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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JAN 10 1992

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property Veterans Memorial Building  
historic name Vets Hall  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location  
street & number 842-846 Front Street n/a  not for publication  
city, town Santa Cruz n/a  vicinity  
state California code CA county Santa Cruz code 087 zip code 95060

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Stacy R. Craig  
Signature of certifying official  
California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

3/19/92  
Date

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Shelene Byers entered in the National Register 4/27/92  
Signature of the Register Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social/meeting hall

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social/meeting hall

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th/early 20th century revival  
Mission/Spanish colonial Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls Concrete

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roof Terra cottaother Terra cotta (glazed)Metal/iron

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The Veteran's Memorial building is a handsome, two-story structure in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style, facing the main street of the city's central commercial district. The building is constructed of concrete, in a rectangular shape, divided into front and rear sections. The front portion (west facade), with street exposures and significant architectural detail, is topped with a red clay tiled hipped roof. The rear portion, which houses the auditorium, has a flat roof and utilitarian facade. Outside of minor changes to window and door treatments on ground floor archways, the building has not been altered from its historic appearance.

A commanding entry tower, with recessed doorway, is located at the northwest corner of the building, embellished with ornate arches on both sides, and glazed tile adorning lower portions of the entry hall. Double multi-paned glass doors, topped with a fan light, lead to a large interior entry hall. The tower is embellished with a metal weathervane depicting a charging cavalry, reiterating the military theme of the building. A wooden flagpole rises from the second floor, adjacent to the tower. Above the front arch, wrought iron letters spell "Veterans Memorial", and on the wall to the right of this arch is a granite plaque which reads, "To Honor Those Who Served in War. Nov 11, 1932."

The remainder of the front (west) facade at ground level is comprised of three arches containing windows and doors of mirrored glass, with cloth awnings extending past the arches. A handicapped access ramp has been added to the central entry during the 1970s. Historic photos reveal that these were originally recessed entries with plain glass and no awnings, which are believed to have been altered during the 1950s, however the overall rhythm of the arches remains basically the same. Although not located on an actual corner, the building functions as a corner-type building, ornamented on two sides and set apart by an adjacent driveway which accentuates its prominence as a public building.

The south end of the front (west) facade includes a front-facing gable and slight second floor projection, visually balancing the tower to the north. Tall multi-paned steel casement windows, topped with transoms and set off by wrought iron ornamental balconies are spaced across the facade. Those on the ends have additional wrought iron ornament rising the full length of the window, with glazed tile surrounds. The three central windows share a common balcony of wrought iron incorporating panels of military imagery. The windows are further linked by a bank of decorative glazed tile across the top. Unobtrusive canvas awnings have been added to these central windows.

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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*Veteran's Memorial Building, Santa Cruz, Section 7, continued*

On the north facade, the corner tower entry treatment is repeated. A simple window arrangement continues toward the back: five arched windows on the first floor are set off by decorative round stucco medallions between the arches, and seven rectangular windows above are joined by bands of glazed tile. At the far end of this segment is a shallow projection echoing that of the southwest front facade, with front facing gable, tile-framed windows and decorative iron balcony. An additional element here is a stuccoed, tile-topped chimney with arched cutout. Beyond this point, the flat-roofed auditorium section extends, with four tall windows on both north and south sides, each comprised of three six-paned elements. The rear and side portions of the parcel are excavated so there is access to a sunken outdoor patio from rooms at the southern end of the full basement. The south facade, which was not intended to be visible due to an adjacent building there formerly, consists of a plain wall with one small second floor window on the front half. The rear segment has a metal fire escape and ductwork in addition to the auditorium windows.

The floor of the main entry hall is terra cotta tile. The entry hall, auditorium and large upstairs meeting hall all have handsome ceiling elements of substantial, exposed false beams with stencilled patterns and handpainted vignettes. The spaces behind the original recessed entry arches have been enclosed and made into small offices by adding a stucco wall with windows at each archway, and carpet laid down upon what used to be exterior concrete patios. Outside of this alteration, there have been no major changes to the interior. Overall, considering its age and level of use, the building is in good condition.

The Veterans Memorial Building is listed in the City of Santa Cruz' Historic Building Survey of 1976 with a rating of "exceptional" and is included as a key structure in the City's Downtown Area Plan.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture  
Social history

1932-40

1932

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

n/a

Davis-Pearce Company (architects)  
Branagh, John E. (builder)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Veterans Memorial Building in downtown Santa Cruz, constructed in 1931-32, is an outstanding example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. It was designed by the Stockton based firm of Davis Pearce, which specialized in large commercial and institutional projects throughout the state of California. Of the eleven other non-residential buildings in this style constructed in Santa Cruz, three have been demolished and two have been extensively remodeled or altered to incorporate other architectural elements. The Veterans Memorial Building was the last to be constructed, and features the most customwork art on its facade. The structure's orderly and dignified form is well suited to its purpose, and the incorporation of military images and symbols in several places marks its distinctly commemorative importance. The building provided a meeting place, forum and entry point for rehabilitation and social services for all veterans of World War I, as well as an important anchor in the hub of downtown. Although in continual use for veteran related services, its heyday was primarily during the 1930s to early 1940s, following its construction and before the outbreak of World War II, when local peace-time efforts were geared toward recovery from the Depression, creation of a strong community solidarity and building a sound economic base. It has continued to be a solid visual and community centerpiece as an historically and architecturally significant structure in the Santa Cruz community.

Architectural Significance

Even though Santa Cruz is a Mission town, its adobe architecture was subject to rapid decay from moisture and earthquakes, and what wasn't torn down was usually remodelled to approximate a Victorian style. It wasn't until the twentieth century that Spanish style architecture was reintroduced into Santa Cruz, as part of the "New Santa Cruz" movement spearheaded by developer Fred Swanton. He wanted to develop architectural qualities attractive to tourists, but with a decidedly historic look and western flavor. He led the way for the new movement with the construction of the Santa Cruz Boardwalk whose style was actually "Hispano-Mooresque" and was too exotic to be classified as Spanish Colonial. This aberration notwithstanding, only twelve non-residential Spanish Colonial Revival buildings were constructed in Santa Cruz.

See continuation sheet

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### *Veteran's Memorial Building, Santa Cruz, Section 8, continued*

The eleven other Spanish Colonial Revival buildings were constructed between 1911-28. Five were hotels (Casa del Rey, Alexander, La Bahia Courts, St. George Mission Inn and Piedmont Court); four were schools (Holy Cross Boys School, Laurel School, Mission Hill and Gault), and two were hospitals (Sisters Hospital and Santa Cruz Hospital). The Veteran's Memorial Building was the twelfth and last constructed.

The Veteran's Memorial Building is an outstanding architectural example of the Spanish Colonial Revival period, not only because of the excellence of its identifying features (arches, tiled/hipped roof, monumental style), but also because of its overall good condition which has deviated little from its original historic appearance.

### Social History

After the return of World War I veterans to their homes in 1918, there was a steady increase in membership of the various veterans organizations, among them American Legion Post 64 (Santa Cruz, begun 1918), and Post 121 (Watsonville, begun 1919). Some new servicemen's organizations were started and grew rapidly, while others already in existence increased steadily in membership. These veteran organizations joined in many projects to assist all ex-servicemen and their families in much needed hospitalization and rehabilitation. Suitable meeting places became a problem, and a committee which included prominent businessmen Noel Paterson and Samuel Leask approached the County Board of Supervisors for help. Leask and Patterson were instrumental in arranging for the donation by Frank J. Hoffman of the Front Street lot for this purpose, and on September 7, 1927, the land was transferred to the County. The land had been vacant since a fire in 1887, and the Supervisors were hopeful that the new building next to the main Post Office would be a boost for the downtown.

To finance the building, members of the County Board of Supervisors and local veterans suggested a plan authorized by the state, by which a direct tax could be assessed for the purpose of erecting a veterans building in Santa Cruz and one in Watsonville. The Supervisors passed a resolution calling for this proposition to be presented at the next general election, November 4, 1930. Proposition 27 called for the levy of 15 cents tax per \$100 valuation, beginning on July 1, 1931, and continuing until the total sum of \$92,500 had been raised. The proposition was passed by the voters, and it was agreed to apply the collected monies first to the building in Santa Cruz rather than in Watsonville, since the need here was felt to be greater.

On December 23, 1931, the Board of Supervisors appointed Davis-Pearce Company, represented by J.W. Rowell, to draw plans for the building. Three months later, after calling for competitive bids, the County contracted with John E. Branagh of Piedmont to construct the building for the sum of \$44,419. Changes and

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Byron Times Seventh Booster Edition, Byron, CA: 1920-21  
Byron Times 11th Development Edition, Byron, CA: 1928-29  
Byron Times, 12th Development Edition, Byron, CA: 1930-31  
Rosekrans and Broder, Architects, Master Plan, Santa Cruz County Veterans Memorial Building, unpublished report, 1984, Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Recreation and Open Space  
Tinkham, George, History of San Joaquin County, 1923

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

A 

1	0
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5	8	6	8	0	0
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4	0	9	2	4	6	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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 Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property occupies city lot 05-052-25, roughly 145' x 73' x 145' x 61' in size.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has historically been associated with this property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title <u>Peggy Coats, Ross Gibson, Cynthia Mathews, Micki Ryan</u>	date <u>12 Dec 1991/30 Sept 1989</u>
organization <u>Santa Cruz County Historical Trust</u>	telephone <u>408) 425-3499</u>
street & number <u>1543 Pacific Avenue, #220</u>	city or town <u>Santa Cruz</u>
state <u>CA</u>	zip code <u>95060</u>

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*Veteran's Memorial Building, Santa Cruz, Section 8, continued*

additions during construction, plus the architects fee of 65 brought the final total for construction to \$54,853. The building was dedicated on Armistice Day, November 11, 1932.

The Veterans Memorial Building provided a meeting place, forum, and entry point for rehabilitation and social services for all veterans of World War I, as well as being an important anchor in the hub of downtown. Although the building was in its heyday primarily during the early to mid 1930s, it has continued to be a strong visual and community centerpiece as a historically and architecturally significant structure in the Santa Cruz community.





