to approve the expenditure, according to Mr. Ley in his statement today.

It was discovered at Tuesday's meeting that \$17,000 previously appropriated was already in the memorial hall fund and \$12,000 was provided in this fiscal year's budge. This left a balance necessary to raise through the approval of the people of approximately \$92,000.

Dr. Henry G. Watters of Watsonville, a prominent member of the American Legion and one of the chairman of national activities of the organization, was the main spokesman at the session of the finance committee Tuesday night.

Larger Amount Asked

According to statements from Mr. Ley and Mr. Pinkham, this morning, the veterans felt that the resolution passed Tuesday afternoon should have provided for the full amount exclusive of the \$17,000 already on hand, but the finance committee didn't see it that way. with the result that charges and counter-charges began flying back and forth and things waxed warm for a few minutes.

Chairman Ley said today, however, that he felt certain that the board will abide by its original intention of raising a total of \$120,000 for Veteran Hall purposes in Santa Cruz county, the people

being willing, and no more.

1930/10/10 SC Evening News (3:3) Vets Make Plea For Hall Tax At Highland Center

Outlining activities of veterans organizations in this county and presenting data supporting the measure, Samuel Leask, Jr. Post commander; Arnold Baldwin, past commander, and Mrs. W.L. Stanley, auxiliary commander of the American Legion last night addressed the Highland farm center on the proposition for the erection of a veteran hall in Watsonville and Santa Cruz.

The measure which provides for county taxation for the erection of the two buildings will come up for vote at the general election; November 4. John Mockley of the Grand Army of the Republic of this city spoke in favor of the measure. Entertainers at the center meeting were Samuel Matthew's, George Henry, Foy Blaine and Roy Richenheim of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; Leland Spencer of the American legion; and Craig Lewis of the United Spanish American War veterans.

At the farm bureau meeting under the direction of Karl Hummell, director, arrangements were made to outline the 1931 work at the November meeting of the group which will fall two days after election.

**1931/03/25 SC Evening News (2:2) Veterans of Santa Cruz Stirred By
Threatened Selection of New Site For Memorial Hall**

The United Spanish War Veterans at a meeting last night went on record for the second time in favor of the locating on Front street next to the post office of the veterans memorial building authorized by action of the board of supervisors and the vote of the people. Tonight the Veterans of Foreign Wars will meet and it expected will unanimously take the same stand. the American Legion is said to be in favor of the retention of the Front street site for the memorial hall, although action will not be taken on the subject until the next meeting a couple of weeks hence. The Grand Army of the Republic has also joined in the sentiment for adherence to the original plan of locating the hall on the ground bought for the purpose next to the post office on Front street.

Move for Another Site

The action already taken by the various veterans' organizations is in response to a movement started some weeks ago in the effort to establish the hall elsewhere than on the site chosen. It has been argued in support of this movement, that the veterans should build a hall on wide grounds preferably on the site at Laurel street and Pacific avenue at present owned by the San Lorenzo Improvement club, such hall to be used in part if not mainly as a civic auditorium.

Opponents of this plan, who apparently predominate, argue that what they want is a home for the veterans and not a city hall nor a civic auditorium; that if only a place for them somewhere in the building is being contemplated they might as well stay in the present quarters over Espindola's grocery or they should be given space somewhere in the courthouse. The veterans assert that the whole idea of a the law authorizing the building of such a hall at public expense is provide a home for the veterans of all wars and their auxiliaries. This is what is proposed in the hall planned for the Front street site.

Agreed on Present Site

Said one of the officers of the United Spanish War Veterans this morning, "the site next to the postoffice was chosen by a committee composed of representatives of all the veteran organizations. The choice was made after a thorough canvass by the committee of all sites proposed, including that at Laurel street and Pacific avenue. It was agreed by the committee that the lot next to the postoffice was the most desirable for the purpose. The supervisors unanimously agreed with the committee and made

the purchase.

“There was \$2,000 left after the purchase and the money was used for the purpose of providing the veterans’ memorial monument which stands at the head of Pacific avenue directly across from the site chosen for the veterans’ hall. Sentiment entered into the selection of that site for the memorial which bears in bronze letters the names of all Santa Cruz county residents who gave their lives to our flag in the world war.

Determined the Choice

“It was erected as one of the markers on the great Lincoln highway through the combined efforts of the late Supervisor George Rostron and Ben Blow of the Lincoln highway organization. In the minds of all the veterans, and as we believe, all the people of this county, the planning of that monument where it is determined finally the choice of the locality for the veterans’ hall. That’s where we want it to be. It is the natural, logical place for such a hall.

“In the course of every year Santa Cruz is visited by hundreds of members of various war veterans organizations from different localities in the state. We want them to be our guests in our own hall. they will need no other directions when they start for Santa Cruz than that “the veterans’ hall is next to the post office. If Santa Cruz has a civic center the upper plaza is that center. The post office is a permanency where it stands. We want our memorial hall to be next to it, on the lot purchased for it, and nowhere else.

1931/09/08 SC Evening News (1:1) S.C. Veteran Hall Plans To Be Drawn

\$50,000 Structure To Rise On Lot Next Postoffice

Building In Spring

Watsonville Agrees To Wait For Funds At Later Date

The withdrawal of the claim of Watsonville veterans for half of the building fund of the county permits immediate steps being taken toward the construction of a veterans’ memorial hall in this city.

by the action of the people in voting a .15 cent on the \$100 tax toward the building of veterans memorials in the county, Watsonville is entitled to half the fund.

Construction of the veterans hall in Watsonville will come later, after the completion of the Santa Cruz project.

Preparation of plans for the Santa Cruz hall will be placed in the hands of architects immediately but actual letting of the contract it is said, must await collection of the tax in October and next March.

Saturday evening the building committee of the veterans organizations met with the building committee of the board of supervisors to discuss the possibility of starting the project.

last evening the veterans met with the finance committee of the board and decision was made to order plans drawn at once, as it was found there is sufficient money in the county fund to start the construction as the result of the withdrawal of the Watsonville claim

To Cost \$50,000

The structure will cost, it is estimated, about \$50,000, and an additional \$10,000 will be spent on furnishings.

The new building will be erected on the lot owned by the county next to the post office property, facing the lower plaza on Front street.

Mrs. George Rostron is chairman of the superiors' building committee, serving with George and Bert Lewis. the county finance committee is George N. Ley, C.B. Lewis and Charles Pinkham..

The veterans committee is headed by Dr. J. A. McGarry, with Ralph Lewis as secretary. Its trustees are Allen Rennie of the U.S.W.V. Noel Paterson of the American Legion and Burr Owens of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

1931/12/08 SC Evening News (5:5) Supervisors Plan Use of S.C. Labor On Veterans Hall

The board of supervisors today had under consideration a plan for the use of Santa Cruz labor and Santa Cruz material exclusively in the erection of the Veterans' Memorial hall here.

The board proposes to incorporate in the contract calling for bids, specifications that laborers on the building shall have been residents of this city for at least a year and that preference shall be given to material manufactured in this county.

E.C. Rittenhouse of the Veterans of Foreign Wars was spokesman for representatives of veterans organizations that appeared before the board yesterday with plans and specifications and reported that several changes might be necessary.

Because money for the building will not be available until the next installment of taxes in the spring, the board took no action.

1932/02/08 SC Evening News (1:6) Labor Scale Is Up Before Supervisors

There were indications this afternoon that following the hearing at the meeting of the county supervisors this afternoon the contract will be let for the construction of the Veterans Memorial building on Front street next the postoffice and the work started as soon as possible.

At the hearing at three o'clock this afternoon were representatives of the American Legion and other veterans organizations, member of the building trades council of the county and the three members of the Davis-Pearce company architects who have submitted the plan of the building that has been accepted. These men are J.W. Pearce, Joseph W. Rowell and E.W. Kress, the latter being the San Jose representative of the Stockton firm.

Mrs. George H. Rostron, chairman of the supervisors committee in charge of the wage scale matter affecting the new building, said today that the board as a whole at a meeting yesterday virtually came to a decision on a suggested scale open to argument at this afternoon's session

It was understood that the scale had met with general acceptance by the workers in the various crafts that will be employed on the memorial building.

This scale was as follows:

Asbestos workers- \$8.; bricklayers, \$11; hod carriers, \$7; carpenters, \$8; cement finishers \$8; electrical workers, \$8; engineers on mixers, \$8; glass workers, \$8; hardwood floormen, \$8; housesmiths (architectural iron), \$8; housesmiths (reinforced concrete), \$8; laborers, building and common \$4; laborers cement, \$4; lathers, \$9; marble workers \$9; marble helpers, \$6; mill men (planing mill dept.), \$7; mill men sash and door, \$6.

Painters, \$8; plasterers, \$9; plasterers (hod carriers), \$6; plumber, \$9; roofers, \$8; sheet metal workers, \$8; tile setters, (helpers) \$5; overtime, time and a half. Regular hours eight.

1932/02/09

SC Evening New (2:1)

Veterans Hall Bids Will Be Opened Mar. 7

Bids for the construction of the Veterans Memorial hall on the lower plaza will be opened at 2;30 Monday afternoon, March 7, in the board of supervisors rooms in the county court house following an agreement yesterday between the board members of the veterans' committee and labor representatives on the wage scale of laborers working on the building.

The agreement was reached immediately after Supervisor Rose Rostron read the scale as tentatively adopted by the board committee. The Rev. C.E. Wining, secretary of the Santa Cruz Building Trades council, who had been authorized to speak for labor, applauded the efforts of the board in arriving at an adequate wage scale.

Plans and specifications for the building, which will be of Spanish type of architecture, were presented by J.W. Rowell of the Davis-Pearce company of Stockton.

the building, which will be in the shape of a T, is to have a frontage of 60 feet on Front street and a depth of 128 feet. With the towers it will be three stories high. the exterior will be of tapestry stucco with wrought iron balconies and tile roof.

Plans provide for store space on the lower floor. the second floor will house the auditorium, lodge rooms, club rooms committee rooms and a kitchenette.

1932/03/03

SC Evening News (1:6)

False Work For Vets Memorial Hall Started

Carpenters were today erecting the false work for walls and columns for Veterans Memorial Hall, pouring for which will be started within the next few days, John E. Branagh, Contractor, said.

Concrete for all foundations has already been poured and that part of the job is finished. The Santa Cruz Lumber Company which has been given the contract to furnish all lumber for the building yesterday signed contracts for mill work and will build all the doors and windows, Mr. Branagh said.

1932/03/08

SC Evening News (7:2)

Low Bid On New Veteran's Memorial Hall Leaves \$10,000 Available For Furnishing of Structure To Be Erected On Front Street Next Post Office

Difference of \$10,000 between the estimated cost of Veterans' Memorial hall, contract for construction of which was let yesterday by the board of supervisors and the contract price of \$44,419 will be used to furnish the building, Arnold Baldwin, member of the advisory committee of ex-service men, said today. Its site will be on Front street next to the post office building.

Contract for the building which Davis-Pearce company of Stockton, architects, estimated would cost \$54,000, was given to John E. Branagh of Piedmont after an extended consultation by the board in which three of the 23 bids submitted were discussed.

Mr. Baldwin, who with other members of the advisory committee took part in the discussion, said that the money saved on building costs would be used to help defray expense of furnishing the building, provide a right of way from the rear of the structure to Eagle street and buy plants for landscaping of the grounds.

Funds For Furnishing.

It is estimated there will be in excess of \$10,000 left in the building fund, which amounts to about \$60,000, after all bills connected with construction, including architect fees, have been paid. Plans for

furnishing the building call for installation of a loud speaking system and considerable stage equipment. Mr. Baldwin said.

Bids from the various contractors ranged from \$44,0419 to \$54,074, the latter being submitted by Louis No. Pollard of Redwood City. The bids were based on two schemes, the first of which called for steam heat throughout, the second calling for a hot air system in all but the auditorium.

Mr. Branagh submitted a figure of \$39,936 on the second scheme and \$42, 496 as his basic bid on the first scheme which the board adopted. The extras which the board provided under Mr. Branagh's bid and which ran the total cost up \$1,923 include: tile floor in Memorial hall, \$635; fittings and shelves, \$130; wall seats in the auditorium, \$250; electrical fixtures, \$530; addition to the main staircase, \$240; and a finished basement floor \$128.

To Use Local Labor

Before receiving the bid Mr. Branagh promised the board and representatives of labor and veterans organizations that he would use "local labor and materials, price and quality being equal, in preference to anything else."

George N. Ley, chairman of the board, told representatives of the veterans organizations that the board had decided on a supervisor of construction but wished to withhold fshis name for the present.

The veterans advisory committee consists of E.C. Rittenhouse, Dr. J.A. McGarry, Arnold Baldwin, Samuel Leask, Jr. and Noel Patterson.

Two of the three lowest bidders were contractors of this county, Palmer and Balsiger of Santa Cruz and Wallstrum and company of Watsonville. Bid of Santa Cruz firm amounted to \$45,765 while that of the Watsonville company was \$45,178.

The Bids

Other bids were

Wilson and McGranahan, Santa Cruz.....\$46,104; \$48,898	Hamilton and Church, Santa Cruz....
Frank T Edmans, San Jose....50,995;	Swenson Construction Co., San Jose....49,739
Neves and Harp, Santa Clara....50,823;	H.H. Hennings, Stockton....47,070
John J. Cavanagh, Stockton....48,846;	F.R. Zinck, Stockton....49830
Young & Horstmeyer, San Francisco....48,242;	H.N Sjober & Son, San Francisco....47,8890
B.A. Hawkins & Company, San Francisco....50,617;	H.H. Larson Co. San Francisco....45,918
G.P.W. Jensen, San Francisco....47,024	William Spivock, San Francisco....48,615
J.S. Hannah, San Francisco....48,731	Gut and Fox, Sacramento....50,798
Harry S. Brindle, Sacramento....51,236	Baubert Brothers, Oakland....50,650
L. Ubels, Ripon....49,185	

Many Willing To Sell Furniture For Veterans Hall

Tenders are beginning to be filled in writing with the county supervisors for the supplying of equipment and furniture of various kinds for the new Veterans Memorial hall.

Letters were read at yesterday's meeting from the Munthe Equipment company, which would like to supply the opera chairs and the folding chairs in the building and from the Pacific Lumber company,

which desires consideration for its redwood bark fiber for refrigeration and the ice making plants. The communications were referred to the building committee of the Veterans' organization.

1932/03/16 SC Evening News (1:5) Veterans' Hall Contract To Be Signed Friday

Special meeting of the board of supervisors to sign the contract and approve the bonds of John E. Branagh, Piedmont contractor who has the contract for construction of Veterans' memorial hall, was today called for Friday afternoon at 4 o'clock

The meeting was called by George N. Ley, chairman of the board, after a conference this morning with Mr. Branagh, who was in Santa Cruz to sign the contract and interview contractors here relative to taking subcontracts on the building.

Mr. Branagh, who built the Methodist church here in 1914, said he was prepared to start the construction as soon as he could arrange with sub-contractors to reach the job.

Under the contract, which the board of supervisors awarded to Mr. Branagh Monday afternoon, March 7, the work must be started next Tuesday. While under certain contracts the board has frequently approved the bonds and signed the contract with the contractor after the work has been started, Mr. Branagh said that he did not want to start the work under those circumstances.

Mr. Branagh said he was prepared to give the work to and purchase materials from local firms and has tentatively consulted several contractors here. he said that he expected to remain in Santa Cruz until late Friday making final arrangements to commence work.

1932/03/22 SC Evening News (6:8) S.C. Men Given Sub Contracts On Vets' Hall

Work of excavation of the site for Veterans' Memorial hall between the post office and Antonelli hotel on Front street which started yesterday noon will be finished tomorrow. John E. Branagh, contractor, said today.

Excavation work was being done by Owens Brothers and other local labor. Mr. Branagh said he has given the sub-contracts of lumber to the Santa Cruz Lumber company; cement to the Santa Cruz Portland cement company; electrical work to Irvin M. Smith, reinforcing steel to Cowell Lime and Cement company; and structural steel to the Central Supply company.

Laying of false work and forms for the side and walls of the building will start in the near future, Mr. Branagh said. The building is to be completed July 18.

1932/05/31 Santa Cruz Sentinel VMH Cornerston Laid

Nation's Dead Honored By Local Veterans Organizations

Cornerstone of Memorial Hall is Laid

Large Outpouring Witness Ceremonies

Judge Knight Honored Guest

B.B. Snyder Gives History of Memorial Day

By De La Kiff

The plan of the Memorial Day parade, worked out by E.R. Dakan went through without a hitch and the long line finally came to a stop in front of the memorial building of the veterans on Front street.

Here a platform was arranged for the principal speakers and guests, with Emmet C. Rittenhouse acting commander of ceremonies; George Ley, who later wielded the trowel and laid the mortar for the corner stone of the veterans' memorial; Sam Leask Jr., senior vice commander; Noel Patterson, junior vice commander; Dr. J. A. McGarry, chaplain and Arnold Baldwin in charge of the colors.

The stone used in the laying of the corner stone was given by Ora Dunlap and the flowers used in the ceremony were from Pendleton's nursery.

The cornerstone was only laid temporarily yesterday morning and today when the daily papers have given a full account of yesterday's doings, they will be laid in the archives with other data on the building to be later opened possibly many years hence. The entire proceedings at the cornerstone laying went through with a clock like regularity under the efficient direction of Emmet C. Rittenhouse. The cornerstone has engraved on it these words: "To honor those who served in the wars, Dedicated May 30, 1932."

Flag With History

Many people will be glad to learn that the big flag draping the front of the veteran's memorial yesterday, was one donated by Mrs. R.C. Humber of 60 Atlantic avenue. It was given to her by an army man, her uncle, and was the first flag run up at San Juan, province of Santiago during the Spanish American war. The flag is very well preserved.

Preparations for the dedication were also handled by John E. Branagh, contractor for the memorial building who assisted materially in seeing that everything was in shape.

Before the dedication ceremonies started Mr. Rittenhouse introduced various members who took a prominent part. They were Commander C.O. Powell of the local Grand Army of the Republic; Fred Lewis commander of the U.S. Spanish War Veterans; Milton Coughlan, commander of the American Legion; Mrs. Handley of the Spanish War Veterans Auxiliary; Mrs. Blair of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; Mrs. Thurwachter, Mrs. Patterson of the American Legion Auxiliary.

Lloyd Pringle of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, gave the Gettysburg Address. Before the start of ceremonies however, the Santa Cruz band played the Star Spangle Banner, and Father P.J. McGrath gave the invocation

Judge Knight Speaks

Mr. Rittenhouse then stepped forward and started.

(See Article for texts of the speeches which followed.)

Mr. Rittenhouse then read the ritual for laying the cornerstone as George Ley mixed the mortar and it was placed in its niche with Senior Vice Commander Samuel Leask Jr. and Junior Vice Commander Noel Patterson, laying their flower wreaths on the cornerstone.

Following the ceremonies, Rev. Joseph Carpenter gave the benediction and the American Legion drum corps buglers sounded taps.

Front street from Mission and Pacific, far down the street, was blocked with many hundred of Santa Cruzans who stood during the entire ceremonies behind the American Legion drum corps and the Naval Reserve, which were drawn up in the front of the platform.

1932/05/27

SC Evening News (1:2)

Contractor Denies Vet Hall Charges

Branagh States SF men Posed As "Local Labor

He Fired Them

Overtime Caused By Delay When Sand Truck Broke

Denial of charges filed with the state labor commission in San Francisco by Deputy Labor Commissioner George Moody of San Jose in connection with his work as contractor on Veterans' Memorial hall was made today by John E. Branagh.

The accusations against him were file yesterday with Timothy A. Reardon, chief of the division of labor, statistics and law enforcement in San Francisco. They alleged that in addition to hiring men for overtime, contrary to the state law, Mr. Branagh failed to pay full wages as provided in the contract.

That the charges placed against him by the labor commissioner regarding four men who were employed for a short time resulted from a series of unfortunate circumstances was Mr. Branagh's statement.

"Several weeks ago four men came to me, re presenting themselves as residents of the San Lorenzo valley and asked to be hired as carpenters," Mr. Branagh said.

Hired As Helpers

"I told them I had all the carpenters I could employ, but that they could go to work as carpenters' helpers. This they agreed to. No wages for that type of work was specified in the contract, but I paid them \$7 per day which was \$1 under the wage scale for carpenters.

"The men lied to me about their residence," said Mr. Branagh, "but I did not discover it until they had worked for several days. Members of the veterans' committee came to me and asked me to fire them because they actually lived in San Francisco.

Laid Them Off

"Because I had pledged myself to hire only local labor for the job, I laid the men off. Now they are trying to get an extra dollar a day for the time they worked, posing before the commission as carpenters," Mr. Branagh stated.

The board of supervisors has taken the stand that where the wage was not specified in the contract Mr. Branagh could determine his own scale, provided it was fair. This it Monday told Perry Andrews of Watsonville, one of the superintendents for the county on the job, although it was not made part of the minutes.

In connection with the charge that he employed men for overtime instead of hiring an additional crew as provided by the law, Branagh said although he paid an overtime wage, his employees did not actually work overtime.

Truck Broke Down

"I get all my sand and gravel from Felton," he said. "One day the truck hauling it in broke down and we waited for three hours for the sand. The work had to be done. We were nearing the end of our limit for pouring the walls so I called on the Central Supply company for the sand and kept the men on until we finished that particular phase of the job," he declared.

"The men did not work for three hours while we were waiting for the sand and we worked just about three hours overtime and although I paid them overtime. I am now thoroughly convinced I should not have done it," he said

Work Is Praised

Both Mrs. George Rostron, Branciforte supervisor and head of the board committee for construction

of the hall and E.C. Rittenhouse, head of the committee of veterans, said Mr. Branagh's work was of high standard.

"Mr. Branagh has proved himself highly efficient and thoroughly hones," Mrs. Rostran declared today.

"He is a contractor of merit and a man who has kept his word on every transaction we have had with him," said Mr. Rittenhouse for the veterans.

The veterans committee met this noon in Brownie's Tavern on Pacific avenue to discuss over the luncheon table with Branagh the various phases of the charges against him and progress of work on the building.

State Men Here

James Fellom of San Jose, Inspector of the Register of Contractors, and Ormond Lutz, Chief Examiner for the Northern California District of the Department of Professional and Vocational Standards, who were in Santa Cruz today, said charges against Mr. Branagh were apparently well founded.

1932/07/22 SC Evening News (8:4) Furnishings For Memorial Hall To Be Purchased

Specifications for approximately \$4,000 worth of furnishings, floor coverings and hangings for the new Veterans' Memorial hall are being prepared by Alan Horton, county purchasing agent.

Bids for their purchase will be asked by the county supervisors. The hangings include those for the stage which will be 26 feet wide and 19 feet high. A billiard table and a pool table have already been bought for the club room, which will be equipped with furniture finished in leather and velour.

1932/09/03 Santa Cruz Sentinel G.A.R. to Have First Meeting in VMH

Grand Army will Hold First Meet in New Memorial

An adjourned meeting of the Grand Army of the Republic, by order of Commander C.O. Powell is to be held in the new Veteran's Memorial next Thursday, September 8.

This meeting, the first of any veterans organization, to be held in the new hall is given to the G.A.R. veterans as a place of honor on the program and their corps will be the first to enter and hold a meeting in the recently completed splendid building of the veterans.

Wallace Reynolds Post of the G.A.R. was to have held a meeting tonight, according to Commander Powell, but the date has been moved ahead, on account of the hall not being finished and on September 8 the first official meeting will be held at 2 p.m. Commander Powell has requested that all veterans meet at the hall next Thursday.

1932/09/07 SC Evening News (1:7) New Vet Hall Acceptance Is Given Setback

Failure of Building Superintendent to File Report is Cause

Acceptance of the new Veterans' Memorial building by the board of supervisors, scheduled for today's meeting, was delayed because of the failure of Perry Andrews of Watsonville, building superintendent,

to file his written report with the board.

Members of all veterans' committees were present. Milton Coghlan, past commander of the American Legion, stated that he would not recommend the acceptance of the building until the report was filed.

Emmet Rittenhouse, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and members of the house committee, said it was his belief that the matter should not be put over until the next regular meeting of the board September 23, as an open house was scheduled for the building Saturday [September 10, 1932].

1932/09/09

Santa Cruz Sentinel

GAR Memorial Hall Activity

It was certainly a happy afternoon for the G.A.R. comrades on Thursday when they held their first meeting in Memorial Hall. This hall is most pretty and beautiful in all its appointments and should be seen to be appreciated. After the meeting the members of C. Alice Baker Tent No. 33, Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, served ice cream and cookies. There was about 45 comrades, daughters and guests present. The caretaker of the building was most courteous and assisted in arranged for the serving.

The altars in the auditorium were presented to the building by the G.A.R. and the flag cases by the D. of U. Veterans.

Mesdames Elinore Wilhof and Jennie Greathouse were in charge of the serving. The D. of U.V. will hold their first meeting in this hall Monday, September 12.

Memorial Hall is truly a wonderful addition to the city of Santa Cruz.

Following their business session the comrades were greeted by Supervisor Rose Rostron, Dr. McGarry, chairman of the housing committee of the building and many others, and escorted on a tour of inspection over the delightful building.

At refreshment time Emmet C. Rittenhouse appeared to greet the comrades and extend to them, on behalf of the building committee, words of appreciation for the altar and desks at the four stations of the main lodge room, which is their donation towards the room's furnishing. Mr. Rittenhouse also in pleasing words thanked the Daughters for the two flag cases in the main hall, which they gave in honor of their fathers, the Union Veterans of the Civil War.

1932/11/07

SC Evening News (2:2)

Plans Made By C. of C. For Providing Entertainment For Officers and Men of Warship

Directors of the chamber of commerce today discussed the program of events in connection with the visit here this week of the U.S.S. Arkansas during the celebration of Armistice day.

Chairman Fred McPherson of the battleship committee read a letter from Captain P.W. Foote, commanding the U.S.S. Arkansas, in which it was stated that the commander was glad to contribute to the attractions of the Armistice day parade with a contingent of men from the ship and the full band. He also consented to make a short talk at the exercises for the dedication of the Veterans Memorial building and will be the guest of the Hi-12 club at its Thursday luncheon

For entertainment for the officers and men of the ship it was suggested that those citizens who cared to entertain one or more of the officers in their homes at dinner on Thursday night could advise the chamber of commerce office. Later on Thursday evening, beginning at 9 o'clock, dancing could be enjoyed at the Blossom room at Casa del Rey, or any citizens who desired to take the officers to dinner could do so outside of their homes at the Blossom room in the hotel.

Friday night will be the regular Armistice day dance at the Casino ballroom, in charge of the American Legion, and it was decided after some discussion today that the sailors will be asked to pay their regular admission charges.

Those sailors who desire to visit the Big Trees on Thursday and Friday will be accommodated by the chamber of commerce, with the assistance of the American Legion and citizens with private cars.

George Myren and Noel Patterson, representing the American Legion committee, were present today to settle some of the details of the entertainment in which both organizations are interested. They made the suggestion that the sailors should pay their way into the Friday night dance. Chairman McPherson said that he was trying to obtain complimentary privileges for the sailors at the football game on Friday afternoon.

It was stated definitely today that the U.S.S. Arkansas, under orders, will sail for Monterey on Saturday morning.

1932/11/11

SC Evening News (1:8)

Dedication of Memorial Building

Son of Santa Cruz Speaker

Eugene Bennett Lauds Spirit of Citizens In Providing Memorial To Heroes

Pointing out that the erection of Veterans Memorial building showed public spirit and civic cooperation, Eugene Bennett, San Francisco attorney, in an address dedicating the structure to war heroes, today told a large audience that the future of Santa Cruz county depended on continuance of that spirit.

Dedication of the building was part of the program celebrating Armistice day which ended the world war 14 years ago. Santa Cruz county joined with this city in the event.

Recalling the entry of the United States into the war, Mr. Bennett, one of its veterans, paid homage to men who had fought and died for perpetuation of the United States and the ideals on which this country was founded.

A former Santa Cruzan and the son of Mrs. Nellie A. Bennett of De Laveaga heights, Mr. Bennett said he considered the future of the Monterey bay area due to its scenic beauty and climatic advantages brighter than any other section of the state.

The potential value of this county as the future playground of the Pacific will be realized if the citizens cooperate in accomplishing its advertisement with the same spirit in which they erected the memorial, he declared.

Mr. Bennett, former executive officer and attorney for the state fish and game commission, past commander of the San Francisco county Legion council and member of the state department Americanization committee, was introduced by Noel Patterson, member of the veterans build committee.

Civic Officials Introduced

Samuel Leask, Jr. past commander of the Santa Cruz Legion post, was chairman of the day and introduced Mrs. Rose Rostron, chairman of the building committee of the board of supervisors. Mayor Fred W. Swanton, Captain Lewis Coxe of the U.S.S. Slat Lake City, and Commander J.B. Rhodes of the ship.

Brief remarks were given by Emmet C. Rittenhouse, representing the Veterans of Foreign Wars; Craig Lewis of the Spanish American War Veterans, and Arnold M. Baldwin of the American Legion.

Work of the veterans building committee, comprised of Mr. Rittenhouse, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Leask, Mr. Patterson and Dr. J.A. McGarry, ended with the dedication service.

Veterans Operate Building

The building will in the future be operated by a board of trustees representing all veterans organizations and composed of Mr. Rittenhouse, Mr. Baldwin and Dr. McGarry.

The Rev. P.J. McGrath, rector of Holy Cross church, said the benediction. the Rev. L.O. Dabritz invoked the blessing. Community singing was led by H.N. Whitlock. Mrs. Arista K. Mellor was soloist.

Gift From G.A.R.

On display at the hall were a group of pedestals for the stations of the various offices of the organizations meeting rooms donated by the remaining members of the Wallace-Reynolds post of the Grand Army of the Republic, only five of whom are now able to attend meetings.

Having a surplus of \$200 in the treasury and wishing to do something to perpetuate their memory with veterans of more recent wars, the civil war vets purchased the station markers and a bulletin board for the building.

Cost is \$58,000

The building of Spanish architecture, was erected by a special tax voted by citizens of the county at a cost of \$52,000. Furnishings, all of which have not been purchased, will cost \$6000, according to the estimate of Allan Horton, county purchasing agent.

Floors of the main hall and basement of the building are in imitation of the tile floors of early California missions. The basement houses the Santa Cruz naval reserves.

On the main floor is the auditorium, while on the top floor is the lodge rooms of the veterans organizations and auxiliaries, as well as kitchen and dining rooms and a clubroom which extends the entire width of the building and fronts on the lower plaza.

1933/05/31

Santa Cruz Sentinel

First Memorial Day Services in VMH

Honor to the Soldier Dead

Memorial Hall Filled With Hundreds Who Did Not Forget

Oldest G.A.R. on Platform

Senator B.B. Snyder Delivers Timely Address

Senator Bertram B. Snyder, a member of the American Legion, was principal speaker yesterday at the general Memorial Day exercises held in Memorial Hall immediately after the parade and separate memorial services held at the various cemeteries and at the municipal wharf.

The hall was comfortably filled with residents of the city and members of the various veterans organizations of the city. Senator Snyder took for his subject "How Tense the Future?" Introduced by Chairman Elmer R. Dakin Senator Snyder said in part:

(See News Article for Text of Address)

Preceding Senator Snyders address the program was opened by the American Legion drum corps, followed by sighing of the "Star Spangled Banner," by Jacquer Cohen. Then invocation was said by Dr. John L. Burcham of the First Methodist church. Lloyd Pringle read Lincoln's Gettysburg address

and Leland Spencer sang “the Unknown Soldier,” Accompanied by Vera McKenna Clayton.

After the reading of Logan’s proclamation by Craig Lewis, Senator Snyder gave his address.

Following the address Jacques Cohen sang “America,” the benediction was said by Father P.J. McGrath of the Holy Cross church and taps were sounded by the American Legion drum corps.

Commander C.O. Powell of the Grand Army of the Republic, the only one of the six surviving members of Wallace Reynolds Post G.A.R. able to participate in the exercises, was honorary chairman. Elmer R. Dakan was chairman, assisted by O.R. Hansen, American Legion, and James Smith, United Spanish War Veterans, James Doyle, Disabled American Veterans.

1940/06/12

Santa Cruz Sentinel

SUV Organize and Meet in VMH

Sons of Veterans of Civil War Start to Organize

There was an enthusiastic meeting of the Sons of Veterans of the Civil War [Auxiliary to the GAR] at the Veterans’ hall Monday night for the purpose of organizing a Santa Cruz camp of that order. There are 22 applicants already signed up, and more than twice that number of interest “Sons” yet to be registered.

The group of “Sons” who came from San Jose to promote the organization consisted of Fred W. Whitlock, San Jose commander of Camp Sheridan No. 4; A.E. Mattos, Vice Commander; Frank Crook department chief of staff, John M. Glass, department patriotic instructor; Aaron Powers chaplain, and Henry Dabel; camp aide.

After a thorough explanation of the fraternal and patriotic nature and purposes of the organization and the required procedure to establish each applicant’s eligibility to membership, the new applicants were signed up, and the meeting adjourned to meet again in the Veterans Hall on Monday, July 8, at 8 p.m. .

Aaron Powers, now residing in Santa Cruz and Dr. C.E. Eddy were appointed as a membership drive committee. All eligible sons of civil war veterans wishing to united as charter members please phone 1623 or contact Dr. Eddy at 34 Chestnut avenue. All direct descendants of civil war veterans, whether sons, grandsons, or great grandsons are eligible to join.

(Remembrances of Robert Hall August 9, 2001)

“ Room 23 has been a bone of contention for a number of years. When I became a member of the American Legion I remember Room 23 as HQ. and Hospitality room (A Day Room) for the legion with pool tables, cards, and games, a small bar, etc. During W.W. II it may have been also used as a U.S.O. center0 dances in the Auditorium. there was a naval Hospital in the old Casa del Rey Hotel and of course Fort Ord was in full swing. Later on the County used Room 23 for various purposes including. a Courtroom, & Supervisors Chambers before the New County Building was erected. Today it is bare of Veterans memorabilia set up by V.F.W. 5888 since its chartering in 1983. Gone the comfortable chairs and couches and our HQ. office, replaced by a cubicle in the the Bunker in the San Lorenzo Flood Plain.”

and from another undated letter

“Historically (at least since W.W. II Room 23 has been a meeting room, Post HQ, and Hospitality or

Day Room for vets. There have been other uses too when it was allocated by Co. Supervisors after the old Cooper St. Courthouse was closed and Annex on Front St. taken over by the Sheriffs Dept. Room 23 became a Court Room & Supr. Chamber and later the CETA training center and then during the drought, League of Women Voters used it 2 years for water conservation. It was given then for use of a new V.F.W. Post No. 5888 furnished with help from VFW 7263 and members of the Bill Motto Post and Friends.

the American Legion post 64 had an office and meeting room in the Bunker when the 1st meetings of Post 5888 took place also U.V.C. which later met in Room 23 once a month. Our most significant project was Veterans Helping Veterans find a place to live and/or jobs: Bunk beds (maybe 20 or so) near the fireplace and meals and a rec. Day Room in the Bunker plus Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners were provided with help from an entire community.”