



A BRIEF HISTORY OF “PATRIOTIC HALLS”

THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES HAS DEDICATED “PATRIOTIC HALLS” AS MEETING PLACES FOR ITS VETERANS AND PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATIONS SINCE 1913. THE COUNTY’S FIRST “PATRIOTIC HALL” WAS LOCATED ON THE TENTH FLOOR OF THE OLD HALL OF RECORDS (*THE BUILDING ON RIGHT IN PHOTO ABOVE*) AND SERVED THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC (GAR) UNION CIVIL WAR VETERANS, THE UNITED SPANISH WAR VETERANS (USWV), AND THE NEWLY FORMED VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS (VFW).

IN 1915, THE COUNTY NEEDED THE HALL OF RECORDS SPACE FOR OTHER REQUIREMENTS, AND WITH HELP FROM THE GAR, THE COUNTY WAS ABLE TO ACQUIRE THE RECENTLY VACATED BUILDING OF DR. J. S. THOMSON’S INDEPENDENT CHURCH OF CHRIST AT 1816 S. FIGUEROA STREET WHICH BECAME THE COUNTY’S SECOND PATRIOTIC HALL. WITH THE END OF WORLD WAR I IN 1918, THE NEWLY FORMED AMERICAN LEGION BECAME A MAJOR FORCE WITHIN THE VETERAN COMMUNITY ALONG WITH THE RANKS OF THE VFW, WHICH WERE SWELLED BY THE RETURNING AMERICAN “DOUGHBOYS” FROM FRANCE. THESE NEW VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS WERE PATTERNED AFTER THE GAR AND USWV, BUT UNLIKE THOSE FRATERNITIES THAT WERE LIMITED TO A SPECIFIC WAR, THE NEW ORGANIZATIONS HAD AN EXPECTATION TO SERVE VETERANS FROM ALL FUTURE CONFLICTS.

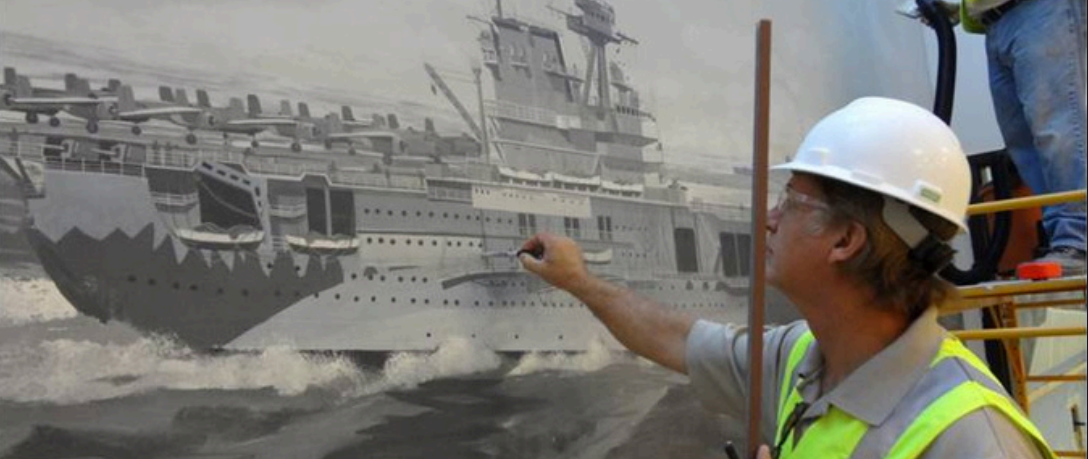
TO ACCOMMODATE THE LARGE INFLUX OF AMERICAN LEGION VETERANS IN 1923, THE COUNTY ACQUIRED A VACANT LOT NORTH OF THE HALL, AND PLANS WERE UNDERTAKEN TO BUILD A SPACE LARGE ENOUGH TO FIT THE NEEDS OF THE GAR, USWV, VFW, AND AMERICAN LEGION ALONG WITH THEIR AUXILIARIES. ALLIED ARCHITECTS OF LOS ANGELES PREPARED A PLAN FOR A TEN-STORY BUILDING WITH FLOORS ALLOCATED FOR EACH MAJOR VETERAN’S ORGANIZATION PLUS COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF. THE SMALLER STRUCTURE WAS TEMPORARILY MOVED ONE LOT TO THE SOUTH, AND GROUND BREAKING FOR THE NEW BUILDING TOOK PLACE ON JULY 26, 1924. THE CORNERSTONE FOR THE EDIFICE WAS LAID ON MAY 30, 1925; AND PATRIOTIC HALL WAS DEDICATED IN A SPECTACULAR PUBLIC CEREMONY ON FEBRUARY 21, 1926.

A 25TH ANNIVERSARY REDEDICATION OF THE BUILDING WAS HELD ON AUGUST 31, 1951; AND THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY REDEDICATION WAS OBSERVED IN SEPTEMBER 2001. THE BUILDING WAS REDEDICATED AND RENAMED IN JULY 2003 IN HONOR OF ENTERTAINER BOB HOPE FOR HIS LIFELONG UNITED SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS (USO) EFFORTS AND DEVOTION TO OUR SERVICE MEMBERS IN GLOBAL DUTY STATIONS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THE COUNTY PERFORMED A SEVENTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLAR MODERNIZATION RENOVATION OF THE BUILDING STARTING IN 2007, AND THE UPGRADED BUILDING WAS REDEDICATED ON NOVEMBER 8, 2013.

THE BUILDING HAS SERVED AS A MEETING PLACE FOR HUNDREDS OF VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS OVER THE YEARS, AND THROUGH THOSE ORGANIZATIONS AND THE AGENCY THAT HAS EVOLVED AS THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, IT HAS HELPED TO PROVIDE BENEFITS TO COUNTLESS NUMBERS OF VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THE BUILDING STANDS TODAY AS A MODERN SERVICE CENTER FOR OUR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES, AND AS A LIVING MEMORIAL TO ALL THOSE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE GIVEN OF THEMSELVES IN SERVICE TO THEIR COUNTRY.

LOWER LEVEL

THE PURPLE HEART INN ON THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE BUILDING WAS THE ORIGINAL DINING HALL. THE “MESS HALL” STYLE DINING FURNITURE WAS REPLACED DURING WWII WITH TWO-HIGH BUNKS FOR SERVICEMEN TRANSITING THROUGH LOS ANGELES. NEARLY 20,000 PERSONNEL WERE BEDDED IN PATRIOTIC HALL DURING WWII. THE ROOM WAS CONVERTED TO THE PURPLE HEART INN FOR THE NATIONAL BICENTENNIAL (1976) TO HONOR GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON, WHOSE LIKENESS IS FOUND ON THE MEDAL AWARDED FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED IN COMBAT. THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE BUILDING WAS DESIGNATED AS THE BICENTENNIAL LEVEL, AND WAS DECORATED IN REVOLUTIONARY WAR-ERA MOTIF THAT INCLUDED A SEAPORT MURAL, PERIOD UNIFORMS, WEAPONS, AND ARTIFACTS. THE UPDATED ROOM SERVES AS A DINING AREA AND CONFERENCE ROOM THAT HOSTS A COLLECTION OF PHOTOS OF BOB HOPE IN HIS ROLE AS AN INTERNATIONAL USO ENTERTAINER FOR OUR TROOPS.



THE **GENERAL “JIMMY” DOOLITTLE** ROOM WAS ALSO DEDICATED AS A MEETING AND DINING ROOM DURING THE BICENTENNIAL TO HONOR ARMY AIR CORPS/AIR FORCE GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE WHO LED A DARING B-25 BOMBERS RAID ON TOKYO FROM THE DECK OF THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS HORNET ON APRIL 18, 1942. A MURAL OF THE TAKE-OFF FROM THE DECK OF THE HORNET BY FRANK ACKERMAN FILLS THE WEST WALL.

TENTH FLOOR

THE GYMNASIUM CONTAINS A FULL-SIZED BASKETBALL COURT, BLEACHER SEATING, AND MEN’S AND WOMEN’S SHOWERS AND LOCKER ROOMS. THE SPACE WAS OCCUPIED DURING WWII



BY A DETACHMENT OF THE 40TH INTERCEPTOR WING OF THE US ARMY AIR CORPS, AND WAS MOSTLY STAFFED BY FEMALE COMMUNICATIONS CORPS VOLUNTEERS.

SCAN HERE TO DONATE, OR GET MORE
INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE.
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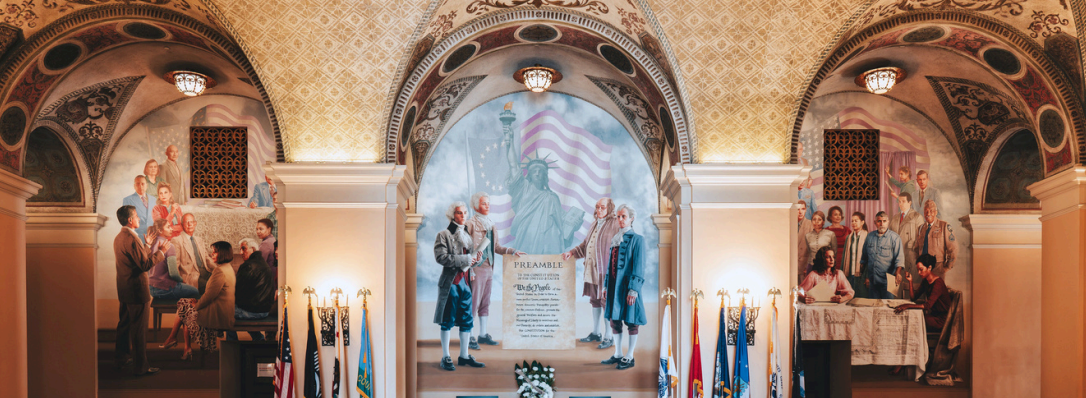


A LIVING MEMORIAL TO LOS ANGELES COUNTY VETERANS

A NATIONAL HISTORICAL LANDMARK – April 2025



LA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERAN AFFAIRS



1ST FLOOR

THE REFURBISHED **MAIN LOBBY** REFLECTS THE 1925 ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURE. THE HAND-STENCILED GOTHIC-RENAISSANCE ARCHED CEILING AND THE BENCH AND TABLE AT THE SOUTH END ARE FEATURES SPECIFIC TO THE HALL IN 1925. LOS ANGELES ARTIST KENT TWITCHELL’S 2011 MURALS DEPICT THE PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION (CENTER), THE FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY (LEFT), AND THE FREEDOM OF THE BALLOT (RIGHT.) THE TWITCHELL MURALS REPLACE THE ORIGINAL 1941 WPA MURALS BY HELEN LUNDEBURG THAT WERE DAMAGED IN THE EARLY 1970S.

THE RECEPTION AREA OF THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE (SOUTHWEST CORNER OF 1ST FLOOR) FEATURES THE ORIGINAL GROUNDBREAKING SHOVEL, PLUS PHOTOS AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ABOUT THE GROUNDBREAKING AND BUILDING OPENING.

THE **AUDITORIUM** SEATS 400 AND RETAINS THE ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES FROM 1925. THE ORIGINAL MOTION-PICTURE 35MM THEATER NOW BOASTS MODERN DIGITAL COMPONENTS. THE AUDITORIUM STAGE WAS THE MOVIE SET FOR THE ICONIC OPENING SCENE OF “PATTON” FEATURING ACTOR GEORGE C. SCOTT. THE AUDITORIUM WAS ONE OF SEVERAL ROOMS USED BY THE MUNICIPAL COURTS IN THE LATE 1940S AS A NEW COURT BUILDING HAD YET TO BE COMPLETED.



THE **MACARTHUR LIBRARY**, NAMED IN HONOR OF GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR IN 1974, SHELVES A COLLECTION OF MILITARY HISTORY BOOKS. THE COLLECTION INCLUDES ONE OF ONLY THREE - 127 VOLUME SET OF THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE CIVIL WAR (WAR OF REBELLION) AND HISTORIES FROM THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, WWI & II, KOREA, VIETNAM, AND OUR CURRENT CONFLICTS, AS WELL AS HISTORIC SCRAPBOOKS AND PERIODICALS.



2ND FLOOR

THE **LINCOLN ROOM** IS THE ORIGINAL MEETING HALL OF THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC (GAR), UNION CIVIL WAR VETERANS.

THIS ROOM AND FOUR OTHERS WERE ORIGINALLY CONFIGURED MUCH LIKE MASONIC HALLS, WITH CHURCH PEW-LIKE BENCHES LINING THE SIDE WALLS. THE ROOM NOW CONTAINS A COLLECTION OF PHOTOS, PAINTINGS, PRINTS, AND BANNERS FROM THE GAR, UNITED SPANISH WAR VETERANS (USWV),

AND WWI & WWII VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS THAT MET IN PATRIOTIC HALL.

THE **LINCOLN ANTE ROOM** HAS BUILT-IN DISPLAY CABINETS THAT SHOW IMPORTANT ARTIFACTS FROM VETERAN ORGANIZATIONS, AND UNIFORM ITEMS THAT REPRESENT THE FIVE SERVICE BRANCHES OF DIFFERENT ERAS.

THE **GENERAL GRANT ROOM** HOUSES CURRENT VETERAN SERVICES OFFICES, AND HOSTS A PHOTO GALLERY OF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS AND COUNTY SUPERVISORS

4TH FLOOR

THE **JOHN HANCOCK ROOM** WAS THE ORIGINAL MASONIC-STYLE MEETING HALL FOR MANY PATRIOTIC AUXILIARIES ASSOCIATED WITH VSOS. IT NOW HOUSES *THE L.A. COUNTY VETERANS AMERICA’S JOB CENTER OF CALIFORNIA TM*.

THE **NAVY ROOM**, ONCE NAMED THE WASHINGTON ROOM, WAS CONVERTED TO A MINI- U.S. NAVY MUSEUM IN 1981, FEATURING A COLLECTION OF ARTIFACTS FROM THE BATTLE CRUISER U.S.S. LOS ANGELES (BB-11). A 1982 MURAL BY SOLOMONDEMBER DEPICTS THE HISTORY OF THE U.S. NAVY FROM THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR TO THE VIETNAM ERA.



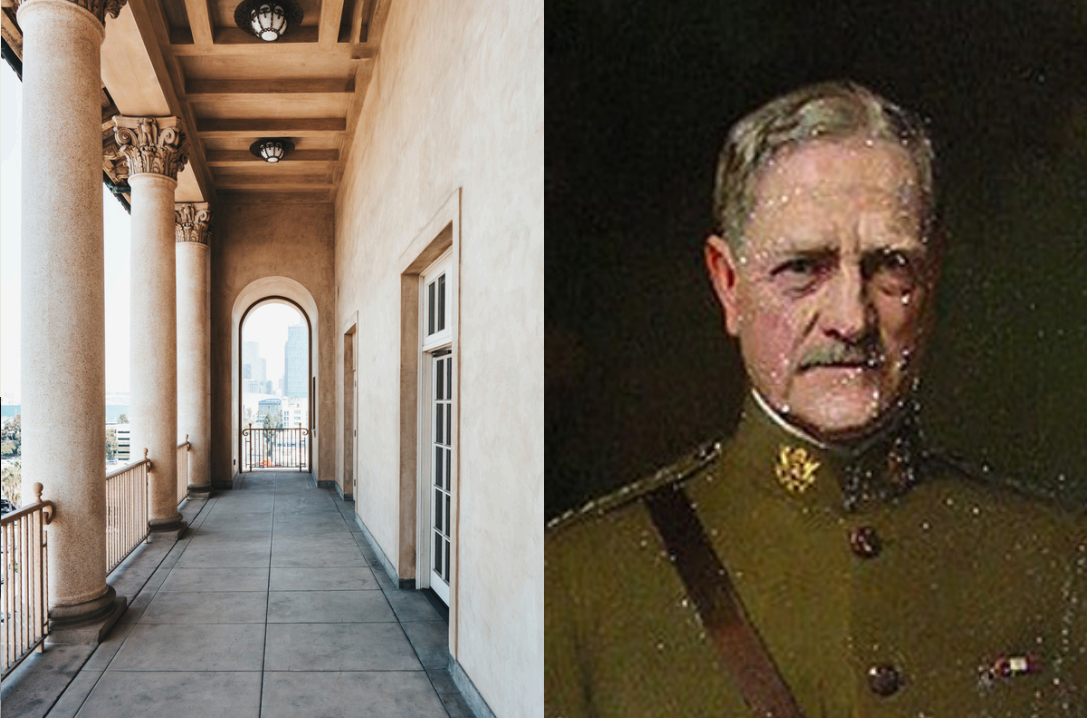
THE *U.S. VETERANS INITIATIVE (U.S. VETS)*, ACTING IN A NON-PROFIT COLLABORATIVE WITH THE COUNTY, NOW OCCUPIES THE ROOM FOR VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES SEEKING HELP WITH COUNSELING, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

THE **MARINE ROOM** IS A SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM ADJACENT TO THE NAVY ROOM, WHICH CONTAINS PHOTOS, PRINTS, AND ARTIFACTS RELATING TO US MARINE CORPS HISTORY.

6TH FLOOR

THE **GEN. OMAR BRADLEY CONFERENCE ROOM** WAS RENAMED FROM THE PRESIDENT MCKINLEY ROOM IN 1975 TO HONOR GENERAL BRADLEY ON HIS 82ND BIRTHDAY. ORIGINALLY ONE OF THE MASONIC-STYLE HALLS THAT WERE USED FOR MEETINGS OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR VETERANS, THE 1975 VERSION OF THE ROOM INCLUDED SEVERAL DISPLAY CASES OF WWII EUROPEAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS (ETO) ARTIFACTS AND MEMORABILIA. THE 1975 D-DAY & ETO MURAL BY COUNTY GRAPHIC ARTIST FRANK ACKERMAN FILLS THE WEST WALL. ALSO DISPLAYED ARE PHOTOS AND LETTERS HONORING GENERAL BRADLEY AND THE DESK HE USED IN HIS WASHINGTON, D.C. OFFICE AND HOME IN BRENTWOOD, CALIFORNIA.

THE **THEODORE ROOSEVELT OFFICE SUITE** HOUSES A SATELLITE FACILITY OF THE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH DESIGNATED SPECIFICALLY TO ASSIST VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THE SUITE ALSO CONTAINS THE EISENHOWER CONFERENCE ROOM NAMED IN HONOR OF GENERAL & PRESIDENT DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.



8TH FLOOR

THE **WOODROW WILSON ROOM** WAS ANOTHER OF THE MASONIC STYLE MEETING HALLS THAT ORIGINALLY HOUSED THE WWI VETERANS OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS. THE MODERNIZED CONFERENCE ROOM IS DECORATED WITH A COLLECTION OF WWI POSTERS AND PHOTOS, AND FEATURES TWO LIFE-SIZED OIL PORTRAITS OF US ARMY GENERAL JOHN J. PERSHING AND FRENCH FIELD MARSHAL FERDINAND FOCH, WHO WERE THE CHIEF ALLIED COMMANDERS IN FRANCE DURING WWI. THE PORTRAITS BY BRITISH ARTIST J. HODGSON SMART WERE DONATED TO THE HALL BY HIS WIDOW MARGARET IN 1963.

THE **ADMIRAL CHESTER H. NIMITZ ROOM** WAS ORIGINALLY DESIGNATED AS A “CLUB ROOM” FOR THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 8, WHOSE OFFICE WAS LOCATED IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE FLOOR. POST 8 WAS FOUNDED IN 1919 AS THE FIRST AMERICAN LEGION POST IN THE COUNTY. THE ROOM WAS RENAMED IN HONOR OF WWII COMMANDER OF THE PACIFIC FLEET ADMIRAL NIMITZ IN 1978. THE MEETING/BANQUET ROOM CONTAINS A COLLECTION OF AMERICAN LEGION MEMORABILIA. THE WALK-OUT FRENCH DOORS ON THE WEST WALL PROVIDE ACCESS TO A BEAUTIFUL BALCONY AND SPECTACULAR VIEWS OF WESTERN LOS ANGELES.



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