

CIVIC AUDITORIUM

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## A Brief History Of The Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium

On March 30, 1940, a 3-day fete celebrated the grand opening of the Civic Auditorium. The ensuing years of service by the facility have reflected the growth and change in our community and in the world at large.

In its early days, the Auditorium was used mostly as a Convention Center by such organizations as Daughters of the American Revolution and the Lion's Club. During World War II it was a training center for Western Electric telephone operators and as a drill site for the California Militia. The American

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## New Board Positions In Contention

Election for new Executive Committee Officers takes place at our next monthly Board meeting, July 7, 10 AM, at the Galleria Office, #257, 740 Front St., downtown Santa Cruz. Positions open are as follows: President, Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer. Other positions also available are: Membership Chairperson, Publicity Coordinator, and Volunteer Coordinator.

Leaving the Executive Committee but remaining on the Board are outgoing President Das Smyth, Vice-president Cathy Borka, and Secretary Ric Botelho. We bid a fond farewell to all these officers who have donated so generously of their time, ideas, and energy. We look forward to continuously working with them on future Board endeavors.

We also regretfully report that outgoing Treasurer, Joe Vinson, will be moving out of the area and will no longer be serving on the Board, but will be training the new Treasurer in all the necessary financial procedures. His contributions will definitely be missed.

We have some exciting prospects for new Executive Committee Officers and invite those of you who are current Alliance Board Members, prospective Alliance Board Members, or Member Group Representatives to join us at our next Board Meeting for your input. Those Board Members currently expressing interest in serving as Executive Officers are: Denise Pierce, Randy Birch, and newcomers to the Board, Sara Connelly and Lynne Colleary. Shiela Solano has expressed interest in the Membership Coordinator position.

## A Brief History Of The Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium (cont...)

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Legion held meetings in the Civic every first and third Fridays. Live boxing matches, circuses and variety shows were in vogue. However, the most popular event was the City Recreation Basketball League.

Creation of the facility was not an overnight endeavor. In 1938 a bond issue was put forward to the people of Santa Cruz, and much debate over the merits of the project quickly ensued. At issue was \$121,295, the total cost to local taxpayers (imagine the cost of duplicating the facility today!), which was to be matched by federal PWA funds of \$114,545. The measure won handily, with 3923 for and 1527 against the proposal.

Work commenced on the Auditorium and the accompanying fire station. On October 21, 1939 the town turned out for the grand dedication ceremonies. An interesting side-line to the event is the fact that at these ceremonies a corner-stone dedication was performed, including the insertion of commemorative objects within the corner-stone (old coins, rosters of civic organizations, etc.). Incredibly,

over the course of time, the exact location of this corner-stone has been forgotten. We leave it to some future architectural sleuth to unravel this mystery in mortar and brick.

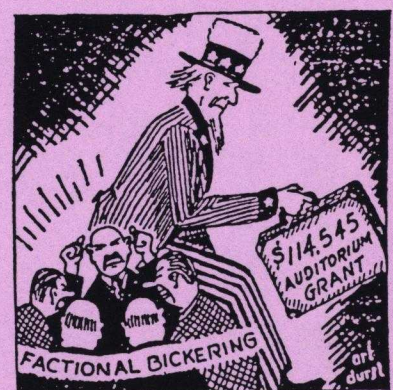
With the introduction of rock concerts and surf films in the early 60's the attendance evolved into a more regional audience. People were electrified by the musical talents of Jan and Dean, The Beach Boys and Bob Dylan. Some of the biggest names in entertainment have since graced the Civic stage, as well as new artists emerging on the scene.

In 1962, the Miss California Pageant increased the recognition of the facility by televising state-wide. The 80's, however, brought much controversy over issues of sexism and promoters of the pageant eventually relocated. Today musical concerts, films, exhibits and sporting events continue to pack full houses. Audience demands for quality entertainment has required two show performances for such diverse events as The Oakland Symphony, Santana and Theatre Ballet of San Francisco.

The Civic has grown a great deal since 1940. It is the intention of the Parks and Recreation Department to provide a friendly and comfortable atmosphere, and to present the finest entertainment available. If the past 50 years are any indication, it seems that our forward thinking forerunners voted wisely in bringing this wonderful facility to our community.

- Poor James

### THE GUEST SNEAKS OUT!



Local political cartoon of the period, reflecting the division of certain interested parties.