

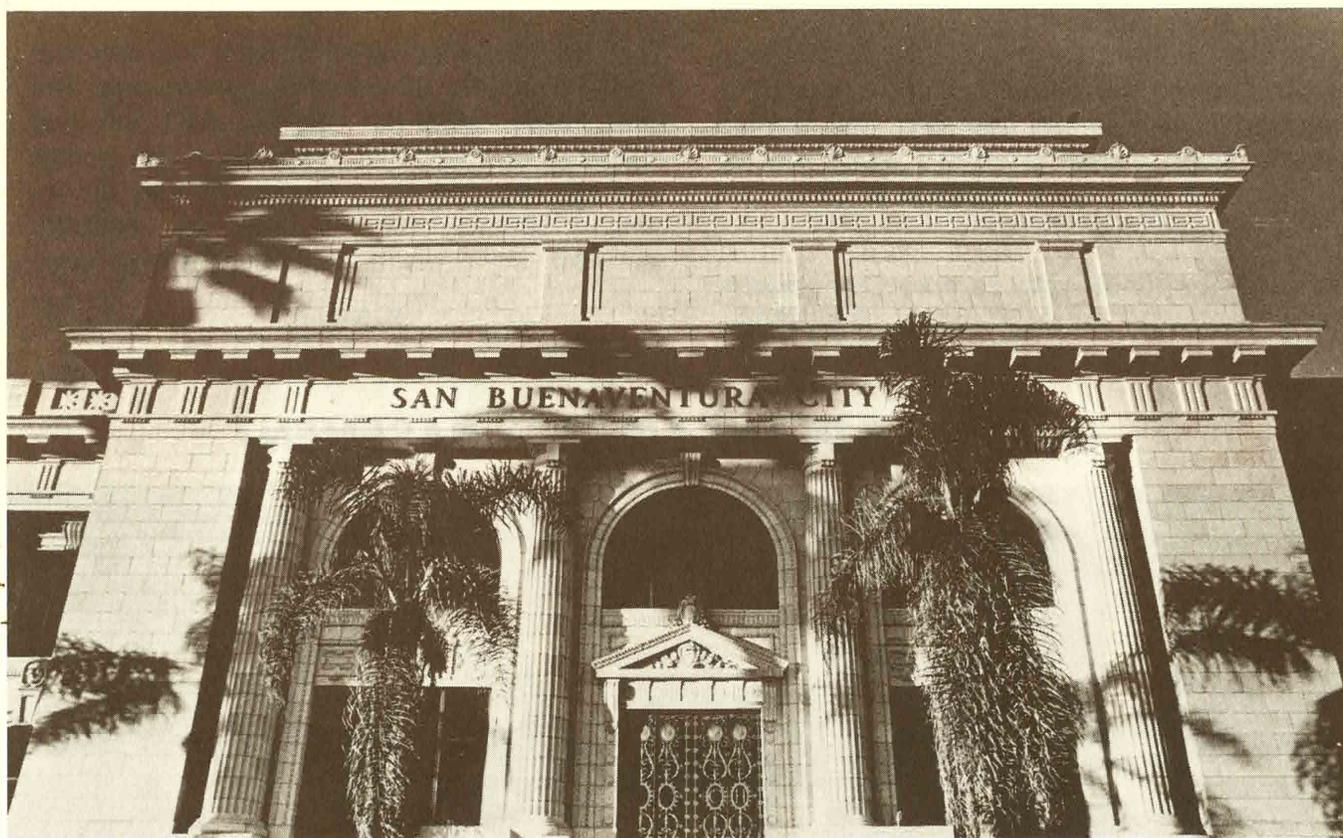
city of san BUENAVENTURA newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 10

PUBLISHED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITIZENS OF VENTURA

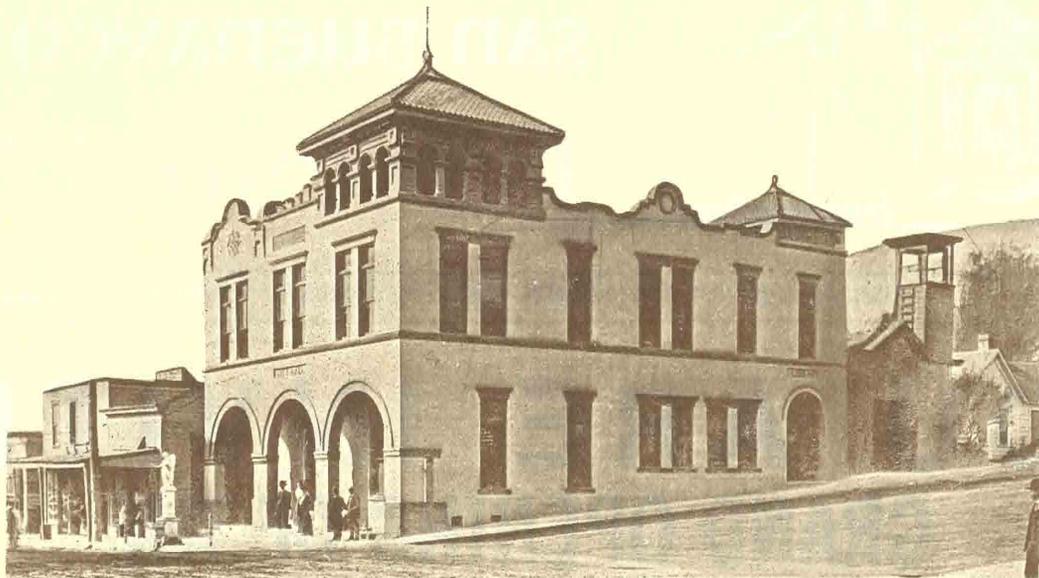
November - December 1973

YOU ARE INVITED GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW CITY HALL – DECEMBER 29



The Grand Opening of your new City Hall will be held in front of the building at 501 Poli Street, which is in the downtown area, at the northern end of California Street, against the hills.

This Grand Opening is a once in a lifetime occasion which we hope you will attend. The event takes place on Saturday at 11:00 a.m. The center of attraction is, of course, the new City Hall, and with that in mind the ceremony will be very brief, with guided tours of the building, and refreshments to follow.



SAN BUENAVENTURA CITY HALL IN 1900

As one walks past the statue of Junipero Serra, through the imposing bronze doors into the marble halls of our new City Hall, we are moving along a path in history which started in 1782 and gave itself direction in 1867 with the incorporation of the City.

During the nineteenth century City government functioned out of a variety of buildings.

The City Council shared Spear's Hall with the Ventura County Board of Supervisors at one time. Since 1900 the City has had only two buildings to itself: The first was at the corner of California and Main Streets. It was an imposing building for its time, in pseudo-mission style architecture. Before con-

elcbcbcb

QUARTERS IN THE LIBRARY BASEMENT





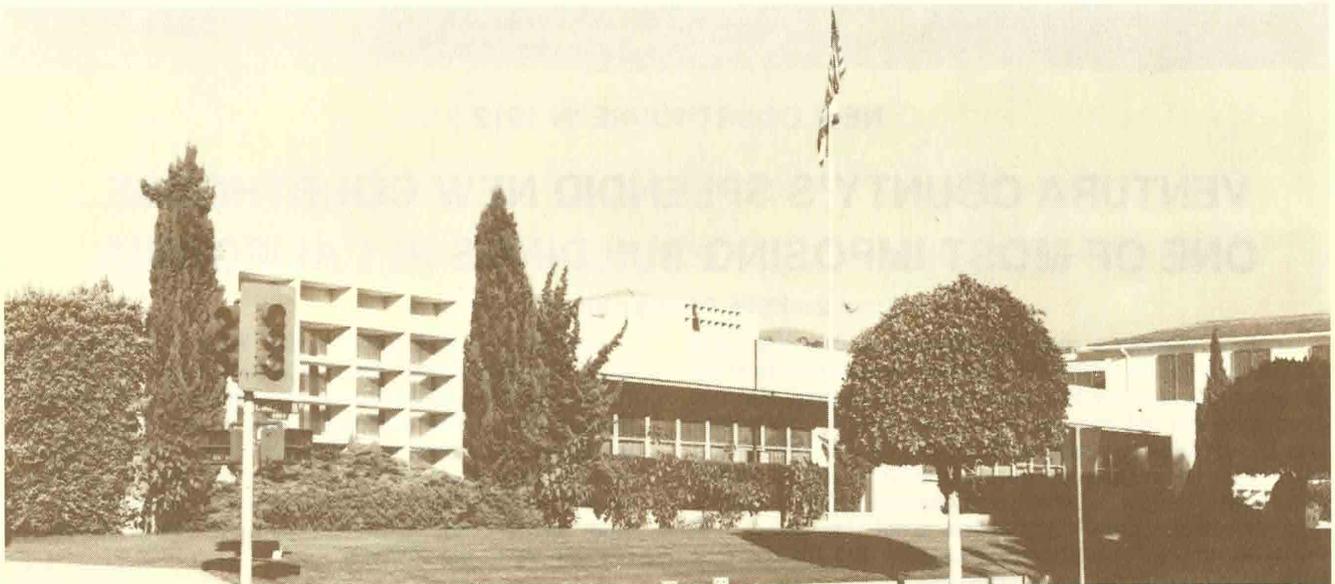
GROUND FLOOR OF MASONIC HALL

struction of the building at 625 E. Santa Clara in 1951, City officials were located first in the basement of the public library, and then on the bottom floor of the Masonic Hall. Although the present City Hall was expanded to include a building on Main Street for the Planning and Building Departments, eventually other offices had to be scattered throughout the City.

The move to the former County Courthouse will not only house the City administration in one of the finest public buildings in the State of California, but it also provides the potential for expansion as other County offices are moved out of the office building located to the rear of the structure.



CITY HALL ON SANTA CLARA — BUILT IN 1951





NEW COURTHOUSE IN 1912

VENTURA COUNTY'S SPLENDID NEW COURTHOUSE ONE OF MOST IMPOSING BUILDINGS IN CALIFORNIA

From the **FREE PRESS**, July 21, 1912

Ventura County's new courthouse within the next couple of months will begin to take permanent form on its splendid site on the side of the beautiful hill that overlooks the old mission town, the beach, the ocean and the mysterious islands beyond. And it will not be more than a couple of years, perhaps not so long, before it is finally finished and presents the superbly magnificent appearance that the artist has given it in the view that is published exclusively and for the first time in any paper, in the **Free Press** today.

Architect Martin informs the Board of Supervisors and the **Free Press** that the general style of the courthouse building architecture belongs to or resembles is Roman Doric. The dictionary tells us that Doric as pertaining to the oldest and simplest of the three orders of architecture used by the Greeks, but that it ranked as second of the five orders adopted by the Romans. It is said further that Doric pertains to Doris in ancient Greece, or to the Dorians.

The real typification of the style that has been adopted is shown more particularly in the 80-foot central portion of the building that will occupy the full space at the head of California Street; in the columns, arches, caps, cornices, windows, etc., connected with this central feature.

That it will be superbly beautiful goes without saying; but the illustration herewith cannot possibly convey the splendid idea that has been so successfully transferred from the brain of the architect to the detailed plans and to the perspective, from which later the illustration is made by the photo-electro process. The blue prints form the basis for hours of delightful contemplation on the part of persons interested in architecture, buildings, artistic and mechanical beauty. The massive outlines, the simple yet commanding dignity of the whole exterior, the sentimental and historical touch of art given by the installation of appropriate points on the front elevation of the building of splendid friars' heads, furnishing the connecting link between the ancient times, the Mission days and the modern period—all these hold one's closest attention.

A detailed description of the beautiful building at this time would be impossible, though it is possible to mention a few of its important features in a general way. For instance, it is to be 280 feet in length, the central 80 feet as stated, being the more imposing part, constructed across the head of California Street, with 100-foot wings on each side.

It will have a north and south depth of 95 feet and a height from the datum line, through the center to peak of roof of 75 feet.

The main entrance will be exactly at the center of California Street, reached by a grand staircase of granite starting at the street sidewalk. A grand veranda will extend the whole length of the building.

The entrance to the building will be through a highly decorated bronze gateway. These doors, which will swing in both directions, will be decorated with the handsomely engraved letters: V.C.C.H. The detail shows that the architect has given these massive doors real artistic attention and one must see said detail in order to properly understand the statement here made. Four massive fluted columns, capped with the classic Doric headings, compose the more prominent features of the front elevation. To either side of the entrance proper there is a set of windows furnishing ample light from the southern skies for the ground floor and for the court room as well, the latter occupying practically all of the central portion of the second floor.

Entering the building one finds himself in a 20-foot vestibule; thence he enters the lobby which gives access to all of the first floor portion of the building and in its rear, by means of a splendid stairway, to the second floor as well. Surrounding this stairway, on the lower floor, are the lavatories, storage closets, janitor's rooms, etc., all nicely out-of-the-way and out of sight.

Proceeding to the right and toward the eastern end of the building one reaches first the recorder's office; then in the northeast corner is found the tax collector's quarters; in the southeast corner the assessor's quarters. Each of these amounts to a suite for there are vaults, cabinets, closets, shelves, rooms and roomlets, all making up a complete establishment for the transaction of all the business contemplated in either of the offices.

From the left of the main entrance and towards the west end of the building, the visitor will pass through a space of about 25x50 feet as yet unassigned. Next will be found the quarters of the probation officer and beyond these will be the location of the treasurer's office, vaults, etc. The Board of Education will have a meeting room a little farther to the west; and then, appropriately, will be the quarters of the county superintendent of schools. In the northwest corner of this wing will be the juror's dormitory with dining room annexed, which makes it appear that there will need be no reason hereafter for the discharge of hung juries: they can hang as long as they wish and have a place to live while hanging.

The principal feature of the second floor, so far as the central portion of the building is concerned, will be the main court for there are to be two court rooms, remember: one for the superior judge and one for the local justice of the peace. It will be pleasing to the out-of-town newspapers, as well as to the writer, to know that the architect has indicated in this court room plan, a table for the use of the Press. It will be adjacent to the witness box, jury box and court reporter, so that newspaper reporters will have a chance to hear what the lawyers and the witnesses may have to say.

To the west of the court room the sheriff will have his quarters and on beyond the sheriff will be the Board of Supervisors' room with appropriate committee rooms, etc. In the southwest corner will be the county clerk's office, private office and public waiting room for the use of those in quest of licenses: marriage, hunting and otherwise. The entire northwest corner will be the clerk's filing room.

To the east of the main court room will be the judge's chambers, law library, court reporter's office; further along is a space allotted to the county surveyor, and from this room there will be access to the third or attic floor, where will be the surveyor's operating room, blue print factory, printing rooms, etc.

The district attorney will have a delightful suite at the southeast corner of this floor, while the minor court room for the use of the justice of the peace will occupy the northeast corner of the floor.

There will be a basement for storage under a portion of the building.

The excavation for the building is partially completed. Bids for the concrete skeleton of the building will be opened July 22.

The historic Ventura County Courthouse, once thought doomed, is about to begin a new life as the Ventura City Hall.

The structure, on Poli St. at California St., was built in 1912 and closed Jan. 1, 1969, when it was deemed unsafe in the event of an earthquake.

The City of Ventura purchased the building from the County for \$145,000. The structure cost \$287,000 to build in 1912, and a 2.7 million dollar contract was let for the rehabilitation and conversion.

The building has been declared a State Historical Landmark and has also been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, which qualified the City for a Historic Preservation Grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, in the amount of \$481,367. In addition, a grant of \$150,000 was received from the Economic Development Administration under their Public Works Impact Program.

The City will open the doors for business on Monday, January 7, 1974.

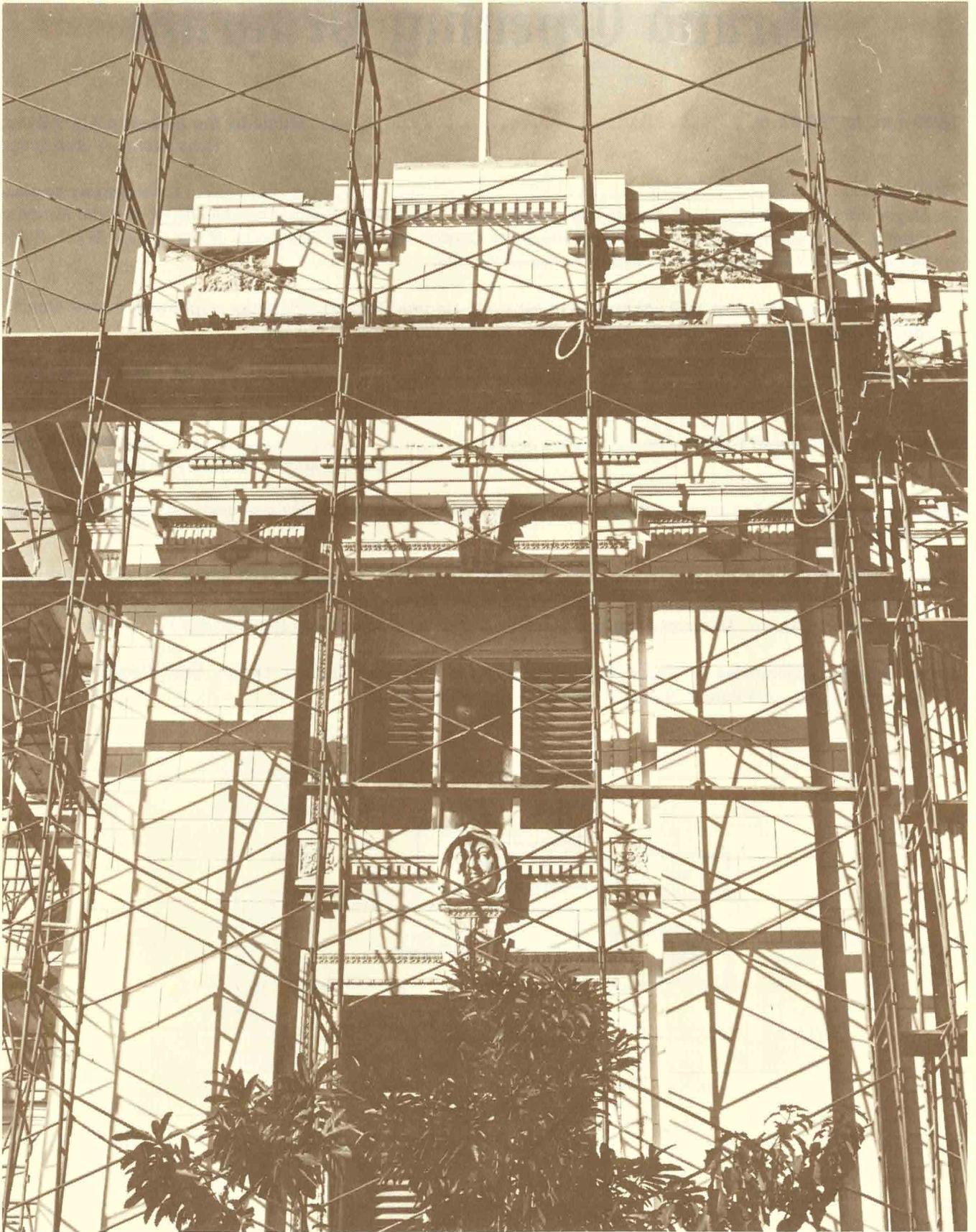
Early in 1971 the architectural firm of Fisher and Wilde of Ventura was selected to provide the architectural and engineering services necessary for conversion of the Courthouse to a New City Hall. As the structure had previously been declared unsafe their design was to include structural reinforcement and replacement of all non-conforming materials such as hollow tile and unreinforced brick. New plumbing, electrical, and air-conditioning systems were also to be provided as well as new doors, windows, partitions, and acoustical ceilings. All of the new work was to be performed while retaining the original historical characteristics such as the exterior neo-classic terra cotta facade, the in-

terior marble stairway, the coffered ceilings, and the hardwood paneling in the Council Chambers and Meeting Room.

The most difficult portion of the work was the structural repair of the exterior walls, which was designed to be performed from the inside without disturbing the exterior face. In addition to the application of gunite concrete the design included the injection of epoxy foam to fill voids and cracks and provide bond between the terra cotta face and the reinforced wall. Wheeler and Gray of Los Angeles were Consulting Engineers on this recent development in the use of epoxy materials for buildings. The contractor for this was Warner Construction Co., Los Angeles. Various columns beams, and footings at other locations were found to be overstressed and required size increases, and two large shear walls were designed to improve the building resistance to earthquakes.

Fine detail and workmanship in terra cotta, marble, wood, and decorative plaster may be noted throughout the building and these features resulted in the declaration of the structure as a State and Federal historical landmark. Not only were these original architectural details repaired and preserved but their importance was emphasized and accentuated by the use of color and indirect lighting. The same company that provided the original terra cotta in 1912 also supplied the contractor with terra cotta for the remodeling project.

Macleod Construction Co. of Ventura was the successful bidder on the construction work which was begun in July of 1972 and completed in December, 1973.



RENOVATION OF THE BUILDING

Grand Opening Program

10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. **Music by the Salvation Army Band.**
 Bandmaster — Bob Gregg

11:00 a.m. **Ceremony begins.**
 Mayor will announce that the American flag is a gift from Congressman Teague and has flown over the Nation's Capitol. The California flag has flown over the State Capitol; the Native Daughters of the Golden West, Poinsettia Parlor # 318, presented the California flag to the City.

The American Legion, Post 339 will raise both flags. Mr. George Gardner of Ventura, nephew of former Mayor Edwin Gardner will sing the National Anthem, while the Salvation Army Band plays.

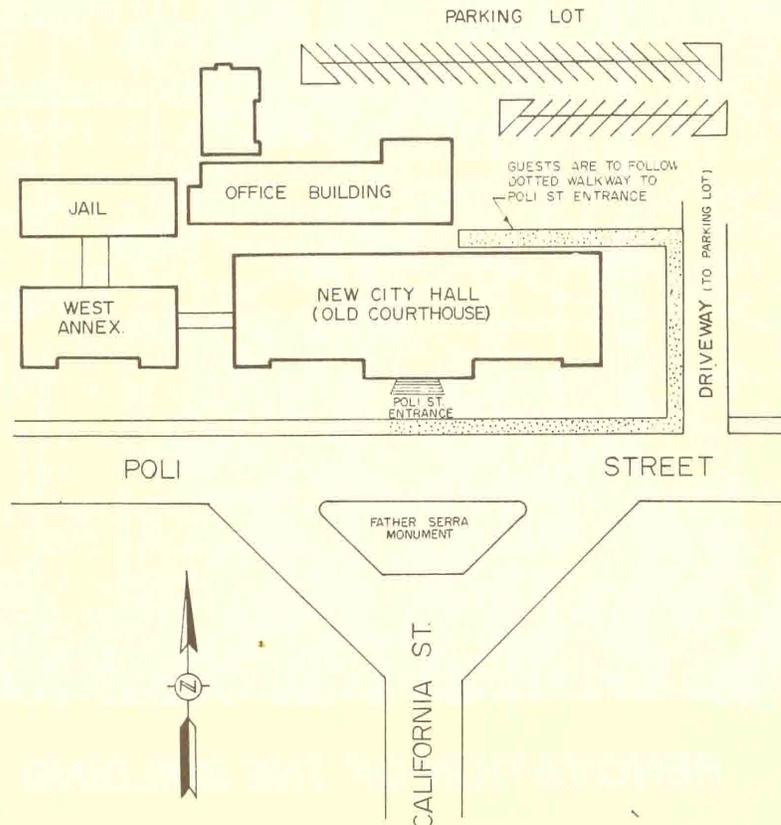
Invocation **Dr. Frank C. Matthews**
 Pastor of the First Methodist Church

Introduction of Honored Guests **Eugene C. Kountz**
 Deputy Mayor of the City of San Buenaventura

Mayor Al Albinger — The Mayor will make a brief speech and declare the City Hall open and will open the large metal gates.

Tours — After the Grand Opening, tours of the New City Hall will be available to the public. The tour guides are: Joyce Gates; Sandy Paris; Gwen Jones; Susan Brooks; Donna Osborne; Barbara Kam; Alice Turner; Shirley Campbell; Gail Mayer; Margaret Armstrong; Lois Titus; Sharlene Smartt; Jan Griffiths; and Kay Green.

Grand Opening Committee — Mayor Al Albinger and Councilwoman Barbara Udsen. Staff Coordinator of the Grand Opening — William D. Robeson, Assistant to the City Manager.



MESSAGE FROM MAYOR



Al Albinger
Mayor

The new City Hall belongs to each and every citizen. As I preside over the Grand Opening ceremony and officially open the building, it will not only be on behalf of the Council but I shall feel that I am representing each of you.

We, the Council, acting as your representatives, have restored for you, the citizens, a building rich in splendor and heritage. Without your support and encouragement the restoration could not have been possible.

Your new City Hall is one of which you can all be proud. It belongs to you, the citizens of San Buenaventura. The building will tell all who see it of the value you place on the past. It is your window on the past, it is your gateway to the future.

MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL



Eugene C. Kountz
Deputy Mayor



David D. Eaton
Councilman



Samuel Heil
Councilman



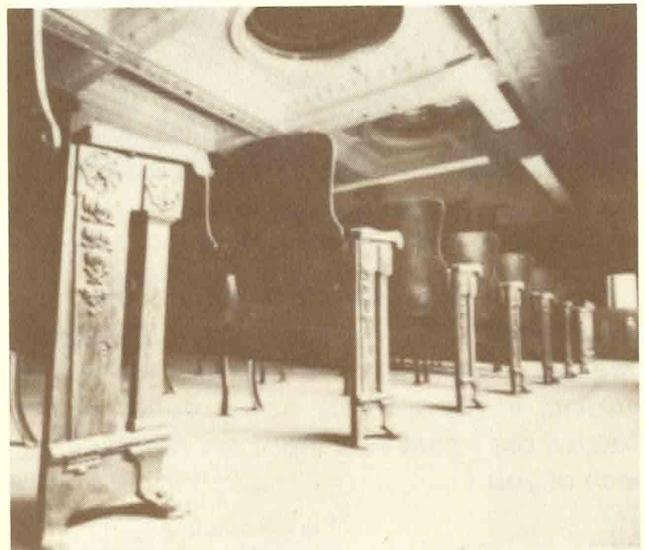
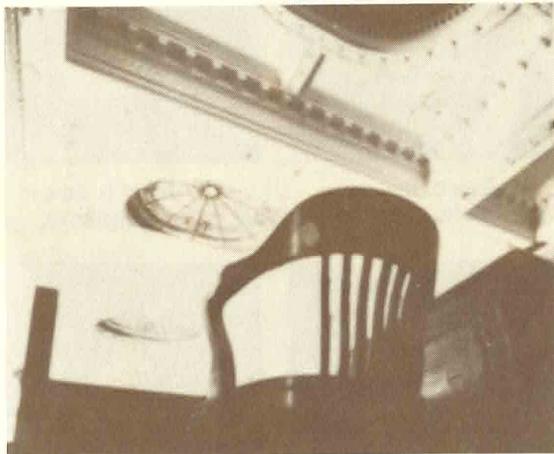
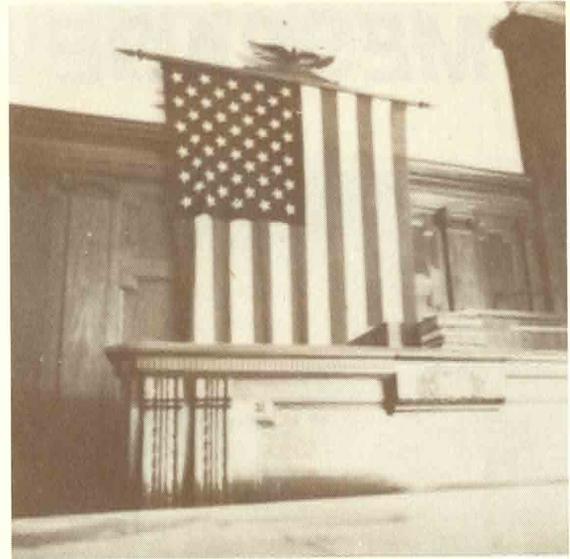
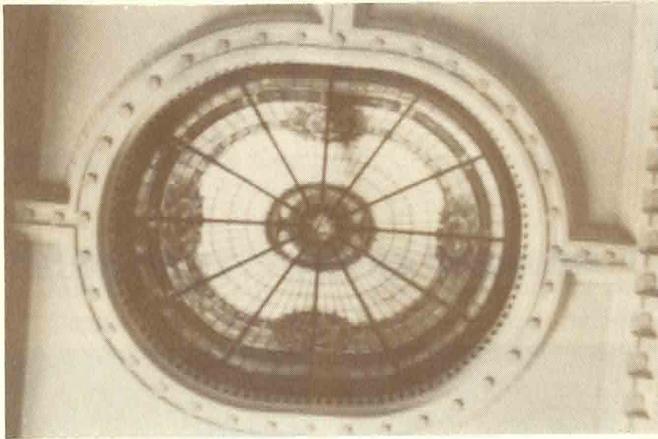
Barbara Udsen
Councilwoman



Gordon K. Lindsay
Councilman



Joseph Garrett
Councilman

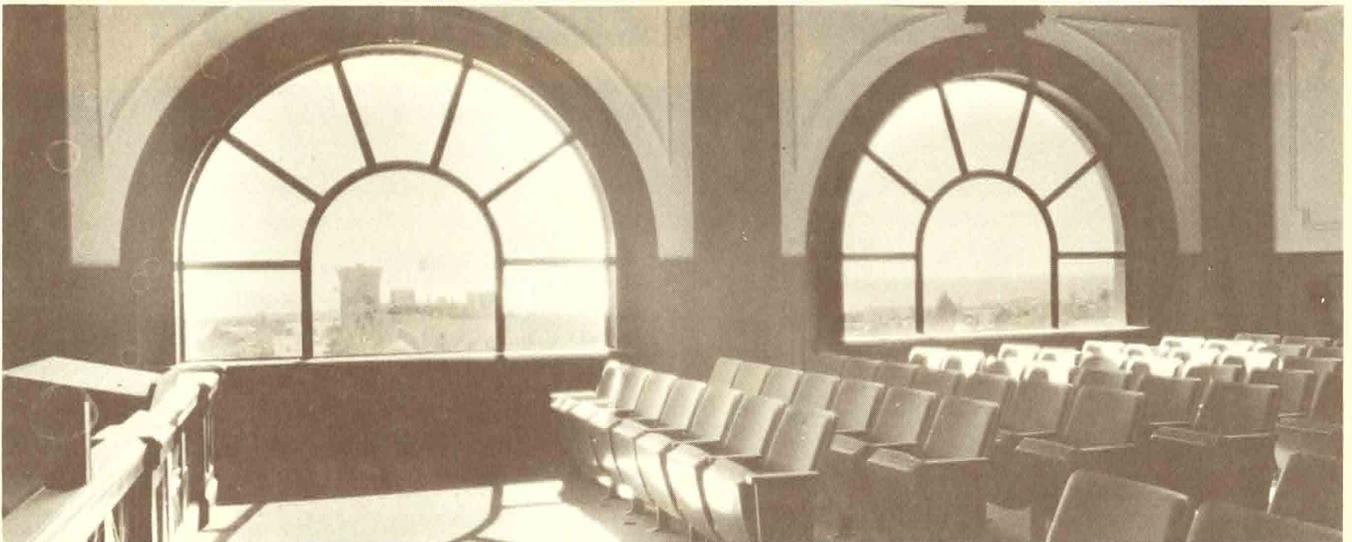


From the domed skylight and the flag at the top, to the seating on the floor, the large doors open onto a picture of the past.

The Chambers have been returned as nearly as possible to their original appearance, including use of walnut paneling, heavy woods and stained glass for the dome over the entries.

The plaster coffered ceiling with three dome shaped stained glass skylights in the Council Chambers has been retained. Together with the mahogany pediments, panelings and fluted pilasters, it is a display of our fine American heritage and cannot be duplicated with all our modern technology.

The new Ventura City Hall is unmistakably a historical landmark that will be appreciated and remembered by the people of this country.



The above photographs show the completed work on the City Council Chambers. This room formerly housed the Superior Court. The dome and ceiling detail has been preserved. Comfortable seating has been installed for Citizens and Councilmembers. The doors to the Chamber open onto Ventura's past and future.

The main entrance lobby and the former Superior Courtroom, which will become the new City Council Chambers are the two areas that are being preserved and restored to their original grandeur. The intricately detailed plaster cornice and frieze on the ceiling, the majestic curved white marble staircases, the white marble floor and wainscot create a serene and dignified atmosphere for the City Hall entrance.

Cannell and Chaffin, Los Angeles, Interior Designers, were responsible for preserving the interior detail and coordinating the interior furnishings of the City Hall.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editor takes this opportunity to recognize the work done on the New City Hall project by former assistant City Manager Leland J. Horner. Mr. Horner was Project Coordinator until November of this year when he resigned to take a position as City Manager of Millbrae, California.

The Editor also makes special recognition of Mr. Grant Heil of the San Buenaventura Historic Preservation Commission and the Ventura County Historical Society. Mr. Heil gave freely of his time and materials in assisting with this publication.

The Editor also wishes to thank the Star-Free Press for the photographs which appear on Page 8.

Subject matter taken from an article by Los Angeles Times' staff writer, Terence M. Green, has been used in the text.

William D. Robeson - Editor of City of San Buenaventura Newsletter.

CITY STAFF

City Manager Edward E. McCombs
Assistant City Manager Charles R. Cate
City Attorney Bruce Leavitt
City Clerk Barbara Kam
Public Works Director Paul Owen
General Services Director Charles Cunningham
Director of Community
Development Roger Barry
Director of Economic
Development William Harrison
Fire Chief Dean Shultz
Chief of Police Richard O. Baugh
Parks and Recreation Director William Kent

CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA
CITY HALL
VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93001

Non-profit Org.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Ventura, Calif.
Permit No 43

city
newsletter